PSYCHOLOGICAL SOCIETY AND SOCIAL CHANGE: RUSSIA IN TRANSITION

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Like other terms of social analysis, such as "modernity," "postmodernity," "democracy" and "globalization," the term "psychological society," signals a contribution to debate about the direction cultural, social, economic and political life is taking. The most tangible manifestation of psychological society is the sheer rise in numbers of people calling themselves psychologists and having psychology as an occupation. The second characteristic of psychological society concerns the emphasis on "the self" as an individual psychological subjectivity, conferring identity, and locus of agency. In a psychological society, people, including, of course, psychologists themselves, acquire a psychological subjectivity, a way of representing themselves to themselves and to others, as having a psychological identity. There is a sense in which, in psychological society, each person becomes her or his own psychologist. Finally, psychological society is a society in which the circle representing human nature in psychological terms and the formation of people as psychological subjects becomes a major feature of social structure. Since such a society developed in the twentieth century in many western countries, it is natural to ask whether at least elements of such a society are now coming into existence in Russia.

Keywords: psychological society, the modern liberal citizen, psychological identity, self-management, change in Russia.

"Psychological society" is a notion found in a number of analyses of the modern, or perhaps postmodern, contemporary world (Gross, 1978; Herman, 1995; Rose 1985; 1999; Smith, 1997, chapter 16; 2008, chapter 5). Writers use it to describe western ways of life, and this at once

poses the question: To which societies does the term actually apply? To what extent do, or will, countries which are not western, not least the Russian Federation, follow the western pattern of social change and thus also develop a psychological society, albeit their own version of it? (We will not put "western" in scare quotes, though, clearly, what is "western" is a subject for debate.)

What is "psychological" in psychological society?

The term "psychological society," like other terms of social analysis such as "modernity," "postmodernity," "democracy" and "globalization," signals a contribution to debate about the direction cultural, social, economic and political life is taking rather than denoting one discrete, concrete process. It is not the point to impose precise definitions. We shall use the term to raise questions about the place of psychology as a field – an almost unimaginably diverse field, of thought, research, social institutions and practical interventions – in the world around us. These questions are extremely relevant in Russia, though psychologists and social scientists, as well as less formal observers of the changing Russian scene, have so far given them little attention.

We provide a handy guide to the notion of psychological society, with the aim to learn more about what is going on in Russia. (The current paper is a completely revised and enlarged version of a conference discussion paper, published as Sirotkina and Smith, 2006.) We do not claim conceptual or analytic originality but informally apply an analytic tool. It is a tool, we believe, which Russian psychologists themselves, as well as social scientists, might find useful when they reflect on the changes in Russia, to which they, whether self-consciously or not, contribute.

The most tangible manifestation of psychological society is the sheer rise in numbers of people calling themselves psychologists and having psychology as an occupation, that is, earning a living by doing something called psychology. As everyone is well aware, substantial numbers of psychologists have been active in countless ways in western countries – in medicine, the military, factories, business corporations, education and so – especially since the 1940s. The number of people involved is large; for example, in the 1980s there were over 100,000 members of the American Psychological Association (the numbers

have risen since), and there were about 20,000 registered psychologists in the Netherlands (the country which then probably had the highest density of psychologists per head of population in the world) (Gilgen & Gilgen, 1987). There was nothing like this number of psychologists in the Soviet Union; but there were notable numbers in both academic (in teaching universities and in the research institutes of the Academy of Sciences) and in applied areas like sport and space research. Then, since disintegration of the USSR in 1991, there has been a conspicuous increase in psychology's visibility in the public arena. We are conscious of the absence of numbers in describing the contemporary Russian situation. But providing reliable data is a complex matter, and it is so for two simple reasons: there is no central organization which might assemble a record, and recording needs a clear understanding of who is (and who is not) a psychologist, and that, precisely, is at the moment a question for debate. The Russian Psychological Society accepts those who "work as psychologists" on the basis of two recommendations of its members (*Obŝerossijskaâ obŝestvennaâ organizaciâ "Rossijskoe Psihologičeskoe Obŝestvo"*). It may be the case that the amount of academic research in psychology has decreased at the same time as a public interest in the field has expanded. Empirical fieldwork would be needed to assess this. What we can put forward within the limited confines of this paper is an analysis of a conceptual tool which, we suggest, should have a key place in such investigations.

