

1997

## The Portrayal of Enemies in Propaganda during the Russian and French Revolutions

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### Recommended Citation

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**THE PORTRAYAL OF ENEMIES IN  
PROPAGANDA DURING THE  
RUSSIAN AND FRENCH  
REVOLUTIONS**



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## INTRODUCTION

This study investigates propaganda aimed at depicting "the enemy" during the Terror period of the French Revolution (1792-1794) and during the Revolutionary and Civil War periods in Russia (1917-1920). The two periods under consideration are congruous for several reasons. First, during each period the regime in control solidified its power and became more repressive in an effort to further its revolutionary agenda. Both the Jacobins and the Bolsheviks were minority groups who gained control of countries in transition, and each government believed that unity among the people was essential in order to lead their country forward. When the Jacobins gained control of the National Assembly in 1791, they tried to exert their influence over the whole of France. They began to discuss and pass laws that in many ways were more radical than and contrary to the original goals of the revolution. For example, the Revolution espoused the freedoms of liberty, equality, and fraternity, but during the Jacobins' reign, many citizens enjoyed less liberty than they had prior to the revolution. Similarly, the Bolsheviks seized power in Petrograd in October 1917, and soon began to implement policies which diverged from the goals they had espoused prior to taking power. For example, before the Revolution, the Bolsheviks had advocated freedom of the press, but once in power, they saw the advantages of having control of the press and they enforced harsh censorship.<sup>1</sup>

The second reason the two periods are similar is that during each there was a terror, which moved the country away from the original goals of each revolution and fostered fear in the minds and lives of the citizens. These

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<sup>1</sup> Abbott Gleason, Peter Kenez, and Richard Stites, Bolshevik Culture: Experiment and Order in the Russian Revolution (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985).

terrors happened during the most radical phases of each revolution, and they were contrary to the original goals of each revolution. Despite their mutual promises of freedom and liberation for their respective societies, both the Jacobins and the Bolsheviks realized that they could exert enormous power through the use of terror and force, and they both used terror to their advantage. In addition to fear, the terrors were also meant to convince the citizens of their new rulers' power, and to encourage people to be loyal to the new regimes. In both cases, the terrors were thought to be necessary precursors to new societies. In France, the Jacobin Terror was thought necessary to purge the country of unpatriotic citizens, and in Russia the Red Terror involved the extermination of suspected internal enemies during the Civil War.<sup>2</sup>

The third reason that these two periods are similar is that each regime became involved in a war during part of the period under consideration, although the circumstances surrounding these wars were different. The presence of war in each of these periods was significant, because each regime had to deal with real external enemies who were threatening their power and the safety of their citizens. France went to war with Austria in 1792 on foreign soil, and so this conflict did not impact the majority of French citizens on a daily basis. Since this war was peripheral to most French citizens, the Jacobins concentrated their propaganda campaign on enemies other than the Austrians. The largest propaganda effort devoted to the war was the *Levée en Masse* in 1793, which was a call to all French men to join the army and fight for their country. This was a positive proclamation, and enemies were not

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<sup>2</sup> James A. Leith, The Idea of Art as Propaganda in France, 1750-99 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1965) and Peter Kenez, The Birth of the Propaganda State: Soviet Methods of Mass Mobilization 1917-29 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1985).

associated with this movement. The Civil War in Russia that began in 1918 and lasted until 1920 was a very significant event, and the bulk of the Russian population was preoccupied with this struggle for the entire war. A great deal of propaganda was produced in response to this war and to the enemies actually being fought on the battlefield.

When countries are in revolution, everything is unstable. Once one faction or regime gains control, it must legitimize its power and convince the people to accept it, and hopefully to support it. During the French and Russian Revolutions, the Jacobins and the Bolsheviks tried to convince the populations that their ideas and goals were the "right" ones and that it was imperative to work for the common good and to accept the regimes' goals.

After coming to power, the Jacobins and the Bolsheviks were able to control what the masses saw and thereby effect what they thought about their new rulers. The Jacobins and the Bolsheviks believed they needed to influence the minds of their citizens, and in order to do that education was necessary. Since social upheavals were going on during the periods under consideration, there was not time to develop long-term policies for national education; those would come later. As a result, during the revolutions both regimes wanted to influence the minds of their citizens quickly and completely by other means. Both regimes wanted to mold their citizens' views and convince them of the correctness of their ideas about what it meant to be a citizen, of how the will of the people would be expressed, and of what the "new societies" would consist. Propaganda was the most obvious way to achieve the revolutionaries' immediate goals, and visual propaganda was especially important because of its appeal and accessibility to the masses.

Writing about propaganda during the French Revolution, Bertaud, a professor of history at the Sorbonne, wrote that "Robespierre and the Jacobins

had neither the time nor the means to succeed in establishing the public mind. What they were trying to do does not resemble at all what future totalitarian regimes would undertake."<sup>3</sup> This paper examines the extent to which this statement is true. It is my view that the Jacobins were less organized and less open about their use of propaganda than were the Bolsheviks, but that propaganda was an integral part of each revolution. Because the new regimes were attempting to replace the old ways of governing and thinking, the portrayal of enemies was important. The Jacobins and the Bolsheviks both wanted to identify internal and external enemies, who could potentially sabotage their futures. Furthermore, by making the distinction between allies and enemies, each regime was strengthening its ideas and increasing support for those ideas.

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<sup>3</sup> Bertaud, in Keith Baker, The French Revolution and the Creation of Modern Political Culture, vol. 2 (New York: Pergamon Press, 1987) 307.

## CHAPTER ONE- BACKGROUND OF PROPAGANDA

### PROPAGANDA

According to Jowett and O'Donnell, "Propaganda is a predetermined plan of prefabricated symbol manipulation."<sup>4</sup> In order to be effective, propaganda must leave a lasting impression upon those viewing it. When a regime sets out to influence its public via propaganda, the perpetrators must have a clearly defined goal— the dissemination of their ideas— though this goal is usually concealed. The most obvious goal of a state that disseminates propaganda is to convince the masses that the propagandist possesses the "correct ideas," and to persuade the citizens to internalize these ideas without realizing that the ideas are opinions rather than facts.<sup>5</sup>

Propaganda can make use of many different media, including newspapers, posters, paintings, sculptures, films, festivals and holidays, books, and songs. Each form can be used to disseminate ideas and opinions in an effort to make people believe these ideas and opinions. If the values and beliefs that the propagandist is proposing are not drastically different from those of the audience, then the propagandist can accomplish his/her mission without much difficulty. "If the times and the conditions are right, ... the propagandist is a hero who does nothing but shake the tree when the fruit is ripe."<sup>6</sup> In addition, if the beliefs, values, and ideas are brought across in a skilled manner, then many people begin to believe the ideas they see and hear without even recognizing that they are being influenced by propaganda.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>Garth Jowett and Victoria O'Donnell, Propaganda and Persuasion (Beverly Hills: Sage, 1986) 16.

<sup>5</sup> Garth Jowett and Victoria O'Donnell, Propaganda and Persuasion.

<sup>6</sup> Garth Jowett and Victoria O'Donnell, Propaganda and Persuasion 212.

<sup>7</sup> Jacques Ellul, Propaganda: The Formation of Men's Attitudes trans. by Konrad Kellen and Jean Lemer (New York: Knopf, 1965).

There are three categories of propaganda according to Jowett and O'Donnell. "White propaganda" is truthful information presented in order to build support for a particular point of view. Truthful information is considered propaganda when it is the intention of the author to manipulate the audience's response. On the other side of the spectrum is "black propaganda," which is false information disseminated in order to manipulate beliefs or influence actions. This type of propaganda is usually detrimental to the viewer because its message is untruthful.

In the middle is a large gray area, which includes all sorts of propaganda that has some truth to it, but is not completely accurate. This is the largest and most ambiguous type of propaganda, and as a result most propaganda falls under this heading. The message in "gray propaganda" is expressed in such a way as to encourage the belief of opinions rather than facts, and these opinions may appear biased when looked at by others who are removed from the situation. If propaganda is successful, it is beneficial to the propagandist, because it has converted viewers to the ideas of the regime in control.<sup>8</sup>

#### THE JACOBINS' USE OF PROPAGANDA

In 1793, when Robespierre was elected to the Committee of Public Safety, the freedoms of equality and opportunity which earlier had seemed so integral to the Revolution were put aside and the Terror began. During the Terror, the Jacobins attempted to purge their society of those people who did not agree with Jacobin plans for the future, and who thus were seen as traitors.<sup>9</sup> Many of the "traitors" supported the King and the aristocracy.

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<sup>8</sup> Garth Jowett and Victoria O'Donnell, Propaganda and Persuasion (Beverly Hills: Sage, 1986)

<sup>9</sup> David P. Jordan, The Revolutionary Career of Maximilien Robespierre (Chicago: University

Others simply said or did something the Jacobins found threatening. The Jacobins hoped that once all of the enemies within their society had been eliminated, the Terror would be followed by a period of calm and order. The Terror was seen as a necessary precursor to the creation of a new and better society of virtuous citizens.

During the Terror, the Jacobins sought out internal enemies and executed them publicly in order to rid society of harmful people and to warn the rest of society about their fate if they should be unfaithful to the ideals of the new Republic. At least 40,000 unnatural deaths occurred during this period, which ended with the execution of Robespierre himself in July 1794.<sup>10</sup> The numerous executions created a sense of urgency and imminent change, and also caused many people to obey the Jacobin regime out of fear.

According to Lynn Hunt, the Jacobins' goal upon coming to power was to "establish a republic which was neither aristocratic nor popular and yet could command the allegiance of the mass of the population."<sup>11</sup> The Jacobins planned to institute a democratic republic in a society of virtuous citizens, where very little government would be necessary once the will of the virtuous would be expressed. The Jacobins wanted to create a "new man" (for only men were considered virtuous enough to be distinguished in this way), who would be just and equal to all other men in society. But these ideas were dreams about the future. For the present, the Jacobins believed they needed to be in control so that they could institute change and begin to build the new society according to their ideals.<sup>12</sup>

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of Chicago Press, 1989).

<sup>10</sup> Marc Bouloiseau, The Jacobin Republic: 1792-94, trans. Jonathan Mandelbaum (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983) 93.

<sup>11</sup> Lynn Hunt, "Symbolic Legimation and Popular Politics in Revolutionary France," Consortium on Revolutionary Europe 1750-1850 (1979): 282.

<sup>12</sup> Lynn Hunt, Politics, Culture, and Class in the French Revolution (Berkeley: University of



Beginning with the storming of the Bastille in 1789, many French citizens had become more open to new ideas and to fundamental societal changes, and therefore the conditions were ideal for effective propaganda. The Jacobins used this situation to their advantage. They used propaganda to accomplish their immediate goals of gaining support among the masses, which were supposed to pave the way for their long-term goals.

The Jacobins did not often employ the word "propaganda," preferring words such as "education" and "campaign" to describe their activities.<sup>13</sup> Nevertheless, according to Jowett's and O'Donnell's definitions, the Jacobins were producing propaganda since their campaign was an attempt to increase support for the Jacobins by influencing peoples' opinions. According to Bouloiseau, "In their passion for unity, the men in power [the Jacobins] did not regard the masses as capable of looking after themselves."<sup>14</sup> The Jacobins believed they had all of the answers, and since they considered most citizens incapable of understanding all of the complex events associated with the Revolution, they considered it their duty to educate the people. One example of this desire to educate is the way in which the Committee of Public Safety would commission artwork intended to educate citizens about the Jacobins' ideas for a future republic. The Committee never explicitly stated that the caricatures and broadsides were part of a larger "propaganda" campaign aimed at creating support for the future republic, but this intention was nevertheless present.<sup>15</sup>

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California Press, 1984) 73.

<sup>13</sup> Claudette Hould in Michel Vovelle, Les Images de la Révolution Française (Paris:Publication de la Sorbonne, 1988).

<sup>14</sup> Marc Bouloiseau, Jacobin Republic 91.

<sup>15</sup> Claudette Hould, L'Image de la Revolution Francaise. exh. cat. (Montreal: Musee du Quebec, 1989).

Propaganda allowed the Jacobins to influence the viewers with their ideas for the future, and censorship allowed these views to be the dominant views in French society. Propaganda also identified enemies of the French, and portrayed them in humorous and degrading manners in comparison to the French.

#### THE BOLSHEVIKS' USE OF PROPAGANDA

Over one hundred years later, Russia went through its own epoch-defining revolution. Although huge differences separate the French and Russian Revolutions, both were led by radicals who were attempting to make a clean break with the past and create new societies. In addition, both sets of revolutionaries addressed their message to the world, believing that their revolutions would be catalysts for uprisings and revolutions in other countries.

During the Civil War the Red Terror occurred in Russia. Tens of thousands of Russians, who were thought to be anti-Bolshevik, were taken as hostages and killed, both as a lesson to others and in order to purge society of enemies. As in France, internal "enemies" were removed from society because they were traitors or suspected traitors, or because they opposed the ideals of the Bolsheviks. The combination of the Terror, which was in itself a form of propaganda, and a multi-faceted propaganda campaign, swayed many citizens to accept the policies of the Bolsheviks, either through coercion or because they truly believed in these ideals.<sup>16</sup>

Upon taking power, the Bolsheviks wanted all ordinary people to feel proud of their new "proletarian" government and happy to be out from

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<sup>16</sup> R.R. Palmer and Joel Colton, A History of the Modern World sixth edition (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1950).

under the yoke of tsarism and the "bourgeois" democracy of the Provisional Government. The Bolsheviks wanted to destroy all remnants of the pre-revolutionary political, economic, and social system. They also set out to educate the masses about their ideas and plans for the future, combining a "crusading zeal with professional skill."<sup>17</sup> The main idea that the Bolsheviks propounded was that their government would represent Russia's workers and peasants, who made up the vast majority of the Russian population. In the society they envisioned, class distinctions would disappear and there would be material abundance.

Class distinctions could not disappear, however, until society had been purged of unwanted people, because in the eyes of the Bolsheviks not all Russians were redeemable. The Bolshevik definition of "the masses" was class-based and did not include capitalists, aristocrats, priests, and others who played important roles in the tsarist regime. People in these groups were believed to be incapable of change, and therefore were viewed as enemies who needed to be purged from society. The Bolsheviks' attitude toward the common people was quite different. They were viewed as ignorant about the benefits of socialism, but capable of embracing change once the Bolsheviks revealed to them how they had been exploited for generations. The Bolsheviks were so convinced that the socialist way was the "truth" that they felt it was their duty to "educate" all workers and peasants so that everyone had the same ideas, Bolshevik ideas. The Bolsheviks wanted to create a "new human being" through education about what it meant to be a citizen in a socialist society.<sup>18</sup> According to Lenin: "In our view the state draws its

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<sup>17</sup> Frederick C. Barghoorn, Soviet Foreign Propaganda (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1964) 4.

<sup>18</sup> Peter Kenez, Propaganda State.

strength from the consciousness of the masses. It is strong when the masses know everything, can make judgments on everything, and approach everything consciously."<sup>19</sup> Of course, the consciousness of the masses only made the state strong when that consciousness was parallel to the leaders' consciousness. The Bolsheviks undertook their massive propaganda campaign to ensure that the masses achieved correct consciousness.

Bolshevik propaganda was overt, especially immediately following the October Revolution and during the Civil War, and there were special committees dedicated to disseminating propaganda. Posters, newspapers, and other media were used to extol the virtues of the new way of life while simultaneously creating monstrous images of Bolshevik "enemies." Most of the Bolsheviks' propaganda was white or gray, because they believed their ideas to be the truth and thus did not generally lie to their citizens.

## CENSORSHIP

Censorship is intricately linked to propaganda because propaganda is most successful when other viewpoints are unable to contradict it. In order for propaganda to be successful in putting forth a united viewpoint, this propaganda must be the dominant viewpoint. Propaganda can exist without censorship, but in these circumstances the propagandist's goal is more difficult to achieve. In the absence of censorship, there are a number of different viewpoints available to the audience, which makes it more difficult for the propagandist to persuade the masses of his/her viewpoint. Since censorship allows only one point of view, propaganda under these circumstances will be successful if citizens are persuaded of its legitimacy. For

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<sup>19</sup> Richard Taylor, "A Medium for the Masses: Agitation in the Soviet Civil War," Soviet Studies 22 (April 1971): 562.

these reasons, censorship is often employed to eliminate opposing viewpoints, thereby creating a united point of view.

Each regime under consideration decreased the freedom of the press once it came to power. When the Jacobins came to power in 1791, the freedom of the press that publishers had been enjoying was encroached upon, and citizens began to feel uneasy about voicing divergent opinions for fear of being labeled a traitor and being killed. When the Bolsheviks came to power they confiscated the paper supply and machinery used by publishers not loyal to the Bolshevik cause, and thus effectively implemented censorship in this way.<sup>20</sup> They set out to control access to various opinions in as many ways as possible, from controlling the printing presses to abolishing old holidays and creating new ones. The Jacobins and the Bolsheviks both struggled with the meaning and limits of freedom of the press and censorship, and changed their stances on the issue during the periods under consideration.

Before the French Revolution, freedom of the press did not exist in France, but in 1789 this changed. The Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen stated that "the free communication of thought is one of the most precious rights of man. All citizens can, therefore, speak, write and print freely."<sup>21</sup> Immediately following this declaration, there existed a wide variety of newspapers and political pamphlets throughout France, and therefore political debates went on in a variety of media. Upon granting this freedom, those in control began to comprehend the immense consequences of this action, and they realized the control and influence they had lost.

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<sup>20</sup> Abbott Gleason, Peter Kenez, and Richard Stites, Bolshevik Culture.

<sup>21</sup> Carla Hesse, Publishing and Cultural Politics in Revolutionary Paris: 1789-1810 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991) 5.

The problem arose of where to draw the line "between liberty and libel, and between opinion and sedition."<sup>22</sup> This was a serious question, especially for the Jacobins, whose goal was to create a just and equal society. Was it just to allow people to print fallacies in newspaper articles? Furthermore, there was the question of whose definition should be used to determine if a statement in an article was true or false. When the Jacobins gained control of the National Assembly in 1791, they decided that some restrictions needed to be reinstated in order to limit sedition.<sup>23</sup> When printing restrictions and surveillance were reinstated, some newspapers opposed to the Jacobin viewpoint tried to mask the content of their articles by titling their newspapers with a word or phrase which echoed the ideas of the Jacobins, even though the content was often vastly different from what the title promised. Every few weeks the editors of these papers would change the names of their publications, and they would omit addresses on all publications in order to escape the Jacobins' wrath.<sup>24</sup> These newspapers did not attract a large following among the common people, but for those associated with particular societies or clubs in Paris and other large cities, it was still possible to publish dissenting ideas and circulate them among friends.

