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**OCTOBER REVOLUTION: LESSONS FOR RUSSIA AND THE  
WORLD**

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*Abstract*

The authors analyze lessons learned and implications of events of the revolutionary year of 1917 and note that the Russian people conducted a certain selection of positive and negative consequences of the October Socialist Revolution. Unfortunately, the Russian people did not have enough free and calm time for the global analysis because for most of the post-Revolutionary period the country was at either war, or preparing for a war. Despite extreme conditions of life and acuteness of perception and assessment of the past in the collective national conscience, the Russian society seems having been succeeded in understanding the main adages and general rules of life necessary for its continuing existence with the support of its whole preceding developmental experience. Most people in Russia believe that another Socialist Revolution for Russia is contraindicated. From the historical experience, people understand that new man-made catastrophes will lead the nation and the state to demise, while modern technogenic factors may extend this process to a global scale. Russian people have built up tolerance to revolutions. Among the hard evidence in favor of this conclusion, there are inescapable facts that in both 1991 and 1993, during the dissolution of the USSR and the siege of the Russian parliament, most of the citizens did not allow themselves to be involved into a dangerous struggle of powers. Today the majority of citizens does not want to join the protests to create a mass sufficient to launch a color revolution project in Russia following the Ukrainian scenario.

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**Keywords:** Revolutionary situation, October Revolution, lessons and implications.



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## 1. Introduction

In 2017, Russia commemorated a 100-year anniversary of the October Socialist Revolution. This centenary gives a nice occasion to remember that it became a crucial event not only for Russian, but also for the world history. However, this milestone anniversary is far from being a cause to look for any analogies between the events of distant past and those of contemporaneity: there are no clear symptoms of a revolutionary situation in Russia yet, apart from a certain learning disability of the current political elite, which by their own actions inflames passions to cause protesting actions of thousand people in Moscow, Saint-Petersburg, Kaliningrad, Vladivostok and other major cities. Meanwhile, the issue of the position of the Revolution of 1917 and Soviet heritage in understanding of the historical path of the country is still open to discussion, its unbiased scrutiny being not that much to the advantage of present-day oligarchs and capitalists of a lesser scale. The October Revolution is hated in the West for one hundred years because it did not allow conquering the Russian nation and becoming holders of vast natural resources. There were attempts to that end, both during the Civil War and foreign military intervention (1918-1920), and during the Great Patriotic War (1941-1945).

The October Revolution is undoubtedly the most important political and historical event of the 20th century, which had an enormous influence onto numerous processes of the global development. It is worth noting that a precursor of this event was an objective fact of accumulated animosity and conflicts in the society, which led the country to a choice between the anarchic self-destruction of the society and a harsh dictatorship. After a century, there is still no unambiguous assessment of this event, because a discussion is too often used not to discover true causes of the historical event, but to give proofs of correctness or incorrectness of a path selected after the October Revolution. A certain part of analysts and society holds that this event on the historic path of Russia was a national catastrophe leading to the Civil War and establishment of a totalitarian system. Some others believe that selection of a non-capitalistic path of development allowed one to achieve heady growth rates in economy, science and agriculture. Despite the antithetical conceptual approaches in assessment of this historical event, it is evident that the revolutionary transformation of Russia gave start to a new global project on a civilization scale. The case in point is that a new social-economic model appeared in advanced European countries, and it still operates in the form of a Swedish socialism model.

An objective study of revolutionary events allows realizing continuation of the best tradition of national development from the Russian Empire to the Russian Federation. The authors do not glamorize the Soviet past and do not seek to justify necessity of its return. The events of 1917 led to an unambiguous conclusion that new class, national, ethnic clashes, able to push the people to a national and social catastrophe, are impermissible. Nowadays the academic community has a unique opportunity to develop a position at the principal stages of development of Russia, common to all citizens.

Besides, October events of the 1917 showed to the world that a lack of social policy, inadequate wages and unlimited oppression may lead to a revolution, made possible by a worker being driven to despair. An example of such revolution may be followed not only by the people of Russia, where 20 million people live below the poverty line, but by toiling masses of other states as well. That is why the lessons and implications from the century-old events require an apprehension and reinterpretation. Maybe

one day, one (or one's descendants) will attain a correct understanding of this process. Anyway, there is a need to do it: to study, to analyze, to compare, to balance... This makes the content of the article.