The second characteristic of psychological society concerns the emphasis on "the self" as an individual psychological subjectivity, conferring identity, and locus of agency. Psychological society contrasts with other kinds, such as religious or communist societies, in which the psychological character of the self is not the prime source of identity and purpose. In a psychological society, people, of course including psychologists, acquire a psychological subjectivity, a way of representing themselves to themselves and to others, as having a psychological identity. There is, therefore, a sense in which each person in psychological society becomes her or his own psychologist.

We may, therefore, suggest that people in psychological society, in all walks of life, become "psychological subjects," in the sense that they acquire a psychological identity. They think and feel about themselves in psychological terms. They also become the site for psychological intervention. The point is not just the self-evident one, that when there are a

lot of psychologists, lots of people become their clients, though they do. (The self-promoting character of psychotherapeutic research in the Russian context is discussed in Sosland, 1999.) The point is that people learn to take it for granted that their identity, mode of life, social relations, attitudes to life and death, character and behaviour, as well as pleasures and pains, are bound up with their psychological nature.

This *double character* of psychological society – the growth of psychological activity and the rise to dominance of representations of the human world in terms of psychological "selves" – has a philosophical dimension. This is manifested in the semantics of the word "psychology": the word denotes a branch of knowledge, and it denotes states which individual people have and which is the subject matter of that branch of knowledge. This led the English psychologist and historian of psychology, Graham Richards, to refer to the former, the disciplinary field, as Psychology, with the capital *P*, and the latter, psychological states, as psychology, with the small *p* (Richards, 2002, pp. 6-10). That one word can have this double meaning reflects the existential condition in which the human being is both the subject and the object of knowledge in the human sciences, the knower and the known, the form of existence which reflects and which is reflected on in conscious life.

Awareness of this double character prompts a very large claim: knowledge of what it is to be human changes what it is to be human. Indeed, this claim is at the heart of an argument, that what distinguishes the human sciences (including psychology) from the natural sciences is that people recreate themselves by knowing themselves, and physical objects do not. The Russian cultural critic, Mikhail Epstein, for example, wrote: "The cultural sciences may be distinguished from the natural sciences in that the former play a key role in constituting their subject matter" (1995, p. 287). Other authors have explored this topic under the heading of "reflexivity," the reflexive circle of thought and change in human life (Smith, 2007).

Psychotherapy provides an elementary illustration of the reflexive character of knowledge in the human sciences, since the point of therapy is to give a client understanding, new knowledge, in order to help the client, at least to a degree, to be different. "As the knowledge that we may have of our own mental powers is reflexive knowledge, the object of knowledge and the knowing subject change and extend

their range together" (Hampshire, 1960, p. 255). If we take a very wide view, we may describe the reflexive character of knowledge of people as a principle of "the Enlightenment project" to make rational knowledge of human nature the foundation of a better world. Certainly, the hopes invested in this project supported the large expansion of the psychological and social sciences in the twentieth century. The "enlightened" view that these sciences are needed for the better ordering of human affairs is dependent on the reflexive character of knowledge. There is a sense in which the psychological and social sciences are intrinsically "applied" fields. We cannot know ourselves independently of that knowledge affecting how we live. Thus if people understand such processes as thinking, acting and hoping as psychological phenomena, as opposed to, say, religious or political phenomena, this will change social realities.

Psychological society, then, is a society in which the circle representing human nature in psychological terms and the formation of people as psychological subjects becomes a major feature of social structure. Since such a society developed in the twentieth century in many western countries, it is natural to ask whether at least elements of such a society are now coming into existence in Russia (and other countries).

