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A New Stage and New Opportunities for Research on the Russian Civil War*

Zarys treści: Celem niniejszego artykułu jest omówienie najnowszej rosyjskiej historiografii dotyczącej wojny domowej w Rosji w latach 1917–1922. Mimo problemów politycznych, w ostatnich latach nastąpił wyraźny postęp w badaniach tych przełomowych w dziejach Rosji wydarzeń przez historyków rosyjskich. Analiza została przeprowadzona na podstawie omówienia najnowszych prac takich rosyjskich historyków jak Aleksander Puczenkow, Wasilij Cwietkow, Konstantin Morozow, Aleksiej Tieplakow oraz Andriej Ganin.

Outline of Content: This article aims to discuss the latest Russian historiography on the Russian Civil War of 1917–22. Despite political problems, in recent years, there has been significant progress in the study of these groundbreaking events in Russian history by Russian historians. The analysis is based on a discussion of the latest works by Russian historians such as Alexander Puchencov, Vasily Tsvetkov, Konstantin Morozov, Alexei Tieplakov and Andrei Ganin.

Słowa kluczowe: Rosja, wojna domowa w Rosji 1917–1922, rosyjska historiografia, biali, czerwoni

Keywords: Russia, Russian Civil War 1917–22, Russian historiography, the Whites, the Reds

Introduction

The 1917–22 Russian Civil War, which took place on the ruins of the Russian Empire, though they might seem distant to us, occupy a fundamental place in the Russian political discourse. In Vladimir Putin's address of 21 February 2022, it served as one of the ideological foundations and justifications for Russia's aggression

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against Ukraine.¹ Putin also presented his point of view on Russia's Civil War in his widely discussed article 'On the Historical Unity of Russians and Ukrainians' from 2021, in which he attempted to demonstrate Ukraine's primordial ties with Russia.² The article mentions, among other things, the leaders of the White Movement as advocates of an indivisible Russia. On the other hand, the funeral ceremony of Gen. Anton Denikin at the Donskoy Monastery in October 2005 can also be recalled, where Putin's presence was supposed to symbolise a kind of reconciliation between Whites and Reds under the new political leadership.³ Russian historian Vladislav I. Goldin wrote in 2019 that the events of the Civil War in Russia are still of interest to Russian society, a significant part of which is still divided into "Whites" and "Reds".⁴ He repeated this opinion in 2022, diplomatically adding that "the sources of contemporary bloody conflicts" also arose in these distant events.⁵ Another Russian historian, Alexander Puchenkov, wrote in 2020 about the Civil War as an unhealed wound of Russian society.⁶ In this sense, the narrative of Russia's Civil War occupies an important place in the contemporary debate not only on the current situation in the Russian Federation but also on the global security situation in Europe and worldwide. All this demonstrates that there is a need to conduct additional research into the 1917–22 period on the territory of the former Russian Empire.

And new publications keep coming. Therefore, considering modern Russian historiography, one can argue that it has not abandoned its interest in the Russian Civil War. The recent centennial anniversaries of 1917, the Civil War and the founding of the Soviet Union have not only motivated numerous thematic conferences and been the subject of extensive media coverage, but they have also been marked by a flurry of new research monographs by Russian historians.⁷ The recent publications by Alexander Puchenkov, Vasily Tsvetkov, Konstantin

¹ Address by the President of the Russian Federation (21 Feb. 2022), <http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/67828> (accessed: 28 Apr. 2023).

² Article by Vladimir Putin 'On the Historical Unity of Russians and Ukrainians', <http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/66181> (accessed: 28 Apr. 2023).

³ M. Laruelle, M. Karnysheva, *Memory Politics and the Russian Civil War: Reds Versus Whites (Russian Shorts)* (London–New York–Oxford–New Delhi–Sydney, 2021), p. 1.

⁴ V.I. Goldin, 'Grazhdanskaja vojna v istorii Rossii: istoriografija, sovremennye podhody, podgotovka novogo akademicheskogo izdanija', *Novejšaja Istorija Rossii*, vol. 9, no. 3 (2019), p. 758.

⁵ Id., 'Grazhdanskaja vojna v Rossii: problemy sovremennoj istoriografii', *Rossijskaja Istorija*, no. 3 (2022), p. 109.

⁶ A.S. Puchenkov, 'Razmyshljaja o Grazhdanskoj vojne', *Vestnik Severnogo (Arkticheskogo) federal'nogo universiteta*, Serija: *Gumanitarnye i social'nye nauki*, no. 4 (2020), p. 36.

⁷ V.I. Goldin, 'Grazhdanskaja vojna v Rossii: Nauka v poiskah istoričeskoj istiny', *Vestnik Severnogo (Arkticheskogo) federal'nogo universiteta*, Serija: *Gumanitarnye i social'nye nauki*, no. 4 (2020), p. 13; V.I. Goldin, 'Grazhdanskaja vojna v Rossii skvoz' prizmu let: Istoriograficheskie processy. (Referat)', in: *Revoljucija i Grazhdanskaja vojna v Rossii: Sovremennaja istoriografija: Sb. statej, obzorov i referatov*, ed. V.P. Ljubin, M.M. Minc (Moskva, 2018); *Rossija v gody Grazhdanskoj vojny. 1917–1922 gg.: očerki istorii i istoriografii*, ed. D.B. Pavlov (Moskva, 2018).

Morozov, Alexei Tieplakov and Andrei Ganin signal that the Civil War has entered a new stage in Russian historiography.⁸ Researchers have started to reconsider the accomplishments and shortcomings of Russian émigré historiography and Soviet historiography, as well as the works produced in the 1990s in Russia and abroad. They are keen to re-examine, in a new and comprehensive way, the main political and military issues that were related to the functioning of the anti-Bolshevik forces and, first and foremost, to determine the reasons for their downfall. With respect to the latter aspect, it is noticeable that Russian researchers are seeking answers to the question of whether the October 1917 coup and the trajectory of the Civil War that ended in the Bolsheviks' victory were inevitable. In this context, there is a noticeable tendency to examine in detail the causes of the outbreak of the Civil War.⁹

It is also important that these studies note the attempt to assess how contemporary Russian society perceives the events of the Russian Civil War of 1917–22. In this regard, historians Morozov and Tieplakov, in particular, argue that the Soviet narrative of the events of 1917–22 is still dominant among the Russian population. Therefore, they recognise the need for new research into this period in Russian history. This is accompanied by a large amount of archival material being introduced into scholarly circulation, including in the form of publications of diaries, memoirs, and collections of documents.¹⁰

There is also no doubt that the above-mentioned research problems are discussed amongst Russian historians against the backdrop of Western historiography. For example, it is a significant and invigorating debate of whether to speak of one great civil war in Russia or multiple civil wars and armed conflicts between

⁸ This article is a continuation of the author's considerations presented in the following review articles (in Polish): M.P. Sadłowski, 'Artykuł recenzyjny monografii naukowej Aleksandra S. Puczenkowa pt. "Pervyj god Dobrovol'českoj armii. Ot vozniknoveniâ 'Alekseevskoj organizacii' do obrazovaniâ Vooružennych Sil na Ŭge Rossii (noâbr' 1917 – dekabr' 1918 goda)", *Przegląd Historyczno-Wojskowy*, no. 1(279) (2022), pp. 204–12; id., 'Artykuł recenzyjny monografii naukowej pt. "Военспецы. Очерки о бывших офицерах, стоявших у истоков Красной армии", *Przegląd Historyczno-Wojskowy*, vol. 3(279) (2022), pp. 243–57; id., 'Ku rozwiązaniu zagadki Borysa Sawinkowa. Recenzja biografii autorstwa Konstantina M. Morozowa', *Przegląd Historyczno-Wojskowy*, no. 1(283) (2023), pp. 243–61; id., 'Najnowsza rosyjska historiografia wojny domowej w Rosji 1917–1922. Wstęp do analizy', *Wschodni Rocznik Humanistyczny*, vol. 20, no. 3 (2023), pp. 251–73. In the latter article, the author expressed the thesis developed in this publication that the Russian historiography of the Civil War in Russia of 1917–22 is entering a new stage of research.

⁹ Goldin, 'Grazhdanskaja vojna v Rossii: Nauka v poiskah', p. 13.

¹⁰ A.V. Ganin, 'Itogi i perspektivy istoriografii Grazhdanskoj vojny v Rossii', *Vestnik Severnogo (Arkticheskogo) federal'nogo universiteta*, Serija: *Gumanitarnye i social'nye nauki*, no. 4 (2020), p. 9; R.G. Gagkuev, 'Problemy izuchenija Grazhdanskoj vojny v Rossii: segodnja i zavtra', *Vestnik Severnogo (Arkticheskogo) federal'nogo universiteta*, Serija: *Gumanitarnye i social'nye nauki*, no. 4 (2020), p. 6; V.V. Mihajlov, 'Grazhdanskaja vojna v Rossii: preodolenie ideologii – utverzhdenie nauchnosti', *Vestnik Severnogo (Arkticheskogo) federal'nogo universiteta*, Serija: *Gumanitarnye i social'nye nauki*, no. 4 (2020), p. 29.

different states and nations on the ruins of the Russian Empire.¹¹ Echoes of these discussions are now also reflected in the Russian historiography.¹² There were even joint publishing projects.¹³

This thesis requires research, but the author of this article tends to claim that, unlike the period of the Second World War, the period of the First World War, the 1917 Revolution and the Civil War in Russia did not become one of the main axes of Putin's historical policy. Despite the clear reluctance of the Putin regime to any revolutions, Russian historians researching the history of Russia until the 1930s had a wider margin of freedom in their research. I think this is one of the reasons for the significant interest in contemporary Russian historiography on the subject of Revolution and Civil War. However, the importance of these events for the history of Russia and the world is also a reference point for assessing contemporary, current political, social and international problems. In this sense, perhaps one of the motivations for the work of Russian historians is the desire to analyse the past to provide material for understanding the currently very difficult political situation in Russia.

To Rethink the White Don

Puchenkov's work is a comprehensive study of the Volunteer Army from November 1917 to December 1918.¹⁴ That is, from the moment General Mikhail V. Alekseev arrived from Petrograd to Novochoerkassk on 2/15 November 1917, until the formation of the Armed Forces of South Russia, which took place on 9 January 1919. It presents, vividly and in much detail, the evolution of the so-called Alekseev Organization from a small group of officers gathered around General Alekseev into the Volunteer Army, and eventually into the Armed Forces of South Russia. Puchenkov, relying, among other things, on Vladimir P. Fedyuk's research on the anti-Bolshevik movement in southern Russia,¹⁵ elaborates on the thesis that the better and worse sides of the White Movement in southern Russia were formed during the first year of the Volunteer Army. This meant that the Volunteer Army's political and military characteristics, which until the autumn of 1919 had an impact on the successes of the Whites, and then precipitated their defeat starting from

¹¹ J. Smele, *The 'Russian' Civil Wars, 1916–1926: Ten Years That Shook the World* (London, 2015).

¹² B. Kolonitskii, 'Ot mirovoi voiny k grazhdanskim voenam (1917?–1922?)', *Rossiiskaia istoriia*, no. 1 (2019), pp. 3–24.

¹³ *The Bloomsbury Handbook of the Russian Revolution*, ed. G. Swain, Ch. Alston, M. Hickey, B. Kolonitskii, and F. Schedewie (London, 2022); *The Russian Revolution of 1917 – Memory and Legacy*, ed. C.S. Leonard, D. Orlovsky, J. Petrov (Routledge: Abingdon–New York 2025 [in print]).

¹⁴ A.S. Puchenkov, *Pervyj god Dobrovol'cheskoj armii. Ot vzniknovenija 'Alekseevskoj organizacii' do obrazovanija Vooruzhennyh Sil na Juge Rossii (nojabr' 1917 – dekabr' 1918 goda)* (Moskva, 2021).

¹⁵ V.P. Fedyuk, *Belyje. Antibolshevickove dvizhenie na yuge Rossii, 1917–1918* (Moskva, 1996).

the end of 1919, were developed in the first year. Therefore, Puchenkov intended to review and describe those features in detail. Puchenkov's study seeks to enhance our understanding of what alternative to the rule of the Bolsheviks was offered by the Whites in the South of Russia, and what might have led to their ultimate defeat.

