To the Issue of the Use of Aeronautical Ships by Russia in the Russian-Japanese War of 1904–1905 (on the Material of the Journal «Chronicle of the War with Japan»)

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Abstract
In the present article we discuss the features of the use of aeronautical forces of the Russian Empire during the Russian-Japanese War of 1904–1905. This topic is at the present time point studied enough yet unexplored and has a number of gaps. Particular attention in the work of the author pays technical features (specifications) Russian balloons and balloons beginning of the XX century. The sources for the preparation of articles became warlike materials illustrated magazine «Chronicle of the war with Japan».

In order to solve research problems the author uses the scientific methods such as analysis and synthesis, generalization and concretization. In addition, we used the historical-situational method, which involves the study of historical facts in the context of the studied historical period (epoch), in conjunction with the «neighboring» events.

This work can be useful and interesting to all those who are interested in how the history of Russian-Japanese War of 1904–1905, and a history of domestic journalism.

Keywords: Russian-Japanese war; aeronautics; aeronautic ship; balloon; military intelligence; Russian pre-revolutionary journalism; the journal «Chronicle of the war with Japan».

1. Introduction
Over 110 years ago, in August 23, 1905 the Peace Treaty between Japan and Russia was signed in Portsmouth, USA. That marked the official end of the Russo-Japanese war of 1904–1905. This war was not just a painful slap to the face for the Russian Empire, but the proof of the ineffectiveness of all its Government. However, this political-military conflict proved to be significant for the air force of our country: Russia started using its aeronautic ships during the Russo-Japanese war against the enemy.

2. Materials and methods
2.1. The Information about the events of the Russo-Japanese war was received by Russian Empire citizens from various sources, mainly from the pro-Government press. A military edition "Chronicle of the War with Japan" was one of these information sources about the war events in the Far East of Russia. This weekly journal was published throughout the war. Totally, 84 issues of the "Chronicle" were released. The main editor was Colonel (later Major-General) D.N. Dubenskiy. The journal was printed in St. Petersburg by the art typography "Partnership of R. Golike and A. Vil′borg" (Frolov, 2016: 1181). Precisely the content of "Chronicle of the War with Japan" will be
the primary source of our study on the peculiarities of using of Russian aeronautic ships during the Russo-Japanese war of 1904–1905.

2.2. When solving research tasks we applied scientific methods such as synthesis and analysis, generalization and specification. In addition, when writing an article, we used historical and situational method, which involves the study of the historical facts in the context of the historical period studied (era) in conjunction with the "neighbouring" events.

3. Discussion
To date, the fundamental works (monographs and dissertation researches) on the theme of our research do not exist.

However, there exists a number of scientific works, in which, in a various degree, the participation of aeronautic ships during the shooting-off war of the Russo-Japanese war 1904–1905 is considered. These include article of D.I. Lubchenko "Combat balloons" (Lubchenko, 2009), in which the author notes that "the fastened balloons were first applied by Russian and Japanese armies to adjust fire and to carry out the reconnaissance during the war in 1905, especially at the siege of Port Arthur" (Lubchenko, 2009: 34). Enough valuable insights into the origination and development of aeronautics and aviation in the Russian Empire are contained in a collection of documents and materials of M.F. Bogomolova "Aeronautics and aviation in Russia prior to 1907" (Bogomolova, 1956). This collection is the first systematic publication of documents on the history of Russian aviation, aeronautic, and aviation technology. It includes more than 700 archival documents and literary evidence from publications that are now bibliographical rarities. In the monograph of P.D. Duz' "The history of aeronautics and aviation in Russia (the period before 1914)" the history of development of aeronautics and aviation in Russia until the 1914 is outlined in chronological order. The work has a separate chapter "Russian aeronautics during the period 1904-1914", in the first part of which the author considers the peculiarities of using of Russian aeronautic ships in the Russo-Japanese war of 1904–1905 (Duz', 1981). It is impossible to ignore a monograph by U.O. Druzhinina and A.U. Emelina "The Aeronautic Cruiser 'Rus' ". To a certain extent it is also dedicated the history of Russian military aeronautics of the beginning of the 20th century. In this work the authors, basing on archival materials and periodicals of the beginning of the 1900's, describe the history of aeronautic cruisers of the 2nd rank "Rus", which took on his board the special equipment for reconnaissance using balloons. While U.O. Druzhinin and A.U. Emelin in their work note that originally the Russian military headquarters planned to use the cruiser "Rus" in the "theatre" of the Russo-Japanese war and prepared it for this task, but it still later abandoned this idea (Druzhinin, 1997). These researchers are also the authors of the article "'Parrot' over Port Arthur", which tells about the activities of Lieutenant M.I. Lavrov on the position of Chief of the Port Arthur Aeronautic Office (Druzhinin, 2000).