"Popular" psychology and the borders of "scientific" psychology

In psychological society, it is very striking that there are "popular" forms of psychology as well as "scientific" forms. (We use the conventional language in distinguishing "popular" and 'scientific," but we think the differentiation is itself a subject for sociological research (Cooter & Pumfrey, 1994; Thomson, 2006).) If there is a sense in which each person is her or his own psychologist, then, naturally, there will be literature on psychology for ordinary people, as well as a literature for "experts." Moreover, we know that in twentieth-century publishing the genre of popular psychology flourished, and this shows every sign of continuing. This kind of literature is especially large on "self-help" and "therapy." In Russia, since 1991, the genre, largely new, has expanded very rapidly, and the results are conspicuous in any bookshop. Furthermore, this growth of popular psychology is not just a feature of publishing but of the me-

dia generally. Psychologically-oriented discussion is now a pre-eminent feature of Russian TV (which is entirely state controlled), in chat-shows, interviews and soap opera alike.

It is this public dimension of psychological society which makes any attempt to measure the number of psychologists or amount of psychological activity so problematic. What should we measure?

In western countries, especially in the United States, there is a long history of policing the social border, with the authority of legislation, between those who, by virtue of a training and hence a supposed expertise, can legitimately claim to be psychologists and those who cannot. Only the former may practise and earn money from a psychological occupation. This establishment of the psychological profession, with policed borders, is yet another feature of psychological society.

Yet it has proved very difficult and complex to create well defined borders around the profession of psychology, especially in the area of psychotherapy – as the experience of France dramatically illustrates (Ohayon, 1999). Common English language, it is true, distinguishes between scientific and popular psychology, with the implication that the former is "real" psychology, that is, founded on knowledge, in a way that the latter is not, and this suggests that only a scientific training should qualify a person as a psychologist. Psychologists who work in the academic setting have a particular interest in maintaining this view.

In Russia, there is little or no history of policing a border around psychology by legislating, as in western countries, to define who qualifies for the occupational category of psychologist. In the Soviet Union, the borders around the occupation were simply given by virtue of training, and there was no popular psychology to compete with the scientific psychologists. The possession of expertise was, in general, a socially unquestioned fact of a rigid social system. Nowadays, however, the situation has dramatically changed. A large number of people, some of whom make themselves prominent on TV as well as in press, claim to be psychologists, a claim which offends and troubles academic, scientific psychologists. An unknown number of self-styled psychotherapists advertise for clients. As a result, in Russia, there is now discussion about defining and disciplining a legally recognized profession. This would seem another sign that a psychological society is in process of formation.

A historical view

Historical perspective is a help to thinking further about the contemporary changes in Russian society, which, we suggest, is becoming more "psychological." The large-scale expansion of the occupations of psychology did not occur until the twentieth century, and to a considerable extent only in the second half of the century. Though there are earlier precedents for some aspects of psychological society, for example, in Romantic subjectivity, it is a feature of "modernity," part of the attempt to bring order to social life through a technology of reason.

Published histories of Russian psychology in the twentieth century overwhelmingly focus on theory and the content of scientific knowledge. (We attempt a historical summary of Russian psychology in Sirotkina and Smith, forthcoming.) All the same, it is apparent that the history of scientific psychology cannot be divorced from the history of the organization of psychology as a set of occupations. In the Soviet period, it is notably clear, that the way science developed depended on struggles for access to restricted and centrally controlled resources, resources for which the controlling power, the Central Committee of the Communist Party, had its own agenda.

There is no literature on the history of psychology in Russia since the changes of 1989-91. Like other observers, we take it for granted (though on the basis of impressionistic evidence, like the range of books in bookshops) that there has been a remarkably rapid public turn to psychological forms of understanding. It is also the case that psychologists have found new possibilities for employment as private counsellors, in business, politics, education, in the health sector, and so on. How many have done so is unknown, but the numbers are substantial, if very unevenly distributed across the country. This search for new employment became a necessity following the freezing of state salaries of scientists (as of other professions) in the late 1980s, followed by the political decision, in the Yeltsin years, very substantially to cut funding to science. Academic or scientific psychology was seriously cut back. In psychology, as in other scientific occupations, there was a large-scale "brain-drain," the economic emigration of trained scientific workers, especially of workers seeking the professional development of their careers in what they regarded as the "normal" western manner. There is a large question mark about exactly how much "cutting-edge" scientific psychological research of any

kind continued in Russia, just at the same time as popular psychology burgeoned.