At first the Jacobins re-established censorship in an effort to encourage responsibility in presenting truth and virtue rather than to prevent people from publishing their opinions. As the Jacobins' power increased, however, the new restrictions became more and more difficult to evade, and groups

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<sup>22</sup> Carla Hesse, Publishing and Cultural Politics 20.

<sup>23</sup> Carla Hesse, Publishing and Cultural Politics.

<sup>24</sup> Bertaud, in Keith Baker, French Revolution 302.

with non-sanctioned opinions were forced either to publish clandestinely, to stop publishing, or to adhere in print to Jacobin ideas.

By the time Robespierre was elected to the Committee of Public Safety in 1793, the Terror was in full force, and many citizens were scared to voice opinions which diverged from those of the Jacobins. Robespierre at this point opposed freedom of the press, something he had earlier favored. In his quest for power, Robespierre realized how important it was to have influence over the opinions people were forming, and he decided censorship was necessary in order to have a consensus of opinion about the future of the new Republic. In keeping with their vision of the future, the Jacobins thought that in the future freedom of the press would be reinstated, but that during the revolutionary period censorship was necessary in order to instill republican ideas in the masses.<sup>25</sup>

Censorship thus became a tool used by the Jacobins to promote their own point of view and to advance their propaganda campaign without competition from other points of view. Censorship laws were enforced during the Terror with grave consequences, including death, for those who did not obey the laws, and thus censorship was often self-enforced.<sup>26</sup>

During the Jacobin period censorship was never complete, for it did not prohibit all publications by non-Jacobin groups. All printed materials were required by law to be submitted to a committee and to be approved before printing could occur, but in reality this was difficult to enforce.<sup>27</sup> The implementation of censorship created many arguments within the National Assembly, and although the Jacobins were successful in implementing

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<sup>25</sup> David P. Jordan, Career of Maximilien.

<sup>26</sup> Carla Hesse, Publishing and Cultural Politics.

<sup>27</sup> Bertaud in Keith Baker, French Revolution.

censorship, there was dissent from the Girondins and the Mountain—the two other groups represented in the National Assembly. These groups realized that if the Jacobins had the power to censor all forms of print not produced by the Jacobins, then Girondin and Mountain journals would most likely be censored, even though their views did not diverge significantly from those of the Jacobins.<sup>28</sup> They came to believe that the Jacobins were becoming too powerful. In fact, this fear of censorship became so heightened that opposition to censorship helped overthrow Robespierre and the Jacobins. The Jacobins were believed to have too much power and influence over citizens' access to information, and other groups wanted their opinions to be heard as well.

The Bolsheviks also wavered in terms of their positions on freedom of the press and censorship. The Bolsheviks were revolutionary Marxists, and their ideology did not value freedom of the press. According to Lenin:

Since there can be no talk of an independent ideology formulated by the working masses themselves in the process of their movement, the only choice is either bourgeois or socialist ideology. There is no middle course (for mankind has not created a "third" ideology, and moreover, in a society torn by class antagonisms there can never be a non-class or an above class ideology.) Hence, to belittle socialist ideology in any way, to turn aside from it in the slightest degree means to strengthen bourgeois ideology. There is much talk of spontaneity, but the spontaneous development of the working class movement leads to its subordination to bourgeois ideology...<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Henri Avenel, Histoire de la Presse Française Depuis 1789 Jusqu'à Nos Jours (Paris, 1900) 127.

<sup>29</sup> Abbott Gleason, Peter Kenez, and Richard Stites, Bolshevik Culture 135.



It followed from this view that freedom of the press could not be supported by the proponents of socialist ideology. In addition, the Bolsheviks' believed Lenin's statement that "the capitalists...call freedom of the press that situation in which censorship is abolished and all parties freely publish any paper they please. In reality, this is not freedom of the press, but freedom for the rich, for the bourgeois to mislead the oppressed and exploited masses."<sup>30</sup> In this way the Bolsheviks were able to justify their censorship policy by stating that it was protecting the proletariat, rather than hindering the proletariat's right to express various opinions.

After the February Revolution freedom of the press was established in Russia for the first time by the Provisional Government. At this time, Bolshevik publications competed with other socialist, Marxist, and bourgeois newspapers, many of which were much more established and had better financing. After the Bolsheviks came to power, they recognized the power of censorship and used the secret police to help them unify the beliefs of their citizens. When the Bolsheviks had the predominant ideology in Russia, their beliefs about freedom of the press were implemented by the secret police and other Bolshevik surveillance committees, in order for their views to be propagated more easily.<sup>31</sup>

One factor that aided the success of Bolshevik censorship was the scarcity of paper. During the Civil War, paper was very scarce in Russia, and the Bolsheviks had complete control over the bulk of the paper supply. Therefore, the Bolsheviks could control what was printed in books, newspapers, posters, and other documents by only issuing paper to those organizations which were working for the Bolshevik cause. The fact that so

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<sup>30</sup> Peter Kenez, Propaganda State 37. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2344203>

<sup>31</sup> Abbott Gleason, Peter Kenez, and Richard Stites, eds, Bolshevik Culture 137.

many posters were produced during this period despite the paper shortage proves how important the Bolsheviks believed their visual propaganda campaign was for their cause.

Since control of printed material was more centralized and the lines of censorship were more rigid, the Bolsheviks were comparatively more successful in their efforts at controlling what was printed than the Jacobins were. This success may be one reason why the Bolsheviks were ultimately more successful in achieving their goals. By the end of the period under consideration, censorship was well in place in Russia. In addition, many citizens did not realize how rigid Bolshevik censorship was, because they were not aware of alternative viewpoints which were being suppressed by the Bolsheviks.

## ORGANIZATIONS DISSEMINATING PROPAGANDA

The Jacobins did not have a government organization devoted exclusively to the dissemination of propaganda. Nevertheless, the Committee of Public Safety, which consisted of twelve elected members from the National Assembly, had the power to do whatever it deemed necessary to unite the citizens of France and boost morale, and a major part of this effort was devoted to the propaganda campaign.<sup>32</sup> During 1793-94, a special fund was formed to commission political caricatures and broadsides, and more than a dozen caricatures and broadsides were completed with the aim of boosting the morale of the French and uniting them behind the Jacobins.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Jordan and Rigney in James A. Heffernan, ed, Representing the French Revolution: Literature, Historiography, and Art (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 1992).

<sup>33</sup> James Cuno, "Obscene Humor in French Revolutionary Caricatures: Jaques-Louis David's *The Array of Jugs* and *The English Government*" in James A. W. Heffernan, ed, Representing the French Revolution: literature, historiography, and art (Hanover, NH: Dartmouth College: University Press of New England, 1992) 196.

Unlike the French, who tended to “suggest” themes for caricatures, use “surveillance” techniques to control the printing presses, and exercise their “influence” to guide their new society in the right direction,<sup>34</sup> the Bolsheviks were explicit about being propagandists and agitators. This attitude was reflected in their straightforward dissemination of ideas and doctrines. There were no vague or implied meanings for the Bolsheviks, and they clearly stated that propaganda was one important method of promoting socialist ideals.

The Bolsheviks’ propaganda efforts were managed by various agencies. Many organizations were involved in the struggle, most notably VTsIK (the All-Russian Central Executive Committee) and Litizdat (Literary-Publishing House). VTsIK was the first organization to produce posters after the October Revolution of 1917, an initiative which was soon followed by other publishers as the demand for poster production increased. VTsIK’s responsibilities were constantly changing because of the uncertain status of government organizations during the Civil War. Nevertheless, VTsIK was very adept at producing posters quickly and effectively, and soon became the leading agency in poster production, often giving assistance to other organizations. Litizdat was the military publishing house most active during the Civil War. Litizdat was responsible not only for informing soldiers of current events and party platforms by means of printed material, but also for producing propaganda to encourage everyone all over Russia to support the Reds (the pro-Bolshevik forces fighting in the Civil War). Litizdat was especially important because it was given complete independence during most of the Civil War period, when

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<sup>34</sup> David L. Dowd, “Art as national Propaganda in the French Revolution,” Public Opinion Quarterly (Fall 1951): 532-547 and Marc Bouloiseau, The Jacobin Republic.

the Bolsheviks were willing to do anything within their power to ensure the support of the masses.<sup>35</sup>

During and immediately after the Civil War there were a total of 453 different institutions contributing to poster production and publication.<sup>36</sup> The large number of institutions can be attributed to the rapid growth of the media devoted to propaganda and the circumstances of the Civil War. In 1920 the Bolshevik Party's Central Committee Department of Propaganda and Agitation (Agitprop) was created as the oversight organization disseminating propaganda, and its goals shifted toward economic and social concerns at the end of the Civil War.<sup>37</sup>

In addition, ROSTA, the Russian Telegraph Agency, disseminated Rosta windows, which played a key part in making citizens aware of day-to-day events associated with the revolution. Rosta was also concerned with the "solicitation of support for the Bolsheviks and the defamation of their enemies."<sup>38</sup> These propaganda organizations were crucial to the Bolshevik struggle for power during this hectic and tumultuous period.

During both the French and Russian periods, organizations dedicated to propaganda dissemination were crucial to the success of regime-sponsored propaganda. This kind of concerted effort, whether or not it was labeled "propaganda," was important in bringing ideas about the leaders' plans for the future of each society to the masses and encouraging them to support their new government.

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<sup>35</sup> Steven White, Bolshevik Poster (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988).

<sup>36</sup> Steven White, Bolshevik Poster.

<sup>37</sup> Alex Inkeles, Public Opinion in Soviet Russia (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1958).

<sup>38</sup> ROSTA Bolshevik Placards, 1919-1921 (New York: Sander Gallery, 1994) 5.

## PROPAGANDA IMAGES

If, as Peter Kenez asserts, propaganda is nothing more than "an attempt to transmit social and political values in the hope of affecting people's thinking, emotions, and behavior,"<sup>39</sup> then propaganda is useful and necessary for any regime that wishes to educate its citizens about its message and goals. The Jacobins and Bolsheviks did not just want people to believe that their visions and ideas were correct. They wanted citizens to adopt those visions and ideas as their own. Both regimes also wanted their depictions of enemies to be believed as truth rather than opinion.

During each period under consideration, each regime attempted to use all available forms of mass communication to promote its ideas. In fact, all official proclamations and decrees can be regarded as part of these propaganda campaigns, because all printed material issued from the revolutionary regimes addressing the masses was expected to promote the ideas of those regimes. According to the Jacobins, "everything ought to have a moral purpose among a Republican people."<sup>40</sup> The same was true in Russia, where every proclamation transferred from the government to the people was seen as an educational tool.

Printing was an essential aspect of propaganda during both periods. Printing presses are often associated solely with newspapers and journals, but printing presses were in fact responsible for reproducing all forms of printed propaganda. Without the ability to duplicate documents rapidly and thus distribute the same information all over the country, the mass propagandizing of the citizenry would not have been possible. Since standard typesetting was a relatively new innovation at the time of the French Revolution, the Jacobins

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<sup>39</sup> Peter Kenez, *Propaganda State* 4.

<sup>40</sup> James A. Leith, "Ephemera: Civic Education through Images" in Robert Darnton and Daniel Roche, eds., *Revolution in Print: the Press in France 1775-1800* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989) 288.

were very aware of the massive impact mass communication had on the French people. According to Jeremy Popkin, the printing press allowed one to "teach the same truth at the same moment to millions of men."<sup>41</sup> During the Russian Revolution, printing presses were much more developed than at the end of the eighteenth century, and so the Bolsheviks were able to use printing presses more efficiently and effectively than the French.

In France, the most well-known types of propaganda used during the Revolution were newspapers, *libelles*, engravings, caricatures, broadsides, distinctive attire, and rituals. As Robert Darnton and Daniel Roche explain, "to seize the power they [the Jacobins] must seize the word and spread it...by journals, almanacs, pamphlets, posters, pictures, song sheets, stationary, board games, ration cards, money, anything that will carry an impression and embed it in the minds of 26 million French people...."<sup>42</sup> The combination of written and visual propaganda helped the Jacobins reach the widest number of citizens in a variety of ways.

*Libelles* and newspapers were the most popular and important forms of written propaganda. *Libelles*, small pamphlets and flyers that were printed and posted on walls as well as distributed on the streets, were important because they provided a commentary of daily events going on in Paris. There were many different kinds of *libelles*, both literary and popular. According to Darnton, "Whenever crises hit the state, *libelles* compounded the damage."<sup>43</sup> During the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries *libelles* had developed a

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<sup>41</sup> Jeremy D. Popkin, "Journals: The New Face of News" in Robert Darnton and Daniel Roche, eds. *Revolution in Print: the Press in France 1775-1800* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989) 141.

<sup>42</sup> Robert Darnton and Daniel Roche, eds., *Revolution in Print: the Press in France 1775-1800* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989) xiii.

<sup>43</sup> Robert Darnton, *The Forbidden Best-Sellers of Pre-Revolutionary France* (New York: W.W. Norton and Comnay, 1995) 199.

reputation for presenting gossip rather than facts, and during the Revolution *libelles* often offered a particular citizen's point of view about a subject rather than factual information. As a consequence *libelles* became very popular. Those who were used to reading *libelles* took what they read with a grain of salt, but for the uninitiated, the *libelles* could seem to be an authoritative version of events, which was rarely the case.<sup>44</sup> Although *libelles* were effective at informing a small part of the French population about the events taking place during the Revolution, they did not reach a wide spectrum of people, since illiteracy was the norm rather than the exception in 1789. Newspapers played a similar role, except they were, for the most part, more factual.

In Russia, the Bolsheviks mobilized all available media to further their cause. Newspapers, journals, songs, festivals, cinema, books, agitation trains, theatre, posters, and Rosta windows are just some of the media the Bolsheviks used to increase peoples' understanding of what the Bolsheviks stood for.

Newspapers were an important form of written propaganda for the Bolsheviks, in part because prior to the Revolution many revolutionaries had used underground newspapers to clandestinely publish their views at home and abroad.<sup>45</sup> The Bolsheviks understood the importance of expressing their ideas in written form, but Bolshevik newspapers, like French *libelles*, only reached a small, rather elite group of people— those who could read.

The majority of peasants and many city dwellers were illiterate in Revolutionary France and Russia, so written messages had a limited propaganda value. Both the Jacobins and the Bolsheviks therefore used images to reach illiterate citizens. According to Kenez, a poster's "message can be quickly grasped by the most unsophisticated viewers; its appeal does not

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<sup>44</sup> Robert Darnton, The Forbidden Best-Sellers.

<sup>45</sup> Abbott Gleason, Peter Kenez, and Richard Stites, Bolshevik Culture.

depend on rational argument; and it is as capable of advertising a commercial product as of selling a political idea."<sup>46</sup> Visual propaganda was attractive to both regimes because of its non-verbal propaganda qualities. In just a few seconds, a poster or caricature could convey a very poignant message to a viewer, and when visual images were displayed in well-traveled areas, it was hard to avoid the messages that these images conveyed. Images were also a representation of the policies favored by the revolutionaries which remained in peoples' minds.

My analysis of French Revolutionary propaganda concentrates on engravings, caricatures, and broadsides because of their potential mass appeal as visual propaganda. Engravings and caricatures were often cartoon-like, and they were sometimes commissioned by the government to further its cause. Unlike Bolshevik images, however, many French images were produced by an artist without the suggestion of the government. Engravings and caricatures were very popular before the Revolution, though before 1789 the themes they portrayed were generally not political.<sup>47</sup>

Reproduction proved to be important during the Revolution, because copies could be made and distributed all over Paris and eventually all over France. The images used in these capacities were usually positive images promoting liberty and fraternity, or images of French enemies being ridiculed in various fashions. These images were then taken by others and reprinted many times in various formats. Engravings were often made from a woodcut, so that multiple copies could easily be made of the same image. It is this repetition on many levels of ubiquitous images that subliminally affected illiterate people and influenced them toward the acceptance of Jacobin ideas.

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<sup>46</sup> Peter Kenez, *Propaganda State* 111.

<sup>47</sup> Robert Darnton and Daniel Roche, eds., *Revolution in Print*.



Images of enemies were also successful as propaganda because of the variety of themes they depicted and the sense of unity created by identifying a common enemy. According to Melot, during revolution the caricature becomes a "subversive weapon whereby a political model is dismantled by means of an aesthetic model."<sup>48</sup> Caricatures, broadsides, and engravings gave the Jacobins a visual voice with which to depict their enemies in ways they deemed appropriate.

My analysis of Bolshevik propaganda concentrates on posters and Rosta windows because of their mass appeal as visual propaganda and because of the central role they played during the Revolution and the Civil War. Posters were favored because they were comprehensible to the illiterate masses and because they could be produced quickly, which allowed them to keep up with changing events. Their aim was to evoke a feeling of support for the Bolsheviks and unity among the people by depicting an active scene. The origins of Bolshevik posters can be traced back to *lubok* images and icon painting. *Lubok* are simple, colorful woodcuts dating back to the seventeenth century, and icon painting was the mainstay of Russian art, which was intrinsically linked to the Russian Orthodox church. Like early Bolshevik posters, *lubok* images and icons both used vibrant colors, two-dimensional, flat portrayals, and simple images to convey powerful messages.<sup>49</sup> Of course, the posters the Bolsheviks produced were quite distinct from these two older styles, and the break from the past can be seen most evidently in the themes the Bolsheviks chose to portray, as compared with *lubok* and icon painting.

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<sup>48</sup> Melot, in Lynn Hockman, ed, French Caricature and the French Revolution, 1789-1799 (Los Angeles: Grunwald Center for Graphic Arts, University of California, 1988).

<sup>49</sup> Stephen White, Bolshevik Poster

"Rosta windows" were similar to posters in the role that they played during the revolution, and like posters Rosta windows were considered "revolutionary art" because they were created for political purposes rather than aesthetic ones. Rosta windows combined the functions of posters, newspapers, magazines, and information bulletins. They kept up with day-to-day events better than posters because they were individually produced. At first Rosta windows were hand painted; later they were duplicated by hand using cardboard stencils. They were recognizable because they often involved a series of frames treating a single theme, "like a magnified comic strip," and in this way they told a story.<sup>50</sup> Their name was derived from the Russian Telegraph Agency, under whose auspices they were produced, and from the abandoned storefront windows in which the first Rosta windows were hung. After the first few months of production, the handmade images were displayed all over, not just in windows, but the name "Rosta window" endured. Rosta windows had the ability to portray the outcome of enemy actions because the numerous frames within one Rosta window allowed viewers to see the progression of action.<sup>51</sup>

Posters and Rosta windows addressed proletarians through colorful images and simple phrases, thus bringing Bolshevik messages to many ordinary people. The written slogans accompanying the images always used the informal voice, which made the relationship between the poster and the viewer familiar, like that of comrades.<sup>52</sup> Rosta windows' "abrupt and telegraphic captions literally screamed at the literate viewer, while visual

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<sup>50</sup> Robert C. Williams, Artists in Revolution (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1977) and Stephen White, Bolshevik Poster

<sup>51</sup> N. Baburina, Russia Twentieth Century: History of the Country in Poster (Moscow: Panorama, 1993).

