5.
The Metamorphosis of Personality

5.1.
Introduction

When scholarly journals started hosting discussions about the concept of personality by the end of the nineteenth century, those that participated in the debate were more concerned with its sources than with its meaning. The absence of elaborate discussions concerning the meaning of the concept shows how much it was the taken for granted. In this context, two main explanations of the causes of personality emerged. First, they were placed at the individual level, and personality traits were attributed either to differences in the intensity of natural instincts shared by all individuals or to some inherent ability or skill individuals developed vis-à-vis others. Second, the origin of personality was located at the group level, and social determinist theories of personality became dominant. A clear definition of personality was never sought during this passage from the individual to the group pole of determinism, although behaviorist methodologies forced the treatment of personality to become more abstract and more "scientific."

Scientism revealed itself through emphasis given to the use of statistics and laboratory experiments, which were both meant to detect differences in the causes and nature of personality. But the main goal of the scientific enterprise was predictability and control: the causes of personality were supposed to be discovered so that scientists could predict its appearances — and correct deviancies, which is why the sources of personality traits were believed to be more important than the definition of personality proper. Moreover, the detection of deviations was possible only insofar as there was a norm from which to deviate; but as discussions about

the definition of personality were almost inexistent, there was no deliberate effort to define the social norm. These two absences— absent definitions of personality and social norm — coupled with statistics' need to apply collective categories, created the conditions of possibility for the identification of the concept of personality with the concept a social group, and thereby spawned the idea of a social personality after the World War II. The idea of social personalities is one of the foundations of sovietologism.

This chapter is divided into five sections. Section Two presents a brief summary of the repercussions of biological evolutionist theory in personality studies as the backdrop within which the academic treatment of personality took over. These repercussions explain the predominance of the individual-as-cause-of-personality pole at the turn of the century. Section Three explores how the "social determinism" of personality model was discursively applied. It marked the abandonment of the individual-based explanation and a migration towards the concept of social personality. As in the previous section, all examples will show the impact of scholars' shared commitment to scientism on the emerging field of personality studies. Section Four examines relations between social control, methodology and the emergence of the idea of social personality. In this section, examples will show how the study of the deviant cases helped to naturalize a specific notion of social norm and to conflate the concept of personality with it — thus creating the concept of social personality. Section Five concludes by summarizing the chapter's main ideas and paving the way for the next.

5.2.
The Evolution of Personality

Since the end of the nineteenth century, the idea of personality has been associated with notions of authority and social control. Initially, those who were superior to the average were thought to exercise some kind of control over the members of the group, and hence to help to frame the group's social norms. These were the individuals whose personality traits were worth questioning. At this stage, it seemed that emphasis on an individual's particular qualities, more than his/her relation to the social

milieu, best explained his/her outstanding figure. That is why, according to Ross (1897, p. 237) "the causes of hero worship are to be sought in the hero," and the relation between personality, authority and social control can be explained by what the author terms "natural prestige": "Of mental qualities strength of will is of course the invariable prerequisite; but faith in one's self and imagination are the real architects of vast personal authority" (Ross, 1897, p. 238). With this emphasis on the individual sources of personality, the social environment was taken into account only in a broader dimension, as was appropriate to the evolutionist epistème of the period. Ross (1897) distinguished between "natural" and "noble" societies. In the "natural" societies, acceptance of someone's predominance is based on egoistic feelings, and "the sentiments that underlie early allegiance (to a leader) are not love and devotion, but fear, trust, and admiration"; in the latter, "we see almost from the first something chivalric in the relations of follower to leader" (Ross, 1897, p. 240). The passage from the "natural" to the "noble" stage of human relations occurs only when, "(...) in the course of social life certain values have come to prevail, certain ideals have infected the mass - in other words, moral civilization has begun" (Ross, 1897, p. 240). Ross termed this process "the evolution of personality."

The evolutionary aspects of the concept of personality limited its application to the morally civilized. The development of the psychoanalytic method in the beginning of the 20th century further reinforced this constraint. It is clear that this method of approaching the problem of personality was adequate so long as the individuals in question belonged to the same "moral civilization." In fact, "savages" were involved in the study of personality only insofar as they could be compared to the "civilized." In Totem and Taboo, released in 1913, Freud (2004) asserted that "a comparison between the psychology of primitive peoples (...) and the psychology of neurotics (...) will be bound to show numerous points of agreement and will throw new light upon familiar facts in both sciences" (he refers to anthropology and psychoanalysis) (Freud, 2004, pp. 1-2). He then remarked that, although it would be a mistake to expect that "(...) the sexual life of these poor, naked cannibals would be moral in our sense or that their

