7.
The Soviet Union as a western representation

7.1.
Introduction

The main argument of this dissertation is that the emergence of sovietologist discourse described in the previous chapter is related to discursive formations of culture, the State, and personality that developed before its appearance. It was through the statements that composed these discourses that the inferiority, contradictory nature, and expansionism of the USSR could be reasserted. While these appearances in sovietologist discourse asserted the ontological incompatibility of the West and the Soviet Union, the sources of this differentiation, the discursive formations of culture, the State, and personality, were totally western. Hence the title of this chapter: the Soviet Union as a western representation.

This argument has two broader implications. By the time these concepts migrated to sovietologist discourse, they had passed through significant transformations. Consequently, their meanings had more to do with their positions in the discursive formation to which they belonged than to some kind of transcendental power to denote an external reality. The archaeological analysis provided in the previous chapters has made their discursive quality clear; it follows, therefore, that the Soviet Union depicted by sovietologists was also a discursive formation. In fact, the USSR alluded to by specialists was the result of interplay among the notions of culture, the State, and personality borrowed from many areas of

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knowledge and the historical context from which it was born, i.e., the Cold War.

The task of this chapter is to make these relations explicit. To do so, I deal with the reasons why the Soviet Union's subjectivity was made to seem unchanging, despite the potential for change noted in the conclusion of the previous chapter. In the next section, I offer a transversal reading of the discursive formations of culture, the State, and personality, in an attempt to retrace their similarities as discourses affected by the same *epistèmes* in different periods. In section 7.3, I present the *epistème* of the Cold War and demonstrate how it contributed to the reassertion of culture, the State and personality in the markers of sovietologist discourse. Section 7.4 offers examples illustrating the mechanisms which kept the USSR immune to transformations. In this section, sovietologist interpretations of the role of the party, the educational system, Soviet science, and some aspects of Russia's history are presented in a way that confirms the impossibility of change in the Soviet Union's subjectivity. Afterward, a brief conclusion restates the argument of this chapter.

7.2.
Culture, the State, and personality revisited

If the reader allows me to come back to my archaeological practice on culture, the State, and personality and appreciate the tendencies found in these analyses, we can see that these three discursive formations have passed through similar transformations from the nineteenth to the middle of the twentieth century. First, in their scientific inception, all three were affected by an evolutionist *epistème*. Consequently, they were highly abstract in terms of content — scholars engaged in the study of these "objects" based their scientific findings on an a priori scale of evolution and accommodated the data to which they had access to this abstract scale. Hence, in terms of culture, societies could be differentiated by the stage of their development of control over nature, thus assuring the material existence of savages, barbarians, and modern collectivities. The

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lack of differentiation between the concepts of the State, race, and nation soon yielded the notion that evolved societies could organize their political lives in what could be legitimately called States, while primitive societies were incapable of such political organization. In terms of personality, the evolutionist *epistème* clearly operated in the very restrictive use of the term to members of civilized societies.

In the passage from an evolutionist mode of understanding to different renderings, one can also note similarities pervading all three discursive formations: the importance of collecting data and analyzing them through statistical methodologies, the emphasis given to the actual behavior of agents instead of normative expectations of how they should behave, and the pivotal place conferred to prediction as a way of judging the social utility of scholarship. In the discursive formation of culture, the drive to spatialize the concept amounted to an attempt to provide an empirical base that would attest to the singularity of different culture-areas, and the emergence of the concept of cultural traits helped to demarcate borders between different groups in a way that reaffirmed the importance of empiricist methodologies. Similarly, the attacks that pluralists perpetuated against the juristic approach's metaphysics of the State were also based on empirical grounds. According to the pluralists, the development and economic stratification of capitalist societies had reached a point in which political power was distributed among different social groups, and was no longer concentrated in the Sovereign. The many comparative studies about personalities, which were based on scales analyzed through statistical methodologies, are good indications of how empiricity also shaped the bounds of valid personality studies and, in a movement in which analytical categories became group realities, contributed to the emergence of the idea of social personality.

These similarities took place concurrently from the 1920's on, a period when the social sciences in the United States were becoming increasingly dominated by a conception of social engineering based on predictability and control, as Ross (2003) observes. She contends that social science norms were guided during the evolutionist period by the

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wishes of a liberal elite that sought how to best advance toward modernity in an environment characterized by economic transformation and social unrest. Consequently, the belief in rational human progress turned the majority of social scientists during this period into apologists of capitalism. However, World War I disrupted this belief, for it fostered awareness of contingency and a critical stance toward rationality. Accordingly, "(…) this sense of living in a new historical world further eroded the evolutionary systems that had framed nineteenth-century social science and moved all of the social sciences by the 1920s away from historical and toward synchronic forms of explanation" (Ross, 2003,p. 219). The "historical" world of evolutionist scales was replaced by a scientific "a-historical" functionalist perspective, which appropriated metaphors of adaptation from biology and counted on the help of more "scientific" disciplines such as statistics.

Along the way, social intervention acquired a new meaning. If by the nineteenth century, the practical concern of the social sciences was to guide the elite toward modernity, intervention in the twentieth century was based on more pragmatic motivations. "The growing need of government and bureaucratic organizations for procedural rationality, and the testing programs and statistical bureaus of World War I, provided the seedbed for engineering tools that promised prediction and control," Ross writes (2003, p. 220). The consequences of this shift are much more profound than one might imagine at the first sight. As Ross observes, "seeking predictable manipulation and common disciplinary procedures in research, as well as practical interventions, social scientists tried to remake the 'science' of their disciplines in the image of their interventionist techniques" (2003, p. 220). This is how the social sciences became an instrument of social control.

