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CIVIL WARS AND MORTALITY RATES OF MILITARY COMMANDERS: A HISTORICAL-DEMOGRAPHIC STUDY

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Summary. In this paper I would like to accomplish the following tasks: to compare mortality rates of generals in US civil war and Russia one; to explore the maximum life spans of military commanders; and to analyze changes in occupational mobility of commanders before and after the civil war. Both published materials and databases were used to determine mortality rates of generals. Civil wars are a vivid example of meritocracy. They evolve new military talents and give new political leaders. Civil wars are always a turning point in professional and social mobility. After some years of bitter fighting not everyone can pick up the threads. For some, the war was a step towards fame and fortune, for others a step towards disaster, obscurity and misery. History of civil wars suggests that men who started the war as young military leaders actually lived less than those who were in adulthood when the war began. Those who went through all the ordeals, even in the face of economic and political reconstruction (in the U.S.), emigration or political repression (in the USSR) could live to be very old.

Keywords: US Civil War (1861-1865); Russian Civil War (1917-1922); military commanders; mortality rates; lifespan; occupational mobility.

Introduction

Any civil war is always a national disaster. Opponents in the civil war are citizens of the country. Each side asserts its truth, ideals and values. Civil wars in the United States (1861–1865) and in Russia (1917–1922) were a major turn in history that defined their vector of development for many years to come. Economic system, political system, national identity – all this changed drastically. These wars are of such magnitude that it is practically impossible to accurately determine the amount of materials published on these events: hundreds of books, thousands of articles, hundreds of feature and documentary films. Many aspects of the confrontation (military, political, economic, cultural) were analyzed by researchers; memoirs of many participants were published and life stories of major military and political figures of the era were reconstructed. All this helped to provide a more complete and vivid picture of violent confrontation but some questions were ignored. This paper is an effort to undertake a comparative analysis of mortality rates of military commanders in two civil wars: United States (the Confederacy and the Union) and Russia (the Red Army and the White Movement). This study focuses on how major military conflicts influenced the life of military men.

In this paper I would like to accomplish the following tasks:

- to compare mortality rates of generals in both countries;
- to explore the maximum life spans of military commanders; and
- to analyze changes in occupational mobility of commanders before and after the civil war.

Any civil war is a political revolution at the same time. The American political scientist Samuel P. Huntington noted that the political essence of the revolution is in the rapid spread of political consciousness and rapid involvement of new groups into politics – so fast that the existing political institutions are unable to assimilate them. Revolution is an extreme case of the explosive growth of political activity. Full-scale revolution is always associated with a rapid and violent destruction of existing political institutions, mobilization of new groups into politics and creation of new political institutions [15, p. 270–271].

Several decades earlier, another prominent scientist Pitirim Sorokin pointed to a number of specific features of social revolutions. During the revolution, the structure of society becomes weakened, formless and collapsing. Lines of social stratification suddenly become blurred, the mechanism that regulated the circulation and regrouping becomes paralyzed

and stops functioning, and so the whole circulation becomes anarchic in nature. Before us “a scattered anthill”: without style, without form, without order. Individuals from the lower classes can immediately rise to the top of the social ladder, skipping over a series of stages, and vice versa they can fall from the top down with the same catastrophic speed and suddenness. During the revolution, energetic people with unmet ambitions come to the fore. Since the revolution is always war and violence, it brings to the fore those who are able to manage violence. Intervention of the military and military force into the political revolution becomes a natural result of the started process [22, p. 205–208, 241–242].

Also, new armies that appeared instead of the old ones (the Union and the Confederacy, the Red Army and the White Movement) passed their own development from disorganization to the new level of organization, i. e. from order to chaos and back to order. Sociologists have long noticed that any organization in a growth phase provides employees with more opportunities for career advancement than the one whose growth is complete. The larger the organization, the more staff posts in it, the greater the chance for career growth through numerous ways of achieving a higher purpose. The permanent enlargement of the organization reduces the likelihood of internal conflict, as it can provide many employees with an opportunity to enhance their status without need to simultaneously downgrade others. It means that the majority of employees in such an organiza-

tion can take the highest places not at the expense of the others. Furthermore, the number of executives in a large organization is always significant. The larger the system and the larger and more diverse its functions, the greater the number of staff involved in the coordination and control [8, p. 348–356]. Thus, a favorable combination of external factors (setting up new military structures) and internal factors (talent and ambitions of a soldier or an officer) gave an excellent opportunity for self-realization to anyone interested.