Further strengths of Puchenkov's book include the detailed characterization of the main leaders of the White Movement in the Don area (Alekseev, Gen. Alexei Kaledin, Gen. Lavr Kornilov, Gen. Anton Denikin) and the analysis of the complicated relationships among them. Such a research perspective subsequently became the basis for reconstructing political views and, partly, state system concepts, as well as for analysing attempts to implement them in practice. In this context, it is important to characterise the ideological and political attitudes of the Alekseev Organisation and the Volunteer Army in the first days and months of their functioning. Puchenkov finally disproves the theses pushed by the Soviet historiography that the beginning of the White Movement in the South of Russia in late 1917 and early 1918 had a "reactionary" basis, and that the movement itself was based solely on monarchically disposed representatives of the aristocracy, nobility, industrialists, bankers, landowners, or activists of the Black Hundreds movement. Of particular interest in relation to this are the extensively quoted memoirs of Ivan F. Patronov, who described in detail organisational matters and the mood prevailing in the initial period of the Volunteer Army's operations. In one of the accounts cited by Puchenkov, Patronov indicated that the overriding idea among the volunteers was, above all, the will to fight the Bolsheviks. Besides, the volunteers were preparing to fight the Germans and were loyal to the Entente allies. All of this was supposed to unite people with different political views. However, according to Patronov, the volunteers in the Don area did not have specific political attitudes and state system concepts in late 1917 and early 1918. This became one of the reasons why there was a problem with a positive political program in the early days of the White Movement. And, by the same token, it explains why the idea of the so-called non-prejudgement (Russian: *непредвзетие*),¹⁶ i.e. the political and constitutional doctrine assumes that no decisions on the choice of a particular political system for Russia as well as on major social and economic reforms would be made until the Constitutional Assembly was convened, became dominant in the White Movement's program.

On the latter issue, Puchenkov detailed the relationship between the Whites and the leaders of the Don and Kuban regions. This issue, however, requires further research. It is because Puchenkov outlines the issue of nationalism in the ranks of the Volunteer Army without going beyond the years 1917–18. On the other hand, Puchenkov highlights the pro-Western and anti-German orientation of the

¹⁶ About non-prejudgement, see M.P. Sadłowski, *Między Mikołajem II a Leninem. Państwo rosyjskie i jej koncepcje w czasie rewolucji lutowej 1917 roku* (Kraków, 2021), pp. 65–66; V. Tsvetkov, *Beloe delo v Rossii. 1917–1919 gg.* (Moskva, 2019), pp. 89–22.

founders of the Volunteer Army. In this regard, it is very interesting to analyse the political and economic views of General Alekseev, who saw the future of Russia in cooperation with France, the United States and Great Britain. And symbolically, from his first days in the Don area, Alekseev stayed and worked in a hotel called the “European” in Novochoerkassk.

Dreams about the Island of Crimea

A similar motivation lies behind the arrival of V. Tsvetkov’s publication.¹⁷ In the introduction, Tsvetkov declares that it is an attempt to answer the question of whether the “Island of Crimea” (a reference to the novel by Vassily P. Aksyonov¹⁸) could have survived 1920 and become a “Russian Taiwan”.¹⁹ When reading these reflections, one may get the impression that Tsvetkov is trying to find answers to the questions of whether the victory of the Bolsheviks in the Civil War and their establishment of a communist state and economic system was inevitable. He provides the answer in distinct parts. The first section of the book provides an analysis of the military aspects of the fall of Crimea in 1920, while the second part examines the civilian rear area issues of the main reforms of Gen. Peter Wrangel’s government, namely the agrarian and land reform as well as the local government reform. Thus, Tsvetkov split his narrative into the military and civilian (internal) parts, making a clear and methodologically correct discussion split into the front line and rear areas issues.

Based on a close analysis of the implementation process of these major reform projects, Tsvetkov argues that they could have succeeded in the long term. He argues that the modernisation project involving the implementation of the Western European political system solutions (also based on the Russian local government traditions and the 1917 reforms of the Provisional Government) in 1920 on the territory of White Crimea began to demonstrate its effectiveness and found support among various social groups. The reforms included the implementation of local (land and municipal) government; the interaction between the local government and the central government administration based on the principle of subsidiarity; a capitalist economy based on private farmland ownership; well-funded municipal government units; the development of commerce, investments and tourism based on the capital of the Western powers, mainly France. Tsvetkov also analyses the financial system reform and the question of supply chains to Crimea, pointing out that it was possible for the Whites to survive in this regard until the spring of 1921. Equally interesting are his discussions of the plans for the development of tourism in Crimea, as well as of the military and political cooperation with France and

¹⁷ V. Tsvetkov, *Poslednaja bitva Belovo Yuga. 1920 g.* (Moskva, 2022).

¹⁸ V. Aksyonov, *The Island of Crimea* (New York, 1983).

¹⁹ Tsvetkov, *Poslednaja bitva*, pp. 1–3.

Poland, as well as the recognition of Ukraine and the establishment of cooperation with Ukraine.

However, ultimately, Tsvetkov's real focus is on the agrarian²⁰ and land reform, which he considered to be the core of all of the internal political and economic measures undertaken by Wrangel. He concludes that contrary to the theses of the Soviet historiography, a close analysis of the implementation and development of the reform project shows that they delivered positive results as early as 1920. In institutional terms, this shows the efficient process of electing representatives of the population, primarily peasants, to the so-called land councils, which were responsible, jointly with the central government administration, for implementing agrarian reform. Tsvetkov calculated that 90 such councils had been elected in the Taurida gubernia and the districts of the adjacent Yekaterinoslav gubernia, and had begun their work by 15 October 1920.²¹ Tsvetkov explains such high intensity of this process by two factors. First, he recognised that peasants, like many in the rear area, believed in the ability of the Whites to hold the front line and in the strength of the Crimean fortifications. Second, peasants, as the new owners of the farmland, assumed that, even if the Whites were to end up losing, the land would still remain in their hands after the Reds entered Crimea. Tsvetkov assessed the very participation in elections and activity in the councils as an expression of "a high degree of civic activity and civic support for the government of the South of Russia".²² He also comes to a positive assessment of the plans and the implementation of the local land government reform at the level of volosts and uyezds, which, he maintains, could have become the foundation of a political representative system.

Summarizing these deliberations of Tsvetkov, it can be said that, in a political and economic sense, in the autumn of 1920 Crimea gained the status of the centre of the anti-Bolshevik movement in the territory of the former Russian empire. And its authorities tried to organise broader international coalitions to fight communism.

