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# The Early State and its Analogues\*

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## **ABSTRACT**

*It is recognized widely enough that a pre-state society in order to get transformed into a state must have a certain size of territory and population, a necessary degree of sociocultural complexity and an ability to produce sufficient quantities of surplus. However, sometimes cultures significantly exceed required levels of those parameters without forming states. In addition to this, we know historically and ethnographically a considerable number of stateless societies not at all inferior to the early state societies with respect to their territory, population, sociocultural and/or political complexity. So, the question is: how to classify such societies? Compared to unquestionably pre-state societies, such as, for example, simple chiefdoms, they are not only larger in size but much more complex as well. In certain sense, they can be regarded as being at the same level of sociocultural development as early-state societies. And, since both types of societies faced similar problems and solved similar tasks, I denote complex stateless societies as early state **analogues**. This article is an attempt to analyze such analogues and compare them with early states.*

## **INTRODUCTION**

I can hardly be wrong stating that the view of a state as the only possible, and hence alternativeless, result of the development of pre-state polities, is predominant among the students of the early state formation. Such a unilinear approach, no doubt, aggravates

methodological problems encountered by many political anthropologists in their studies of complex societies (see, *e.g.*, McIntosh 1999a; Vansina 1999). ‘It is often said that research on the formation of complex political organization is currently in a state of methodological deadlock’ (Bondarenko 2000a: 213). However, it will be easier to get out of this methodological deadlock if we reject the idea that the state was the only and universal possibility of development for complex post-primitive societies **and recognize that there were alternative pathways, other than transformation into early states** (Bondarenko 2000a; Grinin 2001). Luckily, the idea that non-state societies are not necessarily less complex and less efficient than the state ones, nowadays looks less blasphemous than a few years ago (Bondarenko, Grinin, and Korotayev 2002: 56; also Claessen 2002:101)<sup>1</sup>.

I have denoted those alternatives to the early state as *early state analogues* (Grinin 1997, 2000a, 2000b, 2000c, 2001, 2002a, 2002b, 2002c, 2002d). Some of these analogues turn out to be incapable to get transformed into states at all. Other systems of this kind do become states – but when reaching quite a high level of development and complexity that is fairly comparable with those of many state societies. Therefore, it is important to accept the fact that the societies that preceded the formation of the state historically strongly differ among themselves in size and complexity. **This means that in different societies the transition to the state started not from the same but from different levels of sociocultural and political complexity.**

Thus, a society, after reaching a certain size and a certain level of sociocultural complexity (at which the transition to the state is already possible), may continue to develop – and at the same time not to build political forms of an early state for a long time. In particular, a culture may have a very high level of social stratification (examples are given further in the text) but lack a state system. But if we understand the early state only as a product of antagonistic social contradictions (*e.g.*, Engels 1961; Fried 1967, 1978; Krader 1978 etc.), such phenomena could be hard to explain<sup>2</sup>.

Although the analysis of existing points of view, as regards what the state is and what its basic features are, is beyond the scope of this paper, it is necessary to point out that in this context throughout this paper the early state is regarded first of all as a special political organization of a society (a system of political and

administrative institutions) that emerges (**not always, but only in certain conditions**) in societies that have already reached a necessary level of development, and, particularly, a certain level of sociocultural and political complexity, that produce necessary amounts of surplus, and have necessary territory size and population<sup>3</sup>.

### **EARLY STATE ANALOGUES: SIZE AND SOME CHARACTERISTICS**

We know many historical and ethnographic cases of polities which differ from the early state significantly in political organization and power as well as administrative structure, but are similar to it in size and complexity (Beliaev, Bondarenko, and Frantsouzoff (eds.) 2002; Bondarenko 1995, 2000a, 2000b, 2001; Bondarenko and Korotayev (eds.) 2000a; Bondarenko and Sledzevski (eds.) 2000; Crumley 1995, 2001; Grinin 1997, 2000a, 2000b, 2001, 2002a, 2002b, 2002, 2002d; Korotayev 1995, 2000a, 2000b; Kradin and Lynsha (eds.) 1995; Kradin *et al.* (eds.) 2000; McIntoch (ed.) 1999b; Schaedel 1995 etc.).

It is recognized universally enough that, to form a state, a pre-state society must possess a certain set of minimal characteristics with respect to territory, population, complexity, sociopolitical inequality and ability to accumulate surplus (cf. *e.g.* Claessen 1978a, 2000, 2002). Societies, however, can significantly outgrow respective levels of those indices – but without forming a state. How then should such societies be classified? Still as pre-state ones or as something else?

I am convinced that the most productive path to follow is to recognize them as **early state analogues** (Grinin 1997, 2000a, 2000b, 2000c, 2001, 2002a, 2002b, 2002c, 2002d; Bondarenko, Grinin, and Korotayev 2002). This is because, on the one hand, if compared with doubtlessly pre-state societies, such as, for example, simple chiefdoms, tribes etc., they are not only bigger in size but much more complex as well. On the other hand, their size and complexity were comparable to those of early states and dealt with problems of comparable scale. This is why they may, in a certain sense, be regarded as being at the same level of sociocultural and/or political development as the early state societies. The latter, certainly, differ significantly from their analogues, but not as much in the development level as in some peculiarities of political or-

ganization and in ‘the mechanics’ of administration. However, despite the differences in the mechanics of regulation of sociopolitical life, similar functions were performed in both types of societies<sup>4</sup>. Below I shall give some examples of such analogues. However, before doing this, I should provide some additional explanations.