Finishing the historiographical review on topic of our research, we can conclude that the topic “The history of military aeronautics in Russia of the beginning of the 20th century» has not been thoroughly researched and still possesses a number of unexplored lacunae.

4. Results
The first mentioning about the use of aeronautical ships by Russia in the Russo-Japanese war in 1904-1905 can be found on the pages of the military journal "Chronicle of the War with Japan" № 24. In the article "The Balloons in the Field War" its author noted that in 1904 it was the 29th year since the Russian army headquarter had raised the question about the use of balloons for military purposes. Since that time in Russia the Aeronautic park and 7 fortress aeronautic offices have been established. "With the start of the Russo-Japanese war, the Russian army headquarters remembered about balloons and the benefits they could bring to the fight with Japan" (Chronicle of the War with Japan, 1904a: 447).

According to the information provided in this article, the first one who proposed to introduce the balloons to that war theatre was the Commander of the Manchurian army Adjutant-General A.N. Kuropatkin (Chronicle of the War with Japan, 1904a: 447). However, the request of Commander was not approved immediately, because in Russia at that time there was no field aeronautical regiments. As a result, it was decided to form a Siberian aeronautical company that was supplied with the property of the fortress type. This troop could not be mobile and, therefore,
the Russian army still needed the unit capable to follow the military troops everywhere, with a light, mobile property.

Great help in the equipment of the Russian aeronautical forces for the Far East area was provided by nobleman S.K. Maksimovich (the son of Russian military officer and statesman, General K.K. Maksimovich – auth.) on its own initiative. Learned about the financial difficulties of the military forces of the Russian Empire, "he built on his own expense the equipment for the mobile aeronautic troop". Afterwards the Emperor Nicholas II personally visited this new formation and ordered to form the East Siberian field aeronautic battalion consisting of two companies. The Emperor appointed the Chief of the Aeronautic training park, Colonel A.M. Kovanko as the battalion commander (Chronicle of the War with Japan, 1904a: 448).

It should also be noted that by early 1904 in the Aeronautic training park the experiments on extraction of hydrogen were completed, "which allow to obtain the same amount of waste gas from four times less material". There were built the samples of machines for gas recovery and two-track windlass for pulling the balloon to the ground. All these technical inventions and innovations have been sent to the East Siberian field aeronautic battalion (Chronicle of the War with Japan, 1904a: 448).

There was submitted the article "Balloons in Port Arthur" in Vol. 36 "Chronicle...", which focuses on the problems of the aeronautic troop of the city and the important strategic center of Russia on the theatre of the Russo-Japanese war. From this publication, we learn that even in the autumn of 1903 the Naval Department of Russia sent aerostatic equipment to Port Arthur: balloons, nets, machines for gas recovery, etc. Due to the Japanese capture of Russian steamboat "Manchuria" all this property was not delivered to destination (Chronicle of the War with Japan, 1904b: 687).

