

about the events associated with the Boxer Rebellion and the attack on Blagoveshchensk (1900). This topic is interesting, but it would have helped to trace the general history of the Chinese diaspora in the region. The Afterword: “Of Squids, Truffle-Hunting, and Complicated Relationships” by Willard Sunderland, Henry R. Winkler Professor of Modern History at the University of Cincinnati, reviews “the complexity of the region . . . the distinctive qualities that eventually coalesce to make it into a region, accrue over time through the layering and re-layering of relationships between outsiders and native peoples, first migrants and later ones, Russians and foreigners, old states and new political forms, and between human societies and their physical environments . . .” (236).

This collection contains a lot of theoretical generalizations and the overwhelming majority of materials reflect connections with political science. The authors rightly note that the geographical potential of the Russian Far East is far from being realized. At one time, Siberian regionalists, who were inspired by the creation of the Far Eastern Republic (1920–22), spoke a lot about this. These Siberian regionalists also participated in the last White government in Vladivostok. It is hardly worth talking about the policy of the federal center towards this vast periphery as a space of experimentation and entrepreneurship, except for the annual economic forums held in Vladivostok. Russia’s interaction with its neighbors in the Asia-Pacific region can also be characterized by cyclical events. One can agree with the authors that the region is still limited by the tendency of the center to ignore local characteristics, needs, and knowledge. At the same time, the more the center seeks to establish and strengthen its control, the more its ambitions for the region become increasingly unattainable. This is clearly visible in the economic trends of the region, which often conflict with the needs of the center. The colonial principle of governance completely violates the idea of federalism. At the same time, the Far Eastern territories are slowly dying demographically.

This book would be most useful graduate students and researchers.

Ed. Valerie Hébert. *Framing the Holocaust: Photographs of a Mass Shooting in Latvia, 1941.*

Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2023. xix, 275 pp. Notes. Index. Photographs. \$59.95, hard bound.

Aldis Purs

Seattle University/University of Washington

Email: purspetersons@mac.com

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Valerie Hébert has edited a masterful collection that dissects twelve photographs that document a moment in terror and horror from December 15, 1941 in occupied Liepāja. Holocaust studies, from museums to monographs to webpages, often use these photographs to depict the stages of a “killing action” in the “Holocaust of Bullets” that killed around one and a half million Jews before the Nazi regime built the concentration/death camp system. Almost everything about the photographs, however, is challenging. Who took the photographs, why did they take them, who are the perpetrators and victims in the photographs, what do the photographs tell us about the Holocaust, and on a deeper level, should we look at them? Hébert and eight other scholars, a multi-disciplinary cross-section of experts on history, the Holocaust, and photography, weigh in on these debates and provide context to the photographs, to the history of the Holocaust, specifically in Latvia, to a sophisticated analysis of

the meaning of photographs, and to the meaning of photographs. Throughout these discussions, and woven through the articles, is the moral question raised by Hilary Earl, one of the contributors, about “the ethics of witnessing the photographs of unwilling subjects” (237). This concern and the thoughtful wrestling with it that each of the contributors addresses extends the value of the collection to ever larger audiences, from historians of Latvia and/or the Holocaust, to any depiction of violence through the ages to our morning newspapers.

Framing the Holocaust grew out of an academic workshop, “Regarding Atrocity: Photography, Memory, and Representation,” which Hébert organized at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. Hébert begins the collection with an introduction that outlines the project and includes the twelve infamous photographs and the different captions that have accompanied them. She also dedicates the book to Edward Anders, a Holocaust survivor from Liepāja. Anders also contributed a moving foreword to the collection, and his memoirs, *Amidst Latvians during the Holocaust* (Riga, 2011) is essential reading for any examination of the Holocaust in Latvia. Each of the contributions address two separate, but intertwined issues: what do we see in the photographs and why should we (or shouldn’t we) look at them?

The contributions from Hébert, Daniel Newman, Tanja Kinzel, and Marilyn Campeau provide answers to the first issue: what we see in the photographs. Edward Anders’ foreword also includes the chilling realization that when he looks at the photographs, he can identify friends and family friends. Newman’s contribution outlines the massacre and the provenance of the photographs. He examines the theories about who took the photographs, and relates how David Zivcon, a Jewish mechanic/electrician found the photographs in a Gestapo officer’s apartment, surreptitiously took them to a friend at a photo lab to make copies, and then hid them in a metal box behind a wall until the war ended, when he retrieved them and turned them over to the Soviet Extraordinary State Commission for Ascertaining and Investigating Crimes Perpetrated by the German-Fascist Invaders and their Accomplices (the Extraordinary Commission). More importantly, Newman identifies many of the victims in the photographs, includes biographical information about them, and even passport photos of three of the victims. Marilyn Campeau, on the other hand, discusses the provenance of the captions on the photographs added by the Extraordinary Commission as putting “Soviet words on German perpetrator images” (142), and engages in a more general debate about how to use and evaluate Soviet sources on the Holocaust. Kinzel adds insightful commentary about what the photographs tell us about the photographer, about his gaze encompassing pornographic, humiliating, and demeaning intentions. Kinzel struggles with our use of the photographs and whether we duplicate the perpetrator’s gaze, but counters such concerns by reading from these photos “the victims’ expressions (however subtle) of agency and choice” (113).

