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## WHAT IS THE STATE? A RUSSIAN CONCEPT OF GOSUDARSTVO IN THE EUROPEAN CONTEXT\*

Abstract: What allows us to talk about the state as an active agency when we understand that only individuals act? This article draws comparisons between Quentin Skinner's exposition of the history of the concept of the state in major European languages and the history of its equivalent Russian term gosudarstvo in order to provide some general hypotheses on the development of the phenomenon of the state, and on the origins of this baffling usage. First, summing up a vast number of historical and lexicographic works, it attempts a meticulous reconstruction of conceptual development in the Russian language. Second, a peculiarity of the Russian case is discussed, where absolutist thinkers (and not republicans, as in Western Europe) stressed the difference between the person of the ruler and the state. Third, political interests in introducing such novel usage are discussed, together with the role of this usage in the formation of the state. This allows us to see better the origins of current faith in the existence of the state as a more or less clearly designated and independent actor, predicated on the mechanism of what Pierre Bourdieu described as "mysterious delegation."

A state exists chiefly in the hearts and minds of its people; if they do not believe it is there, no logical exercise will bring it to life.<sup>1</sup>

If we ask what in empirical reality corresponds to the idea of the state, we shall find many diffuse and discreet human actions and passive reactions, practically and legally ordered ties either of a singular character or of a regularly recurring kind, united by an idea which is a belief into effective... norms and into relationships of domination among people.<sup>2</sup>

What is the state? As linguistic analysis demonstrates, this question may hardly make sense. Alf Ross was the first to consistently apply a Wittgensteinian approach to analyzing statements that described state actions, or, more accurately, to analyzing the fact that certain acts, performed by individuals are spoken as if performed by the state. Indeed, when we speak of the German state declaring war or building a highway, we are fully aware that it was a certain civil servant who pronounced a declaration of war or that there is a multitude of construction workers who are actually building the highway in question. We are aware that we cannot empirically see, hear or touch an entity called the state, while individuals appear in their full empirical splendor. However, noted Ross, in modern English it generally made sense to speak about state actions in

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<sup>1</sup> Joseph R. Strayer, *On the Medieval Origins of the Modern State* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 5).

<sup>2</sup> Max Weber, *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Wissenschaftslehre* (Tubingen: More, 1968), 200.

the following two cases: “when the act represents the exercise of public authority or official coercive power” and “when the act is the performance of a certain piece of work which is paid by the ‘public treasury’.”<sup>3</sup>

Even if statements that mention state actions make sense, they are systematically misleading, since we often intuitively presume that we can find a logical subject of action mentioned in the statement by means of pointing to reality. This search for an empirical referent for “the state” will not help, however, because statements that describe state actions have only grammatical subjects (that is, the word “state” is a grammatical subject to which a predicate is attached) but do not have logical subjects as in the statement “Peter built a house”, which has both grammatical and logical subjects. When we say “the state is constructing this building”, implied are some individuals authorizing expenditure and directing the whole project or a set of individuals physically assembling the building, while the “state” to which the act of building is linguistically ascribed is not found in empirical reality. As Ross concluded,

It is not possible to replace the word “state” by other words, so that a certain substance, occurrence, activity, quality, or anything else is designated, which “is” the state... The question whether the state is a reality, ... a fiction, a sum of psychological processes is also a fictitious problem -- in any case in relation to the usage that we have been considering. The state “is” nothing because the statements of the structure “the state is...” cannot properly be made.<sup>4</sup>

Ross also described the four conditions that supplied the statements that describe state actions with an opportunity to make sense. We are able to speak of some individual’s actions as if they are being performed by “the state” when, first, authority is not vested in this private individual but in his or her capacity as the present holder of office; second, if this authority entails giving orders to others; third, if this authority is not exercised in the holder’s own interest, but in the interests of a duty-bound office established for the common good; fourth, when this authority is part of a systematic unity of authorities. In short, to speak of the act of an individual person as being performed by the state we have to believe that this individual currently holds an office, legally regulated to promote the common good and being part of similar offices that together constitute public government or civil service.

If Ross is correct and we cannot meaningfully talk about the question “what is the state?” we can at least posit a question about the historical conditions that made it possible to meaningfully talk about state actions, being at the same time fully aware that one cannot find an entity called “the state” in empirical reality. In other words, how did these four conditions for validating a speech act mentioning “acts of the state” develop? What were the reasons for adopting such a convoluted usage and how did it actually happen?

This question is all the more interesting since speaking about the state as a subject of action is definitely a modern invention. For example, even Machiavelli who is usually credited with having first elaborated the modern concept of the state rarely, if ever, speaks about the state as an active agent. Jack H. Hexter in his 1957 article -- now almost a classic in Machiavelli studies -- analyzing the usage of *lo stato* in *Il Principe*, has found that “*lo stato* is never worked for, helped, served, revered, admired, feared, loved; it is added to, assaulted, possessed,

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<sup>3</sup> Alf Ross, “On the Concepts ‘State’ and ‘State Organs’ in Constitutional Law,” *Scandinavian Studies in Law* 5 (1960), 123-4.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 124-5.

occupied, seized, taken, acquired, kept or lost.”<sup>5</sup> In short, it is up for grabs, not an organized body politic, ready for action, but an “inert lump.” Out of 110 instances when lo stato appears in *The Prince* in connection to politics, 35 times it appears with only 5 verbs -- acquistare, tenere, mantenere, togliere (to take), perdere (to lose). Furthermore, the majority of other uses of lo stato is also “exploitative.” The state “is likely to be being bossed by someone...; or created or increased...; or defended and conserved.”<sup>6</sup>

The explanation for this curious usage may lie in the fact that Machiavelli’s advice to princes is concerned with their main goal -- mantenere lo stato -- that is, to maintain their estate and state of domination, and hence Machiavelli rarely talks about lo stato outside of this context. Thus, out of 110 uses, Hexter found only 8 where lo stato may be said as being unambiguously active; these are phrases that may imply our contemporary perceptions of the state -- lo stato is said to have foundations, take roots, and so on. However, we may be just reading our perceptions into these lines, since the modern concept of the active state was hardly available at Machiavelli’s epoch at all. Hexter elucidates the context for each of the “active” uses of lo stato and shows that all of them may be also interpreted as dealing with the roots and foundations of personal domination of the prince over men, rather than with actions of the separate entity called the state, or even with actions of the prince’s governing apparatus. For example, the first sentence of *The Prince*, even if employing lo stato in the active sense, clearly reveals the main feature of this term, in Hexter’s opinion: “All states, all dominions (tutti gli stati, tutti i dominii) that have held and do hold empire over men have been and are either republics and principalities.”<sup>7</sup> Following the usage of his day, Machiavelli is concerned with “empire over men”, imperio sopra li uomini, or in Hexter’s term, with “tenancies of command over men.” His book does not deal with the operation of an abstract entity called the state, because this conception had not been formed yet.<sup>8</sup>

To restate our initial puzzling question again: how did we come to imagine the state as an entity that actively influences the world, even if we cannot verify this belief empirically and if the early moderns could hardly think of the state as an actor either? What made possible such a radical reversal from the early modern concept of the preyish state, on which everybody feeds, to the active and overpowering entity that we now imagine? What made it possible to think of the

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<sup>5</sup> Hanna Pitkin, *Wittgenstein and Justice. On the Significance of the Ludwig Wittgenstein for Social and Political Thought* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972), 311.

<sup>6</sup> Jack H. Hexter, *The Vision of Politics on the Eve of the Reformation: More, Machiavelli, and Seyssel*. (New York: Basic Books, 1973), 156, 159.

<sup>7</sup> Machiavelli, *The Prince*, trans. Harvey C. Mansfield, Jr. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985), 5.

<sup>8</sup> Also see Harvey Mansfield, “On the Impersonality of the Modern State: A Comment on Machiavelli’s Use of Stato,” *American Political Science Review* 77 (1983): 849-57. Quentin Skinner disagrees with Hexter: some instances of ambiguous usage in Machiavelli provided an opportunity to later think of lo stato as an apparatus of government that may initiate actions. By the middle of seventeenth century almost all West European authors share this vision. Of course, the conceptual slide is just beginning in Machiavelli’s time, insists Skinner, but it would be wrong to overlook the first leanings in this direction. (Skinner, “The State,” in *Political Innovation and Conceptual Change*, ed. T. Ball, J. Farr and R. Hanson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), esp. 164-167.)

existence of an almost mystical entity -- “the state” -- that nobody sees but that everybody presumes to exist and to act, frequently in an overwhelming manner, on our individual lives?

In order to answer these questions, I shall first survey the well researched history of the concept of the state in major West European languages, and particularly in English. Then I shall examine the history of its Russian equivalent, the concept of gosudarstvo, which will supply a good contrast case to the results obtained from research on the word “state.” Generalizing from both conceptual histories, we might be able to provide a hypothesis on the reasons for the appearance of a puzzling contemporary usage that systematically misleads us to perceive “state acts” carried out by individuals as actions of a mystical entity called the state.

#### History of the concept of the state.

The English word “state” has a very rich history. The OED enumerates about 40 senses of it. Coming from the Latin word status, it carries connotations of something standing or established, of a condition or manner of this standing. Quentin Skinner has provided a most comprehensive history of the political uses of the term, and we shall follow his exposition rather closely.<sup>9</sup>

Harold C. Dowdall, who first wrote in English on the development of the concept of the state, emphatically asserted that from Cicero to Grotius he had found not even one use of the term status in the sense of modern political state.<sup>10</sup> Skinner finds two important medieval Latin predecessor expressions that supplied grounds for the development of the modern concept of the state. The first is status regis which meant “status of majesty, high estate, condition of stateliness.”<sup>11</sup> Justinian’s code, the vocabulary of which provided terms for many of the key medieval categories, starts with a section called De statu hominum which deals with the problem of de personarum statu, the status of different persons. This usage proved to be very convenient after the rebirth of Roman law in eleventh and twelfth century Europe. Since in the medieval world view each vocation had its own station or status, the vocation of princes or kings had a corresponding status appropriate to them, called status regis, estate royal or estat du roi. As Dowdall first noticed, this status implied not only a set of duties and qualities appropriate to a

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<sup>9</sup> Skinner, “The State.” This article belongs to a tradition of thought exemplified also by writings of Dowdall and Hexter -- people who closely examine the conditions of appearance of the concept, which, in their opinion, are closely tied to the appearance of the designated phenomenon itself. The debate on whether the phenomenon of the (political) state existed even before the concept appeared is for the reader to adjudicate him- or herself. For example, Ernst Kantorowicz and Gaines Post have ruled in favor of this phenomenon’s existence in medieval Europe. Kantorowicz thus found the antecedents of the modern concept of the state in Aquinas (Kantorowicz, *The King’s Two Bodies*. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957), 271.). In another version of the argument, Post asserts that even if the Latin term status did not apply to what we could consider to be “states” in medieval Europe, the term regnum (which was frequently defined as a corporate body) did, and thus was used to designate these states avant-le-lettre. (Post, *Studies in Medieval Legal Thought* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1964), viii.) Andrew Vincent in a recent overview supports the Dowdall-Hexter-Skinner vision. (Vincent, *Theories of the State* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1987), 17.)

<sup>10</sup> Harold C. Dowdall, *The Word “State”* (London: Stevens and Sons, 1923), 4.

<sup>11</sup> Skinner, 91.

magnate, but all “the trappings of exalted station” as well.<sup>12</sup> Skinner explains this attention to the external signs of princely stature through Clifford Geertz’s theory of the majesty of the sovereign residing in the “ordering force of display” -- a feature of sovereign power, about which we have almost completely forgotten but which constituted a very important part of status regis. Only a man of the stature and stateliness appropriate to a prince, with respectable physical comportment and a manner of standing that inspired awe, could successfully claim status regis. We can still register residual elements of this understanding in Milton, when he writes about Canute in *The History of Britain*: “with all the state that royalty could put into his countenance.”<sup>13</sup>

The second important medieval expression that contributed to the rise of the modern concept of the state is status regni, or, better, status rei publicae. It also came from the vocabulary of Justinian’s code, which in turn quoted the famous statement of Ulpian: “Public law pertains to the status rei Romanae; private, to the utility of individuals. Public law relates to religion, priests and magistrates.”<sup>14</sup> Status rei publicae thus designated a state or a condition of the realm or of the commonwealth -- a sense still retained in the US President’s State of the Union address -- and most often was treated as a specific object of concern for princes. A prince was expected to keep the status regni in a good condition. The expression optimus status rei publicae dates back to Cicero, but it also became part and parcel of numerous writings on bonus status during the Middle Ages, one of the last most telling examples being the Latin title of the famous *Utopia* of Sir Thomas More, or as it was translated in English, “A fruteful and pleasaunt worke of the beste state of a publyque weale.”<sup>15</sup> Of course, frequently, the two predecessor categories appeared together: the glory of the magistrate’s vocation consisted in attaining or furthering the good standing of the commonwealth. Analytically, however, these were distinct categories, since the first primarily indicated the specific status of one estate among others within a given realm, while the second pointed to the common welfare of this realm.