The scientism of this new form of social engineering was compounded with behaviorism, which was the search for repetitive behavioral manifestations that could be predicted and controlled. During the interwar period, however, a migration of European scholars to American universities challenged the privilege of this methodology. This

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was the case, for instance, in anthropology and in the field of psychology. Anthropology abandoned cultural classificatory schemes based on stages of development and started working instead with the concept of cultural diffusion, which would later make culture the core concept of anthropological studies. Psychology shifted its focus from behavior to motivations. What in behavioral terms would be considered metaphysical speculations, in psychoanalytic terms could be portrayed as objective, yet unconscious motivations (Ross, 2003). The archaeological analysis provided in the previous chapters tracked these shifts. In cultural studies, patterns of culture were not thought to be inferred from behavior, but were believed to be determined by the principles from which a specific culture was organized as a configuration. In studies of the State, we saw a reaction against the pluralists and the emergence of a myth of the new State, which was believed to have a metaphysical basis, and was later identified with the Totalitarian State. In personality studies, we saw the emergence of the idea of group personality, which was based on the notion that the same social environment was responsible for determining the common characteristics of different individuals; even the unconscious was believed to be framed by the experience of a group personality.

Commenting on the relations between these disciplines, Ross (2003, p. 228) contends that "(…) psychiatry and psychoanalysis were also drawn during these decades toward collaborative efforts with anthropology in the study of 'culture and personality,' an effort that drew on emigré theorists to show how culture expressed, and was expressed in, personality." As already noted, Manganaro (2002, p. 152) asserts in his analysis of Ruth Benedict's Patterns of Culture (1934) that, "(…) in fact what distinguishes Benedict's Patterns is its emphasis upon specifically rendered discrete cultures, (…) cultures as such are 'configurations' of personality traits." This influence was also felt in studies of the State. Charles E. Merriam, one of the founders of the Chicago School of Political Science (CSPS) and president of the American Political Science Association (APSA) at the time, demanded that, if they are to call their work genuinely scientific, the members of APSA should use psychology and statistics in

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their research (Almond, 2004). Another great exponent of CSPS, Harold Laswell, pioneered the introduction of psychoanalytic concepts in international politics during the 1920's and 1930's and is now considered the "father" of political psychology (Ward, 2002).

The essential characteristics of scientific study in political science that Merriam proposed in his APSA presidential address in 1920 illustrate very well the *epistème* that dominated the epoch. According to Heaney & Hansen (2006), the "new science of politics" proposed by Merriam was based on three precepts: 1) theoretical elaborations in political science should be based on the way the natural sciences, and principally biology, developed their theoretical frameworks; 2) methods of analysis should be based on the natural sciences and should consider observation, laboratory work, and the use of statistics as their starting point; 3) the practical motivations that sustain political science should also take inspiration from the natural sciences. Consequently, he believed, "Political Science ought to produce knowledge that is constructive to the human endeavor of government, just as natural science serves to bring nature (partially) under human control" (Heaney & Hansen, 2006, p. 590).

While this *epistème* of control and prediction was being consolidated, and anthropological, political, and sociological/social psychological theories were departing from behaviorism, fascism emerged as a new form of European political organization. The consequences of this coincidence could be noted in a new similarity that the archaeological practices of the previous chapters uncovered: both movements reinforced the primacy of the group, and pushed the individual further from the discursive formations of culture, the State, and personality.

Regarding the epistemological reasons for this shift, it seems that the need to mimic the procedures of the natural sciences to produce legitimate knowledge of the social world led to the use of statistics and, in turn, statistics created the possibility of conceiving of fictional social aggregates as collective subjects. Somehow, what was initially meant to be an analytical category became a real subject. This process of subjectification of the object could be noticed in all three discursive

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formations. Notions of the "generative power" of culture, the existence of a "group mind," "adequacy," and the concept of a "genuine culture" — all of which emerged during this period — exemplify the emergence of this collective subject into the field of culture, despite the existence of individuals. Similarly, the corporate, the authoritarian, and the totalitarian State found their place pressed both by the historical events of their day, and by reaction against the fragmentary nature of pluralist critiques of the "collective" juristic State. In this context, it is worth noting that pluralist attacks threatened even the foundational distinction between internal and international politics, and menaced the institutionalization of political science as such. In personality studies, these tendencies toward scientism and the privileging of groups over individuals were obviously present in generalizations inferred from questionnaires and the projection of personality traits onto collectivities, for example, as in the term national culture-pattern's underpinning of social determinists' renderings of personality.

As for the political reasons for this "throwing away" of the individual subject, it seems pretty safe to hold that collectivist subjectivities entered the discursive formations of culture, the State and personality during attempts in anthropology, political science and sociology/social psychology to understand the world with the emergence of fascism. It is clear from the archaeological analysis that fascism decisively impacted these discursive formations. Many scholars quoted sources from the Italian and the German government as a way to illustrate how insignificant the individual was vis-à-vis the power of the group and to exemplify their "collectivist" findings. The way studies of culture conjoined the State and culture, with some statements even referring to the existence of an authoritarian culture, illustrates the point. In studies of the State, the supposed superiority of the corporate State, which was presented as an alternative to the dichotomy between the pluralist and the juristic state, and its implications for the emergence of the authoritarian and totalitarian states, are supportive evidence. In studies of personality, the molding of a new national culture-pattern character was immediately

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related to the resurrection of eugenics and socio-metric forensic sciences, although the relations were not so direct as in the other two discursive formations.

7.3.
The Cold War *epistème*

To appreciate why these discursive formations were so important, there is another aspect that must be considered: the atmosphere of the Cold War. According to Solovey (2001a, p. 168), "Cold War politics helped to determine what science was, what it did, and what it meant. (...) The contours of research in a wide range of scientific fields (...) were influenced in various manners by defense funding and associated State objectives." According to Herman (1995, p. 124), "the boundaries between military and civilian targets, between wartime and peacetime conflicts, already beginning to blur during World War II (...) took on an eerie permanence during the Cold War." This occurred because "peace was 'simply a period of less violent war in which nonmilitary means are predominantly used to achieve certain political objectives'"; consequently, "the services provided by experts became a permanent military asset." In fact, continuity emerged between the programs developed in the social sciences during World War II and their preeminent role in the ensuing Cold War. Herman (1995, p. 128), for instance, informs his readers that World War II programs in the field of psychology were institutionalized during the 1950's with funding from the military, both in the Department of Defense (DOD) and universities. Solovey (2001b, p. 177) also notes that, during the war, "psychologists, anthropologists, and other scholars working in the field of culture and personality studies, all sought to predict national behavior as part of wartime operations."

