

## **4.**

### **The Metamorphosis of the State**

#### **4.1.**

##### **Introduction**

The concept of the State is considered central in international relations theory and practice. Following Weber's traditional definition, mainstream scholars in the field take for granted that the State represents the monopoly of the legitimate use of force in a certain territory. This rendering conceives of States as ontological beings detached from each other, which assures that, inside, they can autonomously determine the future of their constituents, and, outside, they can act independently. The way this definition was appropriated by IR scholars has two implications: on the one hand, this rendering helps to reinforce the conjunction of the State and the nation, territory and sovereignty; on the other, it gives birth to an imaginary of units interacting in an anarchic international realm. The predominance of rationalist thinking during the 1970's and 1980's helped to consolidate this image, taking the State for granted and conferring to both the State and the international system an ahistorical character, as a corollary of the rationality attributed to the state-as-actor figuration. The reason for this seems clear: if all the States act instrumentally, they will search the same goals (maximization of power) despite of the historical context they are immersed.

However, when one digs deep into the texts about the concept of the State during the inception of the discipline of International Relations, one finds that it had no abstract definition, and was even applied interchangeably with the concepts of race and nation. Moreover, the concept of the State was associated/dissociated with/from the notions of federation, local government, territory, sovereignty in such a way that, when practitioners

explicitly advocated its use, the concept could be identified only in superficial, vacuous ways. In this sense, the juristic and pluralistic conceptions of the State, which are treated by the specialized literature as the main dichotomy framing the theoretical debate of the period, were not, and could not be, the only meanings attributed to the concept of the State in the beginning of the twentieth century. Later, these two conceptions created the conditions for the individualization of the State and the emergence of other meanings that resulted in the concept of the Totalitarian State. The implications of these findings open up the possibility of approaching the concept of the State from a discursive perspective and using this perspective to find out how the dispersion of statements about the State gave place to a relatively stable definition adopted in the 1950's. This moment of concept stabilization was one element that made *sovietologism* possible.

This chapter is divided into five sections. Section Two presents a brief summary of the repercussions of biological evolutionist theory in the social sciences as the backdrop within which the academic treatment of the concept of the State operated. Section Three presents the juristic versus pluralistic debate about the State and addresses the causes of the filtering of the conceptual mess characteristic of the period, a process that I term the individualization of the State. In section Four the emergence of a new State is analyzed. I argue that this new State results from the interplay of the different concepts discussed in the previous section, as well as the consolidation of fascism as a political ideology. Section Five concludes the chapter by summarizing the main ideas presented and paving the way for the next.

#### **4.2. Evolutionism and the (many) concepts of the State**

By the end of the nineteenth century, when journals started publishing papers on the issue, there was no such a thing as a clear concept of the State. Keasbey (1893) offers the best illustration of how the concept was treated. In a paper entitled the "Economic State," published in the *Political Science Quarterly* in 1893, he appeals to political theory, biology,

anthropology and philology to argue that the three traditional factors of production - land, labor and capital - were not enough to understand the functioning of the economy. Because “human life is (...) a struggle for existence” and “individual labor and capital are not powerful enough to conquer outer nature to the extent required for the economic evolution of the human species” (Keasbey, 1893, p. 603 e 605) (due to the declining rate of land productivity), a fourth factor should be considered: the economic State. This factor, he believed, is born out of the dual character of human nature. In one dimension, human nature is endowed with egoistic instincts of survival; in another, with altruistic instincts of cooperation. This duality forces the individual “to devise some means whereby he may unite with his fellows in the joint fulfillment of their wants and in harmony of life,” in a kind of association that is not only political, but also implies “a division of their labor and capital and a regular system for the exchange and distribution of their products.” This “organization of individuals for industrial purposes” is controlled by “one supreme central authority,” which allows Keasbey to assure his readers that the “idea of a union of individuals under one sovereign power is (...) nothing more nor less than the idea of the state expressed in the language of economics” (Keasbey, 1893, p. 606).

