ON THE GENESIS OF STATE

Buket KORKUT RAPTİS[*]

ABSTRACT

In this essay we aim to reconsider the genesis of state by elaborating some philosophical concepts and distinctions based on the recent studies in social sciences. We will associate the political power with the realm of state, which is the hallmark of civilization, and the ethical power with the realm of community, which is the bearer of culture. The right question we suggest addressing on the genesis of state is "what kind of ethical outlook should a community have so as to transform into a state?" If the state turns out to be the only authority that possesses the use of violence seen to be legitimate, then it is impossible for a community to give birth to a state without an ethical problem. In order to understand the genesis of state we will attempt to reveal this ethical problem. By appealing to the Aristotelian distinction between internal and external goods, we will conclude that the confusion between internal and external goods is the source of the ethical problem for the communities that transform into states.

Keywords: *State, Political Power, Ethical Power, Community, Civilization, Culture*

DEVLETİN KÖKENİ ÜZERİNE

ÖZ

Bu makalede son dönem sosyal bilimler alanında yapılmış çalışmalardan yararlanarak bazı felsefi kavram ve ayrımlar geliştirip devletin kökenini yeniden ele alacağız. Politik gücü uygarlığın göstergesi olan devlet olgusu ile, etik gücü ise kültürün taşıyıcısı topluluk ile ilişkilendireceğiz. Devletin kökeni hakkında sorulması gereken doğru sorunun şu olduğunu önereceğiz: "Devlete dönüşmesi için bir topluluk nasıl bir etik görünüme sahip olmalı?" Eğer devlet meşru gözüken şiddet kullanma hakkını elinde tutan güç ise, bir topluluğun etik bir sorun olmadıkça devlete dönüşmesi olanaklı değildir. Devletin kökenini anlamak için bu etik sorunu açığa çıkarmayı amaçlayacağız. Aristoteles'in içsel ve dışsal iyiler ayrımından yararlanarak, devlete dönüşen topluluklardaki etik sorunun içsel ve dışsal iyileri birbiri ile karıştırması olduğu sonucuna varacağız.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *Devlet, Politik Güç, Etik Güç, Topluluk, Uygarlık, Kültür*

In the philosophical literature, social contract theory (i.e., the view that people's political obligations are based on a contract or agreement among them to form a state) is the dominant view concerning the state. It is not, however, clear whether it is posited as the most reasonable explanation of the origin of state or it is proposed to legitimize the state. In either case, theories of social contract do no appeal to the works of social scientists. In our view, reflection on the genesis of state requires both an acquaintance with the studies in social sciences and a philosophical articulation of concepts.

Concerning Friedrich Nietzsche's method of genealogy, Gilles Deleuze once said "genealogy means both the value of origin and the origin of values."[1] The same can be told about the interconnection between the genesis of state and the value of state. In other words, theories about the origins of state always come with an answer to the question whether or not the state is legitimate. For instance, the two opposed views proposed by the social scientists, namely, integrationist and conflict theories also provide an answer to the question of legitimacy. The former group of theories claims that the state emerged as a result of integration due to the ecological conditions and the socio-economic needs of human beings.[2] This is clearly a way of legitimizing the state. The latter group of theories claims that the state emerged as a result of conflict where the conqueror dominated others.[3] This view implies that the state cannot be legitimized on the basis of its origins. Interestingly, there are archeological and anthropological evidences against both views. Concerning the integrationist theories, we now know that there were stateless societies with ecological conditions and socio-economic needs similar to the ones that established states. Concerning the conflict theories, archeological studies tell us that there is no evidence of war for some societies during the period of their state formation.[4] Hence, neither integration nor conflict can explain the emergence of state. How shall we then approach the question concerning the genesis of state?

We shall first be candid about our view of the state. From an ethical perspective, the state, as we know it, cannot be legitimized due to the fact that it is not only non-egalitarian, but also the most systematic form of domination of some people by others. The interesting question for us, then, turns out to be:

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[1] Gilles Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, (translated by Hugh Tomlinson), Continuum, London, 2002, p.2

[2] For an example of integrationist theory, see V. Gordon Childe, *Man Makes Himself,* Mentor Books, New York, 1958.

[3] For an example of conflict theory, see Franz Oppenheimer, *The State: Its History and Development Viewed Sociologically*, (translated by John M. Gitterman), Vanguard Press, New York, 1926.