## 2. Problem Statement

When speaking about problems of the October Revolution, it is worth noting that after the victory of the February Revolution, there was a certain duality of power in Russia: an intertwining of bourgeois dictatorship with a revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of workers and peasants. The Provisional Government, the official authority in Russia, became the agency of the bourgeois dictatorship. In their declaration of March 3, 1917, the Provisional Government promised to conduct a total amnesty, abolish capital punishment, introduce political freedoms, prohibit estate-based discrimination, and arrange for elections of the All-Russian Constituent Assembly. However, its line of domestic policy proved to be inconsistent and contradictory. Many of the promises were left outstanding.

The second center of authority in the country was represented by Soviets (councils) of Workers', Peasants' and Soldier's deputies. They published their own orders and decrees, which were executed at the local level. So, for example, in accordance with order no. 1 of the Petrograd Soviet dated March 1, 1917 "On Democratization of the Army", the army units elected soldiers committees, which were blended into the Soviets of Workers' Deputies, forming their soldiers' sections. This order not just equalized civic rights of soldiers and officers, but also practically made the latter dependent on the elective soldier committees, which were assigned to control weapons. The order abolished traditional forms of military discipline, allowed political activities and creation of different social organizations in the military.

The soviets, while formally not being state administrative bodies, controlled actions of the government and influenced the decisions made. Provisional Government was an authority without power, while Soviets were a power without authority. This situation had been called "dual power" (dvoevlastie). It was a peculiar situation when there were simultaneously two sources of authority acting in the Russian capital: Petrograd Soviet and the Provisional Government. In late March - early April 1917, at the All-Russian Congress of Soviets, the Bolsheviks proposed forming a body to control the decisions of the Provisional Government, so that in the future the authority would have been completely shifted to the Soviets. But Bolsheviks' proposal again was not supported by the majority of the delegates of the Congress. Nevertheless, the very raising of the issue of power had been highly publicized.

The class characteristic of the soviets allowed V.I. Lenin to conclude that the soviets and not the local self-government bodies, which included bourgeois elements, will become a political foundation of the future proletarian statesmanship. The Bolshevik leader made calls for overthrowing of the Provisional Government and establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat. The Bolshevik leader saw a major opportunity for transition from a bourgeois democratic revolution to a socialist one and establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat in the precarious balance during the dual power period. Lenin saw a Soviet Republic as a new form of state authority. This plan was possible to implement peacefully, without coup d'etat, through exposure of anti-popular nature of the Provisional Government through getting a majority in soviets of workers', soldiers' and peasants' deputies. Thus, Bolsheviks proposed slogans «Away with the Provisional Government» and «Full power to the Soviets!»

However, Mensheviks, having a majority in the soviets, were in cahoots with the Provisional Government and betrayed the interests of the Revolution. On July 3–4, 1917, a 500 thousand anti-government protest of workers and soldiers was held in Petrograd. The government accused Bolsheviks of coup d'etat. There was fire on the protesters. Bolshevik leaders Leon Trotsky, L.B. Kamenev, A.B. Lunacharsky and others were arrested. Lenin succeeded to flee.

The whole authority was shifted to the Provisional Government courtesy of Petrograd Soviet being headed by SRs, and Mensheviks decided to support it. In July, with termination of the dual power, Bolsheviks discarded the «Full Power to the Soviets!» slogan due to Mensheviks and SRs taking a counter-revolutionary position. The period of dual power ended. With it, the peaceful transfer of authority ended as well.

The authors note that in the modern capitalist Russia, there are numerous factors that directly and indirectly cause discontent of people. First of all, it is a striking income inequality, practical legal inequality, deficit of justice in the society, weak social security, poverty of a significant part of population. Taken together, these unfavorable social phenomena are indicative of relative regress of the social system and archaization of the societal structure. They lead to a revival of Classist principles of the social life, long gone from the global stage. Turning to the events of the early 20th century, one may say that the short succession of the Russian revolutions was caused by a sharp social differentiation, which scandalized the vast majority of the society, raising it against the minority (Berdyayev, 2006). Lack of understanding or disregard for this historical experience is a direct route to social turbulence and catastrophe. Thus, one of the main lessons of the 1917 events is that the society itself, especially its copiously rich part, shall not provoke revolution by support and conservation of stark income disproportion and other social disparities. Quite the opposite, it is necessary to act in such manner that these disproportions could be blurred out.