Indeed, those programs were institutionalized through the cooperation of universities and think-tanks that received funding from the American government or private foundations committed to the "free world." According to Solovey (2001b, p. 175), "in an impressive range of

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cases, the military stimulated the growth of other social sciences as well." While "the RAND Corporation, the most famous of the military think-tanks, facilitated research (...) which drew from a number of social science disciplines, but especially economics," other "large private foundations - Carnegie, Rockefeller and Ford - together with national security agencies, pushed for and financed the development of the Harvard and Columbia Russian studies programmes, MIT's Center for International Studies and (...) the proliferation of area studies programmes throughout American higher education."

This cooperation took place in an environment in which "intellectuals who shared the world's horror over the Nazi Holocaust and Stalin's purges were drawn into an ideology that grouped Communism with right-wing totalitarianism as a threat to civilization and human rights" (Ferraro, 2005, p. 7). This climate soon affected the universities:

> "On March 24, 1953, the American Association of Universities, under leadership of Yale's A. Whitney Griswold, adopted and publicized their statement on The Rights and Responsibilities of Universities and Their Faculties, signed by administrators of 37 universities. This document affirmed a commitment to free enterprise as fundamental to education and scholarly productivity, and condemned members of the Communist Party to exclusion and expulsion from academic life. As part of the McCarthy era assault on academic freedom, many 1950s institutions and state governments adopted loyalty oaths that employees were required to sign as a condition of employment. These sworn oaths certified that employees were not and had never been members of the Communist Party (...)" (Ferraro, 2005, pp. 7-8).

The degree of "influence" that this intellectual environment had on the work of scholars and the validity of their findings has been debated. For instance, Holsti (1998) revisits the period and accepts that "the study of international politics during the Cold War years (...) reflected national priorities and troubling security problems, but except in its explicit policy guise, it was not subordinate to daily headlines" (Holsti, 1998, p. 17). Another author accepts that military support raised concerns about military domination of the scientific enterprise, but then mentions many

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features of postwar American science to placate the critics: “the military's extensive reliance on universities as sites of research and training; its regular use of university scholars as advisors; the existence of pluralistic sources of public and private support (...)” (Solovey, 2001b, p. 178). Ferraro (2005, p. 8) describes an “intellectual consensus” that helped to attenuate the self-criticism of those engaged in “Cold War Science.” He writes that acceptance of the “liberal model of development, the threat posed by Soviet Communism, and the perfectibility of American capitalism was widespread across the political spectrum.”

However, there are two good reasons to disagree with Holsti’s claim that international studies during the Cold Year were not subordinate to state military interests. First, as we have already noted, the State and the academia were complexly entwined during this period of the Cold War. Consequently, attempts to distinguish between scholars’ “explicit policy guise” and other motivations for scholarly endeavors are doomed to fail. At the very least, a principle of caution should be kept in mind given that academia and policy oriented goals were so obviously linked. For instance, commenting of the purposes of research contracts sponsored by the military, Herman (1995) quotes Don Price, then deputy chairman of the DOD Research and Development Board, to illustrate the role the DOD wanted the scholars to perform: “[The military] stands firmly on its cardinal principle: it does not make research contracts for the purpose of supporting science,” but only "in order to get results that will strengthen the national defense…." The official then proceeded to remark that “American scientists are still struggling to reconcile their eighteenth-century devotion to science as a system of objective and dispassionate search for knowledge (…) with the (…) necessity of using science as a means for strengthening the military power of the United States” (Herman, 1995, p. 132).

The second reason to disagree with Holsti’s eschewal of academia’s subordination to the military is the clear impact that the “policy world” had on the “academic world,” and the consequences this subordination had for the constitution of international subjects, such as the USSR.

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Renewed appeals to behaviorist methodologies assured continuity between the instrumentalization of the social sciences during World War II and the Cold War. According to Solovey (2001b, p. 177), “since social science had been associated with supposedly un-American programmes of social reform (and sounded suspiciously like socialism), leading scholars and their patrons often looked for other words to signify a stronger commitment to a hard-core type of science.” The author cites the Behavioral Sciences Program sponsored by the Ford Foundation during the 1950’s as one program intended to spread such a message. Scholars of the social sciences greeted this return to behaviorism with cynicism. Herman (1995, p. 133) quotes a speech given by Gordon Allport — one of the authors mentioned in chapter five — in which he confessed that he was not entirely comfortable with the term “behavioral science,” “since the science we seek is a science of feeling, of thought, of dreams and of silence, quite as much as of behavior.” But he admitted that “(...) philanthropic foundations seem to like the name behavioral science, and we shall raise no objection to it lest Cinderella miss her chance to ride in a golden coach provided by the Foundation. Up to now these sciences have been riding in a Ford model T."

Together with behaviorism, other methodologies were appropriated from the natural sciences, and emphasis on the use of statistics and the construction of categories of collective subjectivity became increasingly important. “Military social research efforts typically deployed 'hard' scientific methodologies as well. This meant a marked preference for quantitative analysis as opposed to historical, qualitative, and other forms of social research that seemed 'soft' by comparison” (Solovey, 2001b, p. 177). With this stimulus, “sociologists were eager to gain recognition as ‘real’ scientists that were as useful to the nation as physical scientists. Some of the men who established the parameters of mainstream sociology in the 1950’s were active participants in the creation of science for the Cold War” (Ferraro, 2005, p. 8).