Transitioning from Kinzel’s focus on the photographer and the photographed, contributions from Danny Hoffman, Daniel H. Magilow, and Dorota Glowacka go further into theoretical discussions of atrocity photography, place, and gender. These contributions draw from the theoretical work of Susan Sontag, Michel Foucault, Marianna Hirsch, Roland Barthes, and Emmanuel Levinas, to name just a few, to deconstruct meaning in the photographs and in our use of them. These contributions range away from the beach at Šķēde and link these discussions to Soweto and Sierra Leone (Hoffman), to beaches more generally (Magilow), and to the Warsaw Ghetto and Auschwitz-Birkenau (Glowacka) and Phan Thi Kim Phuc (“Napalm Girl”) and Alan Kurdi (the drowned Syrian refugee boy from 2015) (Earl), and by implication to every atrocity photo we come across in the future.

Although different contributions will appeal to different specialists, everyone can find value in the success of this multi-disciplinary volume. Hilary Earl extends such value in the final contribution to the collection, “A Pedagogy of Witnessing: Reading and Interpreting the Šķēde Beach Execution Photographs in the University Classroom” (223). She relates how she uses the theoretical debates as a “teachable moment” in a classroom setting, instructing students to define “atrocity photograph,” familiarize themselves with articles from the “look/

don't look" divide, and then debate the merits of each through the Šķēde perpetrator's lens of victims who have been restored with more of their identity and agency. She argues the exercise succeeds in "creating historically literate students" that "value...context" and challenges "their pre-existing views of photographs and photography" (242). Hebert's collected volume, *Framing the Holocaust*, does the same for academics as well. This is essential reading for understanding Latvian history, the Holocaust, and atrocity photography.

Daria A. Arincheva and Alexander V. Pantsov.
The Kremlin's Chinese Advance Guard: Chinese Students in Soviet Russia, 1917–1940.

Trans. Steven I. Levine. *Chinese Worlds*. London: Routledge, 2023. vii, 264. Appendixes. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Photographs. \$160.00, hard bound.

Jeremy Friedman

Harvard University

Email: zevscott@gmail.com

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Daria Arincheva and Alexander Pantsov have done a meticulous job documenting the attempts to train Chinese communist cadres in the Soviet Union in the 1920s and 30s. This book will serve as an important resource for those interested in the early years of the Chinese Communist Party, the process of educating foreign cadres in the early years of the USSR, and the relations between domestic Soviet institutions and the Comintern in this regard. Arincheva and Pantsov have painstakingly traced individual biographies and pseudonyms to give readers a glimpse into the formations and early activities of crucial figures in both the CCP and the Guomindang, including Wang Ming, Li Lisan, Kang Sheng, Chen Boda, Jiang Jinguo, and numerous others. They describe in great detail the process of creating one institution after another for this purpose, providing background on logistics, personnel, and curricula. Their conclusion, however, is unambiguous: the effort as a whole was a failure. According to the authors, "The bleak reality of Soviet communist life transformed the majority of those who came to study in Moscow from romantic revolutionaries into pragmatists and careerists or evoked their complete disenchantment with Bolshevik dogmas. Romance turned into tragedy" (240).

The book begins with early Soviet attempts to provide some sort of Bolshevik education to the many Chinese who found themselves fighting for the Red Army during the Civil War. After the failure of this attempt at mass education, the book covers a series of attempts to construct institutions that would be able to turn a select group of young, presumably motivated and somewhat educated Chinese into the cadres that would bring revolution to China. Beginning with the creation of the Communist University of the Toilers of the East in the early 1920s and its dedicated Chinese section, through the rise and fall of the more specialized Sun Yat-sen University of the Toilers of China, to the somewhat more successful, and elite, group trained at the International Lenin School, the book continues until the final attempts to educate young Chinese ended in 1940 after the entire project of educating foreign communists largely fell victim to the purges of the late 1930s. In all, the authors write, some 3,000 Chinese received some form of communist education in the Soviet Union during this period, of whom only about five percent would play a meaningful role in the