Keasbey's contribution is important because it explicitly shows how the evolutionist perspective operated by fusing the state, race and nation. The economic state corresponds to the apex of economic evolution; hence it is an achievement that is restricted to civilized societies. The author applies geographical and racial variables to explain this phenomenon. Geographically, he asserts that frigid and tropical climates are inadequate for economic development. In the frigid climates, man “must exert his utmost physical effort barely to subsist,” while in the tropical climates, “the ease of life and the enervating influence of the climate conspire to suppress in these people all ambition and all desire to improve their lot” (Keasbey, 1893, p. 608). Logically, then, the economic state will be found in the temperate zones, “where human beings have actually realized the ideas of their reason, and have thus raised themselves definitely above the plane of simple existence” (Keasbey, 1893, p. 609). But even in this region, one can find different levels

of economic development. Keasbey explained this variation by observing that “human beings are not equally endowed with economic genius” (Keasbey, 1893, p. 609). Amongst the black, the yellow and the white races, he claimed, the last is the “dominant race of man” and has proved to be superior. The Negro race is a “primitive race (...) essentially inferior” because even after having been transported to the temperate zones and regaining their freedom, Negroes “have rarely shown (...) any special economic genius or any great ambition to advance” (Keasbey, 1893, pp. 609-610). The Yellow race is more developed, but “their industrial organization is crude in the extreme, and there appears among them none of that restless ambition to perfect their existence, so characteristic of our modern economies” (Keasbey, 1893, p. 610). It seems obvious to the author, then, that the combination between the white race and the temperate zones is pre-requisite for the evolution of the economic state. But these aspects alone could not explain its emergence. The economic state is the result of the conjunction of these two factors with the idea of nation. As Keasbey stated, “peculiar geographic conditions, working thus upon these half-leavened lumps of tribal affinities, produced finally a further coalescence within each of the three great families of the white race, and formed a new aggregate, the nation, which may be looked upon as the simplest ethnic unity.” According to his analysis, the conjunction between geographic units in the temperate zone and the energy of the Caucasian nations “has actually brought forth the highest types of our economic civilization (Keasbey, 1893, p. 612).

This slippage between racial, geographic, and political concepts is understandable if one considers that what conferred meaning to the concepts of the state, race and nation was not the referents that they were supposed to portray, but the framework through which they were distributed in the discursive economy of the period. This is why there was little concern for their definitions, but great concern for the conditions in which they operated. This emphasis is clear in Farnam's (1888) attempt to address the proper role of the State in fights against pauperism. He accepted as a truism “that the struggle for existence tends to bring about the survival of the fittest in the strictly scientific sense of that phrase (i.e. of those who are most fitted to

their environment).” In accordance with this truth, he then reformulated what is at stake in fights against pauperism: “Is the environment of modern society fitted to bring about the survival of those who are most fit, from the moral and economic point of view; i.e. those who are most likely to become self-supporting, useful citizens?” (Farnam, 1888, p. 288). The author suggested that the State should not limit its actions to the relief of the poor, but should actively promote the survival of the fittest through measures that force people of “no earthly use,” those who do not possess “economic qualities,” the “unfit”, “the lower types of society,” etc., to face nature’s desire. He based his eugenicist argument on the fear that, absent intervention, the “lower types” would outnumber the “higher types” in modern society, because they are driven to reproduce even when they are not capable of providing for their offspring, due to their lack of rationality. Although he was specifically concerned about the role of the State in fights against pauperism, his conception of the State was imprecise. He defined the State merely as “the individual agglomerations of men” (Farnam, 1888, p. 306). Thanks to this vagueness, he could treat industrial society, modern society, government, civilization and national government all as synonyms for the State.

The need to distinguish between the states that formed the United States of America and the concept of the State, as a way to refer to the Union, further compounded the problem of imprecision. Many American scholars used the concept of nation to refer to the country, and limited the reference of the concept of the state to the different states of the Union. This difference emerged in many debates during the incipience of the discipline of American political science. Smith (1888, p. 136) debates over the codification of state statutes at the end of the nineteenth century should take as a starting point the assumption that “our state statutes are local law, while the common law, as its name implies, is a national system.” Patten (1890, pp. 26-27) similarly opposed both concepts, asserting that the founding fathers “looked upon the state as a sovereign, and kept state issues independent of those of the nation,” because “they limited the power of the nation as much as possible, with the hope that the states would retain their vitality and be the real centre of power and influence.” He bemoaned the States loss of importance relative to

the nation, testified by their constituencies' allegiance to major national parties, and not to local leaders. Robinson (1893) applied the same distinction in his description of the Federal State as a middle ground between the League of States (States loosely related to each other) and a Simple State (where centralization imposes order over its the different parts). According to Robinson, the Federal State “did and could originate only as a compromise between the desire to unite and the desire not to unite; yet it both develops nationality and prevents centralization” (Robinson, 1893, pp. 118-119). It seems, then, that the concept of nation was associated with the desire to unite (the Union), while the state was associated with the “desire not to unite.”