The major consequence, then, was that the Cold War environment reinforced the stability of the discursive formations of culture, the State

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and personality by proliferating and normalizing military-oriented social research. In this context, it was to be expected that sovietologists would focus their attention on the mechanisms of continuity that could preserve the Soviet Union's subjectivity, because the Cold War *epistème* emphasized exactly that: political aggregates that could be treated as collective categories stable enough to be predictable and controllable. Hoslti neglects that fact. For this reason, I looked at culture, the State and personality as the markers that delimited the emergence of sovietologist discourse.

7.4.
The unchanging Soviet other

The most obvious mechanism of preserving the Soviet Union's subjectivity was the Communist Party. Usually, scholarship emphasized associations between its centralized structure, the role of the government, and the figure of a strong dictator. Sometimes, however, the party seemed to assume supernatural powers and appeared as an all-embracing entity capable of affecting all aspects of life and of delimiting the contours of Soviet subjectivity. Most importantly, the party and its leaders seemed to want power only for the sake of power and to be willing to do anything to secure their grip over Soviet society.

Kurganov (1951) believed that the party's drive for world domination motivated all Soviet policies. "The Party, in its struggle for expansion and world domination, needed a large army equipped according to the latest technical standards," he wrote (1951, p. 254). The author recognized that to "build tanks, guns, trucks, aircraft, warships," the workers would need to be trained to develop the Soviet industry according to modern benchmarks. He then concluded that the party, "(...) driven not by love of the people but by love of power, devoted special attention to the 'training of cadres,' that is, to the fight against illiteracy, in order to raise the general cultural level of the population" (Kurganov, 1951, p. 255). After noticing that the development of education could give rise to the birth of intellectual elites inside the USSR in charge of giving "expression to the soul of the nation and (being) the custodian of its collective

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memory," he observed that setting-up of industries in the national republics might neutralize such a movement. Therefore, he speculated that it "probably was the intention of the Party to create there a class of industrial workers in order to split the nationality along class lines and ultimately to break the national spine by means of the class principle" (Kurganov, 1951, p. 256). Wherever some national cultural trait was thought to develop, the author assured his readers that it "(...) is being molded under the strong and vigilant influence of the Party in power": "Every single national culture (...) is being enslaved by Communism and exploited by the Party with the sole purpose of bringing forth a new kind of man, a new Soviet nation" (Kurganov, 1951, p. 260). In fact, he claimed, the Party promoted the fusion of nationalities to cope with this problem. According to the author, this was the aim of the Five-Year Plan, which determined redistributions of available manpower following "operational directives (that) are issued for the transfer of populations (...)" in a way that "continuous merging of nationalities and a transformation of the nationality pattern within the USSR are taking place" (Kurganov, 1951, pp. 261-262). What strikes one's attention about Kurganov's interpretation is that all changes sponsored by the Party appear, in fact, as measures aimed at avoiding any change at all. As the author notes, changes happened everywhere, "but in the USSR these changes are brought about by force; they have their specific tempo, and their specific objective — to bring forth a new Soviet man, a new Soviet nation" (Kurganov, 1951, p. 267).

In dealing with the problem of nationalities, Reshetar (1953, p. 162) saw the creation of a new Soviet man as the result of Russification promoted by the Party, which was, in his own words, "(...) controlled by Russians and by thoroughly Russified non-Russians." The author asserted that the communist party always fought against "national deviation," and recalled that such phenomena were first termed "Sumskijizm," due to the name of a former commissar of education in Ukraine who protected Mykhola Khvylovy, a Ukrainian novelist who demanded that Ukraine's intellectuals look to Europe, and not the USSR, to find inspiration for their artistic works. Khvylovy insisted that "there could be no true world

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revolution unless each nation were free to develop its own culture independent of other cultures, including that of the Russians" (Reshetar, 1953, p. 164). After defending the writer's stance against the consolidation of "Soviet culture," Sumskij was removed from his post by Stalin. The Party took two measures against Sumskijizm: the denationalization of the civil service and of the party bureaucracy. In the civil service context, Reshetar noted, "the Stalinist regime has developed the practice of sending in outsiders to perform the control function," while in the context of the party apparatus, "often the First Secretary of the Central Committee is a non-Russian but the Second Secretary is an outsider and is the real power - as has been the case in most of the non-Slavic republics" (Reshetar, 1953, p. 170).

Timasheff (1952) offered a different rendering of the party's role in Soviet society. According to him, the party's control over the government came with the seizure of power during the period of the Russian revolution under propitious conditions. This specific event proved the fragility of any political elite's foundation of power, he claimed, and determined the party's ever-present suspicion against those who might represent a threat. Hence, all of the party's actions were directed at suppressing the emergence of rival groups. In structure, he noted, the communist party of the USSR was very similar to other political organizations, and instituted a pyramid-like hierarchy: "there is one man on the very top, a few directly under him, and, under their orders, many more" (Timasheff, 1952, p. 18). But in content, what distinguished the party from other organizations, he believed, was the nearly mystical figure of Stalin, the powerful man who was not only the first secretary, but also the Soviet Union's prime-minister and generalissimo:

> "(...) he could be called the Red Prophet: he knows the truth and foresees, with no error possible, the future; he is the one who guides the activity of men of science in all fields, because he masters these fields better than any expert; he is also the man who directs the esthetic life of the nation: he gives binding directions to the authors, poets, playwrights, composers, painters and architects. Like the Roman prince, he is deified: as was recently said in Pravda,

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> any one who sees him appearing at a session of the Supreme Soviet of the Union will never forget how he enters, how he glances at the deputies, how he smiles" (Timasheff, 1952, p. 18).