However, these disproportions will never balance by themselves as it is hard for a single person to part with ownership of a part of one's riches, so it is problematic for the entire social strata. Thus, there should be a power capable to initiate certain behavioral programs at a macro level, stimulate or force large masses of people to follow such programs. This power is a state. Having a mechanism of sovereign authority, this political organization sets the heading for the society as a whole. For instance, the so-called social state conducts material redistribution policy in accordance with the principle of social justice so that every citizen achieves an adequate standard of living, social differences are removed and those in need get assistance. With such approach employed on behalf of the authority, the society starts to realize and esteem the advantages of the social world, activating its solidarity and integration capabilities, and becomes immune to radical ideas and their supporters. On the contrary, the class state guards the traditional order of asymmetric distribution of material and social resources in the society. The majority of the population perceives such system as unjust; the society is divided, and a part of it rises in protest, thus creating a revolutionary situation. If the revolution or coup d'etat is successful, the state authority is removed together with the social order under its protection and the Cursed Days begin (Bunin, 1991). Such conceptually simple cause and effect links, which are unfortunately hard to grasp in the societal practice, also form a part of the valuable historical experience. Its essence is that a modern state by its nature may only be all embracing and social, but not classic. It is almost a fundamental truth of today's

existence, for it is not necessary to prove that a state authority becomes fully legitimate only if it is accepted by the wide masses of people, as well as the fact that the stability of a society is a direct function of the state's ability to perform its social function.

### **3. Research Questions**

The main question of the research is a study of technologies employed in preparation and performance of the October Revolution, determination of its main causes why the working class, poor peasantry supported by soldiers and navy sailors ensnared themselves with the Bolshevik campaigning and became the principal force in deposing the monarchy and the Provisional Government. In the early 1917s, the public outcry caused by tiredness of war, rise in prices, profiteering and queues was magnified even more with constant interruptions of food supply to the cities. In a number of locations, the bread queues started to vandalize shops. This violent attitude found its way to factories. The World War, which Russia was drawn into, made preexisting political and economic conflicts more acute and eroded economic standing of the working masses. The military costs grew huge. To cover them, the government issued fiduciary money, causing galloping inflation. Hardships of war and military defeats of the Russian Army undermined trust in tsar and his government. November 1, 1916, P.I. Milyukov, the leader of Constitutional Democratic Party spoke in IV Duma and publicly accused the tsar government of stupidity and treason.

In January 1917, on the verge of the February Revolution, more than 177,000 workers participated in strikes and protests in Petrograd. Some of the street actions against tsarism took place till January 9, an anniversary of the Bloody Sunday, when the belief in a good tsar was riddled with bullets. On February 18, workers of Putilov's Factory started a strike. Management responded with a lockout. Over 30,000 workers became destitute. This conflict served as a signal for the start of mass protests in the capital. On February 23, women demanding bread and return of their husbands back from the fronts of the war led a column of protesters. On February 25, economic strikes grew into a general political strike under slogans of «Away with tsarism!», «Away with monarchy!», «Away with the war!». Nicolas II sent General Habalov an order: «I command to stop the disorders in the capital tomorrow». So, following the tsar's wish, soldiers and policemen were given orders to open fire on protesters and rioters. There were clashes between the workers and police forces. The number of strikers grew to over 300,000 people. The next day an event happened that radically changed the situation in the capital. On February 26, a company of Pavlovsk regiment opened fire on mounted police. Mass defection of soldiers to protesters ensued. Two days later, the entire Petrograd garrison participated in the uncontrollable mass protest.

Thus, revolutionary rioting of workers and peasants, soldiers and navy sailors, unhappy with the tsarism policy, acquired a mass scale. On February 26, 1917, Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies was created in the capital to control the revolutionary protests. It was headed by State Duma representatives from Menshevik and SR parties.