Neither of these two terms, however, signified the modern concept of the state as an autonomous governing entity, distinct from both rulers and the ruled. It was the advice books to Italian princes -- the earliest example of “popular” literature that used these categories and translated them from Latin into vernacular Italian -- that gradually extended the meaning of the term status in the direction of the modern concept of the state.<sup>16</sup> Generally, answering Machiavelli’s question -- how can the prince mantenere lo stato? -- advice books made three types of recommendations. First, in order to maintain one’s dominant status and the good state of the entrusted realm, a prince must maintain the character of his regime, the type of government. It is in this sense of regime that the first sentence of *Il Principe* uses the term lo stato: Tutti gli

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<sup>12</sup> Dowdall, 5.

<sup>13</sup> Skinner, 92.

<sup>14</sup> Post, 12-13.

<sup>15</sup> OED, article on “state”, section #28, p. 554

<sup>16</sup> Advice books are “popular” literature only in relation to the glosses and treatises of medieval legists that had a very circumscribed circulation. Thus, Latin expressions that Post and Kantorowicz found in sparse medieval juridical treatises which may have tried to first articulate the modern concept of the state, were hardly consequential -- they are ignored in the abundant mirror-of-princes literature, which is almost exclusively concerned with the domination of the prince and the condition of his domain. See Skinner, 96.

stati..., and so on.<sup>17</sup> The second way to maintain lo stato was to allow “no loss or alteration in the range of territories given into one’s charge.”<sup>18</sup> Hence lo stato came to designate the territory over which princely domination was exercised.

The most decisive innovation was the idea that in order to maintain both regime and territory, one had to command “the institutions of government and means of coercive control that serve to organize and preserve order within political communities.”<sup>19</sup> Machiavelli talks about lo stato in this sense, even if he makes the very first steps in this direction, departing from old usage. Indeed, it was easy for Hexter to interpret all instances of the use of lo stato as dealing with the personal command of the prince over his subjects since the new meaning had not yet separated itself from the old ones of regime and territory and could be easily overlooked in expressions which combine many connotations. Lo stato at that time, as we have already said repeating Skinner, almost always meant il suo stato of the prince, the condition of his personal domination rather than a state apparatus serving him. In West European literature as well, until the mid-sixteenth century “there will be found scarcely any instance in which état, staat, or state in question is unequivocally separated from status or standing of the prince himself.”<sup>20</sup> One could add that the “state” in question most frequently was his lordly stature or his standing domination.

Two developments in political theory in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries separated the state as an entity with a life of its own -- from the person of the prince, on the one hand, and from the prince’s subjects and territory they inhabit, on the other. First, the republican tradition of European thought contributed to the separation of the prince from the state. This was a well-established point in a stream of republican thinking from Dante to Contarini (best exemplified in his *De republica Venetorum*, 1543): a city can hardly hope to remain free unless it succeeds in imposing strict legal conditions on its rulers and magistrates. However, this idea of the need for a framework of laws and public power independent of the prince could be easily expressed by Italian republicans in traditional terms, rather than by introducing a new and unnecessary term status. Thus, “although Contarini has a clear conception of the apparatus of government as a set of institutions independent of those who control them, he never uses the term status to describe them, but always prefers in a similar way to speak of their authority as embodied in the respublica itself.”<sup>21</sup>

Second, absolutist thought in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries contributed to separating the figure of the prince from the multitude of the ruled, and here the word “state” was called for in order to express this not so subtle distinction. Fighting against the fiduciary theories

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid., 99. Dowdall, 28, even tried to define this regime, based on varied sources, but tracing it ultimately to the definition contained in the first sentence: lo stato is a dominio that exercises imperio over people.

<sup>18</sup> Skinner, 100.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., 101

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., 102, 104. Skinner’s best case for the thesis that the new meaning of state machinery, independent from the person of the ruler, is already present in Machiavelli refers to an excerpt in *Discorsi* book I, ch. 18: “In Rome there was a constitution regulating government, or rather its form of government (e ordine del governo or vero dello stato), and then laws enabling the magistrates to keep the citizens in order.” Machiavelli, *The Discourses*, ed. B. Crick. (London: Penguin, 1983), 160; Italian original quoted in Skinner, 110.

<sup>21</sup> Skinner, 106, 109.

of sovereignty, where the prince was considered to be a trustee or a minister of the people who could be recalled under certain conditions, the absolutists strove to impose a vision of sovereignty endowed with irrevocable powers. The powers of civil government may initially depend on the power of citizens, in this line of thinking, but once established, they belong to an independent sovereign and cannot be reclaimed. Neither the word *respublica* nor its English or French equivalents fared very well in expressing this idea. For example, Raleigh lamented the fact that the word “commonwealth” did not successfully describe the source of sovereignty since it became “an usurped nickname” and frequently referred “to the government of the whole multitude.”<sup>22</sup> Hence he employed the term “State” which he defined (in 1618) as “the frame or set order of a Common-wealth, or of the Governours that rule the same, especially of the chief and Sovereign governour that commandeth the rest.”<sup>23</sup> Hobbes, wrestling with the same problem in his early treatises, used the word “city”, the old English equivalent of Latin *civitas*: “A city therefore (that we may define it) is one person whose will, by the compact of many men, is to be received for the will of them all.”<sup>24</sup> This, Skinner suggests, was so awkward and alien to colloquial usage of the word “city” that when he published *Leviathan*, he opted for another term: “that great Leviathan, called a Common-wealth, or State (in latine Civitas).”<sup>25</sup> As many have noted, in *Leviathan* sovereignty resides in an artificial soul, neither in the ruler, nor in the ruled. This allows Hobbes to distinguish the state, or “the Seat of Power”, as he calls it at one point,<sup>26</sup> from both the people and the person of the prince. The term “state” itself is very convenient since it does not carry the connotations of popular rule that “commonwealth” has, neither does it directly imply the personal rule of the prince, as the word “sovereignty” -- interpreted as the domination of a feudal sovereign -- could have done.

#### History of the concept of gosudarstvo

Let us juxtapose this account to conceptual development in the Russian language. The movement away from il suo stato to “the state” conceived as different from both the person of the ruler and the body of the ruled is obvious in the Russian case as well. However, there are significant differences that may shed light on the historical reasons for the peculiarities of conceptual development in West European languages. A comparison will also allow us to formulate a hypothesis on what made it possible, in both English and Russian, to speak of “the state” as an independent entity with a capacity for action. I apologize for the somewhat extended treatment of Russian matters, but since no extended conceptual history of gosudarstvo has been produced do far, I shall have to be tediously meticulous at times, assembling bits and pieces of evidence that have been heretofore produced by scholars in various disciplines.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 119.

<sup>23</sup> OED, article on “state”, section #29a, page 554.

<sup>24</sup> *De Cive* quoted in Skinner, 119.

<sup>25</sup> Hobbes, *Leviathan*, ed. C. B. Macpherson (London: Penguin, 1985), 81.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 75.

<sup>27</sup> I am greatly indebted to Claudio Ingerflom who first brought my attention to the topic and whose remarkable article (Ingerflom, “Oublier l’état pour comprendre la Russie?” *Revue des études slaves* LXVI: 1 (1993), 125-134) provides the only systematic (if brief) account of the development of the Russian equivalents of the English term “state.” In his analysis of Russian

The first obvious difference between the conceptual developments in the two languages is that Russian did not adopt the Latin term, or its West European equivalents, to designate the state. The Latin word status was incorporated into Russian to only designate the social rank or high esteem of a person, while the phonetic copy of the German word Staat came to signify units within a federal state, as in Soedinennye shtaty, “the United States.” The main Russian term for the state, gosudarstvo, is a derivation from gosudar’ -- meaning prince or master of a household, the obvious equivalent of the Latin dominus -- which led Richard Pipes to suggest that gosudarstvo could be more adequately translated as “domain.”<sup>28</sup>

A conceptual history of gosudarstvo thus seems at first sight rather straightforward. Ancient Slavonic had a word gospodar’ linked to the root term gospod’ or gospodin, meaning “head of the household, property owner, male spouse” (also later -- “Lord, meaning God”) while a related early word gospoda meant a household or a land estate.<sup>29</sup> A word gospodar’ is already found in Novgorod birch bark charters from the eleventh century.<sup>30</sup> Somewhat later, gospodar’

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usage in the fourteenth to seventeenth centuries he primarily relies on Andras Zoltan, *Iz istorii russkoi leksiki* [From the History of Russian Lexics] (Budapest: Eotvos Lorand University, 1987), a text in Russian but printed in Hungary, thus making it now largely unavailable to both English and Russian-speaking audiences. This text is based on Zoltan’s dissertation defended in Moscow in 1984, the findings of which were also published in an abridged form as Andras Zoltan, “K predistorii russkogo gosudar’” [Towards the Prehistory of the Russian Term Gosudar’] *Studia Slavica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae*, 29 (1983), 71-109. I use the 1983 text more extensively since other readers can consult it, and refer to Zoltan’s 1987 text, courteously supplied to me by the author, for details omitted in 1983. For earlier attempts of lexicographic descriptions see G. Stoeckl, “Die Begriffe Reich, Herrschaft und Staat bei den orthodoxen Slaven,” *Saeculum* 5 (1954), and Wladimir Vodoff, “Remarques sur la valeur du terme ‘tsar’ appliqué au princes russes avant le milieu du XV siècle,” *Oxford Slavonic Papers*, 11 (1978). My general argument on eighteenth century usage closely follows the influential study of Liudmila Chernaia, “Ot idei ‘sluzheniia gosudariu’ k idee ‘sluzheniia otechestvu’ v russkoi obshchestvennoi mysli vtoroi poloviny XVII - nachala XVIII v.” [From the Idea of Serving the Czar to the Idea of Serving the Fatherland in Russian Social Thought of the Second Half of the Seventeenth – Beginning of the Eighteenth Centuries], in *Obshchestvennaia mysl’: issledovaniia i publikatsii, vypusk 1*, ed. A. L. Andreev and K. Kh. Delokarov (Moscow: Nauka, 1989).

<sup>28</sup> Richard Pipes, *Russia Under the Old Regime* (New York: Scribner, 1974), 78.

<sup>29</sup> In this family of words, Pipes stresses the Indo-European root \*ghes, meaning “to strike” that has led to such Latin term as hostis enemy, and become part of the household vocabulary of many European languages through such words as, for example, “guest” and “host” in English. (Pipes, 77) Etymological dictionary of the Russian language note two ancient Slavonic roots in the word gospod’, gost’ and pod’ with the first one meaning “hospitable owner” and the second stemming from Indo-European \*potis -- “master, head of the household, male spouse.” Russian gospod’ may be related to Latin hospes, in genitive -- hospitis, “hospitable master, hosting foreigners”, coming from the blend of the same two Indo-European roots, with an original form \*hostipotis. (Pavel Chernykh, *Istoriko-etimologicheskii slovar’ sovremennogo russkogo iazyka*, (Moscow: Russkii iazyk, 1994), I, 209; and Max Fasmer, *Etimologicheskii slovar’ russkogo iazyka* (Moscow: Progress, 1986), I, 446.)