But what is really intriguing is the different role played by the concept of the nation in Patten's (1890) understanding of local government versus Robinson's (1893) definition of the Federal State. Patten (1890) believed that, to be genuine, local government must be influenced by “(...) a common climate and soil, coupled with a common ancestry, to develop in each community those local usages and sentiments which give vitality to its government” (Patten, 1890, p. 32). He then blamed the contours of the American western expansion for the decay of local government — frontiers were artificially demarcated and immigrants were used to populate the territory. These features of American western expansion and the large size of the new territories made these states “(...) merely a kind of national government” (Patten, 1890, p. 33). His argument explicitly assumed that features that might describe the concept of the nation well for some (common ancestry, local usages and sentiments, etc.), were definitive features of local government which was, in turn, opposed to his notion of the nation (understood as Union). On the other hand, Robinson (1893, p. 141) argued that the Federal State is an entity apart from the government (understood as the Union) and the states, although it is a product of their agreement. It is exactly this agreement that gives birth to the Federal State, not the “consciousness of common interests, feelings and aspirations,” which this author used to define the concept of the nation (Robinson, 1893, p. 122). What was local government to Patten (1890) here becomes the nation. In a

proto-juristic manner that reinforces the confusion between state (the simple one) and nation, he argues circularly to contend that states were the main actors in the creation of the Federal State, not nations. “In a legal sense, whatever is done through a State is done by that State; hence, the State created by the nation acting through the States was, nevertheless, from a legal point of view, created by those States” (Robinson, 1893, p. 123).

Contemporaries were aware of the confusion between the usages of these concepts and strove to fix the problem. Platt (1895, p. 300) assured his readers that the element that distinguishes the State from other organizations is its purpose, i.e., to protect family, property and contract in a society where “civil cohesion (...) is supplemented by the nobler ties of patriotism; reason and active consent.” If this purpose were neglected in definition of the state concept, there would not be “anything radically distinctive in the peculiar product of the political genius of the historical nations, to include Asiatic autocracies and the barbarous monarchies of Africa under the category of the state, and to rank slaves as citizens” (Platt, 1895, p. 299). Contrary to his efforts, however, the refusal to apply the concept of the state to the organization of primitive peoples and the desire to preserve a distinct meaning for it was based on a certain level of conceptual conjunction. He associated the State with patriotism and historical nations. However, while patriotism is indisputably a virtue attached to the nation, the idea of “historical” is, in fact, based on the evolutionary scale used to differentiate races. This conceptual overlapping is better understood when one reads remarks from another author writing some years later. According to Lansing (1907, p. 109), “it should also be noted that the words “state” and “nation” are (were) frequently used interchangeably.” He then proceeded to explain that he preferred the word state because “the word nation carries with it an idea of racial and, generally, linguistic characteristics which the word state does not.” Nonetheless, he paradoxically concluded, closing the full circle of exchangeable meanings, that “today most states, particularly the large and powerful ones, are correctly called nations; and, while the difference between the words is recognized, they will be often used (...) as synonyms in accordance with common usage” (Lansing, 1907, pp. 109-110).