The seemingly mystical role of the party leader reinforced two other characteristics. The party was a civil organization, but was ordered according to military principles of hierarchy and discipline. Consequently, no dissent was allowed. The party was allegedly secular, but to be a member of the party, it was necessary to accept Marxist doctrine, which created a sense of belonging among all group members. Second, all economic and cultural life of the Soviet citizens was controlled, because the State owned economic and cultural monopolies. Consequently, the individual had no voice. He was told that the Soviet government represented the genuine will of the Soviet people, and governed through the people, for the people. Hence, the individual had no alternative but to abide by the directions of the government and party. "Against the power machine he is impotent; moreover, he is unable to prepare, or to discuss a new crystallization of political power. But the government is his only employer; it is better to be on good terms with the boss, and, besides, there are (sic) the political police" (Timasheff, 1952, p. 22).

The party's omnipresent role in Soviet life was confirmed by what Nove (1954) called the end of the diffusion of authority. In the beginning, when non-technicians managed the party's control over technicians, there was a certain diffusion of authority in Soviet society, because the party members depended on the knowledge of their subordinates to keep the State apparatus properly functioning. However, as the regime grew older, tendencies for the "distinction between the party man and the administrator or specialist (to) wither away" grew more intense. The result was similar to what happened in the army: "at first, generals were subject to the supervision of non-military party men, either in the guise of political commissars or of 'party generals.'" After a while, "leading professional soldiers, many of whom hold party office, are in charge. This may be a good thing from many points of view, but in a sense authority was more 'diffused' when there were political commissars" (Nove, 1954, p.

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48). As the same process happened over the years across all spheres of Soviet life, the party's control over Soviet subjectivity allegedly increased.

The party's domination over the Soviet society created an opportunity for the destruction of the individual and the constitution of a social personality of the Soviet Union. This can be noticed in the way the party controlled intimacy and the sexual life of the Soviet citizens. During the 1920's, following the communist attack against the traditional bourgeoisie family, women achieved a high level of sexual emancipation, and ideas of Free-love spread all over the Soviet Union. But this situation resulted in too much liberty for the individual, and this "sex-is-joy" attitude was replaced, in the 1930's, by the regime of Stalinist Virtue. "Abortions became illegal in 1936. Divorce laws were revised, so that by 1944 simple mortals found it extremely difficult to obtain divorces. Motherhood medals, carrying with them lucrative state subsidies for large families, were instituted" (Sandomirsky, 1951, p. 201). The main goal behind Stalinist Virtue was the "(...) subordination of the sex drive to the requirements of the Five Year Plan" (Sandomirsky, 1951, p. 203), but this policy ended up having broader implications than those devised by the Party. Beyond the de-eroticization of love and the subordination of the sexual desire to the demands of the Soviet regime, Stalinist Virtue destroyed the very distinction between the private and the public life:

> "Sex, as a private matter, is looked upon with great suspicion by the rulers in the Kremlin. They believe that the intimate world of the individual, with its loves, hates, and fears must be carefully investigated and controlled by the collectivity, that is to say by the Party. Such scrutiny is obviously far more embracing than a mere check on the political reliability of a citizen. Such scrutiny includes an investigation of how a man treats his girlfriend or his wife or his children. Preoccupation on the part of an individual with his own emotions is considered futile, obsolete, anti-social, and above all time-consuming. (...) If the private is absolutely subservient to the public interest, it follows that "biological factors" in human life must be denied" (Sandomirsky, 1951, p. 206).

The tendency to destroy individuality and to create a social personality could also be noted in education. Peters (1956) quoted Soviet

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education law and statements issued by authorities to contend that the main objectives of the USSR's educational system were always the same. In 1923, Soviet law prescribed that "all the work in the school and the whole organization of school life should promote proletarian class consciousness in the minds of pupils and create knowledge of the solidarity of Labor in its struggle with Capital" (Peters, 1956, p. 421). More than twenty years later, in a resolution issued by professors who took part in an All-Union congress of educators, there appeared the following oath: "We professors and instructors, obligate ourselves so to conduct our work that every day spent by a student in a higher educational institution will nurture in him Bolshevik ideology, broaden his political and cultural horizon, and enrich him with knowledge of his specialty" (Peters, 1956, p. 421). During the 1950's, the minister of education of the Russian Republic announced that "by educating the young in the spirit of Communism, our Soviet school has become the instrument of a cultural revolution, a weapon for the rebirth of society (...) with the task of the nurture of a new man, free from the slavish psychology of capitalist society" (Peters, 1956, p. 421).

These normative prescriptions were put in practice through different strategies. At the level of technical education, to weaken the possibilities of contestation during the process of "social personality creation," the system "(...) groups people and isolates them from other groups. Like the hull of a ship which is partitioned into separate compartments so that if a leak develops that section of the ship can be sealed off, in the same way a state may safeguard its own future." The goal was also achieved through the help of young communists called pioneers: they "keep (...) teachers in check who may (be) tire(ed) of the Party line. Pioneers may report them to the chairman of the local soviet or to a Party official" (Peters, 1956, p. 422). However, taking into account the role devised for education in the Soviet Union, it was believed likely that pioneers would not be necessary in following generations. Their extinction could be inferred from Soviet regulations stating the purposes of kindergarten: "It is a state institution for the Soviet civic education of children between the ages of three and seven, (that) promotes team work

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against the individualistic tendencies of young children and instills the love of their Soviet homeland and its leaders, especially Lenin and Stalin" (Peters, 1956, p. 423).