²⁰ These reflections of Tsvetkov constitute a summary of his earlier works on the agrarian problem in the white movement: V. Tsvetkov, 'Kooperacija i sel'skoe hozjajstvo na belom Juge Rossii v 1919–1920-e gg.', *Jekonomicheskij zhurnal*, no. 43 (2016), pp. 110–30; V. Tsvetkov, E. Tsvetkova, 'Osobennosti regional'nyh prodovol'stvennyh rynkov v period Grazhdanskoy vojny na Yuge Rossii v 1919 – nachale 1920 gg.', *Jekonomicheskij zhurnal*, no. 3(47) (2017), pp. 48–73; V. Tsvetkov, E. Tsvetkova, 'Voenno-hozjajstvennye povinnosti kak faktor vlijaniya na jekonomiku Belogo juga Rossii vo vremja Grazhdanskoy vojny', *Jekonomicheskij zhurnal*, no. 4(52) (2018), pp. 112–26; V. Tsvetkov, E. Tsvetkova, 'Jekonomicheskaja istorija Kryma v 1920 g.: prodovol'stvennoe polozhenie', *Modern Economy Success*, no. 1 (2022), pp. 143–49; V. Tsvetkov, 'Osobennosti formirovanija i osnovnye priemy propagandy agrarno-krest'janskoj politiki Osobogo Soveshhanija pri Glavnokomandujushhem Vooruzhennymi silami Juga Rossii v 1919 g.', *Lokus: ljudi, obshhestvo, kul'tury, smysly*, vol. 14, no. 2 (2023), pp. 50–68; V. Tsvetkov, 'Osobennosti razrabotki i obsuzhdenija proekta zemel'noj reformy na belom Juge Rossii letom – osen'ju 1919 goda', *Vestnik Volgogradskogo gosudarstvennogo universiteta, Serija 4: Istorija. Regionovedenie. Mezhdunarodnye otnoshenija*, vol. 27, no. 4 (2022), pp. 80–93.

²¹ Tsvetkov, *Poslednaja bitva*, p. 424.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 425.

The political and economic planning and reform work in 1920 laid, at least in the short term, the groundwork for maintaining an anti-Bolshevik state alternative in the form of the “Island of Crimea”. Tsvetkov himself is the author of, among others, two general but extensive monographs on the White Movement.²³

To Understand Savinkov and His Role during the Civil War in Russia

An important scientific and publishing event that provided new reflections not only on the Civil War, but also on the history of Russia in the early twentieth century was the publication of Savinkov’s biography by historian Konstantin Morozov.²⁴ Indeed, based on an analysis of Savinkov’s biography, Morozov makes an attempt to answer the question of why Russia did not evolve into a Western European style constitutional monarchy or republic, but plunged into a deep political and social revolution, as reflected in the October Coup. In this sense, the first part of Morozov’s monograph can be viewed as the political study of the causes of the Russian Civil War. At this point, it is worth adding that the book is based on an extensive collection of documents about the Savinkov family published in 2019.²⁵

Morozov’s biography takes a new look at Savinkov’s role in the so-called Kornilov putsch. It is interesting to note the Russian researcher’s conclusion that it would have been better for the “freedom revolution” and for Russia itself, if Savinkov had done nothing in August 1917. According to Morozov, it is possible that in such a case other plans to get out of the crisis and save the Provisional Government would have worked. What Morozov means here is the preservation of the Provisional Government according to the principle of “a coalition at any cost” or the implementation of Chernov’s plan to create a unified socialist government.

The essence of Morozov’s criticism of Savinkov’s actions is based on the fact that Savinkov, because of his loosened ties with the Socialist Revolutionary Party during the 1917 Revolution, set his sights on an individual government career. This career, in turn, was based on the ties with officer circles, and subsequently with Kerensky and Kornilov. However, its finale was a failed march on Petrograd with Krasnov. Thus, Savinkov pursued a policy that aimed to save the government but counted on the army’s support. In this context, Morozov asserts that Russian history (and not only in 1917 but also in 1991) demonstrates that those who think that the army is “a good political argument at the moment of a powerful revolutionary ferment in the country” ultimately fail.²⁶ Finally, the course and consequences of Kornilov’s putsch confirmed, according to Morozov, the fact that Savinkov

²³ Tsvetkov, *Beloe delo v Rossii: 1917–1919*; id., *Beloe delo v Rossii: 1920–1922* (Moskva, 2019).

²⁴ K.N. Morozov, *Boris Savinkov. Opyt nauchnoi biografii* (Moskva–Sankt Pieterburg, 2022).

²⁵ *Tri brata [To, chto bylo]: sbornik dokumentov*, ed. K.N. Morozov, A.Y. Morozov (Moscow, 2019).

²⁶ Morozov, *Boris Savinkov*, p. 444.

had a rather poor understanding of the people. Hence, his miscalculations and alliances of 1917 are a continuation of the mistakes associated with the Azef affair. The same thing would happen again when Savinkov became a victim of the Soviet special services.

In connection with his description of Kornilov's putsch, Morozov even wrote of a blow that Savinkov dealt to his own party, as he did not engage in the implementation of the party's political agenda during the 1917 Revolution, using the existing mechanisms of power and government administration, including the local government units. Kornilov's putsch, on the other hand, shook not only the Provisional Government but also the entire establishment that rose to power in Russia in February/March 1917. At this point, it should be added that Puchenkov, like Morozov, came to the conclusion that the so-called Kornilov putsch accelerated the process of the Provisional Government's collapse and facilitated the Bolsheviks' rise to power. Thus, the Socialist Revolutionaries, who had begun to garner support at various levels, could not capitalise on that support at a time of growing radicalisation. Therefore, Morozov makes a heavy accusation against Savinkov, asserting that he distanced himself from the democratic mechanisms of the functioning of the government (state) and society, betting on obscure agreements or, in fact, conspiracies with the military.

Morozov reiterated his doubts about Savinkov as an effective politician in the context of discussing his role in organizing the anti-Bolshevik uprising in Yaroslavl, Rybinsk and Murom in mid-1918. Indeed, he pointed out that it had been based mainly on the cooperation with the French, who had originally been supposed to commit to landing in Arkhangelsk and thus establish contact with the insurgents. Therefore, they dissuaded Savinkov from the idea of an uprising in Moscow, fearing that the Germans might intervene there. At this point, Morozov posed a question of whether events might have turned out differently had the uprising broken out in Moscow and Savinkov cooperated with other anti-Bolshevik forces. In particular, since the leftist Socialist Revolutionaries also rose up against the Bolsheviks in the summer of 1918. However, it should not be overlooked that Morozov, while comprehensively analysing Savinkov's biography, criticises him for specific actions and choices, but on the other hand, points out that only Savinkov's contemporaries have the right to judge him.