The revolutionary uprisings throughout the country worried the bourgeoisie. The chairman of the State Duma, M. V. Rodzianko, tried to convince the monarch to take radical counter-revolutionary measures. An issue of a decree limiting political rights and freedoms of the citizens was anticipated. The regime of limitation of assembly and meetings in practice was not operational. Rodzianko despairingly

warned the emperor: «Your Majesty... I have to warn, I am sure that in less than three weeks there will be a revolution of such proportion that you will no longer rule». However, all the attempts of the Duma Chairman to convince the tsar to take actions and prevent the imminent danger for the regime resulted in nothing but royal annoyance. Letters from Empress Aleksandra Fyodorovna also were to no avail: «Darling, be hard, show them the firm hand...»

Emperor's awkward actions (Nicolas II changed in swift succession four prime ministers, four military ministers and six domestic affairs ministers), as well as an attempt to disperse the IV State Duma (Decree of February 25, 1917), had demonstrated the autocratic monarchy's inability to deal with the complex situation caused by the World War I. «Ministerial leapfrog» intensified inability of the central power to control the situation. Calls to people's humility and war till the victorious end did not yield any results.

On February 26, Nicolas II lost his last chance to transform the revolution from below into a revolution from above, a less painful variant for the country: he issued a decree to disperse the State Duma, thus denying the liberal forces any hope for parliamentary way to change a constitutional monarchy and pushing them to revolution. After the victory of the February Revolution, Russia became one of the freest countries in the world. All the political parties could operate legally, tsar's political police was dismissed and censorship abolished, estate, ethnic and religious limitations canceled, trials disestablished, political rights and freedoms declared together with universal and equal suffrage by secret voting. Many regulatory bodies were abolished under people's pressure: Ministry of Imperial Court, Royal Chancellery, gendarmerie, police, The Most Holy Synod together with its chief procurator. An Extraordinary Commission was formed at the Ministry of Justice to investigate criminal activities of former tsarist ministers and other senior government officials.

The Provisional Government sought to break an "interclass peace" between the bourgeoisie and proletariat, between the estate holders and peasants. The General Land Committee was created to tackle the agrarian issue. Local committees appeared at the level of governorate, uyezd (parish), volost (canton). Lands owned by the royal family were nationalized. However, these measures proved to be too little too late. Peasants, not waiting for any decisions of the future All-Russia Constituent Assembly, took possession of uncultivated lands, as well as estate owners' livestock and equipment, cut forests, ransacked the nobles' estate houses.

Another task of no less importance is to demonstrate the leading role of the Bolshevik Party and the personal role of V.I. Lenin, the latter not only had developed a thought on socialist revolution and a plan of an armed revolt, but skilfully managed the overthrowing of the Provisional Government. The authors show that V.I. Lenin in his letters to the Party's Central Committee insisted on the armed struggle: Bolsheviks have to take power, The crisis is ripe, Marxism and revolt). He developed a detailed plan for the armed coup d'etat in Petrograd, which formed a foundation of the Party's activities; after the VI party congress that took place from July 26 to August 3, the party set a course for the armed revolt. Preliminary date was set as September-October of 1917.

Ever decreasing authority of the official structures led to shift of the real authority to the soviets. In August and September, Bolsheviks achieved majority in Moscow and Petrograd Soviets. V.P. Nogin became a chairman of the Moscow Soviet (Mossoviet), L.D. Trotsky became a chairman of the Petrograd

Soviet (Petrosoviet). On October 12, a Military Revolutionary Committee (RVK) was created at the Petrograd Soviet under the claim of protection against counterrevolution and with active participation of Trotsky. It became a headquarters for preparation of the armed revolt and seizure of power. The RVK included from 30 to 100 members, including such well-known Bolsheviks as V.A. Antonov-Ovseyenko, N.I. Podvoysky and others, as well as some Left SRs. That is why the committee initially operated under the helm of P.E. Lazimir, Left SR, who was later replaced with L.D. Trotsky. The Revolutionary Committee developed links with military regiments, Red Guards and sailors of the Baltic Navy.

The Provisional Government noted operation of the RVK. On August 26, B.V. Savinkov, SR, tried to convince Kerensky to take radical preventive measures, up to recalling several divisions from the front, to smash the committee and military units faithful to the Committee. The Commander-in-Chief assured Boris Savinkov that the third Cavalry Corps is ready to reconcentrate in the outskirts of Petrograd by the evening of August 28, and even asked to declare Petrograd as being under military rule effective on August 29. However, those were empty words.

