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**DRUNKENNESS AND ANARCHY IN RUSSIA: A CASE OF POLITICAL CULTURE**

I

He is finished: his heart flutters, but it is with joy; he congratulates himself, he says sincerely, *No one can break men on the wheel better than I.* He steps down; he stretches out his bloodstained hand, and justice throws into it from a distance a few pieces of gold which he carries through a double row of men drawing back with horror. He sits down to a meal and eats; then to bed, where he sleeps. And next day, on waking, he thinks of anything other than what he did the day before. Is this a man? Yes: God receives him in his temples and permits him to pray. He is not a criminal, yet it is impossible to say, for example, that he *is virtuous, that he is an honest man, that he is estimable,* and so on. No moral praise can be appropriate for him, since this assumes relationships with men, and he has none.

And yet all grandeur, all power, all subordination rests on the executioner: he is the horror and the bond of human association. Remove this incomprehensible agent from the world, and at that very moment order gives way to chaos, thrones topple, and society disappears.*

In statements dealing with the current political situation, many Russian intellectuals make reference to the situation in Russia as it was on the eve of the Bolshevik revolution. To those who are accustomed to the image of the revolutionary populace in Soviet publications of Brezhnev's era (1964-82), the manner in which these intellectuals characterize the Russian people seems strange. Those publications portray a people in revolt (proletarians and soldiers first of all) having a feverish desire to

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destroy the old political order, and as being merciless to the
counterrevolutionaries. Yet at the same time, the revolutionary
populace demonstrates perfect self-control, discipline, and shuns
pogroms, viewing them primarily as counterrevolutionary phe-
omena distinct from the revolutionary process.

Many Western historians portray the Russian revolutionary
movement in a similar way. The major difference is the inter-
pretation of the relationship between the grassroots revolutionary
movement and the Bolshevik Party. Although official Soviet pub-
lications of Brezhnev's time stress the harmony between the
grassroots revolutionary movement and that of the Bolshevik
Party, Western scholars are less certain and point out that the
grassroots revolutionary movement had been absorbed by the
Bolshevik Party as early as the summer of 1918.

Such an exalted view of the grassroots revolutionary move-
ment finds less favor among the majority of contemporary
Russian intellectuals today, including those in official circles.
In one of his speeches shown on Soviet television, the eminent
specialist in ancient Russian literature, Draitry S. Likhachev,
recalling the time of his youth when he witnessed revolutionary
events, conveyed his apprehension about mob violence. The
newly appointed Minister of Culture went so far as to quote
Alexander A. Pushkin (1799-1837), the Russian classical writer
and poet, who warned against a "Russian revolt, brutal and
senseless." The minister made it clear that he viewed all
Russian popular movements, including the Bolshevik
Revolution, as having developed along the lines of brutality. In
this context, spontaneous violence by the Russian populace be-
came one of the major threats to the newborn Bolshevik regime
and, according to some Soviet historians, was one of Lenin's
chief points of concern.¹

These visions of the revolutionary masses have induced
Soviet intellectuals to reinterpret the Red Terror and the emer-
gence of Soviet totalitarianism. In this revisionist view, the
Bolshevik dictatorship and terror were designed not to repulse
foreign intervention and counterrevolutionary activity, but to
suppress the populace, a merciless terror being the only way to
save the country from complete destruction. The Bolsheviks
should be praised for dealing harshly with the Russian masses.
Aleksei Uliukaev, in his article "Invitation to Slowdown," pub-