[4] For a discussion on the shortcomings of these two kinds of theories, see Robert L. Carneiro "A Theory of the Origin of the State," *Science*, New Series, 1970, Vol. 169, No. 3947, pp. 733-738.

How could a community of people establish a state? What might have gone wrong? To answer this, we should begin with a definition of state.

I. A Definition of State

We usually presuppose that we have a good sense of what the state is. It is not, however, easy to define the state. We should begin with Max Weber's classic definition, which provides us with two interrelated characteristics. The first one Weber explains as follows:

> ... the state is the form of human community that (successfully) lays claim to the monopoly of legitimate physical violence within a particular territory...[5]

This is the most cited criterion of state in the literature. However, Weber actually points out another characteristic which is based on the first:

> ... the state represents a relationship in which people rule over other people. This relationship is based on the legitimate use of force (that is to say, force that is perceived as legitimate).[6]

According to Weber, the second characteristic is possible due to the first; some people use legitimate force (i.e., physical violence) to rule over other people. But what makes this force legitimate? Weber specifies that it is the force that is "perceived to be legitimate." There is surely a difference between the "legitimate use of force" and the "use of force that is perceived to be legitimate." It is unlikely that Weber was unaware of this distinction. The former is a normative concept while the latter is a relative one. It seems that if we are concerned with the institution of rulership based on the monopoly of physical violence, there is no place for the normative use of the concept of legitimacy.

But how is then the state seen to be legitimate? Since rulership based on coercion cannot be legitimized normatively, the way in which people nonetheless see this as legitimate has to do with their perception. The state then uses another power to control the perception of people. This power is psychological, for it concerns how people perceive and evaluate a certain phenomenon.

The significance of psychological power is first articulated by Pierre Bourdieu who names it as "symbolic power." According to Bourdieu, symbolic power is "the power to impose the principles of division, knowledge and

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[5] Max Weber, "Politics as a Vocation," in *The Vocation Lectures* (translated by Rodney Livingstone), Hackett Publising, Indianapolis, 2004, p.33.
[6] Ibid., p.34.

recognition."[7] "Symbolic violence is the violence which extorts submission, which is not perceived as such."[8] In this sense, "to say that the state is legitimate is to say that it can obtain submission without constraint, or rather with a form of constraint that I call symbolic power."[9] For Bourdieu, the definition of state should appeal not only to the monopoly of physical violence but also to the monopoly of symbolic violence.[10] In view of Bourdieu's contribution, our modified Weberean definition of state is then the following:

The state is established based on the stratified distribution of the power of using force (i.e., physical and psychological violence) over a definite territory, where those who have the most power of using force rule over the others with less power. To rule is to control others and make them work (for the accumulation of surplus that they are not allowed to use; for sustaining the institution of rulership; for defending it against internal and external threats) by means of the monopoly of physical force that is seen to be legitimate, for it is accompanied by the monopoly of psychological force. Hence, the state is the institution of rulership based on the monopoly of physical and psychological force, which we name "politics;" the state consists of politics.

Before we proceed with proposing a possible thesis on the genesis of state, we need to introduce a distinction between civilization and culture.

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II. The Distinction between Civilization and Culture

The state is the hallmark of civilization. But in history there used to be societies which did not establish a state. Nonetheless these societies had a culture. How should we then distinguish between civilization and culture? Nietzsche was right when he implied that civilization is a process at the end of which people lose the ground of their culture; for, Nietzsche claimed, people of modern civilization have the knowledge of other cultures but they themselves do not anymore possess any culture.[11] Civilization at its peak means the death of the culture of its own ground. Nonetheless some cultures are prone to develop a civilization while others resist the process of civilization.

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[7] Pierre Bourdieu, *Pascalian Meditations*, (translated by Richard Nice), Stanford University Press, Stanford, 2000, 189.
[8] Pierre Bourdieu, *Practical Reason: On the Theory of Action*, (translated by Randal Johnson), Stanford University Press, Stanford, 1998, p.103.
[9] Pierre Bourdieu, *On the State: Lectures at the College de France, 1989-1992*, (translated by David Fernbach), Polity Press, Cambridge, 2014, p.146.
[10] Pierre Bourdieu, *Practical Reason: On the Theory of Action*, (translated by Randal Johnson), Stanford University Press, Stanford, 1998, p.40.
[11] Friedrich Nietzsche, *Untimely Meditations,* (translated by R. J. Hollingdale), Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2007.

Primarily, both culture and civilization are ways of organizing human social life, but the means by which they accomplish this are different. In "Nomadic Thought," Gilles Deleuze provides us with three useful concepts which are peculiar to his definition of *state apparatus*.[12] The three features of state apparatus, according to Deleuze, are: *law*, *institution* and *contract* which are all means of organizing social life. Since the state is the hallmark of civilization according to our thesis, we can take these three features of state apparatus as the distinctive features of civilization. Deleuze does not specify, but we should add that culture proceeds with *custom*, *practice* and *promise*. In other words, in a civilization that replaces a culture, *law* replaces *custom*; *institution* replaces *practice*; and *contract* replaces *promise*. This is the way in which we suggest distinguishing between civilization and culture, that is, in terms of the means by which they organize human social life. In sum, we suggest the following definitions:

Civilization is the way in which the state organizes the social relations among its citizens on the basis of law, institution and contract. Hence civilization presupposes a state.

Culture is the way in which a community of people organizes the social relations among themselves on the basis of custom, practice and promise. Hence culture presupposes a community.

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This distinction between culture and civilization is compatible with Ferdinand Tönnies' famous distinction between community and civil society. According to Tönnies, "the relationship itself and the social bond that stems from it, may be conceived either as having real organic life, and that is the essence of *Community [Gemeinschaft]*; or else as a purely mechanical construction, existing in the mind, and that is what we think of as *Society [Gesellschaft]*."[13]

While culture is a natural and collectively appropriated product arising out of the common life experience of a community of people, civilization is always an artificial construction of how social relations should be organized from the perspective of dominators. In other words, both culture and civilization are products of human affairs, but while culture is anonymous and unanimous, civilization is authored. That is why civilization as opposed to culture presupposes a division of labor; some people engineer the process of civilization while others are domesticated through this process.

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[12] Gilles Deleuze, *Desert Islands and Other Texts 1953-1974*, (translated by Michael Taormina), Semiotext(e), New York, 2004.

[13] Ferdinand Tönnies, *Community and Civil Society*, (translated by Jose Harris and Margaret Hollis), Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2001, 17.

In *The Civilizing Process*, Norbert Elias also mentions a distinction between the English and French conception of civilization and the German concept of culture (i.e., Kultur). According to Elias, Western society associates civilization with a form of progress in "the level of its technology, the nature of its manners, the development of its scientific knowledge or view of the world, and much more."[14] In this sense, Western society "believes itself superior to earlier societies or "more primitive" contemporary ones."[15] For the English and French, the concept of civilization "sums up in a single term their pride in the significance of their own nations for the progress of the West and the humankind."[16] In the German usage, however, civilization has "only a value of second rank, comprising only the outer appearance, the surface of human existence."[17] The German concept of culture, which is considered to be more valuable, places special stress on "the particular identity of groups."[18]

How can we integrate Elias' insightful analysis in our distinction between civilization and culture? The idea that culture designates the peculiar identity of a group is compatible with our definition of culture. What we specified, but Elias does not, civilization is a process that a culture goes through at the end of which it replaces the culture of its own ground. That is why civilization is seen as a progress. Indeed it is a progress at the end of which the group loses its peculiar identity (i.e. culture) and represents itself as the peak of what humanity (at that historical period) can achieve. That is the source of its colonizing effect that Elias tries to capture. As Elias says, the English and French "who think with pride of their "civilization", they all regard it as completely self-evident that theirs is the way in which the world of humans in general wants to be viewed and judged."[19] In our terms, when a particular society is civilized by means of law, institution and contract, these means posit themselves as universal means that all other cultures should adopt so as to progress.

One more agreement between Elias' concept of civilization and ours is embodied in the way in which Elias explains the process of civilization in the West. In Elias' narrative we see how Western civilization was a result of the process pioneered by a group of individuals. Even the concept of *civilite* "was an expression and a symbol of a social formation,"[20] where "its individual starting-point can be exactly determined. It owes the specific meaning which became

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[14] Norbert Elias, *The Civilizing Process*, (translated by Edmund Jephcott), Blackwell Publishing, Oxford, 2000, p.5.
[15] Ibid., p.5.
[16] Ibid., p.6.
[17] Ibid., p.6.
[18] Ibid., p.7.
[19] Ibid., p.7.
[20] Ibid., p.47.

socially accepted to a short treatise by Erasmus of Rotterdam."[21] Elias' narrative focuses on how the manners of a Western upper class was imposed on the lower classes through education. In our terms, unlike culture which is a natural and collectively appropriated product arising out of the common life experience of a community of people, civilization is always an artificial construction of how social relations should be organized from the perspective of dominators.

III. The Distinction between Political Power and Ethical Power

Since we associated politics with the state, which is the hallmark of civilization, does this mean that cultures are devoid of politics? Indeed, this is what we will argue. But how do cultures then regulate social relations? This is the question we shall answer, which also puzzled Pierre Clastres. In the *Society Against the State*, Clastres analyzes some American Indian communities and argues that these communities are not merely stateless; rather, they resist the formation of state through certain social mechanisms.[22] But Clastres is puzzled about whether they are devoid of politics (or apolitical) for that reason. If political power is always coercive, i.e., involves command-obedience relations based on the monopoly of physical violence, then on the one hand Clastres admits that since these people do not recognize the monopoly of coercive power and they neither command nor obey, their societies turn out to be without politics; on the other hand, he takes it for granted that only animals form social groups without politics, but he does not want to reduce American Indians at the level of animals. There should then be non-coercive political power. But what does it mean and how is it possible? This is Clastres' question of puzzlement and he seeks to find an answer to this by analyzing the social dynamics of American Indian communities. Even though we do not agree with some of Clastres' philosophical interpretation of the anthropological data, which we will discuss now, his observations are nonetheless invaluable.

Clastres first points out that animals do not possess any form of political power:

> It is then the question of political power and, quite justifiably, J. W. Lapierre asks first whether this human fact corresponds to any vital necessity; whether it unfolds from biological roots; whether - in

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[21] Ibid., p.47.

[22] Pierre Clastres, *Society Against the State: Essays in Political Anthropology*, (translated by Robert Hurley), Zone Books, New York, 1989. The thesis that there were communities which resisted the formation of state is also proposed by James C. Scott in *The Art of Not Being Governed*, Yale University Press, New Haven, 2009.

other words - power has its birthplace and raison d'etre in nature and not in culture. At the end of a patient and informed discussion of the latest work in animal biology, - a discussion not at all academic, although predictable in its outcome - the answer is clear: "The critical examination of acquired knowledge regarding social phenomena among animals, and in particular regarding their processes of self-regulation, has shown us the absence of any form, even embryonic, of political power..."[23]

From this controversial observation, however, Clastres derives the following conclusion: "Logically speaking, an apolitical society would no longer have a place within the sphere of culture, but would rightly be placed among animal societies."[24] Does this proposition indeed follow from the previous observation logically? Just because animals lack political power, should those human communities, which do not organize their social relations according to political power, be placed among animal societies? Unless there is another form of human society distinct from both the kind of society based on political power and that of animal societies, this might be the case. Clastres, however, does not consider this possibility; that there might be a distinctive human social organization not based on political power. Given Clastres' observations which we will discuss below, American Indian communities seem to be examples of such societies.

Since there are such human societies which do not recognize coercion and since political power is coercive, what we need to explain is what kind of social power these societies use so as to regulate their relationships. What is then wrong with Clastres' conceptualization?

Primarily, Clastres does not distinguish between the social and the political in human relations and assumes that all social relations are political relations for human beings. But it is the other way around; all political relations are social relations. The social is broader than the political. For instance, healthy relationships among family members are social but not political (where a healthy family relationship is the one in which coercion is not involved).

Now, Clastres' intuition that not all power is coercive makes sense. But he uses "power" and "political power" interchangeably. Not all power used in regulating human relations are political. Since there are social relations that are not political, "social power" is a concept distinct from "political power." We

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[23] Pierre Clastres, *Society Against the State: Essays in Political Anthropology*, (translated by Robert Hurley), Zone Books, New York, 1989, p.8.
[24] Ibid., p.21.

must then distinguish between two kinds of social power: one is coercive that is political and the other is non-coercive, which we shall name "ethical."

This clarification among concepts helps us in distinguishing between the social relations in the state and those in Clastres' archaic societies better than Clatres' classification of concepts could allow us. In view of this, we can solve the puzzle proposed by Clastres: if political power is coercive and American Indians do not recognize coercive power, how do they then regulate their social life? And what does Clastres want to capture when he claims that the Indian chief has "powerless" power? Our solution to this riddle is simple: An Indian chief is powerless in terms of political power, but he has ethical power, and the social life is regulated by use of ethical power.

Considering Clastres' archaic societies, in sum, we argue that in these societies social relations are regulated by ethical power and this feature is what distinguishes them from the state that is based on political power. Clastres gives support to our thesis when he claims that "It is the lack of social stratification and the authority of power that should be stressed as the distinguishing features of the political organization of the majority of Indian societies."[25] Furthermore, according to Clastres, these societies are "essentially egalitarian" where men control their own activity.[26] On the basis of Clastres' anthropological data, these societies are non-stratified and egalitarian. But we said that the chief has a distinctive ethical power, is he then not privileged? How is his relation to the members of his community supposed to be? Clastres gives us an explanation of this relation based on the own words of an Indian chief:

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> The great cacique Alaykin, the war chief of a tribe inhabiting the Argentinean Chaco, gave a very good definition of that normal relationship in his reply to a Spanish officer who was trying to convince him to drag his tribe into a war it did not want: "The Abipones, by a custom handed down by their ancestors, follow their own bidding and not that of their cacique. I am their leader, but I could not bring harm to any of my people without bringing harm to myself; if I were to use orders or force with my comrades, they would turn their backs on me at once. I prefer to be loved and not feared by them." And, let there be no doubt, most Indian chiefs would have spoken similar words.[27]

[25] Ibid., p.28.
[26] Ibid., p.197
[27] Ibid., pp.207-208.

On the basis of the chief's qualities of character, ethical power is granted to him by the members of his community. Furthermore, if the chief goes against their common will, then he is abandoned. Besides, the chief with ethical power knows that even if he could acquire political power and force people to obey him, he would lose his ethical power. To prefer ethical power over political power is, to put it in Indian terms, "to prefer to be loved and not feared by" people.

The radical distinction between the political and the ethical is first articulated by Niccolo Machiavelli. According to Machiavelli, "a ruler who wishes to maintain his power must be prepared to act immorally when this becomes necessary."[28] (Machiavelli 2005, 55) "For meanness is one of those vices that enable him to rule."[29] Despite the controversies in interpreting what Machiavelli meant to suggest, there is nothing outrageous about what he actually says, for he openly describes what politics is about. The unethical character of the political is actually embodied in the institution of rulership based on coercion. Would a virtuous person want to rule others? Recall how Plato in *The Republic* answered this question: The philosopher would not prefer to rule but must be convinced on the basis of the fact that if he does not accept to rule, he will be ruled by inferior people.[30] But Plato assumed that the institution of rulership is necessary for arranging social relations. He was rather concerned with how a wise rulership is possible. In other words, he tried to reconcile the political with the ethical. But if Machiavelli is right, which we claim that he is, the political is autonomous; to be a successful ruler, one might need to be vicious. We might even question whether successful rulership is possible without some form of coercion. Machiavelli argues that use of force is necessary for an effective rulership.[31] Indeed, how could one rely on command-obedience relationship to organize social relations if there is no penalty for disobedience? It seems that some form of coercion (either physical or psychological or both) is necessary for the possibility of an effective rulership. This does not mean that the political (i.e., the rulership that is based on coercion) is the only option for arranging social relations. As we have seen above, it is possible to regulate social relations based on the ethical.

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[28] Niccolo Machiavelli, *The Prince*, (translated by Russell Price), Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2005, 55.
[29] Ibid., p.57.
[30] Plato, *The Republic*, (translated by Tom Griffith), Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2000.
[31] Machiavelli, *The Prince*, 2005, p.61.

IV. The Distinction between Segmented and Stratified Cultures

In the *Society Against the State*, Pierre Clastres actually assigns two interrelated tasks to political anthropology:

> This is the same as defining the task of a general, not a regional, political anthropology, a task that divides into two major lines of inquiry: (l) What is political power? That is: what is society? (2) What explains the transition from non-coercive political power to coercive political power, and how does the transition come about? That is: what is history?[32]

We have already discussed the first question. Concerning the second, there is an assumption embodied in this question. Clastres presupposes that all primitive societies were egalitarian, that is, they were based on non-coercive power, and hence he is puzzled about how the complex society in the form of state that is coercive emerged. How does Clastres answer this question? Towards the end of his book Clastres admits that he has no plausible answer:

> Primitive societies are societies without a State because for them the State is impossible. And yet all civilized peoples were first primitives: what made it so that the State ceased to be impossible? Why did some peoples cease to be primitives? What tremendous event, what revolution, allowed the figure of the Despot, of he who gives orders to those who obey, to emerge? Where does political power come from? Such is the mystery (perhaps a temporary one) of the origin.[33]

