

THE RUSSO-CHINESE WAR. By *George Alexander Lensen*. Tallahassee: Diplomatic Press, 1967. 315 pp. \$15.00.

The turn of the century was a difficult time for China. The Western Powers and Japan threatened her very existence. Russia, while claiming to be China's best friend, was in fact more determined than any other nation to expand her sphere of influence in China. The Boxer Rebellion served as a pretext to push that expansion another step forward. Boxer attacks upon the Russians and their properties in Manchuria provoked a Russian retaliation sufficient to bring Manchuria under Russian dominance for several years. A very small part of this development is singled out in this book for a detailed description. Mr. Lensen devotes his account mainly to military action between the Chinese and Russian soldiers and railwaymen in Manchuria. Even then he relies primarily upon Russian accounts, though without allowing himself to be unduly biased by this one-sidedness. The "war" was quite episodic. The Boxers do not seem to have had a general plan for a comprehensive, coordinated military attack against the Russians. The optimistic Russians had failed to anticipate Chinese actions and had to respond piecemeal and spontaneously. The pitiful unpreparedness of the Chinese was matched by the initially small size of the Russian forces. The encounters were more or less extensive skirmishes, providing the occasion for much individual heroism and suffering. For the reader who is fascinated by factual descriptions of military battles, this book will have some value. The reader who seeks enlightenment on the possible historical or political significance of this "Russo-Chinese War" cannot find it in this book. The author's concentration on such a very narrow and extremely specialized section of the Boxer events severely limits the value of the book. Only in the last chapter, dealing with the reactions of various foreign governments to the Manchurian events, is there a brief reference to the context in which they were taking place and to the political consequence they have had.

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WITNESSES OF TSUSHIMA. By *J. N. Westwood*. Tokyo: Sophia University, in cooperation with the Diplomatic Press, Tallahassee, 1970. xiii, 321 pp. \$15.00.

Unlike many other episodes in Russian military history, the great naval battle of Tsushima, which undoubtedly marked the nadir of Russia's disastrous embroilment in the Russo-Japanese War, has not lacked chroniclers. Unfortunately, very few of the existing accounts of the tragic fate of the Second Pacific Squadron of Vice Admiral Z. P. Rozhdestvensky have been entirely objective or based on thoroughgoing research. The author of the present volume, who is perhaps best known for his studies of Russian railroads, has set out to correct the inaccuracies of earlier accounts of the battle and especially to dispel the notion that the Russian navy in 1905 was hopelessly inept and its opponent virtually flawless. Accordingly, in his excellent introductory chapter Westwood demonstrates that the Russian navy was by no means technically inferior to its rival and that in the naval action prior to Tsushima the Russians, although beset by some unusually bad luck, performed quite creditably.

For his account of the 18,000-mile voyage of the Second Pacific Squadron and of Tsushima itself, Westwood has employed an interesting approach. Thus, ex-

plotting thoroughly the existing Russian memoir literature, the author in effect becomes editor and allows the "witnesses" of the events described to relate the story themselves, interjecting himself only to offer comment or analysis. In general the results of this rather unusual methodology are gratifying. Thus, for example, the author sheds new light on the celebrated Dogger Bank incident and also on the enigmatic personality of the Russian commander, Rozhdestvensky. Equally valuable are Westwood's conclusions on the causes of Russia's defeat, which he attributes primarily to the strategic inferiority of the Second Pacific Squadron and the greater speed of the Japanese fleet.

In view of the book's generally superb illustrations, the absence of any route or battle maps is surprising and regrettable. Much more serious, however, is the cumbersome arrangement of the reference notes, which are combined in an appendix with an otherwise excellent note on sources. Finally, there is a certain inevitable imbalance to the book because of its almost exclusive reliance on Russian materials. To offset this, interested readers may now consult the recent complementary study of Tsushima by N. F. Busch (New York, 1969) which is based substantially on Japanese sources.

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AUSSENPOLITISCHE FRAGEN VOR DER VIERTEN DUMA: EIN BEITRAG ZUR GESCHICHTE DES RUSSISCHEN PARTEIWESENS IN DER KONSTITUTIONELLEN MONARCHIE, INSBESONDERE DER STELLUNG ZUR AUSSENPOLITIK WÄHREND DES ERSTEN WELTKRIEGES. By *Margarete Wolters*. *Hamburger Historische Studien*, 1. Hamburg: Helmut Buske Verlag, 1969. 253 pp. Paper.

Professor Wolters's study makes two contributions to students of the political parties in the Dumas: (1) it provides an annotated bibliography of the major monographs on the subject by German, American, English, and Soviet scholars (29 pp.), and (2) it furnishes an extensive series of charts, maps, diagrams, and brief descriptions of the political parties in the Fourth Duma (37 pp.). Both will be found useful for ready reference. The substantive text—about 155 pages—is not as important.

The author begins by posing the two basic questions of what groups of Russians were interested in participating in governing Russia through their representatives in the Dumas, and whether the Duma played the role legally prescribed for it by the October Manifesto. Having stated the "basic questions," she never really comes to grips with them. The first question was, in fact, pretty effectively settled in the first three Dumas, primarily on domestic issues. The answer to the second question was largely determined by Stolypin's electoral coup, the use of section 87, and situations inherent in or developing because of World War I.

Professor Wolters, in addressing herself to foreign policy questions during the war period, somehow manages to avoid the distinction between foreign policy and military policy. The limits of the Duma's competence in military affairs were pretty well established in the Third Duma. It was the effects of Sukhomlinov's policy (or inaction) concerning the fortifications on the Vistula—rather than any desire by the Kadets or their opponents—which made a defensive operation impossible. This