First of all, the sizes of the analogues should be mentioned. This issue becomes of a very great importance because of a certain direct relationship: the bigger is the population of a polity, the more complex its structure is (all other conditions being similar), because new number of population and new size of territory may require new levels of hierarchy and administration (see, *e.g.* Carneiro 1967; Johnson and Earle 2000: 2, 181). But since we compare early state analogues with the early state proper, it first should be established what is considered to be the minimum size required for an early state.

To start with, there is no uniformity of opinions on this subject. However, something like the following pattern tends to be offered:

simple chiefdom – populations in the thousands;  
 complex chiefdom – populations in the tens of thousands;  
 state – populations in the hundreds of thousands or millions  
 (Johnson and Earle 2000: 246, 304).

This produces an elegant and perfect line of levels of cultural evolution: the family – the local group – the Big Man collectivity – the chiefdom – the archaic state – the nation-state (Johnson and Earle 2000: 245).

In general, such a line is a fruitful method of constructing evolutionary patterns, but it is useless for our purposes since it completely ignores states with population from several thousand to one hundred thousand although there are quite enough of such states even in the modern times (*e.g.* Nauru, Kiribati, etc.), while in the ancient and medieval times their number was much larger. At the same time, an opinion, arguable but deserving attention, is voiced according to which the first states (meaning pristine states as termed by Fried) must have been small in size at any time and anywhere and must have incorporated one single territorial community or several interconnected communities (D’jkonov 2000a: 34). In this respect, therefore, the early states counting from several thousands to 100–200 thousand people are of special interest to the researchers of state formation process. In general, I am inclined to

consider the point of view expressed by Claessen (2002: 107) to be more true to fact. In his opinion, for a polity to become a state it must have a population of not less than several thousand people. And he adds that population of the smallest Tahiti states counted not less than 5,000 (*ibid.*). But this, certainly, is the lowest limit for an early state.

D'jakonov (1983) cites some interesting facts regarding the assumed population numbers of Mesopotamian city-states (the 'nomos-states' according to this author) in the 3<sup>rd</sup> millennium B.C. In the 28<sup>th</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup> centuries B.C. the population of the Ur city-state (90 sq. km) assumably counted 6,000 people, of which two thirds resided in the city of Ur itself. In the 27<sup>th</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup> centuries B.C. the population of the Shuruppak *nomos* could amount to 15,000–20,000 people (1983: 174). In the 25<sup>th</sup> – 24<sup>th</sup> centuries B.C. the population of Lagash approached the figure of 100,000 people (1983: 203).

Other examples can be cited as well. Thus, if in the 5<sup>th</sup> century B.C. the population of even such no small Greek cities as Sparta, Argos, Thebes, Megara was around 25,000–35,000 people (Struve *et al.* 1956: 241), the population of many Greek *poleis*, rural areas included (of course, with the exception of such cities as Athens, Corinth, Syracuse), was within tens of thousands, and it probably was even less in the earlier epoch. Some tens of thousand people was probably the number of the population of each of the biggest Tahiti states (Papara, Tautira, etc.) since by the arrival of Europeans the total population of the archipelago could be estimated to be around 35,000–200,000 people, but the first figure looks too modest (Claessen 1978b: 444). Other sources estimate this population as being within 80,000–100,000 (Ravva 1972: 8). Presumably, the population of 40,000–50,000 people could live in the early state that existed around 100 B.C. – A.D. 250 at Monte Albán in the Valley of Oaxaca, Mexico (Kowalewski *et al.* 1995: 96).

Thus, the differences in population numbers and, respectively, in the complexity of organization of early states may conventionally be reflected in the following graduation:

**a small early state** – from several thousand to several dozen thousand people;

**a medium early state** – from several dozen thousand to several hundred thousand people;

**a large early state** – from several hundred thousand to several million people.

The early state analogues must respectively be classified as **small early state analogues, medium early state analogues and large early state analogues**. It goes without saying that all three of them appreciably differ from each other<sup>5</sup>. The relation between the sizes of early states and their analogues are given in Table 1.

**TABLE 1**

Size of polity	Type of early state and examples	Type of early state analogue and examples
Several thousand to several dozen thousand people	A small early state (Ur in the 28 <sup>th</sup> –27 <sup>th</sup> centuries B.C.)	An analogue of a small early state (Iceland in the 11 <sup>th</sup> century A.D.)
Several dozen thousand to several hundred thousand people	A medium early state (Hawaii)	An analogue of a medium early state (Aedui, Arverni, and Helvetii of Gaul before Caesar)
Several hundred thousand to several million people	A large early state (early France in the 6 <sup>th</sup> – 8 <sup>th</sup> centuries; the Inca state <sup>6</sup> )	An analogue of a large early state (Hsiung-nu in 200 B.C. – A.D. 48)

The watershed between the states and the analogues runs within the polity size of several hundred thousand people. For the analogues, this size is, probably, the final limit beyond which such a polity either breaks down or transforms into a state. That is why large state analogues are very rare. The only case of such analogues among the examples given further, are the large nomadic ‘supercomplex chiefdoms’. The population of such supercomplex chiefdoms (Kradin 2000a, 2000b, 2002), even by the most optimistic estimates, never exceeded 1,500,000 people (Kradin 2001: 127). Therefore, such analogues correspond only to the smallest of large (early) states.

From the above the following important deductions may be made:

1. Though any society that historically precedes the formation of an early state is a pre-state society, it may be a predecessor of not necessarily a small state, but immediately of a medium or a large one. Respectively, the larger and the more complex the ‘pre-state’ society is, the higher is the probability of its transition directly to a larger state system bypassing small and medium state stages. Really, will it be right to regard the complex chiefdom in Hawaii, the largest island of the archipelago, numbering up to one hundred thousand people (Johnson and Earle 2000: 285), as being inferior, in its level of development and complexity, to the smallest Tahiti states or the *nomos*-state of Ur which was mentioned above? Absolutely and evidently not. Indeed, after the Europeans had arrived in the Hawaiian Islands, **a medium size** state had already been formed there – meaning that its population reached 200–300 thousand people if we base upon the pre-contact population estimates (Johnson and Earle 2000: 284; Seaton 1978: 270).

But since the transition to the early state was from historically pre-state societies of variable complexity and size, a necessity arises to subdivide such pre-state societies into two types. The first group includes societies that may be described/termed as inherently pre-state since their existing size and complexity prevent their transformation even into a small state. The other group includes polities that, with their existing features, potentially may transform into small or larger states. These are the polities that I denote as ‘**early state analogues**’.

2. At the same time a society may transform into an early state both from the principally pre-state level – for example, by way of *synoikism* of small communities as described, for example, by Claessen for the Betsileo of Madagascar in the early 17<sup>th</sup> century [2002: 105–106]), – and from the levels of small (*e.g.*, Tonga, see below), medium (*e.g.*, Hawaii) and even large (*e.g.*, the Scythians at the beginning of the 4<sup>th</sup> century B.C., see below) early state analogues. **Such approaches allow to single out, within the politogenesis<sup>7</sup>, evolutionary alternatives to the early state, both at any level of its complexity and development and from the point of view of correspondence with its size.** Reverse metamorphoses, from an early state to its analogue, though rare, are also known (Korotayev 2000a; Trepavlov 1995).

3. Belonging to analogues group are also polities which for different reasons have not become states: *e.g.* the Iroquois, the Tureg, the Hsiung-Nu, the Gauls, etc. These societies may be regarded as being stateless and alternative to early states of this or that type. All this serves to demonstrate that the notion of an early state analogue is a complex one and includes a vast variety of polities, which differ from each other with respect to their size, complexity, form and development level. The primary aim of bringing such quite dissimilar societies under a common name of '*an early state analogue*' is to single out trajectories of development of complex post-primitive societies which are alternative to the evolutionary pathway leading to the formation of the state.

### EARLY STATE ANALOGUES: CLASSIFICATION

All the analogues, no doubt, differ from early states in their peculiarities of political organization and administration. However, this distinction is manifested in each analogue type in a different way. For example, the separation of the power from the population in self-governing communities is rather weak; confederations exhibit weakness of power centralization, etc. That is why I did my best to classify the early state analogues according to peculiarities of their political forms, although this principle is hard to keep to consistently. The following types and sub-types of the analogue may be distinguished:

**First**, one could single out some of the self-governing communities and territories, such as:

a) Urban communities, especially the ones with developed commercial structure (Grinin 2001; Korotayev 1995). As examples of self-governing townships the following can be cited: certain Greek *poleis* (Korotayev 1995), although too few of them can be classified as analogues<sup>8</sup>; some temple-civil communities of ancient Arabia (Korotayev *et al.* 2000: 23; Korotayev 2000b: 266); possibly, some towns of Gaul where the number of 'true towns' reached 1,000 (Shkunaev 1989: 143), some of them with the population of several ten thousand (Shkunaev 1989: 134).

b) Large enough self-governing settlers' territories (*e.g.* Iceland in 10<sup>th</sup>–13<sup>th</sup> century A.D.).

Iceland was sectioned into territorial areas and several tens of legal-administrative districts, with *Althing* (the people's assem-

bly) and *Lögretta* (a kind of senate) as supreme organs of administration. The level of electoral procedures and conventions was high, the proof of which being the decisions adopted from time to time by the *Althing* by voting. Thus, in A.D. 1000 it was decided to change the religion and adopt Christianity. At the same time toleration was preserved: it was allowed to secretly worship pagan gods and eat horseflesh, the basic food for the population. It was also decided to divide big land possessions of the nobility and distribute them among the farmers; this process was completed in the middle of the 11<sup>th</sup> century A.D. (Olgeirsson 1957: 179–191). However, the 12<sup>th</sup> century the wealth and social inequality again became so strong that it started influencing the transformation of the basic institutions of the Icelandic society (Gurevich 1972: 8, 9). In the 13<sup>th</sup> century the population grew up to 70,000–80,000 people (Filatov 1965: 343).

c) Territories inhabited by large groups of déclassé persons of various descent ('outlaws'), that had their own bodies of self-government and constituted an organized and formidable military force-like, for example, the Cossacks of Don or Zaporozhye (Korotayev *et al.* 2000: 19), and, if Gumilev (1993: 11–13) is right, possibly the Juan-juan in Central Asia (4–6<sup>th</sup> centuries A.D.) as well.

**Second**, some large tribal 'confederations' with a supreme chieftain exercising strong enough power (such as 'kings', khans, etc.), such as:

a) More or less stable tribal unions, ethnically uniform or having a firm monoethnic main body. German tribal unions of the period of the Great Migration of the Peoples in 4–6<sup>th</sup> centuries A.D. (Burgundianes, Salian Franks, Visigoths, Ostrogoths, etc.) that counted from 80,000 to 150,000 of population (Bessmertny 1972: 40; Neusyhin 1968; Udaltsova 1967: 654), tribal unions of some Gallic peoples, particularly in Belgica and Aquitaine (Shkunaev 1989: 140), and other may serve as examples;

b) Very large polities that emerged as a result of successful wars (like the Huns 'empire' under Attila in the 5<sup>th</sup> century A.D. or the Avars 'empire' in the 6<sup>th</sup> century A.D.), however unstable and ethnically heterogeneous;

c) Large formations held together basically by the power of the chiefs' authority and not by coercion. For example, the pre-Incan (15<sup>th</sup> century) Lupaca chiefdom of southern Peru had the population of over 150,000 people and was ruled by two paramount chiefs without the institution of coercive force, and both special-

ized and corvee labor was supplied on an essentially consensual basis (Schaedel 1995: 52).

**Third**, large tribal unions and confederations without royal power.

a) Saxons of Saxony ([Kolesnitskij] 1969a); Aedui, Arverni and Helvetii in Gaul (Shkunaev 1989: 140) may serve as examples of such tribal unions without royal power. At the same time it should be specifically pointed out that the processes of social and proprietary differentiation had gone quite far with them and went ahead of political development.

The Saxons (of Saxony), before they were conquered by Charles (the end of the 8<sup>th</sup> century), had had no royal power but their tribal units were headed by dukes. General military command was in the hands of a duke who was chosen by lot (Kolesnitskij 1963: 186). Politically, all the territory was organized as a kind of federation of separate provinces. Common issues were discussed and tackled at a congress of representatives of the provinces (Kolesnitskij 1963: 186). The Saxon society, excluding slaves, was divided into three strata: the tribal nobility (*aethelings*, *nobiles*), the free (*liberi*) and the semi-free (*liti*). At the same time, the legal statuses of the *nobiles* and the *liberi* differed sharply, which was legally affirmed in *Lex Saxonum*. In the first twenty articles of this code the *nobiles* appear as the sole bearers of legal standards and rules (Neusyhin 1968: 608; [Kolesnitskij] 1969a: 479; 1969b). It goes without saying that inequality in wealth was also considerable.

Gaul, by the Caesar's conquest, was a very rich territory with large population – 5 to 10 and more million people (Brodell 1995: 61–62) – with numerous towns, trades and well-developed commerce. Social differentiation was considerable (Clark and Piggott 1970: 310–328). According to Caesar, the common people lived like slaves (Le Roux 2000: 125). At the same time the Gallic nobles had, each of them, up to several hundred – and even several thousand (up to ten thousand) – of clients to form a cavalry troop as a substitute for levies and in this way to confront the most of the Gallic commoners (Bessmertny 1972: 17; Caesar 1993: 9). In the aristocratic *civitas* (a Roman name for the territory under tribal unions in Gaul) a distinct military unity was observed, while the mechanisms of adopting political or other decisions were realized through one of several elected magistrates (Shkunaev 1989: 139, 144). The population of certain tribal units and confederations was very great. For example,

the number of the Helveti who in 58 B.C. tried to migrate to the western parts of Gaul was, according to different sources, from 250,000 to 400,000 (*e.g.*, Shkunaev 1988: 503);

b) Confederations of societies, at times making quite stable and strong (from the military point of view) political formations as, for instance, tribal confederations of the Iroquois (Fanton 1978; Morgan 1983; Vorobyov 2000), the Tuareg (Pertshyts 1968) or the Pechenegs (Marey 2000);

c) Township confederations of the type of the Etruscan Confederation. The Etruscan towns proper, with their oligarchic rule of militaristic nobles (Neronova 1989), were rather not states, as far as scarce data make it possible to judge, but small state analogues (Grinin 2001: 21), while a federation of them may be regarded as a medium state analogue<sup>9</sup>;

d) Autonomous rural territories forming a federation or a confederation of politically independent rural communities, as, for example, is observed among many highlanders (Korotayev 1995).

Highland Dagestan may be cited as an example (Aglarov 1988). The communities, *jama`ats*, that formed federations (the so-called ‘free societies’), were themselves, at times, large enough settlements – some of them up to 1,500 and more households (*ibid*: 207) (which is comparable to a small *polis*) – and had a multilevel system (up to five levels) of self-government (*ibid*: 186). As to a federation (sometimes including 13 or more settlements each), it was a political unit of an even more complex constitution and uniting tens of thousands people. Family groups (*toukhous*) were unequal socially and in rank (*ibid*: 131). Another example are the village groups in southeastern Nigeria, sometimes including tens of villages with total population of tens of thousands (up to 75,000). Each village group had its own name, internal organization, and a central market (McIntosh 1999a: 9).

**Fourth**, superlarge nomadic amalgamations, such as Hsiung-Nu (which superfluously resembled large states), termed by Kradin (1992, 2000a, 2000b, 2001a, 2001b) as ‘nomadic empires’ and referred to as a supercomplex chiefdom. According to Kradin, the ‘nomadic empires’ of Inner Asia counted up to 1,000,000–1,500,000 of population (2001: 127; 2001b: 79).

