



Camouflaged Sacrifice in Times of Uncertainty

An ethnographic account of the
former U.S. Soldier belonging
amongst the United States Army in
Germany

Sonja Graham
August 2017



Helping to build your home

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**An ethnographic account of the former U.S. Soldier
belonging amongst the United States Army in Germany**



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Also, of course our awesome children, who experienced for the first time the absence of their mother for an extended period of time. When challenges arose, I pulled through because of you.

Sonja Graham

Wiesbaden 15th of August, 2017

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ABSTRACT

The United States Department of the Army Civilian, a former soldier and his existence structured through the acquiescing of the oscillation of the benevolence and hegemony of the nation-state. This thesis shall convey the interconnectedness of the sovereign power, in regards to the former soldier's mandated mobility, the acquisition of economic sustainability, and the philosophy of belonging to the U.S. Military. Additionally, the challenges former migrant soldiers have endured to receive citizenship rights, while defending the U.S. Constitution. The U.S. Department of the Army Civilian has willingly submitted himself to comply to sacrifice, believing to be in control of his live decisions, which has been molded by national economic circumstances, quite often due to economic instability and/ or ethnic minority status. Therefore, a false sense of being in control has been created, as there have not been adequate alternatives offered. Once the soldier is part of the military society through the indoctrination as early as basic training, he has become a soldier for life. Perhaps, confined in the mentality and thinking processes of being entrenched into the sub-society of the U.S. Military and unable to separate or return to the former civil society.

Keywords: Native Anthropology, Uncertainty, Belonging, Citizenship, Economic-Sustainability, U.S. Army, Nation-State

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LIST OF CHARACTERS

Aaron Smith a kind and helpful former retired U.S. Soldier, GS Civilian, married to a German and has two daughters. His excellence precedes him, and he has been chosen to relocate to enhance department efficiency.

Bob is a caring single dad of two dual-citizenship sons, his German wife Helen resides in a health care facility due to a rare illness. He is a former retired U.S. Soldier, and currently a GS civilian employee.

Elaine is the British spouse of a GS civilian. She is the lead Instructor of the Department of Labor training (SFL-TAP). She is a dedicated, ambitious and professional leader. She is fierce but caring. Her three-day training sessions prepare the soldier well to advance to the civil society, a life after the military service.

Frank Kaufman is a gentle and well-spoken former U.S. Soldier. Retired from the U.S. Military and did not seek a GS position. As a child, Frank emigrated to the U.S., as a German WWII refugee. He was assigned to France, where he met his wife. Currently, he volunteers at the Retiree Association.

George Davila a former retired U.S. Soldier, GS civilian, emigrated from Puerto-Rico.

Manuel Alvarez is ambitious, achieved, holds a GS civilian Leadership position, which comes with large responsibilities, and is therefore respected, and perhaps also disliked, which may be part of the positions nature. He is a former retired U.S. Warrant Officer, which grants him the title of Chief. He emigrated to the U.S. from Venezuela as a child.

Mark is married to a German spouse, he is a professional sponsored motorcycle racer and married to a German. He is a former retired U.S. Soldier, and a GS Civilian. His allotted overseas time is coming to an end, and he is proactively searching for a position in the U.S and its territories.

Matthew a sincere and humble former U.S. Soldier was medically discharged after six years of military service due to a severe heart condition. He is currently a GS civilian married to a Rumanian-German spouse and has four children.

Michael Hayatou is a determined, ambitious and strong minded former U.S. Soldier. He has emigrated from Sierra-Leonne as a teenager. He retired from the military in 2016 and was offered a GS position in Germany.

Molly is a U.S. Military spouse of 18 years, and Wiesbaden is her families last duty assignment with the military. She is looking forward to her husband's retirement and finding a stable home to settle.

Raúl is a former U.S. Soldier and was medically discharged after 14 years of military service. He is married to a German and has one son. He emigrated to the U.S. from Cuba as a young man with his parents. Raul is determined to find a position on the military installation, he is not in pursuit of German employment or residency.

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Ralph a former retired U.S. Soldier, and currently a GS civilian is married to a German and has three adult children. Which reside in Germany. He is of German descent and speaks German fluently.

Samuel a former U.S. Soldier, currently a GS civilian, married to a U.S. spouse with two children, was adopted from Costa Rica, and states: It is the best thing his mother could have done to provide him with a good life, rather than despair.

Sean a former U.S. Soldier, current GS civilian, single, lives in Germany to pay off his debt and accrue savings before returning to the U.S.

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1. CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1. Through the (un)familiar ethnographer lens

A day at the Lucius D. Clay Kaserne



Picture 1: Flag Retreat – Military Ritual Revelry and Retreat – Honoring the Host Nation

I have scheduled a 12 o'clock interlocutor interview and drive to the Wiesbaden Lucius D. Clay Kaserne. As I drive along the long road leading to the Installation, I notice the luscious saturated yellow rapeseed fields of the local German farmers creating a natural boundary and picturesque scenery. As an eligible member of the community, I quietly proceed through the gates of the Kaserne, but make an effort to be more observant. I approach the tall green fences and installation gate. I am aware of the procedure and lower my driver and rear car window. The guard scans my dependent identification card and upon seeing my picture on his display, greets me farewell. As I make my turn onto the boulevard, I acknowledge the eagle figurine with its wings spread high on the old original brick gate. To my right and left are retired tanks, long not in use, representing their military Units. At the end of the boulevard I face three tall flagpoles flying the German flag to the left, the U.S. American in the center and the blue Nato flag to the right. It is an impressive sight approaching the flags and coming to a halt in front of them. Two signs enhance the symbolism: 'Army Strong-Strong Europe'. As I seek parking a military police vehicle passes by me. While walking toward the tower, I can see the three flags waving in the wind, and it does have an appeal

and perhaps creates a feeling of pride. I arrive at the tower an administrative facility officially named the General John Shalikashvili Center. As I proceed on the pedestrian walk way I see soldiers in uniform, formal dress blues and individuals in civilian attire. Thus, far I have felt quite natural walking the paths of the installation. However, upon entering the tower I feel a sense of discomfort, a mix of an impressive authoritarian entry hall and my eligibility of presence. The latter perhaps fueled by the hearsay of the tower's status of confidentiality and the status of personnel working within. I sit patiently in the corner leather chair and absorb all the overwhelming feelings and the architecture surrounding me. I received a visitor's badge once thoroughly vetted by the security office, and was to be escorted at all times. After completing the interview, it was time to surrender the visitors badge and leave the installation. Rarely have I exited the Kaserne at 17:00 hours, but I recall the ritual which takes place at this particular hour. As I collect my thoughts, I catch myself using the term 'caught'. Yes, I was caught by the calls of the bugle, the retreat of the U.S. Flag at 17:00 hours. I use this term, as for some the sound of the bugle is an interruption in their task, their ability to move freely and make their way home outside of the installation. This day I was caught on my way to the car by the first sounds of the bugle. I notice a female soldier in civilian attire leaving her car door ajar as she stood at attention, two male soldiers exiting the food court, placing their bags on the nearby tables in order to stand at attention, and a mom and her three children in civilian attire standing with their hands across their hearts, all facing the sound of the bugle, an estimated direction of where the U.S. flag is being retreated. For a few minutes, everything on the Kaserne comes to a halt, people stand at attention and do not speak. I too, a fairly new naturalized U.S. citizen still adjusting to my new civic duties place my hand over my heart and face the flag. Is it pride, is it patriotism, or another form of national hegemony, reminding the individual of whom is in control of their quotidian behavior and activities. But also, an intent to remind the military personnel to honor those who have fallen while serving and protecting their Nation.

1.2. Theoretical Framework

The Department of the Army Civilian (DAC) assigned to support the U.S. Military mission overseas, lies before our eyes so obvious; yet appears invisible as a societal entity extricated from the military institution and its host nation Germany. Henceforth, I will refer to the Department of the Army Civilian as the GS civilian, as the civilian's address one another as, the civilian or GS civilian. Also, I will refer to the soldier as he, for the ease of comprehension, indeed well aware of men and women serving in the ranks of the U.S. Military. This thesis will examine the GS civilian which was sculpted by his nation and indoctrinated into the military sub-society at an adolescent age. As Maringira and Carrasco quote Goffman, "... the military is a typical example of a total institution; all activities are conducted in the same place and under the same single command. The military is both a place of residence and work: *individuals separate from the wider society*, live an enclosed and formally administered round of life (italics, my emphasis) (Maringira and Carrasco 2015: 323)."

The primary aim of this thesis is to convey how the GS civilians create their quotidian lives all awhile vulnerable to the hegemony of the nation-state. For once Federal employment stood for prestigious and stable employment, it has fallen victim to governmental shutdowns' and reduction in force (RIF) budget cuts. Such as the 2017, 90-day hiring freeze of Federal civilian employees, ordered under the Presidential Memorandum of President Donald J. Trump. Yet, it still appears to keep its status of long-term economic sustainability. Mark, a former Air Force soldier, married to a German, decided due to a luxurious contracting job to remain in Germany. After four years of uncertainties and instabilities of the contract position, he decided to seek a more stable employment with the Department of Defense (DoD). At least he thought it was to be more stable, during his first week of his new employment the

government ordered a furlough¹. With this in mind, this thesis will focus on the dichotomy of the benevolence and the hegemony of the U.S. Government. On the one hand the soldier receives benefits in order to provide economic sustainability for self and their progeny, as well as the right to become a citizen, yet in return the soldier is subject to any changes the nation-state sees fit. For instance, as the U.S. Army enlistment contract states, which I will further elaborate on in chapter three: “I understand that I cannot change these laws but that Congress may change these laws, or pass new laws, at any time that may affect this agreement, and that I will be subject to those laws and any changes they make to this agreement (DD Form 4/1 (Page2) Section C 9. Oct. 2007).” May the price for *certainty* be too high? As Bauman states: “All certainty that comes after the ‘original sin’ of dismantling the matter-of-fact world full of routine and short of reflection must be a *manufactured certainty*, a blatantly and unashamedly ‘*made up*’ certainty, burdened with all the inborn *vulnerability of human-made decisions* (*italics, my emphasis*) (Bauman 2012: 21).” May the latter be the justification for the cost of a priceless possession, named life? After all the individual chooses to enlist in the military as he is in control of his *certainty*, since: “... the responsibility for resolving the quandaries generated by vexingly volatile and constantly changing circumstances is shifted onto the shoulders of individuals – who are now expected to be ‘*free choosers*’ and to bear in full the consequences of their choices (*italics, my emphasis*) (Bauman 2007: 3).” Indeed, the free chooser will bear in full the consequences of their supposed ‘free choices’. However, what may have been their alternative choices, for Aaron stated: “*As a young man I liked to fight, my family was of poor background, laboring in construction and painting, I would have ended up in Prison or dead²*”. Also, Paul Warren added, “*I wonder where I’d be now if I would not have joined the military³?*” As his primary

¹ Formal Interview with Mark, 17-03-2017.

² Formal interview with Aaron, 03-04-2017.

³ Formal Interview with Paul, 14-04-2017.

employment choice after completing high school, was a local seafood factory. Bauman adds, "...fear, 'in the absence of existential comfort', people tend to settle for safety, or the pretense of safety (2007: 10)." Uncertainty is fueled by the fear of fate, the inability to avert the peculiar nature of its blows, the inability to predict them, let alone prevent or tame them (ibid.). What remains is the ability to make choices to at least alter the outcome or lessen the intensity of the blow.

The second aim of this thesis is to illustrate how the aforementioned economic sustainability and creation of certainty is connected to the foreign-born soldier obtaining the perhaps highest right of the nation-state, the citizenship, in pursuit of the American Dream. Moreover, how as a consequence the pursuit of a long-term economic stability warrants in relation to the potential sacrifice of one's body (Agamben 'Homo Sacer' 1998). Emphasizing the paradox of the benevolence and the hegemony of the nation-state, which must care for its constituents. The U.S Military Veteran, has become the subject and object of his Nation-State. Contrary, in order to function fully, the sovereign provides a mandatory Soldier for Life-Transition Assistance Program, to ensure Veterans will receive the tools for a successful transition to the civil sector and not fall victim to unemployment or homelessness. On the contrary, the soldier is reduced to his bare life (*zoē*), despite his right and status of political life (*bios*). For instance, through the measurement of life in the form of VA health care screenings, in order to receive military disability benefits (ibid.). What does this mean to the foreign-born soldier sworn to defend the U.S. Constitution? Yet, not a rightful member of the sovereign; however, eligible to sacrifice his life in pursuit of *bios*. Perhaps, Druckman describes a socio-psychological solution to the question, why then would a soldier potentially sacrifice his bare life in pursuit of a full life (*bios*): "... the nation *achieves personal relevance* for individuals when they become *sentimentally attached to the homeland* (affectively involved), motivated to help their country (goal oriented), and gain a sense of

identity and self-esteem through their national identification (ego involved) (*italics*, my emphasis) (Druckman 1994: 44).” With this in mind, Druckman describes the socio-emotional concept of Patriotism, also many times denied throughout my research, yet lived and enacted in the everyday lives of the interlocutors. Most decisions we make don’t have an immediate outcome, the mentality of how we deal with uncertainty over time is often described as: ‘We cross this bridge once we get there’ (Moritz 2017). We address our current necessities and certainly not the notion of death in the process.

The third aim of this thesis is to describe how mobility and migration are connected to the creation of a new *Heimat*⁴. How the GS civilian describes their philosophical perspective of social-belonging to the U.S. Military institution across the globe. Zygmunt Bauman refers to human mobility as ships and anchors, the former soldier a vessel on the sea, catching and releasing its anchor as the government assigns the soldier to various military installations across the globe (2011:433). For instance, as Molly a military spouse of 18 years stated: “*Two more years until my husband retires, and for the first time we get to choose where we want to live. Not our parents, and not the military sending us to a rotten post.*” Perhaps, Molly⁵ is falling victim to a hopeful and mythical idea, to leave the military institution and its reign at last. On the contrary, the former soldier commonly seeks residence in close proximity to the military installation, due to an attachment through shared history and veteran benefits, for Bourdieu (1990) argues, “... once the habitus is incorporated, it is perpetuated through its re-activation and reproduced later in life.” Thus, once indoctrinated or shaped by the military, the individuals’ identity will remain ‘*forever a soldier*’ (Maringira and Carrasco 2015). Enhanced by, Sørensen’s statement: “Months of intensive training followed by deployment, life in a camp environment saturated with military culture, [...] generate an

⁴ Heimat= German philosophical term describing belonging to a place, country, nation, an emotion tied to a place.