sexual instincts would be subjected to any great degree of restriction" (Freud, 2004, p. 2), it is possible to attribute the social habits of these different groups to the same psychoanalytic causes. For instance, he compared the rules of avoidance that forbid the relation between mother-in-law and son-in-law in primitive societies to rules of avoidance in civilized societies. The repression of sexual desires, he claimed, causes stereotypically poor relations between a mother-in-law and son-in-law. The mother-in-law's "sympathetic identification with her daughter can easily go so far that she herself falls in love with the man her daughter loves," while, for the son-in-law, the mother-in-law represents the possibility that his repressed sexual feelings towards his own mother and his sister may be consummated — he "has an impulse to fall back upon his original choice, though everything in him fights against it" (Freud, 2004, p. 18). Freud could find "nothing against the presumption that it is precisely this incestuous factor in the relation that provides savages with the motive for their rules of avoidance between son-in-law and mother-in-law" (Freud, 2004, p. 19).

Ross (1897) and Freud (2001, 2004) presupposed a dichotomy between "savages" and the "civilized," and marked the difference between them as the development of a morality based on the control of human instincts. This moral swamp in which the concept of personality is immersed does not represent, however, its source. It only assured that personality studies would be devoted to the study the individual causes of personality in civilized societies. The exemplary work of this orientation is Freud's (2001) analysis of Leonardo da Vinci's personality, originally released in 1910. In this book, Freud advanced the psychoanalytic thesis that the early stages of childhood, and especially those aspects related to sexuality, are decisive in the constitution of adult personality. He suggested that da Vinci's disgust for sexual intercourse, his slowness in executing his oeuvres, as well as his well-known habit of leaving them unfinished were all related to a "single instinct" that he had excessively developed: "the craving for knowledge" (Freud, 2001, p. 24). To Freud, the predominance of this instinct in da Vinci's personality was due to the way he overcame his period of infantile sexual explorations. Beginning around the third year of age, this stage in the child's development

is characterized by "the question of where babies come from," and is usually sparked by the delivery of another baby in the family, an event that the older child sees as a threat to his/her "selfish interests." Hence, the child's sexual investigation is driven by a need to know the process of procreation in order to find means to avoid it. This denial, according to Freud, is the first attempt at intellectual independence, because the child already has a notion of sexual intercourse but does not accept the answers that the adults offer. However, as the child's sexuality is not completely developed at this stage, the unanswered questions are not replaced by truth. This failure could have three different implications for the development of the child's adult personality. If the curiosity remains inhibited, as it was in the child's exploration of sexuality, the intelligence may be limited throughout life. The subject would then develop a personality characterized by a neurotic inhibition. Second, thinking itself may be sexualized. In this form, known as neurotic compulsive thinking, the subject attains sexual pleasure in intellectual operations. This drive for pleasure comes from the unconscious and motivates the development of an average intelligence. The last alternative is characterized by the sublimation of the libido; before the occurrence of sexual repression, the libido takes the form of curiosity and attaches itself to an instinct for research. The sublimated libido is neither repressed nor unconscious, and allows the personality to freely pursue its intellectual interests. Freud concluded that, "if we reflect on the concurrence in Leonardo of his overpowerful instinct for research and the atrophy of his sexual life (…) we shall be disposed to claim him as a model instance of our third type" (Freud, 2001, p. 28). His early childhood sexual explorations explain his effeminate behavior, his incapacity to finish his oeuvres, the permanent conflict within his personality between the artist and the scientist, his lack of attachment to his emotions, and his geniality.

The individual-as-source-of-personality explanation was very common at the beginning of the twentieth century, which is one reason why attempts to measure personality traits in laboratories and studies of how diseases affected changes in personality abounded. For instance, exemplifying the first category, Fleming (1927) used a galvanometer to

measure the electric currents given off by individuals with different types of personality. In his experiment, he asked four judges who "intimately" knew eighteen individuals (S) to classify them according to two types of personality: magnetic and nervous. He gives no explanation of what these categories mean, but instead describes the experiment in detail: "The initial resistance, measured in ohms, of the skin to the passage of a current from a single dry cell was secured for every S. All readings were taken at noon just before lunch. The electrodes were physiological salt solutions into which the S placed the index and the second finger of the right hand" (Fleming, 1927, p. 128). Although the results of the experiment were not conclusive, the author was very confident that a high correlation between the two kinds of personality and the electric current found in individuals belonging to these categories would pave the way for an objective measure of personality: "As high a multiple correlation as .65 between initial resistance, and 'magnetic personality' and 'nervous temperament' combined, is still more of a surprise, and if corroborated will be quite significant in the study of personality" (Fleming, 1927, p. 129).