Of course, many questions come to mind in connection with Morozov's research and assumptions, first and foremost, whether there was a basis for overcoming mutual prejudices between the various leaders and centres of the anti-Bolshevik movement during the Civil War. Morozov himself considered the inability to reach agreements between the various leaders of the anti-Bolshevik movements to be one of the reasons for their defeat and, thus, the Bolsheviks' victory. According to him, the leaders of these movements "for the most part did not rise up to the challenges of history," and their attitude in 1917 and during the Civil War was in line with the old adage that "generals get ready for old

wars”.²⁷ This is because, according to Morozov, they were unable to abandon their old views and vested interests.

On the other hand, however, Morozov points out that despite the weakness of the personal factor, there was also a complex institutional, social and political sphere, which was the nucleus of a state based on freedoms. In this context, Tsvetkov's and Morozov's works are in line with some currents of the most recent Russian historiography that study the events of 1917–20 with respect to the possibility of a dialogue between different political and social forces. Hence, the researchers' attention is focused on the existing potential and possibilities for overcoming the divergences that existed in Russia in 1917 based on a potential consensus rather than an armed conflict. A comprehensive and pioneering work on this subject, focusing on the regions, was written by Mikhail E. Raznikov and Olga M. Morozova in 2021.²⁸ Tsvetkov and Morozov are also developing a method for studying the effects of social reforms that the anti-Bolshevik centres tried to implement during the Russian Civil War. At this point, it is worth mentioning the latest monograph by Vadim M. Rynkov, which contains a comprehensive analysis of the activities of the anti-Bolshevik centres in eastern Russia (the Volga region, the Urals and Siberia) with respect to social affairs.²⁹ In this respect, also important is the collection of articles entitled 'Iazyk, voina, i revoliutsiia', which contains an analysis of the basic terms and phenomena during the Russian Civil War, such as civil war, republic and republics, citizen, anarchy, revolutionary leaders.³⁰ Also at the level of particular regions of Russia.

This new research approach is also reflected in the history of the Civil War in Russia, published in 2024 in the 'History of Russia' Series in twenty volumes (Nauka Publishing House).³¹ The twelfth volume, about the Civil War

²⁷ Ibid., p. 479.

²⁸ M.E. Raznikov, O.M. Morozova, *Sotsialno-politicheskoy dialog w Rossii (1917–1918 gg.). Tendencii, mekhanizm, regionalnyye osobennosti* (Moskva, 2021), pp. 87–102.

²⁹ V.M. Rynkov, *Sotsialnaya politika antibolshevitskikh praviteilstv na vastokie Rossii: Ideologia, zakonodatel'stvo, praktika (iyun'1918 – oktiabr 1922)* (Moskva, 2022); M.P. Sadłowski, 'Social'naja politika antibol'shevitskikh pravitel'stv na vostokey Rossii: ideologiya, zakonodatel'stvo, praktika (iyun' 1918 – oktiabr' 1922). V.M. Rynkov, Moscow: Izdatel'stvo Kuchkovo Pole, 2022. 1040 pp., P2200 (hardback). ISBN: 9785907171541', *Revolutionary Russia*, vol. 37, no. 1 (2024), pp. 76–78, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09546545.2024.2354307> (accessed: 12 July 2024).

³⁰ *Slova i konflikty: Iazyk protivostoianii i eskalatsiia grazhdanskoi voyny vv Rossii*, ed. B. Kolonitskii (St Petersburg, 2022); M.S. Gorham, "'Slova i konflikty: Iazyk protivostoianii i eskalatsiia grazhdanskoi voyny v Rossii' by B.I. Kolonitskii. St. Petersburg: Izdatel'stvo Evropeiskogo Universiteta v Sankt-Peterburge, 2022. 327 pp. P500. ISBN 978-5-94380-347-5', *Russian Review*, vol. 82, no. 3 (2023), pp. 526–28.

³¹ *Istoriya Rossii: v 20 tomah*, vol. 12: *Grazhdanskaja vojna v Rossii. 1917–1922 gody*, Book 2: *Vlast'. Jekonomika. Obshchestvo. Kul'tura* (Moskva, 2024); A.V. Ganin, 'Vpervye za sorok let vyhodit novaja Istoriya Grazhdanskoy voyny v Rossii v dvuh knigah', *Rodina*, 10 June 2024, <https://rodina-history.ru/2024/06/10/vpervye-za-sorok-let-vyhodit-novaia-istoriia-grazhdanskoy-voyny-v-rossii-v-dvuh-knigah.html> (accessed: 1 July 2024).

in Russia, consists of two parts. The first concerns military and political-diplomatic matters.³² In turn, the second part, which was published in the first half of 2024, contains a comprehensive description of the internal affairs of the anti-Bolsheviks and the Reds.³³ In this publication, as noted by Ganin, the Civil War is a clash between the Whites and the Reds not only on the front, but also a conflict in the social and cultural sphere, in matters of education, science and nationality.³⁴ Thus, this is a very clear negation of the claims made by the Soviet historiography that highlight only the weakness of the non-Bolshevik political forces in Russia after 1917, as well as their alleged harm to the Russians. And thus a negation of the claims about the historical inevitability of the Bolshevik rule in Russia. Notably, the first chapters of this book (*kniga 2*) contain an analysis of the statehood of the anti-Bolsheviks and the Reds, which proves that the authors recognise that the two main parties in the Civil War in Russia started building their own specific state and political projects.³⁵

Finally, Morozov's book contains interesting research proposals. Analysing in his monograph the attitude of the Russian population in 1918 to the anti-Bolshevik movements, the Russian historian concludes that the study of the Russian Civil War calls for a serious rethink. According to Morozov, modern Russian society "to this day harbours several Soviet myths and stereotypes about the events of that time".³⁶ To this day, an image prevails in the minds of many citizens that a hundred years ago, the absolute majority of Russia's population at that time fully supported Bolshevism.

In this respect, Morozov attempts to highlight the complexity of the attitudes of the Russian population toward the anti-Bolsheviks and the Bolsheviks in 1918. He points out that the passivity, resignation, or even tolerance or temporary acceptance of the latter's rule, prevailing among part of the population, did not signify the support for Bolshevism as such. According to Morozov, 1918 was a time of chaos, growing anarchisation and atomisation of society in Russia, not only in combination with inertia, passivity and will-lessness of the population. A part of the population reacted negatively to the rule of the Bolsheviks or, after a short time since they had taken the helm of the state, simply became disillusioned with them and began to oppose them. However, the problem is that "the widespread savagery under the conditions of the expanding Civil War gradually changed the

³² Goldin, *Grazhdanskaja vojna v Rossii: problemy*, p. 110.