<sup>30</sup> Zoltan, “K predistorii russkogo gosudar’,” 72.



gained preeminence in political usage because it became the official title of some Russian princes. This happened due to the Latin influence on the chancery language of Russian princes through the official language of the Polish Kingdom and Lithuanian Russia. The first registered usage of gospodar' appears in 1349 in the Slavonic version of the princely title of Casimir III of Poland, who is called gospodar' ruskoe zemle, that is, dominusque terre Russie in its Latin version.<sup>31</sup> Poland at that time gained the principality of Galicia-Volhynie, the prince of which, Andrei, called himself dux Ladimiriae et dominus Russiae in Latin already in 1320.<sup>32</sup> After Galicia was ceded to Lithuania, gospodar' became part of the title of the grand duke of Lithuania, and the knowledge of this title eventually spread to those Russian princes who closely interacted with Lithuanians and Poles. In 1427 bishop Kirill of Beloozero applied the title gospodar' to the great prince of Muscovy and in 1431 Photii used for the first time the derivative gospodarstvo.<sup>33</sup>

The term gosudar' eventually appeared and squeezed out gospodar' for reasons that are not yet entirely clear.<sup>34</sup> In the opinion of Russian historians, the main distinction, however, lies not between the terms gospodin-gospodar'-gosudar', but between these terms and the previous term for great princes, velikii kniaz'.<sup>35</sup> For example, in 1477 Ivan III demanded that the republic

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<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 76

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 78

<sup>33</sup> Ingerflom, 127. Zoltan disputes the authenticity of the 1427 epistle and dates the first Muscovite document using gospodar' as of 1434 (Zoltan, "K predistorii russkogo *gosudar'*," 93). The most exhaustive, though not the most accurate, dictionary of ancient Russian, however, gives the first example in 1461 only: Gospodin i gospodar' velikii kniaz' Vasili Vasilievich (Stepan Barkhudarov, ed., *Slovar' russkogo iazyka XI-XVII vv.* (Moscow: Nauka, 1975-92), article on gospodar').

<sup>34</sup> See the overview of reasons in Zoltan, "K predistorii russkogo *gosudar'*," 71. Many scholars think this happened purely for phonetic reasons. Others attribute it to the fact that gosudar' could be related in popular consciousness to sud, "court", with princely title correspondingly interpreted as "the supreme judge." Given the fact that both terms were frequently written with an overword tilde, in the approximate form of g~sdr', it is hard to establish the exact date of gosudar' becoming the dominant form -- perhaps not earlier than in the sixteenth century. (Chernykh, *Istoriko-etimologicheskii slovar'*, I, 210.) The first registered full spelling of gosudar' in a written source dates from 1645 only (Zoltan, "K predistorii russkogo *gosudar'*," 105.) Gospodar' was in usage until the nineteenth century, with three meanings in the eighteenth, according to the latest dictionary of that time: 1 gosudar'; 2 owner of the household used in Southern Russia; 3 official title of a king of Moldavia. (Yurii Sorokin, ed., *Slovar' russkogo iazyka XVIII veka* (Leningrad: Nauka, 1987), V, 190.

<sup>35</sup> See, e.g., Anna Khoroshkevich, "Iz istorii velikokniazheskoi titulatury v kontse XIV - kontse XV vv." [From the History of the Titles of Great Princes in the End of the Fourteenth – Beginning of the Fifteenth Centuries] in *Russkoe tsentralizovannoe gosudarstvo: obrazovanie i evoliutsiia, XV-XVIII vv.*, ed. V. T. Pashuto. (Moscow: AN SSSR, 1980), 29. Pipes (*Russia*, 65), however, holds that the main distinction is between gospodin, a term of public law in the fifteenth century meaning "ruler over free people", and gosudar', a term of private law, meaning at that time "owner of land and serfs, dominus." Then it seems very significant that the feudal republic of Novgorod called itself "Gospodin velikii Novgorod" which implied rule of the free

of Novgorod accept him as their gosudar'. Velikii kniaz', the hereditary title of Muscovite princes heretofore, implied primus inter pares, one prince among the many, while the title of gosudar' implied that the subjects of Ivan III could be treated like serfs or other personal property of the dominus. With the expansion and centralization of the Muscovite principality that followed the fall of Novgorod, the title of gosudar' became predominant, and czars later could simply perceive their realm as gosudarstvo, their exclusive domain where everything, including the property of the subjects, belonged to the czar personally.<sup>36</sup>

Furthermore, some scholars assert that gosudar' in the seventeenth century, particularly after the crowning of the first czar of the Romanov dynasty in 1613, really came to mean what the title said -- gosudar' vseia Rusi ("of all Russia") -- since a special perception of a deep personal connection between each subject and the czar developed after the country-wide search for and enthroning of the new dynasty.<sup>37</sup> Service to the czar came to be regarded as a direct personal relationship between the sovereign and the subject. People handling what we might call "state affairs" were considered and regarded themselves as actually handling gosudarevy dela, "affairs of the czar" and thus carried in themselves part of his person and status. For example, Russian ambassadors abroad held that they would directly affect the personal stature and standing of their gosudar' if they were not treated with all the pomp pertaining to his dignity.<sup>38</sup>

The term gosudarstvo, as a consequence, came to mean both a feature or quality of being a gosudar', and the territory of his rule. In the fifteenth century, the term mostly designated a general condition of being dominus, what one might call in Latin dominatio -- a regime of domination -- and only with time did the sense of dominum (in Machiavelli's Italian -- dominio), a territorial domain, emerge to equal importance. Thus, Ivan III, in a famous exchange with a Novgorod delegation in 1477, insisted that they came under his total domination and could not curtail or regulate it: "We desire the same rule (gosudar'stvo) in our patrimonium (otchina) of great Novgorod as we have in the Low Lands of Moscow... And you are trying to tell me what my rule (gosudar'stvo) should be? But what would this rule (gosudar'stvo) then amount to?"<sup>39</sup> Thus, gosudarstvo in the fifteenth century was close to the Italian lo stato in that both appealed to dominio. But while lo stato in the first sentence in Il Principe meant a dominio that had imperio over men, the Russian language did not know this distinction between dominio (feudal

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people, while Muscovite princes adopted the title gosudar' in order to describe their subjects as serfs. This account overlooks many difficulties with fitting details into this neat distinction. For example, Novgorod also called itself by both titles -- Gospodin gosudar' -- in 1469 (see Barkhudarov, article on gospodin). Also, the word gospodin itself, as we know, came from the word gospoda -- a feudal household with land and serfs -- and gospoda was part of the official title of the republic of Novgorod, and so on.

<sup>36</sup> The title of "czar" is an abbreviated and Russified "Caesar", a title of Byzantine emperors which was first officially adopted by Ivan IV with all the appropriate theological connotations. Gosudar' and czar coexisted since then as parts of the official title of the sovereign. Also, the Russian empire appeared officially only when Peter the Great was proclaimed emperor in Russian -- imperator -- in 1721.

<sup>37</sup> Chernaia, 30.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> Original chronicle quoted in Lev Cherepnin, *Obrazovanie russkogo tsentralizovannogo gosudarstva v XIV- XV v.* [Formation of the Russian Centralized State in the Fourteenth-Fifteenth Centuries] (Moscow: Sotsekgiz, 1960), 872, my translation. Cf. also Pipes, 82, for his version.

household) and imperio (sovereignty, command over free men meaning non-slaves).<sup>40</sup> Gosudarstvo was rule and command, but rule and command as practiced in one's patrimonium over serfs and members of the family.<sup>41</sup> Also, the term gosudarstvo at the time seems not to have had the connotations of kingly stature, the ordering force of display, that status regis and lo stato .

Zoltan tried also to trace the development of the second meaning of gosudarstvo -- "the territory which gosudar' rules." Although the meaning of territory may be said to appear already in the epistle of Photii in 1431,<sup>42</sup> its widespread use in this sense followed later borrowing from west-Slavonic (Belorussian and Ukrainian) scribes who translated the Polish word panstwo with the term gosudarstvo. Under their influence, Russian scribes implanted the territorial meaning of the Polish panstwo in the Russian gosudarstvo as well. Since the Polish term meant both dominatio and dominum, this importantly extended the meaning of the Russian term.<sup>43</sup> Thus, in 1536 the term was already used in the plural, meaning multiple lands<sup>44</sup>, while Ivan IV had no

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<sup>40</sup> See this point, central for his argument, elaborated in Pipes, 77-78.

<sup>41</sup> In theory, this rule was never completely unbridled and monarchs were subject to God's sanction. The vocation of the czar was conceived not as a right, but as a duty, service to God that was limited by canon law and custom. As the famous Russian historian Kliuchevsky asserted, the czar had extensive power over individuals, but not over the way of life. ( Vladik Nersesians, ed., *Razvitie russkogo prava v XV - pervoi polovine XVII vv.* [Development of Russian Law, Fifteenth- First Half of the Sixteenth Centuries] (Moscow: Nauka, 1986), 85-87.) Cf. also: "the people, renouncing its will, transfers power not to the monarch but entrusts itself to the divine will, with the czar just being God's chosen one. The czar, for his part, renounces his personal will as well and conducts his service as a work of divine obedience." (Vladimir Karpets, "Nekotorye cherty gosudarstvennosti i gosudarstvennoi ideologii Moskovskoi Rusi: Idea verkhovnoi vlasti" [Some Aspects of Statehood and State Ideology in Muscovy: The Idea of the Supreme Authority] in *Razvitie prava i politiko-pravovoi mysli v Moskovskom gosudarstve*, ed. Z. M. Chernilovskii (Moscow: ViuZI, 1985), 21.

<sup>42</sup> The dictionary of ancient Russian gives the earliest meaning of gosudarstvo as territory in 1431, supported by a mistaken interpretation of Photii's epistle. Pavel Chernykh in his *Ocherk russkoi istoricheskoi leksikologii: drevnerusskii period* [An Outline of Russian Historical Lexicology: Ancient Rus'] (Moscow: MGU, 1956) has shown that this quote - "bless the prince... with his sons and grandsons and gosudarstvo" -- clearly means regime of domination rather than territory (216). However, the same epistle of Photii has another relevant passage -- "and from other lands, g~sdr'stv, grand duchies, and from Lithuanian land." (Zoltan, *Iz istorii russkoi leksiki*, 38).

<sup>43</sup> A west-Slavonic source from Vilno mentioned "the borders of gosudarstvo" in 1494, the first time that the connotation of territory unambiguously appeared. Also, Russian transliteration of the Polish term, panstwo, was used as a synonym of the Russian word otchina (patrimonium) in Russian sources from 1490 on, which implies that Russians were well aware of the Polish usage. (Andras Zoltan, "Polskie 'panstwo' a rosyjskie 'gosudarstvo'." *Zeszyty Naukowe Wydzialu Humanistycznego Uniwersytetu Gdanskiego, Filologia rosyjska* 10 (1982), 112. )

<sup>44</sup> Mikhail Krom, "Nauchnaia terminologiya, iazyk epokhi i politicheskie realii XVI v." [Scientific Terminology, Language of the Epoch and Political Reality of the Fifteenth Century] in *Politicheskie instituty i sotsial'nye straty Rossii (XVI - XVIII vv.)*, ed. E.A. Antonova et al. (Moscow: RGGU, 1998), 66

problem recounting in 1543 all gosudarstvy that were part of his title.<sup>45</sup> Residual evidence of gosudarstvo primarily conceived as dominatio rather than domain comes from as late as 1570, when Ivan IV wrote to queen Elizabeth of England on his disillusionment over the character of her rule which he considered not appropriate to an autocrat. His letter can be paraphrased as follows: “And we thought that you are a gosudarynia [the female form of the title] in your domination [gosudarstvo, but interpreted as an activity] and that you yourself own and look after your sovereign (gosudarskoi) honor and the augmentation of your domination (svoemu gosudarstvu pribytku).” Pipes supplies the translation that was made by the English chancery -- “We thought that you lord it over your domain, and rule by yourself and seek honor for yourself and profit for your realm” -- and notes that English interpreters were baffled by the Russian text and rendered Russian gosudarstvo by “rule,” “land,” “country,” even though these terms hardly corresponded to the Russian word that frequently implied personal possession.<sup>46</sup>

Summing up the early development of the Russian term for the state, one sees a parallel emergence of both connotations that one finds in lo stato or “the state” in early modern Europe. Both lo stato and gosudarstvo signify aspects of the personal domination of the prince, il suo stato (though the Italian principe commands free men in the sense of non-slaves while the Russian gosudar rules his subjects like serfs). Both words also signify territories that sovereigns control. The most decisive innovation, however, was one that happened, according to Skinner, in the beginning of the sixteenth century in Italian, and in the beginning of the seventeenth in English -- the designation by lo stato and “the state” of an apparatus of government, independent of both the rulers and the ruled. This happens in Russian as well, but only in the early to mid-eighteenth century. This extension also occurs in Russian in a different manner than in Western Europe, because of the absence of long-established republican or absolutist traditions of political thought. Nevertheless, a comparison of the Russian and West European cases may help us understand what was at stake in the appearance of the idea of the state as an independent and active entity.