The boundary between scientific and popular psychology may not now be so sharp. Firstly, significantly, students since the 1990s have flocked to psychology courses, creating new teaching possibilities, guaranteeing at least some income to established academic psychologists, and turning the teaching of low-level psychology into a major occupation. To our knowledge, there are several dozens of institutions offering an equivalent of an MA in psychology in Moscow alone. The psychological research institutes of the Academy of Sciences and of the Academy of Pedagogical Sciences, for example, began to teach for income. Secondly, a large number of people with some training in psychology, that is, people with at least a first degree in psychology, have looked for or created openings in which they could earn a living while putting themselves forward as psychologists. In the 1990s, there was, for example, a new interest in family therapy, in political psychology, and in organizational psychology. New students, completing courses in psychology, in turn, added increasingly to this process. Exactly how many psychology students there are and what they in fact go on to do, nobody knows. But, surely, only a small proportion of these new specialists could be said to have science as their main occupation, and thus their activity blurs the boundary between scientific and popular psychology. Taken together, these developments suggest a shift towards psychological society in Russia.

Psychology and modernity

When social scientists write about "modernity," they describe and explain what has made western society, beginning especially in the seventeenth century, distinctive. They emphasize, among many complex points, individualism, belief that the individual person is the unit of agency and of worth, and instrumental rationality, belief that reasoning is for material ends. Modern psychology fits well into the picture: psychology conceptualizes its subject matter as states or processes of *individuals*, and it has expanded and received political support because of belief that it would help bring *rational order* to human affairs. The clearest example is the history of intelligence: psychological studies of intelligence classify people and make a social structure based on indi-

vidual capacity, and, through measurement, psychologists contribute to the ordering of society (Carson, 2007).

Psychological society is the form taken by societies in which people have come to believe that the individual is logically, ethically, and existentially prior to the social. This is most fully developed when, as in much contemporary life, people think that knowledge and expertise about individual psychological states and processes is the basis of "the good life." In recent years, this is evident in the upsurge of enthusiasm for "positive psychology" and for psychological approaches to "well-being."

Sociological theories of modernity are not neutral, purely descriptive, since they convey, implicitly or explicitly, evaluations of what is gained and lost in the process of modernization. In modernity, something is always rising, such as the bourgeoisie, and something is always being lost, such as community (Tönnies' *Gemeinschaft*)! The early, classic studies by investigators like Auguste Comte, Karl Marx and Herbert Spencer – not coincidentally also renowned as founders of sociology – identified a rising individualism as an ambiguous event, considered from the point of view of the ethical ideals which animated their social philosophies. Awareness of the moral ambiguity of individualism has continued to be a feature of sociological analysis, from the early nineteenth century, through the work of Ferdinand Tönnies, Weber and Durkheim, down to the present. And, in its turn, there is an element of critique in the literature on psychological society: a critical response to the way in which excessive, even exclusive, attention to individual, psychological states and processes reveals political and ethical failings of modernity, failings most visible, critics often claim, in the United States.

In pre-modern societies, historical sociologists argue, place in a community determined a person's identity (for example, in peasant society). Indeed, the notion and reality of "self" came into existence only over time (Seigel, 2005). Then, with the advent of modernity, contractual relationships replaced communities, and individuals, legally constituted and emancipated from socially fixed identities, acquired personal psychological characteristics and a new subjectivity. The material, economic dimensions of this process have shaped the modern market, wealth as a measure of human well-being, and consumption as the expressive form of personal existence. Psychology developed as the science of the understanding and management of the individual and of her or his capacity to take part in complex relationships with other people on which ev-

erything depends (Foucault, 1988; 1991). Psychology acquired the attributes of being an administrative science, providing the means to manage individuals when individuals failed to do so by themselves, for whatever reason (e.g., because of grief, from hyper-activity, or through being born different). At one and the same time, modern people have learned to think about themselves in psychological terms, and to find in psychology the means for managing lives.

The critical thesis is that when people represent and understand themselves and others in psychological terms, they do so at the expense of representation and understanding in social and political terms. Critics argue that in psychological society discourses on social structures and institutions, the character of political power, and the social underpinnings of notions of truth, have less meaning. It becomes particularly difficult, they contend, to criticise psychological practices themselves. The term "psychologization" describes the substitution of a psychological understanding for a social (or theological or philosophical) one. An infamous instance is the Harvard psychologist, Richard J. Herrnstein's proposal, in 1968, during fierce campus action against the Vietnam war, to understand protest in terms of adolescent rebellion rather than politics. Social critics, such as Richard Sennett, in *The Fall of Public Man* (1986), and Christopher Lasch, in *The Culture of Narcissism* (1980), discussed aspects of the collapse of civil society and its replacement by individualized goals and discourses. Lasch referred scornfully to "the *me* generation," a generation of people who had invested in life-style, personal beauty and fitness, and psychotherapy, as if such individualized responses could address the collective vicissitudes of modern life. Many observers noted a trivialization of the political process, most clearly in the media attention given to the psychological personality of politicians.

These criticisms had much to say about one of the central features of psychological society, the staggering growth in the range of activities called psychotherapy, merging into counselling of all kinds and into advice about life style. This is clearly a phenomenon of the modern twentieth century. The point now is not to judge the efficacy of psychotherapies. The point is the obvious one, that psychotherapies emphatically respond to human difficulties and to human suffering as the expression of individualized, subjective lives. The phenomenon is not just visible in the availability of psychotherapists but in the self-presentation of ordinary people as suitable clients for treatment.

The intensity of commitment to certain kinds of psychotherapy has always made it clear that psychotherapies are not neutral tools but active missions "to better" life. It is a cliché of critical observation to liken them to religions. It is here that we get to what many people would regard as the heart of psychological society: the re-creation of the purposes, ideals, and meaning of existence in terms of norms of psychological health – the assignment of "ultimate" significance to psychological understanding. In literature examining this major cultural shift, the books by Philip Rieff, *Freud: The Mind of the Moralist* (1961) and *The Triumph of the Therapeutic* (1987) are something of a benchmark. Rieff wrote:

> Once again history has produced a type specially adapted to endure his own period: the trained egoist, the private man, who turns away from the arenas of public failure to reexamine himself and his own emotions. A new discipline was needed to fit this introversion of interest, and Freudian psychology, with its ingenious interpretations of politics, religion, and culture in terms of the inner life of the individual and his immediate family experiences, exactly filled the bill (Rieff, 1961, pp. 2-3).

Before Rieff, the less subtle and more directly political literature of the so-called "Left Freudians," such as Wilhelm Reich and Erich Fromm, had also tied to demonstrate connections between the structure of capitalist society and the structure of the psyche (Robinson, 1969).

Debate in the 1980s about whether western countries were witnessing the major social and cultural change to postmodernity complicated the picture. The discussion of postmodern conditions even further emphasized individualism. Some observers argued that in postmodern life there is no prospect of people having stable identities and no grounds for hope in a rational political process, as the heirs of the Enlightenment had hoped. The Polish-British sociologist Zygmunt Bauman, for example, described the contemporary western life-style in terms of a chronic instability and fluidity in human relations, conditions in which, in his account, the recreation of individual identity acts as a surrogate for any more permanent features of community (Bauman, 2001). Within this postmodern world, individualized psychological categories and a psychological language for personal character continue to be taken for granted; the very fluidity of personal identity appears to reinforce the attractiveness of psychological discourse. Yet, at the same time, there is an emphatic shift towards genet-

ic, evolutionary, and neuroscientific forms of explanation in psychology, explanation that stresses the "given" character of psychological identity. There appears to be a substantial contradiction between belief that identity is "given" (e.g., by genes) and that identity is chosen (e.g., by cosmetic surgery). Perhaps such contradictions are exactly what makes it attractive to refer to postmodern conditions.

The 1980s were also marked, especially in the United States and in Britain, by the rise of "the New Right" and a political and cultural backlash against libertarian life styles. There was nostalgia for "family values," for "community," for "responsibility." In some quarters, this associated psychological interventions in human problems with the welfare state ("the nanny state"). But, all the same, market capitalism has continued to break-up communities and to stress the individual's self-identity and self-responsibility; and psychologists have been there to provide management when individuals, and especially children and the ill, cannot cope with the demands placed on them. The shift to the right in western politics does not seem much to have questioned psychological society.

The government of the individual

We want to present a little more detail about a central feature of this reshaping of politics and culture in psychological society. Michel Foucault suggested, and the English sociologist Nikolas Rose elaborated, the thesis that modern liberal democracies achieve government – the ordering and control of people and affairs – through individuals exercising control over themselves rather than by the state itself exercising force or the threat of force. The psychological attributes that give people living in liberal democracies their identity, their place in society and their purpose in life, Rose argued, also *govern* them. In other words, the thesis is that there are now societies (found in the English-speaking world and in western Europe) in which "policing" is primarily a process which *active* citizens carry out on themselves. Citizens have the tools and habits to do this because they have learned to think of themselves as psychological subjects, learned to think that capacity, agency and worth lie in individuals. And liberal states have organised support for the system in psychological terms (child guidance, counselling, assertiveness training, and so on). These liberal societies are in marked contrast to non-modern, non-liberal societies in which government carries out "policing" and requires

the population to be *passive*. Of course, nobody claims that the situation is either / or; elements of both systems may exist together – but there is still a contrast between non-modern and modern, authoritarian and liberal systems.

The theoretical background is Foucault's anlaysis of power in terms of disciplines for the regulation of the individual body ("bio-power"). Foucault maintained that, in the decades around 1800, a shift in discourse and practice established the modern subject matter of the human sciences, the modern human subject, as well as the disciplines of the human sciences (such as clinical medicine, psychology, linguistics, anthropology, and sociology). This new human subject, first visible in the hospital and lunatic asylum wards, the army, schools, factories, and prisons, was *the disciplined person*, the person subject to administrative arrangements of the controlling state mediated through local institutions. The effect of new institutional arrangements, Foucault argued, was, unlike earlier kinds of repression, to create self-disciplining human subjects. Subsequently, the type of self-discipline imposed in such institutions became a model for new forms of individual subjectivity generally, a subjectivity formed and experienced as a self-controlling subjectivity. The originality and interest of this aspect of Foucault's work lay with the way he understood power, not as force exercised by the state over people but as the constitution of particular ways of being people, of being selves (Foucault, 1988; 1991).

Rose, in *The Psychological Complex* (1985) and *Governing the Soul* (1999), adapted Foucault's approach into a historical account of the rise and effects of psychological society in the English-speaking world. Here, and in a number of articles collected in *Inventing Our Selves* (1996; see also 1993), he described the creation of societies in which it can be generally presumed that individuals will govern themselves, thus making possible the kind of *governmentalité* (Foucault's word) distinctive of liberal democracies. Downplaying the academic setting in the origins of modern psychologies, Rose turned to schools, prisons, clinical and lunatic hospital wards, and other institutions, and later armies and business and administrative organizations, for the sites where modern psychological society originated. The modern management of large numbers of people (Weber's "rationalization") created a discourse about individual capacities and the technologies for measuring them (intelligence is the model case). This discourse has now acquired the appearance of objective truth

about what makes people what they are and what their identity is. Bureaucrats, the managers of the state, have a particular interest in securing authority for decision-making through the objective measurement of the population (Porter, 1995).

Nineteenth- and twentieth-century psychology was a double process: it constructed individual abilities as part of the technological ordering of society, and these abilities and their statistical study gave psychologists their subject matter, methodology and expertise. Locating capacities and power in the individual made possible liberal society, with some control over state power but with a corresponding growth of internalized individual control: "Thus the formal limitations on the powers of 'the state' have entailed, as their corollary, the proliferation of a dispersed array of programs and mechanisms, decoupled from the direct activities of the 'public' powers, which nonetheless promise to shape events in the domains of work, the market, and the family to produce such 'public' values as wealth, efficiency, health, and well-being" (Rose, 1996, p. 155).