V.I. Lenin did not ignore the fact that Kerensky's government could hurt Bolsheviks' plans and tried to speed up the preparation and advance the beginning of the armed uprising by any means. However, L.D. Trotsky, L.B. Kamenev, G.E. Zinovyev insisted on postponing the uprising due to necessity of thorough preparations. The situation was such that the Provisional Government could take countermeasures and prevent the coup d'etat at any moment. It took a resolute and uncompromising address of the leader to convince the members of the Central Committee. Lenin declared ultimatum implying that if the Central Committee does not adopt his position and does not start organizational and political activities for the fastest seizure of power, he will announce his secession from the Central Committee while keeping his right for agitation in the low-level cells.

Under Lenin's pressure, the issue of uprising was included into the agenda of October 10. During the meeting of the Central Committee, Lenin justified his proposals to seizure power by readiness of the masses, the advantageous international situation, support for the socialist revolution in Russia by proletariat of developed countries. The uprising was supported by ten members of the Committee and opposed by two (L.B. Kamenev, G.E. Zinovyev). On October 16, during the extended meeting of the Central Committee with participation of the capital's Party Committee and trade unions, it was decided to prepare the uprising.

Having known Bolsheviks' plans, the official authorities headed by Kerensky tried to predate their actions: printing houses, where Worker's Way and Soldier newspapers were printed, were closed, warrants of arrest were issued for Bolshevik leaders. In response to that, the military units faithful to RVK were put to combat readiness. However, it was too late: Bolsheviks had already accelerated the flywheel of a new revolution.

On October 22, throughout the country, including its capital, massive protests of worker and soldiers took place in support of the All-Russian Congress of Soviets being called to gather then. Military units faithful to Bolsheviks could be seen moving through the streets.

The Provisional Government turned out paralyzed and unable to do anything to prevent the tragedy about to happen. Kerensky behaved hysterically. He tried to call up at least some army units to

the capital, and then unexpectedly appeared at the Pre-Parliament meeting and required to be given emergency powers.

All through the night from October 24 to October 26, Kerensky was in the military headquarters, frantically trying to find any military units able to suppress the Bolsheviks. He sent telegrams to suburbs, addressed the shock batallion in Tsarskoye Selo, artillery units in Pavlovsk, ensign school in Peterhof, but to no avail: none of those units he deemed the most reliable ever moved. No serious military or political forces were found in the country ready to protect the Provisional Government.

Meanwhile, the Bolsheviks enhanced their activities on implementing Lenin's plan of armed seizure of power. They organized multiple rallies where their best party speakers were persuading soldiers and sailors to overthrow the anti-national government. On October 22, the VRK directed their representatives to all the units of the Petrograd garrison with the same objective. Throughout the city streets, there were vivid discussions on Bolsheviks' chance for success in seizing the power.

In the evening of October 24, V.I. Lenin directed a letter to the members of the Central Committee, where he encouraged more decisive actions, stating that in this situation any delay is tantamount to death. The letter said: «History will not forgive the revolutionaries who could (and certainly will) be victorious today, while risking a lot tomorrow, risking of losing everything». The Central Committee agreed with the leader and authorized an assault on the Winter Palace where the Provisional Government were holding their meeting.

On October 24, armed groups of Red Guards and revolutionary soldiers rushed all across the Petrograd from the Smolny Institute where the uprising headquarters were set up. In accordance with Lenin's plan they started taking control of bridges, post offices, telegraph stations and railway stations. They had never met any resistance. Lenin wrote a proclamation, titled To the Citizens of Russia, which was telephoned to different city districts and simultaneously rushed into print. While the Provisional Government was still in the Winter Palace, the Lenin's proclamation noted that it had already been toppled and the authority was taken over by the Provisional Revolutionary Committee.

Aurora Cruiser, moored nearby, gave a volley as a signal to start the assault on the Winter Palace. The garrison of the Palace went down almost without a fight, only several people died. By the morning of October 25, the capital was in the hands of the revolutionaries.

The armed uprising in Petrograd concluded with a total victory of Bolsheviks led by V.I. Lenin. The Provisional Government was overthrown, Kerensky fled disguised as a woman.

