

# COSMOPOLITANISM AND *KOSMOPOLITIZM* IN THE POLITICAL IMAGINARY OF SOVIET CITIZENS

Caroline Humphrey

*DRAFT*

For some years now, a rethinking of cosmopolitanism has been under way, and anthropology has made a distinctive contribution. While philosophers such as Nussbaum (1996) and Derrida (2001) have creatively revived the tradition in European thought, whereby cosmopolitanism is an ideal pertaining to humanity in general, a different approach has sought to de-prioritize European traditions of theorizing and to seek cosmopolitanism in new sites around the world. Bruce Robbins suggests (1998: 1), for example, that cosmopolitanism is being redefined because it now has a new cast of characters'. These are no longer the imagined free-floating supra-national elites of old, but the ordinary people whose lives involve movement and relations with the alien, from North Atlantic merchant sailors, or Caribbean au pairs in the United States, to Egyptian guest workers in Iraq. One consequence of this move is that cosmopolitanism ceases to be only a political idea, or an ideal, and is conceptualised in the plural and in terms of practice or process. The new vocabulary of rooted cosmopolitanism' (Cohen 1992), vernacular cosmopolitanism' (Bhabha 1996), actually existing cosmopolitanisms' (Malcomson 1998) and situated cosmopolitanisms' (Englund 2004) arises from a characteristically anthropological acknowledgement of diversity and inevitable attachments to place. In replacing one universal cosmopolitanism by plural and specific cosmopolitanisms, however, the new writing does not retreat into a fatal particularism, for it pays attention to kinds of relational experience that cosmopolitan subjects have in common, a reality of (re)attachment, or multiple attachment, or attachment at a distance' (Robbins 1998: 3). At this point we should note, however, that all sides in this debate tend to be interested not so much in purely academic analysis as in providing inspiration for rethinking the grounds for political action. Thus from universalist positions Nussbaum is concerned with human rights and Derrida with hospitality and the right of refuge. Meanwhile from a more anthropological perspective writers point to the experiences of hybrid' (Cheah 1998) or post-national' (Appadurai 1991) subjects and tend to advocate cosmopolitanism as a number of local practices of comparison, ranges of tolerance and international competence (Robbins 1998: 261).

It is suggested here that the framework of this debate tends to neglect the presence and intense salience of the ideas of cosmopolitanism held by nation states. We may accept the new attention to previously unexamined sites and local situatedness in displacement' (Robbins 1988: 250), but this is not enough to account for the experience of cosmopolitan interactions. As Yael Navaro-Yashin has shown (2002) with regard to Turkey, the ideologies promulgated by the state penetrate deep into the lives and thoughts of every citizen and furthermore create spaces in which people compete actively to claim the statist culture as their own. Cosmopolitanism as ways of thinking and feeling beyond the nation', in the felicitous phrase of Cheah and Robbins (1998), has to be understood as interpenetrated by these state-derived concerns. This paper then draws attention to the binary and contradictory character of nation state discourse on cosmopolitanism, particularly in strongly authoritarian political contexts. What I address here is not the contradictory imperative' pointed to by Derrida (2002: 21-2) in his reflections on Kant (the opposition between the universal Law of Hospitality and the

limitation on the right of residence that is dependent on the law of states). Rather, I address something different, though not unconnected: the contradictory structure of *affect* and *desire* implicit in state constructions of cosmopolitanism.

It will be argued that the ideas of spatiality, movement and citizenship wielded by authoritarian states are imbued with particular configurations of value, emotion, and fear. These crystallise around the overruling us' of national identification, on the one hand, and the depiction of the slippery and dangerous alien-ness of the cosmopolitan' on the other. To discuss the ambiguity of ideologies of cosmopolitanism in state hegemonic contexts I have drawn inspiration from what may seem a distant and unrelated source, Jessica Benjamin's analysis (1988) of domination and gender. Attempting to understand how domination actually works, Benjamin, following Foucault, argues that it cannot be merely repressive, for then how would any one be brought to obey it? Power holds good, she argues, not by denying our desire but by forming it, converting it into a willing retainer, its servant or representative (1988: 4). Domination is thus a two-way process, involving those who submit to power as well as those who exercise it. Yet the Freudian theories that take place only in a world of men, that take women's subordination for granted, are inadequate, for they fail to account for the impasses that have resulted from the complementarities of subject and object, active and passive. Woman functions as man's primary other, playing nature to his reason, immanence to his transcendence, oneness to his individuated separateness, object to his subject, Benjamin argues. The anchoring of this structure so deep in the psyche is what gives domination its appearance of inevitability (1988: 7). For the adherents of Freud, Benjamin writes, masculinity is presumed and femininity is defined as its other; for the revisionists, maternal identification is primary and masculinity comes into being as not-mother. By juxtaposing the two sides of the argument, I show that the truth' of each position leads us to the ambiguity of gender: masculinity and femininity can each be construed as the negation of the other its opposite, its complementary other (1998: xvi). In this perspective, Benjamin argues, it is possible to recuperate a pre-oedipal bisexual position, that of a subject who would own both tendencies within the self.

What this suggested to me is the broad outlines of an analogy for understanding the interleaved, inconsistent and generative character of the state ideologies, where even the willing acquiescence in the dominance of the we' of national identification may conceal another we' of unacknowledged desires. Cosmopolitanism conceived as the other of nationalism is an object to be controlled and dominated and yet at the same time it provides a latent subject position with which to identify. A person has the possibility for making active one aspect and occluding another, and yet also of generating uneasy excitements out of this very situation. It is the heavy participation of state authorities and social pressures (for example, at mass meetings) that ensure that the two are not equal. The citizen-subject may submit herself willingly, even demonstratively, to the paramount and conventional depiction of the warmly acclaimed we' and thereby objectivise, hold at arms length, and excoriate an artificial other created for this purpose. In this situation to recuperate the desire for what lies beneath this figment, and is found in unacknowledged loyalties, is to yearn for the disowned. I shall argue that this is the very situation that pertains when cosmopolitanism' is so vehemently denied as to become an object of public hatred. In effect, it creates a desire for its forbidden self.

