

11. *The nature of the state*

'Philosophy cannot give us a satisfactory theory of man until it has developed a theory of the state. The nature of man is written in capital letters in the nature of the state.'

Ernst Cassirer

Synopsis: *The nature of the state is set by what the state is, what the state has and by what the state does (1); What the state is (2–6); What the state has (and does not have). The state has no purpose (7–9); What the state does (and does not do) (10–11).*

1. *

The nature of the state is set by what the state is (and is not), what the state has (and does not have) and by what the state does (and does not do).

2. What the state is*

The state is an information platform for its citizens.³⁸⁴ It is a Being, in fact an organisation,³⁸⁵ that is natural to humans, formed immediately when humans gained self-consciousness, and thus names, and started communicating with each other using language. The state is an identification, individualisation mechanism, the only natural one to humans, and one that is indispensable for them to live a meaningful³⁸⁶ life.

The state remains a Being for as long as its citizens process information on its platform; it therefore needs its citizens to augment their information processing, which is something that is in accordance with human nature.

384 See Chap. 7.

385 See Chap. 2, par. 9.

386 See Chap. 7, par. 3.

3.

The state is the information processing infrastructure that creates the processing environment necessary for its citizens.³⁸⁷ It is therefore, in fact, not *an* information platform for its citizens, but *the* information platform for them (in the analogue world, at least for the moment).

Specifically, however, the state is actually not the information platform itself, but the informational infrastructure, the mechanism, that created the information platform and underlies and supports it. It is the nucleus of the information platform, the informational seed that gave birth to all and is found at its centre.

Distinguishing between the two, however, is impossible: the informational mechanism, although based on the simplest of algorithms, is a self-referential one ('every human will be given at birth a unique identifier composed of (a) a name and (b) a citizenship, of which, however, (b) is the name humans give to the mechanism itself'³⁸⁸). Subsequently, every information processing operation carried out by that uniquely identified human is warranted by and registered with the same mechanism that made the identification.³⁸⁹ The information platform that is the state, through the information processing carried out by its citizens on the basis of these self-referential algorithms, continuously expands. It is in view of this understanding that the two terms are equated.

4. **What the state is not***

The state is not a corporation, an association or a union, an organism, a political organisation (or institution), a service provider or a public sector. It is not a pawn, a cipher or a network. More precisely put, the state may appear to be any of those things (or all of them together) only because it is first and foremost is an information platform for its citizens. All of the above are appearances originating from its actual nature, which is an information processing infrastructure for its citizens. Once states were formed, as natural individualisation mechanisms as soon as any two humans started

387 See also Chap. 8.1, par. 4.

388 So, either humans naturally think in this way, in terms of individualised names and individualised families, tribes etc., or an out-of-Nature entity, e.g. God, created the mechanism for humans (i.e. made humans think in this way).

389 See also Chap. 7, par. 5.

using language, all of the above appearances became possible—prior to that, this was not the case.

In addition, the state is not the sum of its citizens or of its citizens' information processing.

Finally, the state is not an actor or a structure—or, better phrased, it is both an actor and a structure at the same time.³⁹⁰

Most certainly, and clearly, of course, the state is not (its) government.³⁹¹

5. *

Modern states, meaning the states in which most of us live (i.e. centralised nation states) are not the product of evolutionary development towards a particular end. They are not an improvement on previous forms of state that historically appeared from time to time (e.g. empires, city-states etc.). Modern states are not the product of a linear development—this is true even though their next level of organisation, meaning the formation of archipelagos, is already in sight, in the form of the EU.³⁹²

On the contrary, modern states are the result of changes in the information processing capabilities of humanity. Need and opportunity are very visibly at play here: individuals need to augment their information processing and will take advantage of whatever opportunities to do this come their way; states need their citizens to do exactly that. Whichever technical tools (e.g. information technology) and organisational measures (e.g. centralised administration) are available at any given time are used to the fullest extent possible.

While the use of technical tools is self-explanatory, why this process culminated (today) in the centralised state perhaps needs some more explanation.³⁹³ Individuals need to augment their information processing and they thus invent tools (from language and writing to computers) to achieve exactly that. Any increase in their information processing is translated into increased processing by their state, which also has to keep up.³⁹⁴ Any increase in the information processing by the state leads to greater

390 On the transactional state, see Chap. 9, par. 5.

391 See Chap. 12, par. 1.

392 See Chap. 19.

393 On why this has culminated in the nation state, see Chap. 18, par. 3.

394 Therefore, it is individuals that create a drag on the state and not vice versa—causing a lag that can be witnessed today in the digital world.

centralisation, in a cycle that can be interpreted in many ways, but which seems (historically) inevitable.

6. The state is timeless*

The state existed as soon as humans started using language and has never ceased to exist since. Humans have never been, and can never be, found outside of a state. States are therefore agnostic of (i.e. not an expression of) nations and nationalities, ethnic differences, ‘national characters’ or ‘national souls’, or any other distinctions ever placed upon humans. Although it would be foolish to deny their existence, it is important to note that these distinctions are the result of politics³⁹⁵ (politics being the result of the existence of states as information platforms for their citizens and individuals competing to augment their information processing in the analogue world where there is a finite amount of information³⁹⁶).

What is important to keep in mind is that any human ever born once humans gained self-consciousness and invented language, was born into a state. How that particular individualised human and that particular state fared (or fares) on our planet is a matter of politics, not of existence of the state itself.

Having said that, it is also important to remember that, once established, the link between each individual and the individual’s state is unbreakable.³⁹⁷ Individuals may find themselves in different states during their lifetimes or experience grave changes within their states for whatever reason and in various contexts; however, all of these situations are the results of political (or personal) decisions that do not affect the (continuous) existence of their state.

7. What the state has (and does not have). The state has no purpose*

The state has no purpose. It serves no purpose, it is not aimed at anything specific, it has no preset objectives that it needs to achieve, no end towards which to strive. (Nor, for that matter, does it have any historically predetermined destiny that it will inevitably reach.)

395 See Chap. 18.

396 See Chaps. 12 and 12.1.

397 See Chap. 8, par. 6.

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The state was not created, it emerged naturally, as soon as humans started using names. Because it was not intentionally created (it is therefore neither a Thing that is an artefact nor an organisation incorporated by humans), it has no specific purpose.³⁹⁸ As is the case for family,³⁹⁹ the state emerged naturally, as the necessary mechanism for using the names of humans in the way humans needed, without any specific planning or intentional thinking on the part of humans.

In other words, states were not artificially created by humans for the purpose of individualisation (as is claimed, for example, under social contract theory for the purposes of security, property or justice), that is, humans did not have the conscious intention to create them as an alternative to other individualisation mechanisms that were available to them or as the result of a conscious choice to augment their information processing as an alternative to not doing so.⁴⁰⁰ Rather they emerged naturally, as a necessary part of self-consciousness and human language. (After all, the definition of the state in this book has emerged only now after thousands of years, and as a result of the arrival of the digital world which has made such a perspective possible, thus further evidencing how natural states have appeared to humans so far in their history.)

8. *

Similarly, the state has no consciousness of its own, nor a will (other than the will to process information, of course). It therefore does not do anything consciously; most importantly it does not exercise control⁴⁰¹ over its citizens (or over the Beings and Things on its platform)—it has no will, no need,⁴⁰² to do so.

(Attempted) control over a state's citizens (in fact, over all Beings and Things on its platform) is exercised by the government.⁴⁰³

398 See note 5/2/1 and 5/2/2.

399 See Chap. 2, par. 9, and note 8/2/1.

400 As is the case for all other organisations (see Chap. 2, par. 7).

401 See Chap. 6, and also Chap. 16, par. 3.

402 See Chap. 5, par. 2.

403 See Chap. 12, par. 8.

9. **The state does not have a pre-ordained order***

There is no imagined level of order (or rationality) that states strive to attain in linear historical development or progress (nor is there historical inevitability that progress is made, for that matter⁴⁰⁴). The fact that states, regardless of whether tribes or empires or how far apart they were geographically or chronologically, ultimately resembled each other organisationally says nothing about the states themselves but rather about their citizens' information processing capabilities at any given time. States may appear today to have 'progressed' towards increasingly centralised, and complex, information processing infrastructures, but this is only because their citizens have continuously augmented their own information processing.⁴⁰⁵ Whatever order or organisation states have reached today or acquired over time only reflects their historical and cultural development as caused by chance and opportunity in the information processing of their citizens, not by any imagined rational end for states themselves—whatever that could be.

10. **What the state does (and does not do)***

The state is a Being; it can and will process information. However, it does not think, it does not process immaterial information. The state, also, does not see—nor does it express its citizens' will or wishes.

11.

Similarly, the state does not reason. Although the state is a Being that can and will process information, actually using Reason in its processing,⁴⁰⁶ it does not think in the same way a human does or use Reason to reach a conclusion or some level of, imagined (by humans), order or perfection—or even to make (any) sense to its citizens. In other words, the state is not a person (much less, a humanised, Hobbesian giant-like anthropomorphic one).

404 See also Chap. 9, par. 7.

405 See par. 5.

406 See Chap. 4.1, par. 2.