<sup>52</sup> ROSTA 12.

content left even the illiterate with little doubt concerning how they might help good triumph over evil."<sup>53</sup>

Because both the Jacobins and the Bolsheviks employed so many different media, their propagandistic efforts to educate their citizens were quite successful. Most people who lived in cities and even some of those who lived in the country encountered some regime-sponsored propaganda about the events unfolding around them.

## ART AS PROPAGANDA

Both the Jacobins and the Bolsheviks were aware of the advantages of including art as a part of their respective propaganda campaigns. As Hunt remarks, "The capacity for vividness and appeal to emotions made art an excellent vehicle for political propaganda."<sup>54</sup> Art's appeal to the masses was multi-faceted. Images often leave a lasting impression in the mind because of their striking appearance, and art was also versatile in terms of the types of scenes it could illustrate.

The Jacobins understood art's ability to attract peoples' attention and they believed that art could serve their needs. Caricatures, broadsides, and engraving existed in the shadow of fine art, and were viewed by many as inferior artwork, but their goal was to reach the people with a message, and they were definitely successful in this undertaking. In the half century preceding the French Revolution engraving of current events became popular. The main audience of these forms of art were the bourgeoisie and the nobility, because caricatures before the Revolution were still very

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<sup>53</sup> Robert C. Williams, Artists in Revolution (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1977) 71.

<sup>54</sup> Lynn Hunt, "The Political Psychology of Revolutionary Caricatures" in Lynne Hockman, ed., French Caricature 35.

sophisticated. During the Revolution the audience the artists targeted became broader and included more of the common people.<sup>55</sup> At the start of the Revolution, censorship laws were relaxed (although they were subsequently reinstated), and this freedom created increased production which resulted in higher demand for images of current events.

The Committee of Public Safety supported the idea of using art as propaganda because it had seen visual images used in the past to serve the monarchy, and it wanted to use this form of representation to propagate its messages of liberty and virtuosity.<sup>56</sup> Both fine art and popular art were utilized as tools of public education. Initially fine art was used more frequently than popular art, but as the revolution progressed, the Committee of Public Safety expanded its media to include caricatures, broadsides, and engravings, which could be produced more quickly than fine art and encompass a wider variety of images than traditional art. Many of these caricatures, broadsides, and engravings were officially commissioned, but others were produced by individual artists who were inspired by current events and trends.

In Russia, posters and Rosta windows opened a new era in Russian art, one which broke away from the idea of art as "a timeless object of individual expression."<sup>57</sup> The artists who produced Rosta windows and posters were using art as a political tool to further the Bolshevik cause, and their aim was to produce art that was useful rather than art that was beautiful or uplifting.<sup>58</sup> These artworks were not produced by months of hard labor; they were

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<sup>55</sup> Melot, in Lynne Hockman, ed., *French Caricature*.

<sup>56</sup> James A. Leith, *The Idea of Art as Propaganda in France, 1750-99* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1965) 98.

<sup>57</sup> *ROSTA* 5.

<sup>58</sup> *ROSTA*.

produced in haste in order to get the message out to the people quickly in an easily understandable format.

The use of revolutionary posters originated during the 1905 revolution, when pictorial attacks were made of the tsar and his family. By the time of the October revolution in 1917, the Bolsheviks recognized the usefulness of this form of communication for conveying straightforward messages. Many revolutionary posters were "created in the relatively swift development of a visual language which was effective and appropriate to the needs of the moment..."<sup>59</sup> Between 1918-1921, over 3,600 posters were produced by the Bolsheviks. Over half were printed, and the rest were produced by hand.<sup>60</sup> During the Civil War, posters concentrated on depicting the enemy and on encouraging support for the Red Army. Once the war ended, more attention was focused on economic and social issues, which were intended to move Russia along the path toward socialism.

## ARTISTS

In both France and Russia, young artists thought to possess the ideals of the regimes were recruited to produce visual images. Both Russian and French artists were often told what kinds of scenes they should create to stir the emotions of their audiences to the highest degree possible. Nevertheless, it was the artists' creative talent that was essential in order to create effective visual representations.

In France the Committee of Public Safety commissioned artists to produce caricatures. The most famous of these artists was Jaques-Louis David. In 1793, when commissioning David to design caricatures rather than

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<sup>59</sup> Stephen White, Bolshevik Poster 38.

<sup>60</sup> Stephen White, Bolshevik Poster, Ch. 5

the fine art for which he was well known, the Committee of Public Safety declared:

The Deputy David is invited to use all the talents and means at his disposal to raise the number of prints and caricatures which will rouse the minds of the people and make them feel how odious and ridiculous are the enemies of Liberty and of the Republic."<sup>61</sup>

The official government artists were selected because the Committee of Public Safety believed that they stood for the goals of the Jacobins and they were trusted to promote the Jacobin cause.<sup>62</sup>

In Russia, Vladimir V. Mayakovsky and Mikhail M. Cheremnykh led the list of artists producing Rosta windows, with Mayakovsky writing the vast majority of the slogans and poems accompanying these images. Since Mayakovsky was very dedicated to the goals of the Bolsheviks, the Bolsheviks trusted him to manipulate symbols to the Bolsheviks' advantage.<sup>63</sup> Viktor N. Deni and Dmitri S. Moor are among the best known poster artists who contributed their talents to the Bolshevik cause. Deni was the more satirical of the two, and his work was closer to the style used in newspaper cartoons. Moor produced images which were more heroic than Deni's, who began producing cartoons well before the Revolutions of 1917, and so my analysis focuses on the regimes' various internal and external enemies.<sup>64</sup> Most artists were young people who were sympathetic to the Bolsheviks' cause, and their prints were effective because they were an expression of the artists' beliefs.

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<sup>61</sup> Hannah Mitchell, "Art and the French Revolution: An Exhibit at the Musee Carnavalet," History Workshop. 5 (1978): 130.

<sup>62</sup> James A. Leith, Art as Propaganda.

<sup>63</sup> ROSTA and Stephen White, Bolshevik Poster.

<sup>64</sup> Stephen White, Bolshevik Poster Ch. 3.

Russian artists, many without formal training in the field of art, found in the Revolution a way to combine their love of art with their political views.

## SUBJECTS

The subjects chosen for use as propaganda images are extremely varied. Since both the Jacobins and the Bolsheviks were attempting to create entirely new societies, each regime needed to influence and educate the masses on a wide variety of subjects, from the importance of public health measures, to the nature of foreign enemies, to the need to volunteer and support the war effort. The Jacobins and the Bolsheviks were both very careful about the subjects they chose to represent in images and those that they chose to omit.

The portrayal of enemies was one topic each regime viewed as integral to its propaganda campaign. The most important internal enemies were the Royal Family, the Aristocracy, and the clergy, while the most important external enemies were the Whites, the English, the Capitalists, and other foreign heads of state. Chapters two, three and four discuss in greater detail various characteristics in the portrayal of enemies, internal enemies, and external enemies, respectively.

## CHAPTER TWO-TECHNIQUES OF PORTRAYING THE ENEMY

Both the French and Russian revolutionaries used various strategies in their depictions of enemies which enabled them to promote their propaganda in more specific ways. One strategy was to use symbols repeatedly in propaganda, which the viewer associated with good or evil without even thinking about what the symbol represented. Another strategy to attract viewers was to use humor, which made the viewer laugh and feel superior to the enemy being depicted. Supernatural enemies embodied all of the evil qualities of foreign enemies without being human, and exaggeration both heightened and decreased the strength of these enemies. The Bolsheviks also used inanimate enemies to depict the battles they were waging with social ills in society.

In addition to the subjects which were portrayed, both regimes omitted information about certain events, which led to an incomplete picture of the events taking place. The subjects that the revolutionaries decided not to portray in their propaganda were almost as significant as the subjects which were portrayed. Negative and violent acts committed by the revolutionaries, even in the name of progress, were for the most part not depicted. When enemies were being hurt or killed by the Jacobin or Bolshevik allies, these scenes were often portrayed without actual injury or blood in the representation.

The Bolsheviks also used images containing a sequence of scenes to show the cause and effect of certain enemy actions as discussed in Chapter one. These comic strip-like depictions, more common in Rosta Windows than in posters, were employed to show the consequences enemies faced when they came into contact with Bolshevik forces. Sequences were also



involved when physical violence was depicted, because the numerous scenes allowed the Bolsheviks to legitimate their violence towards their enemies by illustrating what the enemies did to deserve this treatment. These sequences were produced in order to promote both the positive ideals of the revolutionaries and the negative aspects of their enemies simultaneously.

## SYMBOLS

Symbols recognized by society exert a great influence on culture as a whole and they help to define peoples' beliefs and ideas. The presence or absence of particular symbols makes a statement about what is important to different regimes, and both the Jacobins and the Bolsheviks used symbol manipulation to their advantage. When the Jacobins and the Bolsheviks called into question the accepted systems of symbolic meaning, as each regime did during its respective revolutions, each was making fundamental changes in its societies' culture.

Cultural symbols and beliefs were a very important part of each old regime. These images and beliefs made the monarch appear infallible, as one descended from God, and by definition capable of no wrong. In France, the King was often depicted holding a scepter with a sphere and a cross on top—a symbol of ultimate power and knowledge—and this symbol was recognized by the French as a representation of France itself. In Russia, the Tsar was often accompanied by a double-headed eagle, and he was similarly regarded as the embodiment of Russia who symbolized Russia's strength and uniqueness in the world. Because both the Jacobins and the Bolsheviks wanted to create totally new societies, they saw a need to destroy these old cultural symbols and replace them with new ones. Each revolutionary regime therefore attempted to redefine the basis of culture in its new society through a change

in symbols. In order to redefine culture, new symbols of good and evil had to be defined and established, and then repeatedly portrayed and produced until they became easily identifiable in society.<sup>1</sup>

The sacred center belonging to the King or Tsar and his entourage was thus being destroyed by the Jacobins and the Bolsheviks, and this alteration prompted the question of whether there should be a new sacred center, similar in stature to the King or Tsar, around which society would be molded. Since both of these revolutionary regimes were in theory moving away from monarchical rule towards egalitarian societies, the Jacobins and the Bolsheviks wanted the symbols in their new societies to be identified with the common people, unlike the symbols of the former regimes, which by definition did not represent "the people." For example, the French introduced the liberty cap and the Russians introduced the hammer and sickle. Furthermore, in each society, but especially in France, there was concern about both the proper place for symbols and the importance symbols should have in the culture of the new societies.<sup>2</sup>

Since the Jacobins wanted to sever ties to the monarchy completely, they were skeptical at first about whether to continue to place great significance on symbols. The Jacobins saw national symbols as reminders of the *ancien regime*, which they wanted to abolish, and as a result there was talk about discarding representative symbols entirely. One important concrete question regarding symbols was whether the image of the King, the symbolic representation of France itself, should be replaced by a new symbol,

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<sup>1</sup> Lynn Hunt, "Symbolic Legimation and Popular Politics in Revolutionary France," Consortium on Revolutionary Europe 1750-1850 (1979): 281-288 and Alex Inkeles, Public Opinion in Soviet Russia (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1958).

<sup>2</sup> Lynne Hockman, ed, French Caricature and the French Revolution, 1789-1799 (Los Angeles: Grunwald Center for Graphic Arts, University of California, 1988) and Lynn Hunt, Politics, Culture, and Class in the French Revolution (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984).

or whether France should no longer be represented by a single image. The Jacobins believed that in a truly just society symbols would not be necessary, because only the essence of man would be important. Nevertheless, after debating the issues surrounding the power and uses of symbols, the Jacobins understood what an effective tool symbols could be, and controversy about the continued use of symbols subsided. The Jacobins realized that if they did not replace the old symbolic images of France with new ones, people would continue to associate the old regime images with the new Republic of France. The Jacobins wanted to avoid this association because these images had deep connotations with monarchism and despotism. Replacing old cultural images, both positive and negative, thus became an important aspect of the Jacobins' propaganda campaign.<sup>3</sup>

In the end, a new symbol was created to represent France— a symbol that was intended to portray the antithesis of the French monarchy.<sup>4</sup> The symbol was that of a young woman named *Liberté* holding a fasces and a lance topped with a red cap (another symbol of liberty, worn by all during the Revolution).<sup>5</sup> (See page 35) This woman was an idealized figure, unlike the King who was an actual entity, and she was depicted in many different fashions. The Jacobins hoped that this symbol, which was in some ways modeled after Jeanne d'Arc, herself a symbol of French liberty, would be identified with a Republican France and with Jacobin ideas. This positive symbol was very general, and thus could be used in many different

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<sup>3</sup> Lynn Hunt in Jack R. Censer, The French Revolution and Intellectual History (Chicago: the Dorsey Press, 1989) and Lynn Hunt Politics, Culture, and Class, 87-91, and Marc Bouloiseau, The Jacobin Republic: 1792-94 trans. Jonathan Mandelbaum (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983).

<sup>4</sup> Lynne Hockman, ed, French Caricature 229.

<sup>5</sup> Lynn Hunt, "Engraving the Republic: Print and Propaganda in the French Revolution," History Today 30 (October, 1980): 15.



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circumstances. During the Terror, the Jacobins used *Liberté* as a representation of what they were fighting for, even though in reality the Terror was drastically infringing upon the liberties of French citizens. On the other hand, the French did not create negative archetypes, because they did not want to make generalizations about their enemies. Instead, the Jacobins depicted each French enemy as a particular person rather than as a model always identifiable by certain symbols or features common to all enemies.

Unlike the Jacobins, the Bolsheviks were convinced from the outset of the immense power of all sorts of images and symbols. The Bolsheviks regarded the symbols they used as completely different from the images the Tsar had employed, and so they had no fears that their continued use of symbolic images would equate their regime with tsarist Russia. The Bolsheviks saw their symbolic images as educational tools meant to increase the political understanding of the workers and the peasants.<sup>6</sup> Rather than creating one specific person (like *Liberté*) to represent "the people," the Bolsheviks used stylized images of "the worker," "the soldier," and "the peasant" to represent the various classes that were understood to support the Bolsheviks. In this way, their positive symbols of Bolshevik citizens were more specific and concrete than the Jacobin symbol of *Liberté*.

In addition to symbols of people, certain words and archetypes are seen again and again in Russian propaganda. In propaganda images promoting the Bolsheviks, these words include Republic, Soviet, Socialist, proletariat, world revolution, and communism. In addition, the color red, the red star,

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<sup>6</sup> Mikhail Guerman, *Art of the October Revolution* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1979) and Vladimir Tolstoy, Irina Bibikova and Catherine Cooke, *Street Art of the Revolution: Festivals and Celebrations in Russia 1918-1933* trans. by Frances Longman, Felicity O'Dell, and Vladimir Vnukov (New York: The Vendome Press, 1990).

the sun, and the factory are recognizable positive symbols in Bolshevik propaganda. Bolshevik symbols were very straightforward and repetitive and this made it easy to identify recurring themes.<sup>7</sup> For instance, the image of a worker on a horse with the sun rising at his back indicated a promising future and progress with the Bolsheviks in control. Many images also included the soviet fortress, which was meant to symbolize the strength of the Soviet Republic.<sup>8</sup>

In looking at enemy depictions, many antonyms to the words and archetypes listed above recur: monarchy, religion, bourgeoisie, capitalism, imperialism, parliamentarianism, and democracy.<sup>9</sup> Inanimate enemy symbols included the black top hat of the capitalist, the bourgeois clothes of the capitalist and military generals, the color black, and the color white, which was associated with the enemies of the Civil War. The world depicted by Bolshevik posters and Rosta windows was "a menacing one populated by enemies who wish to harm Soviet Russia: hostile forces within Russia supported by westerners, and the threat of hunger, ruin, and disease."<sup>10</sup> Anyone associated with these negative words or ideas was an enemy, and no further explanation was necessary. This dichotomy was a way to make the distinctions between enemies and allies very straight-forward and simple for the viewer. Symbols were frequently used in Bolshevik posters to signify whether an action was good or bad. Symbols made it easy for the viewer to

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<sup>7</sup> N. Baburina, Russia Twentieth Century: History of the Country in Poster (Moscow: Panorama, 1993).

<sup>8</sup> Stephen White, The Bolshevik Poster (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988).

<sup>9</sup> Lasswell, in Harwood Lawrence Childs, ed, Propaganda and Dictatorship: A Collection of Papers (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1936).

<sup>10</sup> Sam Keen, Faces of the Enemy (Emeryville, CA: Quest Productions, 1986) video.

identify the image as good or bad without having to think deeply about the action being depicted.

## HUMOR

One way that symbols were manipulated was through the use of humor. In France, caricatures had been quite popular before the Revolution, in large part because of their satirical nature. Caricatures and broadsides had been subject to the censor, as were all printed materials, but the censor was often lenient in printing humorous caricatures and broadsides with messages which would have been forbidden in written form. Before the Revolution, "humor [made] possible the satisfaction of a desire in the face of a barrier imposed by an outside authority."<sup>11</sup> Once the Jacobins came to power, humor was used to convey ideas that were difficult to express or that were taboo. Humor was also used to attract peoples' attention and to humiliate enemies. For example, to write an article describing the vile nature of the Royal Family would have been seen by many as distasteful, but to produce a caricature with the members of the Royal family depicted as farm animals being pulled in a wheel barrow by a servant was something that most people would laugh at.<sup>12</sup> (See page 41) This use of humor united people behind common ideas regarding the character of the French people and French enemies.

Both internal and external French enemies were sometimes pictured as silly, stupid, and easily manipulated by others. In this way, the Jacobins wanted people to believe that they were rational, intelligent beings creating a new society, quite the opposite of the enemies they were portraying. In their

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<sup>11</sup> James Cuno in James A. W. Heffernan, Representing the French Revolution: Literature, Historiography, and Art (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 1992)198.