In the text that follows I trace these psychic' effects ethnographically for the citizens of

the USSR in the Stalinist period. Historically, the emergence of public hatred of cosmopolitanism was far more complex than the sketch above has been able to depict. It was interwoven with other political formulations, notably those concerning spatiality and the citizen (e.g. the laws on residence) and secondly the USSR's acclaim for socialist internationalism', and both of these also contained internal contradictions that shifted ground historically during the twentieth century. Despite these particularities, which are essential if we are to understand the Soviet case, I suggest that the central argument of this article, concerning the need to attend to national discourse and its life in the political emotions of ordinary people, has broader application.

### Situating Soviet *kosmopolitizm* historically

Writers of the European Enlightenment envisaged cosmopolitanism as the culmination of human progress (Condorcet 1955 [1795] , Kant 1970 [1795] ). Kant defined it within the concept of 'perpetual peace' as the ideal impossible to realise fully of a future perfect civil union of mankind. The non-realizability lay in the fact, acknowledged by Kant, that all states would never give up their sovereignty and that the best one could hope for would be federations of rule-governed states opposed to war, in other words for what I shall call 'internationalism.' The fully cosmopolitan person is thus a person not yet known in the world. Whether in Condorcet's vision, as the person who chooses freedom from the shackles of ethnicity, or in Kant's, as the citizen of a utopian political order, the cosmopolitan exists in an unattainable space. Nevertheless, this ancient European ideal still has echoes in certain international spaces like the U.N. the ideal in Martha Nussbaum's words of the person whose allegiance is to the worldwide community of human beings (1996: 4).

As anthropologists I agree that we should detach the idea of 'cosmopolitanism' from its moorings in the history of Western European thought and investigate how such an idea might have been constructed elsewhere. For such an endeavour to make sense it would be necessary to retain a core of ideas associated with the term, summarised perhaps as the values of an inclusive civilisation in which ascribed socio-political divisions are made irrelevant or worked with' to create a society that transcends them. History provides many matrices one might explore, where a version of cosmopolitanism seems to have existed: the culturally variegated court of Akbar, for example, or the world of Inner Asian Buddhism between the 17<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, or, on a smaller scale, the interleaving of religions and languages among ordinary people on the island of Cyprus before the early 20<sup>th</sup> century (Yashin 2000).

Where does Russia, in particular Soviet Russia, stand in this regard? Here we have a most complex situation. For Russians the very idea of 'Russia', especially in its image as the Holy Russian Empire or the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, has an amplitude that might in theory seem to approach the notion of cosmopolitan society. In both the Tsarist and the Soviet visions, a supra polity, even a supra civilisation, enveloped and folded into itself the multitude of ethnicities, languages and social differences within it. Further, the Communist Party of the USSR espoused a vision of universal progress and a policy of internationalism, which it pursued energetically (if erratically) for decades through the Comintern and other organisations. It was heir to the Enlightenment conception of the role of the state, which, as James Scott has argued was to 'characterise society' in all details and improve the human condition with the authority of scientific knowledge (1998: 91-3). The heroic goals of high modernism conceived as a

revolutionary endeavour for all humankind appear to be fertile ground for cosmopolitanism. Yet the paradox is that in Russia, and especially in Soviet Russia, *kosmopolitizm* in public use became not a term of acclaim but a poisonous accusation. Indeed, during the period of high Stalinism it became a legal indictment for which people were punished, imprisoned, and even put to death. How are we to understand this?

In this paper I shall argue first that we should detach cosmopolitanism from internationalism. Even though they look similar, or it might seem that internationalism should transform itself in time to cosmopolitanism (as in the Enlightenment vision), in fact that is, in the real world they are very different beasts, as described later. Second, it is necessary to distinguish cosmopolitanism as a generally available idea from the historically particular construction of *kosmopolitizm* as an ideological product of the Soviet regime. We will then be able to contrast this version of *kosmopolitizm* with both internationalism and cosmopolitanism, or to put this another way, we will be able to get some purchase on Soviet *kosmopolitizm* in the context of 20<sup>th</sup> century political thought. Seen in this light, I shall suggest, the ethnographic reality even of Stalinist *kosmopolitizm* can be perceived as no longer purely toxic. Politically paramount as it was, it could never entirely eradicate the forbidden and attractive ambience of what was hidden within it – an as it were domestic practice of cosmopolitanism. And as I show in more detail later, it was affected by the political context – containing its own ambiguities of Communist internationalism. The dead hand of *kozmpolitizm-as-accusation* could not control and radically underdetermined the desires and temptations generated both by its own negativity and by the more generous spirit and actual practice of internationalism.

As an object of anthropological inquiry, Soviet *kosmopolitizm* is not therefore to be understood only in terms of political expediency, such as a label by means of which the state could get rid of unreliable citizens, or a tool whereby to revive fading patriotism (Zemtsov 1991: 74-5). Nor was it simply the ideological aberration of a state that saw itself as beset by enemies. Rather, it is better understood as a construct that links together spheres of human life usually separated in analysis. We may return here to the analogy with gender domination. From a masculinist position in bourgeois society the notions of public and private expressed an unavowed sexual politics, where an entire domain of human activity, namely reproduction, love and care, became women's lot and was excluded from political consideration (Benhabib, quoted in Benjamin 1998: 197). Yet this public/private distinction could only be created by abstracting from the relationship of dependency and desire between men and women. The campaign against *kozmpolity* in the late 1940s was likewise a public construction that contained its own disavowal. I hope to show, moreover, that in tracing the dimensions and flavours of *kosmopolitizm* we discover filaments that connect international politics with the most intimate hesitations of common everyday life, and that relate the formalistic ceremonials of brotherly international encounters with the ineradicable undertow of half-hidden feelings, – the curiosity, suspicion and attraction that attend the presence of the Outside (Foucault: 1998: 177).<sup>1</sup> Soviet *kosmopolitizm*, to reiterate, despite the overwhelming negativity of its public manifestations, could not but provoke the presence of what it feared most – actually existing

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<sup>1</sup> Orlova has suggested that the reasons for the 1949 campaign against *kosmopolitizm* lay in the aftermath of the Second World War. Hundreds of thousands of Soviet troops and other citizens had seen the countries of Europe and were contrasting it with the poverty of life in the USSR. The main enemy became abroad – that world where our army has been at the end of the war (1983: 162).

cosmopolitan relations.