Data

Both published materials and databases were used to determine mortality rates of generals. Sources used by me are in the reference list. I collected information on military leaders of the Confederacy and the Union as well as the Red Army and the White Movement. I considered officers in the general ranks starting with Brigadier General (in the U.S.) and Major-General (in Russia). With respect to the Red Army, the approach was different. After the October Revolution of 1917 epaulets and military ranks were abolished. So, in my database there were not only generals of the Russian Imperial Army, sided with the Bolsheviks, but also those who held senior positions in the Red Army (e. g., commanders of fronts, armies, divisions and brigades). They were not only senior officers, but also subaltern officers, and sometimes just talented soldiers who were promoted in the years of political anarchy. Thus, the database has about three thousand people (see Table 1).

Table 1
Number of commanders in our database

American Civil War, 1861–1865		Russian Civil War, 1917–1922	
Union	Confederacy	Red army	White movement
581	425	1015	876
Total: 1006		Total: 1891	

Results

Let us begin the analysis of mortality rates among generals in the Civil War in the United States (1861–1865). Look at the

situation over the period as a whole (Table 2). The table shows that the percentage of deaths in each age group on both sides is roughly equal. Perhaps, the only striking

difference is the higher death rates of young Confederate commanders in the first three age groups (up to 50 years) as opposed to the Union. In the groups of 20–29 years and 30–39 years it is 1,7 times and in the group of 40–49 years 1,3 times. Then, in the older age groups, the advantage goes to the generals of the Union. In each of the subsequent groups, the percentage of those survived starting from the age of 50 in the case of the Confederacy is less than in the case of the Union. High mortality rates prevail among Confederate generals in the first half of life, and among those in the Union in the second half of life. This is the first important difference.

Table 2
Mortality rates among U.S. Civil War generals in 1861–1865 (in percent)

Age (years)	Union	Confederacy
20–29	1,5	2,6
30–39	6,5	11,0
40–49	8,6	11,0
50–59	15,7	14,4
60–69	22,2	19,5
70–79	27,7	26,6
80–89	15,0	12,5
90–99	2,8	2,4
Total	100	100

Table 3 below presents information on the years of birth of the Union and Confederate generals. It follows from the Table that the absolute majority of participants in both armies were of three age groups, i. e. born in 1810–1830-ies: 89,4% (the Union) and 90,3% (the Confederacy).

Those born in the 1820s gave the highest percentage of generals, and this is only natural. They were neither beardless youths ready for action and dreaming of glory nor the elderly people dreaming of rest and comfort. During the war time, they were only 32–45. A reasonable balance was characteristic of the people born in the 1820s: on the one hand, they preserved internal energy, on the other, they acquired experience and discretion.

Table 3
Years of birth of the Union and Confederate generals (in percent)

Years of birth	Union	Confederacy
1780s	0,5	none
1790s	1,5	0,8
1800s	7,6	7,3
1810s	27,2	23,8
1820s	41,7	40,9
1830s	20,5	25,6
1840s	1,0	1,6
Total	100	100

Heavy losses among officers and lack of time for their training forced the Union and Confederate leaders to actively promote talented young commanders. Accelerated promotion in rank was the hallmark of the personnel policy of the both armies. However, the psychology of this new generation of commanders even in the rank of general was still that of subaltern officers, as they were until recently. They were ambitious, courageous, and eager to fight and sacrifice themselves, wanting to distinguish themselves and get rewards. Many of them died in one of the many battles or died of wounds and infectious diseases.

More than 20 years ago, Charles J. Crawford conducted an interesting study on the age level of commanders in the Armies of the Potomac and Northern Virginia during the Civil War. According to his estimates, from June 1862 to April 1865 in the Army of the Potomac the average age of commanders in infantry divisions dropped from 44,2 to 36,2 years; in cavalry divisions from 53 to 34,3 years. In the Army of Northern Virginia, the average age of commanders in infantry divisions dropped from 45,4 to 37,3 years; in cavalry divisions actually remained at the same level, i. e. 29 years at the start of the war and 29,6 years at the end [6, p. 5]. Young commanders who led the Union and Confederate Armies were playfully nicknamed “boy generals”. Following are ages of the youngest commanders calculated by Charles J. Crawford (Tables 4 and 5).

