

cences into context, but what the book really has to offer is a few intimate details in the complex story of the Allied intervention in Russia.

Brigadier Williamson and his fellow Allied officers, with a few exceptions, were virtually ignorant of Russia and the events which preceded their coming in 1919. Williamson tells how he arrived there, "in a spirit of adventure and of preservation of the traditional ethics of the caste to which I belonged," to help Russians "loyal to their murdered Tsar." He was therefore both baffled and angered to discover that the Russian commander was "morbidly sensitive against aristocrats, courtiers, and officers of the ex-Imperial Guard" and that his own British superiors were quick to issue "emphatic orders" against any sign of support for monarchists. Worse still, from beginning to end he found that the leaders on both sides, Russian and Allied, "were always wrong" and that the war, often an astonishingly primitive conflict, was fought with incredible inefficiency, waste, and bungling.

Williamson is correct in the latter judgment, of course, but what his account reveals exceptionally well is the naïveté and ineptness of so many of the Allied officers who were sent to Russia by the intervention. If his book contains numerous errors, they somehow make its message seem even more authentic. The value of this simple memoir lies in its lower level—hence all the more vivid—portrayal of the agonizing frustration felt by those heroic but confused officers who found themselves fighting a war they did not understand under conditions that brought death more often from disease than from bullets. The general reader will find the book exciting but often misleading; the specialist will find in it another footnote to the history of the period.

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THE WHITE GENERALS: AN ACCOUNT OF THE WHITE MOVEMENT AND THE RUSSIAN CIVIL WAR. By *Richard Luckett*. New York: Viking Press, 1971. xviii, 413 pp. \$10.00.

"St. Petersburg is referred to as St. Petersburg throughout," writes Mr. Luckett in his preface. This sentence is a warning: the author dislikes not only the reforms of the March Revolution, but believes that even the tsarist government introduced a few too many innovations. One wonders how Luckett, an Englishman, refers to his royal family. After all, the family name, Windsor, was adopted at the same time and for the same reason that the name of the Russian capital was changed.

Indeed, Luckett is a conservative who cannot see any justification for revolutionary upheaval. However, his conservatism is rarely relevant, for he has no interest in political issues. His insistence on calling the Russian capital by its pre-1914 name is merely a manifestation of the same eccentricity which makes him write that the national independence struggle of the Finns was somehow more a part of the Russian Civil War than the wars of the other nationalities—Poles, Letts, Estonians, Georgians, and many others.

Luckett has no patience for describing the issues over which the Civil War was fought. He does not analyze the political views of the White leaders, and he has little understanding of the brittleness of the alliance of forces which made up the anti-Bolshevik side. He is content to say nothing more than what is obvious

and well known about issues like land reform. The military exploits and even the physical appearance of some of the White soldiers attract his attention.

However, in a book about the Civil War the author cannot help but reveal some of his views about the working of history. He seems to believe that the Russian Revolution was caused not by class struggle, not by the collapse of a weak government at a time of great stress, and not even by the work of foreign agents, but rather by the wickedness of some politicians, notably Guchkov, who, for reasons known only to himself, sowed dissension between the tsar and his chief of staff, General M. V. Alekseev. The Kornilov mutiny occurred not because of the political ambitions of the general, but because V. N. Lvov enjoyed mischief for its own sake, and because of the activities of the "morphine addict" Boris Savinkov.

Luckett's complete lack of comprehension of the political context allows him to make some strange assertions. He believes that Kornilov was named commander of the "St. Petersburg" military district because of his "known revolutionary sympathies." This is unlikely, since it was the tsar who approved the appointment and since Kornilov during the war frequently expressed the desire "to string up all these Miliukovs" (Victor Chernov, *The Great Russian Revolution*, New Haven, 1936, p. 325). Luckett also imagines Denikin as something of a revolutionary. He maintains that Denikin's "military career was not an easy one, since he gained the reputation of being politically unsound and was regarded by his seniors as a dangerous radical." This assertion is a figment of Luckett's imagination.

It is hardly worth noting factual errors. But it is interesting that the transliteration of names is not only inconsistent but that the same name appears in different transliterations. Sometimes we hear of Krivoshein, sometimes of Krivochein, presumably depending on whether Luckett's source was English or French. His confusion of the Western and Russian calendars makes him say that the Bolsheviks captured the majority in the St. Petersburg (!) Soviet before the Kornilov mutiny. At one point Luckett creates the fictitious character S. S. Krymov out of the names of the Kadet politician S. S. Krym and General A. M. Krymov. If only the resolution of the military-civilian conflict among the Whites could have been so easy!

The White Generals is a book written by an amateur historian who has not done his homework. It is full of mistakes, and without redeeming virtues. The book should not have been published.

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OT GUMANIZMA K KHRISTU: VOSPOMINANIJA, PIS'MA I ZAPISI.

By *D. P. Konchalovsky*. Collection "Les Inédits russes," vol. 3. Paris: Librairie des Cinq Continents, 1971. 350 pp. 28.50 F., paper.

Konchalovsky's book contains his autobiography and a vivid narrative of his observations and impressions from contemporary life. The author was born in 1878 in Kharkov. In 1902 he was graduated from the Istoriko-filologicheskii Fakultet of Moscow University and began his career as teacher and scholar specializing in the history of the ancient world, particularly the social history of Rome. Scholarship was the main purpose of his life (p. 12). He was a "normal" Russian intellectual: