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# The Epoch of the Initial Politogenesis

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## ABSTRACT

*We present a general theoretical analysis of processes and models of the formation and development of polities, starting with the level of simple chiefdoms and their analogues up to the level of the early states and their analogues. This macroevolutionary process is generally denoted here as **primary (initial) politogenesis**, whereas the early state formation process is regarded as a component of the politogenesis. The analysis of politogenesis is made against the wide background of late archaic and early civilizational processes.*

## INTRODUCTION

**The beginning of politogenesis<sup>1</sup>.** Politics as a realm of relations concerning the distribution of power (Smelser 1988) seems to have appeared around the age of the Upper Paleolithic Revolution. Actually, certain elements of ‘quasipolitical’ relationships may be already found among the non-human primates (see *e.g.*, Dol'nik 2007 on complex and dynamic hierarchical relationships among the baboons; see also *e.g.*, Butovskaya, Korotayev and Kazankov 2000). However, among nomadic hunter-gatherers the power systems remained mostly very little differentiated and weakly integrated; on the other hand, the level of their differentiation and integration more or less correlated with their demographic indicators. The power was mostly based on the age and gender stratification, as well as on the leader's personal qualities and authority, his ability to secure for his community a more or less acceptable life (this was also frequently observed among the early agricultura-

lists, especially among the semi-nomadic ones [see *e.g.*, Lévi-Strauss 1955]).

However, even among the ethnographically described nomadic hunter-gatherers important differences in complexity of their socio-political organization were observed. While the majority of the ethnographically described non-specialized nomadic hunter-gatherers were acephalous and egalitarian, some of them (first of all most of the Australian aboriginal communities) were non-egalitarian (Woodburn 1972, 1979, 1980, 1982, 1988a, 1988b; Artemova 1987, 1989, 1991, 1993; Chudinova 1981). They demonstrated a sufficiently different type of socio-political organization with a much more structured political leadership concentrated in the hands of hierarchically organized elder males, with a pronounced inequality between males and females, as well as between elder males and younger males<sup>2</sup>.

Among specialized ('higher') hunter-gatherers and fishermen of Siberia, the Far East, Kamchatka, Alaska, the Aleut Isles, North-West and South-West America one could find rather highly structured forms of hierarchical sociopolitical organization that were sometimes even more pronounced than among many early agriculturalists (see, for example, Shnirel'man 1986, 1989, 1993; Townsend 1985; Averkieva 1978; Dauns 1978; Fainberg 1968; Freihein 1961). However, such an evolution was to a certain extent a dead-end as it could have only occurred in especially favourable environments and was unable to diffuse to other cultures existing in the other environments.

The Agrarian Revolution (or, to be more exact, its first phase connected with the transition to primitive agriculture and animal husbandry [Grinin 2006, 2007d, 2007f; Grinin and Korotayev 2009]) started a period of deep sociodemographic changes. As regards the subject of the present article, it is important to note that the increase in the population and population density (as well as settlement/community sizes) tended to lead to the increase in the significance of political (*i.e.* power) relations both within societies and in intersocietal interaction, including military interaction). Thus already at this macroevolutionary level it appears possible to speak about *protopolitogenesis*.

However, in order that such societies (exemplified in the ethnographic record by most of the traditional sociopolitical systems

of New Guinea) could evolve toward more complex organizational forms, they had (to use Burdeau's [1966] metaphoric expression) to 'cure the power' from the impersonality paralysis of primitive stupor, to develop an institution of chief or its (sometimes democratic) analogues. Hence, the formation of the first polities reaching complexity level of chiefdoms and their analogues was one of the most important macroevolutionary shifts<sup>3</sup>, or *aromorphoses*. The most important (though rarest) qualitative *macrochanges that increase significantly complexity, adaptedness and mutual influence of social systems*, and that open subsequently new directions of evolutionary development for many social systems were denoted by us as *social aromorphoses* (for more details see Grinin and Korotayev 2007, 2009; Grinin, Markov and Korotayev 2008).

The forms of sociopolitical organization at this level of complexity could be rather diverse: more or less centralized chiefdoms, self-governed civil or civil-temple communities, decentralized chiefless complex tribes, as well as various other acephalous medium-complexity sociopolitical systems (see *e.g.*, Berezkin 1994a, 1994b, 1995a, 1995b, 1997, 2000). We tend to speak about the politogenesis proper starting from this level of political complexity.

However, within most of such social systems the need in systematic professional administration was very weak, or absent, whereas the functions of central power may be performed by various alternative subsystems. It was not infrequent when even irrigation works were conducted independently by village communities without any interference on the part of chiefdom leaders or any other supracomunal rulers (see *e.g.*, Rodionov 1994; Claessen 2004: 79; see also Leach 1970).

The formation of the first archaic states and their analogues (*i.e.* stateless polities comparable with archaic states – see below, as well as Grinin's article 2009 in the present issue) became another extremely important aromorphosis.

In this article we analyze macroevolutionary processes that took place during the very prolonged late archaic and early civilization periods. During those periods two above mentioned major aromorphoses took place, *i.e.*: a) the formation of more or less institutionalized political subsystem, starting from the complexity level of chiefdoms and their analogues; b) the formation of archaic states and their analogues with further institutionalization of

the political subsystem. All this epoch is denoted by us as *the epoch of the initial (or primary) politogenesis*. We denote it as ‘initial’ because the politogenesis did not stop with the state formation, but continued further with the evolution from the early state to the developed one, and even from the developed state to the mature one (see Grinin 2008; Grinin and Korotayev 2006)<sup>4</sup>. Accordingly the epoch of primary politogenesis may be subdivided into two epochs: 1) the one starting with the formation of chiefdoms and their analogues, which we shall denote below as the *pre-state* period or the *period of the Elder Aromorphosis*; 2) the one covering the formation and development of the early states and their analogues, which we shall denote below as the *early state* period or the *period of the Younger Aromorphosis*.

This article presents a general theoretical analysis of the process and models of the politogenesis against the overall background of the late archaic processes, whereas the state formation process proper is regarded as a component part of the general politogenetic process. Here we deem it fit to present our definition of the early state (for its detailed justification see Grinin 2003, 2007c, 2008; Grinin and Korotayev 2006, 2009).

*The early state is a category that is used to designate a special form of political organization of the substantially large and complex agrarian society (or a group of societies) that determines its external policy and partly the social order; this political form is at the same time a power organizing subsystem separated from the commoners that a) possesses sovereignty (or at least autonomy); b) that is able to coerce the population to fulfill its demands; to change certain important social relationships, to introduce new norms, as well as to redistribute resources; c) that is constructed (entirely or mostly) on the non-kinship principles.*

### **Politogenesis vs. state formation process**

As mentioned above in note 1 the term ‘politogenesis’ was proposed by Kubbel' who started to use it rather actively. However, Kubbel' equated the politogenesis with the early forms of state formation (see *e.g.*, Kubbel' 1988b: 3), the same is done by many present-day scholars who use this term. This approach stemmed from a rather widespread (but outdated) point of view maintaining a) that all the non-state political forms should be regarded by definition as

pre-state ones; b) that the development of political institutions and forms led directly to the state formation; c) that any state (even the most archaic one) is more complex than any non-state polity; d) that political relations only appeared with the state formation.

However, it does not appear reasonable to reduce the notion of politogenesis to the state formation process only. This does not appear reasonable already because of the fact that simultaneously with the state formation one could observe the formation and development of complex non-state polities that could not be regarded as pre-state ones (see Grinin 2003, 2004b, 2004c; see also Grinin's article in the present issue). Thus, a rather wide process of formation of a whole spectrum of complex political systems (that, we believe, deserves to be denoted as *politogenesis*) is reduced to a much narrower process of state formation. As was correctly observed by Lewis, there was a great diversity of complex non-state political systems all over the world (Lewis 1981: 206). In order to avoid such unjustified oversimplifications we have developed some new approaches to the study of politogenesis (Korotayev, Kradin, de Munck and Lynsha 2000; Grinin 2007b, 2007c, 2007e; Korotayev and Bondarenko 2000; Bondarenko, Grinin and Korotayev 2002; Grinin 2003, 2004c; Grinin and Korotayev 2006).

Within our approach, *politogenesis* denotes a process of formation of a distinct political aspect within the social system that leads to the emergence of partially and relatively autonomous political subsystem, a process of the formation of special power forms of societal organization; this is connected with the concentration of power and political activities (both internal and external) under the control of certain groups and strata.

Anthropology does not use the notion of politogenesis (but see note 1), as political anthropologists believe that the term *state formation process* is sufficient here<sup>5</sup>. However, it appears to us as desirable to separate these notions: *politogenesis* could serve as a more general notion designating the genesis of political subsystems of complex societies, whereas the *state formation process* (**SFP** throughout) would denote a special type of politogenesis. That is why we believe that it would make sense to introduce the notion of *politogenesis* into the vocabulary of anthropology; this term could be used for the designation of the process of formation of any type

of the complex political organization and not only the state organization (on this point see Bondarenko, Grinin and Korotayev 2002: 66–67).

As a result of the SFP an ever more important role in the administration of society is played by power and legal methods applied by new types of professional military and civil administrators. Thus it would appear that the SFP is ‘younger’ than politogenesis. Politogenesis can be regarded as a component of general social evolution; on the other hand, the SFP can be regarded as a component of politogenesis that appears within it at a certain stage. It is necessary to note that for its start the SFP usually needs much larger territories, populations, and resources than other politogenetic processes leading to the formation of medium-complexity polities (like simple chiefdoms and their analogues), and, on average, even more than the politogenetic processes leading to the formation of the early state analogues (see Grinin 2007e, 2009 in this issue). Yet, gradually, the SFP became leading (and later dominant) direction of politogenesis. That is why one may get an impression that the politogenesis is identical with the process of state formation. However, this is not so.

The SFP is not only ‘younger’ than the politogenesis. Even when the first states appeared, the politogenesis could not be reduced to one – SFP – line. Contrary to this, there was a considerable number of other lines (or rather directions) of evolution, and among them at the beginning the state one was an exception (and then for a rather long period it was observed in rather rare cases). What is more, the very formation of the state rarely proceeded in a swift direct way (the formation of the Zulu state can serve here as an example). In most cases we observe first the formation of the early state analogues; and later those analogues (*i.e.* sociopolitical systems that were comparable to the states with respect to the level of their political-cultural complexity) were transformed into states (as an example we may mention the Hawaiian state that was formed in the late 18<sup>th</sup> to the early 19<sup>th</sup> century). The first way may be denoted as ‘vertical’, the second – as ‘horizontal’ (for more details see Grinin 2009 in this issue).

Another point should be made on the relationships between the politogenesis and the SFP. State centralization/decentralization cycles that were one of the most important historical dynamic

processes in the ancient and medieval history may be in certain cases interpreted as a sort of dynamic opposition between the SFP and the alternative politogenesis versions (Grinin 2007e). Indeed, the disintegration of large states (especially large early states) tended to lead to the formation of polities that could not be classified as states because of their small sizes and/or weakness of their administrative apparatus and/or unclear status of their sovereignty. For example, in pre-Columbian Mexico and the Andes the results of the early state disintegration are regarded as chiefdoms or city-states (Chabal, Feinman and Skalník 2004: 50), but some of them can well be regarded as early state analogues. Taking into consideration the difference between the politogenesis, in general, and the SFP, in particular, one may observe that the politogenesis generated diverse political forms, but after reaching a certain level of political complexity the political development started to tend towards the SFP.

### **THE POLITOGENESIS TRAJECTORY IN THE CONTEXT OF THE LATE ARCHAIC AND EARLY CIVILIZATIONAL PROCESSES**

**General notes on the correlation between politogenesis and other socio-evolutionary processes.** Our research indicates that politogenesis was just one of a few simultaneously occurring macroevolutionary processes that led to the development of new forms of organization for the increasingly complex social systems (and systems of such systems – for more details see Grinin 2007e; Grinin and Korotayev 2009). At the meantime it appears necessary to take into account that during both the Elder (or Lower) Aromorphosis and Junior (or Upper) Aromorphosis in most of the socially developing societies the change occurred in different dimensions (technological, political, sociostructural, religious etc.) whereby a) the scope, significance and proportions of those changes displayed enormous variation; b) those changes could occur in each society with considerable time lags; c) in different societies different subsystems could be more developed. **As a result one could observe an enormous number of various combinations and models of development.**

Depending on many factors, various processes (*e.g.*, religious or socially stratifying) could play a leading role at the respective

levels of sociocultural complexity. Yet, in some case this role could have also belonged to the politogenesis. However, **for quite a long time (at least up to the state formation) in many cases it played a subordinate role; that is why in many cases the politogenesis did not initiate the other developmental processes, but rather followed them.** The political power itself was frequently derivative from other forms of power (*e.g.*, sacral power) and social organization; only gradually and only in some cases it acquired a substantial autonomy<sup>6</sup>.

With the growth of sociocultural complexity, and especially with growth of the role of wars as a mode of intersocietal relations and a mode of resource redistribution, the politogenesis acquires a considerable autonomy, and in certain cases it could become playing the leading role in social macroevolution.

The complex dynamic relationship between politogenesis and other socioevolutionary processes may be illustrated with respect to the relationship between the politogenesis and the growth of societal size. The latter led to the increase in the need in more complex administration, control, more complex systems of norm creation and political/administrative decision making (though the formation of such a need in many cases did not result in the actual transformations in the above mentioned directions, in some cases this contributed to the development of the respective social ar-morphoses); on the other hand, the growth of the social system complexity tended to create certain conditions for the growth of the respective social system (Carneiro 1967, 1987b; see also Feinman 1998; Johnson and Earle 2000: 2, 181; Johnson 1981, 1982). It appears that we are dealing here with a typical case of non-linear positive feedback between the two respective variables. Within certain periods of time one may also consider as non-linear the relationship between the growth of the information currents' intensity and the rise of the status of those persons who were able to master those currents, as the growth of this status contributed to the growth of the information current intensity (cf. Johnson 1978).

Such complex relationships are also observed as regards the relation of the politogenesis with the other relevant processes: politogenesis – ethnogenesis (see, for example, Kubbel' 1988b; Neusykhin 1968; Grinin 2007e); politogenesis – religiogenesis (Godelier 1978: 767; Southall 2000; Kochakova 1999: 41–42;



Grinin 2007e); economogenesis – development of the systematic surplus production etc. In particular, it can be shown that the development of the systematic surplus production was to a considerable extent a result of the politogenesis (see *e.g.*, Sahlins 1972b; Korotayev 1991; Grinin 2007e). In all these cases we are dealing with the dynamic positive feedback that cannot be analyzed within the simple cause – effect framework, as in such cases one process is simultaneously the cause and the effect of the other.

With respect to the politogenesis certain factors may be regarded as catalysts (that is they do not lead directly to the politogenesis, but they facilitate and accelerate this process), for example, some technological innovations, like (in certain circumstances) irrigation (Earle 1997; Sahlins 1972a [1958]; Wittfogel 1957; Gunawardana 1981), iron metallurgy, innovations with respect to the use of some riding and draught animals (first of all, the horses), various military innovations<sup>7</sup> etc.

## **PRE-STATE POLITOGENESIS (THE LOWER/ELDER AROMORPHOSIS)**

### **Preliminary notes**

When we speak about pre-state sociopolitical forms, we only mean **principally pre-state forms**, *i.e.* political systems with a level of complexity not exceeding the one of simple chiefdoms and their analogues (autonomous medium-complexity acephalous, civil, or civil-temple communities, some tribal systems etc.). That is, we mean those sociopolitical forms that are not comparable with the state with respect to their complexity, size, and functions.

The range of the population of the medium-complexity sociopolitical systems is rather wide: from several hundred to several dozens thousand. However, more or less centralized and compact medium-complexity polities (simple chiefdoms, civil-temple communities etc.) cover a more narrow range between several hundred and several thousand. For example, in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century the population of the New Caledonian chiefdoms covered the range between 500 and 2000 (Shnirel'man 1988: 200); the population of a typical Trobriand chiefdom oscillated around 1 000 (Johnson and Earle 2000: 267–279). In general, we consider as appropriate Earle's estimate of a typical simple chiefdom's population as being in

the range of thousands (Earle 1987). We consider 10 000 as an upper limit, as a simple chiefdom does not appear to exceed it without rather fast disintegration. Its territory (with a salient exception of some nomadic chiefdoms) was not usually very large either (*e.g.*, Spencer 2000: 155–156).

On the other hand the population of some amorphous entities, first of all decentralized agglomerations of tribes lacking common systematic political organization, but coordinating somehow their activities, could have a population of dozens thousands, or even more (on the Nuer tribal systems see *e.g.*, Evans-Pritchard 1956). Sometimes, during large wars and migrations, they could form temporary confederations that, however, were usually very unstable<sup>8</sup>.

### **General direction of development in the pre-state period**

As we could see above, there is a complex dynamics of correlation between the politogenesis and the other dimensions of the complexity growth in the late archaic societies. In fact, in any society all its subsystems cannot change with the same speed, whereas it may take a subsystem that lags behind a very long time to catch up with the rest (or it may even never catch up). Thus society A that is similar to society B in the overall level of social complexity may be significantly less complex in political, or some particular social/cultural dimension. That is why it is important to underline that during the Senior/Lower Aromorphosis a significant autonomization of the political subsystem did not happen in many cases (though it was not rare when it did happen).

**A more universal feature of the social development at this complexity level was the formation and institutionalization of new forms of social inequality.**

This manifested itself in the following ways.

Firstly, this manifested itself in the transition from relatively egalitarian, or primitive non-egalitarian (see *e.g.*, Artemova 1987, 1989, 1991, 1993) to the inequality formed on a new social basis<sup>9</sup>. New types and dimensions of social inequality emerged (including the ones based on genealogical differences, new types of wealth inequalities, access to offices, or public resources).

Secondly, one could observe a tendency towards increased surplus accumulation and redistribution aimed at the organization of pub-

lic works and banquets, as well as the material support of rulers and priests, wars. A substantial part of surplus was appropriated by the political centre (*e.g.*, the chief) and the elite. The role of tribute and booty increased. One could observe flourishing prestige economy whose functioning was supported by the activities of various prominent people, including the administrators (see *e.g.*, Sahlins 1972b).

Thirdly, one could observe a tendency towards the increase in the social division of labour that was expressed in the emergence of semiprofessional or even professional administrators, warriors, priests, ancient 'intellectuals', craftsmen, merchants, servants etc. There was also a tendency towards a deeper intercommunal division of labour.

Fourthly, even where the politogenesis retarded, the growth of sociocultural complexity was usually accompanied (and supported) by some elaboration of decision-making mechanisms, some growth of the role of trade was frequently observed; in general, the growth of socio-cultural complexity stimulated the development of the political subsystem.

In general at this phase we tend to observe **the growing separation of power from the commoner population and the differentiation of the political power from the other forms of power.** Of course, the role of accumulation of wealth, prestige goods, and trade was very important as regards the development of political structures (Earle 1997; Ekholm 1977; Webb 1975; Sahlins 1972b), but the importance of military and religious factors might have been even higher. Indeed, with respect to the intersocietal relations even rather simple societies had to follow certain (and frequently rather complex) political rules. The warfare between human societies appears to have been as old as the human societies themselves<sup>10</sup>. However, there are certain grounds to maintain that the transition to agriculture tended to lead to a certain increase in the role of warfare (at least because of the growth of population density, as well as because of the growth of the amount of the resources that could be captured as a result of warfare (see *e.g.*, Korotayev, Malkov and Khaltourina 2006: Chapter 4). The role of warfare in the process of the formation of chiefdoms, their analogues, as well as their military-political alliances and confederations is well known.

The development of the political subsystem was stimulated by the growing social integration, on the other hand, it stimulated this integration, for example, by facilitating the organization of larger and larger groups of people for the collective action (Earle 2001: 105). The growing integration also intensified the struggle over the issue who would be the centre of integrating entities, which was always one of the main movers of political dynamics (regarding processes of both integration and disintegration that frequently created long-term dynamic sociopolitical cycles).

However, the separation of power did not always mean the separation of administration. In most polities the main mechanisms of power were based on religion, magic, tradition, personal authority and capabilities of leaders, support of clan groups etc. The administrative apparatus *per se* was absent. Private or chiefly retinues (if they were established altogether) were created in order to attack and plunder neighbours rather than to police the members of the same society.

### **Politogenesis pathways in the pre-state period**

Depending on the abundance of economic resources and the development of the new forms of social inequality it appears possible to speak about *different* ways of the differentiation of the politogenesis from the other evolutionary processes (see Grinin 2007e for more details).

1. In very special environmental circumstances (for example, with especially fertile soils) one could observe the production of especially large surplus quantities (naturally, up to the ecological niche saturation). This could create a need to find effective ways to accumulate and redistribute this surplus, and sometimes (depending on the agrarian technology type) to control the production, and even to administer it directly. Some scholars emphasize precisely the economic dimension of the chiefs' activities (see *e.g.*, Earle 1997; Sahlins 1972a, 1972b; Wittfogel 1957; Claessen 2004: 76–77). Note, however, that some of the respective polities should be classified as early state analogues rather than pre-state polities (see Grinin 2007e).

2. In some cases when the large surplus production coincided with the formation of special religious (ideological) systems, the role of organizers of societal integration and surplus accumula-

tion could be performed by priests. In such cases administrative subsystem looks like a secondary one serving interests of religious leaders and corporations. In certain societies the role of the initiators of the political subsystem differentiation could be performed by secret societies (Grinin 2007e), which were sometimes created in order to break from the clan-communal traditions and to defend a less conformist part of the population from their pressure (see *e.g.*, Novozhilova 2000; Belkov 1993: 94–97; Kubbel' 1988a: 241).

3. The start of the politogenesis may be connected with the search for the external sources of wealth. Unorganized external exploitation was very typical for the Senior Aromorphosis period. And as the war was connected with a certain hierarchy, with the necessity to order and carry out orders, as well as with inevitable expression of one's own initiative, it contributed to the politogenetic processes and the formation of military elites<sup>11</sup>.

4. Non-agricultural activities (trade, crafts, seafaring) could contribute to the formation of special ways of politogenesis. The trade often provided a chief with necessary resources, which made it possible for him to attract his supporters (Webb 1975). In craft-and-trade societies the processes of specialization go on more intensively, amplifying the development of new forms of social stratification and functional differentiation. In addition to this, craft-and-trade settlements tend to have higher concentrations of population, which facilitates administration and stimulates the differentiation of political dimension. Finally, the trade provides wealth that needs to be defended, and this could consolidate respective populations in a rather effective way.

The seafaring multiplies contacts and increases their intensity. In the seafaring peoples we frequently observe formation of corporations and armed groups that could become a nucleus of political processes. It seems also relevant that a naturally circumscribed territory of an island (especially a small island) may facilitate its subjugation to a single political power.

5. Politogenesis may be connected with an extraordinary situation (defense from some aggression, mass migration etc.). This often leads to breakdown of tradition and appearance of influential leaders.

## **POLITOGENETIC PROCESSES OF THE EARLY STATE (JUNIOR AROMORPHOSIS) EPOCH**

The societies' sizes (measured both by their territory and population) grow by one or two orders of magnitude at this stage in comparison with the pre-state period. At the respective complexity level polities' populations oscillate in the range between several thousand and several hundred thousand, whereas by the end of this phase some early states could have a population of several million (for example, the Inca Empire [see Schaedel 1978; Kurtz 2008]).

### **Early state analogues**

As has been shown by us earlier (Grinin 2003, 2004a, 2007a, 2007e, 2007g, 2008; Grinin and Korotayev 2009; see also Grinin's article 2009 in the present issue), a social system after it reaches such a size and level of sociocultural complexity that permit its transformation into a state, may continue its further development without being transformed into a state for a very long time (or even never being transformed into a state). In particular, a social system may have a rather high level of social stratification, but it may well still lack any statehood. A very large number of polities existed that according to their political organization, power structure and administration differed from the state in a very significant way, and that, nevertheless, were quite comparable to the state as regards the complexity of their organization, solved tasks, and performed functions. These political forms that were alternative to the early state were denoted by us as early state analogues (see *e.g.*, Grinin 2003, 2004b, 2004c, 2007a, 2007g; Grinin and Korotayev 2009). Their many significant characteristics can well be regarded as being at generally the same level of sociocultural complexity as the early states (see Korotayev, Kradin and Lynsha 2000; Grinin 2003, 2007e).

Our analysis has shown that the emergence of the early state analogues in no way was an exception. Contrary to this, it was the early state formation that was a less frequent phenomenon in the politogenesis (see Grinin 2007e; Grinin and Korotayev 2009; see also Doornbos 1994; Schaedel 1995). That the state formation became the leading politogenetic process was a result of very long competition and evolutionary selection of political forms.

There were various ways of the development of analogues. Some of them had no potential of the transformation into the state, some of them did not become states because their politogenesis was forcibly interrupted (as this happened with the Iroquois, Tureg, Xiongnu, Gual etc.). Nevertheless many analogues got transformed into states. However, this transformation took place after they had achieved a rather high level of complexity and development that was quite comparable with that of many states. Some analogues were transformed into states when they had a population of 10 000–15 000, some other achieved this when they had a population of many dozens thousands, still others turned into states only when they had a population of hundreds thousands (see Grinin 2003, 2004c, 2007c; for more details see Grinin 2009).

Below we will mention a few types of analogues (from among the ones identified by us) that we believe to be the most representative:

1. Some independent self-governing civil or civil-temple communities as well as self-governing territories (including the one formed as a result of colonization *e.g.*, Iceland in the 10<sup>th</sup>–13<sup>th</sup> centuries) with population ranging between several thousand and several dozens thousand.

2. Some large tribal alliances with a relatively strong power of a paramount leader (*rex* etc.) with the population of dozens thousands (sometimes even hundreds thousands and more). Some German tribal formations of the Great Migrations' Epoch could serve here as an example.

3. Large tribal alliances and confederations, within which the 'royal' power was lacking (that it was absent altogether, or it was abolished), but at the same time the processes of social and economic stratification as well as functional differentiation had brought significant results and even went faster than the processes of political centralization. Examples of such tribal alliances lacking the 'royal' power may be found among the Saxons of Saxony and among some Gaul peoples. The population organized by such alliances could well reach dozens (and sometimes hundreds) thousand people.

4. The quasi-state alliances of nomads that were large and strong militarily and may have looked like large states (*e.g.*, Scythia, or the Xiongnu 'Empire').

5. Many complex chiefdoms, especially the very large ones that were comparable with many early states with respect to their sizes and organizational sophistication (for example, the population of the Hawaiian chiefdoms was within the range between 30 000 and 100 000 [Johnson and Earle 2000: 246]).

### **General and political processes of the early state period**

For a very long period of time within many inchoate and even typical early states (in terms of Claessen and Skalník [1978b: 22–23; 1978c: 640; 1981]), as well as within certain early state analogues one could observe an objective problem – how **to make the reproduction of the new forms of inequality and functional differentiation quite stable**.

It was only gradually that the initial **systems** of institutions, ideology, and traditions aimed at institutionalization of the new forms of inequality evolved. In every society such systems could have their own peculiarities. In some (more rare) cases rights and privileges were fixed with respect to a certain parameter (for example, the access to administration) only, in some other cases they were fixed with respect to several parameters (for example, wealth and status), still in some other cases they were fixed with respect to all dimensions (wealth, status, legal, sacral etc.). In all cases as far as the fixation of inequality is concerned the following changes tended to take place:

a) surplus (and sometimes a part of subsistence product) tended to be re-directed in a rather stable way in favour of the elites as well as to support administration, temples, war etc.; accordingly, we observe the formation of new sources of income for the power structures and/or elites;

b) the social structure usually acquires a more saliently stratified form. The society is clearly subdivided into the elite and the commoners, or into the rulers and the ruled (see Claessen and Skalník 1978c: 640), one can also observe the formation of some significant additional groups and strata that had status that was lower than the one of the commoners (slaves and various underclass categories); in some places a rather rigid hierarchy of ranks was formed;

c) in addition to the development of crafts and trade, the social division of labour tends to lead to the monopolization of admini-



stration, many types of sacral activities, some specialized types of cultural activities, as well as the military subsystem by certain groups and corporations;

d) we tend to observe the growth of the importance of ideology, especially the ideological justification of the ruler's super sacralization (see Claessen 1981; Muller 1981; Claessen and Oosten 1996a, 1996b);

e) the distinctions between aristocracy and commoners tended to become more and more sharp; the importance of genealogies tended to increase, the archaization of genealogies developed (see *e.g.*, Kurbatov 2006: 115 on Greece, Te Rangi Hiroa 1959 on Polynesia, Leach 1970 on Kachin of Burma)<sup>12</sup>; the importance of the ritual dimension of the sacralization process, as well as complexity of court ceremonies, enthronization patterns etc. tended to grow (see *e.g.*, Muller 2008 with respect to chiefdoms; see also Skalník 1996).

**We observe the strengthening of the separation of political power from the commoner population and the final consolidation of this separation.** This is accompanied by the beginning of differentiation of various political functions (administration, foreign policy, judicial system, police, military function, taxation etc. [see *e.g.*, Fried 1967; Service 1975; Claessen and Skalník 1978d, 1981; Carneiro 1981])<sup>13</sup>. In many cases the ruler's family, lineage, clan acquired a very special status (see *e.g.*, Claessen 1981; Muller 1981). In many cases intensive integration was observed, military-political alliances, confederations etc. became very wide-spread.

The contradictions that appeared in the process of supporting the new forms of inequality with respect to the early states stemmed from the very fact that the very formation of the early state demanded sufficient flexibility, adaptability, and the ability to develop, whereas in the traditional societies the 'sanctity' of a given form of inequality stems up to a considerable extent from its 'antiquity', its supposed invariability and immutability. In the meantime the emergent state power quite frequently had to struggle with the aristocratism of elites, to rely on persons lacking any aristocratic pedigrees (including persons with a very low social status such as slaves). Naturally, these changed the very bases of social inequality, the established hierarchies and functional differentiation (see Grinin 2003, 2007c for more details). The conflicts

between the ruler and his own clan were rather usual. Like Clovis (the first King of the Franks) the strengthening rulers used to liquidate their relatives one and all. Yet, even when the emergent rulers just pushed their relatives aside from the first roles in the administration, they had to replace the criteria of aristocratism and closeness to the ruler's line with new criteria of devotion to the ruler and service effectiveness. Thus, according to Barfield, Genghis Khan put the new elites (that were personally devoted to him) over his own family, as a result of which the Mongol military organization became a deviation from the Steppe tradition, rather than culmination of its development (Barfield 1992: 197; Kradin and Skrynnikova 2006: 457–458).

This way the importance of the political subsystem grew substantially. However, the political power did not differentiate itself entirely from the other forms of power. This is especially salient in the early state analogues. That is why only in some polities the administration became a sphere of activities of a certain group (stratum); it was even rarer when it was performed by a special apparatus composed of professionals (or at least semiprofessionals). However, even in the latter case the political power needed additional supports (*e.g.*, in the form of the ideology of the ruler's sacrality, estate systems, clanship ideology etc.). That is why frequently the ruler and his agents could not simply order 'the ruled'; thus they would need certain conciliatory procedures (see *e.g.*, Claessen and Skalník 1978a: 630; see also Kochakova 1999: 9), consultations, search for consensus (at least among the most influential part of the society (see also: Skalník 1987, 1991). Sometimes one could observe a kind of balance between the mechanisms of legitimation from above and from below (Skalník 1996). The importance of the above mentioned supports tended to decrease (though rather slowly), whereas the role of strictly administrative power dimensions tended to increase. Yet, in those cases when the politogenesis moved from the authoritative power of ruler to some form of democracy (as this occurred in Athens, most of other Greek *poleis*, Rome, Carthage etc.) the role of procedural legal dimensions of the political power differentiation increased (on the democratic version of politogenesis see Grinin 2004a, 2004b, 2007c).

### **Politogenesis and war**

Robert Carneiro seems to be the most prominent contemporary political anthropologist who systematically develops a theory of the influence of war on the politogenesis and the state formation (Carneiro 1970, 1978, 1981, 1987a, 2000a, 2000b, 2002, 2003, 2004). However, his studies have not received a wide recognition, and many scholars do not consider the war to be a fundamental factor of the SFP (see *e.g.*, Claessen 2000: 3; on the possible reasons for the underestimation of the role of war see also Ambrosino 1995)<sup>14</sup>.

**We believe that the absence of the military factor (in any form) in the process of the state formation is an extremely rare exception.** War appears to have been a rather important factor in the formation of the majority of the chiefdom and early state analogues; yet, it seems to have been less important in comparison with its role in the state formation.

Note that when we speak about the military factor, we mean any influence of warfare on the politogenesis including the direct (both conquest and defense) warfare, the preparations for (both conquest and defense) warfare, the dealing with the results of the successful conquest warfare. The formation of the early state usually began with wars, and it was very rare when the early states did not wage endless wars<sup>15</sup>.

However, it appears necessary to note that this does not imply that the military factor of the SFP was leading always and everywhere. We just maintain that the military factor was always present within this process; however, it could manifest itself in very different ways, and its importance in different cases could be also very different. In certain cases this was the crucial factor of the SFP, in some other cases it was one of the leading factors, but in still other cases it could well be of secondary importance.

It is quite clear that no factor (including the military one) cannot be the only factor; what is more, as regards the politogenesis (including the SFP) in general, no factor can be regarded even as the main factor, though in concrete cases (and at concrete phases) of the politogenesis main factors can well be identified. In order that an arogenic<sup>16</sup> evolutionary phase transition (*i.e.* an arogenic qualitative transformation) could take place, a number of relevant subsystems and characteristic should be sufficiently developed.

However, as was mentioned above, in concrete social systems we usually observe certain disproportions: some subsystems and characteristics develop more rapidly and intensively, whereas some other subsystems and characteristics develop slower and weaker. The comprehensive evolutionary development is usually achieved through the interaction of a considerable number of societies. Through the interaction, competition and cooperation between social systems particular evolutionary achievements of particular societies of previous historical generations are transmitted to many other social systems of subsequent historical generations. In this respect the wars could contribute rather strongly to the creation of conditions that were necessary for an evolutionary breakthrough, for a social aromorphosis.

Yet, the military factor has some peculiarities in comparison with the other factors. Firstly, it may act simultaneously as an internal and external factor (which does not appear relevant, for example, with respect to such factors as estate, or class inequalities). Secondly, perhaps it demands breaking of connection with traditions more often than others, and the transition to the state is almost impossible or difficult without such a break. Thirdly, the war appears to be the most severe and fast instrument for the social selection, it better than other factors makes societies and elites mobilize their forces and resources, strain and become more active and change their strategies. Fourthly, providing internal preparedness and under favourable circumstances war is the fastest way of integration, the shortest way to solving many problems. Fifthly, while establishing polities sized to several thousands the limit of peaceful integration started to appear, so namely the war becomes the major tool of integration, promoting concentration of the population in certain places.

In general, the life of the majority of agricultural tribes and chiefdoms (*e.g.*, the Iroquois, Celts, or Germans), as well as nomadic herder ones (*e.g.*, the Scythians, Xiongnu, or Tuareg) was filled with raids, campaigns, and wars.

However, it is quite evident that the transition to early statehood can only occur if certain conditions are present: the economic subsystem is able to produce a certain amount of surplus and prestige goods, the population numbers and densities are not below certain threshold levels, some more or less developed ideology

is present etc. All these are a 'nutrient medium' within which the processes of functional differentiation, social stratification, resource accumulation, and the power centres' formation could go with a substantial intensity. Naturally, the war itself can neither produce surplus, nor increase the population (actually it rather destroys both surplus and population). Thus the emergence of preconditions for the state formations proceeds mainly on the basis of nonmilitary processes. That is why the war (and even the conquest) cannot create a state if none of the societies in question is prepared internally for the state formation. The simple chiefdom could not transform itself into a state even as a result of the most successful war if there were no sufficient economic, ideological, and social preconditions. Carneiro's contribution here is that he has described some possible contexts, within which the war can result in the phase transition to a higher level of complexity (for example, the situation when in pre-Hispanic Peru the environmental circumscription in conjunction with population pressure resulted in such a type of warfare that led to the state formation) (1970). In the meantime the examples provided by Carneiro raise certain doubts, as the war could influence the SFP in a much wider variety of ways rather than just through various types of circumscription. On the other hand, there are too many exceptions when the environmental circumscription did not lead to any substantial growth of sociopolitical complexity (Beliaev, Bondarenko and Korotayev 2001).

In this respect the role of war appears to be different as regards the primary state formation, on the one hand, and the secondary state formation, on the other. If the war, plundering and military exploitation become the basis of 'political economy' (in this terms' sense proposed by Johnson and Earle [2000: 22–27]), the main source of enrichment, the main sector of intensive 'economy', their role in the politogenesis significantly increases. That is why it was not infrequent when the war became the basis for secondary and tertiary SFP, when it became performing a 'pseudoproductive' role for a society that was exploiting it. The role of war in the life of a given society also increases with the formation of the state institutions among the neighbours, with the diffusion of these institutions, as well as with the development of military technologies. In this respect, the later case of the SFP we take, the more salient the role of wars (both the wars of conquest and the wars of defense) tends to be (for more details see Grinin 2007e).

The primary SFP in the zone of irrigation economy took place in conditions of a relatively highly productive agriculture. And as the internal surplus was relatively large, the external sources of wealth played a smaller role. However, in conditions of very large surplus production, and especially in conditions of a fast demographic growth (or even explosion) we almost inevitably observe the emergence (or intensification) of the competition and struggle between the growing polities (for a review of this point with respect to Egypt see Prusakov 1999: 61–63). One may say metaphorically that within such **a context the war acted as a sort of formatting process that gave to a certain prepared mass a definite form and that gave to social changes a certain direction.** In such cases the wars stimulated the transformation of state analogues into the state, they increased the role of administrative coercive power (somehow reducing the importance of the sacral power).

We maintain that the birth of a state usually needed special, unusual conditions and circumstances, extreme situations in connection with a sharp change of a habitual way of life that made it necessary to make new decisions and to conduct reforms. And the war often played a role of a trigger in creation of such extreme situations (see Grinin 2007e; Grinin and Korotayev 2009 for more details; see also Grinin 2009 in the present issue).

Claessen's views on the SFP factors coincide with ours in many points. On the other hand, they come in contradiction with his own views on the role of war in the SFP (see Grinin 2007e; Grinin and Korotayev 2009 for more details). According to Claessen (and we agree with him on this point), in addition to four necessary conditions of state formation (sufficient population, sufficient territory, and sufficient level of economic and ideological development) at least one more additional pushing factor is necessary so that a state could emerge. This factor may be regarded as the fifth necessary condition. Claessen believes that the role of this fifth condition could be performed by such factors as the threat of the enemies' attacks (as was the case, for example, with the Bet-sileo in Madagascar in the 17<sup>th</sup> century); resource deficit (as, according to Claessen, was the case with the Aztec); the infiltration of new ideas and beliefs (as was the case with the early states in South East Asia) (Claessen 2004: 80–82). However, surprisingly, his list of such triggers does not include the war. Yet, was not it

the war that acted as a state formation trigger most frequently? At least we do not know any other factor that acted more frequently in this capacity.

### **CONCLUSION. UNITY AND DIFFERENCE OF THE SOCIOEVOLUTIONARY PROCESSES OF THE PRIMARY EPOCH OF POLITOGENESIS**

Naturally, our analysis of evolutionary processes, models, and directions in the epoch of the primary politogenesis is in no way complete. However, it still makes it possible to come to the conclusion that for a rather long period of time neither functional differentiation within social systems, nor politogenesis, nor class formation, nor other processes were something perfectly distinct, well differentiated from the other evolutionary processes. It is not surprising that in many various and different late archaic phenomena and processes one may find a lot of similar traits. It was only gradually that the processes of sociogenesis, politogenesis, civilization genesis, ethnogenesis etc. became more or less differentiated. After this initial differentiation one could observe another wave of differentiation (for example, the state formation process differentiated itself from the state analogue formation process within the general process of politogenesis).

The development of demographic, technological and other processes led to the growth of network and other links, to the integration processes, as well as to growth of the frequency of wars. The neighbours' attacks frequently created direct threats to the property, freedom, and life even among relatively peaceful people (as this was observed *e.g.*, among the Itelmen, cf. Krasheinnikov 1948: 190), let alone those cultures where the raids against neighbours were considered a sort of supreme virtue. Such threats made people migrate, or move to fortified settlements (which could amplify artificially the urbanization processes), they made them seek someone's protection, or stimulated solving the problems by the society itself, through self-organization (Grinin 2007e).

There were internal threats – in addition to the external ones. Even in large polities the order was rather unstable. 'A rumor was sufficient to start a panic, to provoke a murder, or political disturbances. Plots and killings were usual things. As soon as a certain ruler stopped pleasing the others, they threw him down,

or executed him. Even when nothing impeded the free application of laws, the competition that emerged among nobles striving to obtain certain magistrate positions created internal struggles that were easily transformed into internal conflicts. It was not infrequent that an ambitious person came to an idea to destroy the existing order for his own interests'. This picture of the Gauls' life produced by Emile Thevenot (Thevenot 2002: 137) on the basis of Julius Caesar's *Commentarii de Bello Gallico* was typical for some other protostate systems or state analogues that were in unstable state close to a bifurcation point (as well as for many unstable early states).

Every society, depending on its natural and historical conditions, many other objective factors (including stochastic factors), developed its own forms of ordering the internal and external relationships. It appears necessary to stress that initially those forms were usually one-sided and incomplete (in comparison with fully developed forms). In some cases we observe more intensive religious processes, in some other cases the processes of the wealth differentiation were the fastest, but these could be also the processes of specialization, or the aristocracy formation, or the emergence of professional warriors. The simultaneous harmonic development of all the processes was practically never observed (for more details see Grinin 2007e; Grinin and Korotayev 2009). It took a lot of time for various innovations to diffuse and to get borrowed by a considerable number of societies.

However, the further development implied more correlation between the growths of various societal subsystems. This coordination was achieved with the development of the early state and its analogues. This was as a result of this junior/upper aromorphosis that the World System acquires certain features of maturity and experienced an important phase transition.

Thus, on the one hand, **for a very long period of time the early state was just one of a few forms of political organization of complex late archaic early civilized societies that only became typical as a result of evolutionary selection.** However, on the other hand, it appears essential not to forget that it was the state that became finally the leading form of political organization of the complex and supercomplex social systems, whereas all the other polity types disintegrated, or were absorbed (frequently by a direct conquest) into the states, or got transformed into the states, or pressed out to marginal niches.



## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> The term *politogenesis* was proposed originally by Kubbel' (see *e.g.*, Kubbel' 1988b: 3); however, thus far it has been used almost exclusively by Russian anthropologists.