### The state of the common good

The first and decisive distinction that led to the formation of the familiar triplet ruler/state/ruled in Russia, was the distinction between the ruler and the country, perceived as some kind of a union of kin, of a multitude bound by a common lifestyle and origin. Personal service to the czar gradually came to be interpreted as a service to the country, or better, to the fatherland, and this altered emphasis helped for the first time to separate state affairs from the personal affairs of the czar.

Some leanings in this direction are found during the rule of czar Alexei Mikhailovich, the father of Peter the Great. Russia at the end of the seventeenth century was largely perceived by the czar as a patrimony, as his personal domain, and he called it edinogo gosudaria gosudarstvo - “the territory of a single gosudar,” or an estate, if you like.<sup>47</sup> This has been compared by Russian historians of “l'état, c'est moi” of Louis XIV -- a far-fetched comparison, indeed. When le roi soleil expressed this thought, it was plainly paradoxical because the separation of a distinct bureaucratic apparatus and the person of the king was by then largely completed in France. In

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<sup>45</sup> Zoltan, *Iz istorii russkoi leksiki*, 42

<sup>46</sup> Pipes, 77

<sup>47</sup> Chernaia, 32.

Russia, the statement of Alexei Mikhailovich presupposed no such separation: gosudarstvo of the czar was still generally interpreted as il suo stato.

Even the nascent bureaucracy functioned sometimes just to satisfy the czar's personal wishes and needs. Given that affairs of the state and affairs of the czar were not separated, generally the proto-bureaucracy conceived of itself as serving the czar, not any other entity. As Pipes claims, the system of chanceries (prikazy) that appeared under Ivan the Terrible in the sixteenth century had its origins in the households of appanage princes that were moved to Muscovy after the capture of their principalities, in order to help gosudar' rule their conquered domains.<sup>48</sup> Other, functional rather than territorial, chanceries were established on an ad hoc basis to service the various needs of czardom and the czar personally, their objectives overlapping and jurisdictions frequently conflicting with each other.

The Secret Chancery established in the seventeenth century to deal with the czar's most personal affairs, may be a case in point. After 1662 its functions underwent a phenomenal swift transformation and expansion. Instead of conducting its usual investigations, the chancery engaged frantically in food procurement and land accumulation through requisitions and acquisitions. This is explained by the czar's resolve to supply munitions and alimentation to regiments of musketeers that helped him smash the rebellion of 1662. Heretofore the musketeers had had to procure their own maintenance. Now the czar, having recognized the advantages of a standing army, wanted to put it on a firm basis through state supplies. Hence the chancery that dealt with what we might call today czar's personal affairs started to deal with army maintenance as well. Interestingly, with the death of czar Alexei in 1676, this chancery was immediately disbanded, and its property was divided among other chanceries. The heirs apparently did not consider army maintenance their personal affair, or did not see any need to maintain a special chancery for the personal affairs of the czar. Scholars conclude: "In the epoch when they did not distinguish at all between the state and the form of government, the concepts of belonging to gosudar' and of belonging to gosudarstvo completely overlapped. The state and state interest were thought of only as concretely embodied in the living person of the gosudar' and his affairs."<sup>49</sup>

Yet, a nascent tradition of what one might now call "state service" but what to the middle of the seventeenth century was still generally called "service to the czar" provided opportunities for new formulations. Even if the czars themselves had only once thanked their subjects for service to gosudarstvo in a written legal document,<sup>50</sup> parts of their patrimonial bureaucracy

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<sup>48</sup> Pipes, 67. Exact dates of establishment of certain offices or description of their structure are hard to find, since internal documentation in scrolls was not kept with care and also suffered from frequent fires. Thus, from witnesses we know, for example, that deacon Viskovatyi was ordered to start "ambassadorial service" sometime in 1548-49, but do not have the written order prikaz or ukaz founding it, nor are we aware of its early regulations, if there were any. (Sigurd Shmidt, *U istokov rossiiskogo absolutizma* [Origins of Russian Absolutism] (Moscow: Progress, 1996), 448).

<sup>49</sup> Alexander Zaozerskii, *Tsarskaia votchina XVII veka* [Czar's Patrimonium in the Seventeenth Century] (Moscow: Sotsekgiz, 1937), 43.

<sup>50</sup> In an ordinance on merchants from 1681 (Marc Raeff, *The Well-ordered Police State: Social and Institutional Change Through Law in the Germanies and Russia, 1600-1800*. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983), 207), though this still might be taken to mean the personal rule of the gosudar'.

started to entertain thoughts that they might be serving something other than the czar. Thus, already in 1550s we find an instance when a chronicler laments that fact that the boyars each “look after their own [good], rather than after that of gosudar’ or of the land.”<sup>51</sup> A hundred years later, Ordyn-Nashchokin, one of the top chancellors of Alexei Mikhailovich, could sometimes -- amidst the usual assertions that he was working in the interests of the sovereign -- proclaim that he was also working for ustroenie svoego gosudarstva, “the arrangement of his state.”<sup>52</sup> This, of course, could not mean the personal domination of the chancellor (a crime and a blasphemy), but implied that Ordyn already regarded himself as part of some larger community, serving its interests as well as the czar’s personal ones.

The decisive shift in discourse, however, happens with the ascent of Peter the Great who introduced a notion of the common good and attempted radically to distance the person of the czar from the body of the country. In the words of one astute commentator: “a hierarchy that existed in the medieval Russian idea of the state -- the czar serves God and people serve the czar -- has been replaced by a new relationship: both czar and subjects serve the fatherland, the ‘common good’ of the state.”<sup>53</sup>

Historians argue about when this doctrine of the common good was first enunciated. Chernaia takes 1700 as a point of departure, when Peter ordered that books be printed in Amsterdam in the Slavonic language “for the glory of great gosudar’... and for the common utility and growth of the people.”<sup>54</sup> Pavlenko singles out the 1702 manifesto (on recruiting foreigners for state service) where Peter claims to govern so that “each of our true subjects may feel that our only intention is to procure their well-being and their augmentation.”<sup>55</sup> However, most agree that the most famous formulation appeared in Peter’s speech before the battle of Poltava, in which Russia defeated the Swedish army and became a European power, in 1709: “Warriors! Here is the hour that will decide the fate of the fatherland (otechestvo). You should think that you are fighting not for Peter, but for the state (gosudarstvo), entrusted to Peter, for your kin, for fatherland... And know of Peter that he does not care about his life but only that Russia lives in bliss and glory for your well-being.”<sup>56</sup>

Two points should be stressed here. First, Peter presents himself not as the owner of the domain called Russia, but as a care-taker and procurator of its maintenance. Second, the community the interests of which he serves is not necessarily gosudarstvo, it is also a community of blood lineage and common ancestry. The state understood as “fatherland” moves into the forefront of discourse, since this word more felicitously connotes the desired commonality than the word gosudarstvo, which is far too obviously linked with the might and oppression pertaining

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<sup>51</sup> Mikhail Krom, “Politicheskii krizis 30-40kh godov XVI veka” [The Political Crisis of 1530-40s], *Otechestvennaia Istoriiia* 41:5 (1998), 3.

<sup>52</sup> Chernaia, 32.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, 43

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, 36

<sup>55</sup> Nikolai Pavlenko, *Petr Velikii* [Peter the Great] (Moscow: Mysl’, 1990), 485.

<sup>56</sup> Feofan Prokopovich, *Istoriiia imperatora Petra Velikago* [History of Emperor Peter the Great] (St. Petersburg, 1773), 212. The whole speech might have been invented by Prokopovich for political purposes, but given the fact that he served as a mouthpiece for many Petrine reforms, his usage is representative of the sovereign rhetoric.

to gosudar'-stvo, a word which could be literally taken as “prince-ness”, a general quality of domination and domain.

The Russian word for fatherland -- otechestvo -- in ancient Slavonic initially meant extended kin rather than nuclear family, then came to designate the place of birth, pays natal as the French would say; only very late did it come to designate the lofty ideal of the nation, worthy of self-sacrifice.<sup>57</sup> Historians tend to ascribe the appearance of this third meaning of the term to the Time of Troubles (the 1610s), when militia from different parts of Russia united to liberate Moscow.<sup>58</sup> The lofty ideal of pro patria mori, however, could not easily appear in Russia -- as it did in Western Europe -- through the translations of Roman literature or through the development of the medieval notion of patria of Christians in the city of Heaven.<sup>59</sup> Rather, it came through the borrowing of the Greek models, particularly with the help of the vita of St. Dimitrius of Thessaloniki, a Greek martyr prince who sacrificed himself for the community of the polis, a small fatherland.<sup>60</sup> Still, being linguistically linked to the notion of the father (otets), otechestvo could have the connotations of the patrimonial household structure and of the founder of extended kin<sup>61</sup> that thus served the role of a successful transitional term, which eased eliciting support for some impersonal stance from Peter's largely traditional audience.

Generally, commentaries now assume that belief in common good and service to fatherland was personally important for Peter I: “the idea of serving the state, into which the czar came to believe deeply and to which he subordinated all of his activity, was the essence of his life.”<sup>62</sup> He visibly separated his private person and his body politic by playing two roles, that of the common soldier, bombardier Peter Mikhailov, standing in the ranks with others in military marches and exercises, and that of the sovereign towering over the rest on his throne during official receptions. By playing Mikhailov, he offered a model of service as appropriate to a true son of the fatherland, and thus preached by example. His personal spending was very modest, as befitted his army salary. On receiving these payments, he was recorded to say: “This is my personal money: I have earned it and will use it as I please: but with state income (gosudarstvennye dokhody) one should be very careful.”<sup>63</sup> In his own words, he was serving “this state” (semu gosudarstvu) rather than “his state”, and viewed it as an entity that had independent existence and interests of its own. Thus, an order establishing the Senate (effectively a council of ministers) in 1711 obliges this new body to “control expenses in all of the state and curtail unnecessary, and in particular, vain ones.” A reform of the Senate some time later stated:

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<sup>57</sup> Vladimir Kolesov, *Mir cheloveka v slove drevnei Rusi* [Human World in the Literature of Ancient Rus'] (Leningrad: LGU, 1986), 246.

<sup>58</sup> Mikhail Krom, “Christian Tradition and the Birth of the Concept of Patriotism in Russia,” in *The Emancipation of Russian Christianity*, ed. Natalia Pecherskaya (Lewiston: Edwin Mellen Press, 1995), 29-31.

<sup>59</sup> Ernst Kantorowicz, *Selected Studies* (Locust Valley, NY: J. J. Augustin, 1965), 233.

<sup>60</sup> Krom, “Christian Tradition,” 24.

<sup>61</sup> Gary Marker, *Soloviev's Peter: Otets otechestva, otsovstva i muzhestva* [Peter in Soloviev's Description: Father of Fatherland, Fatherness and Manliness], Unpublished manuscript, Dept of History, SUNY Stony Brook, 1999.

<sup>62</sup> Pavlenko, 482.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid., 484

“it is always appropriate for the Senate to relentlessly be in charge of the benefit of the state and of the monarch.”<sup>64</sup>

The intention to draw a distinct line between the person of the czar and the body of the state is clear. However, this was not always easy to carry out.<sup>65</sup> The main reason for these difficulties was the self-undermining character of Peter’s introduction of the notion of the common good: as many commentaries were quick to notice, the segregation of the body of the state from the person of the ruler was ordered and implemented by a personal whim of an autocratic ruler who controlled this body completely. Indeed, Peter’s other reforms that had introduced numerous innovations in customs and everyday life -- spheres that were rarely touched by Muscovite princes -- probably succeeded only due to the mechanisms of traditional domination that helped overcome huge resistance. In the latter case, Peter’s ideologists appealed to czar’s divine sanction to change mores, rather than to his sovereign will.<sup>66</sup>

Thus, inconsistencies pervaded the intended introduction of the notion of the common good that allegedly united the ruler and the ruled in service to fatherland. In 1721 Peter was proclaimed “the father of the fatherland” apparently in imitation of *pater patriae*, a term for Roman emperors, which since the collapse of Italian medieval republics designated, in the words of Skinner, “a wise prince... whose actions will be governed by a desire to foster the common good and hence the general happiness of all his subjects.”<sup>67</sup> But by accepting this title Peter stopped being a son of Fatherland Peter Mikhailov marching in rank with other officers of the army. In 1721 he also officially became emperor. This visibly strengthened the autocratic pretensions of Russian czars. As a result, Feofan Prokopovich, one of the chief ideologists of Peter’s reforms, frequently could not decide which terms to use in lauding the czar’s works after his death, whether to dub Russia “our fatherland” or “his (Peter’s) fatherland.” For example, Prokopovich proclaims that what Peter “made *his* Russia, such it will be” and discusses “what power a gosudar’ needs to have to rule and correct *his* fatherland.” Both uses strongly remind us of the concept of the state as a personal possession of gosudar’. A little later, however, Peter is

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<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, 484; Mikhail Beliauskii and Nikolai Pavlenko, eds., *Khrestomatiia po istorii SSSR XVIII v.* [Collection of Documents on the History of Eighteenth Century Russia] (Moscow: Sotsekgiz, 1963), 126, 132

<sup>65</sup> Texts of 18 popular soldiers’ songs from the early XVIIIth century most frequently mention “service to the czar” and describe it as a series of daily routines and burdens. Gosudarstvo is not mentioned at all, and the officially proclaimed separation between the person of the czar and the body of the state is impossible to find in the texts of these songs. (Olga Ageeva, “K voprosu o patrioticheskom soznanii v Rossii pervoi chetverti XVIII v.” [Patriotic Consciousness in Russia if the First Quarter of the Eighteenth Century] in *Mirovospriiatie i samosoznanie russkogo obshchestva (XI - XX vv.)*, ed. L. N. Pushkarev (Moscow: IRI RAN, 1994), 47.)