The same zeal that was dedicated to the education of children was also directed to the universities. According to Graham (1961), after the Russian Revolution, the study of Classics was eliminated for a short period from university curricula. Their return, with due emphasis on ancient history, was due to the importance attached to this subject in Marx's writings. "Since the Soviet system claims to be based on the work of Marx supplemented by that of Lenin, no segment of Marx's historical analysis can possibly be ignored." This was the main reason why "the claims of ancient history are always assured of a sympathetic hearing in high government circles" (Graham, 1961, p. 208). But the reformatory zeal in higher education was not limited only to curriculum changes. In the USSR, "it is not always easy to tell whether a man has been appointed to a responsible academic position because of his intellectual achievement or because of his manifested political reliability, nor to what extent the two qualities coincide" (Graham, 1961, p. 212). The blurring between politics and scholarship was evident in the case of Antaeus. In a speech made in the Plenum of the Communist Party in 1937, Stalin compared the Bolsheviks with Antaeus, a "minor mythological figure who was killed in an altercation with Heracles." Graham (1961, p. 212) remarks that "a luckless" scholar who had released his book on Greek mythology right before Stalin's speech was "indignantly assailed by a reviewer who scornfully inquired how anyone could write what purported to be an authoritative and scholarly work on Greek mythology without paying proper tribute to the brilliance of Stalin's remarks on Antaeus."

The blurring between the lines that divided science and politics were also taken to indicate the party's control over the entire Soviet society. In the USSR, "to consider science apolitical and supranational, or to speak approvingly of 'world science' or 'world culture,' was to subscribe to the 'bourgeois' ideology of 'cosmopolitism'" (Wrinch, 1951, p. 486). Harris (1959, p. 686) pointed to three reasons why politics and science

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intermingled. In the first place, "the top scientific administrators are chosen in large numbers from active members of the communist Party." Second, "most scientists are expected to conform to the (communist) faith, to avoid heresy or heterodoxy, or at least to be discreetly silent if not active in support." Finally, "scientists trained from youth up to accept the superiority of the system as matter of religious faith and patriotic pride tend emotionally to accept the value of the system as a whole (...)." The logic underpinning the argument was that an educational system controlled by the party would be responsible for the development of scientists who were devoted to proving the legitimacy of the party's directives to Soviet society as a whole.

According to Harris (1959, p. 685), the party's omnipresence was based on recognition of "man's deep-seated psychological, emotional, and spiritual needs"; "the communist Party (...) has appropriated many of the forms of the church in an attempt to capture emotional loyalties, reverence, sense of security, and abiding faith of the individual in a greater power outside himself." This was believed to be the strategy that the party used to co-opt all individuals, and the Soviet scientists were no exception. The party conferred to the Soviet scientific enterprise a religious character, while undermining the universality presupposed in all scientific endeavor. Communism and dialectical materialism were consequently considered "the State religion of the Soviet Union," and the members of the communist party were treated as "the priesthood of the new order."

From this perspective, Soviet scientists appeared to their western colleagues as fanatics working to perpetuate communism. Wetter (1960), for instance, believed that the Russian intelligentsia tended to be obsessed with socialist ideas; that they typically devoted their whole existence to their realization and assumed a dogmatic attitude toward them. This tendency was one of the causes cited to explain why socialism in Russia underwent a peculiar transformation. "A doctrine that in its country of origin might have been regarded as no more than a theory, a hypothesis, or a partial truth was immediately reforged in Russia into a kind of new revelation" (Wetter, 1960, p. 581). The same apparently happened with

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the appropriation of the positivist dimension of Marxism by the Russian intelligentsia. “They fell into a virtual idolatry of science, and interpreted ‘science’ as materialistic dogma, and scientism as a new faith: a dogma and a faith that expose the injustice of the present social order and that lead the people (the proletariat) toward their liberation (Wetter, 1960, p. 581).

This backdrop allows one to understand three scientific quarrels that the Soviet scientists had with their western colleagues: the problem of the unconscious, the problem of the genetic theory and the problem of relativity. According to Soviet psychologists, the meaning attached by Freud to the unconscious was metaphysical and risked portraying history as the result of unknown forces. Historical materialism disavows psychoanalysis, suggesting instead that all reality is derived from the material dimension of life, and that history making is a conscious process performed by men seeking emancipation. From its perspective, men should change society within the limits imposed by their material conditions. Indeed, the three defining features of Soviet psychology are materiality, consciousness and transformation. A brief presentation of some aspects of the Bykov’s School of psychology will illustrate these features well. Bykov was a follower of Pavlov during the 1950’s, a period when “'Pavlovianism' (appeared) as the only truly 'progressive' research-line in psychology” (London, 1951, p. 423). His experiments were classical Pavlovian attempts to show the conditionality of internal organs through analysis of external stimuli. But when experiments proving the possibility of conditioning external behavior through the stimulation of internal organs gained in complexity, the material base of the unconscious was revealed. As the internal stimuli where not perceptible by consciousness, phenomena led him to formulate the concept of unconscious. But, according to London (1951, p. 426), “he avoids, however, the use of this word, preferring instead to speak of the 'subconscious,' the 'subconscious process,' and the 'subconscious sphere' or 'realm’.” The reason was quite simple:

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> "For Bykov conditioned reflex methodology, applied to the interoceptors and internal organs, puts the 'subconscious' on a 'materialist base,' that is to say, refers it directly to processes below the 'threshold of consciousness.' Most interoceptive stimulation, therefore, since it is unconscious (that is to say, unknown, subjectively unexperienced), Bykov calls subsensory, assigning to it a great role in the 'complex life of the psyche.' (…) From this it is but a short step to psychosomatics. Bykov, however, eschews the 'idealistic' Freudian psychosomatics' of America in favor of a 'materialistic psychosomatics,' founded on Pavlovian conceptions and methodology" (London, 1951, pp. 426-427).

The effect of the Bykov's School findings was to reinforce the importance of historical materialism in studies of human behavior. If material forces determine the unconscious, then it must be possible to trace its origins and to transform the external behavior of the individual once these forces are known. Materiality, consciousness and transformation were then intertwined in the individual's ontology, and the very role Marxism assigned to them to explain historical tendencies was used to explain changes in human behavior.