Concerning the second category, McNeil (1923) prepared a case study of one of his patients to explore personality transformations caused by a disease. According to his history of the case:

> "(...) the patient, when a child, was of a quiet, reserved disposition. He did not indulge in games or athletic sports to the extent that the average boy does (…) On February 15, 192I, the patient was admitted to one of the city hospitals suffering from a condition later diagnosed as encephalitis lethargica. (...) A decided change was then noted in the disposition of the patient. His manner and outlook on life underwent a complete transformation. (...) The patient came to the clinic accompanied by two members of his trade union, who told me that although previously he had been efficient, after his illness he was discharged from several jobs, sometimes for flirting with girls in the building, sometimes because he had bungled his work, ruined costly material, etc" (McNeil, 1923, pp. 14-15).

Based on that history, he asked one hundred and twelve questions of the patient, covering fourteen spheres (intelligence, output of energy, self-assertion, adaptability, moral sphere, habits of work, recreative activities,

general cast of mood, attitude towards self, attitude towards others, reaction to attitude toward self and others, position toward reality, sexual sphere, balancing factors),to gauge and describe in detail the changes in his personality after the illness. What strikes the reader's attention in this experiment is the way the moral environment is naturalized in McNeil's effort evaluate whether changes in the patient's personality were sufficient to classify him as abnormal. For instance, in the "position toward reality" dimension, it is said that, before the illness, "he was a practical man with a practical outlook on life, and his conduct was consistent with his position socially. Morally, he was upright and honest." After the illness, however, McNeil writes that "he is not honest with himself or others and cannot be trusted as before." For instance, the scientist notes, "he would (...) have married, had his fiancé consented to the ceremony, though at the time he had no means of earning a livelihood and his prospects for the future were poor" (McNeil, 1923, pp. 28-29). The patient's intention to marry his fiancé without having appropriate financial means was not considered a "normal condition of mind."

Both of these examples suggest that locating its causes at the individual level gave personality a kind of mysterious nature. Notions such as "natural prestige," "unconscious," "magnetism," or even "mental disease" helped to obliterate the important function the social environment played in determining personality. As the last example demonstrates, the personality studies were based on comparison between individual behavior and behavior accepted by the individual's social group; however, as soon as all individuals belonged to the same moral community, the causes of personality was located at the individual level.

Zorbaugh (1928, p. 313) attributed this perspective to "certain psychologists" who "have maintained that man's instincts determine all his behavior, motives, and forms of social life — that man's personality is to be explained in terms of his instinctive traits." The origin of this mode of explanation is to be found in the influence "evolutionism" has had on psychology after the second half of the XIX century. "Darwin had demonstrated man's relationship to the ape. (...) Evolution showed man to be

an animal like other animals. (…) Man, like other animals, must have instincts" (Zorbaugh, 1928, p. 315). According to Zorbaugh, when the consequences of such theorizing are stretched to their limits, "national differences turn out to be the result of racial differences in the strength of certain instincts," leading people to conclude that "the difference between the voluble cafe-and-boulevard-loving Italian and the taciturn Englishman (...) is a difference in strength in the gregarious instinct as between the Mediterranean and Nordic races" (Zorbaugh, 1928, p. 316). In an earlier paper, Zorbaugh regretted that "the possibility of studying actual behavior rather than the processes of a nervous system that still defies our microscopes and galvanometers (…) have as yet made little headway" (Zorbaugh, 1927, p. 180).

5.3.
The emergence of the social personality

In spite of Zorbaugh's (1927) regret, the individual-as-source-of-personality explanation and the biological determinism associated with it main targets of criticism emphasizing the importance of the social environment in framing individual behavior. Verry (1925, p. 645) argued that "isolating a personality from its social setting and studying it as a self-contained unit" was fallacious. He observed that many sociologists "have been directing attention to the importance of status, the social role of the individual, his position in the group or groups of which he is a member, in determining his personality" (Verry, 1925, p. 645). In his study of the development of personality in preschool play groups, the author concluded that "the examples given indicate clearly how largely the personality and status of a child in his play group were determined directly by his position in his family circle, the only social group in which these children had had previous experience" (Verry, 1925, p. 646).

Young (1927, p. 449) believed that biological determinism of personality would be problematic for the social worker, for "if (he/she) accepts the biologic factors as the determinants of human conduct there is little that social work can do short of breeding a new race of men." He

contended that “it is only when social workers turn to a consideration of the social forces which influence personality that they discover forces which are fairly amenable to direct control by social work methods — at least within the life-time of the workers” (Young, 1927, pp. 449-450).