Lieutenant M.I. Lavrov was appointed the Head Office of the aeronautic troop of Port Arthur. He had completed a course at the officer classes at Aeronautic training park. Lieutenant was not confounded by the loss of equipment intended for his troop. M.I. Lavrov "bought up in the city all silk fabric and built from it a balloon; another balloon he built from sheets (these balloons got the name "Parrot" and "Eagle" – auth.). Instead of a special varnish to give the shell the gas impermeability, he used drying oil. By use of sulfuric acid and iron, the Lieutenant got hydrogen required for balloon flying. Later M.I. Lavrov crossed town Chefoo (now Yantai – auth.), sent samples of the fabric, of which the balloons had been built, to General A.M. Stessel and his staff to demonstrate (Chronicle of the War with Japan, 1904b: 687). After November 23, 1904 Lieutenant M.I. Lavrov during the attack of High Mountain was killed, works with improvised fastened balloons in Port Arthur ceased.

The article "The kite-balloons" (Chronicle of the War with Japan, 1904c) is published in Volume 38. It tells about the new, at the time, type of balloons, devised in 1897 in Germany – a kite-balloon, which since the beginning of the 20th century had been introducing gradually into the armed forces of European countries. The author describes in some detail the features of such a balloon, including referencing the materials of the dedicated scientific-popular military journal "Aeronaut" (Aeronaut, 1904). He also notes that the kite-balloon has one very important advantage compared to an ordinary spherical balloon: "it can work with wind in 12–15 meters" (observation with conventional balloon becomes impossible when the wind is more than 7 meters per second – aut.) (Chronicle of the War with Japan, 1904c: 725). The publication lists the other benefits of the kite-balloon: 1) full stability of a balloon in the air even with the strong wind; 2) good gas impermeability of the shell; 3) insignificance of balloon size in height compared to spherical balloons; 4) easiness of movement with the balloon and the movement with it in marching order. In the end, basing of all designated benefits, many leading Western European countries – Germany, Austria, Spain, and Sweden – "have brought the kite-balloons in the armies and navy" (Chronicle of the War with Japan, 1904c: 726).

In Russia the first kite-balloons were seriously considered by the Navy Department, which after the outbreak of the Russo-Japanese war of 1904–1905 sent to Vladivostok two kite-balloons and a crew trained in dealing with it. The author of the article draws attention to the fact that on the down-to-earth war theatre, where strong Manchu winds was dominating, the Russian army had no kite-balloons (Chronicle of the War with Japan, 1904c: 726).

In "Chronicle of the War with Japan" for 1905 text information about using balloons by Russia in the Russo-Japanese war 1904–1905 is absent.
Fig. 1. Adjutant-General Stessel examines balloons, constructed from improvised material.

Fig. 2. Balloon ascents near the village of Čžougun’pu.

It should be noted that in some issues of “Chronicle...” there are submitted photomaterials on the topic of our study: "The taking-off of the balloon to show His Majesty, 19 July", "The arrival of the balloon to the Guczacy position", Adjutant-General Stessel examines balloons constructed from improvised material", "The 2nd company of the 1st Eastern Siberian balloon battalion near the
village of Čžougun’pu", "Balloon take-off near the village of Čžougun’pu" (Chronicle of the War with Japan, 1904a: 446; Chronicle of the War with Japan, 1904b: 634; Chronicle of the War with Japan , 1904b: 674; Chronicle of the War with Japan, 1905: 1284). The №38 of the edition contains a picture of an enemy balloon: "The Japanese military balloon, around Port Arthur, is ready for reconnaissance" (Chronicle of the war with Japan, 1904c: 716).

5. Conclusion
The Journal "Chronicle of War with Japan" is quite a valuable source on the history of Russian military aeronautics of the beginning of the previous century. However, the material presented in this periodical issue is limited by size and does not allow to fully re-create the objective detailed historical picture on the subject. Despite this, on the basis of the information provided in the "Chronicle...", we can make the following conclusions: 1) the events of the Russo-Japanese war 1904–1905 prompted Russia to begin using aeronautics in military affairs; 2) at the beginning of the 20th century balloons have become an indispensable tool of military reconnaissance; 3) during the war in the Far East Russia had a modest air force because of a lack of funds.

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