³³ Ibid. It is worth adding that in September 2024 Nauka Publishing House issued in the 20-volume 'History of Russia' Series the eleventh volume on the First War World and the Russian Revolution of 1917; see: *Istorija Rossii: v 20 tomah*, vol. 11: *Imperija, vojna, revoljucija. 1914–1917 gody. Ot vojny k krahu imperii*, Book 1–2 (Moskva, 2024).

³⁴ Ganin, 'Vpervye za sorok let'.

³⁵ Goldin, 'Grazhdanskaja vojna v istorii Rossii: istoriografija', p. 770.

³⁶ Morozov, *Boris Savinkov*, p. 481.

fabric of the Russian society”,³⁷ which made it easier for the Bolsheviks and their methods to accomplish victory. Nevertheless, certain political, social and economic, as well as cultural developments of 1918 precipitated resistance to the Bolsheviks among various groups. The polarisation of the population also played an important part in these processes. Therefore, Morozov concludes that further research into these processes and the population’s attitudes is needed.

Deheroisation of the Red Partisans

Similar hypotheses and conclusions, especially regarding how the citizens of the Russian Federation perceive the events of the Russian Civil War, have already appeared, following the publication of Morozov’s book, among others, in Alexei Tieplakov’s latest scholarly monograph. The book is devoted to the negative developments (criminalisation and class terror) stemming from the activities of the so-called Red Partisans during the Civil War in the Far East of Russia from 1918 to 1922. In the conclusion of his book, Tieplakov writes: „[...] especially the Soviet version of the Russian history still sits firmly in the minds of a huge portion of Russians, including the ruling elite. Soviet myths can only be discarded with the help of new research. The image of the legendary heroic Red Partisans, painted by the century old propaganda, has already been called into question by many researchers. The task of the author of this book was to finally cast it into oblivion”.³⁸

Tieplakov’s book is an attempt to account for the crimes of the Bolsheviks in 1918–1922. He examines the origin, trajectory and meaning of the terror, murders and general criminalization of social reality allegedly perpetrated by the Red Partisans during the Russian Civil War. His thesis is that the so-called white movement was, in essence, a self-defence of life and property against revolutionary violence. According to Tieplakov, from the end of 1917 to mid-1920, the Reds (the so-called Red Guards and Red Partisans), as a result of purges, might have murdered between 60,000 and 80,000 residents of Kazakhstan, Siberia and the Far East, who were supposed to constitute the social, economic and intellectual elite of these regions. In this way, Tieplakov de-heroises some Bolshevik activists from the Civil War period for whom monuments are still standing in modern Russia or who have streets named after them.

To Rethink the Origins of the Red Army

However, it is impossible to study the Russian Civil War without considering the military matters. Those are the focus of Andrei Ganin’s latest monograph, which

³⁷ Ibid., p. 481.

³⁸ A. Tieplakov, *Krasnye partizany na востоке Rossii. 1918–1922: deviacii, anarhija i terror* (Moskva, 2023), p. 821.

seeks to answer the question of why about 100,000 officers of the former Russian army, including about 2,500 generals and staff officers (colonels and lieutenant colonels), served in the Red Army at various times during the Russian Civil War.³⁹ Furthermore, according to Ganin, 14,000 former White officers served in the Red Army at the end of the Russian Civil War.⁴⁰ The book expands on the research of Alexander G. Kavtaradze,⁴¹ as it examines, based on the considerable archival material, the fate of such senior commanders as Dmitry P. Parsky, Iordan G. Pehlivanov, Vasily M. Tseitlin, Evgeny N. Sergeyev, Mikhail S. Svechnikov, Matvei I. Vasilenko. In this context, one should not miss the information about the biography of General Yakov A. Slashchov, published by Ganin in 2021, who, on the one hand, defended Crimea in 1919–1920 against the Bolsheviks, and in 1921 crossed over to their side.⁴²

Ganin comes to the conclusion that, unlike the Whites, the Reds sought to use all the personnel resources available to them to their maximum advantage. This also applied to the qualified officers taken prisoner. This policy worked well, and the captives mostly valued the trust granted to them and served with integrity. According to Ganin, the Reds, unlike the Whites, also knew how to take advantage of the so-called “poputchiks” (fellow travellers).

It is worth specifically mentioning the chapter devoted to the Russian artillery officer Vassily M. Tseitlin and his ideological, political and patriotic evolution. In the July 1917 crisis in Petrograd, Tseitlin wrote that the Bolsheviks were serious opponents of the Provisional Government and should be countered vigorously. At the same time, he pointed out that Lenin and his party had been transferred to Russia in the interests of the German General Staff and the German secret services, but that Lenin himself was a man of ideology and he was acting independently. However, on 3 March 1918, he wrote that “it would be better for Russia to be a Soviet republic than to be torn into parts”. Tseitlin’s diary constitutes an important historical source for studying the mood among former tsarist officers and their transition to the service of the Bolsheviks in early 1918.

Importantly, the sources related to the ideological changes that were taking place among a significant portion of the officers can be juxtaposed with the sources related to the final stage of Savinkov’s political career. After all, like many of the so-called war (military) specialists (warspecs), he found himself in the Reds’ camp eventually and expressed his willingness to cooperate with the Reds. Of course, his path to the USSR was different. Nevertheless, Morozov, when examining the last months of Savinkov’s life, presents his political evolution very convincingly. It was precipitated by the fact that in the conditions of the 1917 Revolution and

³⁹ A.V. Ganin, *Voenspecy. Ocherky o byvshich oficerach, costoyavshich u istokov Krasnoyi Armii* (Moskva, 2022), pp. 6–7.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ A.G. Kavtaradze, *Voennye spetsialisty na sluzbe Respubliki Sovietov 1917–1920 gg.* (Moskva, 1988).