<sup>66</sup> See Ingerflom, 129-30, on this general thesis spelled out in detail by the Tartu school. Many readers might have noticed by now that my presentation as a rule ignores political theology of the Russian czardom. This is done in order to limit the exposition of this article to exploring parallels with Skinner’s thesis. A separate study on how the term gosudarstvo fared in theological usage and quasi- religious political doctrines after the seventeenth century is undoubtedly necessary.

<sup>67</sup> A theme appearing most distinctly in Beroaldo. See Skinner, 97.



said to have copied good foreign laws to “improve *our* fatherland.”<sup>68</sup> The secret of this confusion is perhaps revealed by the clear exposition in the political treatise *On the Truth of Monarch’s Will*, written by Prokopovich: “A monarch may lawfully order people to do not only what is necessary for the good benefit of his fatherland, but also whatever he may wish, as long as it does not conflict with the common weal and God’s will.”<sup>69</sup> Autocratic will is the ultimate mover of the Russian state, and no matter how much is said about the public good to which czar and people commonly aspire, a common “fatherland” is instituted only on the order of the czar who must be obeyed due to the total patrimonial power of the gosudar’ in his domain.

Thus, the word “fatherland”, even if a bit more felicitous linguistically than the word gosudarstvo for the point of common allegiance of potentially equal citizens, was frequently used synonymously with “the state.” Most commentaries notice the essential interchangeability among Russian words for fatherland, state, and society until the end of the eighteenth century. Their shared connotation then was a “lofty, mighty and radiant union of the reborn society-state with its members.”<sup>70</sup> Also, in terms of natural law theorists, who had been extensively translated into Russian in the eighteenth century, civil society was synonymous with the state (as in Locke, for example), while entering this “civil state” was achieved simply by means of instituting a common umpire and common defense among naturally separate humankind. Thus, even future radical thinkers initially shared the vision that equated society, state, and fatherland. Radischchev wrote: “O you, who paved the way to thinking about the good of the people, of society, of the state -- Plato and Montesquieu”; and in another instance: “a rural inhabitant loves the fatherland more than other co-members of the Russian state.”<sup>71</sup>

Catherine the Great took an important step toward institutionalizing such usage. In 1783 she published *The Book on the Duties of Man and Citizen*, which contained her adapted translation of Pufendorf’s treatise of the same title.<sup>72</sup> This book became a compulsory part of secondary education until 1819. Among other things, Catherine supplied the correct definition of the fatherland, obliterating any possible distinction between it and the state, a “misconception” that she lamented and condemned:

In its true meaning the Fatherland is a large society of which one is a fellow citizen, i.e. the state whose subject one is either by place of birth or by resettlement and residence. Such a large society, which sometimes extends over many regions, is called the Fatherland because the well-being of all inhabitants and all fellow citizens is maintained and supported by the same authority and laws, just as the well-being of children in the home is secured by father’s care. Therefore all those who are subjects of one supreme power are sons of the Fatherland. *Love for fatherland* consists in showing esteem and

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<sup>68</sup> All quotes from Vladimir Grebeniuk, ed., *Panegiricheskaia literatura petrovskogo vremeni* [Panegyric Literature of the Petrine Epoch] (Moscow: Nauka, 1979), 281, 289, 292.

<sup>69</sup> Feofan Prokopovich, *O pravde voli monarshei* (St. Petersburg, 1726), 27.

<sup>70</sup> V. Surin, “Lichnost’ i gosudarstvo v russkoi literature vtoroi poloviny XVIII v.” [The Individual and the State in Russian Literature of the Second Half of the Eighteenth Century], *Sbornik Kharkovskogo istoriko-filologicheskogo obshchestva* XIX (1913), 114.

<sup>71</sup> Sorokin, article on gosudarstvennyi, 197, 199.

<sup>72</sup> See a detailed analysis and a chapter by chapter comparison between Pufendorf’s original and Catherine’s adaptation in Vadim Volkov, *The Forms of Public Life*, unpublished revised version of chapter 1 (European University at St. Petersburg, 1997).

gratitude to the government, in obeying the laws, institutions and just rights of society and using them for the common good...<sup>73</sup>

Several novel features of this excerpt are worth noting. First, Catherine II tries to blur the distinction between government and society (or fatherland). However, given that different words are used to designate these phenomena (rather than one word gosudarstvo, as was frequently the case at the end of the seventeenth - beginning of the eighteenth century), the possibility of distinguishing between them, and even of radically opposing them to each other, is already present. Second, the opportunity to define the state in the narrower sense, as an apparatus of government, is manifest. As the dictionary of the eighteenth century Russian language tells us, the meaning of the word gosudarstvo that came to prevail was “a country, the population of which is subject to a single government,”<sup>74</sup> and we see Catherine employing this sense when she talks about “subjects of one supreme power,” by either birth or residence. Yet the new metaphor of the state as mechanism, engendered by translations of foreign political treatises, pushes gosudarstvo toward being defined as this supreme power, as a self-sufficient and independent entity. Radishchev almost repeats Hobbes’s introduction to *Leviathan* when he writes: “the state is a great machine, whose aim is citizens’ bliss. Two sorts of springs set it into motion, mores and laws.”<sup>75</sup>

Examples of usage of the adjective “state” (gosudarstvennyi, that is, pertaining to gosudarstvo), which had barely appeared in the middle of the seventeenth century,<sup>76</sup> but enjoyed abundant use in the eighteenth century, demonstrate that the state was very close to being seen as a governing body with specific features of its own. This state, narrowly defined, is then thought of as having certain specific rights, as in the following statement: “whoever transcends our ordinance... will be executed as the violator of state rights and as an enemy of authority (vlasti).” The state has its own “state ranks” meaning court bureaucrats, as in the sentence: “with timid servility state ranks stood around my throne.” More importantly, the state has “state places,” offices where the business of government is conducted.<sup>77</sup> The state now has its “state council,” a set of governmental collegia and ministers. Last, but not least, it has “state peasants” who populate the crown lands and are directly subject to the central government for taxation.<sup>78</sup>

This plethora of people, activities and institutions merited recognition as a separate entity, a body in its own right. Catherine II stopped short of proclaiming it, even though she carried out a final consolidation of the governmental apparatus in practice, by instituting the hierarchy of bodies of provincial government in 1775 and thus completing the setting up of a uniform state machinery.<sup>79</sup> Her usage, as we have already mentioned, suggested that the state was not identical to its subjects and to the person of the ruler -- “The intention of monarchical regimes...

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<sup>73</sup> Joseph L. Black, *Citizens for The Fatherland. Education, Educators and Pedagogical Ideas in Eighteenth Century Russia. With a translation of Book on the Duties of Man and Citizen, 1783* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1979), 246-47.

<sup>74</sup> Sorokin, article on gosudarstvo, 198.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, 199

<sup>76</sup> First usage registered in 1649: Barkhudarov, article on gosudarstvennyi.

<sup>77</sup> Peter I is usually credited with establishing these and arranging their internal layouts, having clearly separated the governors and the governed in space. See e.g., Raeff, 203.

<sup>78</sup> All examples in this paragraph are from Sorokin, article on gosudarstvennyi, 197-8.

<sup>79</sup> Raeff, 229.

is the glory of citizens, of the state and of the gosudar”<sup>80</sup> -- but this triple distinction was consistently asserted only by critics of the regime.

Thus, Fonvizin wrote: “Where the arbitrary rule of one person is a supreme law, there a firm social tie cannot exist; there is the state, but no fatherland, there are subjects but no citizens.”<sup>81</sup> The republican ideal is implied here: a government of laws and not of men guarantee freedom. As Radishchev would write, “And even if the gosudar’ himself ordered you to violate the law, do not obey him, because he errs, harming himself and society.”<sup>82</sup> Particularly interesting in both passages is the affirmation of the need for a vigorous independent society opposed to the state that would preserve freedom. Radishchev, in a famous verse, formulates it in the following terms:

Czar’s authority defends faith  
Czar’s authority affirms faith  
Together they oppress society  
One intends to enchain reason,  
Another tries to wipe out the will,  
And both say this is for common good.<sup>83</sup>

The “society” that Radishchev mentions is not the civil society of modern liberalism; neither is it the unity of all people inhabiting Russia. Rather, in accordance with eighteenth century usage, it is either the aristocratic “good society” of Russian capitals, or perhaps la republique de lettres of thinkers of the Russian Enlightenment.<sup>84</sup> Nevertheless, the opposition between the state and society is drawn radically and resolutely. The modern triplet ruler/state/ruled is finally being formed. If Peter the Great separated the person of the czar from the realm he ruled, then radical Enlightenment thought split this realm into society as a body of private citizens and the state as the machinery of legal power.

The equation of the state with the government apparatus and the separation of the state from society became a commonplace in the nineteenth century Russian works.<sup>85</sup> However, this perception was shared only by the literate part of the Russian population. Kavtaradze’s study of nineteenth century peasant perceptions of the political universe shows that they hardly understood gosudarstvo in the modern sense or even used the term. For a typical peasant, the czar was an ideal figure who embodied divine justice and served as a source of distant hope in people’s daily hardships, while the state clerks and representatives (for example, provincial governors or tax collectors) were treated as private persons whose abusive actions the czar could at some point curtail. The state as an independent and autonomously regulated machine of power did not exist in their perception; rather, they still regarded officials as the czar’s personal servants who abused his orders.

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<sup>80</sup> A. A. Alekseev, “Istoriia slova grazhdanin v XVIII v.” [History of the Word “Citizen” in the Eighteenth Century], *Izvestiia AN SSSR, seriia literatury i iazyka* 31: 1 (1972), 69.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid.

<sup>82</sup> Sorokin, article on gosudar’, 200

<sup>83</sup> Chernaia, 42-3.

<sup>84</sup> For conceptual adventures of Russian terms for society see Vadim Volkov, *The Forms of Public Life*, Ph.D. thesis, Cambridge University, UK, 1995.

<sup>85</sup> See Ingerflom, 132, for relevant examples.

Furthermore, peasants did not have a notion of the common good of the state or an established notion of fatherland. For example, when Napoleon invaded Russia in 1812, this was initially viewed in the villages as a conflict between sovereigns rather than peoples. In the first months of the war peasants resisted the French army only if it menaced their local communities. Only after ravages of some of these communities did the famous “bludgeon of people’s war”, vividly poeticized by Tolstoy, appear. The primary allegiance of a peasant was to the mir, the local commune, and building extra-communal allegiance to a bigger entity called the fatherland was extremely difficult. Even in the Crimean war of 1855 peasants entered the Russian army without patriotic feelings but possibly expecting a reciprocal favor from the czar. Rumors circulated that the French had entered the war to liberate the serfs, which made enlisting the peasants’ “service to the fatherland” in the czar’s army even more difficult. Hence, if they did defend the official “fatherland”, they could still think that they were thereby earning their freedom, to be granted by the czar. Once again, the military conflict was perceived as a war between princes, not a war between peoples.<sup>86</sup>

It was only the Bolsheviks who brought the state into the everyday life of the each citizen of post-revolutionary Russia, who made the modern meaning of the term obvious to everybody. The construction of what Skinner calls “the doubly impersonal character of the state” was finished when, for the majority of Soviet citizens, the state as an independent machine of power intruded into their lives, but became distinctly separate both from the life of the rulers and from people’s own existence. No matter what heights the adulation of Stalin reached, and notwithstanding the fact that almost everybody was employed in state enterprises and offices, Soviet citizens knew that their state, at least in theory, was not the personal property of any ruler, but an independent entity, which -- as everyday practice constantly reminded them -- also had interests that did not coincide with theirs and which was ready to sacrifice the citizenry for these interests.

