

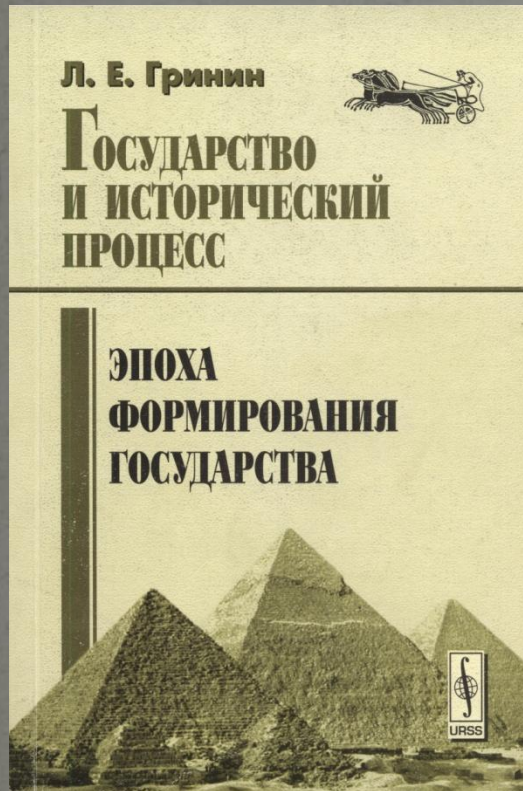
ON THE MODELS OF THE EARLY STATE FORMATION

Leonid Grinin

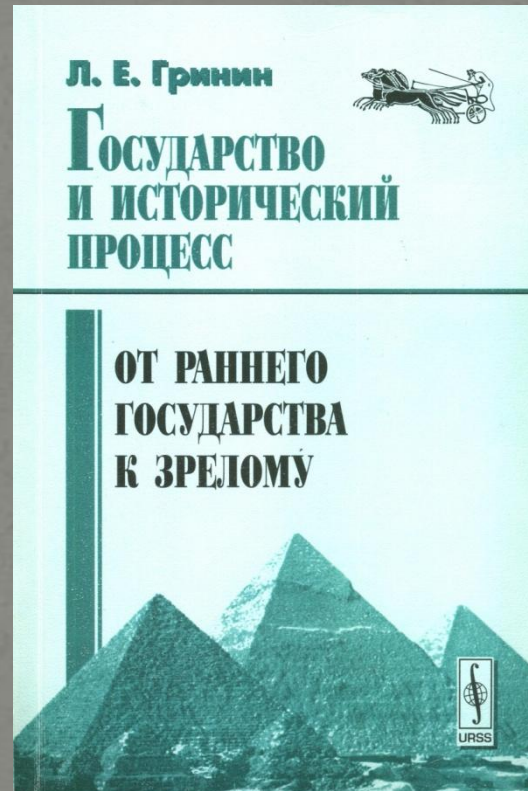
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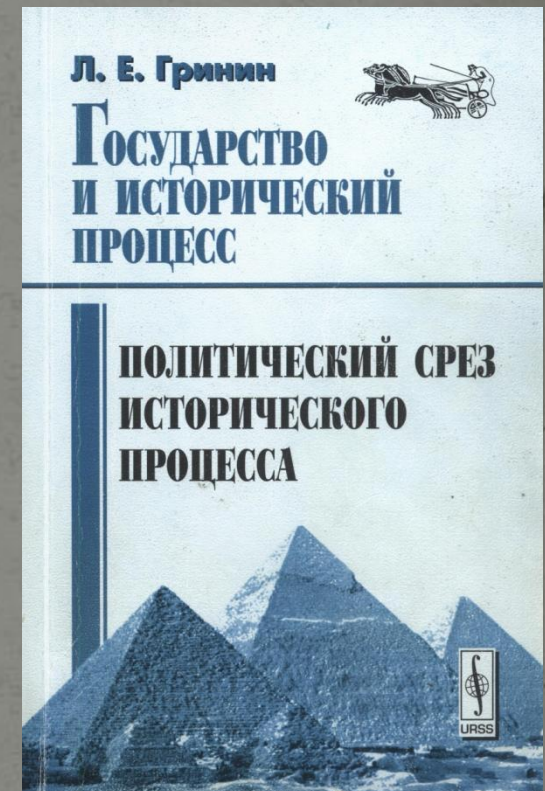
State and Historical Process



The Period of State
Formation

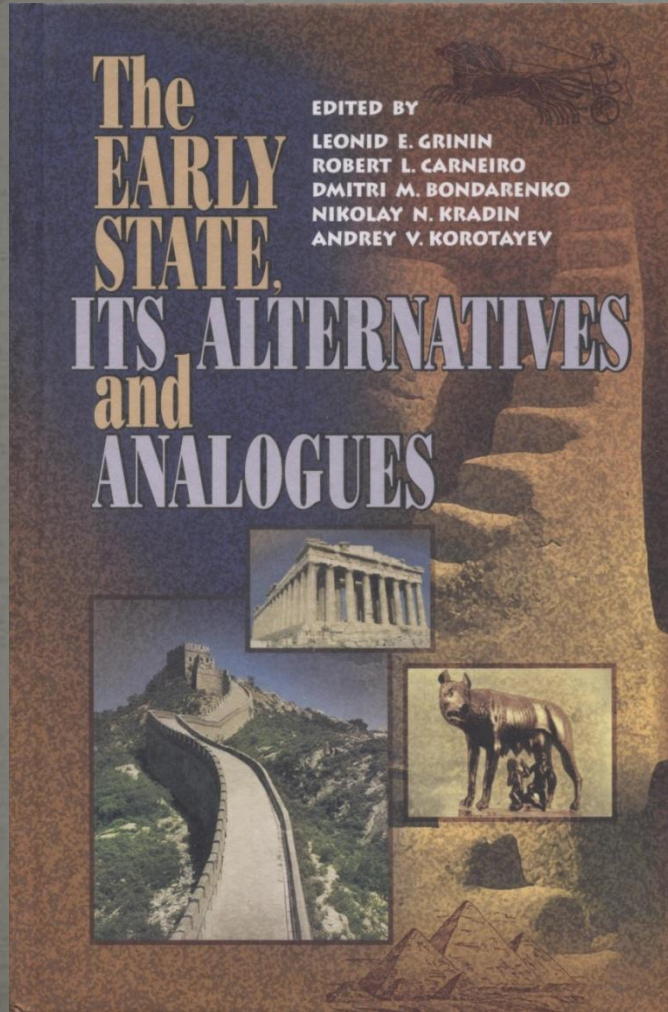


From the Early State to
the Mature



The Political Survey of
Historical Process

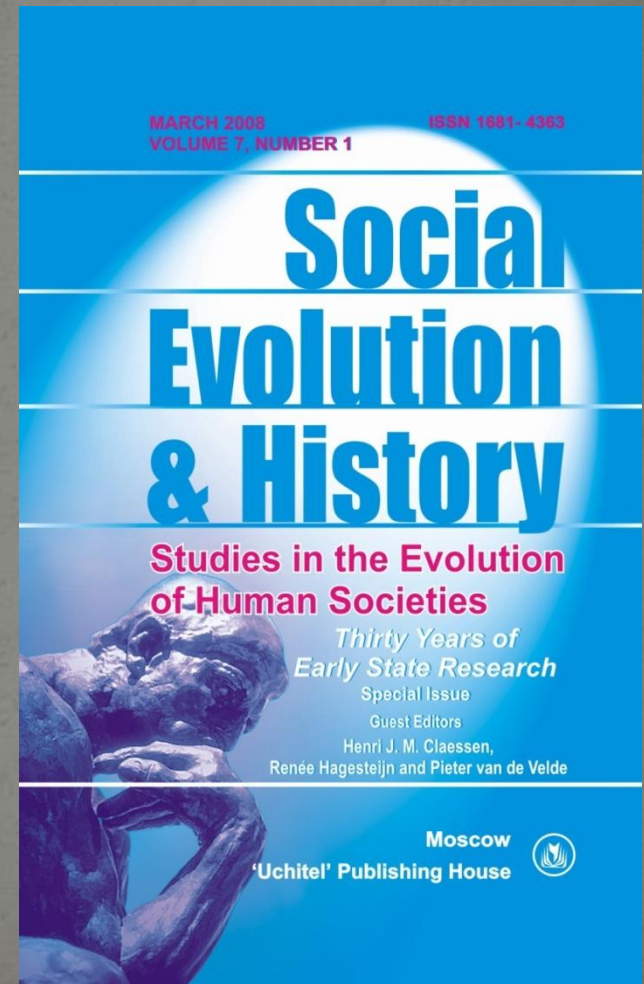
The Early State, Its Alternatives and Analogues



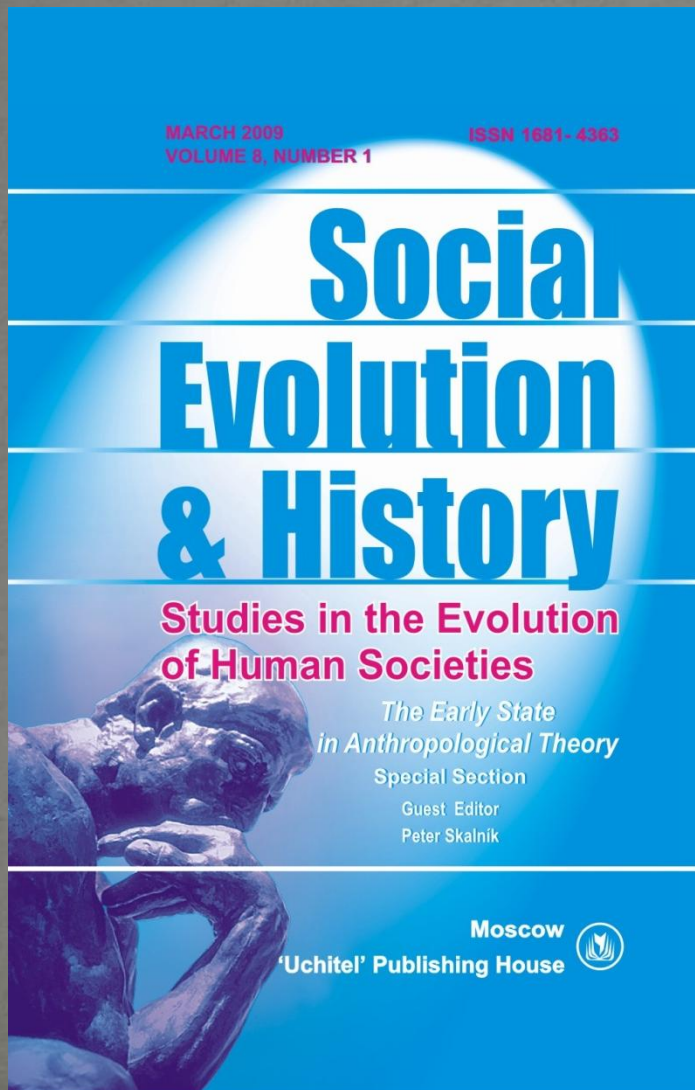
- Part I: Theory
- Part II: Early States
- Part III: Sedentary Alternatives and Analogues
- Part IV. Nomadic Alternatives and Analogues

Thirty Years of Early State Research

Authors: Henri J. M. Claessen, Dmitri M. Bondarenko, Gary M. Feinman, Leonid E. Grinin, Renee R. Hagesteijn, Nikolay N. Kradin, Donald V. Kurtz, Jean-Claude Muller, Albert A. Trouwborst, Michal Tymowski, Edward Ch. L. van der Vliet, Jianping Yi, and Pieter van de Velde



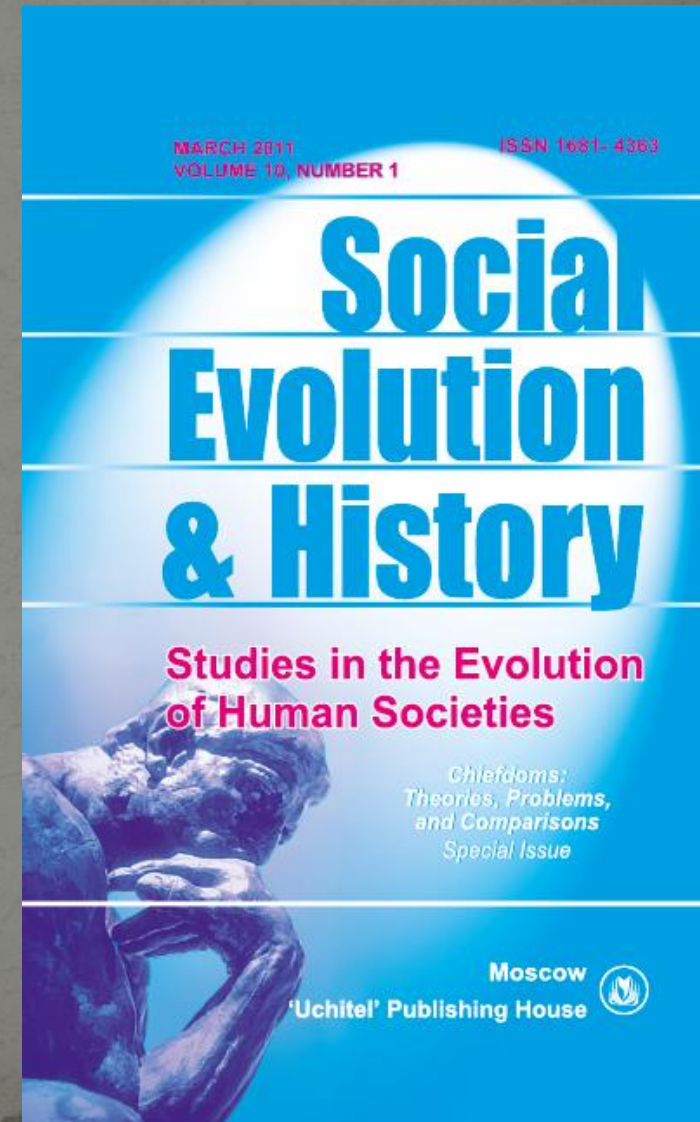
Special Section. The Early State in Anthropological Theory. Guest Editor - Peter Skalník



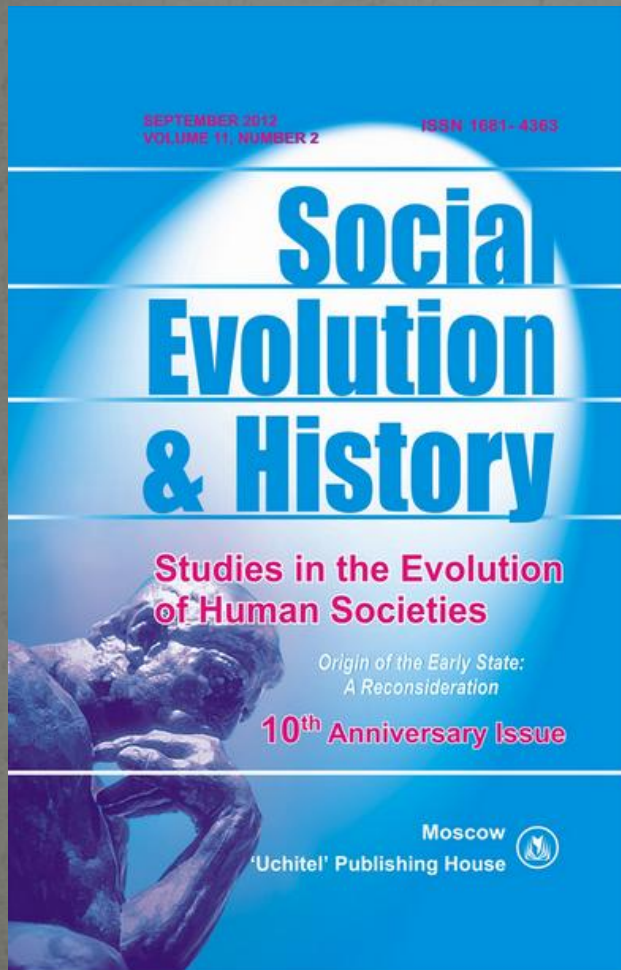
- Early State Concept in Anthropological Theory
- State Origins in Anthropological Thought
- The Epoch of the Initial Politogenesis
- The Pathways of Politogenesis and Models of the Early State Formation
- The Early State and Theorization on the Evolution and Character of the State in Asia: Some Preliminary Observations
- Slavery and the Early State in Africa

Chieftoms: Theories, Problems, and Comparisons

- On Chiefs and Chieftoms
- Complex Chieftom: Precursor of the State or Its Analogue?
- Chiefs, Chieftomcies, Chieftoms, and Chiefly Confederacies: Power in the Evolution of Political Systems
- Chieftom Confederacies and State Origins



Origin of the Early State: A Reconsideration



- Robert L. Carneiro
- The Circumscription Theory: A Clarification, Amplification, and Reformulation
- Emergence of Chiefdoms and States: A Spectrum of Opinions
- Herbert Barry III, Robert M. Carmack, Henri J. M. Claessen, Gary M. Feinman, D. Blair Gibson, Alessandro Guidi, Stephen A. Kowalewski, Donald V. Kurtz, Ludomir R. Lozny, Joyce Marcus, Toon van Meijl, Peter N. Peregrine, David B. Small, David Sneath, Fred Spier, Alain Testart, Edward Ch. L. van der Vliet, Paul Wason, Jianping Yi