In my opinion, Scythia in the 6<sup>th</sup>–5<sup>th</sup> centuries B.C. may also be referred to as a supercomplex chiefdoms. It was a large multi-

level hierarchical amalgamation with the ideology of clan unity for entire society, with the principle of redistribution (of both tribute and duties) and united into a single military force. Scythia was headed by kings who had armed forces of their own (Khazanov 1975). The cast of priests and aristocracy stood out, whereas aristocrats had their own armed forces and possessed great wealth. However, the administration methods in Scythia still remained basically traditional; therefore, on the one hand, it cannot be regarded as an early state, while on the other hand, it has nothing to do with an ordinary pre-state society. At the end of the 5<sup>th</sup> – beginning of the 4<sup>th</sup> century B.C., during the rule of king Ateas Scythia witnesses the transition to early state (Rybakov 1966, I: 220). This king disposed of other kings, usurped the power, united the country within the boundaries from the Sea of Azov to the Danube and even began to move further westward (*ibid.*)<sup>10</sup>.

**Fifth**, in connection with the above, it becomes evident that at least some of the very large complex chiefdoms may be regarded as early state analogues since in size, population and complexity they are not inferior to small and even medium states. Certainly, if historically they precede the formation of a state, it is rightful to regard them as pre-state societies – but pre-state **historically** and not inherently. (But if their development did not result in the emergence of a state it would be more precise to term them as stateless polities). Some examples of such complex chiefdoms have been given earlier. However, it is worth-while to have a look at the Hawaiians, too.

As it is known, the Hawaiians achieved considerable successes in economy, particularly in irrigation (see Earle 1997, 2000; Johnson and Earle 2000; Wittfogel 1957: 241), a very high level of stratification and accumulation of surplus by their elite (Earle 1997, 2000; Johnson and Earle 2000; Sahlins 1972/1958), a fundamental ideological justification of privileges enjoyed by the top stratum. By the time they were discovered by James Cook, a political system had already formed when several large chiefdoms co-existed. Although wars were a natural thing, 30 years before Cook's arrival a peaceful treaty had been concluded between the chiefdoms (Seaton 1978: 271). The population of certain chiefdoms varied from 30,000 to 100,000 people (Johnson and Earle 2000: 246). Chiefdoms were subdivided into dis-

tricts with population of 4,000 to 25,000 people (Harris 1995: 152). Thus, all the conditions required for the formation of an early state were available, namely: sufficiently large territory with subdivision into districts and large population, high level of social stratification and considerable surplus production, strong power of a paramount chief and a strict hierarchy of power, developed ideology, territorial division, as well as other things. However, there was no state as such.

At the same time, the sizes and development levels of Hawaiian chiefdoms provide a reason to regard them as small early state analogues and the chiefdom on the Hawaii Island proper – as a medium state analogue. To prove this statement, it is worth while to make some comparisons. The population of this largest chiefdom of the Hawaiian Archipelago amounted to one hundred thousand people (Johnson and Earle 2000: 285) which is one hundred times more than the population of a typical simple chiefdom of the kind that existed on the Trobriand Islands (Johnson and Earle 2000: 267–279). According to Johnson and Earle (2000: 291), only the number of chiefs in it could be up to one thousand which equals to the total population of a Trobriand chiefdom. This is the difference between an inherently pre-state polity and a polity analogue of an early state! And if other representatives of the elite (land managers, priests, warriors and their families) were added to the number of the chiefs in the Hawaii Island, I guess the numbers of the elite would exceed the total population of the whole smallest state in Tahiti which, according to Claessen (2002: 107), was 5,000 people. Therefore, the Hawaiian polities are quite comparable to early states and even exceed some of them in size, population, complexity, degree of social stratification and power centralization. All this proves that the Hawaiian complex chiefdoms may be viewed as analogues of small and medium early states.

To my mind, the Tonga complex chiefdom was also similar to not the largest Hawaiian chiefdoms in size (tens of thousand) and development level. The Tonga population was divided into three ranks or castes. The highest caste was represented by the chiefs, with an armed force of their own, solid wealth, many clients and dependent folk. The Tongan society was headed by two supreme rulers, one of them the profane one who held most of the power and the other – the sacral one (Tokarev and Tolstov 1956: 612–615). Adoption of weapons and military methods, first from the Fijians and later from the Europeans, intensified intestine feud among Tongan chiefs which, in the end, resulted

in the unification of the islands under the Christian King Tupou I (Tokarev and Tolstov 1956: 670–671), which meant the emergence of an early state in the Tongan society<sup>11</sup>.

### **PRE-STATE, ANALOGOUS AND EARLY-STATE POLITIES: PROBLEMS OF COMPARISON**

The above classification of pre-state and stateless polities into such groups as a) inherently pre-state and b) analogous to an early state allows, as I see it, to make further steps in solving the problem of the early state criteria. One of the important reasons of the failure to make a decisive step in this direction is the fact that both inherently pre-state societies and their analogues are referred to as ‘pre-state societies’. The result is a mixture of different criteria. In fact, an early state has evident enough features that distinguish it from inherently pre-state societies. Namely: food production yielding regular surplus used to maintain the specialists and the privileged categories; size; level of sociocultural and political complexity; an appreciable social and wealth stratification; emergence of strata, or classes, of the rulers and the ruled. These criteria have been suggested, more than once, as distinguishing the early state (see Claessen and Skalník 1978b; Claessen 1978a: 586–588; 2002). However, all attempts to apply these characteristics to pre-state and stateless societies that in fact are early state analogues inevitably faced difficulties since these features may be found in many, or at least in some, analogues as this has just been demonstrated. But if we do not classify all pre-state and stateless societies into inherently pre-state and analogues of early state, then, when applying early state criteria, in practice, the result may be that in certain ‘pre-state’ societies many features of a full-fledged state will be encountered.