⁵ Molly, a military spouse of 18 years, living and working in Wiesbaden. Informal conversation in April, 2017.

embodied *sense of being at home* in the military that does not easily dissolve (*italics*, my emphasis) (2015: 231).” For instance, as Brian posted on his social media account after reuniting with a former comrade: “*It's been about 11 years since the last time I seen this guy! We were young Soldiers in Germany passing each other in our deployments. Bro... Thanks for coming out to Fayetteenam⁶, having a few beers with me, and taking a walk down "Unit" lane. I can't believe we survived! #ISurvivedUnit #platinous*”⁷ The presented post resonates with the Soldiers Creed, “*I will never leave a fallen comrade* (army.mil).” Accordingly, Maringira and Carrasco write: “... comradeship is not just another form of sociability among members of a same gender group, often termed ‘homosociality’. The difference lies in the nature and intensity of the bonds created and re-enacted in post-army-life. Comradeship lasts because of the intensity of experiences in which it was forged ... (2015: 329-330).” Lastly, the Kaserne is mere an annex of the U.S. homeland, the territory of the Lucius D. Clay Kaserne represents a canister, which holds within its boundaries a population of rightful citizens. Relating to the uncertainties of modernity (Bauman 2007) and global politics the canister is at the benevolence of the sovereign power and may be dissolved or relocated; not minding or ignoring the incongruous idea that some of the population has chosen to join another population group [German spouse] (Bauman 2011: 425- 426). Thus, once more leaving the former soldier, making a *free choice* to cling on to economic sustainability via Federal employment or a change of life perspective in Germany.

⁶ Fayetteenam= The name given to the city of Fayetteville, NC in the 60's by protesters in opposition to shipping out of US troops from Fort Bragg/ Pope Air Force base to the war in Vietnam. Today many citizens use the name with pride. This name originates with the city of Fayetteville, NC. No other Fayetteville in the U.S. can make this claim. Home of the largest U.S. Army Installation Ft. Bragg. (Established on Sept. 4, 1918) (urbandictionary.com)

⁷ Social Media informal observation. Two former soldiers having served in the same U.S. Army Unit in Wiesbaden Germany, deployed to Iraq multiple times, married to local nationals, unfortunately their marriages did not survive the military lifestyle (04-29-2017).

1.3. A brief history of the Lucius D. Clay Kaserne

‘*Als der Ami kam*’ - The Arrival of the U.S. Troops in Wiesbaden

I felt ambitious and saddled my bicycle to begin my ride to the Kaserne. There are two agricultural roadways to get to the installation and the nearby farm. I chose the one closest to the suburb of Wiesbaden-Erbenheim. It being my official first day of research I absorbed all of my surroundings. For instance, the close proximity of German Schrebergärten⁸ separated merely by a tall fence with barbwire between the Kaserne’s runway and someone’s growing lettuce. I marveled, given all the security and surveillance to enter the installation, was this to close for comfort. As I proceeded and made one of my final turns, I noticed a local bus stop with the name of Rennbahnstrasse. Which let me to conduct some map research, if indeed this street was to led to the former Rennbahn (Horse Track) of the year 1910. Astonished of how much the online mapping service presented to me, I found that indeed the Rennbahnstrasse at one time led to the former brick gates of what is now the Lucius D. Clay Kaserne. Nowadays, the Rennbahnstrasse is a dead end, cut off by the military installations fencing and its runway.

Resuming with the rich history of what is currently known as the General Lucius D. Clay Kaserne. Established in 1910, as a horse race track, later transformed to a civic aero plane runway in 1929. The first modern military purpose emerged in 1938 when the famous ‘Ace of Spades’ fighter wing of the German Luftwaffe occupied the new established base and used it throughout WWII as a fighter and bomber base. In 1945, post WWII the U.S. Forces occupied the former German base. In 1948, the U.S. Air Force designated the airfield as its new European Headquarters and the territory was named, the Wiesbaden Air Base. 1976 the Air Force relocated its Headquarters to Ramstein, Germany, and the first U.S. Army brigade made the Wiesbaden Air base its home. In 1998, the Air Base was officially named the Wiesbaden Army Airfield (WAAF) due to the arrival of U.S. Army troops. In 2012 with the closure of the U.S. Army Europe Headquarters (USAREUR) in Heidelberg, Germany, the Wiesbaden Army Airfield was renamed the General Lucius D. Clay Kaserne.

⁸ Schrebergärten: Small garden community/ plots for rent.

Thus, establishing the new home of the U.S. Army Europe Headquarters in Wiesbaden (U.S. Army Garrison Wiesbaden 2017). The U.S. Army Garrison Wiesbaden is the on-site administration for the 19,800-strong American military community in Hessen. The task of the U.S. Garrison is to ensure the stand-by duty and wellbeing of currently 3,100 military members, 3,900 U.S. civilians, 10,500 family members, 1,200 local national employees, and 1,100 retirees (Military Installations 2017). An impressive 14.1 % of the Wiesbaden population (278, 919)⁹ are members of the U.S. Military Community (Military Installations).

1.4. The Department of the Army Civilian

The Lucius D. Clay Kaserne is the prevalent work place of the GS civilian. Many GS positions are white collar positions, as they are predominantly administrative, however there are also technical and service related positions. The United States Office of Personnel Management (OPM.GOV) divides the occupation characteristics as follows: 90.51% White Collar, comprising of 26.89% Professional, 36.94% Administrative, 26.71% Technical, Clerical, Other, and lastly 9.48% of Blue-Collar positions (OPM.GOV 2017). The vast majority of the GS civilian residing in Germany are men of former military status. OPM further states its overall percentage of employees is 56.76% men and 43.23% women. Furthermore, are 8.25% of military retiree status, 1.89% officers and 6.35 % enlisted personnel. In addition, 25.93% are of Veterans preference. In September of 2015, OPM reported a total of 17, 381 Department of Defense (DoD) employees outside of the United States and US Territories. The entire DoD population recorded at the end of the fiscal year 2014, counted 723,000, which the Department of the Army civilian is a fraction thereof (OPM.GOV). Lastly, OPM reports 64.66% of federal employees are Caucasian and 35.34% of minority groups, which the latter comprise of 17.68% Black, 8.36 % Hispanic, 5.74% Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander, and 1.74% Native American (2015). Being that the DoD

⁹ Military Installations Fast Facts: www.militaryinstallations.dod.mil.

civilian is a U.S. Federal employee, English language proficiency and holding the U.S. citizenship or an equal legal status¹⁰ are a requirement.

Adding to the above information I was able to conduct a quantitative and qualitative research questionnaire of 24 participants within the USAG Wiesbaden community. The results presented 13 (54%) within the age range of 46-56 years, further 22 (92%) members were prior military, thereof 15 (62 %) retired service members. Race and national origin similar as presented by OPM, were 14 (58%) Caucasian, 7 (29%) Black, 3 (12.5%) Caribbean, Central- and South- American. Lastly, 22 (92%) men and 2 (8%) women. Furthermore, did the questionnaire interlocutors have the opportunity to select from 11 pre-formulated reasons of the importance in choosing federal employment. The result are as follows: 20 (83%) job security, 14 (58%) retirement benefits, 11 (46%) prior active duty, 6 (25%) salary, and lastly 6 (25%) patriotic duty. Finally, 11 (46%) claimed travel as a prime reason for seeking an overseas government assignment. Some members responded in short written statements, for instance:

“Better opportunities, safer environment and world class race tracks.”

“Be with my son.”

“Closer to supporting real world issues.”

“Travel the world, get out of the small box we call our daily lives.”

“Operational assignment, in conjunction with a European cultural experience. Born in Germany, and 4th tour in Germany.”

“Experience, training, opportunity to travel and self-growth. Germany is such a beautiful country.” Perhaps a humorous, yet sincere statement I received was the, of a civilian married to a German spouse: *“Pre-nuptial agreement to my spouse to stay in Germany as long as possible, as well as an easy transition from active duty to the GS world.”*

¹⁰ www.usajobs.gov: Federal employment criteria. Accessed: January 09. 2017.

Surely, this sample is of a timely restrained study, location bound, and only a cross-section of the overseas GS population. Nevertheless, does it present commonalities amongst the population. A copy of the questionnaire can be found in the appendices section of this thesis.

1.5. The Native Anthropologist and the Academic GS civilian Spouse

“When she turns off the recorder and removes the cloak of the investigator, she goes home to a community she forever shares with natives. Their fundamental beliefs, as well as their struggles and triumphs are deeply woven into the fabric of her own existence. This profound reality acts as a relentless urging, provoking her continuous attempt to liberate the fact from romanticization. Ironically, she cannot hope to accomplish this...unless she is willing to closely examine the community as a system of shared values and beliefs, as well as to examine the subtle but significant distinctions among its members (Nelson 1996:198).”

As Nelson conveys so romantically, yet so critically, the native anthropologist carries various burdens. First answering to one’s own ethics and integrities, second to give a true portrayal of one’s society, which was, is, and will be, a shared community forever. Lastly, the possible critique and inquiry of the academic field. How objective and self-reflexive was the study conducted, may it fall subject to discreditation due to the researcher’s native status? My role as a native anthropologist and academic GS Civilian spouse began as the foreign-born U.S. Military spouse and later GS Civilian spouse. This role gave me the ability to understand majority of the military jargon and notions conveyed during the participant observations and interviews. Further, it granted me access to the installation in the form of a dependent identification card¹¹. Yet, the Wiesbaden U.S. Army Garrison Command and the Public Affairs Office submitted my research through a rigorous vetting process. Ensuring my ethnographic methods will not inadvertently reveal Force Protection measures. I made a conscious effort to see my quite native environment through the ethnographer’s lens. What was once familiar or perhaps taken-for-granted had to become unfamiliar. Moreover, did I

¹¹ Dependent ID card, Identification sponsored by the Spouse assigned to the military installation.

work on my self-reflexivity, as the environment may have accepted me as a native member of the community and therefore complied to partake in my research. As well as the interlocutors support concerning the worth of continuous education, as one member stated: “You make sacrifices now, in order to better your future¹².”

On the contrary one can never be fully a native, as I may have claimed the role of a academic GS spouse researcher, I am not a GS Civilian nor a former U.S. soldier, and consequently my status cannot be of a complete and fully immersed native. Therefore, personal narrative contributions and the use of ‘I’ are not of a narcissistic nature, but rather that of a native participant narrator. Nonetheless, during my ethnographic research, I noticed the impact the environment and the locals had on me, how this contributed to my self-reflexivity and the shaping of my academic identity. The following quote, contributes to the inner dilemma ethnographers may endure: *“The researchers take, hit, and run. They intrude their subjects’ privacy, disrupt their perceptions, utilize false pretenses, manipulate the relationship, and give little or nothing in return. When the needs of the researcher are satisfied, they break off contact with the subject (Reinharz 1984: 95).”*

Reinharz makes a crucial point, part of every ethnographer’s life, they come, conquer and may never look back. As Mr. Hayatou, an interlocutor of my research, asked me: “So, this is it, when will we see each other again?” Perhaps Reinharz states the truth; however, I believe the ethnographer leaves an image of his personality and background behind in the field; much as the participants presenting more than spoken words to the researcher. The ethnographer takes valuable lessons and life queries home, adding to self-reflection and the shaping of the researcher’s identity. I have had the pleasure to meet and learn about the backgrounds of intriguing personalities, whom have immigrated to the U.S. in various forms, and have prior or during their military service been granted the U.S. citizenship. Many of the persons have

¹² Informal conversation with Mr. Alvarez on the Municipal parking lot 17-03-2017.

left countries of despair, nations with great poverty, conflict, and corruption. Consequently, was I corrected that even though I was a U.S. immigrant and naturalized citizen, I was from a western-industrialized nation, assumed not capable of empathy or the ability to relate to first hand experiences of poverty and corruption. I am a white female, from a middle-class German family, who chose to immigrate to the U.S. due to her spouses U.S. military orders, not because of despair and the search for a new, perhaps prosperous life. At this moment, I felt vulnerable and realized my exposure of being immersed into the field.

1.6. Ethnographic Methodology

The ethnographic fieldwork for this thesis was conducted between February 14th, and May 15th, 2017 in Wiesbaden, Germany.

First, this thesis presents individual life narratives, as well as implemented U.S. Government programs to ensure a stress-free transition for active duty soldiers returning to civilian society (SFL-TAP). This data was gathered through formal and informal interviews, as well as participant observation methods, the latter of active and passive nature (O'Reilly 2012). O'Reilly noted: "Life histories gave her participants the opportunity to talk at length about who they are, ... (2012: 129)." Learning about the interlocutor's life and what presented itself from beneath the surface were the most intriguing moments of this research. Moreover, O'Reilly emphasizes the potential of life history interviews for ethnographers, as this method creates a relationship and builds rapport, which short-one-time interviews may not (ibid.: 128).

Second, being of native anthropologist status, I made it my duty to keep all my scheduled appointments, arrive punctual and present myself sincere and professional. Concurrently, I used the method of self-reflexivity, the ability to self-reflect on one's own role in the practice and unfolding of every-day life. Further, self-reflexivity involves the questioning (critical thinking) about the things we read, here and write (O'Reilly 2012: 99- 213). For instance,

self-reflecting on the role as an ethnographer going (being) native or an insider assumed challenges of personal prejudices and presumptions which will need evaluation. Furthermore, “All ethnographers are to some extent outsiders and to some extent insiders: all must strive to make the strange familiar, and the familiar strange; must constantly question, *immerse* and *distance*, in the ongoing process of producing ethnographic insights (*italics*, my emphasis) (O’Reilly 2012:98).” Ambitious and feeling time constrained, I hit the ground running, scheduling interviews and visited the field daily. Fairly soon I realized, I needed to adjust my pace, in order to establish a balance between immersion and distance. As Aaron Smith¹³ perhaps unconsciously related to Laura Nader’s (1972) studying up anthropological perspectives: “*Looking from the top down, you miss it, only see the bushes, but not what lies beneath them.*” This form of immersion and distance dualism creates advantages and disadvantages to evaluate. Advantages of being an insider (native) are the ability to move naturally through the terrain, and perhaps an ease to establish rapport with potential actors. On the contrary disadvantages may lie in the taken-for-granted tacit language, jargon, gestures, and routines, therefore perhaps overlooking valuable data. Being a former military spouse I was conscious of what I brought to the table, my own set of experiences, and especially feelings of being at home and belonging to various military installations. As O’Reilly (2012) quoted Herzfeld, “Quite simply knowing when to shut up - that marks the capable and canny anthropologist ... (O’Reilly, 2012: 99).” I noticed the importance of shutting up, at my second interview, in order not to distort the interlocutors’ answers. Providing room for the interlocutor to present their thoughts, versus what they may perceive, I want to hear.