International Symposium on Early State Formation. Beijing, November 4-5, 2009

古代国家的起源与早期发展 国际学术研讨会

会议手册



主办单位：中国社会科学院世界历史研究所

2009年11月4日—2009年11月5日

中国·北京

早期国家政治制度国际学术研讨会

International Academic Conference on
Political Systems of Early States

论文汇编

Collection of Papers

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早期国家

政治制度研究

Political Systems of Early States



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The main ideas

- **Multilinearity of politogenesis and the variation of its forms** have various manifestations.
- **The main causes** determining the politogenetic pathway of a given society are the polity's size, its ecological and social environment .
- The politogenesis should never be reduced to the only evolutionary pathway leading to the statehood. I designate various complex non-state political systems as **early state analogues**.
- Thus, it was only in the final count that the state became the leading form of political organization of complex societies.

Politogenesis vs State Formation Process

An evolutionary process *politogenesis* is much wider than the *state formation process*, because there were many versions of political development. For a long period of time one could observe a more frequent emergence not of early states, but of *polities of a special type that were non-states* with respect to the structure of their political administration, but that were comparable with the state as to many significant parameters.

Definitions

The early state analogues

are various forms of complex stateless societies *that were non-states* with respect to their structure of political administration or other features, but that were comparable with the state in many significant parameters: their size, sociocultural and/or political complexity, functional differentiation and the scale of tasks they have to accomplish etc.

Alternatives to Early State

There were many **alternatives** early state analogues. The sociopolitical evolution of late archaic societies had alternatives:

- these societies could evolve not only in the direction of early state;
- they also could evolve through the development of complex *stateless* political forms.

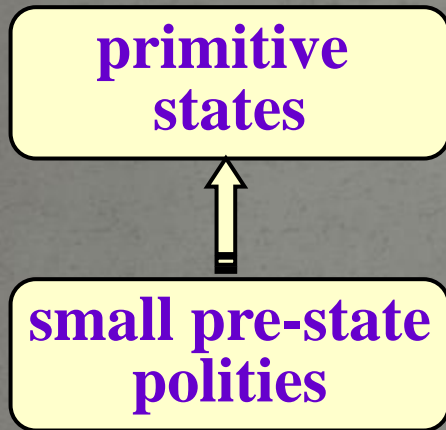
The main ideas

Two main types of the pathways to statehood

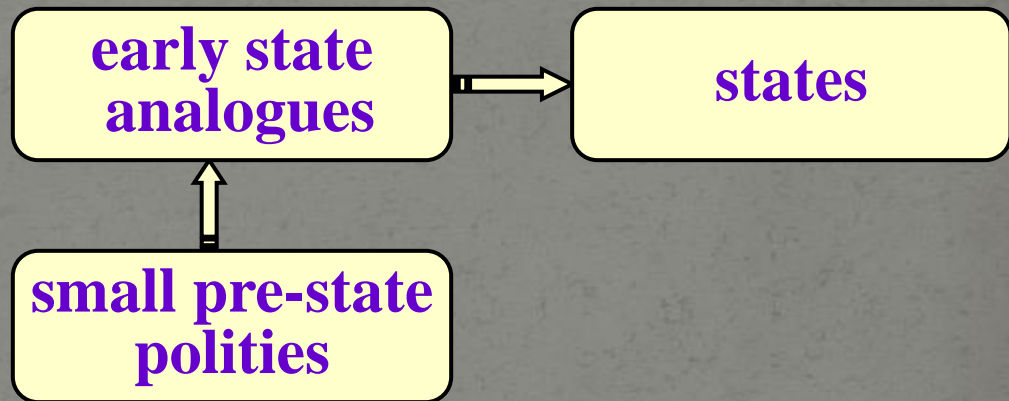
Within *the 'vertical' model* the state formation took place in a direct way, i.e. directly from small pre-state polities to primitive statehood.

Within *the 'horizontal' model* we first observe the formation of early state analogues that were quite comparable to the state as regards to their complexity, whereas later those analogues were transformed into states.

Two main models of the state formation process



**'VERTICAL'
MODEL**



**'HORIZONTAL'
MODEL**

Definitions

The early state

is a category that is used to designate a special form of political organization of a relatively large and complex agrarian society (or a group of societies/territories) that determines its external policy and partly its social order.

It is a power organization which

- a) possesses supremacy and sovereignty (or, at least, autonomy);
- b) is able to coerce the ruled to fulfill its demands; to alter important relationships and to introduce new norms, as well as to redistribute resources;
- c) is based (entirely or mostly) on such principles that are different from the kinship ones.