More examples can be found in the editor's introduction to the first issue of the Journal of Racial Development, which later became Foreign Affairs. In the opening lines, Blakeslee (1910, p. 1) writes that the Journal is concerned with the "problems which relate to the progress of races and states generally considered backward in their standards of civilization." The lack of differentiation between these concepts is made even more clear in the passage explaining the scope of the publication, where the terms nation and civilization are also added to compound the problem: "The races and states which will be most frequently discussed, will be those of India, the Near East, Africa and the Far East - excepting Japan, whose civilization is on a substantial equality with that of the nations of the West" (Blakeslee, 1910, p. 1). In other passages, China is described as "the most advanced of the so-called backward states" and eugenics is treated as an approach that shows "the immense importance of sound stock in the survival of races and nations" (Blakeslee, 1910, p. 3-4). All these subjects were supposed to be approached "to discover, not how weaker races may best be exploited, but how they may best be helped by the stronger" (Blakeslee, 1910, p. 1). It seems pretty safe to assume that in this sentence, the word races can be substituted by either states or nations. In another paper, the president of the University that sponsored the new publication justified the importance of the journal based on the need to better understand those who could be in charge of world affairs in the future. He observed that "whether the nations that now rule the world will be able to indefinitely wield the accumulated resources of civilization is by no means established" and hypothesized that "some stocks now (then) obscure may a few centuries hence take up the torch that falls from our hands" and usher humanity to the "kingdom of the superman" (Hall, 1910, p. 11). Another author characterized the problem of the proper relation between races as "the cardinal phrase of the general problem of international fraternity and peace," and called for the creation of an international organization of interracial goodwill (Mead, 1911, p. 214).

It is clear that the mingling between philosophies of history and "scientific discoveries" of the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries was responsible for the fusion of the concepts of the State, race and nation.



Following Hegel, the State explicitly represented the higher political form of organization where all achievements of political modernity could take place. Following Darwin, and the eugenicist interpretation of his evolutionist theory applied to the social sciences, the white Europeans were considered to be the representatives of the most evolved stratum of the human species. Since the appearance of the State and the nation depended on the existence of civilized people, one can conclude that race was also a precondition for the emergence of these entities, and that they had to first appear among white Europeans. Due to this common origin, attempts to confer specificity to each one of these concepts were necessarily problematic. On the one hand, the evolutionist *epistème* authorized their singular use, for instance, in the belief that the white race had both state and nation, the yellow had nation but no state or an “imperfect” state, and the Negro race had neither state nor nation. But on the other hand, it determined their interchangeable character, for each concept depended on the others to make sense. Their singular usage was avowed and, at the same time, disavowed by the evolutionist phraseology.

#### 4.3.

#### **The Juristic-Pluralistic debate: the individualization of the State**

That is the backdrop for understanding the importance of the juristic conception of the State. This conception relates the legal omnipotence of the State with the concept of sovereignty, and conflates these two concepts with the notion of territory. In doing so, it establishes the divide between the inside and the outside, and enunciates the ahistorical quality of the state concept. “Looked at with the eyes of the law as defined by the constitutional jurist, international life is atomistic, non-civic, individualistic” and “nations are, as individuals, in that ‘state of nature’ in which Hobbes and Rousseau, and the other natural law writers placed primitive man” (Willoughby, 1918, p. 208). The State was treated as a person, and, just as a person is independent of other persons, it was treated as an entity ontologically independent of other States. The international field was, according to this interpretation, anarchical. But the significance of Willoughby’s often-quoted passage extends further. His citation of the “state of nature” allegory not only

pays tribute to great political theorists, but is also a choice that accords with the discursive resources available in the period. The concept of the juristic state is conflated with the nation — as the correlations between States, Nations and individuals make clear — and opposed to the idea of primitive peoples, i.e., inferior races. Again, the State, nation and race are the conditions of possible thought about... the state, nation and race!

The pluralist perspective was also immersed in this evolutionist *epistème*. Laski (1919, p. 568), who was the most prominent advocate of this approach, criticized the monistic state (juristic) depiction of “an hierarchical structure in which power is, for ultimate purposes, collected at a single centre,” and noted that “the advocates of pluralism are convinced that this is both administratively incomplete and ethically inadequate.” The pluralists believed that “human society has been becoming infinitely more complex, that organization has for a variety of reasons been going on among men with amazing rapidity, and that some of their most vital interests have centered in these organizations within the larger society” (Ellis, 1920, p. 399). They believed that the juristic findings “cannot be strictly accurate in a world of constant change and flux for which they do not sufficiently allow” (Ellis, 1920, p. 407). For these reasons, pluralists claimed the idea of unity portrayed by the juristic conception was mistaken, and advocated a fragmentary ontology based on a kind of shared sovereignty among different groups inside the State. “They argue that the tendency of social and industrial change today is in the direction of a progressive weakening and narrowing of state power” (Coker, 1921, p. 186). This is why the pluralists associated the idea of sovereign unity with the past. In a type of contextualist approach to knowledge, they contended that the juristic theory of the state “was born in an age of crisis and (...) each period of its revivification has synchronized with some momentous event which has signalized a change in the distribution of political power” (Laski, 1919, p. 563). More specifically, they considered that the “worship of state-unity is almost entirely the offspring of the Reformation and therein, most largely, an adaptation of the practice of the medieval church” (Laski, 1919, p. 566). Consequently, they could hold that lack of attention to the historicity of the state concept was the major flaw