⁴² A.V. Ganin, *Belyj general u krasnoyi voenspec Yakov Slashov-Krymskij* (Moskva, 2021).

the subsequent Civil War, the concept of fighting for Russia and the Russian state was driving the revolutionary out of him. This process involved Savinkov-the-statehooder becoming less and less Savinkov-the-revolutionary.⁴³ He abandoned his ideals of fighting for freedom and individual rights to “recognise the undemocratic power of the Bolsheviks in the name of saving the Russian statehood”.⁴⁴ In addition, there was the disillusionment stemming from his participation in the fight against the Bolsheviks in the Civil War, where Savinkov noted that a significant part of the peasantry was hostile to the anti-Bolshevik forces, primarily to the Whites. Importantly, Morozov pointed out another aspect in this context, namely that Savinkov, despite his fight against the Tsar’s rule and the monarchy, viewed the democratic and representative state system with scepticism. This made him become interested in fascism towards the end of his life, and consequently, he recognised the Bolsheviks’ model of power. The origins of this attitude were characteristic of a part of the Russian revolutionary intelligentsia, which, while fighting the Tsar’s rule, developed an inclination towards authoritarian or even totalitarian tendencies. However, the question arises whether Savinkov, at the end of his days, actually understood the nature of the developing communist regime.

Answering the question of why Savinkov’s activities failed during the Russian Civil War, Morozov quoted Abram R. Gots’s words from a document found in the Central Archive of the FSB. Gots stated that hopes that revolutionary Russia could go from Narva to Poltava or repeat the success of Prussia in 1813 turned out to be futile.⁴⁵ Without resolving social issues, it was impossible to call the population to a national-revolutionary and patriotic act.⁴⁶ This was the main reason why the anti-Bolshevik movement, including the Savinkov policy, failed.

Going back to Ganin’s work for a moment, one should not miss a brief discussion presented in chapter five that deals with the officers in the fledgling Red Army who began to organise the White underground in the Red Army. In Petrograd and Moscow in early 1918, the White underground was an example of several grassroots initiatives of former tsarist officers who decided to act against the Bolsheviks. However, due to the lack of strong centres that would coordinate such activities, as well as the development of the Bolshevik repressive apparatus in the form of the Cheka, this officer-based anti-Bolshevik underground was effectively crushed. Concluding this thread, it is worth adding that at the end of 2023, Ganin published another two-volume publication about the officers of the Tsarist General Staff during the Civil War in Russia.⁴⁷

⁴³ Morozov, *Boris Savinkov*, p. 696.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 622.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴⁷ A.V. Ganin, *Kadry general’nogo shtaba v period Grazhdanskoj vojny v Rossii 1917–1922 gg. v 2 to-mah* (Moskva, 2023).

Conclusion

The studies conducted by Puchenkov, Tsvetkov, Morozov, Tieplakov, and Ganin provide a great deal of fresh material to reconsider the political, military, social and economic conditions under which the main participants in the Russian Civil War struggled for power. The works also provide inspiration for conducting further research on the state system (mainly constitutional law) and government administration system concepts, as well as the ways by which the White movement, and the anti-Bolshevik movement in general, attempted to implement them during the condition of Civil War, which constitutes, among others, an important subject of the deliberations of the historians of the state and law.

Indeed, the institutional part of the activities of the anti-Bolshevik centres during the Russian Civil War is still understudied. In Puchenkov's book, for example, we find a fairly extensive discussion of the so-called Bychov program (i.e. the political and state system assumptions that were developed by General Kornilov and his entourage during his arrest in the Bychov prison following the so-called Kornilov putsch of August 1917) as well as of the political views and ideological choices of each of the Volunteer Army's leaders. However, there is still too little information about the aforementioned concept of non-prejudgement (Russian: *непредвешение*). Especially about its origins and how it was understood by the closest associates and supporters of the Volunteer Army. Further research is needed, for example, on the state activist lawyers who provided political support for the development of certain political concepts and their enactment. One such example is Konstantin N. Sokolov, a close associate of Denikin and the author of a highly significant memoir.⁴⁸

Similar things could be said regarding Morozov's book. Indeed, further research is needed on the issue of how Savinkov and the Socialist Revolutionary Party perceived the Russian state political system. Whether, for example, any or potentially what analytical and conceptual work had been performed with respect to the constitution, the representative system, the system of the citizens' rights and freedoms, local government, or the federal system issue.

The publications discussed above demonstrate that the Russian Civil War requires more research, and the latest publications in this field provide material for further works and reflections, as well as for the formulation of research hypotheses. In this respect, Morozov wrote that further research is required, for example, on Savinkov's relations with Kerensky and Kornilov in 1917 and the issue of the participation of foreign centres in the Russian Civil War.⁴⁹

⁴⁸ K.N. Sokolov, *Pravleniye generala Denikina (Iz vospominaniy)* (Sofija, 1921).

⁴⁹ This author added that he was also working on two publications: Savinkov's Polish period, and the links between Savinkov and the Socialist Revolutionaries, and the assassinations of the Bolshevik leaders in 1918. See Morozov, *Boris Savinkov*, p. 18.

It is worth mentioning here, especially in the context of Morozov's book about Savinkov, that other Russian historians also undertake biographical research on key figures in the Russian Civil War. In 2023, Tsvetkov published a biography of General M.W. Alexeyev,⁵⁰ and in 2018 Alexander V. Reznik published the second edition of the book about Trotsky and the so-called left opposition.⁵¹ In turn, Andrei A. Ivanov published biographies of Vladimir Purishkevich and Markov II.⁵² In 2023, a monograph by Ilia Ratkowski I. Ratkowski was published entitled *Stalin. Five Years of Civil War and State Construction. 1917–1922*.⁵³ It is an interesting attempt to take a new look at Stalin's role in the Civil War, and, on the other hand, an attempt to assess how this conflict influenced the future dictator of the USSR. The problem is that in Ratkowski's work, he referred to, among others, the opinions of Russian President V. Putin on Leninist and Stalinist projects of the federal system in Bolshevik Russia. All this may be evidence of understanding or even sympathy for Stalin's policy.

Summing up the above considerations, it should be stated that they bring a certain freshness to the historiography of the Civil War in Russia. Also noticeable in the monographs under discussion is the hope that certain theses and the information contained therein will reach beyond the narrow circle of researchers of Russian history and, therefore, impact the new perception of the major issues of the Civil War of 1917–22 by the society of the Russian Federation. Thus, the idea is to reduce or even eliminate the Soviet perspective of the Civil War, which, for example, in the opinion of Morozov and Tieplakov, is the dominant narrative among the Russian population. On the other hand, as can be seen in Tsvetkov's work, there is a tendency to also correct the overly radical narratives present in the public space with respect to the events of 1917–22, namely, the uncritical portrayal of the anti-Bolshevik movement, especially the white movement.