Table 4

Age of youngest commanders (Army of the Potomac)

Date	Infantry		Cavalry		Army
	Division	Corps	Division	Corps	
June 1862	34	39	53	none	35
September 1862	33	38	38	none	35
May 1863	34	32	30	40	48
July 1863	28	32	27	38	47
May 1864	28	34	26	33	45
June 1864	28	34	26	33	45
April 1865	25	29	25	24	46

[6, p. 7].

Table 5

Age of youngest commanders (Army of Northern Virginia)

Date	Infantry		Cavalry		Army
	Division	Corps	Division	Corps	
June 1862	36	Her	29	none	55
September 1862	31	38	29	none	55
May 1863	29	39	30	none	56
July 1863	29	37	30	none	56
May 1864	32	38	26	31	57
June 1864	27	38	27	46	57
April 1865	27	39	27	29	58

[6, p. 7]

Table 6 summarizes the causes of death of the Union and Confederate generals by ranks. It shows: first, how dangerous are command positions and how high are risks of being killed on a par with ordinary soldiers; second, the low level of medical care

(every fourth general died from wounds); third, higher mortality rates among the Confederate generals (half as high again as the mortality rates among the Union generals), i. e. their heroism and readiness to sacrifice themselves.

Table 6

Mortality rates among the Union and Confederate generals in the U.S. Civil War

Ranks	Union		Confederacy		Total
	Killed in action	Died of wounds	Killed in action	Died of wounds	
General	none	none	1	none	1
Lieutenant General	none	none	2	1	3
Major General	8	4	3	4	19
Brigadier General	19	15	55	9	98
Total	27	19	61	14	121

[My estimates based on: 13, p. 173–175]

Now a few words about the professional mobility of the Union and Confederate generals. Below are Tables 7 and 8 which show the ten most popular (most common) professions, occupied by the Confederate and Union generals before the war's start and after its completion. In the U.S. many of the Civil War commanders served in the U.S. Army and earlier they participated in the war with Mexico in 1846–1848. The U.S. Army was small and compact in size, so career advancement in the Army was

slow. Many of those, who could not accept quiet, daily routine of service, resigned and worked as lawyers, merchants, engineers, farmers, etc. Two of the most famous generals of the Union Army Ulysses S. Grant and William T. Sherman tried unsuccessfully to go into business and nearly bankrupt. No one knows who they would have become. Probably they would have remained unknown to anyone officers but the war saved them. Thanks to the war they became heroes and idols of the nation.

Table 7
Top 10 occupations among the Confederate generals before and after the Civil War (in percent)

Pre-war occupation		After-war occupation	
Profession	Percent	Profession	Percent
Military officer	28,0	Lawyer	26,5
Lawyer	26,3	Politician	18,0
Politician	16,5	Farmer	14,5
Planter	8,7	Businessman	8,2
US congressman	4,3	Civil engineer	6,8
Teacher	4,3	Planter	6,8
Instructor of military academy (school)	3,1	Governor, lieutenant governor	5,4
Farmer	3,0	US congressman	5,4
Merchant	3,0	US senator	4,2
Civil engineer	2,8	Judge	4,2
Total	100	Total	100

[My estimates based on: 22].

After the Civil War, the situation changed: the Confederacy was defeated, all Southerners were considered traitors. During the Reconstruction of the South they were actually forced out of the U.S. Army. Many of them were disenfranchised. The U.S. Congress and U.S. President issued a series of acts in 1865–1872 to amnesty former senior commanders and politicians of the Confederacy. Formally, they were forgiven, but the winners' attitude to them remained negative. They were not considered heroes and no songs were composed in their honor. In the eyes of the Northerners they were morally guilty. For example, Robert E. Lee (1807–1870), commander of the Confederate Army, up to his death was denied the right to vote. It should be noted

that in the United States the Civil War veterans were treated differently. If the Union veterans got their pensions from the federal government and were considered heroes, the Confederate veterans could only rely on the pensions of the southern states and moral support of the local communities. Only those Southerners who fought in the war against Mexico could rely on the federal government's financial assistance [5; 10; 17]. Again, civilian employment was the lot of retired generals of the Confederacy.

The Union veterans found themselves in a better position. In their hands were military and civil authorities, many of the key positions of executive power, not to mention the fact that the former generals of the Union (Ulysses S. Grant,

Rutherford B. Hayes, James A. Garfield, and Benjamin Harrison) were Presidents of the United States. By the beginning of XX century ideological confrontation gradually relegated to the background. In 1912, a permit was granted to erect a

monument to the fallen soldiers the Confederacy at Arlington National Cemetery. This event was an important factor in understanding the war as a national tragedy, not as a “war of political opponents”, but as a “brothers’ war”.

