

**THE STATE, ITS HISTORY
AND DEVELOPMENT
VIEWED SOCIOLOGICALLY.
[NEW YORK-1922]**

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THE STATE

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THE STATE

ITS HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT VIEWED
SOCIOLOGICALLY

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AUTHORIZED TRANSLATION

By

JOHN M. GITTERMAN, PH. D., LL. B.

(Of the New York County Bar)

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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 Vierkant 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 "bourgeois" 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-