<sup>2</sup> That is why we suggested to denote these two types of polities with different terms, retaining the *band* for the designation of egalitarian primitive polities, and designating the non-egalitarian primitive polities as *local groups* – indeed, the locality of the non-egalitarian hunter-gatherer communities concentrated and structured around totemic centres was much more pronounced than among the constantly splitting and merging egalitarian hunter-gatherer bands (Korotayev, Kradin and Lynsha 2000; Korotayev 2003).

<sup>3</sup> A similar opinion is expressed by Carneiro (1981) who, however, does not mention analogues of chiefdoms (Carneiro 1981). Such major macroevolutionary shifts that open a new direction of development to numerous social systems are denoted by us as *aromorphoses* (for more details see Grinin and Korotayev 2009; Grinin, Markov and Korotayev 2008).

<sup>4</sup> Besides, it has been shown that not all the early states were able to become and actually became the mature (developed) ones (see Claessen and Skalnik 1978a; Claessen and van de Velde 1987b; Shifferd 1987; Skalnik 1996).

<sup>5</sup> Note that such useful and helpful notions as *complex society*, *sociocultural complexity* do not provide a complete solution for the respective problem. The lack of such a division is strange enough, considering the fact that in the Western literature the concept *political systems* originated long ago and has been substantially used for a long time, at least since the book *African Political Systems* appeared in 1940 (Fortes and Evans-Pritchard 1987 [1940]). And the concepts *political system* and *classification of types of political systems* have been thoroughly analyzed (for more details see Skalnik 1991; Fortes and Evans-Pritchard 1987 [1940]). Probably it is connected with the fact that basic classification of all political systems as Skalnik and others fairly notice (see Skalnik 1991), was strictly, mechanically and antihistorically divided into two main ideal types (*Ibid.*): non-state (acephalous) and political that completely ignored possibilities of separation of evolutionary complex systems without state formation.

<sup>6</sup> The symbiosis of the sacral and the political (*e.g.*, in the form of the concentration of sacral and political power in the hands of a sacred king) was a very (if not the most) widespread form. However, the proportion of the political and the sacral (as well as the relations between the ruler and the priests) could be very different, which resulted in a huge variety of the *politogenesis* versions (for some examples see *e.g.*, Frazer 1980 [1923]; Claessen and Oosten 1996a).

<sup>7</sup> We can consider here as a classical example the case when a Zulu chief Shaka introduced a new type of weapons, a short stabbing spear, with a long, sword-like spearhead, the *iklwa*; it became possible to use it in close combat, whereas previously the spears could only be used for the throwing. The introduction of this weapon contributed to a very considerable degree to the success of Shaka's army and the formation of Shaka's 'empire' (Ritter 1955; Ratzel 1902, 1: 116). As a result the Zulu moved from the pre-state epoch to the state one. It is also well known how the military potential of nomadic herders grew with

the invention of the saddle and the stirrup. Before the invention of the latter 'no weapon... could be used effectively by a horse-rider' (Kardini 1987: 264).

<sup>8</sup> The scope of this article does not permit us to provide any detailed analysis of the notion of tribe (on the problems with this notion see *e.g.*, Bromley 1982; Shnirel'man 1982; Girenko 1991; Kubbel' 1988b; Ol'derogge 1977; Tishkov 1990; p'Bitek 1970, 1971; Helm 1967; see also Korotayev 1995; Grinin 2007e: 111–113). Suffice to mention that it is rather vague and polysemantic; this notion is used to designate small groups of 10–20 persons, on the one hand, and large stateless peoples consisting of hundreds thousands and even millions persons. There is also a large variety of opinions as regards to which level of overall sociocultural complexity corresponds the tribal organization. We have already expressed our view on this point based on the idea that in some agrarian medium-complexity social systems the tribes could be regarded as chiefdom analogues (see *e.g.*, Korotayev 1997, 2000, 2002, 2006; Grinin 2007e; Grinin and Korotayev 2009; see also *e.g.*, Dresch 1989; Southall 2000).

<sup>9</sup> Applying Morton Fried's terminology, one may say that we observed the process of transition from egalitarian to ranked societies (Fried 1967: 33, 109, 186). However, even within some early states egalitarian traditions could be rather salient. For example, according to Albert A. Trouwborst (2008: 168) in daily life in Burundi (in 1958) the distance between the authorities and the common people was not as great as one would have expected. Chiefs and commoners acted and spoke to each other in a familiar way looking to outsiders as if they were equals. On the other hand, some hunter-gatherer societies were not egalitarian (see *e.g.*, Woodburn 1972, 1979, 1980, 1982, 1988a, 1988b).

<sup>10</sup> Though the questions of whether the instances of primitive warfare should be called wars, as well as what were the causes of primitive warfare remain rather controversial (see *e.g.*, Harris 1991; Lorenz 1966; Brown 1987; Keeley 1996).

<sup>11</sup> However, intensive warfare does not lead necessarily to any qualitative development; it could be a way of life and a mode of population regulation. This could be observed among the Papuans of the New Guinea Highlands who for thousands of years failed to make a qualitative step forward (*i.e.* a phase transition) from the simple agrarian society to the complex (or even medium-complexity) craft-agrarian society, from independent simple communities to at least the level of simple chiefdoms and their analogues (see *e.g.*, Butinov 1968, 1980, 1995, 2000).

<sup>12</sup> Yet, it appears necessary to note that not in all the archaic societies all the deep genealogies were necessarily falsified; some of them contained surprisingly correct information (see *e.g.*, Korotayev 2006: 121–124; Robin and Gajda 1994).

<sup>13</sup> For instance in some cases one could agree to obey any third side or selected people. So, according to Herodotus (History I: 96–100) the governor in Ancient Midea, for example, has been elected (see Dyakonov 1956: 176–180; about the role of monarchs see also: Miller 1976).

<sup>14</sup> Among those early authors who believed that the state was born mainly as a result of the conquest of one people by another one should mention Gumpłowicz (1983) and Oppenheimer (1926) (for a review of these theories see *e.g.*, Carneiro 1970). Later these approaches were quite justly rejected as oversimplifying the historical reality; however, as happens too often, the baby was thrown out with the bath water.

<sup>15</sup> That is why the assertions that the state creates war, and the war creates state (Tilly 1990), or that the *poleis* created war, and the war created *poleis* (Hansen 2002: 39) appear to reflect the historical reality in a rather correct way.

<sup>16</sup> *I.e.* leading to an aromorphosis.

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