Table 8

10 most popular occupations of the Union generals before and after the Civil War (in percent)

Pre-war occupation		After-war occupation	
Profession	Percent	Profession	Percent
Military officer	33,5	Military officer	33,8
Lawyer	22,5	Lawyer	14,9
Politician	11,4	Businessman	8,5
Teacher	6,0	US congressman	8,1
Instructor at West Point	5,7	Diplomatic posts	7,8
Civil engineer	4,5	Politician	7,8
Businessman	4,3	Governor, lieutenant governor	6,6
Clerk	4,3	Internal revenue collector	4,2
Farmer	4,3	Writer	4,2
US Congressman	3,5	Farmer	4,1
Total	100	Total	100

[My estimates based on: 22].

Look at the situation of military commanders of the Civil War in Russia (Table 9).

Table 9

Mortality rates of generals in Russia in the Civil War of 1917–1922 (in percent)

Age (years)	Red Army	White Movement
20–29	2,9	0,1
30–39	5,8	2,7
40–49	28,1	8,1
50–59	24,9	17,7
60–69	19,0	26,7
70–79	10,7	24,8
80–89	6,4	14,6
90–99	2,1	5,3
100 and over	0,1	none
Total	100	100

We can see that the number of the Red Army commanders, who were dead before age 40, is 2,2 times higher than the number of the White Guard generals in the same

age group. The same applies to the period of maturity, i. e. age 40–59 (2,1 times higher). This means that the leaders of the Red Army died twice as likely in the early adulthood than their opponents. The latter being the result of Joseph Stalin’s large-scale political repressions against commanders. Almost all of them were executed, died in prison or in exile. Beginning with the “retirement age” (60–79 years), the situation is changing. The White Guard generals, who died at this age, account for 51,5% while the Red Army commanders only for 29,7%. The White Movement was ahead of the Red Army by the number of long-livers. One in five white generals and every eleventh Red Army commander lived for more than 80 years. Ivan Belinsky (1876–1976), military engineer, colonel, and later a Soviet general who lived as long as 100 years and two months, is rather an exception to the rule. Especially as in the 90-year-olds group the number of White generals is 2,5 times higher than that of the Red ones. This is an excellent illustration of how

differently were veterans treated on both sides. Paradoxically, many generals who fled Russia and moved to other countries, turned out to be more successful than those who stayed in the USSR. Motherland has become stepmother for many of them.

Unlike the U.S., Russia was thrown into a civil war right after another major war (First World War). After the October Revolution of 1917, the Red Army was actually created from scratch. Abolition of many attributes of the previous Army (insignia, rank, class) resulted in confusion and anarchy. It was chaos, which had to be straightened out. Here, as in any revolution, young hopefuls were encouraged. Therefore, among the Red Army commanders there were so many young people who rose from humble origins. Sometimes they were ordinary soldiers who participated in First World War and entered the service of the Soviet regime. The Bolsheviks more often promoted young soldiers up the military hierarchy. Prominent commanders of the Civil War were Nikolai Shchors (1895–1919), Vasily Chapayev (1887–1919), Grigory Kotovsky (1881–1925), Vladimir Azin (1895–1920), Mikhail Tukhachevsky (1893–1937), Vasily Blyukher (1890–1939), Ieronim Uborovich (1896–1937).

It is obvious that without the help of the Russian Imperial Army officers who voluntarily or by force joined the Red Army ('military experts'), the Bolsheviks could not win the civil war. According to the contemporary Russian historian Sergei Volkov, military experts were almost all in senior command positions in the Red Army in 1918–1922 (Table 10).

Table 10
The share of officers in the Red Army command structure (1918–1922)

Ranks	Percent
Front commanders	92,3
Front chief of staff	100
Army commanders	91,3
Army chief of staff	97,4
Division commanders	88,9
Division chief of staff	97

[26, p. 326]

Consider the causes of death of the Red Army commanders in the Civil War. A total of 93 people in our database belong to this category, 21 of who were earlier of the general rank (19 generals and 2 admirals); 34 were officers (from lieutenant to colonel), 10 were non-commissioned officers, and 28 were soldiers. Causes of their death are given in Table 11. Obviously, the majority were killed in action and died of diseases totalling 78,5%.

