Finally, despite the ambitious scope of his research on the labor movement, this work still seems rather narrowly focused. Certainly the workers helped bring the Bolsheviks to power in major cities, but the author's concern with this aspect of the Russian revolutionary drama risks the old Marxist error of giving undue attention to the working class as an agent of social change. One of the major achievements of recent historical scholarship has been to recognize the distinctive role of each class—peasants, gentry, and capitalists, no less than the workers—in the events that culminated in Lenin's rise to power. McDaniel has made a significant contribution by showing the complicated interactions among the bureaucracy, the manufacturers, the workers, and the radical intellectuals, but in the last analysis the subjects of his study must be seen in the larger context of the agrarian revolution and the revolt of minority nationalities against Petrograd. Here, after all, lay the ultimately decisive factors that determined the Bolshevik victory in the cataclysm of the Russian Civil War.

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Francesco Benvenuti has written a lively and provocative political history of how the Bolsheviks created the Red Army under the pressure of revolution and civil war. Immediately he warns readers that his is not a military history, but rather a study of state-building and of the legacy of the Civil War period for later Soviet politics. Indeed, Benvenuti's book must be added to the recent works of Robert Service and T. H. Rigby as required reading on the formative early history of the Communist Party and Soviet state. Benvenuti traces the evolution of the Army's internal regime, the Army's position within the Soviet state, and the politics of the Bolshevik Party as it underwent its wrenching transformation from a revolutionary party to a party that increasingly acquired the characteristics of a state apparatus. He argues that the impact of the Military Opposition was much greater for the Party's evolution and the character of the Opposition far more diverse and dynamic than has been previously admitted. Finally, Bolsheviks and the Red Army offers a new view of Trotsky in his capacity as Chairman of the Revolutionary Military Council and War Commissar. On the one hand, Trotsky's outstanding skills as an organizer and administrator emerge more clearly in the book's sections on the institutional history of the Army; the sections on ideological debates, on the other hand, reveal his constant and often crippling isolation, both within the Party and at the top levels of the Army.
On the matter of the distinctive type of civil-military relations that evolved during the creation of the Red Army, Benvenuti's work invites comparison with John Erickson's writings on the early history of the Army—on whose work Benvenuti draws heavily—as well as Gerhard Ritter's *Das Kommunenmodell und die Begrundung der Roten Armee im Jahre 1918*. Erickson placed greater emphasis on institutional matters and personal rivalries than does Benvenuti, who comes closer to Ritter's account in his picture of a genuine ideological struggle over revolutionary principles. Far more than Erickson, Benvenuti believes that ideas were important in shaping the Red Army, and he traces the evolution of the sharply divergent positions that brought Trotsky and his allies to blows with the shifting coalitions that made up the Military Opposition. Benvenuti weaves together debates at Party congresses and conferences with military politics at the fronts to demonstrate that questions about armies and soldiers went to the heart of the dilemmas that confronted the revolutionaries' coming to power. The Army constantly faced institutional competition from influential organizations jealous of and resentful toward the preeminence enjoyed by Trotsky and the Army in the besieged state's priorities. With great skill Benvenuti portrays the "blurred character of relations" within the Army which were the consequence of a set of internal contradictions that lay at the foundation of the new form of military organization. The Civil War did not resolve those contradictions; rather, the debates over a "unified military doctrine" in the early 1920s were a legacy of the conflicting political agendas of the revolutionary-military elites.

A reevaluation of Trotsky's role is especially timely, given the current interest and political significance of the early years of postrevolutionary history for the contemporary Soviet leadership and intelligentsia. Until recently Soviet historians have adhered to the Stalinist orthodoxy that supplanted Trotsky as the creator of the Red Army with the wise and correct guidance of Lenin and those members of the Central Committee who escaped excoriation as enemies of the people. In the West, in sharp contrast, Trotsky himself, through both his own compelling writings and those of Isaac Deutscher, Trotsky's talented biographer, has shaped views of the top leadership. Under Trotsky's considerable influence, Western historians have accepted virtually unchallenged Trotsky's claims to undisputed leadership of the Red Army and to Lenin's constant trust. Benvenuti departs from the traditional Western view that Lenin and the Central Committee left military affairs exclusively to Trotsky's purview. Trotsky was clearly a principal actor, but, as Benvenuti reminds us, he did not write the script. In addition to Trotsky, other key shapers of the Red Army emerge more clearly in Benvenuti's study, such as Sergei Gusev, Ivar Smilga, Nikolai Podvoiskii, and Mikhail Frunze.

Benvenuti gives great credit to Trotsky for defeating the widespread and persistent opposition to the use of military professionals from the Imperial Army in building a regular Red Army. Precisely Trotsky's position