of juristic theorizing, while the pluralist perspective, in contrast, “realizes that the state has a history and it is unwilling to assume that we have today given to it any permanence of form” (Laski, 1919, p. 568). In this sense, the pluralist State is a political organization which conforms with the modern capitalist economy, which is characterized by the fragmentation of the State into groups with competitive interests. These are the groups that shared State sovereignty.

Although immersed in the evolutionist *epistème*, the debate between the juristic and the pluralistic approaches represented the beginning of the individualization of the State concept. This individualization happened because the discursive battles between the two approaches constrained the space in which intelligible sentences about the state could be enunciated. The juristic approach ignited the process of individualization through an explicit attack against calls to historicize the concept. The juristic theory was not “(...) curious regarding the historical origin of political authority among men, nor of the historical circumstances surrounding the birth of any particular sovereignty” (Willoughby, 1918, p. 193). This lack of curiosity was not a flaw, but allowed it to treat the State “as an instrumentality for the creation and enforcement of law” (Willoughby, 1918, p. 192). Consequently, by taking “political institutions as it (found) them, and (viewing) them in a single aspect, namely, as legal institutions” the juristic conception sought “to ascertain the essential qualities exhibited by them” (Willoughby, 1918, p. 194). These essential qualities were formal, and hence did not take notions like race and nation into consideration. But the pluralist perspective also decisively limited the discursive space of the state concept. Insofar as it situated the pluralistic State at the apex of the evolutionist scale of human societies, it left no space for considerations about the nature of the State among inferior races or non-colonial nations. In this way, the pluralistic State’s presupposition of the evolutionists’ modernization theory excluded these other subjects from debates about the State. It created boundaries that limited discourse on the State concept to the experiences of modern capitalist societies. Ironically, by doing so, the pluralist perspective reinforced the absolute character of the State concept instead of emphasizing its historicity.

These processes of “essentialization” and “absolutization” created the conditions needed for the individualization of the concept of the state. However, though they were necessary for this phenomenon, they were not sufficient. The decisive movement for the separation between them took place after the First World War and was brought by the Minorities Treaties, which were supposed to be supervised by the League of Nations and to avoid practices of violent exclusion that the international community considered unacceptable. The Treaties marked a period where “for the first time the protection of minorities was regarded as an ongoing international responsibility” (Rae, 2002, p. 227). However, the emphasis on a new international morality does not imply that the old one, based on the state of nature analogy, was replaced. Actually, the period was essentially contradictory. According to Rae, “while there was movement towards more clearly articulated social norms protecting the rights of minorities (...) the concern with maintaining the stability of borders limited the effectiveness of the treaties and dragged the League into complicity over the sorts of practices it had hoped to prevent” (Rae, 2002, pp. 227-228).

It is exactly due to this contradictory nature that the state concept became fully individualized. The international norm of the Treaties framed the concepts of race and nation as labels that represented minorities inside the state. However, as the state continued to be considered the legitimate actor in international affairs, it was still in charge of guaranteeing respect for these minorities. This new regime of truth created the practical conditions needed to isolate the State from what was in its inside and in its outside, and to reinforce the formalistic role that the juristic conception advocated. Inside, the State was a legal entity, different from races and nations; outside, it was a sovereign unity, different from other States. However, while reinforcing the formalistic role of the state, this separation also helped to reinstate the pluralist primacy of groups inside the State, since the label “minorities” could easily be attached to groups other than nations and races, such as women, workers, migrants, etc. Thus, the individualized juristic-pluralistic State is best characterized as a schizophrenic entity that has one juristic side turned to the outside, and another pluralistic side turned to the inside.