### Comparisons and critique

Comparison of conceptual development in the English and Russian languages shows different strategies of arriving at the triple distinction that lies at the foundation of the modern concept of the state -- ruler/state/ruled - and different forces at play. In English, a distinction between the ruler and the state was achieved by republican thought, while a distinction between the state apparatus and the ruled was carried out by absolutist thinkers. In Russia, it seems, the same result was achieved, but developments happened as if reflected in a mirror: a distinction between the person of the ruler and the state was carried out by absolutist thinkers (frequently monarchs themselves), while the entity called the state was distinguished from the ruled by the nascent republican tradition.

This mirror-image relationship between conceptual development in English and Russian disappears, however, if we pay close attention to the categories employed in both transformations. Then we can see that in the West European case a transformation of the initial notion of lo stato or “the state” generally conceived as il suo stato involved a radical differentiation of this concept -- carried out by republicans -- into two others. Thus, the state in the sense of status regis became interpreted as an estate or duty of princehood, while the state in the sense of status rei publicae was interpreted as the optimal condition of things in a republic, as

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<sup>86</sup> Ibid., 132-3.

ensured by the rule of laws rather than by the discretion of a princely estate. Later, res publica itself was split by absolutists into res gubernans and publica. The term “state” proved very useful for articulating this later distinction between the state and the people. In the end a triple distinction appeared -- rex/res gubernans/publica.

In Russia, the core initial problem was drawing a distinction between dominus and his dominatio or dominum. This was similar to splitting the undifferentiated il suo stato of West European princes into distinct rex and stato. However, since the Russian language did not offer linguistic possibilities similar to those of the Germanic or Romance languages -- Russian words close to the Latin status hardly existed and the vocabulary of Roman law was all but ignored -- conceptual development happened by means of interpreting gosudarstvo as “fatherland” -- that is, dominum was interpreted as patria -- thus separating it from the person of the czar. Furthermore, both czar and people were supposed to serve this patria until indignant republicans had split this patria into one part to which they returned the derogatory title of gosudarstvo (which linguistically implies domination of the dominus) and the second part -- a body of oppressed compatrioti that could jointly oppose this apparatus of domination.

In both cases of conceptual development, however, one finds a crucial point of asserting a commonality beyond the figure of the common ruler, be it the respublica or commonwealth of West European thinkers, or the Russian equivalent of Latin patria. But if this commonality beyond the figure of the prince was obviously suggested by many republican thinkers in Europe, why was the same commonality demanded and imposed by Russian autocrats? Was it out of altruistic motives and by virtuous self-limitation as befits an enlightened despot? Or did the autocrats have sound reasons in advancing a theory of the common good -- reasons, which if explored, might shed light on European developments as well? Indeed, the Russian case, because of its stark absurdity -- with monarchs using their almost total power to impose by most autocratic means the conception of respublica on a recalcitrant populace -- may reveal what was at stake in this idea of the common good, which modern states are now so obviously taken to represent.

My hypothesis is simple. Appeal to the idea of the common good was necessary to regulate and control people more thoroughly and meticulously than ever before, both in Western and Eastern Europe. In Russia this increase in control had to happen faster and in a very limited period of time -- since the czars had to catch up with the rest of Europe, which had moved farther along the road of technical progress and population management. So the czars had to rely on autocratic means to hammer this idea of the common good into the heads of their subjects. Those European countries which first set out to control their populations through the fiction of the common good (handily offered by the republican tradition), could initially afford gentler measures. They did not have to face fierce military competition from technically advanced adversaries that had already learned to enlist mass support.

Let's take a closer look at the instance of Peter's dramatic appeal to the common good before the Poltava battle. He exhorts soldiers to treat this battle as their own, rather than their sovereign's, as a battle for their kin, for the land of their fathers.<sup>87</sup> Heretofore the czar's subjects could volunteer (or not) to engage in the czar's service and even if dragooned into the czar's army against their will, could dissimulate obedience and compliance. Now, with the erection of a

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<sup>87</sup> Prokopovich, *Istoriia*. Note also that these words ascribed to Peter I endow him with a disinterested position. He is even eager to radicalize this disinterestedness to the utmost, ready to sacrifice his own life -- and all this just in order to enlist the support of the soldiers!

new deity called patria or fatherland, when they sabotaged the czar's orders they were not simply opposing the dominating sovereign, but betraying their own fathers and ancestors, the whole community. Since patria is a common concern, all must participate in serving it, with no exceptions.

The same appeal to common necessity during hostilities between feudal lords justified the imposition of additional burdens on a reluctant populace in Western Europe as well. Of course, republican treatises on the common good stressed the other side of this imposition, on the ruler, rather than on the ruled. Optimus status rei publicae could be achieved if individual advantage is subordinated to "the common good of the city as a whole" as Campano wrote in 1502, or when the ruler "remains oblivious to his own good, and ensures that he acts in everything he does in such a way as to promote the public benefit" as Beroaldo asserted in 1508.<sup>88</sup> Such passages reveal the intellectual origins of the medieval proliferation of common good theories that had sprung from Latin translations of Aristotle's *Politics*, which described the regime of justice in the city as upholding the common good. However, another source of their popularity were the frequent situations when princes had to appeal to conditions of dire necessity to justify their taxation of each (corporate) subject of their principality. "When for the public welfare, the defense of the realm, a king asked for an extraordinary tax to meet this necessity, special privileges, immunities and liberties... all of which amounted to private contracts between king and individuals and corporations, were not valid."<sup>89</sup>

In 1179 and 1215 the Third and Fourth Lateran Councils decided that Italian communes could tax even the clergy if common necessity was evident and if the pope was first consulted and gave his consent. Lawyers quickly extended this to apply to kingdoms. Hence, in 1295-96 pope Boniface VIII discovered "that he had to consent to extraordinary taxation of English and French clergy by Edward I and Philip IV. Ironically, each of the monarchs claimed that his necessity was a just war of defense against the other."<sup>90</sup> Kings effectively resorted to the fiction of common necessity to tax and pool the scarce resources of their subjects in order to win in this war. Given the Norman conquest of the Anglo-Saxon kingdom, the disputed status of provinces in what now is northern France and the absence of the "nation" in the modern sense of the word, this was hardly a war between the nations of England and France (as contemporary mythology would have us believe), but a turf war between two gangs of competing landlords of similar origins.

The populace seems to have always reacted to these "pleas of necessity" and rhetoric of common good with obvious suspicion. For example, in England, this was a subject of constant disputes between the king and the Parliament. As late as 1610, the Parliament claimed that, except in times of dire necessity, kings should be able to "live off their own," meaning on the income from crown possessions rather than from taxing each subject.<sup>91</sup> What constituted dire necessity was also up for discussion in many European general estates and representative assemblies, and the most renowned discussion signaled the start of the French Revolution. As we remember, this was not a problem of Western Europe alone; Russian peasants in 1812 and 1855 were hard to persuade that a situation of dire necessity was on their agenda and that they should contribute their efforts and revenues to the war of their sovereign. As we see, Peter's

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<sup>88</sup> Skinner, 95.

<sup>89</sup> Post, 18.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid., 19

<sup>91</sup> Skinner, 103.

propaganda may have been successful at Poltava but hardly penetrated the minds of the masses of his subjects elsewhere. The majority of the population remained unaware of the common good of the fatherland even a century later.

This imposition of the fiction of the common good that effectively serves the interests of the dominant classes (who thus manage to represent their concerns as universal) is a classic point of critique of the state.<sup>92</sup> An interesting new version of such a critique has been recently proposed by Pierre Bourdieu, who is more interested in demonstrating the “how” of the imposition of the fiction of the common good rather than answering why it was imposed. Bourdieu discerns many pragmatic changes that this imposition entailed.<sup>93</sup>

For example, Peter the Great understood very well that requiring universal service to the fatherland helped in the extraction of taxes and accumulation of scarce resources. A standing army constantly needs provisions, which -- as Peter’s father was quick to discover -- required either procuring supplies through a special apparatus (hence the development of the possessions of the Secret Chancery in seventeenth century Russia) or tax contributions from all. Peter chose the second path, stopped taxing the recalcitrant and elusive unit called the household and instead collected the famous soul tax, imposing the tax yoke on each individual, now obliged to serve the fatherland. Contributing to the fatherland’s welfare seemed more justified than merely financing the czar’s military entertainment.<sup>94</sup> In Western Europe also the first centralized tax collection devices looked rather unfounded to the populace until the imposition of the fiction of the common good. They even remind one of racketeering since they included simple seizure, the use of debtors' prison, collective detainment and quartering of soldiers. Bourdieu writes: “it is only progressively that we come to conceive the taxes as a necessary tribute to the needs of a recipient that transcends the king, that is, the ‘fictive body’ that is the state.”<sup>95</sup> Concomitant to the imposition of the fiction of the common good, king’s levies and patrimonial redistribution in the form of gifts and sovereign largesse (which partly legitimated the levying of patrimonial taxes) were reformed to conform to the newly professed image of a bureaucratic spending of “public expenditures” that made universal taxes tolerable and even “natural.”

Creating a feeling of commonality among the subjects of the same sovereign was another matter. Wars and joint taxation fuse populations, of course, but only to a certain extent. Imposing uniform classifications, developing a common literary language and teaching “national culture,” particularly in the form of common literature, after the installation of a universal secondary school system is most decisive for the naturalization of the idea of the state as a representative an servant of the common good.

Holding that “the state” is a fictitious agent and that only individuals act, Bourdieu posits a question about what groups of individuals might be specifically interested in advancing this fiction of the acting state that provided foundations for our puzzling but most widespread contemporary use of the word “state.” In case of France, his conclusion is quite straightforward:

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<sup>92</sup> See a Marxist version of such analysis in Pavlenko, 497: “ ‘common good’ is a fiction of the eighteenth century that justified the necessity of each subject to fulfill duties imposed on him by the state, according to the estate to which he belonged.”

<sup>93</sup> Pierre Bourdieu, “Rethinking the State: Genesis and Structure of the Bureaucratic Field,” in his book *Practical Reason* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1998).

<sup>94</sup> In his young days, well before setting up the regular Russian army, Peter already formed two “fun regiments” that entertained him by staging mock battles. See e.g. Pavlenko, 34.

<sup>95</sup> Bourdieu, “Rethinking the State,” 43.

in the early modern era, the juridical profession profited most from advancing the fiction of the common good and public service.<sup>96</sup> The centralization of courts in early modern France through the royal appeal procedure created the permanent local bodies of lawyers, Parlements. Their jurists, by explaining the rule of French monarchs in terms of the common good, also justified their own special position in the system of upholding justice for the common good. This appearance of “state nobility” in France is likely to have coincided with the appearance of the academic title that allowed its holders to present themselves as objective experts, examples of “disinterested devotion to the general interest.”<sup>97</sup> Altogether, the jurists

had an interest in giving a universal form to the expression of their vested interests, in elaborating a theory of the public service and of public order, and thus in working to autonomize the *raison of the state* from dynastic reason, from “the house of the king,” and to invent theory of “res publica” and later the republic as an instance transcendental to the agents (the king included) who are its temporary incarnations.<sup>98</sup>

The appearance of the doctrine of the reason of state concomitantly with the advent of the fiction of the common good may explain some other uses of this fiction. This doctrine tells us that actions in the interest of the state are not subject to standard human morality used in private interactions -- the Judeo-Christian Ten Commandments, for example -- and princes are sometimes obliged in the interest of their states to commit what would be considered heinous crimes in private life. Machiavelli is generally taken to epitomize this doctrine, though the term *ragione dello stato* appeared before his writings; it became the subject of the special treatise by Botero in 1584, well after Machiavelli’s death. By advising a prince to use all measures to mantenere lo stato, if one understands lo stato as the modern state, as a supra-personal entity established for the common good of all, Machiavelli is said to have ushered us into the world of specifically political rationality.<sup>99</sup>

Clearly, acts justified by the doctrine of reason of state would be considered inhuman if they were done to attain private goals. By instituting a fiction of the common good, however, the servants of the state allow themselves atrocities that may be committed while serving this fiction. Furthermore, some of them would decry the reminders of the moral unacceptability of such behavior heretofore, justifying their actions now by the “morality of responsibility”, to use a Weberian term. Indeed, Weber in his famous lecture juxtaposed the “morality of responsibility”

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<sup>96</sup> Ibid., 48

<sup>97</sup> Pierre Bourdieu, *The State Nobility. Elite Schools in the Field of Power* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996) 377, 380.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid., 58

<sup>99</sup> This point is best known in Friedrich Meinecke’s formulation. See his *Machiavellism* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1957) As Hexter shows, however, since there is no notion of the body politic in Machiavelli one can hardly find traces of the reason of the state doctrine. Lo stato is about tenancy of command over men, and even if Machiavelli immorally supplies advice on the laws of this command he does not justify slaughter in the interest of some higher entity called the state. The closest he comes to stating something like the reason of the state doctrine is his description of the founding of Rome in *Discorsi*, when the assassination of Remus by Romulus is justified by the fact that this had allowed for the institution of a lasting vivere civile. Hexter, 167.



that without much ado completely absolves the statesman from all guilt for the use of his or her discretion in employing violence and other dubious means in attaining state goals -- with the “morality of ultimate ends,” this reminder from the old days when reprehensible means, even if used, were deemed reprehensible.<sup>100</sup> Modern statesmen frequently come to rely on the first morality only, forgetting about the second and the fact that Weber called for the necessity of the combination of both in political life. The eclipse of the morality of ultimate ends and the rise of the morality of responsibility was not an easy task to accomplish, however. Meinecke noted that on the subject of reason of state there are unstudied “catacombs... of forgotten literature by mediocrities.”<sup>101</sup> Indeed, it required a constant drill of repeating the same doctrine over and over again (and with such a prolonged effort that even flocks of the most mediocre authors could manage to jump on the bandwagon) to finally make early modern Europe abandon the heretofore predominant discourse of “thou shalt not kill” and sanction some people to kill others freely and easily in the rationally defined “interests of all.”

