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Problems of Interactions of the White Army Commanders with Separatist Governments of South Russia in A. I. Denikin's 'Defamation of the White Movement'

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## Abstract

The article studies some of the more complicated and sensitive issues of the Civil War in the South of Russia – relations of the Armed Forces of South Russia with the Krai governments of the Don and the Kuban and separatist movements as an important factor in the Whites' defeat in the South of Russia. Both issues are covered in 'Defamation of the White Movement,' one of the last works of General A. I. Denikin. Its manuscript has been introduced into scientific use by the authors. Commanders and military authorities of the Volunteer Army with A. I. Denikin at its head were not tied down by regional interests and could pursue national interests in their policy in order to restore an all-Russian unity destroyed by the revolution. Regional concerns of the Don, Kuban, Little Russian, Caucasian independentists were in direct conflict with the national tasks that the Volunteer Army and the Armed Forces of South Russia strove to solve. Unlike the Don Ataman P. N. Krasnov, who was forced to cooperate with the occupation authorities of Imperial Germany, whose troops had occupied the territory of the Great Don Army for the most of 1918, and unlike other regional administrators in the German-occupied territories, the Whites did not cooperate with the occupiers and at times counteracted their anti-Russian policy. Denikin's propaganda successfully used this fact to fall back on traditional patriotic sentiments and to eat away at the Kremlin regime's support. Centrifugal tendencies in the South of Russia did not allow the Volunteers to consolidate anti-Bolshevik forces and made an armed resistance to the Bolsheviks impossible. Hence A. I. Denikin's uncompromising stand on separatist aspirations of independentists. In his view, it was the separatists' activities in different regions of the former Russian Empire that hindered the successful offensive of the armed forces of South Russia, for instance, on the Moscow direction. Internal dissent was exacerbated by intervention of foreign forces – German occupation forces, the Allied Intervention, and active Bolshevik influence on the outskirts of the former Empire. The article compares Denikin's text with testimonies of contemporaries and writings of historians. Thus, the authors have been able to show that his slender work reliably and accurately recreates the complex and dramatic situation, which led to the defeat of the anti-Bolshevik forces in the Civil War.



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## Keywords

White movement, White Army, Armed Forces of South Russia, General Denikin, March on Moscow, tactical and strategic issues, local separatism.

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