I think it would be much more productive to approach the problem in such a way when all the early state criteria specified were used only for the purpose of comparing early states with inherently pre-state societies – but not for comparing early states with their analogues since the latter possess all or some of these features themselves.

**It follows that, to distinguish an early state from its analogue, different criteria are required, other than those serving to distinguish an early state from an inherently pre-state soci-**

**ety**, since major distinctions between early states and their analogues are contained not in quantitative indices and in the complexity level but in the peculiarities of political organization and in the methods of governing the society. That is why the rest of this article is dedicated to the analysis of the differences between the early state and its analogues.

## **COMPARING THE EARLY-STATE WITH ITS ANALOGUES**

To distinguish the early-state from its analogues, I had derived four criteria (Grinin 2002b, 2000c), namely:

- 1. Specific properties (attributes) of supreme power.**
- 2. New principles of government.**
- 3. Non-traditional and new forms of regulating social life.**
- 4. Redistribution of power.**

Prior to spelling out these criteria and describing them, some explanations must be given.

These criteria are a system, each of them largely supplementing and interpreting the others. But, certainly, in any early state these criteria follow different paths of evolution, and in the end, some of them turn out to be more mature than other.

**Nevertheless, each of these four features must, to this or that extent, be present in every early state. Analogues that would exhibit all the features described above do not exist. In other words, even one of these features missing means that we are dealing not with an early state but with its analogue.** Therefore, one single feature from among the mentioned above, when discovered in the characteristic of a polity should not be taken as an indication that it is a state and not an analogue. Since analogues differ very much among themselves, some of them may exhibit none of the mentioned features while other – only some of them. To my mind, the presence of even more than two features, out of four, in an analogue poses a problem. Further in the discussion I shall draw the reader's attention to such specific distinctions between the state and its analogue of this or that type. Therefore, ‘we must not think in terms of “pure” types. The state is distinct even though it holds many features in common with chiefdoms’ (Wason 1995: 23).

The four criteria stated are abstract enough, and this is expressed in their verbal formulations (‘new principles’, ‘specific

properties’, ‘new forms’). As I see it, when reaching our aim – which is to reveal the distinctions between the early state and its analogues, – such broad generalizations seem to be most productive, and I can explain why.

First, they reflect the fact that in every early state corresponding to all the four criteria, some or other narrower lines predominated. It must be clear that not in a single early state all of the new principles and forms could come to exist simultaneously – just some of them at a time. That is why I compare early states with their analogues in such a way that serves to single out the narrower directions marked by using a special font. Second, the features singled out by myself make it possible to combine within them many of the moments pointed out by various researchers as the criteria of the early state. For example, power differentiation and specialization and the ability to delegate this power as well as the emergence of administrative apparatus have been included into the criterion ‘The new principles of government’.

### A. SPECIAL PROPERTIES OF SUPREME POWER

To analyze its supreme (or central) power seems to be an exceptionally important task for the purpose of investigating the process of state formation (Claessen 1978a: 586–588; Claessen and Oosten 1996: 2; Ember and Ember 1999: 158, 380; Haas 2001a: 235; Grinin 2002b, 2000c; Spencer 2000: 157).

– **Sufficient potential of the supreme power** is what makes early states different from such their analogues which have formal and weak supreme power – like this was observed in certain Gallic polities (see Le Roux 2000: 123–127), or no supreme power at all – like in complex horizontally integrated societies (horizontal complexity [McIntosh 1999a; see also Grinin 1997; Korotayev *et al.* 2000]). It also makes them different from such analogues within which the main task of the supreme power is to preserve unity and consensus (like in heterarchical polities [Crumley 1995, 2001]), and from confederations where the need of consensus causes instability in the center and loss of connections with ‘the outskirts’ (Fanton 1978: 114).

However, in an early state the supreme power acquires some features that are not attributable even to the analogues where the actual power of the chief and his court is quite strong. An early state is distinguished from such analogues by its ability to intro-

duce essential changes into socio-political organization of the society and expand the domain of authoritative control.

This may manifest itself as reforms of all kinds or changing some important traditions, or in some other ways which will be discussed later. For example, the rulers of early tyrannies in Greece sometimes severely limited not only the influence of the nobility but their private life as well, but at the same time they introduced important reforms (Berve 1997). Another case is the reforms by Montezuma II in the Aztec Empire at the beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> century who limited the numbers of the nobility, under the pretext of questionable descent banned access to government service for many of them, and cancelled their privileges (Kurtz 1978: 176).

