

THE THIRD DUMA, ELECTION AND PROFILE. By *Alfred Levin*. Hamden, Conn.: Archon Books, 1973. x, 210 pp. \$8.50.

John Masefield wrote, "There is another way to truth: by the minute examination of facts . . . a hard and noble and thankless way." One hopes that this second in a series of studies, "an introduction to further investigation into the . . . Third Duma," will not be thankless. It should not be, because specialists will profit from Levin's meticulous, relentless searching and collecting of facts, often very hard to come by; and generalists will benefit as the findings of the doyen of specialists in this field surface in general histories.

One may quarrel with the title, which seems to promise more than the author intended. Between two-thirds and three-quarters of this monograph is concerned with matters prior to the first sitting of the first session of the Third Convocation of the State Duma. Levin's introduction is accurate, terse, and very useful groundwork. The emphasis of Levin's first book, *The Second Duma: A Study of the Social-Democratic Party and the Russian Constitutional Experiment*, is adequately expressed by its title. His interim articles have been concerned with the elections following Stolypin's electoral coup. This study reviews the political groups and groupings, and it re-examines and, in part, repeats some of the material on the elections; but it moves closer to what appears to be the author's ultimate target—an evaluation of the constitutional experiment. The Third Convocation is treated as perhaps historians ideally should treat their subjects: as if it were still happening—its end as yet unknown. After noting that the "infant parliament" would probably show some effects of more than six centuries of "accumulated social and political attitudes," Levin concludes: "It would have to draw heavily on the traditional patience of the Russian people for a long, undisturbed haul to master the parliamentary process" (pp. 151–52).

This was undeniably true, but it seems an artificial sort of conclusion, since everyone knows that the haul was not that long. Such caution seems excessive, and so does the author's determination to let statistical data speak for themselves. The trouble is that they don't speak for themselves but remain, at least for the average reader, mute and serried facts. Having worked through much of the same material, I readily agree that the sum of the data on certain points is insufficient to support a firm conclusion. But sometimes these same data are suggestive of possibilities, even of probabilities, and I wish Levin had been less chary of noting this.

The citations and footnotes are meticulously done, but the publisher unfortunately chose to make them difficult to use; and the "Bibliographic Note" will be of great use to students for many years to come.

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LENIN. By *Robert D. Warth*. Twayne's Rulers and Statesmen of the World Series, no. 21. New York: Twayne Publishers, 1973. 198 pp. \$5.95.

To compress the life of Lenin into a volume containing no more than 160-odd pages of text is no easy task. There are too many things that must be crammed in—Lenin's youth and formative experiences, his personal life, political activities, ideological disputes, and major writings; an assessment of his personality, a discussion of his major successes and failures, and sufficient information about the background to all these matters to make them meaningful to the beginner.

The volume reviewed seems to demonstrate that in so short a space this job cannot be done even by a highly qualified scholar. Professor Warth is obviously competent to write about the subject. His knowledge of the relevant information seems impressive, and the bibliography he has added is ample. His views are balanced; Lenin emerges as neither a saint nor a villain, but a complex person with phenomenal strengths and talents. The author's style is lively; the presentation neatly mixes Lenin's personal and political lives. On the whole, the book successfully avoids disseminating worn-out stereotypes, though the stupid remark that female revolutionaries are rarely noted for charm or physical beauty (p. 75) would better have been omitted. In general, the author seeks to dispel the most persistent myths about Lenin and the Russian Revolution. But in order to keep within the allotted space, he has made the narrative excessively sketchy. The specialist, who will learn nothing new from this book, will appreciate that the author has briefly touched most important points, if only in a sentence or a paragraph. But the beginner, to whom this book doubtless is addressed, will frequently be at sea—for example, how could he possibly make sense out of the one brief paragraph on page 99 devoted to the Kornilov affair? Nor is he likely to be less bewildered in numerous other places.

At most, therefore, the book will serve as a handy supplementary assignment in undergraduate courses dealing with the Russian Revolution.

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STALIN AS REVOLUTIONARY, 1879–1929: A STUDY IN HISTORY AND PERSONALITY. By *Robert C. Tucker*. New York: W. W. Norton, 1973. xxi, 519 pp. \$12.95.

Professor Tucker subtitles his book "A Study in History and Personality." Certainly no single personality—other than Lenin—has had a greater impact on the history of twentieth-century Russia, and not even Lenin's legacy (except to the considerable degree that it is misunderstood as Stalin's) has occasioned so much debate. Most of that debate concerns actions occurring after the concluding date (1929) of the present volume, the year when Stalin was fifty and was just entering the period of his greatest power and influence. But though it is seldom acknowledged, Stalin's impact was enormous—in some cases dominant—in the formation of key Soviet institutions and policies, even in the first dozen years of the new state.

The presentation of Stalin's Georgian and Russian background is, on the whole, highly successful. For this reader, the "Russian Prologue" seemed to understate the extent and significance of the governmental and constitutional changes in 1905–6, and to overstate the unique "Russianness" of Leninist revolutionary doctrines. But the picture is well drawn, and the subsequent chapter on Lenin presents very skillfully the personality and the movement that were to be the vital influences of Stalin's revolutionary career.

The succeeding chapters treat Stalin's childhood and youth, his seminary education, and his early revolutionary career. Many of the details are familiar, though they are given an interesting interpretive slant by the application of Freudian conceptions to Stalin's parental relationships, to which the author traces his rejection of authority (from the irrational cruelty of his father's beatings) and his exaggerated self-estimate and "feeling of conqueror" (from his close relationship with his adoring mother). The chapter also reviews the impact of the school