As a result of the victory of October armed uprising in Petrograd and arrest of the Provisional Government in the Winter Palace, the authority was taken by the II All-Russian Congress of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies. The Congress proclaimed that the Provisional Government was removed from power and declared itself as the supreme authority in Russia. "Socialist Revolution that was reiterated by Bolsheviks over and over again has finally happened! Hurray, Comrades!" – these famous words, said by V.I. Lenin at the II Congress of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies in October 1917 informed the people of Russia about a new period commencing in their history, a period of Soviet authority and Bolshevism.



By declaring themselves the first state of workers and peasants in the world, Bolshevik Party headed by V.I. Lenin announced to the world that the factories belong to workers, land belongs to peasants, that the Bolshevik Party will manage the first socialist country in a new way.

Another issue of this research is lessons and implications necessary to learn so that such revolution never repeated neither in Russia, nor in other countries.

#### **4. Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the study is not only to show how the October Socialist Revolution happened, what were its causes and underlying social conditions, but also (and that is the main thing) to show what kind of lessons shall be learned from it by the political leadership of the modern Russia after re-establishment of capitalism as well as the world leader, so that such catastrophe never repeats.

#### **5. Research Methods**

The research uses historical, institutional, comparative, systemic and other methods. Using the historical method, the authors operate with numerous historical facts, showing creation of a revolutionary situation and other conditions in Russia of 1917, which facilitated success of the revolutionary masses led by Bolsheviks and Lenin. Applying the comparative method, the authors show common features and differences between the socialist revolution that took place 100 years ago and modern colored revolutions. The institutional method allowed revealing operation of the party and other institutes, which prepared and executed overthrowing of monarchy and capitalism in Russia.

#### **6. Findings**

Thus, if a state does not want to see revolutionary convulsions, it has to be not only social, but strong as well. Soviet state mechanism was all-national, but it could not save the country from erosion and breakdown. The powers of Provisional Government and those of tsar were incomparably weaker. The latter decayed that much, that, in words of Vasily Shulgin, a politician of the early 20th century, "... there were not even a battalion of soldiers to protect a three-hundred-years-old monarchy" (Shulghin, 2015a). Nowadays, when a surge of colored revolutions goes through the world and ruthlessly smites unstable regimes (Shulghin, 2015b), this cautionary advice from the past is especially timely.

Even more so for multinational states with a complex structure. For such systems, a period of revolutions and wars is always a hard test for survival. During the calm periods of economic development and growth, national problems usually do not actively manifest in a country. However, as soon as the central authority is in turmoil, the periphery declares sovereignty, announces a secession, etc. In this way Russian, Austro-Hungarian and Osman empires succumbed to historical stress. Breakdown of these superpowers in the 20th century was a direct consequence of revolutionary events and unprecedented upsurge of nationalism. At that, post-imperial sovereignty usually does not bring the national periphery much apparent advantages. Moreover, many of them (with some minor exception) become unable to sustain their own stateness due to weakness of the economic foundation, lack of stateness traditions and internal conflicts. A process of recrystallization of such failed states around a single center of power

starts. In 1922, most of peripheral territories of the former tsarist Russia united around the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic into a new state: the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. The same process happened with the southern Slavic shards of Danube Empire, which were drawn to the Serbian state and together created the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes in 1918 (later renamed into Kingdom of Yugoslavia, then into the Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia). Both federations, Russian and Yugoslav, were built upon a new ideological foundation and seemed to be more monolithic than the previous superstates of the imperial period. However, the nationalism virus, revitalized by revolutionary calamities of the early 20th century, turned out more powerful and resilient than the Communist doctrine. The Socialist federations could not withstand a new assault of nationalistic revolutionism and started to fall to pieces overnight. Everything was repeated again with incomparably more losses. As a result, Yugoslav and Czechoslovak federations were lost, while Russia, having survived a state of political and economic semi-breakdown in 1991-2001, is currently reconstructing its integrational space with great strain. Nevertheless, these attempts are doomed to fail if a concept of a limit for revolutions in Russia is not to settle in the collective consciousness. It is so because the next revolutionary calamity in Russia is unmistakable to lead to a new explosive growth of nationalism and separatism, meaning a demise of the federative state. It is up to the society and authorities to get out of this agonizing circle of sansára. Of course, on condition that they understand their past failures.