<sup>12</sup> Claudette Hould, L'Image de la Revolution Francaise exh. cat. (Montreal: Musee du Quebec, 1989).



enemy portrayals, the leaders of other European nations were depicted as mere buffoons who were incapable of equaling the French. The French especially loved to make fun of the English, and so during the Revolution, when the Jacobins believed France's ideas about the future were more enlightened than England's, the English were a perfect enemy to ridicule. In one caricature, "The Great Royal Knife-Sharpening Establishment for English Daggers,"<sup>13</sup> (see page 43) there is a picture of George III inside of a wheel, running round and round. George III is depicted as an animal who runs but never goes anywhere, showing his incompetence as a ruler. His momentum creates energy to move the knife-sharpener, which Prime Minister Pitt is using to sharpen knives, according to the caption underneath the image. These knives will be used to kill the defenders of the people's liberty. Pitt has taken away the power from George III, a comparison with Louis XVI. Pitt, unlike the French Revolutionaries, however, does not want to liberate the English with his power. He is content to use George III as a forced accomplice to his premeditated crime. The nonchalant manner in which Pitt is sharpening knives shows his confidence in being able to kill all of the revolutionaries. The monarch being portrayed as a rat-like animal is a humorous image, although the scene is also portraying the ruthless character of Pitt in suppressing those dedicated to liberty.<sup>14</sup>

The Bolsheviks used humor less frequently than the Jacobins because they were engaged in a serious civil war and because they needed their citizens to recognize "enemies" as evil rather than as comical. The Bolsheviks were also more prone to show physical conflict with their enemies than were the Jacobins. Because the Civil War was one of the most

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<sup>13</sup> Claudette Hould, *L'Image de la Revolution*.

<sup>14</sup> Lynne Hockman, ed, *French Caricature*, 216.



Image resized at a lower resolution



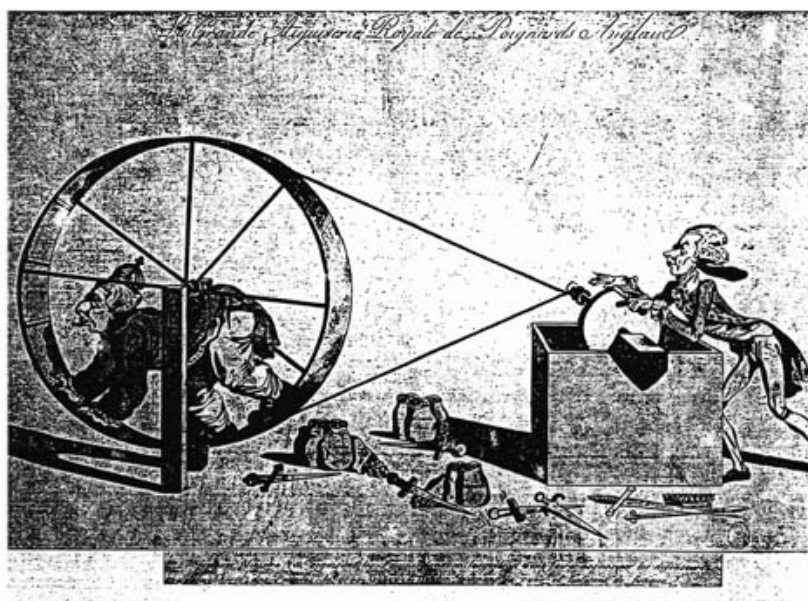


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important aspects of the Bolshevik propaganda campaign, scenes involving physical violence and fighting were more common than in French depictions. The Bolsheviks did stay away from depicting the gory details associated with this violence, which helped to keep the viewer distant from the consequences of violence.

When the Bolsheviks did use satire the goal of the propaganda was to inform viewers about the enemies with a biting significance or irony. In one example, involving five scenes, a capitalist sees a turnip and wants to pull it out of the ground. (See page 47) He cannot do this by himself, so in each image, another member of his family comes to help him. In the final image, the turnip turns out to be the cap of a Red Army soldier, who blows them all away. In the corner is written "That's what you get for trying to pull out a turnip."<sup>15</sup> This image is a humorous example of how a single red Army soldier is able to destroy one or more enemies without using more violence than his presence, and in this case his breath. This power is supposed to give people a sense of security in their army and see the foolishness of the capitalists.

Another humorous example is a poster entitled "Comrade Lenin cleans the world of filth."<sup>16</sup> (See page 49) In this poster, Lenin has a simple broom, and he is standing on top of a globe, easily sweeping off monarchs and capitalists.<sup>17</sup> While this image is humorous to look at, it is also one more example illustrating Bolshevik enemies and the ways in which they must be eliminated. In many images, the world represented the vast frontier on which the Bolsheviks and the capitalists believed their ideologies could not

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<sup>15</sup> Leah Dickerman, ed, Building the Collective: Soviet Graphic Design 1917-1937 (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1996).

<sup>16</sup> Stephen White, Bolshevik Poster.

<sup>17</sup> V. N. Deni, in Stephen White, Bolshevik Poster 56.

be divided. The globe represents the struggle for power between these two opposing viewpoints.

## SUPERNATURAL IMAGES AND EXAGGERATION

The Jacobins, and to a greater extent the Bolsheviks, used fantastical creatures to represent ideas associated with enemies that could encroach upon their societies. In Bolshevik representations, these creatures were depicted as larger than life, and capable of inflicting capitalistic and imperialistic tendencies on Russia because of their association with these enemies. In France, these creatures represented more abstract ideas about enemies.

The idea behind using these fantastical creatures was to inflate the enemies into monstrous proportions. By portraying these enemies as monstrous and vile, it became easier for the viewer to resent them, to fight against them, and even to kill them. The enemy was dehumanized. According to Sam Keen, recognizing humanity evokes compassion, whereas dehumanizing an enemy makes it easier to feel nothing but hatred.<sup>18</sup> An ugly, evil-looking monster is associated with evil regardless of the situation, so when people view such an image, they automatically associate the message being brought across with evil and sinister ideas. Dehumanization provided another method for the Jacobins and the Bolsheviks to portray enemies and grab the viewer's attention, and made it easier to ingrain bias towards the enemy into peoples' heads.

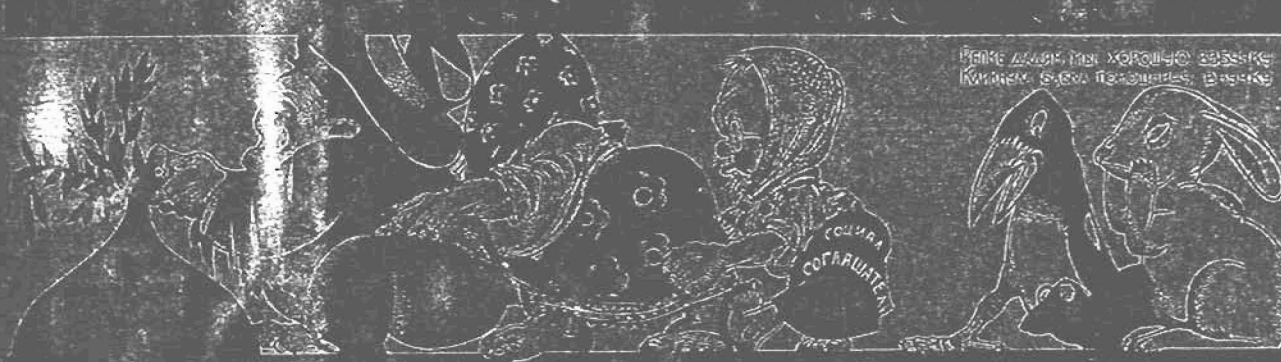
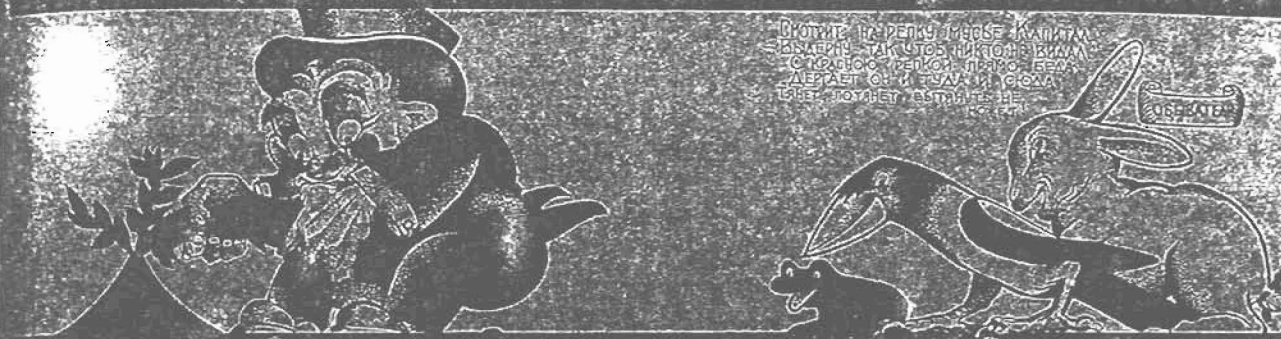
The supernatural enemies embodied everything the Bolsheviks disliked about their enemies. For example, in the image "Death to World Imperialism," a dragon has wrapped itself around the walls of a city and is

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<sup>18</sup> Sam Keen, Enemy

# СОВЕТСКИЙ

# ПЕНКА









**Тов. Ленин ОЧИЩАЕТ  
ЗЕМЛЮ ОТ НЕЧИСТИ.**

322 V. N. Denis. The Lenin illustrated series in Russian. Comrade Lenin  
Cleans the World of Filth, reboursed Jannetson. 1920, no. 4, p. 100. 75x104.

Image resized at a lower resolution



holding it hostage.<sup>19</sup> (see page 53) The city being held hostage is an industrial city, and the supernatural enemy represents the capitalists holding the industrial world hostage for their own advantage. In this image, a large group of workers is shooting at this enemy and piercing it with bayonets, heroically attempting to conquer a supernatural force they could not control. These loyal Bolsheviks are not afraid of the daunting challenge ahead, and this image shows viewers how they too can become heroes.

In another supernatural Bolshevik image, a grotesque statue, half human/half animal is perched high on a pedestal, representing Capital. The Revolutionaries are trying to conquer Capital.<sup>20</sup> (see page 55) Many are unsuccessful and die, but the common goal is to have someone reach the top and kill this enemy. This monstrous statue is complete with wings, horns, scales, and chains, and this enemy is at least four times human size, so the revolutionaries are quite small in comparison.<sup>21</sup> This larger-than-life figure represents the immense power of capitalism, and its massive scale compared to individual Bolsheviks. The loyal and determined Bolsheviks are not discouraged by this, however, as they continue to persevere in their efforts, because they know their strength is in numbers.

In a similar French caricature (see page 57)<sup>22</sup> a many headed beast, presumably representing the evils of the old regime, has approached a group of soldiers who are struggling to fight off the creature. A larger group of soldiers have gathered behind them to help out. The heads of this beast represent specific people who were prominent figures in the old regime,

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<sup>19</sup> Stephen White, Bolshevik Poster.

<sup>20</sup> Stephen White, Bolshevik Poster.

<sup>21</sup> Stephen White, Bolshevik Poster, Apsit 33.

<sup>22</sup> Jean Duché, 1760-1960 Deux Siècles d'histoire de France par caricature (Paris: Editions du Pont Royal, 1961).

many of whom had not yet given up their struggle to stop France from becoming a Republic. This beast has approached the city walls, but is being held off by the soldiers. The viewer is meant to assume that the monstrous creature will be defeated by those dedicated to change.

The Bolsheviks also used subhuman depictions, especially spiders, to portray capitalists. Spiders are small, but they can also be deadly. Spiders kill by entangling their prey in their webs, and they are associated with vile and spine-crawling experiences. Images of the capitalist as a spider suggest the enemy's capacity to entangle Bolsheviks in their web and kill them. However, since spiders are small, they can be killed by anyone who gets close enough. This inhuman depiction of the enemy also allows viewers to believe that there are no common traits between themselves and the subhuman capitalists. Thus the representation of capitalists as spiders is supposed to make the viewers feel as if they could become heroes by destroying capitalists.

Supernatural symbolic representations of enemies as powerful dehumanizes the enemy and makes them easier to hate. Such representations also point to the powerful counter-attack which is needed to overcome these enemies.

## INANIMATE ENEMIES

Inanimate enemies were another force against which the Bolsheviks were struggling and proving their strength. The educational campaign in Russia which focused on improving health and helping people to become better citizens is an example of white propaganda. Posters telling people to drink clean water, to pay their taxes, to be inoculated, to refrain from spitting on the floors, and to address other quotidian issues were popular themes in



# **СМЕРТЬ МИРОВОМУ ИМПЕРИАЛИЗМУ**

Image resized at lower resolution



Российская Социалистическая Федеративная Советская Республика



Image resized at lower resolution







Image resized at lower resolution



these campaigns.<sup>23</sup> These messages are still considered propaganda because they present a partisan viewpoint, and posters advocating other viewpoints were not available.

The French did not devote propaganda to the struggle against inanimate enemies. France was one of the most advanced European nations at the time of the Revolution, and so the Jacobins did not feel they needed to concern themselves with combating many social ills. Increased literacy was an eventual goal of the Jacobins, but this "enemy" was not addressed in visual images.

In Russia, most propaganda concerning inanimate enemies came at the end of the period under consideration (1920), because up until that time, animate enemies who were trying to overthrow the Bolsheviks were a more direct threat than anything else, and so all efforts were concentrated on these enemies. Once the power of the Bolsheviks appeared to be more secure, propaganda was produced encouraging people to fight inanimate enemies. These enemies were something that the Soviet state needed to overcome in order to progress as a nation, but they were enemies which did not threaten the people with the same urgency as the White army had. These enemies included disease, illiteracy, famine, and other social evils. Since these enemies were more difficult to portray than human enemies, slogans as well as counter-measures against these enemies were the main subjects of posters and Rosta windows directed against inanimate enemies.<sup>24</sup>

The Bolsheviks liked to identify themselves as strong and caring leaders who were helping their citizens combat diseases and other social evils.

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<sup>23</sup> ROSTA Bolshevik Placards, 1919-1921 (New York: Sander Gallery, 1994) 34.

<sup>24</sup> Stephen White, Bolshevik Poster.

In one poster, the chains of illiteracy and ignorance are being overcome with the help of the Soviet state.<sup>25</sup> (See page 61) The Bolsheviks wanted literate citizens because they made better workers than illiterate citizens, and literate workers could also read the “truths” upon which the Bolshevik leaders wanted to build their communist society. In order to do this, all citizens needed to be able to read. The Bolsheviks believed it was worth their time and effort to start this kind of a campaign, and to overcome the enemy of illiteracy.

In another image devoted to cholera as an enemy, doctors are giving vaccination shots to people to prevent the onset of this disease. In this way, the Bolsheviks are showing their superiority over the disease, which can be combated with vaccinations. (See page 63, “Citizens! Have Anti-Cholera Inoculations!”)<sup>26</sup> The disease itself is depicted as a black shadow lingering in the background of the scene. This poster also served as a social service announcement because it was an attempt to help those who see it. This kind of reminder made the Soviet state appear to be the parent looking after all of its children. These images promoted the idea of the Bolsheviks as positive leaders helping their citizenry recognize and overcome inanimate enemies. The campaigns against inanimate enemies did not have the same sense of urgency as campaigns calling comrades to volunteer for the front or defend mother Russia because this enemy could be overcome through knowledge and vaccination and so the Bolsheviks were sure to defeat it.

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<sup>25</sup> Stephen White, Bolshevik Poster.

<sup>26</sup> Stephen White, Bolshevik Poster, Ivanov 108.



3.33 A. A. Radakov, *Znanie razoret tsiپی nabyva* (Knowledge will tear apart the Chains of Slavery), coloured lithograph, 1920, 89 x 61 cm., B<sup>1</sup><sub>1295</sub>

Image resized at lower resolution





**Граждане! делайте себе  
противохолерные прививки.  
Только против прививки  
бессильна смерть.**

Image resized at lower resolution





## CONSEQUENCES IF ENEMIES PREVAIL

As we have seen, many Bolshevik posters offer a dichotomy between two ideas, with the Bolshevik scenario portrayed as positive, and the enemy scenario seen as a threat which could turn into disaster if the enemy prevails. The Jacobins, on the other hand, presented more positive depictions, and therefore did not illustrate the consequences for the French if their regime failed.

The Bolsheviks always wanted people to believe that the choice was one or the other—capitalism or Bolshevism. In one example containing two opposite images, this choice is clearly illustrated.<sup>27</sup> (see page 67) In the first image, a Bolshevik figure is standing victorious on top of a capitalist, with one foot on his chest and a flag of victory in his hand. In the second, the image is the same but the positions are reversed, and the face of the capitalist looks much more daunting and similar to a bulldog. This image makes it clear that either scenario is possible, and so decisive action must be taken to prevent the capitalists from prevailing. It is also interesting to note that in the first image, the Bolshevik has already placed his foot triumphantly on the capitalist, and his flag has been planted in the capitalist's face. In addition, he has a gun in his hand, as if preparing for further action against the capitalist. In the second image, the capitalist is about to put his foot on the communist, but he has not yet done so, indicating that there is still time left before the communists are conquered. This image presents a clear choice between Bolshevik dominance and the devastating consequences. In the Bolsheviks' minds, it was impossible for capitalism and communism to exist

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<sup>27</sup> Stephen White, Bolshevik Poster.

simultaneously in Russia or in the world. Therefore, it was essential to destroy the capitalists before the capitalists destroyed them.

Capitalists are also depicted as people who are good at hiding their true selves and their true intentions, which is part of the reason they must be discovered and destroyed. For this reason the average Russian citizen should put his/her faith in the Bolsheviks and the Red Army. In one image representing hidden enemies, a poster shows the animal-like face of a capitalist, with a top hat, half hidden behind the mask of a woman.<sup>28</sup> (See page 69) The woman's face is gentle and calming, whereas the face of the enemy being revealed is harsh and ugly. The capitalist is a member of the Entente, fighting on the side of the Whites in the Civil War, and the Bolsheviks are unmasking him and people like him. This poster illustrates that the Entente is not what it appears to be; enemies are hiding behind its facade. The motif of the mask being removed to reveal the true nature of the enemy was used often by the Bolsheviks. In addition, the Bolsheviks are saying that the Entente is not as strong as it wants people to think it is, and it is therefore forced to hide behind masks and lie about its intentions. The Bolsheviks, on the other hand, are very truthful about their ideas and their platform, and so it is implied that the truthful Bolsheviks should be trusted over the masked enemies.