Also not to be overlooked is the attempt to take a new look at the nationality policy of the anti-Bolsheviks, which is interestingly presented in Morozov's work. This includes, first and foremost, Savinkov's ideas that assumed abandoning the concept of containing Russia within the borders as close as possible to those of 1914. In addition, Tsvetkov expressed an important thought with respect to the options

⁵⁰ V. Tsvetkov, *General Alekseev* (Moskva, 2023).

⁵¹ A.V. Reznik, *Trockij i tovarishhi levaja oppozicija i politicheskaja kul'tura RKP(b), 1923–1924 gody. Izd. 2-e, ispr. i dop.* (Sankt-Peterburg, 2018).

⁵² A.A. Ivanov, *Vozhd' chernoj reakcii: Nikolaj Evgen'evich Markov* (Sankt-Peterburg, 2023); A.A. Ivanov, *Plamennyj reakcioner Vladimir Mitrofanovich Purishkevich* (Sankt-Peterburg, 2020).

⁵³ I. Rat'kovskij, *Stalin. Pjat' let Grazhdanskoj vojny i gosudarstvennogo stroitel'stva. 1917–1922 gg.* (Sankt-Peterburg, 2023). In recent years, Ratkowski has also published the following books: *Belyj terror. Grazhdanskaja vojna v Rossii. 1917–1920 gg.* (Sankt Peterburg, 2021); *Krasnyj terror. Karajushhij mech revoljucii*, 3rd edn (Moskva, 2021); *Grazhdanskaja vojna v Rossii. Ohota na bol'shevistskikh vozhd'ej (1917–1920)* (Moskva, 2021). See more, M.P. Sadłowski, 'Stalin: Piat' let Grazhdanskoi vojny i gosudarstvennogo stroitel'stva, 1917–1922 gg, written by Il'ia S. Rat'kovskii', *Soviet and Post-Soviet Review*, vol. 51, no. 1 (2023), pp. 112–16.

for cooperation between the white Russians and the Ukrainians, as well as the Entente States. Therefore, it would not be an overstatement to say that such research results stand in contrast to the official historical policy narratives of the Russian state. In particular, with respect to the vision of the history of Ukraine in 1917–20. So the question arises whether the said studies will reach beyond the research circles in the current political reality. After all, the print runs of these books are not significant.⁵⁴ Nevertheless, one cannot overlook or underestimate the ambitions of these Russian historians, who are trying to influence not only the Russian reality but also Russia's environment through their research.

Against this backdrop, Ganin's publications, for example, also have a practical dimension, since, based on the historical examples presented, they enable getting to know and understanding the phenomena of officers' acceptance of or involvement in the activities benefiting the totalitarian state. Therefore, it is important to become familiar with the methods and conditions under which the Bolshevik authorities could provide career opportunities and thus use the military specialists (i.e. the former tsarist or White officers) as part of their policies. In particular bearing in mind that the rise of the Red Army was based on the absolute subordination of the military to the politicians. Unlike the Whites, the Reds strictly separated the political leadership from the military command. And this model of political incapacitation of the army has been functioning in Russia virtually to this day.

On the other hand, the political and institutional experiences associated with the rise and functioning of the anti-Bolshevik movements of 1917–22, as well as a study of various models of citizens' involvement in public affairs and social dialogue, can provide contemporary models for various Russian democratic social and political forces. Such research may encourage a deeper reflection on the various modernisation and democratisation processes developed in Russia up to 1917. After all, the history of the Russian Revolutions of 1917, and especially of the Russian Civil War until 1922, is related to a conflict where the issue of whether the citizen's rights and freedoms would become the foundation for the construction of the Russian statehood was being decided. The issue of Russian democracy and, in general, the pro-Western orientation in the process of modernising the state and its foreign policy was being decided. The question of the economic and social system on which Russia's institutional state structure was to be based was also being resolved. In this respect, one can agree with the thought of a Russian historian, Oleg Budnitsky, that a civil war is not limited to military action since, above all, a civil

⁵⁴ In connection with this, the question arises whether the research described in this article has a limited scope of action. Especially since popular science or journalistic books by authors such as Sergey Georgyevich Kara-Murza (Russian: Сергей Георгиевич Кара-Мурза; born 23 Jan. 1939, in Moscow) are being published in Russia at the same time. In his book *Civil War and Foreign Intervention in Russia (1918–1921)* we can read that the Civil War in Russia is “a war for Russia's independence – a war against Western interference”, S. Kara-Murza, *Grazhdanskaja vojna i intervencija v Rossii (1918–1921)* (Moskva, 2022), p. 5.

war is a war of ideologies.⁵⁵ In turn, the defeat of the anti-Bolshevik movements marked the end of the various currents of democratisation and liberalisation that had intensified in Russia since the second half of the nineteenth century. Certainly, at this time and in these processes, we should also look for the origins of the weakness of the state based on the idea and concept of the nation's sovereignty rule in contemporary Russia. Therefore, a reflection on the conditions of the era and the reasons for the weaknesses of those leaders, as well as the political and social forces that failed to stop the Bolsheviks in their triumphant march to power, is important. New biographies of politicians and military officers, such as the ones discussed in this review, are part of an important new stage of research on the Revolution and the Civil War in Russia.

Abstract

The aim of this article is to discuss the latest Russian historiography on the Russian Civil War of 1917–22. The recent centennial anniversaries of 1917, the Civil War in Russia of 1917–22, and the founding of the Soviet Union have not only motivated numerous thematic conferences and been the subject of extensive media coverage but they have also been marked by a flurry of new research monographs by Russian historians. The recent publications by Alexander Puchenkov, Vasily Tsvetkov, Konstantin Morozov, Alexei Tieplakov, and Andrei Ganin signal that the Civil War has entered a new stage in Russian historiography. Researchers have started to reconsider the accomplishments and shortcomings of Russian émigré historiography and Soviet historiography, as well as the works produced in the 1990s in Russia and abroad. They are keen to re-examine, in a new and comprehensive way, the main political and military issues that were related to the functioning of the anti-Bolshevik forces and, first and foremost, to determine the reasons for their downfall. And with respect to the latter aspect, it is noticeable that Russian researchers are seeking answers to the question whether the October 1917 coup and the trajectory of the Civil War that ended in the Bolsheviks' victory were inevitable. In this context, there is a noticeable tendency to examine in detail the causes of the outbreak of the Civil War.

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⁵⁵ O. Budnycky, *Krasnyje y belyje* (Moskva, 2023), p. 116.

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