### Cosmopolitanism and internationalism

It is a convention of social science to oppose cosmopolitanism to nationalism (Kymlicka 2001: 206) and thus it may seem perverse to contrast it with internationalism. But a moment's thought is sufficient to see that a concept based on universalism, a state of being without socio-political boundaries, is utterly different from one that is premised on their existence. As Mehmet Yashin has written, The old leftist description of internationalism has remained in between (inter') nationalisms without transcending nationality, therefore matching other discourses that *reproduce nationalism* (Yashin 2000: 8, emphasis added).

If internationalism is perforce imaginable only in territorial terms, for example as landed blocks, which engage in co-operative behaviour with one another (treaties, law-governed trade, friendship pacts' and so on), then cosmopolitanism might appear as ocean a medium in which it is possible to glide and swim freely. But such images do not penetrate to the dynamic, even confrontational and inimical relation cosmopolitanism and internationalism have actually assumed in history. An insight into this, I think, is given by Foucault's discussion of the impact of Galileo's thought (1998 [1987]). Observing that the great obsession of the nineteenth century was history - themes of development and arrest, of crisis and cycle - and noting how this had been translated in the twentieth century into conflicts between the fierce inhabitants of space, Foucault then comments that the this space has a history.

In the Middle Ages there was a hierarchical ensemble of places: sacred places and profane places, protected places and those that were open and defenceless. [] There were places where things were placed because they had been violently displaced and then places, on the contrary, where things found their natural emplacement and their natural rest. It was this whole hierarchy, this interconnection of places that constituted what might be called, very roughly, mediaeval space a space of localization.

This space of localization opened up with Galileo, for the real scandal of Galileo's work was not so much in having discovered, or rather rediscovered, that the earth revolves around the sun, but in having constituted a space that was infinite, and infinitely open so that the mediaeval space was dissolved in it, as it were. A thing's place was no longer anything but a point in its motion, just as a thing's rest was nothing more than its motion slowed down (1998 [1987]: 176).

Now I am certainly not suggesting any direct analogy between Mediaeval localization and the mindset associated with internationalism / nationalism, still less between Galileo's idea and that of cosmopolitanism. Nor is it the case that cosmopolitanism as an ideal has always arisen as a reaction to, or attack on, nationalism. In Europe, for example, the idea of cosmopolitanism came to prominence in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century before nationalism as we now understand the idea was a dominant political reality. Yet what Foucault's observation shows is that an idea of infinite openness' is *inimical* to any system of thought resting on the value of emplacement and the relations between placed entities. In this respect, nationalism and internationalism align with one another, and neither of them have any room for cosmopolitanism.

## Cosmopolitanism and Soviet *kosmopolitizm*

We can now see why cosmopolitanism could appear as threatening in a late 19<sup>th</sup> century political world consisting of territorial nation states. And this sets the stage for an understanding of *kosmopolitizm*, or at least the Stalinist version of this idea. For the poisonous variant of *kosmopolitizm* is, among other things, precisely the form taken by a reaction to the threat of cosmopolitanism. In high Soviet discourse *kosmopolitizm* was usually coupled with the adjective rootless' (*bezrodniy*), surely alluding to the un-nerving character of motility noted by Foucault.

We should be aware, however, of the historical character of the Stalinist construct and that it somehow had to deal with' (control and channel) its immediate precedents. Right after the Bolshevik revolution, movement and transformation were intrinsic to avant-garde socialist projects. Objects, it was proclaimed, should be available for metamorphosis, just as people should be ready for instant mobilisation. For the post-Soviet critic Vladimir Papernyi, mobility is the key distinction between what he calls Culture One (the redemptive egalitarian activism of the revolutionary avant-garde) and Culture Two (the hierarchical, production-oriented and re-bourgeois culture of Stalin's time). Papernyi (1993: 56-7) quotes from the paradigmatic artists and architects of Culture One in the 1920s:

I have henceforth freed myself forever from human immobility, I am in constant motion (Dziga Vertov).

I'm off!

Right away!

In five minutes

I'll leap

The length of the sky,

In this weather

The going is good.

Wait for me

At the cloud

Under the Big Dipper (Vladimir Mayakovsky)

Architectural constructions must be mobile because the very idea of movement has a great potential for development' (Georgii Krutikov). The cabins of ships, airplanes and train cars become the prototypical dwellings (Moisei Ginzburg), (quoted in Papernyi 1993, 57).

Such ideals were widely shared by young people in the period after the Revolution. For example, Orlova writes, enthused with the image of the far road' that led to the distant, youngest town': I was unshakeably sure: here in these old walls was only the preparation for life. [] Most of my contemporaries were living in tents, in dug-out cabins, in communal apartments, or even in separate flats but whatever the case they were living roughly, temporarily, carelessly. Quicker, quicker to the great goal, and there everything would really begin. [] I wanted out of that house, out of that flat. This wasn't a dream. It was a plan - as concrete as the plans that hung in the showcases in Gorky Street (Orlova 1983: 30-32).