When thinking about the period of revolutions and wars in the contemporary history of Russia, it is necessary to mention the role of a human factor in the development of the social calamities and changes. This aspect of analysis deserves as much attention as social and institutional political changes do. As it is evident from the experience, people participate in revolutionary and post-revolutionary events under influence of certain ideologies, prompted by political interest of organizations. Depending on the content of their doctrines and political leadership, l'homme révolté may become either destructive or constructive force for social changes. Therefore, the destructive man was sought-after by Maidan, orange, bulldozer and all sorts of other colored revolutions. However, the colored ideologies did not assume any constructive activity, thus the creative, constructive person was not in demand. And vice versa, let us remember how under the influence of the communist ideology, the soviet subverting man became a builder and defender of their renewed great country. The authors do not want to be misunderstood: they are not calling for reanimation of the teachings of Marx and Lenin neither in Russian, nor in anybody else's society. At that, one clearly sees where the ideological vacuum leads. Nowadays the Russian society and authorities face a task to outline a new national idea, containing a constructive meaning and able to bring people together. The basic concepts of the arising ideology will be civic consciousness, stateness, patriotism, belonging to a great national culture and heroic past of the nation. This is what both ordinary Russians and authority figures alike think and speak of more and more. If such ideological system is to be proposed and accepted by the majority of the society at the level of consciousness and practice, then organizing a rebelión de las masas in the Russian society will become a difficult task, while a person will be delivered from a painful choice between social organization and disorganization (Ortega y Gasset, 2001).

Faith was always an important spiritual component of personal and societal life. For many centuries, Orthodox Christianity gave Russians and all the Orthodox Christendom a sense of purpose in

life and created an internal energy necessary for social creativity. The atheistic authority, denying God and organizing anti-religious persecutions, sowed disturbance in the souls of people and then started to cultivate a new spirituality, which later proved to be unsustainable (Melgunov, 1990). In a similar way, today's neoliberal surge in the West has washed away all the spirituality, ethics and traditions of human communality from the heads of people. Instead of them, the individual is presented with egocentrism, consumerism, hedonism and ideologemes of subjective right and personal freedom reduced to an absurdity. It is a perilous way, for it leads to rewildering and degeneration. It is painful to recognize that such paradigms and the modus vivendi developing from them have already won foothold in a significant part of the Russian society. Is not it a consequence of Russian previous revolutionary radicalism, theomachy and later experiments in social engineering? Is it true that any kind of social changes shall necessary be followed with a downfall of traditional foundations of a society, including its spiritual foundation? Probably it is just another Universalist enigma of the contemporary history, which is yet to be deciphered not only by the Russian nation, but by the whole world as well.

The global society shall think about a more upscale problem of a humanist, meaning different means to implement social changes, on the basis of global panhuman principles of coexistence (*homo - mensura*). Are social revolutions intrinsically humane? Are they the only way for a subject of change to correct the unsatisfactory reality? The Russian experience of the 20th century is an evidence that it is not so. The Russian Civil War, colossal by its scale of destruction and human losses, which was triggered by February and October Revolutions, was anti-humane. Those revolutions themselves were anti-humane in their content. Revolutionary calamities of the present day may become even more inhumane than any previous events. There are reasons for this. First of all, most of modern revolutions in the post-bipolar world are based not on class, but on ethnic and confessional conflicts, such conflicts being the most cruel and violent form of opposition. Second, the range of means of revolutionary struggle extended so much that it can destroy not only the immediate enemy, but also all the humanity, if the situation is left uncontrolled. Third, the revolutions of the new age have a different format, they overcome easily local barriers and embrace entire geographical regions, thus extending the area of social destruction and multiplying the degree of application of the collective violence (Starikov, 2012). Realizing such risks and dangers to the global stability, the human population shall aspire to seek and discover alternative methods to change the social existence, which would be more humane than a revolution. Such methods started being used already in the early 20th century. For instance, in the politics, a clear expression of an evolutionary side of the process of social development can be found in the tradition of social democracy, while in economy, there is a convergent model, and in ideology, there are Solidarist and Reformist paradigms. States that used those tools for gradual and organic societal design gained advantages in the end, in contrast to those which preferred to progress by leaps and disruptions. Nowadays, the Russian society and state, as well as other young democracies, face a task to keep to the evolutionary path of development, maximally using the self-organization and integration mechanisms to achieve socially positive results. The lessons from the past shall become a warning against leaving the chosen path and a fence against a temptation of fast solutions.