In the ideal of the liberal democratic state, it is the individual who is expected to act, to adapt, to find work, to manage. Rose's thesis is that psychology is the science of this management. The extent to which liberal psychological societies have in fact appeared, is still open to debate, since all states continue to exert formidable coercive powers – powers enhanced in the last decade by the perception of groups of people in their midst who have not internalized psychological norms (exemplified by marginal groups of various kinds and, at the extreme, by "terrorists"). But this does not detract from the representation of the modern liberal citizen as an expert in self-management. As such, he or she has the obligation to draw on the necessary psychological knowledge and techniques. The individual in a liberal state is autonomous, but this autonomy carries the obligation to have a psychological identity, and this identity gives the individual her or his place in the social order.

Change in Russia

This paper has argued that the concept of psychological society is a valuable tool for thinking about change in Russia. The senses in which Russia is and is not acquiring characteristics of a psychological society remain to be studied empirically and analyzed with theoretical precision.

Nobody naively supposes that any country has completely transferred power from the "external" state to the "internal" constitution of individuals. But there are differences in forms of government, and the emergence (or not) of psychological society is a significant factor in describing and explaining this.

The Soviet Union, it is clear, was not a psychological society. If we turn to this period of Russian history, we see a striking conformity between the state's direct, centralized exercise of control over the population and the absence of psychological society. The state, it is true, employed psychologists in schools, in the army, sport and the space programme, but the government, the psychologists and the public all understood this as the "top-down" employment of expertise for well-circumscribed, state-determined, practical goals. In the earlier, more utopian years of the 1920s, there were plans to develop psychology and psychiatry as part of a socialized programme in mental hygiene, and this programme's proponents, like their western counterparts, certainly envisaged the penetration of psychological expertise into all walks of life as part of modern administration (Sirotkina, 2002; 2008). The Bolshevik state adopted a national programme of psychohygiene in the early 1920s, and a psychological dispensary (originally called a "neuropsychiatric" clinic), still existing today, became its base-station (Sirotkina, 2000). The dispensaries treated out-patients and popularized a healthy way of life. It was to be the job of a special staff of social workers to examine apartment houses and work places and to register people who were supposed to be in danger of developing a nervous condition or of becoming mentally deranged. In theory, this "neuropsychiatric" expertise was to cover the whole country. But the programme was never carried through. After "the Great Break" announced in 1929, if not before, the centrally dictated rush to industrialize over-rode all other considerations. Later, the strongly institutionalized custom – the reflex of government and the expectation of the governed – of managing through "external" control persisted. At the time when Foucault was developing his argument about the government of subjectivity, western psychiatrists and the western press were highly critical of the Soviet Union for using psychiatry as an "external" means of political repression against dissidents. There appeared to be a marked contrast between the Soviet state's use of psychiatry as a direct instrument of control and the liberal manner of governing through each person's acquired psychological

identity. The contrast was obviously not absolute: there were critics who labelled western psychiatry and psychotherapy a system of political repression, and there was much internalized discipline in Soviet people. But there still was a contrast.

If we turn to post-1991 Russia, we are in the position that we have to pose questions. Above all, there is a lack of precise empirical knowledge about what has happened in the field of psychology, though a start has been made (Yurevich, 2010). Since the changes, the proliferation of different forms of psychotherapy, along with the appearance of a large number of people offering psychological advice of one kind or another (as with the TV pundits who, describing themselves as psychologists, advise on bringing up children, sex-change, marriage problems and so on) would seem to suggest that the country is rapidly, even precipitately, becoming a psychological society. Yet, though these developments are very visible, they may be superficial. It is not at all clear how far the authoritarian and state-policed ways of managing affairs, which were current both in the tsarist and Soviet periods, have in fact changed. The government may have brought in psychologists to help with public relations, but it has not presumed that citizens can be left to manage themselves.