But from the very beginning the Soviet government was ambivalent about such revolutionary (and proto-cosmopolitan) enthusiasm for the rough, temporary, careless lifestyles of Orlova's friends. It was in a quandary about whether, or how, to implement the ideas of the revolutionary avant-garde. Even in 1918 and 1919, in a situation of chaotic civil war, it made the first attempts to ban movement. Voluntary location from one county to another was forbidden. Later, contradictory decrees were issued. For example in 1923 Moscow City Council demanded obligatory registration of visitors within twenty-four hours, but in the same year Sovnarkom prohibited the demanding of passports and registration papers from citizens of the Russian Federation. Inexorably though, control became the priority control necessary because the transformation of society was to be kept strictly in the hands of the state, and not left to individuals' haphazard enthusiasm. The economy was conceived as a well-ordered machine' (Scott 1998: 195) regulated by timed and spatialised plans. Techniques to fix people in geographic space, to domesticate them in family units, and bond them to the work-place through control of housing, were developed (Humphrey, forthcoming). By 1930-1, revolutionary projects designed to produce communal non-domestic' accommodation for footloose workers were being cancelled. In 1931 Stalin issued his six conditions', one of which demanded the end of the flow of the labour force', and from 1932 the internal passport system tying people to specific places of residence was implemented. People of different professions and ethnic groups were registered, nomadic people were settled (Papernyi 1993: 58-61). Discipline' (obedience) now became a key indicator of loyalty. As Buck-Morss comments (2000: 122), Stalinist culture abhorred uprootedness. Cosmopolitanism became synonymous with betraying the motherland.' In the new construct of *kosmopolitizm* an affinity for universal culture would simultaneously indicate a culpable indifference to Russian national traditions (Zemtsov 1991: 74).

Yet an irony of *kosmopolitizm* was that, even as what I have called the toxic variant' grew in public legitimacy, the Soviet government was simultaneously engaging specialists and firms from the capitalist world in its projects. Kotkin (1995) and Buck-Morss (2000) have shown that several giant projects of Stalinist industrialisation were remarkably cosmopolitan in character. The Director of Soyuzstroï, the main Soviet construction group, was Sergei Nemets, formerly an engineer with the Philadelphia construction company Stone and Webster, Inc. The Chief Engineer of Soyuzstroï was Zara Witkin, whose early projects included the Hollywood Bowl and several large Los Angeles hotels. Even the Soviet ideal' industrial city of Magnitogorsk was built according to specifications created in the United States (Buck-Morss 2000: 167), with American engineering advisers and with a German chief architect (Kotkin 1995: 110). However, the actual cosmopolitanism of such situations was never publicly acknowledged. When the U.S. engineers and their families of Magnitogorsk went home, the well-equipped township built for them, called Amerikanka' (where they danced the foxtrot to the music of the balalaika), was re-named Berezka (Birch-tree). The fact that high Soviet officials of many nationalities had eagerly sought to live in Amerikanka alongside the foreigners was passed over in silence (Kotkin 1995: 126). The Americans' contributions were downplayed to the extent they were later accused of having been wreckers (Kotkin 1995: 413). Thus, although toxic *kosmopolitizm* intensified through the late 1930s and soon masked the history of Soviet industrialisation in a viscous layer of deceit, there is evidence that vanguard' Soviet officials were not only alert to western technical advances but also attracted by interaction with foreigners, however limited by political edict.

A central element in the construct *kosmopolitizm* was that running counter to the universalism of the idea of the cosmopolitan society - it became identified with certain ethnic groups only. By the late 1940s the accusation of rootless *kosmopolitizm*' in colloquial speech was associated mainly with the Jews. As Zemtsov writes:

Although Jews were not the only victims of the anti-cosmopolitanism campaign, its anti-Semitic character soon became evident. Public figures, scientists, and artists who had concealed their Jewish origin under Russian names or pen names were publicly exposed as Jews and castigated in the most virulent and debasing terms in the Soviet press. Readers were informed that in Soviet society there was no social basis for cosmopolitanism, which was merely a legacy of pre-revolutionary capitalism and amounted to admiring everything European and denigrating everything Russian' (1991:75).

But what are we to make of the fact that only certain groups became targets of such accusations? Jews certainly, the Armenians, Poles and Greeks maybe, perhaps some people of mixed European ancestry while other peoples were never attacked with this particular insult. The Soviet Union was full of mixings created by the Soviet regime itself, the military cantonments, labour colonies, the exiled peoples, and the throngs of native peoples of diverse nationalities who flocked into new cities. Such co-mingling of peoples was regarded as the outcome of functionally necessary decisions of the state. Perhaps it was because the groups involved had been deliberately sent to their destinations that they were never accused of *kosmopolitizm*. We may draw two conclusions from the distribution of accusations. First, in an echo of Enlightenment ideas, that *kosmopolitizm* implied superiority and breadth of culture, and thus was inapplicable to peoples judged culturally more backward than the Russians. Secondly, that it implied an element of voluntarism and freedom you were a *kozmpolit* if your rootlessness' could be attributed to your own interests, as opposed to those of the state. That Soviet people might long for such qualities could not be admitted by the state. There was, however, a significant key term in the vocabulary of accusations of cosmopolitanism: *nizkopoklonnichestvo* (literally low bowing'; blind worship, groveling, idolising) to capitalist values. The very term presupposes the existence of a desire while at the same time disowning it.

So how did Stalinism deal with the ideal of the far road' that had been proclaimed with such enthusiasm only a decade earlier? Let us consider further what Papernyi writes about Stalinist culture. When the standard Soviet citizen lost geographical mobility, as a sort of compensation Stalinist Culture Two set apart certain individuals and professions who took upon themselves the heavy burden of travel' while relieving other of this necessity. All the famous expeditions of the 1930s, such as Chkalov's flights over the North Pole, or the adventures of geologists in trackless wastes, are described in Soviet literature as extraordinarily difficult and challenging yet joyful as well. Identifying himself with the superman who freely (although tortuously) soared over the net of parallels and meridians, the simple man also seemed to soar, experiencing all the torment without noticing he was being tied down' (Papernyi 1993: 61). Space for extraordinary movement was thus created in the territorialized and hierarchised society. Its heroes were beloved and admired, the subject of countless songs and poems, against a background in which ordinary people were inexorably tied to officially registered domiciles. Why did no breath of dangerous *kosmopolitizm* attach to the heroes licensed to soar and fly? Perhaps the answer is that they were engaged in the great

task of the taking over' (*osvoyeniye*) of vacant territory, and almost by definition this was uninhabited land.<sup>2</sup> *Kosmopolitizm*, on the other hand, implied contact with other peoples. For this very reason Soviet people (scouts, officials, artists, spies) became vulnerable when they were sent to meetings in foreign countries (conventions, concert tours, exhibitions, etc.), which was dangerous indeed.

