

# The Russian Revolution and the Instrumentalization of Death

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## Abstract

© Association for Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies 2017. The article analyzes the instrumentalization of death during the first two decades after the 1917 Russian Revolution. The Bolsheviks made use of two trends in the culture of death that took shape during the First World War. One, a cult of the dead communist leaders and heroes, and two, the minimalist, non-religious, pragmatic treatment of the dead recommended for ordinary citizens, who were supposed to help build new Soviet hierarchies. As a result, by the end of the 1930s, a peculiar hybrid mass culture of death took shape that combined the surviving religious tradition with elements of the Soviet cult.

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