The ability to control the transformations of organisms seems to have been the major grievance between western and soviet scientists in genetic theory. The debate was framed by the opposition between the reactionary and bourgeois theory of Mendelism-Morganism against the progressivist biological theory of Michurinism. According to Wrinch (1951, p. 504), "Soviet ideology is presenting Mendelism-Morganism as being as extreme a position regarding the transformability of nature in the "right" direction (denial of nature's transformability) as Michurinism is extreme in the opposite, or "left," direction (affirmation of man's ability to transform nature)." Denial that acquired characters could be inherited was seen by the Soviet scientists as a necessary step to affirm a revolutionary biology that would open up the possibility for men to change nature. As a matter of fact, Mendelist-Morganist biology was treated as an ideological attempt to disempower the Soviet man. "The motive of wishing to disarm Soviet man in his struggle for the transformation of nature is implicitly anti-Communist, since the struggle for the transformation of nature is part of the general struggle for Communism" (Wrinch, 1951, p. 510). The

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blending of Marxism with biology was well represented by the way the most prominent follower of Michurin, Lysenko, made use of authoritative figures in his writings. Harris (1959) complained that:

> “Lysenko's highest authorities for the science of genetics are the saints of dialectical materialism, Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin, and Michurin. Heretics in his view are to be indicted and heresies utterly annihilated. His writings are an odd mixture of rational argumentation and of the emotional fire and vision of the zealot denouncing sinners and heretics, with such name calling as "idealism" for Kant, of "formalism" for Mendel or Weismann, of “capitalistic" for Western scientists, of "priestly" for Mendel, of "fascist" for anyone who sees an innate heterogeneity of plants, animals, or people, and of “abiological" for those who call for statistical evaluation of reported experiments” (Harris, 1959, p. 686).

All these figures were invoked to accommodate the findings of progressivist biology to the historical materialist world-view, with special emphasis on how it could be used to transform reality. As Wetter (1960, p. 592) pointed out, the aim of progressivist science was “to induce certain changes in an organism by changing the conditions of its environment” based on the belief that “such changes may then be passed on by heredity” in order “for man to guide the evolution of nature in the direction desired, and to breed new species at will.”

As for relativity, the main target was the supposed idealistic character of the quantum theory. This idealism was thought to appear in the principle of complementarity advocated by scientists of the so-called Copenhagen School — of which Bohr and Heisenberg were the main exponents – which stated the behavior of a micro-object should be described by treating the object as a corpuscle and as a wave. The problem was that the wave model does not mean that the particle was a wave. The wave model measured the probability of finding the particle in a specific place if the particle behaved like a wave. These qualifications were seen by Soviet scientists as “a form of idealism, because in such an interpretation the wave is not regarded as a real property of the micro-object but only as an expression of the observer's knowledge” (Wetter, 1960, p. 584).

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Another aspect that attracted Soviet criticism had to do with relativity proper, namely, the principle that units of measure such as time, length, etc., are relative concepts: this “situation appeared irreconcilable with the objective character of reality (...) required by dialectical materialism” (Wetter, 1960, p. 588). As Wetter (1960, p. 588) remarked, some critics even referred to "reactionary Einsteinism!"

In the view of sovietologists, these three examples demonstrated how science was particularized to sustain the Marxist bases of the Soviet experience. Hence, instead of operating to approximate both the West and the USSR, scientific progress was reappropriated in the Soviet Union to keep them apart. The conclusion drawn was simple: the party used science as another mechanism to avoid changes in the regime. Although this conclusion was born out of considerations about Soviet scientific engagement with the West during the 1950’s, other contributions reaffirmed the impression that the Russians were appropriating western scientific innovations in historically peculiar ways. This happened, for instance, in new interpretations of the role of Westernizers in the traditional debate that pervaded Russian society since the eighteenth century, which opposed them and the Slavophiles. As the names of the contenders suggest, the Westernizers defended a “western way,” i.e, European, of developing the Russian State. On the other pole, the slavophiles argued that Russia had to find its own way, based on its orthodox and Slavic traditions. Usually, the Westernizers’ position was associated with moderate monarchy, capitalism and the respect of some individual rights, while the Slavophile’s position tended to favor autocracy, state-guided economic development and submission of the individual will to the collectivity.

The novelty was that some scholars started noticing that Westernizers were very peculiar in their appropriations of the West. According to Somerville (1953, p. 330), “science and technology (...) represent the more obvious and readily understandable part of what the Russian Westernizers wanted from the West. In regard to the social and political part (...) their desires were quite selective.” That was so because

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the Russian Westernizers approached western notions of democracy and freedom through socialist lenses. It may have seemed quite disruptive to consider Westernizers socialists, but that was exactly what some authors wanted to convey. Somerville (1953, p. 331) went as far as to claim that "what the Russian Westernizers fell in love with was not the actual conditions in the status quo of the West, but rather the ideals, aspirations, and objectives found in the philosophy and humanistic literature of the West, as yet unrealized in practice." He then associated the Westernizers with the radicals, and quoted passages in which they argued that "democratic concepts which stressed political mechanics and methods rather than social objectives and consequences seemed to them to miss the point, particularly insofar as Russia was concerned" or "that the liberalism of the West (...) gave the advantages of freedom to the minority group who were owners of capital rather than to the masses of people, and that the freedom in question consisted largely in being let alone by the state" (Somerville, 1953, p. 333). The author called this situation an "historical irony," given that Russia's anti-Western semblance, "for which she is so frequently condemned and feared in the West — the socialistic-communistic radicalism which she represents — is one of the chief desiderata which the classic Russian Westernizers found in the West, one of the chief reasons why they admired and respected the West" (Somerville, 1953, p. 334).