In a Mayakovsky Rosta window from 1920, the sequence of the scenes allows Mayakovsky to combine various enemies to point out that while the White Guard has been finished off, "the Ogre of World Capitalism is Still Alive." This Rosta window is encouraging people to continue to fight Bolshevism's enemies because even though the Bolsheviks have

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<sup>28</sup> Stephen White, Bolshevik Poster.



Image resized at lower resolution





Image resized at lower resolution



successfully fought off the White army, they still must bring their revolution to the world. If they do not, their revolution will be crushed by the capitalists. Showing the consequences if enemies prevail was a way to make viewers think about the future and strengthen their loyalty to the Bolshevik regime.

The techniques identified in this chapter were chosen by the Jacobins and the Bolsheviks as ways to target their propaganda campaigns more specifically, and to make their visual propaganda more effective, either by helping viewers to recognize certain types of enemies and allies, or by arousing the viewer's interest through the use of humor or supernatural depictions. In the following chapters, which discuss internal and external enemies, knowledge of these techniques will be useful in analyzing the portrayal of specific types of enemies.



## CHAPTER THREE- INTERNAL ENEMIES

The concept of the enemy was an important aspect of propaganda in both periods under consideration because identifying enemies allowed each regime to claim to be the victim while simultaneously calling "the enemy" the aggressor, and in this way unifying the citizenry for the government and against the enemy.<sup>1</sup> In order to hate groups of people and want to eliminate them, they must be identified as enemies. "The violation of human beings requires their social construction into certain kinds of things—enemies, embodiments of evil."<sup>2</sup> In addition, unmasking various enemies was a way for the revolutionary regimes to channel the energy associated with their Revolution toward hating "the enemy," thereby supporting the regime.

The portrayal of an enemy who wants to encroach upon the new freedoms of a fledgling nation was a perfect way to instill fear in the population and motivate people to act. In the propaganda that was disseminated during the two periods under consideration, the Jacobins and the Bolsheviks utilized various portrayals of enemies. Stereotypes were used to make identification easy, inhuman depictions of enemies dramatized how awful and menacing enemies were, and humor ridiculed enemies and lowered their status. In each revolution, both internal and external enemies were depicted, which created the impression that no one was safe. This chapter focuses on internal enemies; chapter four focuses on external enemies.

Many of the enemies used in Jacobin and the Bolshevik propaganda campaigns were internal enemies. Since both the Jacobins and the

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<sup>1</sup> Sam Keen, Faces of the Enemy (Emeryville, Calif.: Quest productions, 1986) video.

<sup>2</sup> James Aho, This Thing of Darkness (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1994) 23.

Bolsheviks were destroying the "old regime" in their respective countries, it made perfect sense that there would be enemies within. Anyone who had been associated with or who had profited under the old regime was viewed with suspicion, and the revolutionary regime wanted to create the idea and the mind set that no one was safe. Everyone who wasn't supporting the regime in control was suspicious and subject to being labeled an enemy.

From the Jacobins' and the Bolsheviks' point of view, the French and Russian citizens needed to be conscious of the enemies that their revolutionary governments, armies, and fellow citizens were fighting. Identification of these enemies was necessary because without it the people would not understand why these enemies were such a threat. Once identification was established, the Jacobins and the Bolsheviks wanted to create a sense of fear or superiority among the citizens of their countries, and to channel energy and hatred against these enemies. Other goals of enemy identification included helping people recognize why these groups of people were characterized as enemies, and encouraging action against them by joining the Jacobin or Bolshevik forces. Finally, images of enemies were meant to dissuade people from sympathizing with the enemy by depicting the enemy in a negative light and by exposing their supposedly evil nature.

## HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The three major internal "enemy" groups in the periods under consideration were the royal family, the aristocracy, and the clergy. In both France and Russia, the revolutionary regimes viewed the King or the Tsar and his family as the ultimate interior enemies, because they had been in control of the monarchical regimes. By the same token, the aristocracy and the clergy were also implicated as enemies because they were important

supporters of the old regime and because they had enjoyed so many privileges.

When the Estates General was called to meet in France in 1789, there was hope that the three Estates would reach a compromise about the future of France without resorting to violence. In 1789 many propagandistic images depicted a member of each of the three Estates (the clergy, the nobility, and the Third Estate) joining together to symbolize the Estates General Meeting. These were positive images, because they were designed to engage the viewer in the events taking place and to excite him/her about the future of France, when all three Estates would work together. Once the Estates General convened, however, the privileged classes were unwilling to give up their rights, and so peaceful change became impossible. With time, the Third Estate and its allies became more and more radical, and the clergy and the nobility were viewed as the "enemies" of the revolutionary regime because of their former privileges.

By the time the Jacobins had gained power in the National Assembly, they had made many enemies, both among the nobility and the clergy, who opposed the Revolution as a whole, and also among people and groups that were dedicated to the revolutionary principles in theory, but for one reason or another opposed to the Jacobin party.<sup>3</sup> The Jacobins' agenda was to raze the old society, including its privileged people and ideas, to make room for a new and more equal society. This meant that the Royal family, the clergy, and the nobility were the major internal enemies of the Jacobins.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Marc Bouloiseau, The Jacobin Republic: 1792-94 (trans. Jonathan Mandelbaum) (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), and Lynn Hunt, Politics, Culture, and Class in the French Revolution (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984).

<sup>4</sup> Jaques Godechot, La Révolution Française: chronologie commentée (Paris: Perrin, 1988).

Most of the Jacobins' propaganda imagery depicting internal enemies focused on groups that were opposed to the Revolution as a whole rather than other revolutionary groups opposed only to the Jacobin's platform. In images, the distinction between the Jacobins as revolutionaries and enemies as counter-revolutionaries was easier to define than the slight discrepancies in ideology between the Jacobins and other proponents of the Revolution. In this way, the viewer could easily identify enemies and allies of the Revolution. The Royal Family, the Clergy, and the Aristocracy, were also the most important internal enemies for viewers to be able to recognize because of their importance before the revolution.

Prior to the Russian Revolution, the Tsar, the aristocracy, and the clergy had all enjoyed privileged status. According to Bolshevik ideology these groups had prospered at the expense of the workers and peasants and now they needed to pay their dues. The Bolsheviks understood and portrayed their struggle in class terms, even though their goal was to create a classless society. They wanted the peasants and the workers to identify with their class and to realize the wrongs that had been done to them. The distinctions between enemies and allies were defined as much by exclusion as by inclusion, and in this way the Bolsheviks, like the Jacobins, were able to categorize all people as supporters or enemies of the Revolution and make "the enemy" a highly defined entity.<sup>5</sup>

## ROYAL FAMILIES

Naturally, one of the main internal enemies in France during the Revolution was the Royal Family. Although the King abdicated in the

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<sup>5</sup>Leah Dickerman, ed, Building the Collective: Soviet Graphic Design 1917-1937 (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1996).

summer of 1789, he was not guillotined until January 1793. During the time between the end of his reign and his death, there were many discussions among the French people as to whether the King should be tried for the crimes he committed against the people, or whether his status as King put him above the law. The Jacobins were, for the most part, in favor of executing the King, but in the National Assembly and in France as a whole, opinions were very divided about the fate of the King. The Jacobins therefore wanted to bolster hatred towards the King, and propaganda was a very useful way of doing this. There were many negative depictions of the King and his family during the decisive period when the National Assembly was deciding the fate of the King, and most of these depictions were humorous. There were very few positive depictions of the Royal Family at this time, as censorship policies made it difficult to produce images contrary to the Jacobins' principles.<sup>6</sup>

The arrest of the King and his family in 1789 was a popular subject of visual propaganda before the King's execution. After the King abdicated, he fled from Paris, but he was soon arrested and returned to the city, where he was put under surveillance and house arrest. In one image, the King and his family are sitting at a small, simple table eating dinner, when many revolutionary soldiers barge onto the scene ready to arrest the King. The scene is supposed to represent the King as an ordinary person, who eats dinner with his family like everyone else, and who should have to pay for his transgressions since he is guilty.<sup>7</sup>

Once the King was brought back to Paris, he was not seen as dangerous. Portraying him as stupid did a great deal to belittle him in the eyes of the

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<sup>6</sup> Jaques Godechot, *Révolution Française*.

<sup>7</sup> Augustin Challamel, *Histoire Musée de la République Française* (Paris: Challamel, 1842).

French. Animals, especially farm animals, were one of the most popular subjects of revolutionary artists. Some animals, such as lions, connote attributes that are normally associated with Kings, such as strength, knowledge, and the ability to govern. But farm animals are raised and eaten by humans, are completely at their mercy, and are never shown respect. There are numerous images of King Louis XVI in which his face is connected to the body of a pig, a hen, or another farm animal. (See page 79) In this way, the enemy was identifiable in a subhuman state.<sup>8</sup> In another image, the King is being tended by a shepherd, who is proving his control over this lowly animal. The shepherd is dressed as a middle-class revolutionary, and he has two sticks in his hands which he uses to keep the King from acting up. (See page 81) This revolutionary man posing as a shepherd shows the viewer that ordinary people can now control the King. The Jacobins hoped French citizens would recognize their power over Louis XVI and support his execution.<sup>9</sup>

There are numerous other examples of the King being degraded from his position as "the embodiment of the state" to a common person. In some images he is shown as powerless and thus at the mercy of the Queen, which, in a highly sexist society was very degrading for a man, especially one of the King's stature. In other images he is described in commentary accompanying the images as an oaf, a fetherhead, a greedy man, and other similarly degrading terms.<sup>10</sup>

In both France and Russia, most people had not had direct contact with their ruler, but everyone knew who he was, and traditionally Russians had

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<sup>8</sup> Ernest F. Henderson, Symbol and Satire in the French Revolution (New York: the Knickerbocker Press, 1912).

<sup>9</sup> Ernest F. Henderson, Symbol and Satire and Michel Vovelle, Les Images de la Révolution Française (Paris:Publication de la Sorbonne, 1988).

<sup>10</sup>Michel Vovelle, Les Images de la Révolution.

found comfort in the Tsar's power because they viewed him as a strong leader. In 1917 the political situation changed drastically, and the Tsar and his family were labeled as "enemies of the people." In order to justify this view, the Bolsheviks had to explain why the Tsar should be considered an enemy of the people. In one image, the Tsar is in chains, and all that we see are his crown, his shoulders, and his chained hands.<sup>11</sup> (See page 83) In this image, the huge sun and the industrial city in the background are portrayed as the future of Russia, while the captured Tsar sits in chains at the mercy of the assembly, and so his image is not seen as threatening. If anything, his presence in front of images promoting the Soviet state is seen as blocking the path toward progress, toward the future.

Unlike the French situation, where the King was not executed for four years, the Tsar and his family were secretly killed in 1918, after which time the Bolsheviks did not have to focus their efforts on explaining why the Tsar was a Bolshevik enemy. Even after the Tsar and his family were executed, many images contained symbols of the Tsar— weapons, a double headed eagle, a crown, etc.<sup>12</sup> (See page 85) These images were often on the ground at the bottom of images, being walked on by representatives of the new regime. Their diminished position in the image symbolized that the hegemony of the Tsar had been destroyed, but they also served as a reminder that the past was oppressive and needed to be trampled on and destroyed.

## ARISTOCRACY

In revolutionary France and Russia, members of the aristocracy were "enemies" of the new regimes because of their association with the King or

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<sup>11</sup> The Soviet Political Poster 1917-1980 (New York: Penguin Books, 1985).

<sup>12</sup> The Soviet Political Poster.

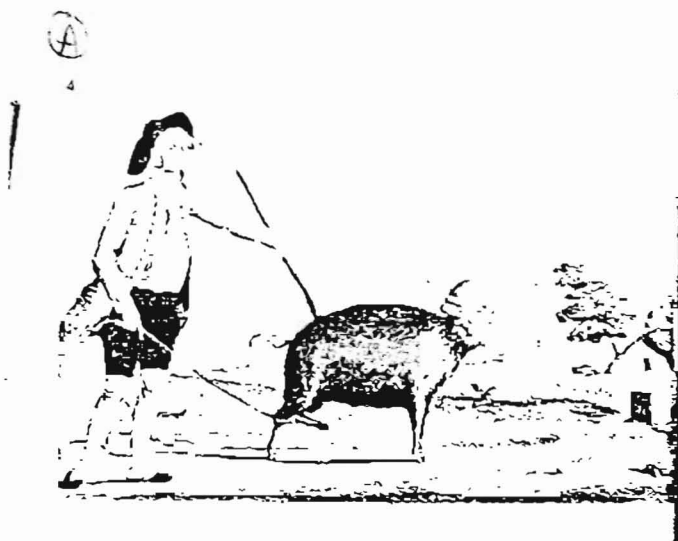








Image resized at lower resolution



ВРАГ ХОЧЕТ ЗАХВАТИТЬ МОСКВУ  
СЕРДЦЕ СОВЕТСКОЙ РОССИИ  
ВРАГ ДОЛЖЕН БЫТЬ УНИЧТОЖЕН  
В ПЕРЕД ТОВАРИЩИ!



Image resized at a lower resolution





Image resized at a lower resolution



the Tsar. In France, members of the aristocracy were often depicted in images treating the King as an enemy, since the aristocracy was seen as closely related to the King. In Russia, the aristocracy all had held positions of wealth and power before the October Revolution, and so they were in part responsible for the suffering of the peasants and workers. In many Russian images, the aristocracy were portrayed living the privileged lives they had always led. These images were not violent, but they made the point that these peoples lives were in opposition to Bolshevik ideals.

Members of the Provisional Government, who were in control of Russia from February-October 1917, were not depicted as enemies in Bolshevik propaganda. The Bolsheviks did not want to elicit fear or hatred towards the Provisional Government, because the Provisional Government had been dedicated to change, although their platform was not radical enough for the Bolsheviks. Instead, the Bolsheviks wanted to set the stage for more radical, successful changes of the Bolshevik platforms by depicting internal enemies from the tsarist regime.

Images involving the French aristocracy often took place in another world— for the most part in hell. In this way, it seems, the Jacobins were assuring their citizens that France was far removed from the evil awaiting the enemies of the revolution. In one such image, a member of the nobility is being welcomed to hell. (See page 89)<sup>13</sup> He is standing beside animals whose tails are in the shape of the devil's spear, and across the river are former headless enemies welcoming the newcomer, with their heads pierced through by long sticks. The older enemies are identified by name, but the newcomer is not, which is an indication that anyone is capable of becoming

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<sup>13</sup> Armand Dayot, La Révolution Française: Constituante, Législative, Convention, Directoire. (Paris: E. Flammarion, [n.d.]).



an enemy of the French and of winding up like this man, in hell. These depictions are more gruesome than most other French caricatures involving enemies, but since the scene takes place in hell it is more justified.

The quintessential caricature of the French aristocracy as an enemy is entitled "The last judgment of the Aristocracy where we see the Principal monsters." (undated, 11"x17") This image is overwhelmed by flames, with heads and body parts of the aristocracy seen within the flames. The possibility for escape is still present, since not everyone is tangled in the flames, but on the right side of the image there is a devil with a three-pronged fork looking for people to push into the fire. As in the previous image, many of the people who are visible are labeled, and those names would have been significant to the viewer. Labeling these enemies shows that justice is being done, because these people deserve their fate. This fire does not appear to be burning in hell, because on either side of the fire is green grass. Even though this fire seems removed from reality, it could also be related in a fantastical way to the Terror campaign to rid France of its enemies.

Unlike the Jacobin images described above, the Bolsheviks' images of the aristocracy were not violent, because the everyday actions of the aristocracy spoke for themselves. In a very well-designed image entitled "Autocratic Structure," the hierarchy of the Tsarist state is depicted through illustration. (See page 91)<sup>14</sup> The entire scene is in the shape of a triangle defined by the Tsar's cloak, which shows the all-pervasive power of the tsar. At the top the Tsar sits in his throne, wearing his crown and holding his scepter. These symbols add to his stature, which create the image that he is the powerful protector of Russia. He is all-powerful at the top, but when his power is contrasted with the fate of those at the bottom (the workers), he is no

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<sup>14</sup> Leah Dickerman, ed, Building the Collective 60.



LOUIS XVI REÇU AUX ENFERS. GRAVURE D'INSPIRATION RÉVOLUTIONNAIRE.

RÉVOLUTION. II.

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longer the great Tsar he appeared to be at the beginning. The Tsar is just the top level of an entire society that is oppressing "the people" at the bottom. The workers and peasants at the base of the triangle are forced to bend over because the oppression by the multitude of levels above them is heavy. Each level of the image is accompanied by a phrase: "We rule you/ We pray for you/ We judge you/ We defend you/ We feed you/ and you work." Although what each level in society is doing can be seen as good by itself, in this case all of these actions are done in a self-serving way, rather than actually to aid those who work. The workers are the ones supporting everyone above them, and they are beginning to realize that this system is not fair. The workers and peasants have no voice to protest what those above them are doing to oppress them, and that is why revolution is necessary, according to the artist. This poster was designed on March 29, 1917 by Aleksei Radakov, before the October Revolution which brought the Bolsheviks to power. The poster was produced after the February Revolution, when freedom of the press allowed the Bolsheviks to propagate their views even though they were not in control.

In the first image from the French Revolution that was discussed in this section, the enemies are shown as being defeated. In one, the enemy is entering hell and his head will soon be cut off. In the second image members of the nobility are burning. In the Russian image, on the other hand, the nobility are portrayed as enemies who are still firmly in control. These representations are typical of the ways in which the Jacobins and the Bolsheviks depicted their internal enemies. The Jacobins tended to portray enemies as captured and in the hands of the revolutionaries long before this was actually the case, thus reducing fear about these enemies sabotaging the Revolution. The Bolsheviks, on the other hand, normally portrayed

aristocratic enemies as very powerful until the end of the Civil War, when the Bolsheviks' power was more certain. The Bolsheviks also believed that the actions of the aristocracy spoke for themselves, and so it was not necessary to demonize them. In some cases this was because the Bolsheviks were portraying their internal enemies as they had lived before the Revolution, but in many cases the representation of the enemy as strong and "on the loose" was another way to instill fear of enemies in their citizenry.