Clastres would be right to consider the origin of state mysterious if all primitive associations were egalitarian and all complex societies were hierarchical. However, recent anthropological studies show that this is not the case:

> In contradiction to evolutionist, neoevolutionist, and Marxist views, not all early human associations were egalitarian and the evolutionary process was not reduced just to the appearance and subsequent increase in sociopolitical hierarchization. On the contrary, social inequality existed in the human society from the very start... In addition, and again contrary to the theories mentioned above, one can give not a few examples of complex heterarchical societies in total forming an evolutionary series that do not follow the exceptionally widely spread unilinear scheme of "band–tribe (or

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[32] Pierre Clastres, *Society Against the State: Essays in Political Anthropology*, (translated by Robert Hurley), Zone Books, New York, 1989, p.24.
[33] Ibid., p.205.

independent community)–chiefdom– complex chiefdom– state". This is especially important because the measure of hierarchization is represented as the main and practically the only "litmus-paper" for a society's level of development in this almost canonized until the 1990s... As Brumfiel wrote several years ago, "the coupling of [socio-political] differentiation and hierarchy is so firm in our minds that it takes tremendous intellectual efforts even imagine what differentiation without hierarchy could be."[34]

According to the recent anthropological studies then, on the one hand, not all primitive communities were egalitarian or segmented; on the other hand, not all complex societies were hierarchical or stratified.[35] This allows us to ascertain, as the most plausible explanation, that some stratified primitive communities evolved into hierarchical complex societies which lead to the emergence of proto-states. Accordingly, we need to revise some of our theoretical concepts so as to provide a plausible explanation for the emergence of proto-states.

Early on we made a distinction between civilization and culture. All civilizations emerge out of a culture. But not all cultures bring about a civilization. Cultures that lead to civilizations must already be stratified in some sense for the possibility of the emergence of the state. Hence, we should introduce a further distinction between segmented and stratified cultures: A segmented culture organizes social relations on the basis of egalitarianism, whereas social relations are hierarchically organized by a stratified culture.

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[34] Dmitri Bondarenko, Andrey V. Korotayev, and Nikolay N. Kradin, "Introduction: Social Evolution, Alternatives and Nomadism" in *Nomadic Pathways in Social Evolution*, edited by Nikolay N. Kradin, Dmitri M. Bondarenko and Thomas J. Barfield, MeaBooks Inc., Lac-Beauport, 2015, pp.5-6.

[35] For an analysis of some non-egalitarian primitive communities of Australian Aborigines, see Olga Yu. Artemova, "Monopolization of Information and Social Inequality" in *Alternatives of Social Evolution*, edited by Nikolay N. Kradin, Andrey V. Korotayev, Dmitri M. Bondarenko. LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing, 2011. For examples of egalitarian complex societies of Eurasian nomads, see Dimitri M. Bondarenko, Leonid E. Grinin, and Andrey V. Korotayev "Alternatives of Social Evolution" in *The Early State, Its Alternatives and Analogues*, edited by Leonid E. Grinin, Robert L. Carneiro, Dmitri M. Bondarenko, Nikolay N. Kradin, and Andrey V. Korotayev, 'Uchitel' Publishing House, Saratov, 2004, pp.3-27; Nikolay N. Kradin, "Nomadic Empires in Evolutionary Perspective" in *The Early State, Its Alternatives and Analogues*, edited by Leonid E. Grinin, Robert L. Carneiro, Dmitri M. Bondarenko, Nikolay N. Kradin, and Andrey V. Korotayev, 'Uchitel' Publishing House, Saratov, 2004, pp.501-524; Tatyana D. Skrynnikova "Mongolian Nomadic Society of the Empire Period" in *The Early State, Its Alternatives and Analogues*, edited by Leonid E. Grinin, Robert L. Carneiro, Dmitri M. Bondarenko, Nikolay N. Kradin, and Andrey V. Korotayev, 'Uchitel' Publishing House, Saratov, 2004, pp.525-535.

American Indian cultures, which Clastres discusses, belong to the class of segmented cultures for their communities were egalitarian. It is evident that in a segmented culture, social relations are rather regulated by ethical power, which is non-coercive. The state, however, is organized by political power, which is coercive. The ambiguous case consists of the situation of stratified cultures. Since these cultures do not yet constitute civilizations, they are stateless similar to segmented cultures. This means that their social organization is not based on political power either. But social power is either political or ethical. The question of puzzlement is then: How can the social organization of stratified cultures, which are hierarchical, be based on ethical power? Is this not contradiction in terms?