Pearson (1931, p. 584) offered a glimpse of the different stages that the study of children personality passed until arriving at the then contemporary treatment of the child as a person: “the child has been looked upon in turn as a miniature adult, a passively reacting mosaic of psychic powers; as a young animal, instinctively recapitulating the life-experience of the race, and only in part amenable to education; as a never-failing spring of creative activity; as a volcano of suppressed passions, largely sexual in nature (…).” Because children are people, the author stressed, problems of personality should lie “in a dream gone wrong, in merciless teasing by an older sister, or a confirmed sense of failure to meet group expectations”; in other words, “human behavior, ‘normal’ or ‘abnormal,’ (should) be studied in relation to its setting” (Pearson, 1931, p. 585).

These renderings illustrate a shift in how the sources of personality were understood. Indeed, it may be said that many of the participants of this “turn” became obsessed with collecting evidences of how the social environment caused personality, as the broad range of “social determinants” of personality identified in the specialized literature can attest. Hughes (1928, p. 761) wrote that a worker’s mobility and “entrance into an occupation, with his change from one occupation to another, or even from one job to another, is that characteristic phenomenon of the modern division of labor which carries with it personality change.” The author worried about the impact that professions have on personality, because the “profession claims and aims to become a moral unit” (Hughes, 1928, p. 762), in the sense that “(…) the occupational group tends to build up a set of collective representations, more or less peculiar to the occupation and more or less incomprehensible to the community” (Hughes, 1928, p. 763). These collective representations were said to appear in the personal traits of individuals belonging to the occupational group, through their etiquette and professional skills, in what may be named the culture of the group (Hughes, 1928, p. 768).

Workers who did not belong to well-established "occupational cultures" represented a threat to the moral values of establishment society. That is the case, Hughes contended, with the personality types that develop on a frontier. "Such persons are without ethical or moral precedent. They are unscrupulous in that they operate to undermine the social and economic order of their peoples" (Hughes, 1928, p. 765).

The effects of the occupational market on personality also preoccupied Groves (1929), though he was specifically worried about the vocational status of women. In his analysis, he tried to answer the following question: "Will the out-of-the-home vocations operate upon the personality of women so as to produce results socially disastrous or helpful?" (Groves, 1929, p. 340). He then pointed to what were supposedly "life interests that have belonged to women in the past," such as marriage, motherhood and housekeeping (Groves, 1929, p. 341), constructing an idea of an ordinary woman's personality that roughly corresponded to being a housewife. He concluded that the entrance of women into the labor market threatened marriages, because "a woman finds in her vocational interests and possibilities a substitute for marriage and her income gives her an independence that does not force her into a marriage" (Groves, 1929, p. 342). The same held true, he believed, for the future of motherhood, for "anything that turns the woman away from marriage removes her chance of motherhood" (Groves, 1929, p. 342). Regarding housework, he theorized that many women would opt not to marry because they would worry that they would be overburdened after marriage by their obligations at the workplace and at home. The author recognized that changes in the vocational status of women would demand inexorable adjustments of both men and women, because "artificial handicaps and obstructing traditions must give way as woman's economic independence persists and increases." Nonetheless, he was specifically concerned about the role of the individual wife during the transitional period. These conditions "make her choice of wage employment a cause of difficulties that register their effects upon her personality, her philosophy of life, and her social attitudes and relationships" (Groves, 1929, p. 348).

Hayner's (1928, p. 795) efforts to establish "the influence of hotel life on the developing personality" provides the most extreme example amongst "social determinists" scholars. After extensively detailing data about the average number of guests in American hotels, the author portrayed the good and bad sides of life in a hotel. Concerning the latter, he lamented that "(…) the personal hospitable relation between landlord and guest in the inns and taverns of the past has been replaced by impersonality and standardized correctness." Consequently, "the modern hotel dweller is characteristically detached in his interests from the place in which he sleeps," and "although physically near the other guests, he is socially distant" (Hayner, 1928, p. 789). On the other hand, "in a hotel the lights are always on if they come home late, and no one will ask questions; (...); the water is always hot; there is an abundance of linen; the room is always warm; life is luxuriously comfortable" (Hayner, 1928, p. 790). These characteristics are responsible for the outcome of four different types of personality patterns in the hotel life: the first one is exemplified by a person that "finds it difficult to adjust himself and satisfy his wishes in the anonymous, impersonal atmosphere of the hotel;" the second is marked by the "free play of impulses when released from restraint" and "the resulting behavior ranges in nature from a mere 'good time' to an explosive 'blowout'"; the personalities in the third group "tend to be blasé and over stimulated;" while the fourth personality pattern is represented by the individual that "may become so accustomed to this environment that, as in the case just cited, he may feel that his 'real home' is a hotel" (Hayner, 1928, p. 795).