Another way in which the Bolsheviks made a distinction between loyal Bolsheviks and aristocratic enemies was to compare those who were prosperous in the old regime (who became internal enemies after the Revolution) with hard-working peasants or workers. By comparing the good qualities of the worker or peasant to the bad qualities of the enemy, a clear dichotomy was created. In one example from 1919 entitled "To peasants and workers," this dichotomy is made clear by a series of depictions of the working class on the left, opposing matching depictions of the bourgeois class on the right.<sup>15</sup> In the first picture on the left, the entire working-class family is hard at work in a simple, one-room house. To the right there is a man in an office working with a book at his desk. He has the comfort of having a room to himself, and he has a large window which looks out onto the city. He is working with his mind, removed from his surroundings, while the family on the left are using their hands and strength to accomplish their tasks. The next set of images has a field of hay on the left, with a man lifting a haystack onto a truck. He is working hard and producing goods. On the right, a mother, father and child are picnicking in a park, at a table with a tablecloth, in a very civilized atmosphere. They are eating the fruits of the worker's efforts, and they do not understand the work that is required to produce the

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<sup>15</sup> Library of Congress, uncatalogued Soviet poster, anon, 1919.

food they are enjoying. In the final pair of images, there are three men working in an industrial factory helping the production of Russia as a modern state. On the right is a group of adults sitting at tables with glasses of wine, attending a Society event.

This is an example of white propaganda, because all of the images in the poster are basically accurate. It may not be the whole truth, because not all workers did the kinds of tasks illustrated and not all of the bourgeoisie participated in the events depicted, but the images show realistic activities within each society. Of course, the intent of the posters is to show the bourgeoisie in a negative light. Nevertheless, the images are not inherently false or inaccurate; they provide a basically truthful representation of the two lifestyles. In this poster, the enemies are not portrayed as vile, dangerous creatures, but rather as rich and snobby people who are unaware of anyone except themselves and their upper-class lives. These enemies are not doing anything abnormal; it is their class and their lifestyle which is the enemy. The Bolsheviks made a concerted effort to separate and make a clear distinction between "us" and "them," and this is one example which makes this distinction visually. If you do not sympathize with those on the left, you are automatically associated with right, and therefore you are an enemy. Addressing this poster directly to workers and peasants made them feel as though they were important to the Bolsheviks, and that their work was appreciated and admired in relation to the work of the aristocracy.

## CLERGY

Many members of the French clergy opposed the Revolution because it meant a loss of the rights and privileges they had enjoyed under the Catholic kings. The clergy had become very wealthy and powerful in the centuries



preceding the Revolution, mostly because of fearful sinners who left the church large sums of money and property in their wills so that they might be prayed for and thus redeemed after death. The accumulation of land and wealth led to a high degree of corruption and sinful behavior<sup>16</sup>, and by the time of the Revolution many opponents of the church and of corruption were eager to poke fun at this institution. From 1789 onwards, many images depict the clergy being stripped of their privileges and engaging in sinful behavior. The Jacobins wanted to retain the Church in their new state, but they wanted the entire institution subservient to the government. Having control over the Church would allow the Jacobins to root out corruption and would encourage believers to follow the church's lead and to pledge allegiance to the Revolution and to the Jacobins. Most clergy refused to submit to the secular power of the state. Thus, the clergy became an enemy of the revolutionary state.<sup>17</sup>

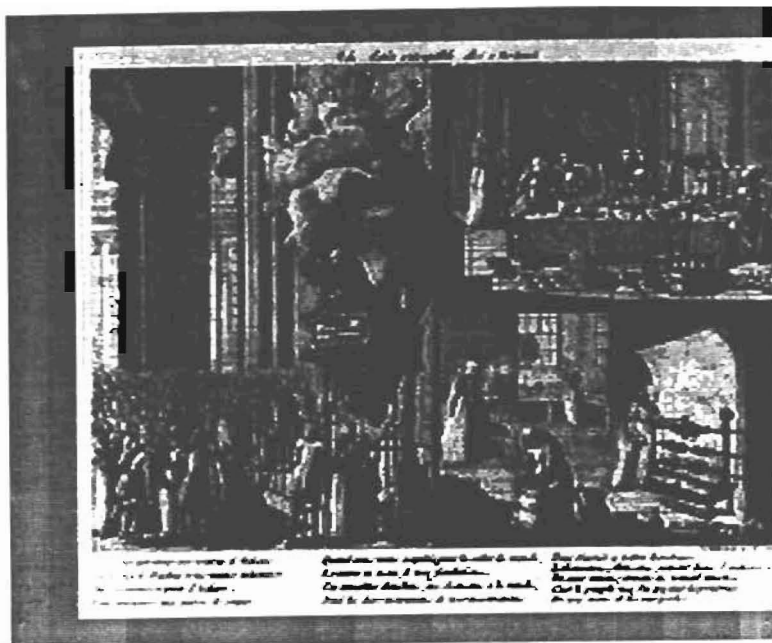
In 1790, before the Jacobins came to power, a satirical caricature entitled "The Very Believable Life of the Monks" was produced.<sup>18</sup> (See page 97) The caricature is divided into three parts, each depicting a different aspect of monks' lives. In the first image, there is a church full of worshipers, who are all looking up at the monk preaching the sermon. Scenes like this were common occurrences before the Revolution, but according to this image they represented only part of the lives of the monks. In the next image monks are sitting at a table, feasting and kissing women, with many broken plates and pieces of food on the floor, indicating that an immoral gathering has been

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<sup>16</sup> R.R. Palmer and Joel Colton, *A History of the Modern World* sixth edition. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1950).

<sup>17</sup> Cuno in James A. Heffernan (ed), *Representing the French Revolution: Literature, Historiography, and Art* (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 1992) and Lynne Hockman (ed), *French Caricature and the French Revolution, 1789-1799* (Los Angeles: Grunwald Center for Graphic Arts, University of California, 1988).

<sup>18</sup> Library of Congress, anonymous, 1790.



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going on. The monks are also shown brewing beer, which was contrary to their vows. The caricature thus shows monks committing acts which they were supposed to have forsworn upon entering the monastery, and for this reason such behavior discredits not only the monks themselves, but also the entire church structure. The viewer is supposed to be shocked, and to begin to question the respectability of the church.

Like the French revolutionaries, the Russian revolutionaries also targeted priests as enemies of the Revolution. Since one of the ideals of the Bolshevik revolution was to create a state devoid of organized religion, the clergy were, by definition, enemies. From the Marxist perspective, the clergy were enemies because they perpetrated lies that helped prop up the aristocratic and capitalist systems. Orthodoxy teaches obedience to authority and meekness, which kept believers from throwing off the Tsarist yoke. Also, the higher echelons of the church were quite wealthy, and lived off the labor of the peasantry, just like the aristocracy. Since Orthodox priests believed what they preached, their views were too deeply rooted to change, and so they were irredeemable in the eyes of the Bolsheviks.

In one Bolshevik poster, the virtues of priests in the central image are accompanied by many smaller images which cast a more critical eye on the institution of the Orthodox church.<sup>19</sup> In the central image, a priest is conducting a funeral service with many devout people paying their last respects to the dead. He is fulfilling his duties as a priest, and everyone appears to respect his place. However, in the basement below the service, the priests are living a very different life. The priests are sitting around the table feasting in the lap of luxury, with paintings of naked women on the walls. In

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<sup>19</sup> Library of Congress, uncatalogued Soviet poster, (anon, non dated, 21"x29"), The Priest's Chambers, not dated, RSFSR.

the center of the table is a chalice cup, which is collecting gold coins and rubles falling from a pipe in the ceiling. The funeral service depicted above the feasting priests looks perfectly normal at first, but the viewer is meant to realize that these kinds of services are expensive and fund the alleged debauchery of the clergy. At the same time that services are conducted, other hidden unholy and sinful activities are being carried out by priests. Many sinful acts are depicted, which clearly are intended to undercut the authority of religious figures. In smaller insets to the left and right, priests are engaging in illicit behavior with women. On the left, a priest is hitting a woman, and on the right a priest is kissing a woman, with his cross necklace on the floor, representing his forsaken chastity and authority. A third image shows a priest holding a large bag of money. Instead of embodying holiness, these are greedy and deceiving priests out to manipulate and lie to people.

In the bottom right-hand corner, the saving grace of this scene, according to Bolshevik thinking, is a man propagating Bolshevik ideals. Since the church has lost its credibility in the images above, this man represents an alternative. He is telling people the truth about the priests and about the merits of Bolshevism, as witnessed by the sun behind him, which is always a positive symbol related to the Bolshevik cause. The man espousing the Bolshevik ideals looks trustworthy, and compared to the priests, who are hiding their vices behind all sorts of rituals and fancy clothes, this man looks simple and honorable. The Bolsheviks wanted to dismantle the power of the debauched and immoral church and in its place, propagate their ideas as simple, honorable, and truthful. This image is one example of the way in which the Bolsheviks used enormous energy to educate their citizens about why people they had formerly respected were now enemies of the Bolshevik regime.

Many French caricatures, especially those involving the church, depicted activities that were more crude than those depicted in the Russian images. This impurity implicitly was contrasted with the pious life priests were supposed to live. At the time of the French Revolution, customs and manners that we take for granted were not yet in practice. For this reason, in French propaganda there are many examples of humorous images involving bodily functions that today would be seen as crude and inappropriate for reinforcing the government's negative views of its enemies.

One example of such crudeness is a caricature entitled "The Papal Brief of 1791," which was a decree issued by the Pope concerning church doctrine.<sup>20</sup> In this image a *sans-culotte*, a title given to the lower classes because they wore a *pantalon* instead of the *culotte* worn by the upper classes<sup>21</sup>, finds what he believes to be a more appropriate use for the Papal decree, which is to use it as toilet paper. The *sans-culotte* is in the foreground of the image, and behind him the likeness of the Pope is being burned by excited onlookers. This image's portrayal of the peoples' lack of respect for the clergy and the Pope is a response to the recognition of the corruption within the church. This corruption was exposed by the revolutionaries with the help of visual propaganda and had filtered down to the people, who protested against the church in their own way.

In another image two devils are defecating two priests. (See page 103)<sup>22</sup> The priests are being equated with shit, as witnessed by the positions they are in, and they are powerless, having been devoured by these devils and having passed through them. The priests have been diminished to a sub-human level. Perhaps the priests were eaten by devils because of the sins they

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<sup>20</sup>Lynne Hockman (ed), French Caricature.

<sup>21</sup> Paul Robert, Le Petit Robert (Paris:Dictionnaire Le Robert, 1993).

<sup>22</sup>Lynne Hockman (ed), French Caricature.

committed during their lives. This image is meant to show French citizen's the priests' place in society.<sup>23</sup>

In many ways, the clergy were the most difficult internal enemy to discredit, because there were many religious believers in both France and Russia before each revolution. In France, the priests themselves and the privileged status of the church had to be discredited, but beliefs associated with Catholicism could not be attacked by the Jacobins, since they wanted religion to remain a part of French society. In Russia, the Bolsheviks not only had to discredit priests, but they also had to attack the foundations of the church and discredit peoples' belief in God.

#### OTHER BOLSHEVIK ENEMIES

*Kulaks* and army deserters were two additional Bolshevik internal enemies, although the attention given to these enemies was not as complete as that given to the internal enemies already described. The Jacobins did not have to deal with either of these enemies. *Kulaks* did not exist in France because of the different land tenure systems, and army deserters were not recognized as enemies during the French Revolution.

*Kulaks* were targeted as internal enemies by the Bolsheviks even though they were not as wealthy as the rest of Bolshevism's internal enemies. *Kulak*, which means "fist" in Russian, was the name given to rich peasants who controlled communal or individual holdings and lent money, thus making a hefty profit at the expense of other peasants. Because the Bolsheviks believed that *kulaks* were unfairly cheating their fellow peasants with their business transactions and with their profits, they were seen as small scale capitalists and as enemies. Accordingly, many *kulaks* are depicted

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<sup>23</sup> James A. Heffernan (ed), Representing the French Revolution.



41. Anthony van Dyck, *The Two Infatuated Devils*, 1700. Oil on canvas, 100 x 120 cm.

Image resized at a lower resolution





as scheming with foreign capitalists. *Kulaks* are often shown hoarding bread during the Civil War, a time of hunger for millions of Russians. The *kulak* is portrayed as an evil enemy who thinks that it is acceptable to sit on bags of wheat while his fellow countrymen starve, because he wants to wait for prices to rise so he can sell the wheat for a higher price. Portraying the evil intent of *kulaks* was intended to make workers and peasants believe they were being cheated by these internal enemies.

During the Civil War, the Bolsheviks had a problem with desertion from their army. In an effort to combat this problem, the Bolsheviks targeted deserters as enemies in their propaganda campaign. A deserter is not the type of enemy who is intentionally going to cause bodily harm to his fellow citizens, but he is very dangerous because he lowers the morale of those around him. Desertion was considered a serious crime by the Bolsheviks, and the fact that a soldier had deserted and betrayed both the army and his country at a time of such need made him a traitor and an enemy. The idea of deserting runs counter to all the ideas of socialism related to the collective good of the people.

One image of an army deserter, "Nightmare of the Deserter," shows the awful consequences that await a young deserter. (See page 107)<sup>24</sup> In one scenario, a line of people are making their way to Siberia, in another scenario a line of nooses hang with a dead man, presumably a deserter, on each rope, and in a third scenario a group of soldiers are shooting point blank at deserters. The young man who is imagining these scenarios looks scared, as if he has made the wrong decision, but now there is no way for him to escape one of these awful fates. This image is supposed to scare the viewer and

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<sup>24</sup> Stephen White, The Bolshevik Poster (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988) 94, Anonymous poster.

make him think twice before deserting the Red army. The viewer is also supposed to identify army deserters as enemies and not help them escape the fates that await them.

## INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL COMBINATIONS

As mentioned earlier, some Bolshevik posters and most Rosta windows had numerous scenes, each in its own frame, and the progression of images tells a story. Each scene is usually simple and active, and typical Bolshevik symbols are often used to facilitate understanding. In one example, "Indecisive Mityushka,"<sup>25</sup> there are six scenes. The first image contains two men talking, and one of the men is holding a copy of the newspaper *Pravda*. *Pravda* was the official newspaper of the Bolshevik party, and later the most authoritative Soviet newspaper; its name means "truth" in Russian. The fact that the two men are portrayed holding *Pravda* defines them as good, and indicates that they believe in the ideas of the Bolsheviks. By the third scene, a man with a weapon is encroaching upon the freedom of the men in the first image. This enemy disrupts the progress the Bolsheviks are making towards building a new society. His outline is black, and he appears ready to break through a door. The next image depicts the strength of the Red Army, which is intended to reassure the viewer that the Bolsheviks are organized and strong enough to search out enemies and punish them. The fifth scene depicts the enemy—the White army—which in the final image the Bolsheviks are able to defeat. The fact that two different enemies are depicted is a reference to the Bolsheviks' many enemies, both interior and exterior, and to the fact that they often both had to be fought at once. In the final scene, many people are signing up to join the

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<sup>25</sup> <sup>25</sup> Library of Congress, uncatalogued Soviet poster, anon, 191-.



Image resized at a lower resolution



ranks of the Red Army, which has shown its strength. This active scene encourages the viewer to act and volunteer, as his comrades are doing. The peasants are cheering in the background, symbolizing their belief in the ability of the Red Army to protect them and save them, and there is a large RSFSR flag flying above the scene.

Two different enemies are depicted, White soldiers and an internal enemy. The people being depicted in this poster are commonplace Russians, and so this poster is intended to appeal to ordinary citizens because they can relate to the people portrayed in the poster. They could be terrorized by an unknown enemy, or beat up by the white soldiers. In order to avoid this, according to the poster, it is necessary to join forces with the Reds and take action. This is just one example of the Bolshevik idea of juxtaposing enemies and comrades in the same poster, in an effort to strengthen support for the Bolsheviks through hatred toward all enemies. By grouping internal and external enemies together, the Bolsheviks were saying that there are very few differences between these two enemies.

In another image combining internal and external enemies, the close proximity of enemies is clearly defined.<sup>26</sup> On the left in the upper corner is a spider in a web, labeled as a capitalist and wearing a crown. This is unusual, because capitalists almost always were depicted wearing black hats, but since all of the enemies are grouped together, it is implied that the capitalist and a monarch are collaborating with each other. Other enemies include a priest, a high-ranking foreign army official, and a capitalist in his easily recognizable suit, labeled as a bourgeois. Next to these enemies are internal enemies, along with non-Bolshevik revolutionaries who could potentially be converted because of their socialist leanings. The other revolutionaries are

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<sup>26</sup> <sup>26</sup> Library of Congress, uncatalogued Soviet poster, anon, 1917.

positioned closest to the Bolsheviks. Many of the internal enemies are pointing at the capitalist spider, in an effort to point him out as the enemy and save themselves. In this poster, internal and external enemies are not cooperating. Rather, they are shown on a continuum from the most evil to the redeemable. On the right are the Bolsheviks, holding a large red flag with the slogan: "To the bright future of the young Union." There is a fairly elaborate text on each side, explaining the oppression of the workers and peasants in the nineteenth century, and calling on all Mensheviks, Cadets, and other revolutionary parties to join forces with the Bolsheviks to weave a web around the spider to destroy him, and to take up arms against the bourgeoisie. Even without reading these descriptions, the clear message of the image is a call to destroy Bolshevism's enemies and to encourage others to join the Bolshevik cause. The message seems to be that the enemies are not yet aware of the destruction awaiting them, but that they are beginning to see the forces of the Bolsheviks, whose numbers are increasing. The hope is that in the future a new image could be drawn without the presence of the enemies, because all honest Russians will be united with the Bolsheviks and will believe in their cause, and all enemies will be sent away or killed.

In 1920, Deni designed a poster entitled "Counter Revolution's grave." (See page 111)<sup>27</sup> This poster was designed toward the end of the Civil War, and in it we see a priest and a capitalist sitting on the ground in a graveyard crying. All around them are crosses labeled with names of Anti-Soviets who have died, and there are also remnants of symbols from the Tsar's regime, including a two headed eagle, a crown, and a priest's cross. These images are on the ground, signifying that they are no longer powerful, and the enemies,

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<sup>27</sup> Albert Nenarkov, An Illustrated History of the Great October Socialist Revolution (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1987).



Image resized at a lower resolution





who are also on the ground, are no longer powerful either. These enemies, instead of collaborating, are commiserating. This poster is an attempt to poke fun at the enemy, and to show the viewer that many enemies have been killed. Those who are not dead are disheartened, and appear to be giving up. By 1920, Bolshevik images depicted more defeated enemies, because their future as leaders of what was to become the Soviet Union was more certain.