The revolutionary topic is, undoubtedly, vast. It is not depleted by the denoted dimensions: social links - state authority - individual personality - global development of a society. Moreover, it does not end

with affirmations. One thing is evident: it is too early to cast a long shadow on the Russian revolutionary past and what it means to Russian people as well as to other nations because not all questions have been answered yet, not all the experience has been extracted and not all lessons have been learned. For a variety of reasons, a lot of material still escapes objective, honest and deep analysis. Until such analysis takes place, the main demand of the modern time for attainment and preservation of societal cohesion, for infeasibility of social rifts and struggle, is left unsatisfied; this demand is at the root of security and prosperity of the global community.

## **7. Conclusion**

What are the lessons and implications which have already been made or require reevaluation after 100 years?

First of all, the October Revolution was committed not by a trickle of conspirators, but by the desperate Russian people. The Social (Socialist) revolution became possible due to a formation of a revolutionary situation in the country. All its main attributes and conditions were present: the political elite could not rule as before; the lower classes did not want to live as before; the country saw impoverishment of people, pauperization and unusual acuteness of hardships, largely magnified by the imperialistic war, into which the tsarist government jumped. The Bolshevik party operated in Russia with its acknowledged leader and could raise the people for the revolution to overthrow much hated authority of capitalist and estate owners.

Second, the armed seizure of power in Petrograd in 1917 was preceded by a long organizational work with the popular masses. This work culminated in creation of the armed revolutionary units: Red Guards, which served as a principal form of organization of the proletarian military during the preparation and implementation of the October Revolution, as well as during the initial period of the Civil War. Its creation was spearheaded by Bolsheviks of Petrograd, Moscow, Kiev, Revel, Kharkov, Odessa, Samara, Nizhny Novgorod and other Russian cities. V.I. Lenin held that creating and arming the Red Guards as one of the most important tasks of the party. On March 26, the resolution of the Party's Central Committee on total arming of the population and immediate creation of Workers' Red Guard was published in Pravda, and on March 27, it was confirmed in a resolution adopted in the first legal All-Russia congress of party operatives in Petrograd. The Military organization of the Party's Central Committee and local party bodies were entrusted with the practical work to organize the Red Guard units. During the first months of Soviet Authority, the strength of the Red Guard exceeded 463,100 armed fighters (Red Guards Protect the October, 2017). Translated into a military parlance, it is over 20 regular divisions. Thus, the organizers of the Revolution had an exact plan of the armed uprising and real powers for its successful implementation.

Third, the Bolshevik Party, led by Lenin, conducted an enormous political operation with the masses, revolutionizing them and preparing them for decisive fights for power. Political slogans of almost all the meetings, manifestations, demonstrations, strikes and other forms of mass struggle included "Away with the tsar!", "Away with the tsarist government!", "Let us turn the imperialistic war into a civil war!". In addition, Bolsheviks insisted that "this is not a way to live", showing it in vivid examples. The people believed the Bolsheviks and their appeals, not least because of being desperate after previous

policies. The people had nothing to loose, besides their chains. The Bolsheviks used a spark of discontent with the tsar, and later with the Provisional Authority, to start a revolutionary fire that devoured tsarism in February 1917, and capitalism – several months later.

The implication is evident: the people shall not be brought to despair, to revolution. Instead, it is necessary to timely conduct required reforms, take care of the workers and all the citizens in deed and not in name, not limiting this care to businesspeople and oligarchs, as it is common today. It is pity that this implication was not inferred by the current government, under whose rule Russia has over 5 million of unemployed and several dozens of millions of impoverished people. All this happens in a country that declared itself as a social state. Article 7 of the 1993 Constitution of the Russian Federation obliges the Russian state to conduct policy aimed at creation of conditions for a dignified life (Constitution of the Russian Federation, 2009). If the Constitution is fulfilled in deed and not in name, then the Revolution of 1917 cannot be repeated.

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