Bourdieu is frequently criticized for having universalized a French experience that makes his theories hardly applicable to other cultures. For example, the USA obviously did not have the same noblesse du robe or centralized administration of justice. But Russian experience fits his theory rather well. The first antecedents of the modern bureaucratic apparatus formed under czar Alexei Mikhailovich coincide with the first timid attempts at assertions of working for the common good, as in the aforementioned Ordyn-Nashchokin case.<sup>102</sup> The decisive installation of the fiction of the common good happens against the background of unprecedented growth and rationalization of the czar’s bureaucracy. Peter replaced the chaotic system of overlapping chanceries that he inherited with a clearly delineated structure of eleven collegia (ministries) to supervise all of the affairs of the state. His first main innovation, however, was the creation of the Senate in 1711 -- initially an ad hoc body that supervised the czar’s affairs in his absence during yet another military campaign. In 1717 the Senate was reformed to become a standing high government, in 1718-1722 collegia were established and attached to it. People recruited to staff these new bodies rarely came from the old ranks of patrimonial chanceries, but were newcomers from all estates, frequently sent by Peter to be educated abroad. Peter examined the returning students himself before appointing them to posts in his governmental apparatus. As if according to Bourdieu’s theory, in 1724 an Academy of Sciences was established, which started providing scholars with titles that certified the disinterested pursuit of truth, and thus allowed

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<sup>100</sup> Weber, “Politics as Vocation.” According to Gaines Post (10), a medieval corporation called “the state” could cease being a corporation and become the state -- a political union that overpowers all other unions -- only if it rejected the preponderance of Christian morality and of the laws of the empire, to which each other corporation was subject at that time. Also see Carl Schmitt’s critique of Gierke: the state is a decisive political unity and thus is not subject to Genossenschaftsrecht of the Holy Roman empire (Schmitt, *The Concept of the Political* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1976)).

<sup>101</sup> Meinecke, 67.

<sup>102</sup> Generally, historians now view Peter’s revolution in bureaucracy as having been well-prepared by the previously overlooked western leanings of the bureaucrats during his father’s rule. See Natalia Demidova, *Sluzhilaia biurokratiia v Rossii XVII v. i ee rol' v formirovanii absolutizma* [Servitor Bureaucracy in Seventeenth Century Russia and Its Role in the Formation of Absolutism] (Moscow: Nauka. 1987).

them to be servants of the state. Many of these new state officials and certified experts became ardent proponents of the idea of the common good.<sup>103</sup>

Thus, the state officials and objective scientists, certified in their objectivity by this state, form a happy symbiosis. Only a few political and social scientists manage to escape the lucrative charm of the fiction of the common good. But this charm is not completely seductive. A long tradition of disputing the right of some to define the common good for all may be drawn from at least the Anti-Federalists' responses to *The Federalist Papers* in the US to different versions of nineteenth and twentieth centuries critiques of liberal democracy that tried to reveal vested group interests behind the facade of the state allegedly serving the common good.

Let me give some recent examples of similar criticisms that have been able to shy away from the usual state mystique, but also add something more to a rather tired search for the hidden vested group interest. In his famous article on state formation as organized crime, that succinctly summarized the thesis of a series of his works, sociologist Charles Tilly speaks of the state as a centralized and differentiated organization of officials that more or less effectively controls the production of a protection racket in a given territory.<sup>104</sup> However, he remarks that these officials do not offer their commodity on a free market of protection services -- a mistaken idea, entertained by Frederick Lane, Tilly's predecessor in thinking along these lines -- rather, the imposition or maintenance of the state has the character of a forced sale. In the language of institutional economics, this means that following this sale protection acquires the character of a "public good," that is, a shared utility like clear water or clean air. Tilly, however, stops short of examining how organized officials first managed to force this sale of protection services on all people in a given realm, and how they then managed to maintain the smooth functioning of this forced sale through a specific claim -- that, first, "safety" was a common good, and second, that the violence of some was waged in the interest of all -- which finally was accepted by the whole population of this realm.

In another piece of recent sociological research, Edward Laumann and David Knoke were surprised by the existence of specific independent interests of modern US state bureaucracy.<sup>105</sup> They have closely followed the formation of state policy in the 1970s and early 1980s in two departments of the US federal government -- food administration and energy. The authors have come to the conclusion that in the majority of studied cases of policy formation, governmental offices are not neutral umpires, but active promoters of their own agenda. They do not necessarily serve some external interests, rather they have interests of their own such as survival, adaptation, growth, and control of the environment. This makes governmental officials depend on this environment which consists of a multitude of other actors, public and private -- other offices of the US government, major private corporations, trade unions, professional associations, well-entrenched interest groups, and so on. Hence when a certain new policy is adopted or the old one amended -- say, on the level of carbon dioxide in exhaust fumes -- a

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<sup>103</sup> Pavlenko, 434-474; Evgenii Anisimov, *Gosudarstvennye preobrazovaniia i samoderzhavie Petra Velikogo v pervoi chetverti XVIII veka* [State Reforms and Autocracy of Peter the Great in the First Quarter of the Eighteenth Century] (St. Petersburg: Bulanin, 1997).

<sup>104</sup> Charles Tilly, "War Making and State Making as Organized Crime," in *Bringing the State Back In*, ed. P. Evans, D. Rueschemeyer, T. Skocpol (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976).

<sup>105</sup> Edward O. Laumann and David Knoke, *The Organizational State. Social Choice in National Policy Domains* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1987).

complex set of negotiations with all of these actors occurs, because in any case many of them have the resources to make their viewpoint be taken into account.

Given the frequent transfers of officers between the public and private organizations involved, it is the network of well-acquainted individuals representing relevant organizations that is the primary battlefield for adopting governmental decisions. The authors conclude: “the state is not a unitary actor, but a complex entity spanning multiple policy domains, comprising both governmental organizations and those core private sector participants whose interests must be taken into account... Intimate consulting and lobbying relationships, frequent employment interchanges and open communication channels between government and interest groups creates the inseparably intertwined institutions that constitute the modern state.” Of course, it is a certain governmental official who ultimately has to proclaim a decision, binding for all, but this decision is formed in myriad exchanges within the network, split into shifting coalitions following particular event cleavages.<sup>106</sup>

Bourdieu’s research team has discovered similar processes at play in state policy formation in contemporary France. At least, in the case of state policy in the housing sector, researchers did not find the state “a well-defined, clearly bounded and unitary reality which stands in a relation of externality with outside forces that are themselves clearly identified and defined.”<sup>107</sup> As a rule, certain state commissions or bureaus entrusted to adopt a policy become a field for the clash of public (i.e., of state ministries, their sections, grand corps -- the professional association of French civil servants -- and so on) and private actors (banks, construction firms, architectural bureaus, and the like). The summary influence of this configuration of interests is far from clear in the beginning of the process of formulating any given “state policy.” Conclusions of Bourdieu’s research team are: “the notion of ‘the state’ makes sense only as a convenient stenographic label -- but for that matter, a very dangerous one -- for these spaces of objective relations of power... that can take the form of more or less stable networks (of alliance, cooperation, clientelism, mutual service, etc.) and which manifest themselves in phenomenally diverse interactions ranging from open conflict to more or less hidden collusion.”<sup>108</sup> One should note that this picture is not a vision of established interest groups clashing for the control of the state machinery, but rather a complex alignment and realignment of shifting forces, produced by mobilization aimed to address particular issues and then disbanded after the event, that together establish and transgress the borders of the state.

Another recent theorization of the state, that also depicts it as a convenient but misleading shorthand given to a complex situation, as “no more than a composite reality and a mythicized abstraction”<sup>109</sup> of a polyvalent and diverse relations of force comes in the work of Timothy Mitchell. He analyzed the obvious difficulty of the proponents of two main schools of studying the state -- the “political system” theorists like David Easton and Gabriel Almond and those who assert relative state autonomy like Theda Skocpol -- in delineating the boundary between the state and society. The failure to do so, in Mitchell’s opinion, is not a small lamentable obstacle to the final success of empirically studying the state, rather it is an indicator that “the state-society

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<sup>106</sup> *Ibid.*, 381- 6.

<sup>107</sup> Pierre Bourdieu and Loic Wacquant, *An Invitation to Reflexive Sociology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 111.

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid.*, 112

<sup>109</sup> Michel Foucault, quoted from G. Burchell et al., eds., *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 103.

divide is not a simple border between two free-standing objects or domains, but a complex distinction internal to these realms of practice,” a border constantly subject to change depending on the political situation.<sup>110</sup>

As an example, he cites the Aramco case when the 1940s royalty increase for the exploration of oil resources of Saudi Arabia from 12 to 50 % of profits could not be accommodated by the US oil companies which were part of the Aramco consortium. Instead of raising the price of oil on the US market or cutting down their profits, the corporations managed to persuade the federal government to consider their increased payment to the sheiks a sort of direct foreign tax and thus were exempted from the equivalent amount of taxes paid to the US federal budget. Drawing a distinction between allegedly private oil companies (who were nevertheless powerful enough to be able to directly influence the federal government’s decisions) and “the state” allowed to cast a political decision to support conservative regimes in the Middle East at taxpayers’ expense as a matter of private corporate policy not subject to public discussion. Mitchell concludes: “We must take such distinctions not as a boundary between two discreet entities but as a line drawn internally, within the network of institutional mechanisms through which a social and political order is maintained.”<sup>111</sup> The task then would be to study the political processes through which this uncertain yet powerful distinction between state and society is produced.

The overall picture presented by these sociologists who do not uphold the fiction of the state as striving for the common good, is rather disheartening. Networks of individuals fight over or negotiate access to a general power to rule others by means of legislation or administrative regulation. The outcome of this clash or collusion is then dubbed “public policy to further the common good.” Of course, civil servants who finally announce and then enact these policies should not be representatives of any vested interest (as primitive Marxism would have us believe), rather they have their own interest in furthering their position as rulers and announcers of state policy. Among people staffing governmental offices, there is even a specific interest in being disinterested, a behavior that is highly rewarded not by economic gains but by symbolic capital -- the high esteem of a given official among other officials and the public.<sup>112</sup> This symbolic capital may be eventually converted into economic capital or, if reconversion of capital is not what an individual official is looking for, it may eventually allow him or her to gain an even higher office with more powers to rule the lives of other individuals.