Although the parlance of social determinism tended to lessen the mysteriousness of personality found in the individual-as-source-of-personality interpretation, the nature of personality still exerted a peculiar fascination, as one can notice in some scholars' attempts to decipher the social environment through individual personalities, for example in studies relating facial expressions and personality traits. Dunlap (1927, p. 159) defined personality as an intrinsically social concept, so long as it was "(...) the total or synthetic impression which another person has of the individual under examination" or, to put it simply, "the individual as estimated by

another person." Assuming that "what a man has done in the past under certain conditions, establishes some probability that he will act the same way in the future, " and that "(…) his past activities have left effects of various kinds on his organism," including on his face, Dunlap questioned "(…) whether these facial activities have left marks or signs by which their past occurrences can be detected" (Dunlap, 1927, p. 159). As the author explained, although "past facial activities cannot have modified either bone or cartilage" and "no changes in the general shape of nose, chin, ears, cheek bones, or position and size of the eyes can be expected," there is "(…) a possibility that the muscles themselves may have been modified, and that the fascia, true skin, and perhaps other connective tissues may have been slowly modified spatially by frequently repeated patterns of muscular contraction" (Dunlap, 1927, p. 160). Dunlap's research provides a clear example of how the social conditions that determine some personality traits were thought to affect the individual to the point of marking his body with identifiable traces that could be used to track these social conditions. In this case, patterns of muscular contraction caused by the social environment were believed to be symptomatic of the resulting personalities.

Sapir (1927) made another attempt in this direction, though his analysis focused on how language could trace the main aspects of the social environment. The author suggested that there are five levels through which language may be studied (voice, voice dynamics, pronunciation, vocabulary and style) but recognized that any analysis of that sort would need to differentiate between the individual and the society, "(…) in so far as society speaks through the individual" (Sapir, 1927, p. 893). The existence of individuality, however, ought not to allow the reader to overemphasize its role in the analysis of language. "We are often under the impression that we are original or otherwise aberrant when, as a matter of fact, we are merely repeating a social pattern with the very slightest accent of individuality" (Sapir, 1927, p. 894). Thus, Sapir's text is replete with passages demonstrating his belief that social circumstances determine how any one individual expresses his/her self through language, and that this mode of expression reflects the individual's personality. Concerning the voice, he

assured his readers that it is “a social as well as an individual, phenomenon” and suggested that disentangling the social part from the individual would be “ a difficult thing to do” (Sapir, 1927, p. 897). Consequently, for Sapir (1927, p. 896) the voice was “(…) in some way a symbolic index of the total personality.” Regarding voice dynamics, he asserted that “(…) society tells us to limit ourselves to a certain range of intonation and to certain characteristic cadences, that is, to adopt certain melody patterns peculiar to itself” (Sapir, 1927, p. 899). It is interesting how this kind of analysis has implications that reach the national level: “if we hear an Italian (…) we are apt to say that he is temperamental or that he has an interesting personality. Yet we do not know whether he is in the least temperamental until we know (…) what Italian society allows its members in the way of melodic play” (Sapir, 1927, p. 900). The same social determinism was to be found in pronunciation. “Society decrees that we pronounce certain selected consonants and vowels,” fact that becomes clear when “(…) the foreigner who learns our language does not at once take over the sounds that are peculiar to us” because he “(…) uses the nearest pronunciation that he can find in his own language” (Sapir, 1927, p. 901). The social influence is noted on vocabulary, insofar as “there are certain words which some of us never use” and “other, favorite, words which we are always using.” Because “certain words and locutions are not used in certain circles” and “others are the hall-mark of locale, status, or occupation,” Sapir believed that it is possible to infer that “personality is largely reflected in the choice of word” (Sapir, 1927, p. 903). The same would hold true for style. “Style is an everyday facet of speech that characterizes both the social group and the individual” in a way that is “a very complicated problem to disentangle” (Sapir, 1927, pp. 903-904).

