

Géorgie: Sortie d'Empire is a must-read for anyone interested not only in Georgia but also in the wider question of nation-building in the countries of the former Soviet Union and the power struggle for the Caspian oil.

Redjeb Jordania, East Hampton, New York

Staliūnas, Darius. *Making Russians: Meaning and Practice of Russification in Lithuania and Belarus after 1863. On the Boundary of Two Worlds: Identity, Freedom, and Moral Imagination in the Baltics*, 11. New York: Rodopi, 2007. xiv + 465 pp. \$130.00. ISBN 978-90-420-2267-6.

This volume synthesizes at least a decade of the author's research, parts of which have been previously published in a variety of journals and collections. Staliūnas's goal is to understand more fully the process of integrating the heterogeneously populated northwestern provinces (NWP)—today's Lithuania and Belarus—into the Russian Empire following the January Uprising of 1863. He provides the necessary context for understanding the period that preceded January 1863, then shows Russia's sharp turn toward more repressive policies against non-Russians in the NWP following the uprising. Based on thorough archival research, the work pieces together and analyzes the writing and actions of administrators in the NWP, their superiors (all the way up to the tsar), ideologues, and publicists as they crafted different strategies to manage nationalities in an effort to align their loyalties to the empire. The author devotes three major sections to the problem of discerning what the nationality policy was, a slippery issue given that different actors faced the problem of trying to integrate diverse class, confessional, linguistic and ethnic groups—gentry, peasants; Poles, Lithuanians, Belarusians, Jews, Baltic Germans—in differing ways. This problem was complicated by the fact that there was no unified view of what "Russification" meant. One section each is devoted to experiments with policies regarding religion and language.

Staliūnas's account brings to life the activities of the various rulers and bureaucrats in charge of nationality policy in the NWP. His argumentation is helped considerably by a number of high-quality reproductions of their black-and-white portraits (a boon to the onomastically-challenged), as well as pertinent quotation of passages from their writing that illuminate their thought processes. In addition to ample contextualization, the author employs tertiary thinking in his analysis of his sources' discourse. He describes how, in contrast to a generalized view of empire as continually expanding its reach and rationalizing its subjects in favor of the dominant group, the Russian bureaucrats saw the NWP as a historically Russian territory to be restored to its inherited allegiance. The Russian administrators viewed the Belarusians, for all intents and purposes, as Russians, but they viewed the Poles, in contrast, as nonautochthonous. Staliūnas's research demonstrates that different actors ranged in their views and actions (again, from the imperial perspective) from "optimistic" (the NWP can be Russified) to "pessimistic" (the NWP cannot be de-Polonized), revealing a lack of a straightforward top-down, unified approach. Nevertheless, the author concludes that the case of the late Russian Empire's nationality policy in the NWP is not strikingly different from policies found in other multiethnic states, which vacillate between strengthening minorities and weakening them by supporting their rivals (pp. 299–300).

The book reads nearly as though written in native scholarly English, although it was translated, one presumes, from a Lithuanian original. A persistent annoyance, however, is the misuse of the comma, the placement of which evidently carries over from non-English usage and, as such, fails to differentiate between restrictive and nonrestrictive clauses. In most instances the reader can derive the correct intention by context, although the inconsistency sometimes results in a critical ambiguity, for example, "bureaucrats were afraid that Lithuanians, who had obtained education or more land, and become richer, would not remain Lithuanian or become Russian but would turn into Poles" (p. 129). Does this mean "all the rich Lithuanians" or "only those Lithuanians who had become richer"? Another structural shortcoming of the book is the use of the index exclusively for name

references; it would have been useful to have an index also to key terms and themes, particularly in view of the warp-and-woof structure of such a complex topic.

These formal issues aside, the content of Staliūnas's book illuminates a place, time, and set of circumstances that deserves thorough understanding. This meticulously crafted, thoughtful work rises admirably to the formidable task. It will be important reading for students of the Russian Empire and of nationality/language policy in multiethnic states, both historical and contemporary.

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Sergeev, Evgeny. *Russian Military Intelligence in the War with Japan, 1904–05: Secret Operations on Land and at Sea*. Routledge Studies in the History of Russia and Eastern Europe. London: Routledge, 2007. xvii + 254 pp. \$135.00. ISBN 0-415-41618-3.

Modern conflicts are characterized by immense intelligence activities. Present-day nations run huge infrastructures that collect, analyze, process, and disseminate all possible information on friend and foe alike, and consider these activities a vital asset as well as a symbol of national prowess. This was not always the case. Premodern wars were fought with the belligerents having little knowledge of their enemies or their capabilities. The significance of intelligence gathering began to grow in the nineteenth century, and in this respect the Russo-Japanese War (1904–5) seems to be a crossroads, if not a turning point.

Indeed, in this nineteen-month campaign, fought over vast and forbidding territory far from the capital, with various sophisticated weapon systems and wireless communication in use for the first time, military intelligence was indispensable as never before. It is commonly accepted that the use or misuse of military intelligence affected, if it did not determine, the course of this war right from its outset. Still, whereas the Japanese exploited an efficient network of agents to form an accurate picture of their foes before and during the campaign, the Russians misunderstood Japan's motives and strategic vision and were ignorant of its general capacity and tactical skills.

Regretfully, this prevalent view, especially concerning shortcomings of the Russian side, is not based on sound research but on an anti-tsarist agenda, or at best, on a deterministic view shaped by the war's outcomes. Evgeny Sergeev, professor at the Russian Academy of Sciences State University of Humanitarian Studies, has ventured to fill in this lacuna. Based on archive documents, some of them inaccessible during the Soviet era, his book offers a new and certainly the most complete overview hitherto in English of Russia's military intelligence in the northeast Asian arena before and during the Russo-Japanese War. The book is thus an important addition to the growing list of studies published recently on the tsarist army in general and the development of its military intelligence branch and its activities during the war against Japan in particular.

Sergeev endeavors to describe and analyze the Russian intelligence assessment of Japan on the eve of the war, as well as its tactical contribution in the subsequent campaigns from the initial attack on Port Arthur, via the ground campaigns in Liaoyang, Shaho, and Mukden, the naval fiasco in Tsushima, to the final decision to conclude the war during the peace negotiations in Portsmouth. Sergeev offers a lucid portrait of the Russian intelligence network and its efforts at adaptation and improvements during the war. He is less successful in deciphering the way the information collected was interpreted, and is completely silent about its dissemination among, and its significance for, the Russian decision makers in the capital and at the front, and to what extent their decisions were affected by faulty intelligence. Moreover, while Sergeev does an admirable job in describing the structure of the Russian intelligence network during the Manchurian campaign and its contribution to the war efforts, he seems to overlook the grand picture of intelligence incapacity.

The Russian intelligence debacle in 1904–5 was greater, in fact, than the American debacle in Pearl Harbor thirty seven years later. Both were unable to predict Japanese plans for a preemptive attack, although it was the Russian intelligence that never fully recovered in the subsequent stages of the war. Until the very end it kept providing the army and navy with limited and often inaccurate