Table 11
Causes of death of the Red Army commanders during the Civil War

Cause of death	Number	Percent
Died of illnesses (typhus, tuberculosis, dysentery, etc)	23	24,7
Killed in action, died of wounds	50	53,8
Died in a car or train accident	3	3,2
Executed by Bolsheviks on suspicion of treason	13	14,0
Other causes	4	4,3
Total	93	100

The attitude towards the former officers of Imperial Russia changed after the Civil War and the rise to power of Joseph Stalin. "The Bolsheviks disposed of them as if they were single-use syringes, and almost immediately after the war they were thrown out of the army and many executed", – said Sergey Volkov. The most amazing thing is that repressions affected even those who voluntarily joined the Red Army and took the ideological values of the Bolsheviks. Many of them were executed or died in prison during the period of the personality cult of Joseph Stalin (1929–1953).

"Revolution is like Saturn, it devours its own children" – these words put by the German playwright Georg Büchner into Georges Danton's mouth, who died during the Jacobin terror, were prophetic for many Red Army commanders. The logic of post-revolutionary events is that the struggle among revolutionaries themselves becomes inevitable, and usually people who revolution raises high, are the first to die. According to Sergei Volkov, 47,5 percent of the Red Army commanders, who held

senior positions during the Civil War, were later repressed [25]. According to my estimates, a total of 51,1 percent of commanders were repressed during the personality cult of Joseph Stalin (1929–1953). Out of 1015 commanders in our database 519 were subjected to various repressions, most of them being executed (Tabl 12).

Table 12
Commanders of the Civil War (Red Army)
repressed in 1929–1953

Cause of death	Number	Percent
Executed	443	85,4
Died in prison	23	4,4
Were in prison, but later released	50	9,6
Committed suicide before arrest	3	0,6
Total	519	100

It was dangerous to be an officer of the Russian Imperial Army in the USSR. This could lead to an arrest and unjustified repression. Only during Second World War and after it the attitude towards such officers became more restrained and respectful. Among those who survived the years of repressions was the former colonel of Imperial Russia Boris Shaposhnikov (1882–1945). Despite numerous accusations against him, which were often delivered to Joseph Stalin, the dictator ordered to leave him alone. Boris Shaposhnikov later became Marshal of the Soviet Union, a prominent military administrator, and died six weeks before the victorious end of the Great Patriotic War.

The former Russian military attaché in France, Major-General Alexei Ignatiev (1877–1954) stayed alive though he came from a noble family. He helped to return to the USSR the money of Imperial Russia that was kept in his name on deposit in French banks. Several generations of his ancestors faithfully served the Russian emperors and were famous for their monarchist views. Nikolai Ignatiev (1872–1962), a cousin of Alexey Ignatiev, served in the White Army in the south of Russia, and then immigrated to Bulgaria. But all these compromising factors had no adverse affect on Alexei Ignatiev's life.

Some former generals of the Russian Imperial Army managed to adapt to new ideological conditions and lived quite a long life, such as Mikhail Bonch-Bruyevich (1870–1956), Eugene Barsukov (1866–1957), Vladimir Fedorov (1874–1966), and Alexander Samoylo (1869–1963). Sure enough their lives were neither comfortable nor easy, nor happy. Obviously personal preference of Joseph Stalin largely predetermined the fate of this or that commander. Some of the former officers and generals of the Russian Army were even allowed to publish memoirs about their life and service before the revolution. All memoirs were subjected to strict censorship and were kept in the ideological tone. Such memoirs only glorified the Soviet Union, the Communist Party and the Red Army. Many of them are fragmentary, of little interest and not very informative.

There were commanders of the Civil War who survived the repression of the 1930s, but not Second World War. Some, like Dmitry Karbyshev (1881–1945), Alexei Flegontov (1888–1943), Vladimir Kachalov (1890–1941), Joseph Apasenko (1890–1943), were killed in battle or died in German captivity. Others, like Pavel Lyubomirov (1858–1941), Anatoly Shemansky (1868–1942) and Nikolai Henrikson (1871–1941) died of disease and starvation at an advanced age during the siege of Leningrad (1941–1944). The first half of the XX century was a difficult time for Russia (series of wars, revolutions, social conflicts, economic transformations). All these factors made the surviving of military commanders extremely difficult. Heroes of the Civil War were like antique Odyssey “between Scylla and Charybdis”.