These writings establish the social environment as the main cause of personality, without neglecting the existence of the individual in a broader social context. Some authors, however, differentiated individuality and personality. According to House (1928, p. 358), the individuality could be defined as “(…) the pattern of traits and characteristics by which any one human being differs from others,” while the personality could be defined as “(…) as the organization of traits, attitudes, and ideas which determine the

role of the individual in human society." Within these parameters lies the "(…) recognition, more and more frequently and extensively mentioned in psychological literature, of the influence of the social or cultural environment in the shaping of the complex of traits which is defined as the personality" (House, 1928, p. 362). Such recognition was decisive for the emergence of the concept of social mind and its relation to the concept of culture. As House (1928, p. 365) explained, "mind can be social, however, only in so far as the ideas and concepts by means of which it operates can be communicated, but ideas and concepts can enter into communication only as they are or become customary in the group, that is, they must be part of the group culture." In fact, House's and others' attention to social causes made culture the major determinant of personality, which was then conceived, in turn, as the "subjective aspect of culture." But culture was not thought to obliterate the individuality of the members of a certain social group, because within any culture, they observed, individuals possess different social roles: "(…) as a rule various types of personalities are to be found in any social group, and these are correlated with the specialized roles taken by the individuals in the group activity"(House, 1928, p. 367).

5.4.
Social personality and social control

Generally, the majority of scholars agreed with the distinction between individuality and personality, as well as with the "cultural determination" of personalities understood as social roles. For instance, determinism treated social experiences that framed individuality during the early period of life as fundamental to the development of personality in adulthood, which is the main reason sociologists appropriated psychoanalytic-oriented analysis. However, this appropriation was done through statistics in such a way that a huge amount of data on individuals could be organized. The result was that the singular individual who was originally the main subject of psychoanalytic inquires became a collective category, like woman, unemployed, hotel guest, nation, etc., and later acquired the status of collective subject.

As Wang (1932, p. 768) stated in his attempt to determine "what facts in a person's early life are significant in the formation of some of his personality traits?" his interest was not "(...) so much in individual cases as in the group differences of the various personality classifications." In his case, he pursued his answer by using statistics to compare the results of 5 different personality tests,[1] each with dozens or hundreds of questions applied to approximately 600 undergraduate students from the University of Chicago (Wang, 1932). Cavan (1934, p. 145) adopted a similar method of analysis in his attempt to discover the "factors in the home background and in social relationships which are associated with good or with poor personality adjustment (…) by means of a questionnaire." He then proceeded to explain how his collective categories were brought to life: "In order to relate the various questions on home background and social relationships to the personality adjustment scores, the children were divided into three groups on the basis of the personality adjustment scores: well adjusted, fairly well adjusted, and poorly adjusted"; after sorting his data sets in this way, "the three groups of cases were then compared with reference to the replies made on the various questions" (Cavan, 1934, p. 147).

As this last example shows, the distinction between individual and personality also contributed to a new emphasis on studies of maladjusted personalities. These studies were meant to demonstrate what should be avoided, or done, to keep individuals aligned to the social norm. For this reason, emphasis was placed not only on childhood, but on adulthood experiences as well. A good example is Mowrer's (1932) attempt to explain how different types of personality could cause discord in American families. He contended that there are "in every individual at least two sets of opposing forces" — one emotional and the other rational. "There is first, that of his early milieu — those definitions given the child in the family group. An emotional setting is given these definitions by the family. (…) Then there are those definitions given the individual later through his non-family contacts. These tend to be much more rational." The author concluded that conflict

[1] Allport's Ascendance-Submission Test; Freyd's Test of Introver-sion-Extraversion; Moss's Test of Social Intelligence; Pressey's X-O Test of Emotionality; and Otis's Test of Suggestibility.

"(…) may be thought of as quite normal, and arising out of the contradictory definitions of the family group as over against the non-family group." Those individuals who are unable to solve the contradiction are more insecure in marriage, which disrupts family life (Mowrer, 1932, p. 389).

This kind of reasoning was so strong that even mental diseases were to be explained through social experiences. In the case of schizophrenia, Faris (1934, p. 157) held that "any form of isolation which cuts the person off from intimate social relations for an extended period of time may possibly lead to this form of mental disorder." Consequently, "the cause of schizophrenia is sought in the social experiences of the individual." He wrote that the symptoms manifested by a schizophrenic individual — "extreme forms of eccentric behavior, thought and feeling" — were an indication of "indifference to communication" and explained that "our actions are conventional because of our participation in the primary group life of our communities. What order we can detect in human minds is principally the result of the necessity to communicate with those friends and neighbors" (Faris, 1934, p. 157). To communicate, people must accept the roles conferred to them by the community. As this acceptance is naturalized, social patterns are reproduced. But when someone is not interested in accepting these roles, "(…) there is nothing to preserve the order in the mental life of the person." Thus, "'indifference to communication' allows 'mental disorder' merely because only the necessity to communicate with, and appear sensible to, other persons preserves the 'order' of a normal mind" (Faris, 1934, p. 158). Based on case studies of prisoners held in solitary confinement, sheepherders, and children with sociability problems, the author concluded that seclusion — a relatively long period of social isolation — was the main cause of schizophrenia.