*Kosmopolitizm* and socialist internationalism.

In this section I attempt first briefly to describe how Soviet internationalism was constructed, and second to explain why *kosmopolitizm* was excluded from it. In effect, *kosmopolitizm* was conceived as deriving from outside the sphere of operation of internationalism. Why? First, because, internationalism operated on the bases of conquests (in the Civil War, the Second World War) and consequently was, among its loftier ideals, a practical means of governance of the dominated. Secondly, it operated to define a territorialisation that was *moralised*. As Yuri Lotman has written (admittedly about a different historical situation), Some lands were righteous and others were sinful. [] Notions of moral value and of locality fuse together: places have a moral significance and morals have a localised significance. Geography becomes a kind of ethics (2001: 171-2). Rootless *kosmopolitizm*' could only be excluded from this moral geography of socialist / non-socialist order.

At the mundane level of politics and economics, internationalism obtained first of all within the USSR. Here all administrative units representing ethnic groups were subordinated to the All-Union structures of the Communist Party and the State and this made national conflict all but impossible. Careful central strategies of population distribution, personnel selection, ethnic quotas and political representation minimised situations of overtly national confrontation. Such policies, and the ethnic-based federal structure itself, recognised that there were national' differences. At the same time, and in enduring tension with the acknowledgement of difference, communism / socialism proclaimed the ideal of human equivalence and equality. The notion that the USSR was anything like a colonial empire could not be entertained.<sup>3</sup> As the decades passed, the project of creating the common Soviet citizen became more firmly entrenched in practical policy. Significantly, eradicating differences in ethnic culture was not admitted as central for this endeavour. A book entitled *The Formation of the Social Homogeneity of Socialist Society* (Filippov and Slesarev, eds. 1981) hardly mentions nationality, for example. It focuses rather on the drawing together of the classes, the eradication of urban rural differences, and the levelling of economic resources and education levels in towns. Nationality was destined to wither away, and therefore was assigned the status of form,' as opposed to the crucial content', of social life.

In this situation, internationalism' as enacted publicly in the internal Soviet context could

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<sup>2</sup> I am grateful to Piers Vitebsky for this point about Soviet aviators.

<sup>3</sup> Nevertheless, there are interesting parallels, it seems to me, with the divergent ideals by which the British sought to justify their rule over India. Metcalf (1995) argues convincingly that the British likewise juggled with inconsistent ideals. At some times and for some purposes the British conceived of the Indians as people like themselves or transformable into civilised' subjects, while at other times they emphasised the enduring qualities of an ineradicable oriental' difference that could only be preserved (1995: x).

only also partake of a certain formalism: the orchestrated parades with representatives of neighbouring republics, the entertainment of dance troupes and song competitions, the long speeches and elaborate toasts of banquets given by national' officials for one another. The fundamentals of the political economy were determined elsewhere. Decisions about access to state resources, the siting of industrial projects, the creation of new towns, the transfer of labour from one region to another, etc. were decided centrally. The bases on which such policies were formed were hidden. Yet, for all this, I suggest that the formalism of international encounters was not a disguise. It was a formal way of expressing what were frequently real feelings both positive and negative. Thus, for example, even the Soviet administrative hierarchy itself had a presence in personal affect. I remember being surprised to hear from a Buryat that he, as a citizen of an Autonomous Republic, felt inferior to Kazakhs and Uzbeks who were citizens of full Republics. Correspondingly, he regarded Evenks and people of other small, hierarchically-lower nationalities as in some sense lesser' people, who were available for scornful jokes. The differential affordances of the various citizenships of the USSR, such as variations in access to higher education, were enviously scrutinised. Condescension from those higher placed' in the hierarchy was resented

Yet for all that, in actuality this was also a moral universe of comradeship. There were numerous spheres even the same formal spheres where real warmth flourished. After the parades, people partied all night, usually in a totally multi-ethnic ambience. Audiences enjoyed the cultural achievements of other nationalities. People took pleasure in luxuries from all over the Union (Georgian wines, Siberian furs, Russian lacquer, Uzbek silks) and regarded them as common achievements of the Soviet people. Of course, in everyday life, a great deal of comradeship also rested on a sense of shared hardship, common fears, and on the grey sameness of material life. But the socialist values of responsibility and duty towards others were real too. Ordinary workers contributed generously to disaster funds when there were misfortunes in far off regions. People volunteered for development projects, they took pride in service for the motherland' (e.g. putting their names forward to go to teach in Central Asia). Some cities, which had been ethnically mixed from the start and gained further contingents from Soviet development policies, became truly cosmopolitan spaces. Almost despite itself, internationalism because it denied conflict and encouraged common values enabled an unacknowledged cosmopolitanism to flourish.

When internationalism was enacted outside the USSR but within the Soviet sphere of influence it became a more ambivalent matter. The brotherly' aspects, the policy of economic integration and the attempt to even up economic and social conditions, were counterbalanced by sharper differences in military power and more overt condescension than in the USSR itself.<sup>4</sup> Yet accusations of *kozmpolizm* did not figure here either. Brotherly' relations were

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<sup>4</sup> Hierarchy was felt more strongly. I remember, in Russia in the 1960s, being given a rank order of the friendly countries', with East Germany at the top and Mongolia somewhere near the bottom. The idiom of the older brother' and the younger brother' was firmly upheld, and appropriate public gestures of respect and obedience were expected. At the same time, the duties and responsibilities of internationalism were greater than at home. A Soviet citizen could be expected to shoulder discomfort and danger: to build mines in Mongolia, to manage industry in Cuba, or fight in North Korea. The only country of which I have direct knowledge of how internationalism' was experienced by ordinary people is Mongolia. Here, at the time, resentment against stationed Soviet armies and the perceived condescension of Russians

laid out as collaborative and accountable (that is, as open and public as Soviet relations ever became). Statistics of exports and imports were published; the media publicised articles about international development projects; educational exchanges were documented. Nevertheless, some aspects of relations between socialist countries were hidden, such as the existence of Soviet-run uranium mines in Mongolia. It is arguable that the reason for this lay in general security (about which the USSR was preternaturally secretive). In effect, internationalism had to collaborate with the obscuring of military security operations and the loss of sovereignty of dominated nations, because it rested ultimately on the idea that we are all on the same side' versus the West'.

Matters therefore were quite different in relations with capitalist countries. In the geographical space of the unrighteous the rules of internationalism' did not apply. Deceit and secrecy were the rule, often on both sides. This was the case even in relations of mutual benefit. For example, Buck-Morss notes that when in 1931 Andrew Mellon, the Secretary of the Treasury of the United States, bought millions of dollars worth of paintings from the Hermitage, These purchases were kept secret, laundered through a complex web of American entrepreneurs and Soviet officials (2000: 169). The operations of the entrepreneur Armand Hammer, whose pencil and asbestos factories in the Soviet Union were nationalised in 1930 but who retained close Soviet connections for decades, were never made public during the Soviet era. Socialist internationalism thus operated as a complicated and shifting system of opening and closing shutters, masterminded, even if never fully controlled, from the Moscow centre. In the Soviets' own backyard the system was to a great extent a technique of governmentality, clothing a created economic interdependence in an always ambiguous and sometimes forced political joviality. The more distant the moral space, the more acute were the tensions in the idea of brotherliness', until in the other world of capitalism it faded away almost entirely, replaced by entrenched suspicion and a conviction of the need for secretiveness and deceit.

Thus it was in relations with the moral outside' that toxic *kosmopolitizm* emerged as an always-possible accusation, for cosmopolitanism was precisely the ability to move between political-moral spheres. Not only was that outer world the domain of capitalists (who were assumed to be ethically vicious, out to exploit each other and everyone else), but it was territory that could not reasonably be supposed to be in any way under Soviet control. The outside' was a peopled space, containing human ideas, technologies and values that were quite different to those of the Soviets. Furthermore, individual and independent human volition was evident there. Perhaps it is because they felt they faced such alien unpredictability that control of public information about international relations became crucial to Soviet officials.<sup>5</sup>

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probably outweighed gratitude. There was a sense of being held under control and an unease that resources were being exported to the USSR without clear accountability in relation to benefits gained. But some years after the collapse of internationalism' and Comecon, many Mongolians now express thankfulness to the Soviets and regret that what they now see as a structure of support has disappeared.

<sup>5</sup> Even basic economic information about the USSR was subject to censorship before it was taken abroad. Orlova, invited to give lectures about Soviet life to Romanian trainee teachers in 1942, was asked on her return to resign from her job because she had taken an uncensored statistical hand-book on the USSR to Romania. This was held to contain secret' material

Accusations of *kosmopolitizm* did not occur when secrecy could be firmly imposed. Hammer, for example, the archetypal cosmopolitan, whose very existence was kept secret from Soviet citizens, was never accused of *kosmopolitizm*. It was when Soviet people were placed in situations of exposure, when their contacts with (or perceived influence from) the corrupt west could not be denied, that danger lurked. In the final section of this paper, I explore by means of several illustrations how the indictment operated, how people supported it, and why, despite the fear it generated, toxic *kosmopolitizm* could never eradicate the impulse towards cosmopolitanism.

#### An ethnography of *kosmopolitizm*

The first example is intended to illustrate how *kosmopolitizm* operated within a social class, the political elite. My illustration comes from the reminiscences of a woman who lived in the famous 'House on the Embankment' in Moscow. This externally grim, yet extraordinarily comfortable and well-equipped apartment block, was home to the highest Soviet politicians and intellectuals. Returning in 1943 after war evacuation to what she calls the 'Government House' on the bank of the Moskva River, Lidiya Shatunovskaya found almost all of the occupants to be engaged in barely concealed dealings on the black market, despite the high positions and good salaries of the husbands. People explained the frenzied profiteering (everything from vegetables to Persian carpets) by their insecurity: you could live in luxury one day and be cast into prison the next.

This is indeed what happened to one neighbour in the House, the well-known physiologist Professor Parin. He was sent in 1947 to the United States to give some lectures and improve relations between Soviet and American medical sciences. With the permission of the Soviet ambassador, he used his honorarium to buy US technology for his laboratory. But despite this, he was arrested immediately on his return, accused of revealing certain secrets in his lectures. He had described a sensational medical technique, a recent discovery made by two Soviet professors, Roskin and Klyuyeva. In the scandal that ensued, the two professors were also accused of cosmopolitanism. They were not arrested, but were judged (*sudili*) at a so-called 'trial of honour' - a public meeting of scientists where they were stigmatised (*kleimili*) with the shame of cosmopolitanism. The accusation against them was that they had published their results in the open press, and even, it seems, abroad. Professor Parin, meanwhile, was imprisoned and not set free until the death of Stalin.<sup>6</sup> With his arrest, the terrified neighbours in the 'House on the Embankment' turned against his wife, and although she was left without any means of support, refused to speak to her. Only the few non-Party member wives in the building tried to help her (Shatunovskaya 1980: 247-8).

Shatunovskaya's account makes clear that the families which did not take part in black-market dealings (families she lists by name, because they were so few) came from predictable backgrounds. Apart from one or two exceptions among the Supreme Soviet, they were the old Bolsheviks and the Academicians. It was the new generation of leaders promoted by Stalin that was fully involved in the illicit trading (1980: 241). These were the people also closest to responsibility of the campaign. And it was these same people who ostracised Professor Parin's wife on account of her contact with *kosmopolitizm*. Yet the black-market at (Orlova 1983: 117).

<sup>6</sup> Parin was then rehabilitated and allowed to rejoin the Communist Party.

this level of society involved above all dealings with foreign luxuries and antiques requisitioned from the pre-Soviet Tsarist aristocracy. The wife of one Minister was arrested after her extravagant dealing in valuables taken from state stores became impossible to ignore (1980: 243). For the most part the Stalinist elite amassed war trophies' brought back from Germany, the concert Steinways, etc. as well as cameras, paintings, carpets and fine china and so forth from all over the world. One sees here, I think, not just a defensive strategy in the face of political uncertainty, but also a structure of desire the longing for the symbols of what was forbidden and dangerous. This example shows how, on an economic level, the promulgation of the anti- *kosmopolitizm* campaign created the bisected psychology that so shocked Shatunovskaya in her neighbours: the voracious appetite for foreign luxuries on the one hand, and the fearful and hard-hearted turning away from the victims of accusations on the other.

My second illustration moves to the operation of domination, anti-*kosmopolitizm* and anti-Semitism in the heart' of one individual. It is taken from the memoirs of a woman who, in the throes of the campaign in the late 1940s, worked as an official in the Soviet institute responsible for literary relations with foreign countries (Orlova 1983). Raisa Orlova's task was to trace communist sympathies in certain works of American literature and to unmask' the harmful character the rest of it. She was a member of the party, a believing communist, an upholder of the ideals of internationalism. Her memoirs, written in the 1960s with small additions in the 1980s, are in large part an anguished attempt to understand how she could have believed what she did, how she could have been as blind as she was. Orlova was Jewish, and yet I not only did not feel myself to be Jewish, but while this was still possible I called myself an anti-Semite, and with reason' (1983: 164). She identified with Russian culture, language and literature. She changed her surname to the Russian name of her second husband (1983: 164). She wrote paeans of praise to the beloved leader, Stalin. I tried to speak in public about patriotism,' she writes. I joined the persecutors. Perhaps there was no more shameful period in my life' (1983: 169).

I cited examples (negative!) from an articles about America published in *Internatsional'naya Literatura* during the war. One of these was written by A. Startsev, who had just been arrested. Today it is clear to me, and all decent people who surround me, that to polemicise with a prisoner, with a person whose mouth is gagged, is utterly ignoble. But then, that is what I did' (1983 164).

Orlova describes how the anti-cosmopolitan campaign was justified among the officials in her institute. A colleague told her that the best Jews, the intelligentsia, the party activists, had broken with their people, and that what remained was an urban, local petty bourgeoisie. Old people. Stagnated, pre-revolutionary remnants. Other nations had their territories thus the Georgians and the Armenians had been able to develop new Soviet nationalities, but the Jews, with no territory, had not (1983: 165). Orlova regarded all this as somewhat abstract, but she listened to the conversations about family-mindedness.' She went along with the accusations of grovelling' (to western values) levelled against the four colleagues whom it had been decided would be singled out as victims. She voted for their exclusion from the party and from their work at the institute.

Yet, in the middle of all this, Orlova recalls a moment when something subconscious revealed itself. There was no milk in the shops in the city of Kuybyshev. In the market queues were already standing at 5 o'clock in the morning for milk at 30-40 roubles a litre.

Orlova needed milk for her two small daughters.

And suddenly there appeared a stout woman, red-faced, clearly Jewish from her accent. She jumped in past the queue and shouted to the seller, Give me milk first, I'll pay you more. I ran up to her and said quietly but very clearly, Clear out right away. Or I'll kill you. I have no idea now how I planned to kill her, but there must have been something convincing in my tone. She immediately hid away. Never after, in all the numerous queues I have had to stand in [], have I ever, in any circumstances, interfered even in conversations. I tried to keep out of them. But it seems that then - I was ashamed. I knew that between that woman and me there existed some link. I was so struck with fright that I acted out of character' (1983: 167).

Why was it that Orlova retained this incident in her memory twenty years later? Benjamin's ideas on domination and on the recuperation of what has been disowned have helped me, first to see that Orlova's moment of anger had anything to do with *kosmopolitizm* at all, and also to analyse how the psychology may have worked. In a binary situation, the adoption of the active subject position - in the case of gender that of the boy in the oedipal constellation who repudiates identification with his mother and projects the elements of despised passivity associated with his own babyhood on the girl - determines the position of the passive object', which then becomes a container for the subject's defensively organised activity. Activity and passivity are divided, seemingly foreclosing the possibility of being a subject who would own both possibilities within the self (Benjamin 1998: xvii). Yet this mutual exclusivity is but one constellation in psychological development, and it conceals earlier bisexual identifications which can be recuperated by reclaiming the mother's contribution to our subjectivity and desire (1998: xvii). The negating moment is decisive, for it determines difference and otherness, yet Benjamin aims to show how this does not prevent the possibility of recognition (1998: xviii-xix). *Kosmopolitizm* can also be seen as a psychological constellation', and the campaign of the 1940s as producing the positions of active subject (persecutors) and passive object (the list of intended victims in the Institute). Yet in the incident in the milk queue, we see how Orlova, who did not struggle out from her public Soviet stance till years later, nevertheless held within herself a buried feeling of commonality with the excoriated. The very excess of her terror and attempt at destruction caused her to recognise that the other' was in fact somehow like herself.

My third example returns to social life and more everyday circumstances. It is intended to illustrate that before, through and after the political hate campaigns Soviet people had experiences of actual cosmopolitanism and that these were not limited to a rarefied elite. Olga Vainshtein's article Fashioning women' ((2000) describes how home-sewing by dressmakers was extraordinarily popular in the 1930s-60s. While Stalin was declaring that A woman should smell of freshness and nothing else', and that cosmetics and stylish outfits were unhealthy inventions of the West, the clothes sold in Soviet shops were correspondingly plain and workaday (Vainshtein 2000: 200). Meanwhile, in an extensive shadow economy, women's favourite dresses were made by their dressmakers, who would be portrayed as family friend, almost a good fairy, a person appearing by magic in the most important moment of life' (2000: 203). The private dressmaker was invisible to the authorities. Her work was classed as unskilled' and her payment was miserable, as her clients were often women who could not afford to buy clothes in shops. Yet, the state was present by virtue of the unusual experience of its absence. As Vainshtein observes, the lack of surveillance in this covert

domestic space turned dressmaking into a cherished sphere of self-expression. The dressmaker was often a person of previously high class disguising her origins, and she was frequently alien to her surroundings also by nationality (perhaps a foreigner, a refugee, very often with a Jewish or East European background). A foreigner in this context is identified as a person enjoying the privileges of mobility and breaking some local rules that are obligatory for the rest of people. Being a foreigner also implied possession of some secret and highly valuable knowledge' (Vainshtein 2000: 207). It was exactly this knowledge of cut and style that gave cachet to the sewer. Vainshtein gives the examples of the Romanian dressmaker who emigrated to France and then came to relatives in Odessa, and the woman called Tanya who had lived in Germany and brought back a pattern book borrowed widely by dressmakers in her mid-Russian town. People like Tanya were secret agents' of western culture, often highly influential as cultural producers: their outfits were copied, their advice on style meant a lot (2000: 207). Yet they were cosmopolitans only in the particular contexts of provincial Russia that gave significance to their foreign flair. The room of the dressmaker,' Vainshtein comments, is repeatedly represented as a kind of enchanted cave from a fairy tale, a magic place for the future transformation of the soviet Cinderella. The noticeable details of the room are, of course, the Singer sewing machine, the mannequins, and the embroidered pictures covering the wall (a traditional craft since the old days)' (2000: 206).

### Conclusion

The example of the dressmaker reminds us that we do not live in a blank and homogenous space, but in spaces that are laden with qualities, spaces that may be also haunted by fantasy. Such a Bachelardian observation is developed further by Foucault when he writes about the space of outside' (*du dehors*):

The space in which we are living, by which we are drawn outside ourselves, in which, as a matter of fact, the erosion of our life, our time, and our history takes place, this space that eats and scrapes away at us, is also heterogeneous space in itself. In other words, we do not live in a kind of void, within which individuals and things might be located. [] We live inside an ensemble of relations that define emplacements that are irreducible to one another. [] But what interests me among all these emplacements are certain ones that have the curious property of being connected to all other emplacements, but in such a way that they suspend, neutralise or reverse the set of relations that are designated, reflected or represented by them' (1994: 177-8).

For Foucault utopias are one such type of all-connected emplacement, in that they maintain a general relation of direct or inverse analogy with the real space of society. Early revolutionary Communism could be seen as neutralising or reversing space in this way and thus proposing a notional and utopian cosmopolitanism - but as this article has shown, the Soviet state rapidly gave up any attempt to actualise such an ideal, becoming enmeshed instead in socialist internationalist politics. Cosmopolitanisms in practice can be better understood in the light of that other space of Foucault's, the one in which we are actually living, that heterogeneous space that eats and scrapes away at us.' <sup>7</sup> Cosmopolitans like the Soviet dressmakers (and we

<sup>7</sup> See, however, the interesting article by Harri Englund (2004), which argues that Pentecostal Christianity in Malawi creates its own cosmopolitanism by insisting on the universality of the sphere of righteousness, as against this-worldly realities ruled by the Devil. Cosmopolitanism

could add musicians, architects, chefs, sailors, and others) were instrumental in making spaces that indeed drew people out of themselves. The very existence of such people suggested the presence' perhaps only glimpsed though the detail of a style of a cosmopolitan and yet definitely imagined space of outside. In Foucault's terms, cosmopolitanism is a curious emplacement, in that it tends to deny, or at least over-ride, territorialization. Yet, as my illustrations have shown, it has a placing' element in its motility that of the outside' come inside, or the hidden inside ventured out to alien space.

During high Stalinism for people like Orlova, these disturbing movements barely reached her consciousness. They were incidents or moments she could not link together, or tie to reflective thinking that would have made sense of her barely sensed doubts.<sup>8</sup> It was not until she travelled to Poland in the 1950s that Orlova came face to face with people who openly challenged her view of the world, and perhaps it was only when she was writing her memoirs that she became consciously aware of having repressed the *kosmopolit* inside herself. Yet this article has also argued that even inside Soviet Russia, even in a time of terror, and the more so when sheer fright abated, there was an unassuming and unnoticed cosmopolitanism in ordinary life.<sup>9</sup> This cannot be understood, however, separately from state discourse. Both its clandestine character and its enticing-ness its quality of magical superiority - were products of the structure of domination, the patriotism' that denigrated the foreigner. And the practice of socialist internationalism, for all its contradictions and the difference from cosmopolitanism in its foundational idea, may have accustomed people to generosity with respect to cultural difference. The more absurd the accusations of toxic *kosmopolitizm*, in other words, the more insignificant the activity judged to be evidence of it, the clearer it is that cosmopolitanism was not to be eradicated in the most everyday life in the Soviet Union. Now one could see this entire nexus as *sui generis*, a Soviet problem, and irrelevant to the world we live in today. The structure of desire I have pointed to, however, and its connection with nationalistic political domination must have more general import.

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in this case entails an uneasy relation with the idea of home'. Home in this impoverished country is the virtually unbearable existential condition one is thrust into as a human being' (2004: 297), and cosmopolitanism in Malawi is the ongoing compulsion to transcend it.

<sup>8</sup> Orlova comments, A little while ago I had occasion to re-read *Litgazeta* from 1949. It is impossible to understand now how I read it then? How could I have believed it? The whole thing is just a selection of pogrom-type articles; the style, the lexicon, not to speak of the content is witness to dirt, lies, disgusting comedy. But I believed. Maybe with some reservations, with many personal disagreements. Perhaps, if I had then tried to generalise these personal and separate disagreements, something different would have happened (1983: 162-3).

<sup>9</sup> See Malcomson (1998: 238-40) for discussion of a range of comparable actually existing cosmopolitanisms' in other historical / political contexts.

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