Now 'ethical' means what concerns ethics, hence by our use of 'ethical' we do not necessarily refer to 'good' in the normative sense. Of course, ethics is about what is good. But Nietzsche is right, there are multiple conceptions of ethics, or moralities; for morality is possible only within a culture and there are multiple cultures. Although we recognize pluralism of cultures, pluralism of moralities and hence pluralism about conceptions of ethics, we need not be relativists about ethics. Ethics as a branch of philosophy has the capacity to compare different moralities and reveal which perspective is better. This is what Nietzsche assigned as one of the tasks of philosophy and showed us how it might be accomplished through a genealogical analysis. As a matter of fact, some moralities might be better than others. And we are capable of reflection and reevaluation of values that belong to different moralities. We agree with Nietzsche that this is the task of ethics as a branch of philosophy.

Now from what we claimed it follows that each culture embodies a particular conception of ethics, which might be worse or better than others. A conception of ethics (or what we call morality) is a way in which human goods are evaluated and ranked with respect to each other. Understood in this manner, stratified cultures also possess a certain conception of ethics. What kind of ethical conception is this?

Before we attempt to explain this, we need to appeal to a distinction that Aristotle makes concerning human goods in the *Nicomachean Ethics*.[36] According to Aristotle, human goods can be classified with respect to their being ends or means: (1) good as an end in itself (i.e., happiness as the active exercise of virtues); (2) good as an end and a means (e.g., honour, pleasure and intelligence); (3) good as a means (e.g., wealth and all kinds of instruments). Furthermore, Aristotle proposes another classification of goods: (1) goods of

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[36] Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, (translated by H. Rackham), Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1934.

the soul (i.e., virtues); (2) goods of the body (e.g. health, beauty, and physical strength etc.); (3) external goods (e.g., wealth). Aristotle adds that goods of the soul are the goods in the fullest sense and also the highest. It is clear that external goods function always as means. Goods of the soul are always ends. Some bodily goods are ends and also means (e.g., health) and some others are only means (e.g., beauty). We have to emphasize that virtues have a special role among all these goods, because happiness, the only good that is an end in itself consists of the exercise of virtues, and virtues also constitute the goods of the soul, which are the highest human goods for Aristotle. For the sake of brevity, then, we might introduce a twofold Aristotelian distinction: (1) internal goods which are always ends, namely, virtues (2) external goods which are always means, such as wealth. This rough distinction is sufficient to help us in understanding the ethical views of stratified and segmented cultures and their difference.

Both segmented and stratified cultures rely on the ethical in regulating social relations. The ethical is the way in which a culture identifies human goods. Stratified cultures are the ones which confuse external goods with internal goods; that is to say, they take external goods as ends in themselves. In a community of stratified culture, the chief plays the role of chief for the sake of external goods, and the external goods that a chief possesses legitimize his position of being a chief in the eyes of his subjects. This leads to stratification. In a segmented culture, however, the leader of a community, if there is any, has the ethical power due to the internal goods (i.e., his virtues), and for the sake of being an exemplar he uses this power.

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Neither segmented nor stratified cultures recognize the monopoly of physical violence, which is the distinctive feature of the state. Nonetheless, as opposed to the communities of segmented cultures, which are egalitarian, communities of stratified cultures are hierarchical. There is a sense in which stratified cultures allow some people to be privileged and command over others on the basis of the monopoly of not physical but psychological power. In such cultures, psychological power is the power that authorizes one to control others' behavior but is granted to a person by others on the basis of the external goods associated with that position. In segmented cultures, ethical power acquired on the basis of internal goods (i.e. virtues) is also a form of psychological power, for it allows one to be listened to more than another person with less ethical power. But this power does not lead to command obedience relation, for it is not and cannot be monopolized. Unlike external goods which are objects of competition, internal goods are objects of cooperation. A person with internal goods, namely, virtues, would not abuse his power to control others' behavior, for this attitude runs against the virtues he has. Such a person rather shows others how to become virtuous and partake in

ethical power. In this sense, each member of the community has equal access to internal goods; they can achieve to be virtuous by their own effort. That is why such a community is segmented rather than stratified. The kind of ethical power, which is given to a person on the basis of external goods, is a form of psychological power that is devious; for the person does not actually deserve to be followed due to his character virtues but pretends as if he is worth to be followed due to the external goods that he has. That is why such a person cannot be an exemplar by his own actions about how to achieve internal goods, but can only sustain the order of the community through command obedience relations. Since members of the community do not have equal access to external goods, this kind of psychological power is monopolized even though it depends on the consent of the community. That is why such cultures are stratified.

Confusion about who deserves to be followed for what reason leads to stratification. Members of stratified cultures mistakenly believe that external goods are ends and some people should be privileged in terms of possessing external goods. But they do not realize that some external goods if provided without measure might turn into the means to political power. When this takes place we encounter the emergence of the proto-state. Not all external goods can be a means to political power. For instance, the chief who is privileged to be polygamous, probably does not deserve this on the basis of his character (what would that mean in any case?); rather, he is privileged due to the status he occupies. In the end, association of chieftainship with polygamy is a result of cultural evaluation of human goods and how they should be distributed. Polygamy might be a harmless external good to associate with chieftainship. But not all external goods are thus harmless. Imagine the association of chieftainship with wealth where wealth is considered to be the legitimate sign of chieftainship. In such a community, the chief holds the potential to gain political power by distributing his wealth to some but not to others. Thus, he might establish an armed force and monopolize the use of physical violence. Therefore, wealth is one kind of means to acquire political power that leads to the birth of the proto-state.

The question for the emergence of the proto-state is then the following: How is psychological power used to acquire political power, the power to monopolize physical violence? We tried to give one plausible answer to this question above and there might be others. Another plausible explanation is implied by Clastres in the following passage:

> Prophetic speech, the power of that speech: might this be the place
> where power tout court originated, the beginning of the State in the

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Word? Prophets who were soul-winners before they were the masters of men? Perhaps.[37]

Note, however, that Clastres does not raise the question we do. Nonetheless, his claim above can be interpreted as another possible answer to our question. The power of prophetic speech, if not a kind of psychological power, what is it? There might indeed be a transfer from the psychological power of prophetic speech to political power since prophetic speech is a skill, that is to say, an external good which might be used as a means to political power. In other words, prophetic speech is not an internal good that is an end in itself; it is a means. If our interpretation of prophetic speech is plausible, our meta-framework of explanation is untouched and even verified by Clastres' intuitive suggestion.

How is the situation in a segmented culture? Ethical power is still a kind of psychological power but is granted to a person due to the internal goods, namely, the virtues of his character. This kind of ethical power allows one to be listened to, but it does lead one to command others; for a person with virtues, as the Indian chief in Clastres' example indicated, wants to be "loved not feared" by others. Furthermore, due to the cultural recognition of internal goods as ends in themselves, the members of a segmented community do not let one to abuse the use of psychological power. They take such an abuse as a sign of vice and hence abandon listening to the person who was initially granted ethical power; in other words, any claim to the monopoly of psychological power is a reason for them to take ethical power away from that person. Besides, the nature of internal goods does not allow psychological power to be monopolized; for internal goods are not objects of competition but objects of cooperation. Even though such a culture might allow one to be a leader, the leader is not supposed to be idle and command others. On the contrary, for the possibility of gift economy to sustain itself, the leader should be the one who works more than others. In the end, the leader becomes the leader, for he represents a model personality that deserves to be taken as an exemplar. The question for a segmented culture (as opposed to a stratified culture) is not who should be obeyed but who should be respected and taken as an example. The ethical power of the leader is supposed to be a mediator for others to partake in this ethical power. In a stratified culture, the chief has the monopoly of external goods and in order to protect this monopoly, he also needs to monopolize psychological power. The monopoly of psychological power is the ground of command-obedience relation and this is the first form of stratification. That is why segmented cultures can resist the process of

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[37] Pierre Clastres, *Society Against the State: Essays in Political Anthropology*, (translated by Robert Hurley), Zone Books, New York, 1989, p.218.

civilization while stratified cultures are the archaic forms of civilizations. Without the distinction between segmented and stratified cultures the origin of complex stateless societies and that of the state becomes mysterious.

In a nutshell, segmented cultures have a conception of ethics that take internal goods as ends, and that is why, they are egalitarian and resist the formation of the state; stratified cultures have a conception of ethics that take external goods as ends, and that is why, they are hierarchical and are prone to bring about state formation. The studies in social sciences provide us with examples of both kinds of culture. Based on the existence of such cultures we attempted to suggest a theoretical framework for explaining the possible genesis of state by introducing some conceptual distinctions. Our philosophical reflections, of course, need to be revaluated by the new data provided by anthropological, sociological, historical and archaeological studies.

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