While the methodological reliance on experiences and case studies could be associated with the behaviorist hegemony of the period, they also reflected a specific social ontology that constructed personality as the mediator between individual and society, as the previous paragraphs demonstrated. Guthrie (1935) agreed with this social ontology in his study of the importance of crisis in the understanding of personality. According to

him, “the unity of the self is not really within ourselves but in the continuity of our relationships with our fellows. Thus when this external unity is disturbed the unity of the self is also deranged.” It follows, therefore: “If the social circle of which the individual is a member is homogeneous and unchanging the unity of the self is maintained; if it is disturbed in a brusque manner and there is a high degree of mobility the individual equilibrium is also disturbed.” This is why “in time of crisis there is a dissociation of the personality” (Guthrie, 1935, pp. 384-385).

The same social ontology underpinned the notion of “extended personality” suggested by Reinhardt & Boardman (1935), which the authors developed to show how any individual personality is constituted through certain external objects and activities that have social value. When an individual is deprived of these external elements, his/her personality tends to disintegrate, and he/she becomes maladjusted. As they put it, “where, as in our society, individual success is measured in terms of occupation and the display and use of external possessions, the separation of the individual from these extensions of the self, robs him of the sense of security and tends to disintegrate the personality” (Reinhardt & Boardman, 1935, p. 240).

It is quite obvious that appearances of statements like “disintegration of personality,” “crisis” and even associations between the social environment and schizophrenia were not coincidental. In fact, they entered the discursive economy of personality studies in the aftermath of the 1929economic crisis. As Koshuk (1937, p. 468) claimed, “the current depression urges upon us more intensive studies than have yet been made of the effects of economic insecurity and rapid changes of status upon family relationships and child development.” If social experiences were the main cause of personality, then the Great Depression was the event that a whole generation of individuals experienced. With this in mind, it is possible to grasp the relation between personality studies and social control, for the scholars were concerned about the damages the crisis would have on individuals and how their reshaped personalities would affect social norms and institutions.

Curiously, Flemming (1934) best illustrates this relation, though he focused on the positive opportunities offered by the aftermath of the economic crisis. As he noted, "there seems to be a feeling among people today that the changing economic order will bring in its wake increased leisure for the great mass of people." This, he believed, would provide a perfect opportunity to improve the artistic sensibilities of people in the USA: "(...) for the development of a better American art and culture something more is needed (...). Back of the techniques must be the personality of the artist. For art and artists to thrive, our milieu must provide sustenance and encouragement for the development of the artistic personality" (Flemming, 1934, p. 27). The methodology he used to determine how to nurture greater artistic sensibilities was based on statistical relations among 47 traits of personality,[2] in which correlations with the trait "Talented in some field of art" were the main focus. The subjects of his research were 84 girls who had their personality traits categorized by at least 3 teachers. After analyzing the "coefficients of contingency found between 'talented in some field of art' and the other traits and characteristics," he discovered that "idealism seems to be the outstanding mark of artistic talent. Next come originality, wide interests, cleverness, culture, and individuality." Thus, his logical conclusion is that, "until the American milieu actively and overtly approves, sustains, encourages, and rewards these characteristics, there is not likely to develop in this country an art of a particularly high order" (Flemming, 1934, pp. 31-32).

Two features strike one's attention in the former paragraph. The first is the belief that statistics would provide an analytic basis for the social engineering of personalities, i.e., personalities could be developed in accord with what was considered "good." In this context, Koshuk (1937, p. 464) called for a cooperative program among different scholars to "take in all

[2] The traits were: Intelligent; Sense of humor; Interesting in conversation; Considerate of others; Talented in some field of art; "Good sport"; Beautiful or pretty; Amusing; Frank; Understanding; Generous; Sociable; Loyal; Sympathetic; Good natured; Athletic Courteous; Sincere; Attractive personal appearance; Honest, truthful; Clever; Lively; Cultured; Helpful; Modest; Dependable; Unselfish; Good judgment; Witty; Individuality; Competent; Idealistic; Neat; Industrious; Tolerant; Entertaining; Natural, unaffected; Fair; Well informed; Adaptable; Pleasant voice; Wide interests; Not easily excited; Smiling countenance; Tactful; Original; Temperamental.

aspects of personality development" and "provide the solid foundation which is still lacking — a knowledge of the basic processes underlying education and the many other arts and technologies that deal with the shaping and control of human nature." She made clear that her thinking was theoretically and ethically oriented: "If we think of personality as a function of group experience, this more inclusive approach may reasonably be expected to yield facts of great value, leading perhaps to the establishment of an index of trait stability, early recognition of abnormal personality trends, discrimination between normal and extreme variation in personality, and a new sense of the power which one's social groups exert in the forming of human nature" (Koshuk, 1937, p. 466).