Characterising psychological society, especially in our discussion of Rose, we have noted a relationship between the public, political sphere in liberal democracies and the personal sphere of how people think about themselves. There is symmetry between the state's provision of a framework utilizing psychological services (education, medicine, the courts, etc.) and people's subjective understanding of themselves as psychological subjects. How far is this symmetry present or developing in Russia? How far, in fact, has the state employed psychological expertise? There are examples where it does, for example, to help promote state policies or the leader's image. In the Moscow metro transport system, there are advertisements for a state service which one can phone for psychological advice – a weak reflection, perhaps, of the hopes in the early Soviet years that the state would provide comprehensive welfare provision and mental hygiene for citizens. Such evidence suggests that the state, at least in part, finds it in its own interest to promote elements of a psychological society. As far as providing psychological advice goes, that would seem a classic case of placing a sticking-plaster over the huge underlying problems of finding work and housing, poor medical prevision, oppressive police regulation (through the internal passport) and so on.

If we turn to the individual sphere of self-help, the private sphere to which many self-styled psychological experts speak, it is not clear how much is new, or specifically "psychological," as opposed to simply being old-style advice wrapped-up in psycho-speak and turned into a commodity. Moreover, for many people the first line of response to difficulties remains family and friends. Few trained therapists are available – or affordable – to the bulk of the population, especially outside the old capital cities of Moscow and St. Petersburg. An opinion poll shows that only 6 per cent of respondents have ever visited psychologists, and 47 per cent believe they cannot afford it. The observer concludes that Russian culture remains "closed" to psychology, and that people would rather run to friends and drink than go to the consultant room (Yurevich, 2010, pp. 164-169). It is also important to remember the ethnically diverse republics of the Federation where anything resembling the characteristics of psychological society is absent.

We should also mention the interest there is in creating an "Orthodox" psychology, a psychology of the soul based on the faith and traditions of the Orthodox Church (for discussion of Christian psychology see (Bratus, 1995), and *Russkaâ pravoslavnaâ psihologiâ*). It is not for us to comment on the difficulties of saying how such a psychology relates to the conventional view of scientific psychology. But it perhaps adds support to belief that Russia is moving towards a psychological society to note that there is this attempt to relate even the religious life to psychological concepts and practices. All the same, critics might say that "Orthodox" psychology has yet to demonstrate that it is more than a restatement of Orthodox belief and that it is, in fact, informed by any distinctively "psychological" knowledge.

The emergence of elements of psychological society in Russia followed the post-1991 collapse of collectivist ways of organizing social and economic life and the introduction of entrepreneurial, individualist economic values into the new Russian Federation. The question then is, how much has changed? In addressing this, one should clearly recognize differences between the immediate post-1991 chaos and uncertainty and the post-1998 Putin era of apparent stability and economic growth (if only in some sectors and set back by "the crisis"). The last decade's apparent stability, however, has seen the restoration of the instruments of the vertical exercise of state power which, it is tempting to think, have hardly changed from tsarist and Soviet times. In contemporary Russia, there are,

therefore, spreading psychological discourses and practices alongside a highly centralized and "top-down" pattern of government. There is no contradiction in this, no more than in liberal democracies where "external" management exists alongside "internal," psychological self-regulation. Psychology's image is that of a science used for "minor matters," on the small scale of personal and family problems, while "major issues" are reserved for political and financial experts (Yurevich, 2010, pp. 168-169). Russia, however, may be achieving something distinctive in the way tight state regulation and psychological discourse exist together.

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In summary, the paper puts forward a perspective on the psychological form of the narratives modern people tell in order to make sense of their lives and obtain some degree of personal and social control. The current emphasis on psychological narratives is not neutral, let alone "the truth," but one way of living, a way of living with a history which we can trace and understand. We can also compare and contrast national patterns. By introducing the concept of psychological society, we add a resource for thinking about the roads which contemporary Russians, psychologists of all persuasions among them, are actually taking. We suggest that analysis of a possible shift towards psychological society is a more constructive way forward than laments about the spread of popular at the expense of scientific psychology. All of the many forms of psychology exist as practices with a social nature. There is need for a common way of understanding this social nature.

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