We consider the situation with the opponents of the Bolsheviks. The White Movement was fundamentally a mirror image of the order and principles of the Russian Imperial Army though somewhat changed subject to the conditions of the current situation. On the whole, the anti-Bolshevik forces were more conservative in military reforms. But the White Movement also had its young idols: Vladimir Kappel (1883–1920), Mikhail Drozdovsky (1881–1919), Anatoly Pepelyayev (1891–1938), Yakov Slashchov (1885–1929).

Great harm to the White Movement was caused by the division of officers into

the “old-timers” who founded the army and the “newbies” who joined the army later. Many generals and senior officers were denied participation in the command of the White Army. They were not appointed to high positions, as each regiment jealously guarded seniority in rank from the beginning of the Civil War. Nobody cared what an officer was before the revolution. It was more important what he had become then. It was psychologically difficult for many colonels and generals to take orders from yesterday’s lieutenants and captains, who so quickly became generals, the more so that many of them had known each other since the time of joint service in the past.

Colonel Boris Shteifon, who served in the White Army in southern Russia, recalled how he happened to meet General Leonid Bolhovitinov at the headquarters of his regiment. Because of his short service in the Red Army, General was tried and reduced to the ranks. Now he served as an ordinary telegrapher at the headquarters of the regiment although three years ago (in First World War) General Bolkhovitinov was Army Chief of Staff and Shteifon was captain and one of his assistants. Everything had changed [20, p. 12]

According to baron Alexei von Budberg (Minister of War in the government headed by Admiral Kolchak), the reason for the defeat of the White Movement in Siberia was that the young ones who were “very diligent, but had neither sufficient professional knowledge nor service experience” came to power. He contemptuously called them “ambitious upstarts”, “revolutionary random miscarriages of Fortune” and “strategic babies”, whose boyish enthusiasm and ambitions dominated over the common sense and experience. These 25–30-year-old generals, marched boldly into the attack with a rifle in hand, but did not know how to manage the troops. They “rushed their fences to become generals and in doing that had no time to learn anything” [2]. It was the same “boy generals” as in the U.S. Army a half-century ago. Yet typical commanders of the White Movement were those born in 1860–1880s. These are just those with who one can associate the success and failure of the Russian counterrevolution. Commanders of the Red Army were younger than their opponents. The vast

majority of them (87%) were born in the 1870–1890s (Table 13).

Table 13
Years of birth of the Red Army and the White Movement generals (in percent)

Years of birth	Red Army	White Movement
1840s	0,1	0,8
1850s	3,4	8,1
1860s	9,5	29,8
1870s	19,3	39,0
1880s	32,4	20,1
1890s	35,3	2,2
Total	100	100

Let us consider the causes of death among the White Movement commanders in the Civil War. In our database there are 118 people belonging to this category. Table 14 presents causes of their death. Obviously, the majority, totaling 88.1%, were killed in the battle and died of disease.

Table 14
Causes of death of the White Movement generals in the Civil War

Cause of death	Number	Percent
Died of illnesses	21	17,8
Killed in action, died of wounds	83	70,3
Suicides	7	5,9
Killed by mutineers-soldiers	3	2,5
Other causes	4	3,4
Total	118	100

The post-war life of veterans of the White Movement looks like a better choice. Paradoxically, neither forced emigration conditions nor lower social and economic status had impact on their lifespan. If they were not subjected to political persecution in the countries where they lived as emigrants or deportation to the Soviet Union, if they were able to adapt to the new foreign language and foreign culture environment, and also to find a steady source of income, the probability of living to be very old was high. For the military emigrants the most attractive and comfortable were Europe

and North America, although many Russian diaspora and communities were set up practically worldwide. Preference to a particular place of emigration was given on the basis of ethnic, cultural and linguistic affinities (Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Poland, Czechoslovakia) or to the countries with high GDP per capita and a good standard of living (U.S., UK, France, etc.). Many ethnic Germans, Poles, Swedes, Finns, Serbs, Bulgarians and Greeks were previously officers of the Russian Imperial Army. At the new place they remembered about it, being able to adapt to the social and economic conditions. Table 15 presents the countries where veterans of the White Movement managed to live more than 80 years. Of course, it is difficult to determine what caused this longevity: a genetic factor (robust health) or socio-economic factors of the country. Nevertheless, these numbers tell the story best.