The second feature is the ease through which research based on questionnaires applied to limited numbers of individuals was considered representative of the personalities of larger collectivities. The scholarly community promptly recognized the incautious use of generalizations, but instead of abandoning such practices, proposed new methodologies to achieve nationwide accuracy. To quote only one attempt, Stagner (1933, p. 303) suggested that "the best method for the development of nation-wide norms for a given test would be that of a cumulative frequency distribution, based on the administration of the test to students in colleges taken at random over the entire country."

Ironically, such attempts gave impetus to even more generalizations. When data were insufficient for valid correlations, the authors resorted to broader categories that could be validated only through culturalist practices. For instance, in the above-mentioned study on schizophrenia, the author supported his argument by speculating that "if it is true that schizophrenia only develops where the social situation allows it, a check on this hypothesis can be made by examining cultures in which isolation of this sort would be impossible. Some of the preliterate societies fit this description" (Faris, 1934, p. 163). The social situation would then be the whole culture in which the individual was immersed. The same cultural generalization appears in Murphy's (1937, p. 474) claim that "sustained analysis of personality in other cultures, both primitive and advanced, occidental and oriental, capitalist and

communist, is a necessary preliminary to any pronouncements regarding the potentialities of human nature in general or of individual persons in particular." Although not addressed at Murphy's work, for both used the situation instead of behavior to identify personality, Reinhardt (1937, p. 495) regretted that the use of traits as indications of personality underlines the ubiquity of such generalizations: "Many, more or less, unique trait characterizations of individuals, classes, races, nationalities and occupational groups are based upon surface observations evaluated in terms of some stock standard without reference to the deeper meanings that lie behind the scenes of action." His critique could certainly be addressed to Koshuk (1937, p. 468), for whom "variations in national culture-patterns of child care and training, and in resultant personality types, may well be investigated, in addition to those characterizing different socioeconomic levels within each culture."

These quotations clearly reveal an inherent contradiction in the social ontology shared by the majority of scholars of personality. Although this social ontology tended to portray the individual, the personality and the larger group as different entities, the existence of different personalities belonging to different groups presupposed, somehow, membership within a broader community. Individuals had to belong to the same culture to have their personalities acknowledged, even if they also belonged to different groups. This is somewhat similar to the notion that identity and difference depend on a shared feeling of sameness. This feature created the potential for scholars to resort to culturalist explanations whenever statistics could not validate the descriptions of collective subjects. Because the methodology they applied to make sense of personality tended to conflate personality and group, the potential became actual. The need to do so was born out of the double motivation of personality studies: prediction and control. Consequently, despite its appearance only in the former paragraph, the idea of a "national culture-pattern" was present behind all statements issued by "social determinists" in personality studies.

5.5.
Final Remarks

This chapter revisited scholarly productions of personality from the end of the nineteenth century until the end of the 1930's. Its main purpose was to demonstrate how theories that personality originated at the individual level were replaced by the notion of personality as an effect of the social environment. Finally, I intended to argue that, due to the social ontology and statistical methodology that were prevalent in the period, causes and effects were conflated, and individual personality became attached to a social personality, which was loosely treated as culture in national terms.

The reader may doubt whether the relatively few definitions of personality cited was a deliberate writing strategy. That was not the case. It seems instead that scholars during the period took the meaning of personality for granted, and did not bother to clarify its use. In many cases, it seems likely that scholars were not talking about the same thing when they participated in the academic production of personality, despite their sense of belonging to the same "personality studies area." Instead of considering this lack a flaw, I consider it to be constitutive of this discursive formation. It sheds light on the fact that other dimensions, and specifically the concern with predictability and control, were more important. — For example, statistical and laboratory efforts to discover the causes of personality were emphasized because knowing the causes would allow social engineers and policymakers to control its effects. Associated with this concern was the need to discover maladjusted personalities to confer meaning on notions of an adjusted-personality, and the relation between the latter and the accepted norms of the social group. These relational properties between social group and personality varied according to the historical period, as the impact of the 1929 economic crisis revealed.

The idea of a social personality that was identified with one national cultural-pattern, the relation among personality, normality and pathology, and worries about predictability and control, only to list a few components of this discursive formation, could all be found in sovietologist discourse. The

next part of this dissertation will explore this relation, as well as those aspects concerning the ideas of culture and the State.

PART III - The Soviet Union's Subjected Subjectivity