In all of the images discussed in this chapter, the Jacobins and the Bolsheviks were trying to create divisions between enemies and comrades, and in creating these divisions they hoped to encourage their citizens to embrace their revolutionary causes. During each of these revolutionary periods, many of the internal enemies remained the same, despite a difference of over one hundred years. One of the main reasons for this is because each regime was attempting to do the same thing. Each was trying to overthrow a traditional, church supported, monarchical regime in a highly illiterate country, and so each revolutionary regime attempted to label the former regime as enemies and attempt to discredit all those who had prospered under it.



## CHAPTER FOUR- EXTERNAL ENEMIES

The Jacobins and the Bolsheviks each came to power via a revolutionary overthrow of the status quo, and both regimes addressed their programs for change not only to their citizens, but also to the world. As a result, neighboring countries were frightened by and opposed to the changes these regimes represented as well as by the prospect of their future relations with these new regimes, and so both regimes had numerous external enemies.

Since external enemies by definition belong to a separate culture and country, rumors that were spread about them were more readily accepted because there was no one to refute the rumors. As a result, stereotypes could develop unopposed in the minds of those citizens being influenced by propaganda. During times of intense change, xenophobia is often present because of a sense of fear among the citizens that their lives are being called into question. This xenophobia, combined with the negative propaganda about these enemies, created a greater fear of enemies. Foreigners were also suspect because of their unknown qualities, and they were easy scapegoats for the regimes in power.

The Jacobins and the Bolsheviks also needed to justify the wars they were embarking upon, both physically and symbolically, and to create support for the campaigns against these enemies. By channeling the energy of the citizens into a hatred for the foreign enemy, the citizens recognized a dichotomy between this enemy and the revolutionary regime. Once this dichotomy became apparent, the energy of the people was more likely to support the revolutionary regime because the enemy was being depicted as "the other."

In the case of both France and Russia, the major changes promoted by the revolutionaries in their countries were difficult. During the periods under consideration, many political and social changes were outlined. In order for the revolutionaries not to be blamed for existing problems, the Jacobins and the Bolsheviks had a stake in arousing hatred against an external enemy, while focusing positive energy on the revolutionary movement.<sup>1</sup> External enemies were a popular target because they were removed from the situation, and thus they distracted people from the immediate crises facing them and allowed people to see themselves as better than their enemies. There was also less resistance from citizens when viewing these enemies in a poor light, because these enemies were by definition "the other."

## HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Since pre-Revolutionary France had been a monarchy similar to most of the governments in Europe, the idea of a government based on the will of the people was threatening to foreign leaders. Since these leaders were hostile to the revolutionaries' agendas, the Jacobins depicted these leaders as enemies.

One real enemy which the Jacobins chose not to depict as an enemy was the Austrians. In 1792 France was seeking territorial expansion and thus declared war on Austria. This war was fought mostly on foreign soil however, and so it did not effect the bulk of the French population.<sup>2</sup> The Jacobins did not depict the Austrians in their visual propaganda campaign,

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<sup>1</sup> Lynn Hunt, "Engraving the Republic: Print and Propaganda in the French Revolution," History Today 30 (1980): 11-17, and Stephen White, The Bolshevik Poster (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988).

<sup>2</sup> R.R. Palmer and Joel Colton, A History of the Modern World sixth edition. (New York: Alfred A. Kolpf, 1950).

because they preferred to depict enemies with whom they were not engaged in actual conflict. In their mindset, military superiority was more difficult both to prove and to represent than other forms of superiority over enemies.

The foreign enemy depicted most frequently was the English. France's relations with England were deteriorating because the Jacobins' ideas about government were diverging from England's. Since France and England were traditional enemies, it was easy to depict the English as an enemy. Also, since there was no military conflict between the two countries, violent images could be avoided. The depiction of foreign enemies was employed by the Jacobins in an effort to remind the French of the need to sacrifice for the good of their nation. Uniting French citizens against these external enemies helped make French citizens aware of the broader impact of the French Revolution outside of citizens' daily lives.

In 1793, the Committee of Public Safety decided not to commission caricatures aimed at the domestic crises that France was facing, and instead to distract people from these problems with the depiction of foreign enemies, many of which were humorous and ridiculous.<sup>3</sup> (Of course, many unofficial caricatures were still produced, but since they did not have the approval of the Committee of Public Safety, the artists producing them were subject to the wrath of the Jacobins if they disapproved of the message) The Jacobins did not believe that their enemies were viable enough threats to physically undo the changes being made, and so they felt that they had the upper hand and could humiliate their enemies in their depictions.

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<sup>3</sup> James A. Heffernan, ed, Representing the French Revolution: Literature, Historiography, and Art (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 1992) 203.

In Russia, a Civil War started in 1918, soon after the October Revolution. This war would decide the future ideology of Russia. During the Russian Civil War the Bolsheviks' Red Army fought the White Army, which had less cohesion and no united platform. It is this lack of unity which eventually allowed the Bolsheviks to win. The White army consisted of Russians, who opposed the Bolsheviks and their Revolution, cossacks, who were warriors from the south who never considered themselves Russians, and foreign armies, collectively known as the Entente.

Since this war was fought on Russian soil between Russians, many Russian citizens were aware of its implications for the future of their country. Although lack of food and clothing, malaise, and even famine were effecting many citizens on a daily basis, these issues had to be put aside in favor of sacrifice for the Civil War.<sup>4</sup> Because the Whites were an imminent threat, in some cases troops were approaching Moscow and were within reach of Bolshevik strongholds— the Bolsheviks felt it necessary to depict these enemies in a very powerful and unfavorable light. The Bolsheviks concentrated on establishing the threat and establishing fear of enemies, while the French focused on the issue of superiority.

In addition to the Whites, the Bolsheviks had other foreign external enemies, mostly countries which had been enemies of the tsar's regime. As a result, it was easy to point out these countries as enemies. Nevertheless, the common Russian before the Revolution had little idea of who Russia's foreign adversaries and allies were, and so these enemies did need to be delineated. Because nothing was known about these "enemies," and because

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<sup>4</sup> Stephen White, Bolshevik Poster.

the Bolsheviks were able to control what information their citizens received, it was easy to legitimate these foreign powers as enemies.

Like the Jacobins, who believed that they had surpassed their neighbors and were ushering in a new and better form of government, the Bolsheviks also believed that the countries around them were not yet enlightened about socialism, and that the bourgeoisie and the nobility in control of the peasants and workers in other countries were preventing a world revolution.

Contrary to the Jacobins, a distinction was made by the Bolsheviks between the rulers of non-socialist countries and the proletariat and peasantry in those same countries. Whereas the proletariat and peasantry were potential allies who were ignorant about socialism, the rulers of foreign countries were depicted as class enemies who were blocking historical progress. The Bolsheviks were convinced that the workers of other European states would soon be inspired by Russia's "proletarian revolution" and would respond by rising up against their own capitalists, who were oppressing them. The portrayals of external enemies were therefore strictly limited to well-dressed, upper-class men who clearly were very far removed from the workers and peasants. In fact, many posters depicted foreign workers and peasants as allies, being shown the socialist way by their Russian counterparts, and not in any way to blame for their country's political leanings. These posters were meant to garner support for international communism by portraying foreign workers and peasants as comrades rather than enemies.



## THE WHITE ARMY

A very powerful Bolshevik Civil War poster by Deni is entitled "Liberator".<sup>5</sup> (see page 121) This title is ironic, because the "liberator", Denikin, is actually depriving innocent victims of their lives. Denikin, a White army commander trying to advance his forces from the South of Russia towards Moscow, is standing in the middle of the scene with his back to the viewer, which makes him faceless and therefore less human. On the right stands a group of White army soldiers with their guns out, ready to shoot a group of defenseless women and children, who are lined up against a wall. Since many viewers felt that others controlled the circumstances of their lives in the same way that Denikin controls the circumstances in the poster, they could probably relate to the situation of the poor women and children. Furthermore, regardless of peoples' situations, most viewers would feel sympathy for the peasants about to be shot. We see the desperate faces of the peasants, while the faceless, White army officers—in their nice, neat uniforms—mindlessly wait for orders to shoot. In this image, both Denikin and the soldiers are enemies, because all have made a conscious effort to oppose the Bolsheviks.

In this poster, Deni was able to capture the contrast between the helpless victims and the cold enemies. Most Russian citizens only glanced at posters as they walked by, so enemies that were easily recognizable were essential, and Deni accomplishes this. By studying this image in more detail, however, the intricacies of the scene become more apparent. The scared and helpless faces of the peasants, as they look down at the corpses beside them, contrast sharply with the cold, mechanical nature of Denikin and his officers,

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<sup>5</sup> Stephen White, Bolshevik Poster Deni, 1919.





who remain removed from humanity. In this way, enemies were identified as less human and more mechanical, while bonds between fellow citizens were strengthened.

In an anonymous poster from 1918, Denikin is portrayed as larger than life, and his arm and fist are being supported by other Bolshevik enemies.<sup>6</sup> (See page 125) The presence of Denikin in this poster is very strong, and even though he is only one of many Bolshevik enemies, he represents the arrogance and vileness of all White Army enemies. The collaboration of the enemies in this image adds to the sense that the *kulak* and the priest support Denikin, both physically and ideologically, and thus they too are enemies of Bolshevism.

In another image, "Denikin's Band," Denikin is surrounded by other internal enemies, including a priest, sailors, a White army general, and a capitalist.<sup>7</sup> (See page 127) The capitalist in this picture indicates that capitalists were collaborating with the internal forces at work against the Bolsheviks. This is a passive scene, with all of these men looking as though they are posing for a picture of "collaborating Bolshevik enemies." In this image, the enemies look powerful in their uniforms, and they are smiling. The largest object in this poster is a White, Blue, and Red flag (the flag of Russia before the Revolution) which reads "Beat the Workers and the Peasants." Below the image, the Bolshevik artist encourages the workers and peasants to "Defend the Soviets, Defend your will, your power." This is one example of how the Bolsheviks attempted to portray enemies as powerful figures who continued to pose a threat. This created fear in the minds of the workers and peasants, and then the Bolsheviks attempted to channel this fear

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<sup>6</sup> The Soviet Political Poster 1917-1980 (New York: Penguin Books, 1985).

<sup>7</sup> Stephen White, Bolshevik Poster Deni, 1919.

into action supporting the Soviets and the Bolsheviks through the use of positive images and slogans asking for action from the viewer.

The French had no military enemy comparable to the Whites, because they were not embroiled in an organized Civil War during their Revolution. There were various guerrilla forces fighting isolated struggles against the Revolution within France, but these forces did not present the same kind of threat that the Whites did, and since they were not seen as a formidable threat to the French army, they were not a topic of enemy depictions.<sup>8</sup> The English were the main foreign enemy of French propaganda depictions, and in many ways they were treated as the most formidable enemy.

#### PRIMARY RIVALS/ENEMIES

The portrayal of the English as weak and incapable boosted the morale of the French, regardless of whether it was an accurate representation, because the French had always loved to laugh at the English. The English army was portrayed as weak and led by fools, and the English monarch was depicted with all other European monarchs as evil, unnatural, and weak. According to James Cuno, the quintessential depiction of foreign enemies was of "European monarchs...rendered impotent and silly, making weak and futile attempts at military strategy, and looking confusedly in all directions..."<sup>9</sup> The representation of serious heads of state portrayed as silly, stupid creatures was part of the Jacobins' superiority complex toward the old regime. The French seemed to believe that even if they "didn't have the military might to defeat the English, [they had] the vicious and popular wit to imagine that defeat as

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<sup>8</sup> Noel Parker, Portrayal of Revolution: images, debates, and patterns of thought on the French Revolution (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1990).

<sup>9</sup> James Cuno in James A. W. Heffernan, Representing 195.





15



Защищайте Советы! Защищайте свою волю, свою власть!



Содержание и краткое содержание № 42





one public humiliation."<sup>10</sup> The French grouped together English kings and citizens in their portrayals of enemies. They believed both foreign leaders and their citizens had not yet come to the realization that precipitated the French Revolution and the quest for liberty and fraternity. Thus, the French portrayed the English (and all other foreign enemies) as less enlightened than themselves.

Two of the most famous caricatures portraying the English as a French enemy are by David, the famous painter who was asked by the revolutionary government to use his talents to produce artwork for the revolutionary cause. These two images were very popular with the French citizens, who enjoyed laughing at the English under any circumstances.<sup>11</sup> By keeping these caricatures simple, David was able to appeal to the masses. An explanation was given under each image, but it was not necessary to read the text in order to understand these images.

The first caricature is called "The English Government." In it George III, the King of England, is the rear of a medusa-like figure, identified as the devil skinned alive.<sup>12</sup> (See page 131) George III is vomiting taxes on the English, who are unsuccessfully trying to run away from this horror. Instead of fighting back, they are looking confusedly in all directions. These taxes are thus attacking the English citizens, who are unable to escape from them. It is implied that the French, who are fighting for liberty and equality, would not accept that kind of treatment from their leaders. This caricature is meant to make the viewer laugh, and to make her/him thankful that s/he does not

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<sup>10</sup> James Cuno in James A. W. Heffernan, Representing 199.

<sup>11</sup> Lynne Hockman, ed, French Caricature and the French Revolution, 1789-1799 (Los Angeles: Grunwald Center for Graphic Arts, University of California, 1988).

<sup>12</sup> Claudette Hould, L'Image de la Revolution Francaise, exh. cat. (Montreal: Musee du Quebec, 1989).

live in England. It is also intended to create support for the revolutionaries, because they are an enlightened regime that does not impose the same kind of taxes on its citizens as does George III.

A similar technique is used in "The Army of Jugs."<sup>13</sup> (see page 133) We see the English army depicted as jugs, marching in straight lines behind George III, who is depicted as a turkey. This army of jugheads looks silly and weak, and to the left on top of an archway we see French soldiers defecating on the English army as they walk by, proving their confidence and showing that they do not need the forced rigidity of the English army. Their high vantage point also gives them superiority because they can view the entire scene, thus allowing no surprise attacks. The French soldiers may not be as organized as the English, but their humorous acts and their aloofness indicate their superiority and the liberty of action they enjoy compared to the English.

Just as the French liked to depict their real life ideological enemy, the English, as inferior, the Russians favored depicting the Poles as weak, helpless, and at their mercy.<sup>14</sup> (see page 135) For example, one Rosta window created by Mayakovsky in 1920 has four scenes. In the first image a Polish aristocrat is being slapped by a Bolshevik hand. In the second image, the hand is holding out a peace treaty to the Pole, which he refuses. In the third image, a Bolshevik soldier is calling people to the front to help defeat the Poles, and in the final image the Aristocrat is being destroyed. This sequence of images allows the viewer to understand that after the Poles were put down in battle they were offered a peace treaty, which they rejected, not realizing the strength of the Bolshevik forces. In order to teach the Poles a lesson, Poland must now be defeated

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<sup>13</sup> Lynne Hockman, ed, French Caricature and the French Revolution.

<sup>14</sup> The Soviet Political Poster.











Image resized at a lower resolution





more soundly than it was initially. This image is also an appeal for men to volunteer for the Polish front, and to make people aware that the Bolsheviks were fighting numerous enemies at the same time. Though crudely drawn, this image is effective because it makes a straightforward point without getting bogged down with details.

Unlike the French images, which merely showed the English as silly, many Bolshevik images depicted Bolshevik forces overcoming the enemy. In this way, the enemy was ridiculed, and the Bolshevik forces (both soldiers and common people) were lauded for their successful defeat of external enemies.

The French scenes described above are obviously imaginary, so the artist can take liberties in depicting French victories over external enemies without having to worry about historical facts. The French found these types of depictions, which were more universal and remained current for years, more useful than did the Bolsheviks, who focused on dynamic current events related to their external enemies. The French were content to portray a group of foreign enemies as silly, regardless of the context, whereas the Bolsheviks often wanted to portray their foreign enemies as incompetent with regard to specific events and circumstances, such as the war with Poland. This was especially true of Rosta windows, which provided a running commentary of current issues, often depicting new scenes daily. These different approaches to enemies also account for the artistic refinement of the French image and the artistic crudity of the Bolshevik image. French images were useful as propaganda for a long period of time, but each image took a long time to produce, so fewer themes were treated. The French Revolutionaries wanted their citizens to understand who their enemies were, while the Bolsheviks wanted their citizens also to understand why the

enemies they depicted were enemies in the eyes of the Bolsheviks, and they accomplished this using concrete examples.

## FOREIGN HEADS OF STATE

The French revolutionaries liked to highlight the differences between their inclusive and enlightened regime and the monarchical governments of France's neighbors. One way they denigrated these rulers was as a group of fools. As in the case of "the English Government," (discussed earlier) one image, "Bombardment of all the Tyrants of Europe," shows the heads of foreign states being vomited upon and peed on by the French.<sup>15</sup> (See page 139) *Liberté*, which was a symbol of the new French republic, is telling the King what he must do to sabotage these rulers, and below the King many members of the National Assembly are similarly ridiculing this elite group. There is a cannon directly behind the King, and so if he does not cooperate with this effort, he will face very steep consequences. The imperial eagle is trying to shield these foreign leaders with a crown, but its effort is futile because of the large numbers on the French side. The imperial eagle was the symbol of the French monarchy, and crowns are universal symbols of monarchy. The French revolutionaries are opposed to these rulers, both in this caricature and in their ideas about government. The European leaders look confused and disgusted, but none of them is running away. Both the humor and the superiority of the French are portrayed, while their enemies are beneath them and at their mercy. This image encourages support for the Revolution and the National Assembly, while encouraging disgust of the enemy.

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<sup>15</sup> Jean Duché, 1760-1960 Deux Siècles d'histoire de France par caricature (Paris: Editions du Pont Royal, 1961).







Image resized at a lower resolution



A Bolshevik image which contrasts with this image is entitled "Every blow of the Hammer is a blow at the enemy,"<sup>16</sup> (see page 141) in which a worker is striking an anvil with a hammer, which causes sparks to fly. As the sparks move across the poster, they become bullets, and the bullets are all flying towards an enemy crouched on the right side of the image. The sparks hitting this bourgeois enemy are weakening him in the same way that the French are weakening their enemies by pelting them with urine and vomit. In each of these images enemies are being attacked without the physical results of a real attack being shown. This was a way to show the strength of the Jacobins and the Bolsheviks without depicting the gruesome details of a real battle. The French and the Russian protagonists are shown as strong and capable, but a battle scene is not necessary, since the superiority of the Jacobins or the Bolsheviks is so clearly depicted in these representations. In both scenes, the enemy has no recourse, and cannot fight back.