When a state is formed on the basis of complex chiefdoms where the power of the chief is strong, the power of the new 'king' becomes more strong and unquestionable. This is what happened in the Hawaii Archipelago where Kamehameha I, who united the islands at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, partially exterminated native nobility, transferred the power from local dynasties to his relatives and retinue, and rearranged land ownership in the conquered territories (Tumarkin 1964: 88–90; 1971: 21), and with the help of Europeans, established a regular army counting several thousand in strength and equipped with firearms and artillery guns, and a navy of 60 decker boats, several brigs and schooners, along with building forts (Tumarkin 1964: 102–103; 1971: 20).

In principle, a strong enough supreme power is required to guarantee the territorial integrity of a state as well (Cohen 1981: 87–88; Gledhill 1994: 41), but this subject will be discussed later on.

#### – **Completeness of the functions of supreme power.**

The more functions are performed by the state, the more reasons are there to take it as evidence of increasing statehood, in general. However, the amount of functions being largely dependent on various provisions (like, for example, whether the state is the organizer of production or not), we need to at least establish the fact of sufficient **completeness of the functions of supreme power**. At the same time, the state is required to perform both the functions of interior control and the exterior functions. This is what makes early states differ from their analogues with their weak interior and strong exterior functions, which is characteristic of large

political nomadic unions with their social organization resembling a military hierarchy where the supreme power, not exceeding the commission granted by old traditions for taking part in interior affairs, had active control over foreign trade and military actions, external sources of income being more important than internal ones (Kradin 1992, 2000a, 2000b, 2001b).

## B. NEW PRINCIPLES OF GOVERNMENT

As societies become more complex and new levels of power are built up, in the management of the society some shift towards division of labor inevitably occurs. In the early state analogues this division, however, is based upon the old (tribal, sacral, self-government, etc.) principles. **In the early state new principles of labor division in the management of the society come to existence that with time become the new principles of society management.** The most important of these are: delegation of power, new distribution of administrative functions (separation of decision-making from execution), new approach towards the formation of administrative body (changing the ways of its formation, enhancement of the importance of the new types of managers, giving a start to special ethics, etc.). These principles will be discussed in detail later on.

Prior to this, however, it needs to be specified that I do not bring forward the *bureaucratization of administration* as a new principle not because this process was not important (on the contrary, it was), but only because not in all the early states bureaucratization was significant. In some cases – for example, in Egypt, or in the Lower Mesopotamia in the times of the 3rd dynasty of Ur – this process took a vivid, classic form. In other cases, bureaucratization took a comparatively mild way, especially in the conquered territories – even in such of them as the Aztec State (Johnson and Earle 2000: 306), or the Roman Republic (Shtaerman 1989). Other states, such as Ancient Rus, were of *druzhina* type, and, therefore, all their administration body was reduced to the ruler's military retinue. I do not consider it right not to regard such polities as early states, and for this reason I have tried to characterize the principles of government in as much a universal way as possible, so that they could be applicable to both bureaucratic and non-bureaucratic

states. However, even in bureaucratic states the managers did not at all resembled the type of clerks depicted by Weber (1947: 333–334; see also Bondarenko 2001: 244–250; Grinin 2002).

– **Delegation of power and power divisibility.**

In general, pre-state and stateless societies stood out for their weak capacity to delegate powers (Wright 1977; Spencer 2000). Such limitations – since the chief could not attend to all the things at the same time – seriously hampered the process of administration and put obstacles for the evolution of the political system. In the end, however, the difficulties of power delegation began to be gradually overcome (on the importance of power delegation in an early state see Claessen 1978a: 576; Wright 1977; Spencer 2000).

At the same time, this is the ability of power delegation as well as other principles of administration based upon this new property of the power that deserves special mentioning. I termed this property as ‘**power divisibility**’ (Grinin 2002b, 2002c). **Its essence is in the possibility for the power to be shared in required proportions among required number of people for a fixed period of time, without losing the power and the control over it.** Accordingly, power divisibility presumes the possession of a realistic right to take the power away or redistribute it. Power divisibility also means that the subjects consent to the right of the holder of the power to share it and transfer it to others. In an early state, the rate of **power divisibility** is already sizable.

In pre-state societies and in the most of state analogues the power was, as a rule, non-divisible – that is, it could not be temporarily transferred, or distributed, or divided between different persons or bodies, without the risk of losing it completely or partially, or meeting a refusal to recognize the legality of such an act.

It is essential to point out that **power indivisibility also means indivisibility of the responsibility of the ruler** for all kinds of faults, misfortunes, plagues and disasters. At the same time, just like in a state, the ruler could, very often, transfer responsibility to the executor.

In pre-state and stateless societies, using a sociological term, the rule of the zero sum is in force, meaning that if somebody's amount of power has increased, somebody else's amount of power has decreased (Smelser 1994: 545). As the apparatus develops, the center

may delegate power to somebody and the amount of its power does not decrease because of this delegation (at least, it should not). But since every functionary also has the power, **as a whole the amount of power increases** the opportunities of an early state in comparison with its analogues.

– **Separation of performance of functions from the bearer of functions.**

The trait common to both early states and their analogues – which is the growth of complexity levels – leads to it being more and more problematic for the center to preserve effective enough connections with the periphery. In the analogues this problem is solved primarily by way of hypertrophying traditions and bringing previous traditions of development – such as, for example, increasing the number, the rank and the titles of the chieftains as well as the growth of their lineages (one may recollect, at this point, one thousand chiefs in the Hawaii) – to the maximum limit; by a more distinct differentiation of the amount of power between the regional and the supreme rulers; by a more precise assignment of functions to definite clans and lines; by developing the genealogical principle as well as the sacral, ceremonial and ideological moments associated with application of power.