In practical terms, the separation of these two sides, and the individualization of the state concept, materialized in the new Constitutions that followed the recommendations of the League of Nations. A good illustration is offered by Czechoslovakia. As one commentator wrote, its Constitution provided “guarantees to all Czechoslovak citizens, without regard to race, language and religion,” in a clear sign that minorities “must not think of themselves as minorities” because “Czechoslovakia must become their state”: “the term ‘Czechoslovaks’ must denote not only the Czechs and Slovaks, but all the inhabitants of the Republic” (Broz 1927, p. 158 and 160). Another author argued that the so-called “nationalistic turn” that swept the world in the 1920’s was misnamed, and, by doing so, clarified what would become the general understanding of the relation between these three concepts. According to Zimmern (1923, p. 116), “the indictment should be drawn not against nations but against states; not against statesmen acting as the spokesmen of nationalities (...) but against statesmen acting as the instruments of sovereign states, great or small, uni-national or multi-national.” Consequently, he concluded, “the League of Nations (was), of course, a misnomer. It (was) a League of States, and it (would) be subject to perpetual misunderstanding if it (was) thought of as anything else” (Zimmern, 1923, pp. 116-117). According to his definition, a nation is “a body of people bound together by the particular form of group consciousness described as “nationality” or “the sense of nationality.” He consequently assures his readers that “a nation is not a race,” because “none of the existing nations, not even those who, like the Jews, have laid most stress on purity of stock, correspond to the racial divisions and subdivisions of the anthropologists” (Zimmern, 1923, p. 118 e 119).

In sum, contrary to the tendencies that associate the nationalistic claims of the inter-war period with the conflation of the concepts of the State and nation, the principle of nationality was, in fact, responsible for their severance. In the context of the juristic-pluralistic debate, this split resulted in the schizophrenic nature of the concept of the State. But the most important consequence was that it also contributed to the abandonment of the evolutionist *epistème* that constrained the treatment of the concept in the

late nineteenth century. These two aspects created the possibility for the emergence of a new treatment of the concept of the State, the totalitarian State, which will be addressed in the next section.

#### 4.4.

#### **The New Myth of the State: the Totalitarian State**

The State's schizophrenia had a short life. The juristic or external face of the State still accorded with the new international morality. The State continued to be the legitimate actor in the international affairs, and the ethical excuse for its primacy was its right to survival. Even those who argued that the State should be held responsible for its actions accepted that "in the absence of a superior constituted authority, it arrives at its own decisions, asserts its own power, and not infrequently accomplishes results which are not contemplated or provided for within the present scope of international law" (Williams, 1923, p. 26). The problem was with the pluralistic or internal face of the State. Its conception of groups sharing the State's sovereignty was a threat from within, and contradicted the principle of survival that operated to keep the juristic one valid. Political pluralism was described as the State's pathological symptom. "The normal condition of the constitutional state is one in which obedience to the law is a matter of constitutional morality," and "where law can neither be agreed upon nor enforced (...) the illness of the body politic ceases to be slightly chronic, and takes on an acute phase" (Elliott, 1925, p. 493). The sense of threat was so intense that Elliot believed that the state's "demise is (was) not so probable as its recovery after a crisis, and a period of such heroic dosing as Mussolini has prescribed to his Italy, though revolution or a period of anarchy are possibilities, and even probabilities where the economic maladjustment is profound" (Elliott, 1925, p. 493).

As the above reference to Mussolini's "heroic dosing" suggests, the threat of fragmentation posed by the pluralistic side of the State was controlled by the emergence of the Corporate State, which first appeared in Italy. The adjective corporate derives from the State's corporations, and not from private business. As Haider (1931, p. 230) explains, "within the