Table 15
10 countries most comfortable for the “white” emigrants who reached the age of 80–99 (in percent)

Country	Percent
France	25,6
Yugoslavia	25,2
U.S.	18,0
Bulgaria	8,4
Germany	8,0
Austria	3,0
China	3,0
Belgium	2,7
Poland	2,3
UK	1,9
Czechoslovakia	1,9
Total	100

We review the occupational mobility of the Red Army and the White Movement commanders. Let us start with the Red Army. A civil war broke out in Russia after First World War therefore most of individuals were employed in military service or in the system of military education. Table 16 shows that those were military officers, instructors of military academies (training schools) as well as a small percentage of workers and peasants who were mobilized

to participate in First World War therefore the Red Army command staff was eclectic in composition. Along with generals and admirals (titled nobility), it consisted of liberal-minded officers (middle class) and even ordinary soldiers (lower strata).

After the Civil War and military reform in 1924–1925 the Red Army was downsized. Yet many of the commanders stayed in the army. Some became instructors or inspectors in military academies (training schools), others took up positions in civil administration, diplomatic posts or made a political career. For the majority, professional and social mobility was upward, especially for those who moved from rags to riches. The new Soviet military elite welcomed particularly those of peasant-and-worker origin as it symbolized the close relationship with the people. Promotion of workers and peasants to generals and marshals was the subject of special pride in the Soviet Union and served as a perfect example of meritocracy.

Table 16
Occupation of military commanders who joined the Red Army in 1918–1922 (in percent)

Occupation	Prewar occupation	Postwar occupation
Civil administration	none	13,3
Diplomatic posts	none	5,4
Instructor of military school	3,4	18,7
Politician	none	2,6
Semi-skilled laborer	1,7	none
Soldier	83,6	60
Unskilled laborer	5,8	none
Peasant	5,5	none
Total	100	100

Another situation was with generals of the White Movement. They were forced to leave Russia and look for a new place to live abroad, adapting to different climatic, economic, cultural and political conditions. Life in a foreign country was difficult. For most of them there was no chance to employ their military skills and knowledge in places where they immigrated. Once

in exile, immigrants tended to lose their previous social status and they abruptly went down the social scale. Both, individuals and whole groups were exposed to this degradation, which ended in a drama for those who were not accustomed to hardships, poverty and social exclusion. In

countries where the exiles settled, they at best became middle-income people, but many former commanders took less prestigious and low-paid jobs (taxi driver, shoemaker, gardener, porter, carpenter, clerk, etc.). Every third of them in exile changed from 3 to 5 activities.

Table 17
Occupation of generals of the White Movement in emigration (in percent)

Occupation	Prewar occupation	Postwar occupation
Accountant	none	2,2
Architect	none	3,3
Civil engineer	none	5,8
Clerk	none	11,3
Educator	none	5,6
Farmer	none	4,4
Handicraftsman	none	2,7
Instructor of military school	6,2	2,3
Lawyer	none	1,2
Merchant	none	4,6
Newspaper correspondent	none	2,8
Politician	none	0,6
Railroad official	none	7,2
Sailor	none	2,5
Semi-skilled laborer	none	18,6
Soldier	93,8	6,3
Unemployed	none	2,0
Unskilled laborer	none	15,1
Writer	none	1,5
Total	100	100

Conclusion

Civil wars in the United States and Russia were large-scale conflicts. They are separated from each other by half a century, but for each of the countries it was a watershed in history. Civil wars are a vivid example of meritocracy. They evolve new military talents and give new political leaders. Civil wars are always a turning point in professional and social mobility. After some years of bitter fighting not everyone can pick up the threads. For some, the war was a step towards fame and fortune, for others a step towards disaster, obscurity and misery. History of civil wars suggests that men who started the war as

young military leaders actually lived less than those who were in adulthood when the war began. Those who went through all the ordeals, even in the face of economic and political reconstruction (in the U.S.), emigration or political repression (in the USSR) could live to be very old.

And finally, the civil wars in the United States and Russia give us examples of different political cultures: democracy, reconciliation, harmony, mercy and forgiveness of one's opponents in the U.S. and authoritarianism, with the persecution of political opponents in the USSR. Until the collapse of the Soviet Union, all white emigrants remained principled ideological enemies for the country. Only in the new democratic

Russia overcoming authoritarian ideology, generals of the White Movement as well as commanders of the Red Army were recognized as full-fledged heroes in the hall of fame although the experience of the U.S. and Russia convinces us that there are no civil war heroes. Warfare is always a great tragedy.

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