

**THE STATE, ITS HISTORY  
AND  
DEVELOPMENT VIEWED  
SOCIOLOGICALLY**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649711604

The State, Its History and Development Viewed Sociologically by Franz Oppenheimer & John M. Gitterman

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.  
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

[www.triestepublishing.com](http://www.triestepublishing.com)

**FRANZ OPPENHEIMER & JOHN M. GITTERMAN**

**THE STATE, ITS HISTORY  
AND  
DEVELOPMENT VIEWED  
SOCIOLOGICALLY**



# The State

*ITS HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT VIEWED  
SOCIOLOGICALLY*

By FRANZ OPPENHEIMER, M.D., PH.D.  
Professor of Political Science in the University of Frankfort-on-Main

*Authorized Translation*

By JOHN M. GITTERMAN, PH.D., LL.B.  
(Of the New York County Bar)



NEW YORK  
VANGUARD PRESS

*Copyright, 1914*  
THE BOBBS-MERRILL COMPANY

*Copyright, 1922*  
B. W. HUEBSCH, INC.

VANGUARD PRINTINGS

*First—August, 1926*  
*Second—February, 1928*

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA



College  
Library

JC

336

662

1922

## THE MAN (1864—):

*Franz Oppenheimer*, one of a fairly large number of British, French and German physicians who abandoned their medical pursuits and rose to fame as political economists, was born in Berlin. He studied and practiced medicine, became private Lecturer of Economics at the Berlin University in 1909, and Professor of Sociology at the Frankfort University in 1919. His libertarian views made him, for many years, the target of academic persecutions, until the growing fame of his masterpiece, *The State*, effectively silenced his detractors.

## THE BOOK (1908):

The organic history of the State is a long and exciting adventure, usually rendered dull in learned accounts. Not so in Oppenheimer's *The State* which extracts that history, in a highly stimulating manner, from the sharp necessities and homicidal conflicts of all sorts and conditions of men, from the Stone Age to the Age of Henry Ford. The easy flow of important information derivable from this German volume has rendered it highly acceptable to American readers.

1 101 715 373

OTHER BOOKS BY  
DOCTOR FRANZ OPPENHEIMER

---

|   |      |
|---|------|
| Die Siedlungsgenossenschaft . . . .   | 1896 |
| Grossgrundeigentum und Soziale Frage . .  | 1898 |
| Das Grundgesetz der Marxschen Gesellschaftslehre  | 1903 |
| Robertus' Angriff auf Ricardos Renten-theorie<br>und der Lexis-Diehl'sche Rettungsversuch . | 1908 |
| David Ricardos Grundrententheorie . . . .   | 1909 |
| Theorie der Reinen und Politischen Ökonomie .   | 1910 |



## AUTHOR'S PREFACE

### TO THE SECOND AMERICAN EDITION

This little book has made its way. In addition to the present translation into English, there are authorized editions in French, Hungarian and Serbian. I am also informed that there are translations published in Japanese, Russian, Hebrew and Yiddish; but these, of course, are pirated. The book has stood the test of criticism, and has been judged both favorably and unfavorably. It has, unquestionably, revived the discussion on the origin and essence of the State.

Several prominent ethnologists, particularly Holsti, the present Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Finnish Free State, have attacked the basic principle formulated and demonstrated in this work, but they have failed, because their definition of the State assumed the very matter that required to be proven. They have brought together a large array of facts in proof of the existence of some forms of *Government* and *Leadership*, even where no classes obtained, and to the substance of these forms they have given the name of "The State." It is not my intention to controvert these facts. It is self-evident, that in any group of human beings, be it ever so small, there must exist an authority which determines conflicts and, in extraordinary situations, assumes the leadership. But this authority is not "The State,"

in the sense in which I use the word. The State may be defined as an organization of *one class* dominating over the other classes. Such a class organization can come about in one way only, namely, through conquest and the subjection of ethnic groups by the dominating group. This can be demonstrated with almost mathematical certainty. Not one of my critics has brought proofs to invalidate this thesis. Most modern sociologists, among whom may be named Albion Small, Alfred Vierkandt and Wilhelm Wundt, accept this thesis. Wilhelm Wundt, in particular, asserts in unmistakable language, that "the political society (a term identical with the State in the sense employed in this book) first came about and could originate only in the period of migration and conquest," whereby the subjugation of one people by another was effected.

But even some of my opponents are favorably inclined to my arguments, as in the case of the venerable Adolf Wagner, whose words I am proud to quote. In his article on "The State" in the *Handwörterbuch der Staatswissenschaften*, he writes: "The sociologic concept of the State, to which I have referred, particularly in the broad scope and treatment of it given by Oppenheimer, deserves careful consideration, especially from political economists and political historians. The vista opened out, from this point of view, of the economic development of peoples and that of the State during historic times, should be attractive even to the opponents of the concept itself."

The "sociologic concept of the State," as Ludwig Gumplowicz termed it, is assured of ultimate general acceptance. Its opponents are strenuous and persever-

ing, and I once called them "the sociologic root of all evil;" but the concept, none the less, is the basic principle of "bourgeoisie" sociology, and will be found of value in the study, not only of economics and history, but in that of Law and Constitutional History. I permit myself to make a few remarks on this point.

The earliest evidence of the recognition of the idea underlying the *law of previous accumulation*, may be traced back, at the latest, to the period of the decay of classical civilization, at the time when the capitalistic slave economy brought the city states to ruin as though their peoples had suffered from a galloping consumption. As in our modern capitalistic age, which resembles that period in many respects, there occurred a breach in all those naturally developed relations in which the individual has found protection. What Ferdinand Toennies calls the "community bonds" were loosened. The individual found himself unprotected, compelled to rely on his own efforts and on his own reason in the seething sea of competition which followed. The collective reason, the product of the wisdom of thousands of years of experience, could no longer guide or safeguard him. It had become scattered. Out of this need for an individual reason, there arose the idea of *nationalism*. This idea had its justification at first, as a line of development and a method in the newly born science of social government; but when later it became what Rubenstein (in his work *Romantic Socialism*) calls a "tendency," it was not justified. The community, to use Toennies' term, changed into a "society." "Contract" seemed to be the only bond that held men together—the contract based on the purely ration-