

ABSTRACT

The topic of the submitted diploma thesis originates from the methodological concept of both historical anthropology and history of mentality as well as everyday life history. The aim of the thesis is the attempt to find a reply to the question what death meant in the lives of soldiers, in what ways they were coping with fear, pain, suffering, in what ways they perceived violence – the inevitable part of their wartime world.

The topic of the thesis itself is a complex view of dying and death of Czechoslovak legionaries on the Russian frontline during the First World War, processed mainly on the basis of analysis of historic resources, stored in both the Central Military Archive and Historical Military Archive and on study of ego-documents (correspondence, diaries and personal records of particular participants of the war).

In the first part the variety of forms of death have been analysed: death at the battlefield, death in field hospitals, voluntary death or death as a punishment. The second part deals with feelings and mood of fighting men in relation to death, how they accepted it and were able to cope with it, it analyses stress factors, which soldiers had to face and it studies possibilities of defence against the stress of war and death. The third part brings closer the facts concerning manipulation with dead bodies, ways and possibilities of funerals, inheritance issues etc. The thesis also thinks about the essence of human life and about respect to its most difficult period – to death.

Key words: legion, the First World War, Russia, death, funeral, health care