Another example of the French ridiculing external enemies is one in which many European leaders have gathered in a room to watch the unveiling of the Prince du Conde's army.<sup>17</sup> (see page 145) This army is nothing more than a group of wooden soldiers. Members of the bourgeoisie and foreign heads of state are in attendance, and they all seem to be impressed, or at the very least interested in this new army. This army is meant to be laughed at, because the French Revolutionary army can obviously topple these wooden soldiers without any problem. Enemy armies, and those who command them, are thus depicted as insignificant, meaning they pose no threat to the Jacobin regime. This is an example of the way in which armies are reduced to the level of humor and inferior status, so that

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<sup>16</sup> The Soviet Political Poster.

<sup>17</sup> Lynne Hockman, ed, French Caricature and the French Revolution.



the French can ridicule them without proving their military strength. In addition, the heads of state can be laughed at because of their interest in such insignificant armies, and because they are foolish enough to think that an army of toy soldiers could pose a threat to France.

Russian posters often depicted enemies who posed a much more genuine threat than did these wooden soldiers. For example, in 1920 Viktor Deni created a poster entitled "The League of Nations."<sup>18</sup> (page 147) The leaders of France, the United States, and England are portrayed as fat men who sit on a platform on top of humans and corpses and who do nothing except maintain control of the world's wealth. As the bodies below get closer to the three leaders, they look more like inhuman corpses, which makes it easier for the leaders to ignore them and their plight. To anyone looking at this poster, it depicts the ruthlessness and power of the leaders of the League of Nations (which in this image included the United States, even though they did not join the League of Nations). The Bolsheviks saw this League as anti-Soviet and committed to keeping the proletarian revolution from occurring throughout Europe. The leaders are calm and passive. They know how powerful they are, so they do not feel threatened. In theory, the League of Nations was to be inclusive rather than exclusive, but in this image the actions of these three men, combined with the flag above their heads reading "Capitalists of the World, Unite!" presents a clear picture that only capitalists are included in this league. These united capitalists are a formidable force against the Bolsheviks, and this image creates hatred toward the capitalists as well as a call to action to wipe them out.

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<sup>18</sup> Leah Dickerman, ed, Building the Collective: Soviet Graphic Design 1917-1937 (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1996).





# ЛИГА НАЦИЙ



М. П. 1934. Карикатура на Лигу Наций, опубликованная в журнале "Красная Звезда".



Unlike the preceding Bolshevik image, in which the enemies are portrayed as strong and ruthless, the Jacobins enjoyed boosting the morale of their citizens through portrayals of defeated and weakened enemies returning from battle. Without depicting gruesome battles in which both sides have suffered, these images imply that the enemy has been defeated by powerful French forces. In one image, two Prussians are sitting backwards on donkeys with somber expressions on their faces.<sup>19</sup> (see page 151) They are returning home from France, and their backward positions indicate that they are upset about their losses, and wish that they could re-fight the battle. They both look entirely defeated, alone, and weak. Since only two soldiers remain, perhaps they were the only survivors. This image paints a pathetic picture of these enemies without making us feel pity for them. One of the men is saying "How those *sans-culottes* fight like dogs," to which the other replies "Who would have known?" These words explain why the soldiers are so upset. They did not believe that the French would be a difficult army to defeat, but they were very wrong. The power of the *sans-culottes* proved strong, and now these men know better than to question the power of the French Revolutionaries. The viewers of this image are meant to see these enemies as small in number as well as inferior to the French.

## CAPITALISTS

One of the most recognizable of Bolshevik enemies was "the capitalist." This fat man, who was always dressed in a black three-piece suit with a matching top hat had no nationality, but he was assumed to be from Western Europe. He was often carrying bags of money (labeled in rubles) and

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<sup>19</sup> Augustin Challamel, Les Français Sous la Révolution (Paris: Challamel, [1843?]).

in addition to his evil capitalist suit, he regularly had a gold watch around his waist which accentuated his wealth and pompous style. In Soviet Russia, the capitalist was a symbol of economic and political hatred, since capitalists were widely believed to exploit the workers' labor and to hoard society's wealth.

It was enough to draw a large, white man in a three piece black suit and a top hat, and the viewer understood that this image represented the foreign enemy—the capitalist. A popular image of the time is entitled "The Last Hour!"<sup>20</sup> (see page 153) In this simple image, we see a clock with the head of a capitalist in the place of the number twelve. The minute hand of the clock is quickly approaching the capitalist, and this hand is a knife, marked with the word "Communism." The capitalist is looking at the knife with a worried face, but there is nothing he can do to escape. This image is foretelling the future, when capitalists will be destroyed by the proletarian revolution. This image quickly gets across the point that the capitalists are in for a surprise at the hands of the communists, and the clear message of the title is that if you are a capitalist, your time is up.

In another popular Deni poster, "Unshakable Strength"<sup>21</sup> (see page 155), a boat contains two external enemies who are approaching the Russian coast. As is the case in many Bolshevik depictions of enemies, these enemies are seen to be strong in many respects, but they always have at least one weakness—in this case overconfidence and haste. This weakness foreshadows the fact that the Bolsheviks will be able to defeat them, even if that defeat is not portrayed in the poster. In this particular image, the two men are advancing in a boat, and they are very well dressed, but ahead of them is a formidable obstacle—a very steep cliff, at the top of which are the

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<sup>20</sup> Leah Dickerman, ed, Building the Collective Deni 1920.

<sup>21</sup> Stephen White, Bolshevik Poster 1919.









## ПОСЛЕДНИЙ ЧАС!

1.12 Viktor Demi, *Posledniy chas* (The Last Hour!), coloured lithograph, 1920, 62 x 49 cm, BS 470.

Image resized at a lower resolution



3.9 V. N. Demi, *Nezabyvaemaya krepost'* (Unshakable Fortress), coloured lithograph, 1919, 44 x 27 cm., BS 1463



# НЕЗЫБЛЕМАЯ КРЕПОСТЬ.

У незыблемой крепости  
Покровы не мнутся  
На незыблемой крепости  
Силы растут, крепнут

На незыблемой крепости  
Силы растут, крепнут  
На незыблемой крепости  
Силы растут, крепнут

Потрясают горы скалы  
Летят камни со всех сторон  
На незыблемой крепости  
Силы растут, крепнут



№ 61

Крепость — это — крепость  
Вот крепость — это — крепость  
Вот крепость — это — крепость  
Вот крепость — это — крепость

Крепость — это — крепость  
Вот крепость — это — крепость  
Вот крепость — это — крепость  
Вот крепость — это — крепость

Как же крепость, это — крепость  
На крепости — это — крепость  
Силой крепости — это — крепость  
Крепость — это — крепость

Великий труд

Image resized at a lower resolution



fortified walls of a city, with a large RSFSR flag flying above. The flag in the enemy's boat is clearly marked "Counter-Revolutionaries", and their capitalist clothes also give them away. One man is waving a sword in the air, and the other already has one leg out of the boat, even though they haven't reached the shore yet, as if he is very anxious to get out and attack. Both men have angry expressions on their faces. The poem underneath this image describes the strength of the Bolsheviks, and the weakness of the tiny sailing vessel these men are traveling in. By depicting this scene, the Bolsheviks wanted to show that the enemies were close, so everyone must be on guard to help the Red Army.

The combination of all kinds of external enemies painted a picture for viewers, on the one hand, that they always needed to be aware of these enemies, who came in many different forms. On the other hand, enemies could also be laughed at and ridiculed when they did not pose an immediate threat to the safety of the regime. These various enemies also had the ability to appeal to different people in different ways, and thus a broader range of people had negative feelings about these external enemies.



## CHAPTER FIVE- CONCLUSION

In the context of the French and Russian Revolutions, enemies were a formidable force acting against each regime, and each regime focused part of its propaganda campaign on its enemies in order to mobilize its supporters against them. The enemies that each regime depicted were genuine threats, even if those enemies were not always depicted by the regimes in a truthful manner. The Jacobins and the Bolsheviks used various strategies designed to expose their enemies in as many ways as possible. Contrary to Bertaud's argument that propaganda was not an integral part of the Jacobins' goals while in power in France, propaganda, and in particular visual propaganda used to portray enemies, was in fact an important part of the Jacobins' political strategy. The Jacobins did not employ propaganda to the same extent that the Bolsheviks did, but there was a much more concerted propaganda effort under the Jacobins than many historians admit.

The similarities between Jacobin and Bolshevik propaganda begin with the fact that each regime was attempting to completely overhaul the existing governmental structures and to establish a wholly new ideology. During the periods under consideration, both the Jacobins and the Bolsheviks were struggling to get their ideas across to the masses, and so propaganda was useful to the two regimes for many of the same reasons. Each regime used propaganda to influence its audience to cooperate with the regime in power and with its efforts to combat and destroy these enemies. Creating propaganda targeted at enemies was a useful tactic for unifying the people behind the regime and for attacking the forces threatening its power.

Since each of the regimes was new, weak, and unconsolidated, the public identification of enemies was very useful for the revolutionaries.



Enemies are present in every society, and the concept of “the enemy” is clear to most people. Since revolutionary ideas were changing the nature of what qualified someone or something to be considered an enemy, when the Jacobins and the Bolsheviks came to power, it made sense for each of them to identify their enemies. This process helped the revolutionaries to identify themselves to the public. Once the regimes’ enemies were identified and recognizable, the enemy could be juxtaposed with a set of revolutionary heroes. For both the Jacobins and the Bolsheviks, it was important that their citizens view the regimes’ enemies as the negative alternative to the regime in power and thus to build support for their cause. By identifying enemies of the revolutionary cause from the moment they came to power, both the Jacobins and the Bolsheviks were making it more difficult for their citizens to label the revolutionaries themselves as enemies.

Both regimes depicted enemies that were genuine threats to their existences. Neither the Jacobins nor the Bolsheviks invented enemies in an effort to scare their citizens; in both cases there were plenty of real internal and external threats to the revolutionary powers. One exception to this generalization is the portrayals of supernatural enemies. These depictions were meant to be representations of enemies and the evil ideas they embodied, although of course monsters and serpents never actually existed. In general, the Jacobins and the Bolsheviks believed their credibility would be higher if they targeted actual enemies.

Many of the enemies each regime depicted were associated with the old regime that the revolutionaries had overthrown. Since the rulers, the aristocracy, and the clergy in France and Russia were accepted by the masses as being the most powerful influences on society before the revolutions, the Jacobins and the Bolsheviks needed to identify these types of people as

enemies. Visual representations of this type of enemy were important because they helped the masses become aware of the change in power structures. In order to discredit the old regime, the leaders of that regime needed to be labeled as enemies and their evil intentions needed to be exposed.

During the course of each revolution, both regimes strayed from their pre-Revolutionary agendas and implemented censorship laws which were more harsh than those which had previously been in effect. Censorship gave the revolutionary regimes more power and enabled the propaganda they disseminated to be expressed without competition from contrary views. It is impossible to judge whether revolutionary propaganda was more successful because of censorship or not, but both the Jacobins and the Bolsheviks used censorship in order to heighten the power of their viewpoints.

Despite their similarities, the propaganda campaigns that I have investigated occurred in different time periods under different conditions, and these factors caused differences in the role that visual propaganda played, in the ways in which propaganda was disseminated, and in the ways in which it was received by the public. The two most important historical differences between the two periods under consideration are 1) that the two revolutionary regimes engaged in their propaganda campaigns in the context of two dissimilar military situations, and 2) that the Bolsheviks had the opportunity to build upon the earlier example of the French Revolution and the propaganda campaign to which it gave rise.

In 1792-94 the French army was fighting in Austria, but since this war was not on French soil, it did not affect the majority of the French population. The French did not depict the Austrians in propaganda images, because they wanted to create patriotism within France and stay away from representations

involving physical violence and fighting. Since the threat of Austrians overtaking the French revolutionaries was seen as distant, French propaganda depicted French soldiers proving their superiority to the English in humorous and symbolic ways, such as mooning or defecating on their opponents.

The situation was quite different for the Bolsheviks. During the years 1918-1920, Russia was embroiled in a vicious civil war. Furthermore, Bolshevik forces were involved in an ideological struggle with their opponents whom the Bolsheviks regarded as trying to destroy socialism in Russia. For these reasons, the Bolsheviks were less relaxed in the ways they chose to portray their enemies than were the Jacobins. The Bolsheviks wanted to depict their enemies in the worst light possible, in order to discredit these enemies and improve their position in the eyes of the people. Thus whereas the French portrayed their enemies as ridiculous, incompetent foreigners, the Bolsheviks portrayed their enemies as strong, formidable forces.

Propaganda images were useful to each revolutionary regime because visual images leave lasting impressions in viewers' memories and because they allowed the regimes to communicate with illiterate commoners. The French did an enormous amount toward establishing art as a medium for the public expression of political ideas. Because visual propaganda was a new phenomenon at the time of the French Revolution, French caricatures and broadsides tended to be complex and subtle. They were aimed at the upper-classes, who better understood the symbolic meanings that many artists included in their images. Nevertheless, the Jacobins quickly realized the appeal that images had to a wide array of people, even if the subtleties were not always understood, and so they promoted the use of images as a medium

for their revolutionary agenda. According to David Dowd, "It was probably the leaders of the [French] Revolution who did more to promote the arts as a means of stimulating national sentiment than any other single political group until the twentieth century."<sup>1</sup>

By the time of the Russian Revolution, art was well established as a medium for conveying political opinions, and the Bolsheviks became quite adept at using posters to communicate with semi-literate peasants and workers. The Bolshevik leaders were long-time professional revolutionaries who had studied Marx and other theoreticians, and they had long considered how to communicate their revolutionary agenda to the Russian masses. This intellectual background was apparent in the Bolsheviks' propaganda campaign. The Bolsheviks believed that they needed to communicate with the illiterate workers and peasants who they identified as their natural political supporters. For this reason, visual propaganda was an integral part of Bolshevik propaganda.

It can be argued that the Bolshevik propaganda campaign was ultimately more successful than the Jacobin campaign because the Bolsheviks depicted enemies who posed more of a real threat than did the Jacobins. The French often depicted their enemies as humorous, implying that they were enemies because of their foolishness. The Bolsheviks, on the other hand, were much more adept at depicting their enemies' actions in ways that explained why the enemies in the poster really were genuine threats.

The Jacobins were able to depict their enemies in a more humorous light because the threat their enemies posed was not imminent. The Jacobins also had the leisure to choose which enemies to depict. Because of this

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<sup>1</sup> David L. Dowd, "Art as national Propaganda in the French Revolution," Public Opinion Quarterly (Fall 1951):535.

freedom and because visual propaganda was not an extremely developed medium at the time of the French Revolution, Jacobin images were romanticized and often contained symbolic references to mythological or other republican symbols. These symbols represented various ideas that sometimes obscured the main idea of the image. Because of this tendency, it was more difficult for the French commoner to understand an image's message, and so Jacobin propaganda was probably less comprehensible than most Bolshevik propaganda. Nevertheless, even if the full symbolic meaning of French propaganda was not understood, viewers could still comprehend the basic message. For example, in one image which is ridiculing priests, there is a magpie with a banner reading "VI" flying over the head of Pope Pius VI. Even if the viewer does not understand the significance of the bird, which is subtly naming the Pope, the general idea of the poster can still be understood.<sup>2</sup> The Bolsheviks viewed this type of complexity as unnecessary and as contrary to their goal of reaching the masses.

Another difference between the two propaganda campaigns was that the Bolsheviks had a much more elaborately defined propaganda campaign than the Jacobins. This difference may have been one reason why the Bolsheviks were able to retain power while the Jacobins were overthrown by other revolutionaries. The Bolsheviks used images with multiple scenes in order to show the initial actions and eventual consequences of Bolshevik and enemy actions. Images depicted preparation for enemies, struggles with enemies, and victory over those same enemies. This progression not only educated citizens about enemies in the abstract, but depicted enemies in

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<sup>2</sup> Claudette Hould, L'Image de la Revolution Francaise exh. cat. (Montreal: Musee du Quebec, 1989).

action and demonstrated the correct way to hate and destroy them. Since the Bolsheviks were actually at war with some of their enemies, it was important that the citizens mobilize quickly to support the Bolshevik cause. The French, on the other hand, did not create images with multiple scenes showing cause and effect situations of enemy actions, in part because their enemy threats were not as imminent. The abstract image of the enemy was enough to arouse fear, hatred, or ridicule depending on the situation. Jacobin images were more often passive, and they did not use progressions to depict how citizens could combat their enemies.

Another difference between the two periods involved the degree of organization within each regime dedicated to the propaganda effort. The Bolsheviks' plans for propaganda dissemination were not centralized, but they nonetheless were much more organized than were the French. Whereas the Jacobins officially commissioned over a dozen caricatures in 1793<sup>3</sup>, the Bolsheviks were commissioning hundreds of posters and Rosta windows each year of the Civil War.<sup>4</sup> Furthermore, the Bolsheviks were more explicit than the Jacobins in their directions about the content of these depictions. Whereas the Jacobins only specified that the ideals of the Revolution must be contrasted with those of the enemies, the Bolsheviks insisted that poster artists depict specific themes.

By the end of the periods under consideration, propaganda use was very well-established within each regime; nevertheless, the Jacobins did not remain in power, while the Bolsheviks did. In June 1794, the Jacobins were removed from their positions in the National Assembly following the fall of

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<sup>3</sup> James A. Leith, *The Idea of Art as Propaganda in France, 1750-99* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1965).

<sup>4</sup> Stephen White, *The Bolshevik Poster* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988).

Robespierre, and the Thermidor began.<sup>5</sup> The Jacobin propaganda campaign was successful in identifying enemies of the Revolution, but the Terror which did so much to define this period and the rash character of Robespierre eventually led to the fall of the Jacobins. The Jacobins set the stage for the future of propaganda images, but they were unsuccessful in keeping power in their hands. After the fall of the Jacobins, images continued to depict enemies, among whom Robespierre was now numbered. With the end of the Terror and as the fear associated with the Terror subsided, a larger variety of propaganda images were produced.

By 1920 in Russia, Bolshevik propaganda became less focused on enemies and became more positive. More posters showed weakened and defeated enemies rather than strong enemies capable of overthrowing the revolution. In many images, people were smiling and holding hands, illustrating that progress had been made as a result of hard work and determination. This optimistic view of the future was attributed to the October Revolution and the Civil War, which both became almost sacred events to supporters of the Bolshevik Revolution. In addition, increasing numbers of posters dealt with the theme of inanimate enemies, signifying the beginning of a new struggle against social evils such as typhus, hunger, illiteracy. According to the message of these Bolshevik posters, most of these social evils could be overcome through the combined efforts of the people and the regime.

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<sup>5</sup> Jaques Godechot, La Révolution Française: chronologie commentée (Paris: Perrin, 1988).

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