Third, equipped with a pocket calendar, which became my field work companion, I first scheduled interview appointments with the Wiesbaden Garrison municipal personnel. As

¹³ Aaron Smith, Formal Interview 03-04-2017.

many of the offices have an open-door policy, I simply peeked my head in to see if the interlocutor were available for scheduling. In the year preceding my anthropological studies I had the opportunity to work on the installation and meet many of the interlocutors previously on a last name basis. Coupled with snowball sampling (O'Reilly 2012), which allowed me to widen the circle of participants and connect to participants outside my initial realm. For instance, Sean¹⁴ connected me with his co-worker Brian, whom is married to a German spouse and has lived and worked in Germany for many years. Conducting a lunch time interview Sean wanted to partake in, Brian reassured me, it was fine, as he perceived Sean like his brother. After all, my interviews were conducted on a one-on-one, face-to-face basis.

In addition, at the heart of anthropological research is the art of taking field notes. As DeWalt and DeWalt present: "If you didn't write it down in your field notes, then it didn't happen (at least so far as being data for analysis) (2011: 270)." Participant observations, as well as interviews were logged in separate notebooks, noting the date, time, and place in order to keep track of the gathered data. Field notes are the evidence, the data collected of participant observation and each observation has its own realities and cannot be reproduced in the same fashion it once occurred. Although, an unstructured, ad hoc interview allows to create an informal relationship and establish trust with the actor. As DeWalt and DeWalt quote: "It's important to be a good listener. Through language we rapidly acquire a substantial amount of information in a short time. If we listen, we will learn much more quickly (2011: 267)." Listening during an ad hoc informal interview may also bring forth challenges of time and space to complete jottings thereafter, not to mention a structuration, and detailed recollection of the conversation. Also, all interlocutors were ensured of their anonymity, likewise asking social media interlocutors for their permission to use a personal, but yet public post. Consequently, a particular challenge on my behalf was the search of

¹⁴ Brian, Formal Interview 27-03-2017.

pseudonyms to ensure the interlocutors anonymity. The name of an individual represents, character, country of origin and/or even the religious faith, which contributes to the person's identity. Furthermore, the military installation resembles but a village, and how I learned later in my research, the population of the municipal is a closely woven community. The latter had me contemplate, which ethical challenges may arise, as the majority of the interlocutors work for the same department.



Picture 2: Military Achievement Coins

Through the display of military artifacts, I was able to gain some insight of the individuals former military live. I sharpened my sense for how many of my interlocutors had personalized their office space with military artifacts. Intrigued by them, I deemed the military awards of achievement and artifacts a form of personal representation, conceivably similar to a mural of the individuals past and present.

Lastly, following Malinowski (1992) in his scientific approach of ethnography, this thesis also applied quantitative research, with its attention to the imponderabilia of actual life, the observed behavior, as well as the documentation of the spoken word (Nader 2011). I have conducted 18 formal interviews and 24 participants completed a short questionnaire regarding military service time, reasons for joining the U.S. Military and continuous service

as a government employee. The quantitative data of the latter, has given me the ability to find commonalities such as job security, economic stability, also travel and education opportunities. These statistical findings are presented within the Department of the Army Civilian section. Lastly, the method of triangulation helped me with the data analysis. Analyzing transcribed interviews, observational field notes, and official government documents accessed through the internet. The purpose of the data triangulation method is to ensure corroboration and converging evidence (Socsci.uci.edu 2017). Throughout the field work I analyzed the data cross checked the findings, searching for new patterns and ideas, and compared new data to see already collected data. Despite the brief time frame of the ethnographic research, I reached a point of saturation (ibid.). At which point it appeared new data or emerging themes were not to be found.

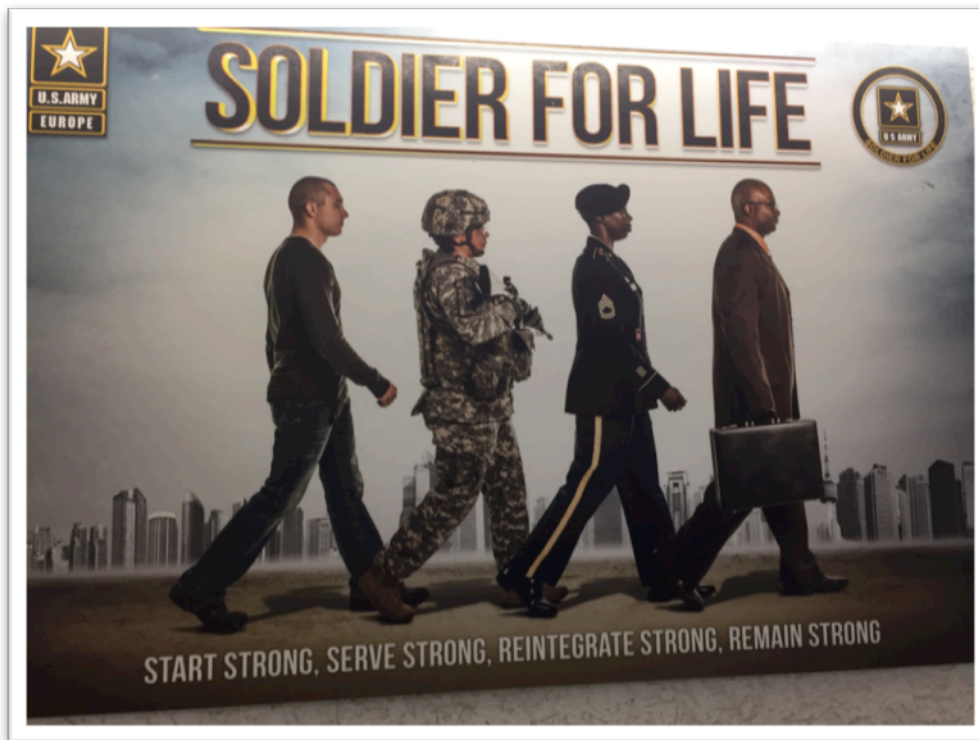
1.7. Thesis Structure

The main argument of this thesis is the entrapment of the perception of free choosers, the presumed agency of life decision making in times of economic *uncertainty* under the veil of the nation-states oscillation of benevolence and hegemony. This thesis consists of five chapters. Chapter one, will comprise of the introduction, the theoretical and methodological framework. As well as the potential conflict of the native anthropologist and setting the stage of the research location. In the following chapter two, I will present the GS civilian a former soldier, their motivations of joining the U.S. military and continuous employment with the Department of the U.S. Army. Further, the tacit concept of ‘Leave No Colonel Behind’, the denial of the term nepotism. Chapter three, is designed to give the reader an understanding of the dichotomy between governmental hegemony and benevolence. As such, unfolding the benefits of continuous service, for example economic stability and the efforts of receiving Veterans Disability benefits. The aim of Chapter four, is to describe the attachment to the military institution and its society, post military service. Generational forms of belonging to

the U.S. Military Community as well as the host nation Germany. Concluding with Chapter five, I wish to provide an answer to the main research question: *How does the Department of the Army Civilian describe their quotidian live belonging and creating a home amongst the U.S. Army in Germany?* This thesis will illustrate the acquiescing of potential sacrifice in order to reap the long-term economic benefits; the military and federal employment can provide economic upward mobility for self and the progeny.

2. CHAPTER TWO:

“ONCE A SOLDIER, ALWAYS A SOLDIER, ... A SOLDIER FOR LIFE”



Picture 3: Soldier for Life - Transition Assistance Program-

2.1. Introduction

“It is a fallacy to expect ex-combatants to leave their past military expertise behind; we argue that demilitarization these former soldiers is synonymous with stripping them of their ‘being’ (Maringira and Carrasco 2015: 330).”

This chapter aims to define the individual’s motives for joining the U.S. military, these being quite often due to economic uncertainty, controlled by geographical location and economic status. As mentioned in the introduction, uncertainty is fueled by the fear of fate, the inability to avert the peculiar nature of its blows, the inability to predict them, let alone prevent or tame them (Bauman 2007: 10). What remains is the ability to make choices in order to alter the outcome or lessen the intensity of the blow. Thus, the Department of the Army civilian, a former U.S. soldier has made the choice to serve with the U.S. Armed Forces and become an object of his Nation-State.

Second, describing which role the nation-state takes in providing the soldier with adequate training in order to obtain future employment post military service. To ensure its constituents are prepared, alleviating transitional stressors and avoiding unemployment and homelessness, which financially burden's the nation-state.

Third, how belonging on the level of the individual to the greater institution of the U.S. military influences, leaving no comrade behind, while ensuring appropriate veteran hiring preferences. Keeping in mind the shared past of the former soldiers; for, *“Their experiences are hard to share with people who were not there, and their comradeship is a source of bonding drawn from life-threatening experiences during war (Maringira and Carrasco 2015: 323).”*

2.2. The Former U.S. Soldier: Narratives of Joining the Military Service

The following short narratives of three black and one South American young men, describe the overall motives for enlisting in the U.S. Military, indicating economic stagnation and the lack of future economic prospects.

***Samuel**, was 21 years old when he joined the military service. He completed high school and attended a private Christian university for two years. Prior to joining the U.S. Army he worked at a job for approximately six months, but due to a car accident, no longer had logistical means to commute to work. Hitching a ride at a local gas station, he was picked up by the U.S. Army recruiter; who, after 20 minutes of sharing a ride had him convinced to schedule an appointment. Thereafter, Samuel was on his way to basic training at Ft. Sill, Oklahoma.*

***Sean**, completed high school, held a college acceptance letter in hand, but had no financial means to attend. His cousin came to his home with a U.S. Marine recruiter. Because Sean was unemployed at the time and the marine's uniform looked sharp and flashy, as well as the recruiters' car; Sean decided to join the marines alongside his cousin.*

***Tony**, was 25 when he joined the military, he had worked at a local blanket company making \$11 an hour. The opportunities were rather bleak when he joined the military. He was the only black male of his age in his basic training unit.*

Paul, joined the military right after high school. There weren't many employment opportunities in his small hometown in Maryland. A seafood factory was the primary employer of the town. His uncle was in the military and everyone was always excited to see him come home.

The U.S Military recruiter sells the enlistment benefits similar to the of car sales pitch, therefore I wanted to get more insight of how and what the recruiter offers to individuals considering joining the military. I entered the U.S. Army recruiting station at the U.S. Military installations in Wiesbaden. It was a rather busy day and the Sergeant approaching me, handed me his business card and asked me to please write him my questions and further details in order to schedule an interview. However, this was one of the only moments throughout my research I was not granted access and provided with first-hand information, which the following correspondence illustrates: “Hi Sonja, Thanks for sending the information. I will forward it on and make sure it can be used for a *research project in a different country* before we commit to a time (*italics, my emphasis*).” And lastly, “Good afternoon, Sonja, I apologize for the inconvenience, but we are unable to commit to an interview. I wish I could've been of more assistance, respectfully, Sergeant First Class (SFC) Recruiter.¹⁵” Upon receiving this e-mail, I decided to retrieve the recruitment information from the official military website Goarmy.com, which provides parents of prospective enlistees with smiling faces of proud military personnel. Immediately I was taken in by a picture of a female soldier checking wiring on a vehicle, while reading the bold lettering stating: “EARN A PLACE ON THIS TEAM, EARN A BONUS up to \$40,000.” Not having addressed the overall benefits presented to me, let alone the convincing advertising, such as: “In the Army your son or daughter can earn money for college, and college credits while learning job skills that *put them ahead of their civilian colleagues*. Soldiers also receive top-notch medical coverage, 30-days paid vacation, and housing allowance (*italics, my emphasis*)

¹⁵ E-mail correspondence with the U.S. Army Recruiter in Wiesbaden, Germany. 2017.

(goarmy.com 2017).” Are you not convinced yet, that the military is the place to provide you with economic upward mobility? No, worries, more benefits are presented in a bullet list: “Earn a salary, while learning a skill, high- quality medical and dental coverage, free or discounted meals and housing allowance, earn college credits, specialized job training, vacation (30 days paid leave each year), retirement benefits, thrift savings plan (TSP - the military version of a 401K) (ibid.)” After a brief moment of reflection I came to the conclusion, that the military does indeed offer amazing opportunities to obtain vocational training and education, while receiving a salary. Persuasively, the online application page states, “TAKE CONTROL OF YOUR FUTURE (ibid.)” But what does the individual have to provide the military? Their life?

2.2.1. Economic Stability and Upward Mobility

Manuel Alvarez leans back in his office chair, rocking confidently and gently, while speaking to me. What do you want to know, he asks me? I begin with my prepared questions and he provides me with a detailed curriculum vitae of his past achievements. When Manuel was 8 years old, his parents migrated from Venezuela to the U.S., due to economic reasons. His mother wished for Manuel to receive a college education, therefore at the age 18 he joined the U.S. Military. Throughout his military service, he was selected to become a warrant officer (Chief) and retired after approximately 20 years of service. He applied for a position with one of the largest civilian corporations in the immediate perimeter of the military installation. After a rigorous hiring process and stringent six-month training, Manuel was on board. Within the next eight years of employment (2000-2008) the corporation endured two major budget cuts and an estimated 10% of the staff was terminated. Given the nature of the sudden termination notices and the uncertainty of being a part of the next batch of terminations; Manuel decided it was time to seek a more stable employment. He sought out his former military supervisor and explored options with the Federal government. Manuel

applied for a position at the local military installation in Georgia, where he had previously served as a soldier. He was selected for the position and after two years he was transferred to Atlanta, Georgia. As the installation in Atlanta was deactivated, his and other co-worker's positions were moved to Virginia. In order to remain with the government services, Manuel and his co-workers commuted with their private vehicles 100 miles (1,5hours) one way. They would meet up Monday through Friday, at 05:30h and leave at 16:30 hours to arrive home at 18:30hours. Manuel was to sign a lease on a home in Virginia, when he received and assignment notice to Alabama, which included a promotion. After 14 months of working at Ft. Rucker, Alabama, he decided to seek a position in Germany, for he had spent many years as a soldier in Germany.

In order to create certainty of economic sustainability, Manuel took a great cost upon himself, which consisted of long hours of commuting to and from his work, as well as numerous relocations. Why does he feel safer and more certain being a GS civilian employee, I ask, as the government in the past decade has ordered numerous government shutdowns, furloughs, or sequesters? These were times in which many GS civilians felt uncertain whether they would return to work the next day, whether their position affiliated with the military was essential to the mission or not. Current lingering fears are the proclaimed overseas military affiliated budget cuts due to take place by the year of 2019, creating the feeling of uncertainty with newly hired GS employees. Manuel explained the hierarchies, and the slow process of the cuts. Beginning with personnel close to retirement, early out, payouts, temporary positions, job announcements being halted, and continuous re-evaluation of the budget and employee statistics. Therefore, he feels in a safe position at this moment, not falling into any of these categories.

Nonetheless, on January 22, 2017, the new U.S. Administration has released a Presidential Memorandum ordering a Federal civilian employee hiring freeze of 90-days; in which the

Director of the U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB) in consultation with the Director of the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) shall create a long-term plan to reduce the size of the Federal government work force through attrition (The White House 2017). Hiring processes were halted and job announcements frozen, thus creating further fears of uncertainties for those discharging from the military, needing logistical support (Sofa-Status) in order to remain in Germany without becoming a legal permanent resident. Many soldiers transitioning from the military during this time opted to re-enlist in the Army, others decided to move back to the United States. The hiring freeze presented the paradox between the benevolence and hegemony of the government, as the nation-state is no longer the caregiver of its Volk¹⁶, as the security and stability of Federal employment grows more volatile and fuels the fear of future uncertainties (Bauman 2007).

2.3. Soldier for Life: Mandatory Transition Assistance Program (SFL-TAP)

“Instead of great expectations and sweet dreams, ‘progress evokes an insomnia full of nightmares of *‘being left behind’* – of missing the train, or falling out of the window of a fast accelerating vehicle (*italics, my emphasis*) (Bauman, 2007: 11).”

Raúl, a former soldier newly separated from the Army represented the above-mentioned quote fairly well, in his measures to build a network. I first met Raúl at the Department of Labor training. He was the only participant dressed in a full three-piece suit and carried a large binder containing all of his military certificates with him. I asked to meet for an interview and we met in the military dining facility (DFAC) for soldiers and civilian personnel. As we enter the DFAC, Raúl explained to me that the entire civilian personnel are sitting at the right wing of the building, we should sit there as well. We paid for our meals, walked toward a table and as he sat his tray on the table he excused himself to greet several people. As I sat down my eyes followed him and I saw him approach a table of four civilians,

¹⁶ Volk: A nations people, population, populace.

shaking their hands and making brief small talk. He returned to the table and explained to me who these people were. I told him I was aware, as I also know Mr. Winthrop, who speaks German exceptional well with a Bavarian dialect and is married to a German spouse. Raúl was once stationed in Wiesbaden and is also married to a German spouse, but his last duty station was in the U.S. and he is in pursuit to obtain a position on the Kaserne. His efforts to actively network; however, create a near desperate character, much as Zygmunt Bauman had described, the fear of being left behind. On another occasion, I had chosen to meet my spouse for lunch at the DFAC and saw Raúl sitting in the right wing at a table for two, alone. Familiar with the appearance of civilians and soldiers in uniforms; I looked around and realized, the civilian personnel are not restricting themselves to the right wing of the DFAC. I cannot but think; Raúl may have missed the train.

During the Department of Labor (DOL) employment readiness workshop, at which I had met Raul, Mrs. Elaine the instructor reiterated that “Networking is an active sport”. Those who have not played the sport of networking effectively, while still in the military service, working side by side with GS civilians and contractors, may not make it to the top margins of the referral list. Furthermore, Elaine asked the program participants: Who are you accountable for, ‘yourself’, and maybe your spouse/family. Get an accountability partner, to push you forward, and keep you from procrastinating. Mrs. Elaine provides a motivational, rigorous and intense forward progressive three-day workshop.

Previously I had asked Mrs. Elaine to partake in her workshop as an observer for my studies. Rather quickly she included me in the process of mock interview training, and your first impression counts interactive introduction session. I found myself torn between participant observer and workshop participant. I was taken in, and in awe, how professional and knowledgeable Mrs. Elaine presented the program. After checking the attendance roster, Elaine asked the participants to write on a Trifold paper, their first name, their Military

Occupational Specialty (MOS), and their plans after military separation. She read each individual MOS out loud and immediately had suggestions for civil sector employment, as well as how their MOS would translate into civil speak, as she called it. Language was a large part of the training as well. That said, the military a place of acronyms, perhaps an acronym soup, as well as how soldiers communicate amongst each other. For instance, as Antonsich described, “A particular language stands for a particular way of constructing and conveying meaning, a certain way of interpreting and defining situations, which can also take the form of tacit codes, signs, and gestures, not actually uttered, yet still understood by those who share the same semiotic universe (2010: 9).” Mrs. Elaine addressed all participants by their first name, rather than their rank or last name. In the military environment, the first name becomes almost invisible and one becomes known only by his rank and surname. Which is one small, yet important intricacy, while transitioning the soldier reintegrating to the civil society. Also, at one point, I began counting how many times Raúl addressed Mrs. Elaine as Ma’am, rather than Elaine. Ma’am, being a form of respect used commonly within the military environment. By the third day, Raúl finally addressed Mrs. Elaine as Elaine. Raúl addressed the transition of military and civil speak as being similar to muscle memory, for instance, such as riding a bicycle. You are taught to do something over and over again, in the field, or in a war zone, your life depends on this muscle memory. Language is a small part of this, perhaps similar to saluting a passing officer or higher ranked officer. Furthermore, Mr. Grainer, the SFL-TAP program manager, addressed practicing interview skills similar to the military’s saying: “Train as you fight,” through continuous repetition, while one is exercising the new obtained skill. At one particular moment of resume writing, Mrs. Elaine asked: “Did I say not to use Headers and Footers?” The group answered simultaneously ‘Yeah’, much like the Hooah (‘hu:ɑ:’)¹⁷ of a military Unit standing in formation. Representing what

¹⁷ Hooah (‘hu:ɑ:’): U.S. Army Service Call, which stands for Heard, Understood, Acknowledged.

Bourdieu (1990) named habitus, behavioral residue of cognitive and physical manners and traits in which individuals present themselves, such as stance, gait, and gesture (Maringira and Carrasco 2015: 329).

The workshop gave me the opportunity to see the excellent training and skill-sets the U.S. Army soldiers have received. Furthermore, the academic opportunities offered and paid for via the Montgomery GI bill or the Post 9/11 bill¹⁸, offering basically free of cost university education, (in return for military service and sacrificing one's life). Furthermore, enhancing the concept of utilizing the military as an economic springboard to advance economically as well as academically. The Wiesbaden Soldier for Life center first opened its doors in October of 2014. "The local SFL-TAP assistance center processes about 316 soldiers each year as they transition from military to civilian employment, said Brad Gavle, the U.S. Army Garrison Wiesbaden Transition Services Manager (Harald Union, 2017)." The current generations of separating soldiers are of privileged status, receiving free career seeking training, senior generation of Veterans; whom I have spoken to, stated that they did not have SFL-TAP services. They were simply handed their DD 214¹⁹ and released into the civil society, which they were once a part of. Younger generations recall the predecessor of the SFL-TAP, named Army Career and Alumni Program (ACAP), but by far not as advanced and successful as the current transition program. Also, Mrs. Alvarez an SFL-TAP contractor and instructor stated: "No other employer prepares you this well before terminating your contract. Additionally, no other employer gets you ready before separation to find future employment. On the contrary, no civil sector employer can call upon you 24/7. You are always a soldier while on active duty, 24 hours, 7 days a week, 365 days of the year²⁰." On one hand, the nation appears to have learned from Veteran statistics of the disabled,

¹⁸ Educational benefits provided for soldiers and their dependents.

¹⁹ DD214: Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty, which shows dates of service and discharge under honorable conditions (fedshirevets.gov, 2017).

²⁰ Mrs. Alvarez, wife of Mr. Alvarez, Informal Conversation at the SFL-TAP crossroads course. 06-04-2017.

unemployed, and the homeless and created a valuable program for the separating service member, on the other hand, the question arises, is it truly for the value of the soldier, or the nation-state, as past generations of Vietnam and Desert Storm Veterans did not receive this support. Raúl added to this notion presenting strong feelings about post-military support: “Get what you can now, while you are still in. Once you leave the Army you are nothing but a number to the military. Think about yourself.” Supported by the local military newspaper article: “In the last four years the Army has saved over \$900 million in cost avoidance for unemployment compensation expenditures through programs like the Installation Management Command Soldier for Life Transition Assistance Program (SFL-TAP), which prepares Soldiers for finding employment in the civilian sector when they leave active service. When Soldiers receive unemployment compensation from a state agency, the Department of Labor bills the Army for reimbursement. Reducing the number of Soldiers receiving compensation by assisting them in their transition to the civilian sector benefits both the Army and the Federal Government in cost avoidance savings (Hargett and Bradner 2017).” Additionally, IMCOM Command Sergeant Major Melissa Judkins states: “This is a positive step for our Soldiers and our Nation as we continue to support and provide the assistance Soldiers need as they transition off of active duty service (ibid.)” The aforementioned illustrates quite well the push and pull of the nation-state; we must care for the well-being of our constituents, as these are the body of our nation, for they contribute to the economic prosperity. If the former soldier becomes vulnerable to economic blows or physical ailments, he may become a financial national burden. In 2016, 20.9 million men and women were Veterans, accounting for approximately 9 percent of the civilian non-institutional population over the age of 18 (bls.gov, 2017). Furthermore, 4.3 percent were unemployed; thereof 4.8 percent were unemployed with a service related disability (ibid.).

Leaving with the question, is the nation providing these excellent SFL-TAP services for the reduction of national spending deficits or does it truly care for its constituent's well-being?

2.4. Nepotism - *Leave No Colonel Behind*

Soldiers Creed

*I am an American Soldier.
I am a warrior and a member of a team.
I serve the people of the United States,
and live the Army Values.
I will always place the mission first.
I will never accept defeat.
I will never quit.
I will never leave a fallen comrade.
I am disciplined, physically and mentally tough,
trained and proficient in my warrior tasks and drills.
I always maintain my arms, my equipment and myself.
I am an expert and I am a professional.
I stand ready to deploy, engage, and destroy,
the enemies of the United States of America in close combat.
I am a guardian of freedom and the American way of life.
I am an American Soldier.
(source: army.mil)*

Civilian Creed

*I am an Army civilian - a member of the Army team.
I am dedicated to our Army, our Soldiers and civilians.
I will always support the mission.
I provide stability and continuity during war and peace.
I support and defend the Constitution of the United States
And consider it an honor to serve our nation and our Army.
I live the Army values of loyalty, duty, respect, selfless service,
Honor, integrity, and personal courage.
I am an Army civilian
(source: army.mil)*

The former soldier honorably discharged seeking Federal employment still tied to the institution and its tacit notions of belonging to the military institution, supporting its members

and his nation; as seen above, so evidently portrayed by the civilian creed displaying some continuances, for instance: *I am an American Soldier* and *I am an Army civilian*. Daniel Druckman (1994) describes the social-psychological perspective of nationalism and patriotism: "... the most commonly accepted definition of cohesion is the desire of members to remain as members of a group." [Thus], "group loyalty is usually regarded as a defining aspect of cohesion (Druckman 1994: 56)." Nonetheless, has the military institution formed a sub-society, which cannot be dissolved, as the past is existent and the future is in the making. Group belonging may form as early as in basic training, advanced individual training (AIT), and from there on out during deployments, and daily interactions. Best described by Antonsich (2010): "In order to generate a sense of (group) belonging, these relations must in fact be long-lasting, positive, stable and significant; plus, they should also 'take place' through frequent physical interaction and reach a minimum number, which varies from person to person (2010: 9)." Enhanced by Samuel's²¹ statement: "During basic training, the immunization shots, the health screenings, the physical training (PT) created a group think mentality. It created a push through thinking, and rather than quitting and leaving basic training one 'pushed' through, for the team." Mark²² recalls and recites in a joyous and proud manner: "HMNAWSF "How many new Airmen will get sore feet", last time he actively resided this was 12 years ago. HMNAWSF stands for the command structure, Headquarters, Major Command, Numbered Air Force, Wing, Squadron and Flight. These memories carry on after military service, and in part create a disconnect to the civil society, whom did not belong to the military sub-society. How does this shared life history play a role in future certainty and Federal hiring processes and why shall the former comrades not look out for one another, providing one another with support and empathy of past experiences.

²¹ Samuel, Formal Interview 18-04-2017.

²² Mark, Formal Interview 17-03-2017.

Throughout my research, the word nepotism created an irritating negative emotion, and my use of it in the field; was often instantaneous and vehemently denied by my interlocutors, upon me asking if individuals obtained positions, due to them knowing someone from within. Yet, on the contrary, those few whom have been left behind in the line for a promotion agree just as instantaneously. Nepotism, what rests in this term, the traditional Oxford dictionary defines nepotism as the practice among those with power or influence of *favouring* relatives or *friends*, especially by giving them jobs (*italics*, my emphasis) (2005: 1181). “From the working man’s perspective, nepotism, means hiring or promoting the boss’s son-in-law, nephew, or girlfriend over the heads of more qualified candidates. This violates our basic sense of fairness and elicits revulsion and anger toward those who practice nepotism and even more perhaps those who profit from it (Bellow: 2003).” This basic sense of fairness and perhaps frustration shall be described by an encounter I had with Benino. Standing on the stoop of the Welcome Center stairs, I met Benino, and as I pulled out my smartphone with his graduation picture in his full master cap and gown, I commented on his great smile and having graduated from the same university, from which I received my undergraduate degree. I looked at him and stated: “Congratulations, great smile, now tell me what are you still doing here?” In the back of my mind, I recalled the interactions I had observed previously between him and his new supervisor Michael. Benino took on the role of a subordinate. Further, did I recall Benino working in a different department the previous year. He appeared to do well working autonomously. I indicated that I believe him destined to achieve great things. By doing so, I opened the door for him to describe his frustration of the local hiring methods, how someone we both knew was a direct hire, but instead it should have been him next in line. He went on and voiced his frustration with the tacit procedure of No Colonel left behind, and the belief that people will find ways to go around the 180-day rule. The U.S. Code 5§

3326, also known as the 180-day rule, was first drafted in the 1960's to ensure hiring on merit.

On September 14th of 2001, due to the declaration of national emergency it was suspended and in 2014 the U.S. Merit systems Protection Board (MSPB) report encouraged Congress to reinstate the code in order to create oversight of the veterans hiring preference. In December of 2016 the Code was indeed reinstated. Throughout my research, I encountered much fear of this particular uncertainty. Transitioning soldiers uncertain of the next step in life decisions and their outcomes, as they now had to wait 180 days before being eligible for Federal employment. Perhaps, many still struck by the 90-day Federal hiring freeze as well as the many complexities of the U.S. Code 5§ 3326. Nonetheless, returning to Benino and his concerns. Driven by his goal in mind to achieve a GS 13 position before he retires, to ensure a 'well-off' retirement check. Benino shrugs the perceived inappropriate hiring process off and moves on. Benino is one of many examples which Devadoss addressed, the United States Congress shall tackle the problems within the inappropriate hiring practices, as these may create behavior which can be destructive to morale and corrosive to productivity within an agency or department (Devadoss 2014). Given the closeness within a military installation, hearsay has its way and one must wonder how much truth stands behind such thing. While, Benino is frustrated with the hiring process. An undisclosed community member reveals the other side of where and how the frustration has grown its roots. Benino's position was of a temporary nature and therefore he was asked to move from a GS 11 to a GS 9 paygrade position, in order to stay in Germany, which made room for a retiring colonel. The shift may have decreased Benino's paygrade and standing in the community, at the same token, it has ensured him continues employment in the DAC system as well as staying in Germany. I find myself dithering, whether I find these practices honorable, leaving no comrade (Colonel) behind; beyond military service, or does this indeed violate my basic sense of fairness? For

instance, Adam Bellow described: U.S. Economists viewing nepotism as an obstacle to a healthy change in business, one that may result in waste and inefficiency (2003). Equally, the MSPB released a report regarding veteran's hiring preference practices of civilian employees of the Department of Defense. Based on their findings, the MSPB recommends the use of oversight process to ensure veterans who are hired, obtain their jobs on merit and not by *favoritism* or other inappropriate means (*italics, my emphasis*) (MSPB, 2014). Furthermore: "... many employees report of the writing of position descriptions for specific persons and the hiring of individuals who retire on Friday and were hired on Monday, which led to the coinage of the phrase, "No Colonel left behind" (Devadoss: 2014)." Mr. Alvarez related, 'anyone can make their resume look golden, in times of phone interviews across the globe; questioning, who is this prospective applicant'²³? Who may vouch for the applicant? Perhaps, references from previous military supervisors or comrades who can confirm their work ethics, skills, and determination. Also, presenting a form of respect and trust in vouching for the comrade. Adam Bellow adds: "Despite official anti-nepotism policies, many executives admit that they prefer to hire the relatives of current employees, because their *experience suggests that the proven conduct of a relative best predicts the behavior of a prospective worker* (*italics, my emphasis*) (2003)." Eight of my interlocutors stated that they knew someone who was a soldier while they served or worked amongst civilians prior to leaving the military service. Perhaps, one may consider this *favoritism*, looking out for one another or leaving no comrade behind. Sean for instance stated, his phone assessor; as part of his GS employment process, was also, from his home state Tennessee and they shared immediate commonalities. Also, Mr. Alvarez and Mr. Davila served together in Bosnia (1996). Bob, Ben, and my spouse served together during the Balkan, as well as the Iraqi Freedom mission.

²³ Mr. Alvarez, Formal Interview 21-02-2017.

2.5. Conclusion

In summary, the individual initially joined the U.S. Military due to economic hardship in search for prosperity. The soldier received valuable vocational training and education, while committing their time and life's, 24 hours and 7 days a week all year around to the military. While serving, a greater bond was created, foremost not for the institution, but for the comradery, having lived and experienced exceptional situations throughout their military career. Furthermore, the soldier was provided an outstanding transition assistance program to ensure competence in pursuit of future employment. Additionally, the bond of comradery has created a dichotomy of what the government perceives as proper hiring practices and what the actual field bestows. The fears of uncertainty further instilled by the Federal hiring freeze and United States codes. The former soldier is aware of the potential setbacks caused by the nation-state, yet quite naturally accepts these and through careful evaluation, deviates his decisions. Consciously prepared to alleviate or alter the blows of uncertain fate. The following chapter will describe in further detail the paradox of the nation-state benevolence and the potential life threatening choices in pursuit of economic prosperity.

3. CHAPTER THREE: BENEVOLENCE OR HEGEMONY OF THE GOVERNMENT - *THE AMERICAN DREAM*



Picture 4: Naturalizing Ceremony at Al-Faw Palace in Baghdad, Iraq

3.1. Introduction

First, the above picture provoked feelings of pride, for it reminded me of my own naturalization ceremony. At which I felt humble, proud, and joyous, receiving what the U.S perceives as one of its highest rights, the U.S. citizenship. In view, soldiers receiving the highest national right of belonging, evoked pride blended with indignation. In fact, caused by the location at which the naturalization ceremony took place; in a region of crisis during a U.S. military deployment, at which the foreign-born soldier could potentially encounter death; all awhile, he has not been granted citizenship. In this chapter I will describe the hegemony of the sovereign nation-state, utilizing its discretions for whom and at which stage of their migration will receive the U.S. citizenship. Additionally, the dichotomy of self-prescribed belonging and the attachment to the nation-state, which has not granted the official form of belonging through citizenship. This chapter holds intriguing narratives of former U.S. soldiers who gained the right to belong and seek government employment despite the

potential sacrifice of their life; likewise, through duty related lifelong physical and even psychological ailments.

3.2. *The American Dream: The Foreign - Born Service Member*

*'You have the right to enlist and 'die' before you naturalize-
receiving citizenship through the expedited naturalization of the MAVNI program.'*

(Sonja Graham 2017)

Raúl a former Cuban citizen, served 17 years in the U.S. Army before being medically discharged. He had to surrender his Cuban citizenship with the completion of a security clearance while serving as a U.S. soldier. Furthermore, he stated, in order to keep his security clearance, he cannot visit Cuba, and has therefore not been able to visit his elder siblings. His parents won the green card lottery and Raúl moved with his father to the U.S. His older siblings were not eligible to migrate with his parents, as they were too old to be sponsored under the green card lottery regulations. Raúl enlisted in the military in 2000, his first deployment to Iraq was in 2003, once more in 2004, and lastly in 2006. During his second deployment, he was one of 300 soldiers to naturalize and receive the U.S. citizenship in Baghdad, Iraq. He was eligible to defend the U.S. Constitution and die, long before being granted citizenship.

Perhaps I am a bit cynical with the above quote, having the right to die awaiting the U.S. citizenship. However, in pursuit of a prosperous life, through the means of migration and enlisting in the U.S. military, one has to prove eligibility to become a U.S. citizen through various rigorous vetting processes. Nonetheless, the enlistee took the Oath to defend the U.S. constitution, upon entering the military service, where does this place the soldier? For he declared: *"I, _____, do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; and that I will obey the orders of the President of the United States and the orders of the officers appointed over me, according to regulations and the Uniform Code of Military Justice. So help me God."* (Title 10, US Code; Act of May 1960

replacing the wording first adopted in 1789, with amendment effective 5 October 1962). (*Army.mil*).” Does this augment the soldier’s worth, or his willingness to die for the right of citizenship? Can there be a greater sacrifice? The sovereign power of the U.S. Government chooses which service member is eligible for expedited citizenship. For instance, the Military Accessions Vital to the National Interest (MAVNI) program was developed, allowing asylee, refugee, temporary protected status, or nonimmigrant status, the latter having lived in the U.S. at least two years prior, without absence of more than 90 days from U.S. soil, in order to be eligible for the MAVNI program. Allowing the individual to naturalize upon completing the military basic training, prior to potentially deploying and risking his life for the nation. “The Secretary of Defense authorized the military services to recruit *certain* legal aliens whose skills are considered to be vital to the national interest. Those holding critical skills – physicians, nurses, and certain experts in language with associated cultural backgrounds – to be eligible (*italics, my emphasis*) (*Defense.gov*).” Also, “Today, about 5,000 legal permanent resident aliens (green card holders) enlist each year. The law ensures that the sacrifice of non-citizens during a time of national need is met with an *opportunity* for early citizenship, to *recognize their contribution and sacrifice* (*italics, my emphasis*) (*Defense.gov*).” Lastly, the government site states: “Since Sept. 11, 2001, over 109,250 members of the Armed Forces have attained their citizenship by serving this nation (*ibid.*).” All awhile, the National Public Radio (NPR) reports: The Pentagon is considering canceling the MAVNI program, due to the potential threat posed by individuals who may have a higher risk of connections to Foreign Intelligence Services, furthermore it refers to an “elevated” risk of an insider threat (NPR, 2017). “The founder of the MAVNI program, retired Lieutenant Colonel (LTC.) Margaret Stock, said the security concerns are overblown: “If you were a bad guy who wanted to infiltrate the Army, you wouldn’t risk the many levels of vetting required in this program (*ibid.*).” The latter point is supported by two of my interlocutors (Raúl and Michael) whom

had to undergo rigorous vetting processes to receive their security clearance and the U.S. citizenship.

In addition, soldiers may also receive posthumous citizenship, which the next of kin may apply for, up to two years past the service member's death. One could assume, that a fallen soldier, who has served for the nation of his choice would receive automatic citizenship upon death. Next of kin must present the fallen soldiers DD 214 of honorable discharge and the DD 1300 Report of Casualty/ Military Death Certificate (USCIS.gov, 2017) in order to apply for posthumous citizenship. Yet, it is the discretion of the military branch under which the deceased has served, to determine if the soldier served honorably during a qualified period of time and if the death was combat related. Furthermore, posthumous citizenship of the deceased establishes on the date of his death, [so to speak backdated to the date of death] (ibid.). Moreover, enforcing the concept of the nation-state's control over the bureaucratic right to belong through citizenship, all along with the discretion of the government to change policies at any time. For instance, as the military enlistment contract states: "I understand that I cannot change these laws, but that Congress may change these laws, or pass new laws, at any time that may affect this agreement, and that I will be subject to those laws and any changes they make to this agreement (DD Form 4/1 (Page2) Section C 9. Oct. 2007)." It becomes evident that the nation-state is in control, and the soldier, no matter his origin falls beneath the sovereign power of the nation-state. On the other hand, the soldier has long established a philosophical and perhaps emotional bond of belonging to the U.S. Nation, through his migration and defending the U.S. Constitution even without holding rightful citizenship. What fuels this great sacrifice? Is it as Anderson described the disinterested love and solidarity of the traditionally conceived family (Anderson, 2016: 144)?" He goes on to state: "Dying for one's country, which usually one does not choose, assumes a moral grandeur [...]. If people imagined the proletariat merely as a group in hot pursuit of

refrigerators, holidays, or power, how far would they, including members of the proletariat, be willing to die for it (ibid.)?” Upon asking one interlocutor if he served for his nation and did it out of patriotism, he stated: “I am a patriot supporting the United States, because this is where my family lives, that is why we need to be ‘prosperous’ [the Nation], because my family needs to exist and survive.²⁴” In addition, the vast majority of my interlocutors stated that they indeed served and continue to serve as a GS civilian to provide for their families. Contrary to Anderson’s statement, the interlocutors chose the U.S. to become their country, through the means of migration. Also, the succeeding interview and narrative of Michael’s migration illustrates the aforementioned sacrifices in order to provide and improve the grim circumstance in which he and his family lived in Sierra-Leone.

3.2.1. *The American Dream* an Interview with Michael

“... a dream of a social order in which each man and each woman shall be able to attain to the fullest stature of which they are innately capable, and be recognized by others for what they are, regardless of the fortuitous circumstances of birth or position. [...] a dream of a better, richer and happier life for all our citizens of every rank (Wills, 2015).”

James Truslow Adams 1931

This is my second visit to Michael’s office, similar to before he welcomes me in and asks me to please have a seat. It is an ease to speak with him, for we share a mutual understanding and respect in regards to our studies and our work ethics. Intrigued by his emigrational background, I wanted to learn about his perspective on the American Dream:

Me: *“Describe the American Dream and what it means to you?”*

Michael: *“Tricky question. Coming from a place where you better your life. Contributing to a society. Staying out of trouble.”*

Me: *“Do you live the American Dream?”*

Michael: *“Yes, from nothing to a good job.”*

²⁴ Sean, Formal Interview 13-03-2017.

Me: "How does your *family perceive your GS career?*"

Michael: "They are Proud of me." [Pause]

"America, it is a great place, to give back. When you fall, you get back up. There are people who won't get up. Don't get in trouble to succeed. People feel entitled and the country owing them something. Having ambition and drive is important. You have to go get it, you are accountable to yourself first."