Why then do the ruled, who clearly perceive the individual interests of given bureaucrats in everyday interaction with them -- including an interest in being disinterested -- accept their rule when it appears as a rule of some entity called “the state”? There are two sorts of answers given to this question, best exemplified by positions of Mitchell and Bourdieu. First, Mitchell would tell us that in ordinary life people refer to many examples of uniform, regular and orderly conduct of people designated as state or civil servants as obvious instances of state action. We encounter many individuals in the same uniforms staffing similarly named offices, soldiers who march in a recognizable standard manner, bureaucrats who are supposed to act uniformly in

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<sup>110</sup> Timothy Mitchell, “Society, Economy, and the State Effect,” in *State/Culture: State Formation After the Cultural Turn*, ed. G. Steinmetz (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999), 83.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid*, 77

<sup>112</sup> Pierre Bourdieu, “Is a Disinterested Act Possible?” in his *Practical Reason* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1998).

processing incoming requests as if they were automatons of a paragraph, in Weber's phrase, and so on. These sequences of disciplined and orderly action create a shared perception of the existence of some abstract entity that stands outside all of these instances and guides them. "Order and precision of such processes created the effect of an apparatus apart from the men themselves, whose 'structure' orders, contains and controls them."<sup>113</sup> The ordered quality of the modern world makes one habitually look for an agent, for the source of this order, which is then found in the abstraction of the state. This sounds plausible as an explanation, but how did this shared perception come about? How do certain people get designated and accepted as soldiers, state officials or civil servants and thus get endowed with the capacity to rule the behavior of others?

Here Bourdieu might help us with the answer. He thinks that mass acceptance of the rulers happens at the level beyond intentional agreement, at the level of "doxic submission." This acceptance is not a consent, open or tacit, given by a citizen to a legitimate government in a situation of original social contract. Rather, it is an acceptance of our everyday life and, with it, of those state-produced categories that structure our everyday life, like descriptions of professions and skills, academic titles and names of scientific disciplines, judicial classifications of actions and the classification of memorable historical events. People overlook the constructed character of the social universe, since they are born into a world already structured, say, according to the principle of the legal and symbolic importance of a nuclear family (rather than of extended kin), and they ignore the fact that at a certain point in time there was a government decision to take the nuclear family rather than extended kin as a basis for legal classifications. A contingent historical choice, certified by "the state," provided a category with the help of which we now construct our normal everyday reality.<sup>114</sup>

Of course, people who create these state classifications, adopted as universal in the name of the common good, only impose their individual decisions (or the preference of a decision-making network) on the entire population. But their action is seen as the work of universal importance, since once imposed on all subjects of the state, these categories are used by all subjects to interpret their everyday reality. In short, these categories become universal, because everybody willy-nilly uses them, and not because these categories reflect the interest of all people concerned. Individuals who produce these categories imposed on all in a compulsory manner, are then seen as servicing a reality common for all -- and become intuitively treated as representatives of thus conceived, and hence misconceived, universal interest. We uncritically assume that in the final account state officials work for the common good, since we are commonly obliged to inhabit the symbolic universe of goods produced by them.<sup>115</sup>

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<sup>113</sup> Mitchell, 89.

<sup>114</sup> Bourdieu, "Rethinking the State," 64-74.

<sup>115</sup> Only symbolic universes that crumble reveal the contingent character of their construction. The USSR's classification of crimes related to property engendered a category of everyday life known as a "speculator", a person who would buy scarce consumer goods under the counter at one price in a state market, and resell them on the street for a profit. Adoption of this classification of human behavior as "natural" and given -- although historically first imposed by the Soviet authorities in the 1930s -- did not entail an open consent to Marxist teaching on property, but just involved growing up in a society filled with speculators, "honest laborers" who do not resell commodities for profit, "shadow dealers" and so on, and habitually using these categories to interpret the events of everyday life. The claim to universality and the illusion that

Bourdieu traces back this state power to define what is real to the power of authoritative nomination that belonged to a medieval sovereign.<sup>116</sup> Initially, kings could issue definitions of statutory honor and invent new nobility titles. They also possessed the power of judicial verdict - the ultimate definition of social reality that is hardly contestable in many societies. With the proliferation of an army of state experts these functions were diversified and delegated by the sovereign. We now have special individuals who in the name of the common good register our births and marital status, bestow and confirm honors and educational degrees, issue legitimate medical and professional definitions of specialized statuses (for example, recognizing people as invalids, veterans, plumbers, doctors) and so on. At the foundation of all of these acts of classification, certification or definition of legitimate reality lies the power to institute, the power of performative naming.<sup>117</sup> “The real source of the magic of performative utterances,” according to Bourdieu, “lies in the mystery of the ministry, i.e. the delegation, by virtue of which an individual -- king, priest or spokesperson -- is mandated to speak and act on behalf of the group, thus constituted in him and by him.”<sup>118</sup> The scepter of kings and czars came as a symbol of speech that gives a definition of reality; it developed from the skeptron of ancient Greeks who passed it from one to another during group discussions to mark authoritative speech.

## MYSTICAL DELEGATION

Here we finally approach the mystery at the core of contemporary usage: why do we speak about the state as acting when we know that only individuals act? This usage, as it turns out to be, is linked to the residues of mystical delegation during the process that institutes public authority.

Historians have shown that the modern concept of political delegation -- that rests on a conception of a group as a fictive entity that can be represented by one physical person or a group of them -- has its origins in two medieval sources, scholastic interpretations of Roman law and the medieval concept of kingship. After the blending of the theory of corporate representation coming from the Roman law with the Christian conception of a mystical union in the body of Jesus, a notion of the “mysteries of the state” became possible, as Kantorowicz

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Soviet authorities were serving the common good were gone when the Soviet state lost its monopoly of classification during perestroika. The newly visible followers of Friedrich von Hayek would call speculators the best agents of the market who quickly conveyed information on bottlenecks in the economy; imprisoning people for reselling goods at a markup now seemed an absurd if not an absolutely evil act. The legitimacy of state officials as upholders of the common good was shaken in that they were shown to serve one truth among the many, rather than serving the only possible common one. Doxic submission requires the extermination of alternative sources of claims for universality.

<sup>116</sup> Bourdieu, “Rethinking the State,” 50.

<sup>117</sup> John Searle has analyzed the logical structure of these utterances of institution: “X will count as Y in context C.” However, he ascribes these acts to “collective intentionality,” a category that uncritically reflects the mythology of original contract in a community of equals. To support his point he gives predominantly US examples of acts of institution. (Searle, *The Construction of Social Reality* (New York: Free Press, 1995), 114-120.)

<sup>118</sup> Pierre Bourdieu, *Language and Symbolic Power* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1991), 75.

shows, quoting James I on this matter.<sup>119</sup> Hanna Pitkin tried to sum up the main thesis of mystical embodiment theories thus: “the king is not merely the head of the national body, not merely the owner of the entire realm, but he *is* the crown, the realm, the nation.” This idea, however, “goes beyond either representation or symbolization as we now conceive them and involves a mystic unity which ‘theoretical analysis can hardly divide’.”<sup>120</sup> English lawyers of the Tudor era thus restated it for political purposes: the king has two bodies, one natural and subject to illnesses and eventual death, another -- political and immortal. As Plowden wrote: “But his Body politic is a body that cannot be seen or handled, consisting of Policy and Government, and constituted for the direction of People and Management of Public Weal.”<sup>121</sup> Initially the lawyers used the metaphor of Phoenix which was very convenient: with every death of the natural body of yet another king, the same body politic was reborn again. Later the usage habituated, and Henry the VIII could say: “At no time do we stand so highly in our estate royal as in the times of Parliament, wherein we as head and you as members are conjoined and knit together in one body politic.”<sup>122</sup>

Christian mysticism lying at the foundation of the medieval and early modern concept of kingship allows one to understand what invisible essences might have been available to the mind’s eye of a faithful king’s subject when s/he was looking at the gathering of King and Parliament. Perhaps, indeed, in this regime of truth that established true statements through exegesis from the testimony of a few authoritative texts, an individual could perceive with inner vision the mystical body of the nation that expressed itself through the mouth of the King and acted through his sovereign orders.<sup>123</sup> Altogether, speaking of “the state” as an active agent imminently made sense -- it was an immediate reality, the ens realissimum for inner vision trained on direct perception of the mysteries of the sacred texts.

It was Hobbes who secularized this vision:

A Common-wealth is said to be Instituted, when a Multitude of men do Agree, and Covenant, every one, with every one, that to whatsoever Man, or Assembly of Men, shall be given by the major part, the Right to Present the Person of them all, (that is to say, to be their Representative;) every one... shall Authorize all the Actions and Judgments of that Man, or Assembly of men, in the same manner, as if they were his own.<sup>124</sup>

The mystical body is reinterpreted in this formulation as being a result of free covenant, which makes it susceptible to future puzzling difficulties. Hobbes still retains elements of the doctrine of mystical embodiment, i.e. those stemming from Christian mysticism -- even if these elements are preserved in a secularized form. For example, describing Leviathan, Hobbes implies that Sovereignty is not in the famous picture on the title page of the book, it is unseen, since it is “an Artificiall Soul, as giving life and motion to the whole body.”<sup>125</sup> This is yet

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<sup>119</sup> Kantorowicz, *Selected Studies*, 382.

<sup>120</sup> Hanna Pitkin, *The Concept of Representation* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967), 246.

<sup>121</sup> Kantorowicz, *The King’s Two Bodies*, 7, 9.

<sup>122</sup> Post, 332.

<sup>123</sup> The sovereign thus logically held the power of authoritative nomination -- only through him did the mystical body of the realm acquire its voice.

<sup>124</sup> Hobbes, 228-229

<sup>125</sup> *Ibid.*, 81

another restatement of medieval platitudes -- for example, as Post has noted, in the doctrine of the king's two bodies "prince was the soul, the lex animata and the vigor institutiae and pater legum."<sup>126</sup> However, this restatement of medieval images allows Hobbes to formulate the doctrine of the state as distinct from both the rulers and the ruled. The essence of the state -- sovereignty -- resides in the invisible soul, distinct from the figure of the ruler or the body of the ruled.

This invisibility to empirical vision, but openness to an inner sight, enlightened by religious insight, provides specific difficulties for an atheist like Hobbes. In the picture that adjoins the title page of *Leviathan* we indeed see an Artificiall Man constructed of many minuscule subjects. Leviathan's head does not consist of men, only his body. This, of course, is reminiscent of the words of Henry VIII: "you as members and we as head are knit together in one body politic." The head in the picture is bigger than any other individual, thus perhaps pictorially representing the majesty of the king's natural person; the mouth also belongs to him: only through the king does the body politic speak. Our contemporary can thus see the natural head of the king, the natural bodies of his subjects, and see the body politic that is the head attached to the body that is formed of subjects. However, this contemporary reader cannot see what animates this Artificial man (which is the State, as Hobbes says): it is the invisible soul. Mystical unity cannot be registered by the empirical gaze of our contemporary.

Looking at the picture, one can only say that Leviathan is a nice metaphor: people united in the state can be perceived as the most powerful creature. However, even in the picture, they are all singular individuals. Thus, the real problem of a modern state, in Bourdieu's words, is that it functions not as a metaphor, but rather as a metonymy: one person (or a selected group) from the multitude takes the function of speaking for all and acting for the good of all.<sup>127</sup> A part is assigned a function to represent the whole multitude -- in order to make the universal interest, allegedly common to all, manifest. As we have seen, this frequently leads to the imposition of the particular interest in the guise of universal interpretations of the common good. And this universalization mechanism seems to be built into the mechanism of representation or delegation as such.

However, this is not inescapable: it only seems that next to particulars there should exist a universal, embodied as a separate entity. As medieval scholars called nominalists asserted, the universal concepts exist as universalia in re, as combinations or configurations of particulars, it is a mistake to grant them separate existence next to particulars. For example, in opinion of these nominalists, the body of Christ is one such example: Christians are joined in it directly, and do not need a specific separate entity to represent this unity in Christ. Thus, this vision of universals was alien to a conception of the Christian church as embodied in the visible Pope and kingdom as embodied in the figure of the Prince. Accordingly, William of Ockham, a famous nominalist scholar, insisted that each Christian had to be consulted on matters of faith in the general council of the church.<sup>128</sup> No one could assume to represent the universal interest of the Church, only the gathering of all of its members could do so.

Interestingly enough, in solving similar today's problems, such nominalism could lead us away from the pitfalls of the fiction of the common good that is imposed by those who allegedly represent the common interest on others who are left with scarcely anything else than to ignore it

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<sup>126</sup> Post, 355.

<sup>127</sup> Bourdieu, *Language and Symbolic Power*, 206.

<sup>128</sup> Pitkin, *The Concept of Representation*, 243.



rather than to accept it. Such nominalism is all the more warranted if we wish to eschew the residual mystical foundations of power that help some maintain rule over others by mysterious delegation.

Notes: