

# *Existing forms of the state and its types*

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***Dr. Abla XHAFERI***

DEPARTMENT OF HUMANITIES AND COMMUNICATION, EUROPEAN  
UNIVERSITY OF TIRANA, ALBANIA.  
E-mail: abla.xhaferi@uet.edu.al

## **Abstract**

*The state is present in every activity of a country. It controls, regulates, supervises, authorizes, or prohibits illegal and useless activities. The main purpose of the state is to maintain order and stability in society. From Antiquity until today, it has existed in different forms, which have been reflected by philosophers of different periods. Plato recognized forms of the state: aristocracy, timocracy, plutocracy, democracy, and despotism. For Aristotle, the forms of the classical state were a monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy, which could end in tyranny, oligarchy, and polity, respectively. Even Montesquieu classifies the above three forms, which can end in despotism. The meaning of the form of the state includes the form of government, which expresses the principles and the way of organization of the higher bodies of the state; the form of political rule, which is determined by the system of methods of its realization and the form of state organization, which is determined by the principles of the territorial construction of the state. The dominant forms of government have been monarchy and republic. Monarchy is a state ruled by a single person (monarch, king, or emperor). Monarchy appears in absolute, constitutional, or parliamentary forms. The republican form of government represents the direction of the state by an individual or a collective. In ancient times, republics were democratic or aristocratic, while today republics are parliamentary and presidential. In parliamentary republics, the head of*

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. Abla Xhaferi is a lecturer at the Department of Applied Social Sciences, Faculty of Law, Political Sciences, and International Relations at the European University of Tirana. She holds a doctoral degree in Political Science and her teaching is focused on subjects of Political Science, Philosophy, and Sociology.

*state is elected by the parliament and has fewer powers, while in presidential republics the president is elected by the electorate and has greater rights and powers. Some other forms of governance have also been applied, such as the minimal state, in which the individual should enjoy as much freedom as possible and the state should be limited only to protection against violence, fraud, theft, guaranteeing the implementation of contracts; the developing state, whose role is to intervene in economic life to promote industrial growth and economic development; the social-democratic state, which intervenes only to make social restructurings, to mitigate the inequalities and injustices of the free market; the state of the dictatorship of the proletariat, which controls the entire economic and social life of a country, it is comprehensive and influences every aspect of human existence. The type of state is determined by its economic-social base. The state is classified into a state of slavery, a feudal state, a bourgeois or capitalist state, and a socialist state. The real functioning of a state also requires the implementation of some requirements to be effective, to move away more and more from the features and indicators of a weak state, and, therefore, also failed in fulfilling its historical mission.*

**Keywords:** *state, a form of state, function, monarchy, republic, type of state*

## **I. Introduction**

The state is present in every human activity of a country: from education to economic administration, from social welfare to health, and from maintaining order within the country to external protection. The state shapes and controls, while, where it does not modify or control, it regulates, supervises, authorizes, or prohibits. Even those aspects of life that are usually considered personal or private (marriage, divorce, abortion, religious worship, and similar), cannot avoid the role and influence of the state. It is not surprising, then, that politics is often understood as the rule of the state.

Such an approach has also been used by Marxist theorists of our time, who conceive of the state as a mechanism that mitigates class conflicts to ensure the long-term survival of the capitalist order.

Of course, ideological debate and political parties tend to revolve around the function or role of the state. What should the state do and what should be left to the individual and associations to do? Thus, the nature of state power has become one of the most fundamental issues of political analysis today, with the debate over the state affecting some of the deepest and most enduring divisions in political theory.

## II. Forms of the state

The forms of the state have existed from Antiquity until today and have been reflected by philosophers of different periods. For Plato, the forms of the state were: aristocracy, timocracy, plutocracy, democracy, and despotism. Aristotle thought that the classical state is not a product of man, it is not historical; it exists for itself in nature as an expression of an immutable natural order (Solari, 1990:23). The forms of this state, according to him, were a monarchy, aristocracy, and polity, which he called true forms. According to him, these forms could degenerate into tyranny, oligarchy, and democracy, respectively.

According to Aristotle, a state governed in the interest of all is a monarchy. If the monarch rules arbitrarily in his favor, this form degenerates into tyranny. A state ruled by a few people for the common good is an aristocracy. If they use their power selfishly and put wealth above intelligence and patriotism, the aristocracy becomes an oligarchy. A state governed by all the people for the common good is a polity.<sup>2</sup>

If, however, most people, realizing their differences, govern in the interests of the poor, politics in its complicated form becomes a democracy.

Even Montecchio classifies the above three forms (Dunning, 1916: 400), which end in despotism, when the drafting of laws, their execution, and judgment are concentrated in a single body. According to him, the value of each form is relative. Democracy as a form is impossible because political virtue and the spirit of equality disappeared. The aristocracy cannot live because moderation between the ruling classes has ceased. Monarchy is impossible because honor among rulers has weakened, while despotism, by its nature, is unstable. (Gettell, 1923: 253).

The notion of the state's form indicates how it is organized. The meaning of the form includes:

- the form of government, which expresses the principles and the way of organization of the higher bodies of the state;
- the form of political rule, which is determined by the system of methods of its realization;
- the form of state organization, which is determined by the principles of territorial construction of the state. This can be unitary or federal.

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<sup>2</sup> Polity is a form of government, "in which the government is in the hands of the people, who exercise it for the common good. In the Aristotelian lexicon, politics is opposed to democracy which, although it is also the government of the people, nevertheless aims, neglecting the common good, to unfairly favor the poorer classes." (Retrieved from [https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/elenco\\_opere/Vocabolario\\_on\\_line](https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/elenco_opere/Vocabolario_on_line) , accessed on September 13, 2022).



These elements fully give the concept of the form of the state.

From the forms above, we will only deal with the form of government. It is an important element, even formally the most important of the form of the state, because it has to do with the organization of the higher bodies of state power, as well as with the scale and the way of people participate in the governance of their state.

The most popular forms of government that have guided the lives of the peoples of the world have been the monarchy and the republic.

Monarchy is one of the earliest forms of government. It represents a state ruled by a single person, a monarch, king, or emperor. This type of state inherits rule from one generation to the next in the hands of its most direct heirs. Monarchy appears in absolute, constitutional, or parliamentary forms.

Supporters of the absolute monarchy were Thomas Hobbes and Niccolo Machiavelli. Hobbes saw the state as an institution founded on the consent of individuals, which must be absolute to preserve peace among men, who by nature are always inclined to be in a state of war (Gettell, 1923: 220). In an absolute monarchy, the monarch rules with absolute power over the state and government. This is best embodied in the expression of Louis XIV “The state is me”. His authority is unlimited by law, tradition, or custom, and power is attributed to him by divine right (Ganrer, 1910: 88). All laws are made by the king, and the people have no choice but to obey or go into anarchy. The king is not responsible for his actions except before God. Monarchy is hereditary, therefore the divine right of the king had to pass from father to son. The king has the right to rule by decrees, issue laws, and give punishments. There are such monarchies: Oman, Saudi Arabia, Brunei, and similar.

In the constitutional monarchy, the monarch is the subject of the constitution, a symbol of national unity and state continuity. The king is the head of state, but his powers are limited by the constitution, which includes a series of rules and rights. His political power is limited. In a constitutional monarchy, according to Locke, the form of government depends on who has the supreme power. Accordingly, the form of the state depends on that who has the power to make laws. (J. Locke, 2005). Such monarchies are Morocco, Bahrain, Bhutan, and similar.

A parliamentary monarchy is also a type of limited monarchy, similar to a constitutional monarchy. In these monarchies, the exercise of power is not concentrated only in the hands of the monarch but is distributed among various organs of state power. The monarch is the embodiment of the symbol and unity of society. Parliamentary monarchy exists today in several countries, such as Spain, Sweden, Belgium, the Netherlands, and similar.

Republic originates from the Latin *Respublika*, which means public affairs. The republican form of government represents the direction of the state by an

individual or a collective. The states of France, Italy, and similar. have individual bodies, while the countries of the former eastern democracies, such as Albania, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, the USSR, and similar., had a collective body, which led through the Presidium of the People Assembly.

In republican regimes, the head of state, individual or collective, is elected for a fixed term directly by the electorate or by a representative assembly.

In ancient times, republics were either democratic or aristocratic. Athens was a democratic republic. The Athenian Republic represents a direct democracy, with a strong influence on western democracies.

Rome was an aristocratic republic. The Roman Republic was established around 509 BC. and was ruled by magistrates elected once a year and by assemblies with various representatives. During the heyday of the Roman Republic, all powers were governed by a constitution that defined a set of norms and balances on the separation of powers. Today, the republics are parliamentary and presidential.

In parliamentary republics, the head of state is elected by the parliament and his role is reduced. Such republics are Albania, Kosovo, North Macedonia, Italy, Germany, and similar. The powers of the president in parliamentary republics are reflected in their constitutions and are fewer than in presidential republics. The powers of the Italian, Macedonian, Kosovar and Albanian presidents, reflected in the respective constitution, are more or less the same. In each of these constitutions, it is written that the president represents the republic and the unity of the nation. He is impartial and stands above the parties. His function does not agree with the exercise of any other public profession or function in a political party. But it doesn't happen like that in every case. Thus, the last former Albanian president during his mandate not only supported but was involved in concrete activities, supporting one side of Albanian politics.

In presidential republics, the president is elected by the electorate and has greater rights and powers than the president of a parliamentary republic. Presidential republics are the USA, Argentina, Mexico, and similar.

However, the type of state and the form of government essentially depend on the political regime. On the other hand, the difference between democratic and non-democratic states lies in the degree and level of implementation of democracy and citizens' rights both in theory and in everyday life.

Although overall time and socio-political developments have enabled two of the most classical forms of government, the republic and the monarchy, which we discussed above, in different eras other intermediate forms have appeared, bearing special characteristics of developments and traditions economic - cultural of these peoples. Thus, several forms of governance have been applied: The minimal state, which is a product of the theories and concepts of classical liberal theorists. One of the representatives of the liberal theory of the minimalist state is Robert Nozick



(1938 - 2002) - who “In opposition to the various forms of utilitarianism and, above all, to the noncontractual of J. Raws, N. - has theorized in his main work “Anarchy, State and Utopia” (1974), individualistic liberalism, in which the function of the state is limited to the security of individuals and the protection of individual rights (theory of minimum state)... (Dizionario di storia, 2010). According to him, people have basic rights, which no one should violate. One of the offenders that violate these rights is the state, and this is the reason why it requires a state with a reduced role in performing traditionally recognized functions.

According to liberal theorists, the individual should enjoy as much freedom as possible. This view was widely expressed in the theory of the social contract, although in general, it undermines the role of the state itself.

From this point of view, the value of the state lies in the ability to exercise control and limit the behavior of individuals in society, which contradicts the principles of minimal state theorists. According to Heywood (2002), “The state is only a protective body and its main function is to create a framework for public peace and order within which citizens can live as they see fit. According to Locke’s famous saying, the state should be like a “night watchman”, which is called to help only when the social order is threatened.” (Heywood, 2002: 117).

This definition limits the state to only a few functions: to maintain internal order, guarantee and respect the agreements or contracts between citizens, and protect its citizens from the dangers that may come to them from outside.

Other economic, social, cultural, moral, and other responsibilities belong to the individual and civil society and not to the state.

According to liberal theorists, the state should be limited only to protection against violence, fraud, theft, and guaranteeing the implementation of contracts. Even Herbert Spencer (1820 - 1903) speaks for freedom and the intervention of the state in people’s lives. Every time the state intervenes in society to help those who are less favored, to improve their lives, it worsens their condition, therefore “the state with its laws should not regulate society in any way, but in at best it should concern itself with the functions of public order.” (Heywood, 2002: 117).

The developing state, whose role is to intervene in economic life to promote industrial growth and economic development. The purpose of this intervention is not to replace the market with a socialist system of planning and control but as an attempt to build a partnership between the state and the main economic interests. A classic example of a developing country is Japan. Since 1945, the Japanese Ministry of International Trade and Industry has assumed the role of developer, which, together with the Bank of Japan, helps to realize the projects of private investors, making the Japanese economy more competitive in international markets. This type of state was also established in other Asian countries, such as Taiwan, South Korea, Singapore, and similar., which” (...) introduced into the economic and

political life (...) an accelerated economic growth “under the tutelage of the state” (Civici, 2013: 4). The developing state of the Asian model is already affirmed as an effective instrument to guarantee accelerated economic growth. Nowadays, with the emergence of globalization, competing states have emerged.

The social-democratic state intervenes only to make social restructuring, following the implementation of the principles of social justice and equality. The principle of equality means the application of the principle of uniform or even, but not uniform, distribution. Equality criteria mean the implementation of rights, opportunities, and outcomes. In countries such as Austria and Sweden, state intervention has been guided by developmental and social-democratic priorities. The key to understanding the social-democratic state is to move from a negative view of the state, which sees it as a necessary evil, to a positive view, according to which the state is considered a means of expanding freedom and promoting justice. The social-democratic state is an ideal of both modern liberals and socialist democrats.

This type of state does not focus so much on the development of the economy, but on equality and the fair distribution of wealth. The social-democratic state is an active actor in helping to alleviate the inequalities and injustices of the free market. This is an attempt to eradicate poverty and reduce social inequalities. The inclusion or adaptation of welfare policies has led to the birth of the so-called social welfare states, whose responsibility has been extended to the promotion of social welfare among citizens. According to political scientist Andrew Heywood, “the social-democratic state is a state that helps and is committed to the principle of empowering the individual.” (Heywood, 2002: 119).

The state of the dictatorship of the proletariat, in contrast to the developing states and the social-democratic states, whose goal remains “interference in the economic life of a country to support a large private economy” (*ibidem*), takes control of all the economic life of a country. The best examples were the states of communist countries, such as the USSR, and the states of Eastern Europe, which included Albania. In these countries, the only leading force in all political, economic, and social activity was the Communist Party. “The governance system based on the mono-party rule has important economic implications. The Party ensures the continuity of economic policy (...) the national scene is heavily dominated by the Party, and economic and non-economic objectives are closely integrated into the totality of state action (Wilczynski, 2008: 22). These states completely banned private businesses and established a planned and centralized economy. “(...) in the Soviet Union land and factories, mines and housing are owned by the state or by cooperative societies. And the state (...) represents working people” (Sloan, 1937: 69).

The justification for state collectivization stemmed from the socialists’ fundamental preference for common property over private property. With the



notion of “collectivization”, they understood the disappearance of private property in favor of a system that was economically and politically based on the development of the common or public property.

The theorists of this theory saw this period of the state as transitory and temporary, but, in contrast, the collectivized state of the USSR – was intended to become permanent, more powerful, and more bureaucratic.

The state of the dictatorship of the proletariat is the last form of state that appeared in the arena of history, the form of the totalitarian state, which represents the most extreme, direct, and iron-handed form of intervention and control of every vital cell, from the personal to the general.

In essence, the totalitarian state is an all-encompassing state whose influence affects every aspect of human existence. This type of state controls not only the economy but also education, culture, religion, family life, and similar. “When we look at Soviet industry, education, entertainment, or scientific institutions, we find that they are wholly owned and controlled by public bodies, whether the Government of the USSR, or national republics, or a local authority.” (Sloan, 1937: 37). The main pillars of such regimes are a comprehensive surveillance process, terror policing, and a widespread system of ideological manipulation and control. In the doctrines of totalitarian states, such as that of the former USSR, Albania, and similar., the activities and role of civil society, as well as their private sphere in the life of the country, were prohibited.

### III. Types of states

The state acts as a political governing organization directed by a social group, as a mechanism in its hands. The content of the state indicates the type of state and the main leading social force, which exerts the greatest influence on political power in society. The form of the state is the specific political organization of society. The type of state should be understood as the totality of its characteristic features, which also express its political-social content. The economic-social base of the state determines its type. Usually in the historical, legal, and political literature, based on the character of the state, they are classified into slavery state, feudal state, bourgeois or capitalist state, and socialist state.

In addition to the above-mentioned criteria, such as sovereignty, independence and formal recognition by other states, the real functioning of a state also requires the implementation of some requirements to be effective and to move away more and more from the features and indicators of a state weak and, therefore, also failed in fulfilling its historical mission.

The state is effective when it controls and taxes its entire administrative territory and when all or most of the population obeys the government's laws. Effective government is the product of satisfactory welfare and the rule of general security. While corruption is a minor problem. Effective states tend to be the best and collect significant amounts (25 - 50%) of taxes. Among the effective countries today, we can single out Japan, the USA, and the countries of Western Europe.

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The state is weak when the phenomenon of crime has penetrated the country's governing policy, and often the decisions made in its governing structures do not serve the majority of the population, but a small group of oligarchs connected to the crime. The government does not have the strength to establish the rule of law, as a result, drug trafficking, corruption, poverty, and insurgent movements thrive there. Justice is bought. Democracy is more preached than practiced and elections are usually vulnerable. Tax collection is low. Income from natural resources, such as the sale of chrome or other underground minerals, which are the real estate of the people, goes into private pockets, as happens in Albania. Most of the countries in Asia, Africa, and Latin America are weak. Some of them are so weak that they are almost failed states.

The state is failed when there is no national government, even though some of the failed state countries claim otherwise. In a failed state warlords and drug lords do whatever they want. No law is recognized and enforced, except the law of the strongest. The purest justice is equivalent to the strength and rule of the strongest. Only outside assistance and pressure keeps them from disappearing altogether. Bogota, for example, cannot control the wild areas of Colombia, where guerrillas and drug dealers control the area.

## IV. Conclusions

The state is the main condition for an organized society and a legal order to regulate social and state relations. It has existed in various forms.

The meaning of the form of the state includes the form of government, which expresses the principles and the way of organization of the state; the form of political rule, which is determined by the system of methods of its realization and the form of state organization, which is determined by the principles of the

territorial construction of the state. The most popular forms of government have been monarchy and republic. The monarchy is ruled by a single person. It exists in three forms: absolute, constitutional, and parliamentary. The republic represents the direction of the state by an individual or a collective. In ancient times, republics were democratic or aristocratic, today they are parliamentary and presidential. In parliamentary republics, the head of state is elected by the parliament, while in presidential republics the president is elected by the electorate and has greater rights and powers.

Other forms of governance have also been applied, such as the minimal state, which is limited only to protection against violence, fraud, theft, guaranteeing the implementation of contracts; the developing state, whose role is to intervene in economic life; the social-democratic state, which intervenes only to make social restructurings; the state of the dictatorship of the proletariat, which is all-encompassing and affects every aspect of human activity. The type of state is determined by its economic-social basis and can be: a slaveholding state, feudal state, bourgeois or capitalist state and socialist state. The real functioning of a state requires effective and increasingly distant from the weak and failed state.

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