When Michael was twelve years old, he decided, he wanted to leave Sierra-Leone to better his life and make a difference. He wanted to alleviate his family's poverty and suffering. He studied hard and when the opportunity arose Michael applied for the U.S. green card lottery.²⁵ In the late 90's, when he was in his late teenage years, he received his acceptance letter and migrated to the U.S. His plans were to sponsor his parents and siblings to join him after his arrival in the U.S., unfortunately his parents passed away prior to fulfilling this goal. Michael was able within a ten-year process to bring his siblings to the U.S. Michael has strong feelings toward generational privileges, as he grew up in a corrupt nation. He explains the wear and tear on a person is more severe, the lifespan is shorter, his parents passed away in their 50s and 60s. He does not want to rely on governmental subsidies in the future. Previous to Michael's enlistment in the U.S. Army, he had worked at a large international airport in California. After serving in the U.S. Army for three years he became a U.S. citizen. Due to the rigorous vetting process to obtain a security clearance, Michael surrendered his Sierra-Leone citizenship to receive a clearance. If he would wish to visit his nation of origin, he would need to apply for a visa, furthermore visiting may raise a red flag on his security clearance renewal. Michael described the scrutiny he endured during his security clearance interview, due to his nation of origin, despite of being a U.S. Citizen. The security agents questioned his past life history and still perceived him as a foreigner. Is it because of the darkness of his skin, his accent? Michael's frustrations, perhaps his heartache, convinced he has done everything the 'right way', the American way, worked hard, pays his taxes, and is a good rightful citizen, yet he still feels treated as he is an immigrant (negative). A paradox unfolds, for Michael lives the American Dream and is considered 'the American' outside of the U.S. Nation. To receive the deserved worthiness, he had to relocate to Germany, working amongst the United States Army in Wiesbaden. The darkness of his skin and his accent have become secondary, for the host nation's population

²⁵ Green Card Lottery: Diversity Immigration Visa Program, established during the Reagan Administration (USCIS.GOV)

perceives him as 'the American'. Lastly, Michael voices his frustration: "I am the same as all the others, who's great grandparents have migrated, I am no different, I have only done it in my lifetime. The U.S. is a nation of immigrants, what makes me so different?" Through his hard work and ambition as an enlisted soldier, presented throughout his military career, his commanding officers recommended him to commission to the ranks of officer. He has made a conscious choice to show through his achievements and determination his love to his mother. He knows his roots and those who supported him alongside his accomplishments.

Admittedly, Michael has an extraordinary gratitude and positivity regarding his path to success. He is humble and grounded by his accomplishments, for he has achieved his goals of obtaining the U.S. citizenship, paying his debt to the nation, which granted him entry and provided him with the means to excel in life, through hard work and utilization of all presented opportunities by the U.S. Army. Michael does not entertain the thought of sacrifice or potential loss of livelihood.

3.3. Veterans Disabilities: Narrative of a Former Soldier and Veterans Affairs (VA) Challenges

Matthew is a former U.S. soldier, 40 years of age, born in Taipei, Taiwan to dual U.S. military parents. He currently resides in Germany with his German-Rumanian spouse and four bi-cultural children. I visited Matthew multiple times in his rather technical and not at all decorated workspace. Matthew medically discharged from the U.S. Army, after having served for six years. His last duty station was in southern Germany. Where he also experienced his life threatening medical condition, which most likely was caused by human-administrative error. Matthew joined the military at age 17, in pursuit of educational benefits. Upon completion of the military basic training course, he transitioned to the basic airborne course (BAC) in Ft. Benning, Georgia, to become a paratrooper. Thereafter, he was assigned to serve among a Special Forces Unit in Ft. Lewis, Washington. Throughout this assignment with the airborne ordinance, Matthew completed 26 jumps, during which he injured his shoulder. In addition, while at Ft. Lewis, he received a 5-series Anthrax inoculation. Upon arriving in southern Germany, he received the same 5-series, as his medical immunization records had disappeared; unable to prove otherwise, he received the

immunization again. He had received a total of ten shots within a three to four- year time frame. The World Health Organization recommends 5 doses in the course of 18 months and yearly boosters are required (WHO 2012). One day, while Matthew was physically active playing basketball, he lost his vision, had chest pains and was rushed to the local German hospital. The hospital diagnosed Matthew with a heart infection and he was on bed rest for multiple weeks, before he was placed on convalescence leave for several months. Upon returning to work, he had a second episode after physical training (PT). Within the following year, Matthew completed 19 hospital visits and was eventually sent to the largest military medical facility in the U.S., the Walter Reed Hospital. Resulting in a diagnosis of a chronic heart disease. Matthew stated, there is no previous family medical history of heart disease. He strongly believes his heart disease to be the result of the double five series Anthrax immunization. However, the military claims no relations of the condition and the immunization. He applied for a medical board discharge, but the local medical staff conveyed the tacit notion of 'suck it up', as he was part of the Special Forces Unit. Unable to deploy and not promotable due to his condition, Matthew contacted his U.S. congressman in order to receive a medical discharge from the military. Matthew explained to me, when a congressional request comes down on the Unit, almost everything else must stop, and a great amount of focus is geared toward the congressional case. At the time Matthew, received a severance package and a disability rating of 0%. Matthew was disappointed that he had to take care of all medical claims with the Veterans Affairs on his own. At this time, Matthew is processing through old and new medical claims, as he had been misinformed in the past regarding some of his duty related ailments. Currently Matthew receives some VA benefits. Matthew is grateful for being alive, yet he has also learned how expendable people are.

At only 24 years of age Matthew had already endured a grand sacrifice. Yet, acquiescing his sacrifice and the frustrations of veteran disability procedures, and being misinformed, he obtained Federal employment and continues to submit to the hegemony of the government, as he is potentially placed on the Priority Placement Program (PPP) and subject to relocate to the U.S. starting January, 2018. While, he is still processing VA claims, which may be affected by his relocation, such as causing delays, or re-evaluations, due to regional jurisdictions. Outraged, by contradictory findings concerning the anthrax inoculation, it is

ever more clear, that the former soldier was indeed subject to the hegemony of his government. Unable to disobey orders or deny mandatory vaccinations; for instance, as stated in the enlistment contract: “I, understand that many laws, regulations, and military customs will govern my conduct and require me to do things under this agreement (DD 4) that a *civilian does not have to do (italics, my emphasis)* (esd.whs.mil 2007).” Furthermore, “as a member of the Armed Forces of the United States, I will be required to obey lawful orders and perform all assigned duties, as well as upon order to serve in combat or hazardous situations (DD 4, Section 9a) 1) and 4, *ibid.*)” In 2002, Meryl Nass, MD reported and presented by the U.S. National Library of Medicine - National Institute of Health, an analysis of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommendations for the use of the Anthrax vaccine: “The vaccine *is not appropriate for civilians* when risk–benefit considerations are taken into account, even for bioterrorism “first responders.” But the vaccine *is acceptable for military personnel*. The CDC's conclusion ignores the fact that *all* military personnel, independent of their specific job or whether they will be deployed to a “high threat” area, are ultimately slated for vaccination. Thus, the decision to vaccinate all service members ignores risk–benefit assessment, the heart of preventive medicine practice. In acquiescing to the needs of the military, the CDC has established a double standard for the practice of military as opposed to civilian medicine, even in peacetime (*italics, my emphasis*) (Nass 2002). Military personnel who refused the vaccination were prosecuted, such as Captain John Buck, a military physician, who refused to receive and administer the anthrax vaccine. In 2001, he was court martialed²⁶, prohibited by the military judge to present evidence regarding the vaccine’s safety and efficacy; he was found guilty (*ibid.*). Notably, the Feres Doctrine²⁷, a body of legal opinion barring members of the armed

²⁶ Court Martial is a military court, enforcing the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ).

²⁷ Feres v. United States, 340 U.S. 135 (1950)

forces from claims against the government for any illness or injury, which sustained to military service (ibid.). Stripped of his political life (bios), the former soldier with the God given right of zoē (bare life) is (forcibly) denied his rights of bios, despite his rights for bios, for he is still a citizen of the nation-state, yet excluded for he signed the enlistment contract acknowledging he is no longer a member of civil society and has to obey given orders (Agamben 'Homo Sacer' 1998).

3.4. Conclusion

All things considered, I query if the benefits even closely outweigh the sacrifice? In the previous chapter, the utilization of the military as an economic springboard in order to alter the blows of fate appeared quite lucrative. Contrariwise, the heart says the sacrifice is beyond well-intentioned, for the nation-state clearly demonstrates its hegemony over the soldier's bare life, not granting the right of zoē including bios, the political life, for he cannot receive the right to sue the nation for ill treatment. He has no rights; he is the object of the nation, excluded from the nation-state civilian population, whom is zoē with the right of bios (Agamben 1998). A paradox quite complex, on one hand, providing veteran benefits, on the other hand, with clear margins not to challenge the sovereign and its discretions. In the next chapter I will illustrate the global connection of military personnel, through mandated military duty assignments, and the sacrifice of stability, perhaps the inability to grow roots and settle.

4. CHAPTER FOUR: ‘DIE WELT IST EIN DORF’²⁸ - THE DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY CIVILIAN IN GERMANY

“To plot only ‘places of birth’ and degrees of nativeness is to blind oneself to the multiplicity of attachments that people form to places through living, remembering, and imagining them (Malkki 1992: 380).”

4.1. Introduction

Throughout the previous chapter, the all-embracing theme described migration, due to economic sustainability and the embodiment of acquiescing sacrifice. In this chapter, I aim to describe mobility through mandated military duty assignments nationally and internationally. How this contributes to home making and belonging amongst the United States Army in Germany. Lastly, how the military community (government) creates a dichotomy of never letting go, for, once a soldier, always a soldier. Through the hegemony of the nation-state binding the sub-society of U.S. military veterans in a close proximity to a military installation, due to veteran health and burial benefits (DD 214). Thus, potentially, creating the camouflaged inability of departing, or resuming life, which was once among the U.S. civil society.

4.2. Die Welt ist ein Dorf: The U.S. Military Installation– A Village across the Globe

I have arranged a formal interview with Mark an interlocutor working at the tower. Familiar with the procedure of obtaining a visitor pass, I am awaiting my pick up in front of the tower’s security office. Once greeted by Mark, he decided to conduct the interview in an unoccupied conference room, for in the office too many people were coming and going and would interrupt the interview. In front of the conference room are bistro tables and chairs, vending machines for snacks and drinks, a location inviting to stay awhile and have a chat. Once Mark and I completed the interview and left the conference room, I saw my spouse standing in the hallway, speaking to a familiar face. It was Ralph, whom we have known from

²⁸ Die Welt ist ein Dorf (German): German idiom in regards to a small world, due to the interconnectedness of people.

our first joint duty station in Ft. Gordon, Georgia (1998). Ralph is of German descent; his mother is German and his father American. Ralph has a German spouse, Susanne, whom I met through the German Woman's Club in Ft. Gordon, Georgia. Susanne and Ralph have established their home in Germany and their three adult children have obtained German degrees and employment. As Mark and I approached the scene presented to us, the group realized that we all speak German. We briefly conversed in German about Mark's affinity to motorcycle racing, Ralph restoring vintage cars, and work related travel. A fourth person quite humorously dressed as an Irish leprechaun, with a green shirt, suspenders, and a green hat with blinking lights joined the scene. Indeed, it was St. Patrick's Day and Bob adhered to wearing something green this day. Bob the leprechaun gave me a hug and a smack on the forehead, Ralph noticed and asked: "Don't tell me you know this guy?" Yes, indeed I do, Bob's wife Helen (German) and I used to ride the same bus to the train station in order to commute to vocational school and employment in Mainz (1996/97). Ralph cannot believe Bob has seniority over him knowing my spouse and I. Some years in the past, Bob and my husband ran into each other at a Gas station in Worms, a small city in Germany (2005/06). Bob and Helen had relocated with the U.S. Army to Worms, while my spouse and I lived in Ft. Gordon, Georgia. We met once with our children at a local park in Worms and thereafter lost contact with one another again. Bob is now a single father of two sons, raising them in Germany, for Helen has fallen ill and currently resides in a medical care facility in Worms. I did not realize, what I had encountered until I drove home from this day's interview. The shared history and commonalities of the people standing in the hall of the tower.

The aforementioned narrative brings forth my status of the native anthropologist, reluctant toward this environment and its unpredictable lifestyle, seeking stability and roots; I realize, once one becomes a part of this society, one will be home across the globe, for as long as one is near a military installation, one will discover familiar faces. Faces, which at one time may have served together during war, connections of shared past experience. We have crossed paths throughout various stages of our lives, while living on or near different military installations. Zygmunt Bauman once stated: "If roots, having been torn out the soil in which they grew, are likely to desiccate and die so that their (very unlikely) reviving will be verging on miraculous, anchors are drawn up in the hope that they may be safely dropped again

elsewhere; and they can be dropped with similar ease at many different ports of call (Bauman, 2011: 433).” The GS civilian, a former soldier represents the above quote quite well, as he is the vessel directed by the military across the global sea, casting and drawing their anchor at the mandated will of the government. Moreover, “Changes in economic, social and environmental circumstances are often perceived locally as being exogenous [the U.S. Military], in the sense that large *segments of those societies affected did not initiate the changes themselves*; indeed, while some local key actors usually collaborate in bringing about, and benefit from, these changes [the Nation-State], *a good number of people are generally left with the feeling that they were not even asked by anybody in power for their opinion* [the soldier][...]. Making social and cultural identities sustainable in a world where change is unpredictable, frequently exogenous and often resulting in unintended consequences can be compared to *rebuilding a ship at sea* (*italics, my emphasis*) (Eriksen and Schober 2016: 3).” The soldier’s contribution to preferred duty locations is often limited, as the assigned military branch decides where the soldier is needed, based on his MOS and rank. This continuous in some form during GS employment, for eligibility to stay overseas is limited due to host-nation residency and taxation laws. The GS civilian residing under logistical foreign military support (Sofa-Status), employed by the U.S. Army, is not considered an ordinary tax paying German resident. Therefore, the individual often carries with him, the uncertainty of re-location, at any time past his allotted (typical three year) assignment. The individual has some choice, if proactive; however, once placed on the Priority Placement Program his expertise and profession are matched to an assignment location in the U.S. This may contribute to sacrificing the ability to settle, growing roots and creating long-term meaningful relationships with the local population. Certainly, one could argue that the free chooser has made a conscious choice to enlist in the military and later join the GS system. For example, Aaron a former soldier and GS civilian of 60 years of age has

long decided to provide stability to his German spouse and children, by sacrificing his permanent presence in the household. While, his wife obtained a German degree in engineering and employment in that field, while also raising their two daughters in Germany, Aaron conformed to his military duty relocations. He has lived and worked at multiple military installations in the U.S. and Europe. Currently he works in Wiesbaden; however, potentially has one last assignment in Belgium before retiring and settling at a small German town with his wife and enjoying life with his grandchildren. The attachment to the economic provider [Government] as such, creates the dichotomy of providing stability for one's progeny, sacrificing one's presence, or creating a quite instable and mobile lifestyle, through relocation of the entire family every 3-5 years. For instance, Darryl²⁹ a young man of German-American descent, his father, a former soldier and his mother German, recently had to make this choice. Darryl is a unique case, he has not been a former soldier; however, attached to the military environment through being a former military child, he has decided to obtain a GS position in Germany. His assignment time has ended and he was placed on PPP. This alone is not the dilemma; nor that he has a German fiancé for some years. However, the timing could not be any more challenging, for his fiancé is pregnant with their first child and due only two months after his relocation to the U.S. In order to provide a stable home, and economic sustainability, Darryl decided to take the GS position in the U.S. versus searching for German employment. His fiancé has inherited a family home and will receive maternity leave and monetary subsidies from the German State; also, she is averse to leave her safety net and her immediate family behind in order to move into an uncertain economic future. Darryl and his fiancé are aware, that he must stay in the U.S. for 2 years in order to be eligible for an overseas assignment again. The young families plan is to commute across the Atlantic, acknowledging the sacrifice of Darryl not being present in his newborn child's life

²⁹ Darryl, Informal Conversation. May 2017.

on a continuous basis. On the other hand, the GS civilian will find a home on any U.S. Army installation across the globe, through shared experiences and known routine procedures. The underlying question is whether their heart belongs at the mandated location, or whether they are attached through community and family elsewhere. For some, the numerous, often mandated, involuntary relocations create the ability to establish a home near any U.S. installation, as long as economically feasible, others wish to have a more stable lifestyle, which I will briefly describe below.

4.3. Home is where I hang my Hat

‘Home is where the Army sends us’, derived from ‘Home is where the Heart is’, a military spousal connotation often found in the form of decals on the doors of military family home’s. Imaginably, the former soldier may have preserved this concept, as home is where their economic livelihood is sustainable. Throughout the interviews the majority of the interlocutors stated, they do not wish to return to their home state, for the cost of living is often not affordable. Paul Warren³⁰ stated he would like to retire,



Picture 5: Home and Relocation Decal

³⁰ Paul Warren, Formal Interview 14-04-2017.

“Somewhere economic feasible, to have more money to buy a house.

Thus, home is where I hang my hat”, also a connotation I heard far often in my interviews. However, there also appeared to be a divide in those closely bonded to their family and relatives and seeking to return to their home state. I will present answers given by several of my research interlocutors’; for instance, Matthew wishes to live close to his parents upon returning to his home state Florida, in order to devote more time to his parents during their last years of retirement. Also, John Walters, who was born and raised in Maine, and has a close bond to his home state, despite living in Germany for numerous years, having established a home and his son attending a German school, wishes to retire and die in Maine, as well as having his ashes spread there. Lastly, Michael Hayatou considers Los Angeles, California his home; he is aware of the high cost of living and therefore is seeking retirement in Texas. He further stated, he cannot go back to Sierra-Leone, he feels detached, perhaps like a stranger or a tourist, even more so he would need a visa to return. He still has cousins in Sierra-Leone, but stated, “They do not accept one anymore, it is a natural animosity”; also, his roots were his parents, which are no longer alive. Furthermore, the interlocutors separated the physical notion of being at home and feeling at home, for instance: “Home is where you feel most comfortable. Where you go back to and where you are at peace with yourself, and when all your family members are home, experiencing good times together, dinner, daily life, homework and bedtime.” How may the mandate mobility of the exogenous force have altered the notion of being at home; furthermore, the attachment of what so often is referred to as the motherland? For, Lord Acton once said: “... a general social condition in which human beings feel themselves powerfully connected together by whatever mother-terrain has nourished them, and in whose bosom - so they dream - they will attain their final rest (Anderson 1992: 2).” Which led me to phrase the question, “Where do you want to be buried?” By far the most delicate question I have ever asked anyone aside my spouse, and

perhaps due to my cultural background made me feel uncomfortable to ask. However, it appeared to me that the interlocutors did not perceive this question to be awkward or odd. Similar to the questions of where they consider home and where they perceive they belong, the answer emerged most significant was the closeness of their kin, rather than the return to their mother-terrain. For instance, Brian Connor a former soldier married to a German-Polish spouse, paused when I first asked him this question, then stated: “It means a lot to many people, and I wanted to be buried in a national cemetery. Now, I want to be buried wherever my wife will be buried, here in Germany or the U.S. My immediate family is my wife and my children, my parents are also important, but now secondary.” A physical location to visit his grave is important to him, his father was cremated and his ashes were buried under a tree in his brother’s back yard. Contrariwise, Aaron Smith articulates it does not matter to him, people associate a plot of earth, but he considers it a burden to those left behind to care for the grave. “Cremate me; or whatever, I don’t really care.” Which goes in hand with Trisha’s³¹ answer: “Well, does it matter, technically I am dead.” Has indeed the mandate global mobility and the attachment through local-national kin changed of what once may have been viewed as home and returning to home-soil, for wherever the family is, will become the final resting place?

³¹ Trisha a female DoD civilian, Formal Interview 15-03-2017.

4.4. Creating a new (old) ‘Heimat’ - *Generations of Belonging: Retired Soldiers in Germany*

“Auto-biographical factors relate to one’s past history – personal experiences, relations, and memories, which attach a particular person to a given place [for instance, an individual’s place of birth, where s/he has grown up] (Antonsich 2010: 8).”

I was ready to conclude my research interviews when I decided one last time to see if the Retiree Association Office was occupied, for the office’s business hours are only once a week. I peeked my head in and met Connor and Frank, two retired veterans, married to European spouses and living close to the Kaserne. Connor and Frank provide volunteer based services to retired veterans throughout Germany. They send out newsletters, create quarterly events, and help family members by directing them to veteran services, including burial preparations. I was invited to have a seat and advance by asking questions. Connor and Frank shared their past experiences with me and every so often looked at one another to concur. Connor stated, now you ought to listen to Frank, he has quite the story to tell, and so I did.

Frank Kaufman was six years old, when he, his mother and his sister left Breslau on a Wagon to escape the war zone (1944) of what is now Wrocław, Poland. His father had died serving with the German military. On a four-week long journey, his family arrived in the British zone, near Düsseldorf, Germany. Through the sponsoring of extended family in the U.S., which immigrated during WWI, Frank and his family emigrated to the U.S. Later on, in his life, in 1957, at the age of 19, Frank returned to Europe and was stationed with the U.S. Army outside of Paris, France, where he met his French spouse. Together they relocated, due to military assignments to the U.S, the Netherlands, and Turkey, until finally they returned to Germany in 1971. In 1973, his family moved to Wiesbaden, and they have lived there ever since. Displaced by the events of WWII, he returned to his country of origin with a foreign nation’s military. Frank retired from the U.S. military and was offered a position with a large telecommunication firm. He worked with the firm for 23 years, before retiring for the second time. Frank never thought he needed German health insurance, because he had military health coverage due to his prior service, as well as the largest U.S. military hospital outside the U.S. at his footsteps at the Air Force Camp Lindsey in Wiesbaden. What he did not

anticipate was the deactivation of the hospital due to the Air Force relocation to Ramstein, Germany. Today, he regrets the decision of not obtaining German health insurance, while working with the telecommunication firm. Which, I will explain in the next section. Upon asking Frank, where he feels home, he stated, he is home in France, as well as Germany. Frank speaks three languages, English, French, and German, the latter his mother tongue has returned to native proficiency. Therefore, his neighbors do not perceive him as 'the American', rather as Herr Kaufman. Frank stated, the presence of the U.S. military in Germany is not of indefinite nature, therefore if the Lucius D. Clay Kaserne would deactivate, before he or his wife were to pass; for, he is turning 80 years of age this coming year, they would consider moving in with their boys in the U.S. in order to care for Frank and his wife.

Further, Frank addressed the difficulties many U.S. retired veterans encounter in order to receive VA health care benefits. Moreover, he stated: one must obtain and pay for Medicare, a U.S. health care program, after the age of 65, in order to further receive military Tricare health insurance benefits; however, Medicare cannot be used outside of the U.S. This led me to conduct a search on the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs official webpage, which the VA course instructor named a bottomless black hole, during the SFL-TAP course. The site states: "The Veterans Health Administration provides 1,233 health care facilities, 168 VA medical centers, and 1,053 outpatient sites across the United States, serving more than 8.9 million Veterans each year (VA.gov 2017)." I searched in the drop-down menu for Veterans Health care facilities in Germany. I typed in the Kaserne's postal code and the VA site presented my location in the middle of Cyprus and the closest VA health facility being in the State of New York. Why was I unable to find facilities in Germany, given the many U.S. military installations health clinics? I decided to visit the VA instructor Mrs. Bowman to retrieve an answer. Mrs. Bowman and I had a brief yet interesting conversation of how there are not any VA health care facilities overseas. Furthermore, how this creates an issue for retiree's whom decided to remain in Germany. Basically, the U.S. Government is not in favor, nor encourages former soldiers to stay overseas past their military service time.

Therefore, they will not provide, nor cater to the thought of doing so. For, it must be an incongruous idea that the former soldier has formed unions in the form of marriage to the local national population (Bauman 2011: 425- 426). Also, Mrs. Bowman told me there is a local military clinic lottery for space availability for retired veterans health services. I asked her, if perhaps the clinic had anything in writing or a webpage for me to seek more information, and she stated; no, this is just something that is known, but not documented. Similarly, Frank had mentioned an availability clause to receive services at the local Wiesbaden military clinic. He also stated that many retired veterans no longer have access to the installation and must utilize the German health care facilities, which often results in direct billing and thereafter the veteran must file a reimbursement claim with the VA health services. Additionally, the VA website states, “Burial benefits include a graveside in any of our 135 national cemeteries, upon availability. Opening and closing of the grave, perpetual care, a government headstone or marker, a burial flag, a grave liner and a Presidential Memorial Certificate are provided at no cost to the surviving family (VA.gov 2017).” However, once more there appear discretionary differences; for instance, in how long the former soldier has served; also under which circumstances the veteran has passed; for example, such as duty related death. Once more I was unable to seek information regarding overseas veteran’s burial benefits. The ability to seek guidance at a military installation, such as the Retiree Association and the VA health instructor Mrs. Bowman appears invaluable, given the jungle of bureaucratic information provided by the government. For instance, Mrs. Bowman emphasized during the SFL-TAP VA briefing, the importance of the DD 214, the importance of knowing where the nearest military installation is located in order to seek guidance for VA benefits. Lastly, these trivial inconveniences regarding VA health care, burial benefits, and the community of shared past experiences; fuel my belief, to contribute to the former soldier seeking residence near a military installation. Furthermore, creating a

nation-state camouflaged attachment to the military sub-society, forging the inability to separate fully due to the economic benefits until the death of the service member- thus, a Soldier for Life.

4.5. Conclusion

In summary, in this chapter I have illustrated how belonging to the U.S. military creates a global community through time and space. Also forms of belonging to a place and a community, how economic sustainability continuous to shape future mobility and casting the anchor for retirement. Furthermore, how the military mandated mobility has altered the concept of being at home and making home in the future, as one is prone to stay within a close proximity to a U.S. military installation, for shared life experiences, as well as VA health and burial benefits. Additionally, the camouflaged sacrifice of stability and home making, due to the before mentioned mandated mobility. Lastly, how the nation-state is aware, but ignores the fact, that past and current generations of U.S. military personnel have formed attachments to the host-nation through marriage of a local national. For, as long as there will be troops overseas, there will be unions with the host nation's population. In the last chapter, I will conclude with answering the overarching question of this thesis, how the GS civilian creates their quotidian life in times of uncertainty living among the U.S. Army in Germany.

5. CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION

“You can take me out of the military, but you can’t take the military out of me, I will be a soldier until the day I die.”

Retired Sergeant Major Jack Tilley³²



Picture 6: Gravestones at a National Cemetery-Honoring the Fallen Soldier

5.1. Introduction

With this thesis, I set out to understand who the GS civilian among the United States military is and how he creates his life affiliated with the military institution, while residing in Germany. The overarching theme of migration, economic sustainability and the sacrifice of stability, physical and psychological ailments are presented under the camouflage of free choice. For, free choice is being manipulated by the nation-state’s economic opportunities, along with existing and continuous societal factors regarding emigrational and socio-economic status. In order to best illustrate the aforementioned, I will describe the three overarching themes. The first aim described the underlying economic motivations of joining the U.S. military and later seeking Federal employment in order to create economic sustainability.

³² Quote from SFL-TAP trifold brochure 2017.

The second aim illustrated the sacrifices the former soldier endured in order to sustain the economic stability, furthermore in the pursuit of this stability the right to becoming a rightful U.S. citizen. Furthermore, how the created comradeship contributed to belonging and remaining within the sub-society of the military. The third aim showed how local and global belonging was created through mandated military mobility, in combination with a long - forged comradeship and union with the host-nation's population through marriage of a local national. Lastly, after answering the main research question, I will discuss the limitations and relevance of this study.

5.1.1. Conclusion

Uncertain Fate – Creating a Soldier for Life

Fears fuel our thoughts of uncertain fate, in the pursuit to alleviate the suffering, which we know we cannot master fully, but remove some and mitigate others, the matter is worth trying over and over again (Bauman 2007: 56). The former soldier has migrated to alleviate his economic suffering, and in turn is willing to sacrifice his political life, for the successive trials consume most of his energy and attention, leaving little space for mournful reflection and worry, dreaming of the long-term fruits of harvest, rather than the fears of death in the process. Well knowing that the mortal body won't become immortal, the soldier settles for second best (ibid.). The economic environment in combination with the military recruitment create the illusion of making life decisions of an economic upward mobility, yet the perceived notion of free chooser is a magical illusion. For, the nation-state has created this economic environment of unequal opportunities, for low-income, migrant and people of minority groups. Additionally, in pursuit of economic prosperity, the former soldier has formed a bond unbreakable, a comradeship and attachment to a community unlike any other. For instance, Higate notes: "Service men may be attracted to occupations that represent *continuity* on a number of different levels, and the process of choice is sufficiently complex

... (*italics*, my emphasis) (Higate 2001: 455).” Through the search of continuity and the lifelong comradeship, which the nation-state has formed through exceptional training and life experiences, the nation-state must except the challenges arising regarding Federal employment, rather than chastising and problematizing ‘Leave No Colonel Behind’ hiring practices, for it has created this subculture.

The American Dream - Citizenship stripped of its political power

“What for the kings and princes was the divine right to proclaim and disclaim the rules at will, and so in the ultimate account to follow their own whims and caprices, meant for their subjects a life lived at the mercy of a royal benevolence not much different from erratic fate: a life of continuous and incurable uncertainty, depending on the mysterious ways in which sovereign’s favor moved (Bauman 2007 :60).” For instance, the enlistment contract provided evidence that indeed the nation-state is inside, as well as outside of the law, for it can change the law at its discretion (Agamben 1998). Enforcing the former soldiers’ inability to practice his political rights, for he has been stripped of these and made the object of the nation-state. A rather complex paradox, which appears difficult to fathom, the soldier a U.S. citizen or in pursuit of citizenship through the MAVNI program, has surrendered his political rights (bios), and therefore encounters various challenges and hurdles in the pursuit of amends regarding his duty related injuries. Moreover, the former soldier through the acquiescing of his physical and psychological sacrifice may be unable to dream of a predictable world, not a poker-faced world, for he is aware that the nation-state is in control of his fate through the discretion of government agencies granting medical retirement and veterans benefits compensation (Bauman 2007: 95). Once more the former soldier endures the sovereign control in order to gain a political life (citizenship) and economic upward mobility accordingly. Utilizing the military as a springboard to success, despite its grand sacrifices.

Creating a '*Heimat*' across the Globe - Indefinite mandated mobility

“If you don’t want to sink, keep surfing, and that means changing your wardrobe, your furnishings, your wallpaper, your look, your habits - in short, yourself - as often as you can manage it (Bauman 2007: 103-104).” The former soldier and GS civilian the vessel on the global sea, navigated by the government, consents to the numerous mandated relocations, for he is attached to the military institution, and has formed bonds to comrades sharing past life histories, and despite an instable *Heimat* creation, he is creating a perceived continuous and stable form of employment. He carries within him a continuous uncertainty of mandated relocation, due to global politics. For the nation-state can deactivate and displace the canister named military installation at its discretion.

Answering the Main Question: How does the Department of the Army Civilian describe his quotidian live belonging and creating a home amongst the U.S. Army in Germany?

The GS civilian acquiescing to uncertainties has adapted to a mobile and reinventing lifestyle, with the ability to strive and survive anywhere across the globe as long as affiliation and an attachment to a U.S. military installation is given. A life philosophy perhaps created by his military past, for one has to roll with the punches, not knowing what is to come, for instance, such as military marching orders. For he is bearing in mind the long-term outcome of economic sustainability and the upward mobility of his progeny.

5.2. Limitations

The research perspective was focused on the Wiesbaden U.S. military community, although the overarching research objective is applicable to various U.S. military installations located across Europe. This research was conducted in a near four-month period. In order to establish a more in depth data analysis and interview a broader population, a longer ethnographic research period would be advisable. For instance, in order to gain access and establish rapport

with the female GS civilian, which present a smaller number of federal employees, possibly due to the overseas location and the in general smaller percentage of women working for the Department of Defense. Also, the community is made up of GS civilians whom did not prior serve in the military, yet small in number. Additionally, U.S. contractors and local national employees, whom all contribute and influence the structure of the U.S. military installation abroad.

Furthermore, I began to question: How do I protect my research, and myself, as a native anthropologist, continuing to live in this environment, regardless of what my research will bring forth. Additionally, which potential repercussions could arise for my interlocutors or myself? My integrity and ethics were questioned, when I was asked to share my thesis with one of the hiring managers for editing purposes. I was told by one of his employees: “He is great with the red marker.” With this in mind, despite having used pseudonyms to protect my interlocutors on one hand, I hope I have professionally represented their life narratives and they can find themselves within my presentation.

Lastly, my research supervisor asked me to think about ‘When does research stop’, if one lives in the community as a native ethnographer? Indeed, the latter presented its self as difficult but also beneficial, for instance, I returned to Mrs. Bowman for VA health benefits guidance, past my research window. Likewise, while I finish this thesis, I was made aware that the Wiesbaden military clinic will no longer serve retiree’s or civilians due to cuts in their medical staff. Simultaneously, did I cross path with a military couple whom were stationed in Bad Kreuznach and Wiesbaden 17 years ago, being able to share past acquaintances created an instant familiarity. The latter indeed presenting the challenge of a native ethnographer to make a cut in research, for it will create an indefinite cycle of data collection.

5.3. Discussion and Relevance

The message of this thesis is the of a revolving door, as long as individuals enlist in the U.S. military for economic reasons, as long as they seek citizenship through serving with the Armed Forces, as long as they camouflage the acquiesce of their sacrifice, it will revolve indefinitely. Some survive and enjoy their retirement, whether in Germany or the U.S. Perhaps, like Connor and Frank, volunteering for the Retiree Association on the installation belonging to two nations, while sharing their past life history and supporting the younger generation of retiree's. The overall question future research may ask, what will happen to the lives created by foreign nation military affiliates, once the foreign military withdraws fully from the host nation. Some will remain and must reinvent their quotidian lives, due to their attachment to the military institution through comradeship, which lasts for life.

Moreover, my interest lies in why some choose to sacrifice their life to lessen the economic blows of fate, while others remain behind and make do with the opportunities provided by the Nation-State (Anderson 2016: 141). Also, in which form does the attachment to family and homeland factor in, for some accept the sacrifice of up rootedness through mandate mobility by the government, presented as travel opportunities. Lastly, uncertainties created by government shutdowns and mandated mobility will remain part of the civilian's lifestyle until retirement. Notably, there is no present solution to residing permanently in Germany and having U.S. Federal employment. Also, Federal employment may hinder a full integration and assimilation with the host nation population. Thus, this research presents a niche in a complex and unique migration population, which is floating in a sphere of presence but not really being present, due to the Sofa-Status providing logistical support. For the fact, that while working for the Federal government, the individual does not have to register a permanent residency in Germany, thus once more, not accountable as a migrant.

Additionally, much of the academic resources present the post WWI and WWII migration of Germans to the U.S., however very little to non-academic literature can be found on former U.S. soldiers emigrating to Germany. This niche, creates a future research project, which I find intriguing, for it spans over generations of former soldiers, since the arrival of U.S. troops in Germany post WWII.

5.4. ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ACS	Army Community Services
Ami	German dialect for U.S. citizen (soldier)
CONUS	Continental United States
OCONUS	Outside Continental United States
DAC	Department of the Army Civilian
DoD	Department of Defense
DD 214	Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty
DD 4	Enlistment/ Reenlistment Document Armed Forces of the United States
GS CIV	GS Paygrade system.
MOS	Military Occupational Specialty
OCONUS	Overseas Continental United States
PAO	Public Affairs Office
SFL - TAP	Soldier for Life: Transition Assistance Program
USAG Wiesbaden	United States Army Garrison Wiesbaden
VA	Veterans Affairs
Contractor	Employed by U.S. Corporation, subcontracted to the U.S. Military Overseas Forces

5.5. TERMINOLOGY

Veteran	Veterans are men and women who have served (even for a short time), but are not currently serving, on active duty in the U.S. Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, or the Coast Guard, or who served in the U.S. Merchant Marine during World War II. People who served in the National Guard or Reserves are classified as veterans only if they were ever called or ordered to active duty, not counting the 4-6 months for initial training or yearly summer camps (www.census.gov . accessed February 10 th , 2017).
PPP	Priority Placement Program: The PPP is a DoD-wide automated program to assist in the placement of employees adversely affected by actions such as Reduction-in-Force, base closure, realignments, consolidations, contracting out, position classification decisions, rotation from overseas , and transfer of function. (www.dla.mil . accessed July 23, 2017).
Sofa-Status	The SOFA was signed in 1951, and the Supplementary Agreement was signed in 1959 and last updated in 1998 at the end of the Cold War. The Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) is a treaty that sets out the terms under which the armed forces of a foreign NATO member state are allowed to operate in another NATO state, including legal issues such as: entry and exit to the country, taxes, employment and even the postal service. Some of the main benefits of SOFA status are: the exemption from having to carry a German national ID Card, having to register your presence with the German authorities, including not having to register your car on the German net. Exemption from having to pay German income tax, also purchase certain goods tax-free, including vehicles. Entitled personnel are: serving personnel when in Germany in connection with their official duties; the ‘civilian component’ (effectively civil servants) accompanying the force (the SOFA specifically excludes German nationals and individuals from countries that are not members of NATO); certain contractors with status equivalent to that of the civilian component; spouses of the above, and children depending upon the Heads of household for support (https://bfgnet.de/sofa.html . accessed August 5th, 2017).

7. If _____ yes, _____ which _____ branch:

8. How many years did s/he serve: _____

9. Did you retire from the U.S. Military service: Yes No

10. Did you ETS from the U.S. Military service: Yes No

11. Prior to applying for a GS position did you complete a college degree?

Yes No

12. Are you currently enrolled in College/ University?

Yes No

13. Reason for seeking federal employment (GS civilian):

14. Please mark reasons important to you for choosing federal employment:

Retirement Benefits Job Security LQA

Colleagues Salary Skill-Based Education

Prior Active Duty Patriotic Duty Economic Others

15. Reason for seeking an overseas government assignment and/ or wishing to remain overseas:



Sample Interview Questions

1. How long do you wish to reside in Germany:
 - 3-5 years
 - 5-7 years
 - Indefinite
2. Where is your Home-State and do you wish to return there?
3. Where do you want to retire and settle?
4. How would you describe the term 'Home'?
5. How would you explain 'being at home'?
6. How would you describe the quote "*I belong here*"?
7. Which specific group of people contributes to the '*feeling of home*'?
8. How would you describe your current employment in Germany?
9. How would you describe your current status in Germany (Nato-Sofa, visitor, tourist, migrant, expat, et cetera.), please explain?
10. Are you married to a non- U.S. or Foreign-born spouse?
11. Your spouse's place of origin:
12. Do you have children, which are bi-national/ dual-citizen?
13. How many years have you resided in Germany, including your U.S. military service time:
14. Have you been absent from Germany, returned to the U.S. for employment?
15. How many years have you lived in the U.S. before returning to Germany:
16. Do you participate in U.S. Politics and in which form?
17. How would you describe your political participation in your homeland (U.S)?

18. Did you vote via the Absentee Ballot for the presidential election?



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Sample Life-History Interview Questions

Beginning at age ____, when you joined the U.S. military.

1. Where did you live?
2. Why did you join the military?
3. Where did you go for basic training and AIT (Advanced Individual Training/ Skill based)?
4. Where was your first duty station?
5. Which duty stations followed thereafter?
6. Where was your last duty station?
7. When (at what age) did you retire, discharge (perhaps disability), ETS from the military?
8. What were your reasons for leaving the military/ if not retirement or disability?
9. Which country did you live in at the time of leaving the military?
10. What was one of the first things you changed about your appearance/ attire or behavior after you left the military?
11. Why did you feel the need to do so?
12. What were your professions, employment thereafter?
13. What are your future dreams, aspirations, or goals?
14. Describe why you obtained federal employment?
15. How did you obtain the position, was it a difficult, lengthy process (application)?
16. Do you feel a sense of pride in the work you do?
17. What are your favorite aspects of working for the U.S. military (government/ supporting the U.S. military mission)?

18. Did you follow politics while you were in the military?
19. Do you currently follow politics?
20. Do you vote via the absentee ballot?
21. Do you engage in any other activities State-Side, local politics, sending goods to the family, sending money home, visiting family, et cetera?
22. Describe what the term 'Home' means to you?
23. Where do you feel you belong?
24. Do you feel rooted, settled, arrived and if yes how so? If no, describe why and what may be the reasons?
25. Does your work provide you with the feeling of belonging and if yes how so?
26. Do you want to return to the U.S. and if so, where?
27. Describe/ explain the importance to you where you want to be buried (soil)?
28. Explain reasons why you chose a duty assignment (GS position) in Germany?
29. How long would you like to stay in Germany and why?
30. How do you foresee to accomplish staying in Germany, while working for the U.S. government?
31. How do you engage with the local nationals (Germans)?
32. Do you feel part of the local society?
33. Can you speak, write, and read German?

PHOTOGRAPHS

Cover page: United States Army Garrison (USAG) Wiesbaden Branding. Plans, Analysis & Integration Office (PAIO). Lucius D. Clay Kaserne Wiesbaden, Germany. Source: Photo by Sonja Graham. 2017.

Picture 1: Wiesbaden Garrison Flag Retreat Ceremony.
Soldiers lower flags during a retreat ceremony at a Veterans Day observance Nov. 10 outside Bldg. 1042 on Clay Kaserne. Source: <http://www.herald-union.com/army-committed-to-soldiers-veterans-families/> Photo by Jacob Corbin. November 23, 2016

Picture 2: Mr. Michael Hayatou's Military Coin Achievement Display.
Source: Photo by Sonja Graham. 2017.

Picture 3: Soldier for Life-Transition Assistance Poster at the SFL-TAP Center Bldg. 1023 W. on Clay Kaserne. Wiesbaden, Germany. Source: Photo by Sonja Graham. 2017.

Picture 4: Naturalization Photograph: 109th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment. Baghdad, Iraq. Source : <https://www.dvidshub.net/image/371113/us-soldiers-naturalize-american-citizens>. Photo by Sgt. Shawn Miller. 02.21.2011

Picture 5: Home and Relocation Decal. Wiesbaden, Germany. Source: Photo by Sonja Graham. 2017.

Picture 6: U.S. National Cemetery. *American flags at the graves of U.S. soldiers buried at Arlington National Cemetery.* Source: <http://www.theepochtimes.com/n3/2114195-hundreds-of-landscapers-volunteer-at-arlington-national-cemetery/> Photo by Win McNamee/Getty Images. May 21, 2015.

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