professional group the syndicates of employers and of manual and intellectual workers are interconnected by so-called corporations (...)” in charge of “promoting conciliation whenever a dispute arises between a syndicate of employers and a syndicate of workers.” These agreements were forced on workers and employers by the State, “believed to be the expression of the nation and, hence, being superior to individuals, groups and classes, entitled to discipline them” (Haider, 1931, p. 228). As noted above, the pluralists’ adoption of the modernization narrative naturalized the division of the capitalist State into different groups, and their moral argument was based on a “new doctrine of the rights of groups,” which assumed “the real personality, the spontaneous origin, and (with some of its exponents) the ‘inherent rights’ of permanent associations” (Elliott, 1925, p. 482). In the corporate State, the existence of these groups was accepted, though their rights were not. “Since the state (...) claims to ensure justice between social classes, self-defense becomes unlawful and must be eliminated”; therefore “Fascism claims to achieve (...) a representation of the country that comes nearer to the modern structure of society: it expects to replace political by economic alignments”(Haider, 1931, p. 230). Accordingly, the term corporate state carries with it “the sense of the kind of unity that exists in the human body, (of) members acting all together, (that) fairly conveys the significance of this new Italian State” (Goad, 1933, p. 776).

The international environment also contributed to the emergence of the Corporate State. McFadyean (1932, p. 3 e 4) stated, in reference to the interwar period, that “the system under which we have lived seems to be breaking down; if private initiative has led us into a morass, perhaps public effort can dig us out,” and acknowledged that his “view is (was) undoubtedly fostered by consideration of what is (was) happening in Russia, which presents us with the fine flower of management and planning.” But against those that saw the corporate State as a middle ground between liberalism and socialism, Goad (1933, p. 775) contended that “it has approached the whole political problem from a different aspect altogether.” It is a superior alternative because “in the Corporate State there is a very stable balance maintained between the two sides which one may call Right and Left” — both

socialism and liberalism are somehow present in its structure. Lorwin (1934, p. 16), who rooted the Corporate State in the middle classes, gave another example of how the international environment decisively defined the contours of the Corporate State: “this is a development of the last decade or so, and is largely the result of the failure of the two other major social groups - the capitalists and the workers - to give Western society (...) leadership and direction.”

According to Lorwin (1934, p. 17), the Corporate State was a “(...) synthesis of the three main developments of modern times — nationality, functional economics, and social welfare.” Another author based it on three assumptions: “the acceptance of the capitalist class as socially productive; the outlawry of social warfare in favor of class collaboration; and the inclusion of the producers' organizations in the national state” (Haider, 1931, p. 228). But the overarching characteristic of the Corporate State was its resource to the “new State myth.” Curiously, in a movement that contradicted tendencies displayed in the previous years, the new State myth reconnected the concepts of the State, nation and race. “Italian Fascism sees the state as identical with the nation, evolved historically, regardless of any anthropological or racial antecedents” while “the German theorists are trying to rebuild the theory of the state upon a doctrine of racial purity, which is anthropologically absurd and historically unsound.” Although different, “the essential element in both these state theories is the same — emphasis on national solidarity and national power” (Lorwin, 1934, pp. 17-18).

To be sure, the nationality principle that was used to demarcate State's borders had been continually present since the end of the First World War. In 1923, one scholar even wrote that “there (was) no doctrine relating to their mass organization more deeply entrenched in the conscience of mankind than the principle of the ethical right to existence of the political state organized on the basis of nationality” (Williams, 1923, p. 24). But as one aspect of the new international morality, the nationality principle was merely a normative one. In practical terms, in spite of reinforcing the conjunction between the State and nation, it worked to dissociate these two concepts, as well as that of race, because both concepts represented minorities in multi-



cultural States. As a response to the fragmentary nature of the pluralist side of the State, the Corporate State again forced their conflation. However, the processes of “essentialization” and “absolutization” had removed the State concept from the evolutionist *epistème* that marked the beginning of the twentieth century. Hence, the conjunction of the State, nation and race could not proceed as in the earlier period. The State that was born out of the new confluence of these three concepts became known as the Totalitarian State.

There are two main aspects that distinguish the Corporate from the Totalitarian State: 1) total lack of respect for individual rights when the criteria of judgment is based on universal standards and 2) identification of the State with some metaphysical entity. The first characteristic is easily found in both the German and the Italian experiences. Loewenstein (1935, p. 27) quoted a National Socialist Party document to illustrate this point. It read that “the Nazi state (...) has the right to embrace all forces of the country, to embrace the human beings, body, soul, and spirit, and all their activities, whatever they may be.” To Loewenstein, this indicated that “the legal position of the individual was especially disregarded, particularly in all cases where the state and the individual came into competition”; or, to quote the words of another Nazi official, in totalitarian Germany, “the state is everything. The ego is death” (Loewenstein, 1935, p. 27). Apologetically, Pei (1935, p. 12) quoted a speech that Mussolini gave in 1929, explaining that the fascists were the first to assert

“(...) in the face of liberal individualism, that the individual does not exist, except in so far as he is within the state and subordinated to the needs of the state; and as a civilization assumes more and more complex forms, the freedom of the individual becomes more and more restricted.”