Definitions

The politogenesis

is a process of separation of the political dimension/sphere within a society and the formation of political subsystem as a relatively autonomous subsystem, a process of emergence of special power forms of social organization, which is connected with the concentration of power and (both external and internal) political activities and their monopolization by certain groups and strata.

Factors determining the 'choice' of a given evolutionary trajectory

- environmental conditions;
- contact intensity both within a society and between societies;
- **a social system's size** that determines up to a considerable degree the volume of accumulated resources;
- **the level of complexity of tasks** that the respective social system has to solve;
- **potential of social system to react** to the external challenges.

The early state

can only develop within a society with a certain level of overall sociocultural and political complexity, within a society that has a sufficient volume of surplus and population. However, even within such social systems the state did not appear in many cases, it only emerged in particular, quite special circumstances.

The early state analogues

(the other complex societies) having reached this level of complexity did not form states, but developed along their own alternative trajectories.

Classification of states and their analogues according to their sizes

- **the smallest early state** – with population between a few thousands and 15,000
- **small early state** – with population between 15,000 and 50,000
- **medium-size early state** – with population between 50,000 and 300,000
- **medium-large early state** – with population between 300,000 and 3,000,000
- **large early state** – with population more than 3,000,000.

Classification of states and their analogues according to their size

Accordingly the early state analogues may be subdivided into following groups:

- *the smallest early state analogues;*
- *small early state analogues;*
- *medium-size early state analogues;*
- *medium-large early state analogues;*
- *large early state analogues*

(however, stable forms of such analogues do not appear to have been attested).

Stateless polity may transform into a state from the following levels:

- 1) from evolutionary **pre-state level** – e.g., through *synoikismós*. This way was typical for some Greek societies, as well as for Mesopotamia in the late 4th and early 3rd millennium BCE;
- 2) from the level of **small state analogues** (e.g., this way the Great Mongol Empire of Genghis Khan started);
- 3) from the level of **the medium-size state analogues** (as happened, e.g., in the Hawaiian Archipelago);
- 4) even from the level of **the medium-large state analogues** (as happened, e.g., in Scythia in the early 4th century BCE).

The state formation usually requires the emergence of **specific, unusual, new conditions and circumstances, extreme situations connected with sharp changes of habitual life, the necessity of new decisions and reforms:**

- conquests or military amalgamations;
- a pronounced incongruence of old administration methods;
- civil confrontation;
- artificial concentration of population, or its sharp growth;
- weakening or discredit of power in conditions of emergence of complex problems;
- emergence of an especially outstanding leader;
- some important technological or social innovation etc.

The point that the state is born in special circumstances is relevant **not only for primary**, but also **for almost all secondary and tertiary states**, because for any concrete people this moment represents a serious evolutionary turning point.

This idea also provides an additional explanation for the mechanism of the 'horizontal' model of state formation that is of the state formation on the basis of state analogues.

If we have a clear analogue of an early state, then the transformation of an analogue into a state can occur through internal changes, reforms, development of old political institutions and emergence of new ones etc.

The competition of alternative political forms

The widest possibilities for the competition of alternative political forms are found within the interval of a polity's population **between a few thousands and a few dozen thousands.**

Beyond **the limit of 100,000** the possibilities of competition of such forms begin to decrease sharply (and its place is taken by the evolutionary competition between various forms of the early state).

The point is that in early state analogues the population growth over a certain limit may lead to its transformation into a larger and more complex analogue, but beyond a certain limit it leads either to this polity's degeneration (primitivization, disintegration), or its transformation into a state.

Medium-large and large state analogues

1. The possibilities of their existence depend directly on the presence of large sedentary civilized neighbours and the early state analogues' ability to compete with them in military terms.
2. Size, might, and complexity level with respect to the realization of external political functions of the nomadic agglomerations ('empires') correlated rather tightly with size, might, and political culture of those states, with which the nomads regularly interacted.
3. Early state analogues get significant advantages in marginal ecological conditions and with less perspective evolutionary economic forms (in particular, with extensive animal husbandry that implies a nomadic way of life). The sedentarization can change rather rapidly many forms of societal administration.

Conclusion

On the one hand, within the overall evolutionary process it appears possible to single out various real **alternatives of development.**

On the other hand, it is also possible to identify an **'a mainstream' evolutionary pathway** that produced those forms that sooner or later became actually dominant, whereas the forms representing 'lateral' evolutionary lines could only compete with evolutionarily more perspective forms up to certain limits or within some special (usually marginal) natural and social environments.

THANK YOU FOR ATTENTION!