Others assumed that important socialists were Westernizers and drew broad conclusions from this assumption. For example, Baron (1958) reconstructed the career of Lenin's teacher, Plekhanov. In the beginning, Plekhanov was a member of the narodnik movement, a popular movement based on collectivistic ideals that emphasized the superiority of the Russian way of life over the West, and which was directly associated with the Slavophile current. He moved to Western Europe toward the end of the nineteenth century, where "new circumstances and new ideas rapidly transformed him into a Marxist and (...) into one of the most ardent Westernizers of his time" (Baron, 1958, p. 390). After this transformation, he was prepared to develop his account of the nature of the Russian State

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under the control of the Tsar. He saw Russia as an “oriental despotism,” and contended that Russia’s borrowing of techniques and ideas from the West would cause her transformation from an “oriental-barbaric” into an “occidental-civilized” society. As a socialist, he believed in the "algebra of revolution," i.e, that “capitalism, the agent of dissolution and of social reconstruction, by virtue of its dynamic nature must continue its work, must turn the balance of forces ever more heavily against autocracy” (Baron, 1958, pp. 402-403). Through this reading, the reader is led to conclude that the drive to westernization was suffused from the beginning by communism. The author’s remarks about the lessons to be learned from Plekhanov’s trajectory are clear about this:

> It seems to the present writer that Plekhanov's interpretation comprehends much that is cogent, and much that is suggestive. Despite recent efforts to establish a closer identification between Russian and Western culture, certain aspects of the life of Russia seem more intelligible when viewed historically as those of a fundamentally non-Western civilization (Baron, 1958, p. 403).

That is a subtle movement, but it exerts effects that are far more comprehensive: the party’s appropriation of science in the USSR was located in a long history of exchanges with the West that aimed not at transforming Russia, but at maintaining its unchanging otherness. Figuratively, this unchanging nature of Russia was represented through various readings of her “peculiarity” of being stuck between the West and the East. To Somerville (1953, p. 324), “from the earliest moments of Russian history, there has been a special ‘situation’ as between Russia and the countries of western Europe (...).” This special situation was “that Russia has been for centuries numerous in population, large in territory, rich in unexploited resources, and backward in technical accomplishments, compared to the leading countries of Western Europe. She was thus at one and the same time a source of temptation and a source of fear.” In a similar vein, Chamberlin (1960, p. 309) stated that “much of the drama, many of the peculiar characteristics of Russian history are explained by the fact that Russia occupies a middle position between East

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and West, politically and culturally as well as geographically." Seton-Watson (1961, p. 583) argued that "whereas the 'open frontier' in North America was a factor of opportunity, and so of liberty, in Russia it was a factor of insecurity, and so of despotism." He then concluded that "the constant need of Russia for protection against enemies held back by no natural frontier (...) is surely a major factor in the development of autocracy." Another way of locating Russia between the West and the East was to suggest that Russia shared many aspects of an "oriental society," due to "the preponderant role of the state in the economic life of the country; a managerial bureaucracy which administers the affairs of the state under an autocratic ruler; and the 'weakness' of society vis-à-vis the state, which renders the power of the latter over individuals and groups 'total'" (Baron, 1958, p. 389). By the same token, reinterpretations of the meaning of "Holy Russian," an expression frequently used by the Russian intelligentsia to refer to the transcendental superiority of the Russian people, had its origins in the idea of the Third Rome, the only place between the West (Rome) and the East (Constantinople) where the Christian faith could be practiced safely at the end of the middle ages (Cherniavsky, 1958).

Sovietologists deployed several mechanisms to construct the Soviet Union's unchanging subjectivity: emphasis of how Marxism intermingled with the party's control over society, the educational system, and scientific research; reinterpretations of Russian history in which potential similarities became real differences; and causal and historical interpretations of Russia's place between the West and the East. . All of these mechanisms ensured that changes in Soviet subjectivity would not threaten the stability of her expansionist, inferior, and contradictory nature. Hence, an ontology of immutability was necessary for sovietologist discourse to operate.

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7.5.
Final Remarks

The aim of this chapter was to explicitly show how the discursive formations of culture, the State, and personality served as essential markers for the emergence of the Soviet Union as a subject in sovietologist discourse. The configurational notion of culture, the totalitarian nature of the State, and the development of the idea of social personality all exerted a dominant function in these discursive formations immediately before the Second World War, and were subsequently reinforced by the Cold War *epistème*. As a result, the stability of the USSR's subjectivity was sought by sovietologists, not because these were inherent features of the Soviet Union, but because the power-knowledge relations that pervaded the production of knowledge in that period required them. The collective quality of the "throwing away of the individual," which was symbolized by all the mechanisms that kept the Soviet Union's subjectivity immune from changes, was also reinscribed according to the Cold War *epistème* of predictability and control. Hence, production of knowledge about the Soviet Union also produced the Soviet Union's subjectivity.

As markers that delimited the frontiers within which statements about the USSR's subjectivity circulated, the discursive formations of culture, the State, and personality didn't produce one homogeneous Soviet subject. As we saw in the previous chapter, the search for stability was in stark opposition to another aspect that marked sovietologist descriptions of the USSR: the USSR's contradictory nature. Rather, these markers limited the kinds of statements that could appear in the sovietologist discourse by foreclosing the intelligibility of other possibilities. How could statements privileging personal genius and entrepreneurial aptitude appear in a discursive formation that was constrained by the preeminence of the group over the individual? How could statements praising freedom as a positive value appear in a discursive formation that was trapped in a totalitarian reading of the State? How could the Soviet Union be treated in a friendly way if the *epistème* that conditioned how her subjectivity was represented required enmity?

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These questions show that discursive rules of emergence, and not the external qualities of the Soviet Union as a subject per se, determined which statements composed sovietologist discourse. In turn, these rules of emergence were indebted to prevalent discursive formations of culture, the State, and personality. Further, as the critical analysis of the previous chapters demonstrated, these discourses were rooted in western academic practices. The conclusion follows, therefore, that the Soviet Union, as it was described in sovietologist discourse, was a western representation.

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