The second characteristic, the metaphysical character of the Totalitarian State, is noticeable in the belief that there is a worldview that belongs to the State, and that every deviation from it is subject to punishment. In Germany, for instance, it was taught that there was “no such thing as an absolute science or mathematics or geography. They must be, in the German universities, a National Socialist science, National Socialist

mathematics, National Socialist geography, and so on” (Loewenstein, 1935, p. 29). This kind of posture was also adopted in Italy, and was a prerequisite for individuals experiencing “the liberty of feeling themselves members, part and parcel, of a powerful, organic state, which is ruled for the welfare of everybody and not in the interests of a chosen few” (Pei, 1935, p. 13).

The reformulated concept of nationalism put these two characteristics together. By the time the Totalitarian State emerged, according to Rappard (1937, p. 218), nationalism was conceived as the doctrine that placed the national State as the supreme source of political values: “It places the national state above the international community (...). It places the national state above local subdivisions (...). And it places the national state above the individual.” It was under the aegis of the National Totalitarian State that the concepts of State, nation and race were again gathered together. Here is the underlying irony of the Totalitarian State: while it successfully countered the threat posed by the pluralistic conception to the State’s existence from within, it destabilized the juristic presupposition that States would interact as independent entities outside. Its nationalistic character disrupted the State-Sovereignty-Territory complex that maintained the formalistic nature of the juristic conception. The historicity of the State concept that the juristic conception denied was brought to the outside, in nationalistic claims of territorial reorganization advanced by Germany and Italy. But this externalization of historicity also reinforced the idea that the State would behave according to the cultural patterns of its people, for there was no place for heterogeneity inside the Totalitarian State. When coupled with the transformation of the concept of culture during the same period, the reformulated concept of nationalism has important consequences for the study of the Soviet Union after the war.

#### **4.5. Final Remarks**

This analysis of the first half of the twentieth century clearly shows that the concept of the State is a discourse that exerts effects on reality instead of just representing it. As a discourse, it does not owe its origins to a

gradual unveiling of the truth that lies behind the blurred gaze of science. Its definition depends on the interplay of knowledge and power.

One might ask whether this conclusion is valid only for conceptualist analysis, since it disregards the contexts in which the concept is immersed to prioritize its intrinsic properties, while a more contextualist approach would really represent an external reality. For example, one might oppose the juristic (conceptualist) and the pluralistic (contextualist) approaches to the concept of the State, and hold that the former exerts effects on reality while the latter represents an external reality. However, as I intended to demonstrate in this chapter, my ontology is neither contextualist nor conceptualist — it is discursive. Consequently, my archaeological practice integrates both of these epistemologies. For example, we have seen that the debate between the juristic and the pluralistic approaches created the conditions of emergence of new statements about the State, whether by splitting the concept from the notions of race and nation, or by channeling the space of rarity where statements about the State could be uttered, and consequently giving birth to new ideas, such as of corporate and totalitarian States. Understood in this way, there is nothing that is outside discourse, and the State is no exception.

The main objective of this chapter was to demonstrate how the transformations of the concept of State led to a concept that reinforced the idea of an ontological entity that could be easily identified as a unified subject in international politics. This treatment of the State is similar to my earlier treatment of the concept of culture during the same period insofar as the functions performed by the notion of patterns in the later found their equivalents in the idea of a totalitarian state in the former. In fact, the totalitarian state and the “patterned” culture, the predominant renderings associated to the concepts of the State and culture in the 1950’s, could be considered as the two sides of the same ontological coin. But there is a third element that contributed to keep these two sides together: the idea of a social personality attributed to collective actors. In the next chapter, I turn to the transformations of the personality concept that made the emergence of its social dimension possible. As I intend to explain in the third part of this

dissertation, taken together, these three elements created the conditions of possibility for the descriptions of the Soviet Union advanced by *sovietologism*.