In many ways similar processes take place in the early state as well. However, along with old tendencies something new emerges, namely: **separation of the performance of functions by the supreme power from the power itself (as a bearer of these functions)**. As a result, a qualitatively different distribution of functions is reached<sup>12</sup>. The supreme power, figuratively speaking, turns into ‘a brain’ that controls various society ‘organs’ while its local duties are carried out by messengers representatives, governor-generals and functionaries<sup>13</sup>. This emerging administrative apparatus assumes the role of a transmission between the supreme power and the society. As a result of this distribution of functions, according to Wright (1977: 381), the internal specialization starts and leads to the differentiation of central processes into separate actions that may be carried out in different places and at different times. This also leads to level changing in the hierarchy of decision-making (Lozny 1995).

– **New traits in the system of administration in the early state and the changes in the body of administrators.**

In the early state the administrative apparatus was basically formed of the material at hand – and not of ideal officials who were simply unavailable – and, therefore, was not one hundred percent professional. In most cases, the center just adapted these already available forms of self-government, government and performance of certain functions by clans, sections and delegates, to its needs (see, *e.g.*, the case of Ancient Japan [Patterson 1995: 131–132; D'jakonova 1989: 214; Paskov 1987: 29–37]). However, although the administrative apparatus resembled a kaleidoscopic mixture of the old and new elements, pre-state and state components, we can observe the beginning of the formation of **a new system of administration** under the influence of new tasks and new potentials of the supreme power in the early state. This can already be found in the changing body of administrators.

Wittfogel said that the state is ‘management by professionals’ (Wittfogel 1957: 239; see also Weber 1947: 333–334). However, ‘a professional’ is a broad enough notion, which implies the possibility of ‘**hereditary professionals**’, referring to those who are destined to perform the duties of certain kind from birth (like is observed, for example, within the caste systems). It is also what the chiefs of various ranks were in chiefdoms. There were plenty of ‘hereditary professionals’ who occupied their posts or offices independently of the center in the early states. But gradually the administrators of a new type, as well as previously unimportant types of administrators (such as, for example, **the approvees** who inherited their positions or received them from their clans but had to be approved by the center) start to play a more and more important part.

The number and the importance of **the functionaries** (their classification see in Claessen 1978a: 576) acting as administrators also grow considerably. The distinction between a functionary and, say, a chief is substantial. A chief, at his level, concentrated all the power in his hands, while the people approved by the center were often restricted in their authority (Diamond 1999: 274). On the whole, the administrative sector becomes very mixed; the rights of different administrators to occupy certain offices were different.

Within the new formation of administrators special attention should be paid to **appointees** or those who are appointed to certain posts or offices (or hired) and depend on the ruler and the authority.

Certainly, this group was also a mix. It included even those who were well provided and could do without any government service at all, or were even burdened with their social status. However, there was also a sub-group of those for whom state service was of primary importance, and who strongly depended on the higher authority. For this reason, the higher authority considered persons with no roots, slaves, servants and foreigners to be the most convenient candidates, so they were recruited to perform administrative duties (see, *e.g.*, Janssen 1978: 223, on the role of court servants in the government of the Old Kingdom, Ancient Egypt; Claessen 1978b: 456, on the admittance of foreigners to the administrative bodies in Tahiti). In the Oyo Kingdom, Africa, foreign slaves held most of the key positions both in the capital and the provinces (Kochakova 1986: 255). In the Hawaii, foreign counselors started to play an important part in state government after the death of Kamehameha I, but even during his reign some foreigners were granted estates plus free labor for their personal use (Tumarkin 1964: 94; 1971). In some states, the administrators were required to have special knowledge, which initiated the formation of a new generation of specialized administrators, including scribes; this group, of course, had a considerable evolutionary potential.

### **C. NEW AND NON-TRADITIONAL FORMS OF REGULATING SOCIAL LIFE**

In state analogues, the change of traditions that regulate socio-political life was associated primarily with ‘overdevelopment’ of old trends and potentials, such as, *e. g.*, strengthening of the ruler's sacrality, development of the genealogical principle, etc. In early states, along with overdevelopment, non-traditional and new methods of regulating social life (necessarily associated with direct or indirect participation of the supreme power, immediate or represented) started to play an important role. The will of the supreme power was clearly expressed in these new methods, and they may have brought about certain changes in traditions and laws.

I have formulated the most important ones as follows (see details further in the text):

- reformation and/or gradual modification of administration and of various aspects of the mode of social life including ‘control and regulation of some areas of social activity (different for each particular state: from sexual activity to blood feud – *L. G.*) which in

stateless societies are exclusive prerogatives of kin groups' (Kurtz 1978: 183);

- break-off from certain traditions and the tendency to substitute traditions with political will (or with the activity of administrators or magistrates, legislation, coercion, etc.);

- growing importance of compulsion and control of performance, including establishment of control after previously autonomous officials and bodies (such as courts, seniors, headmen, etc.).

– **Reforms and regulated changes.**

Reforms undertaken by the supreme power in the early state can be viewed as a very important indication of transition of the power to new methods of social regulation.

In the early history or in the legends of very many societies, one can find information on various great reformers. For example, such are Shun, Wuh Ch'ih, Shang Yang and other ancient rulers and administrators of China (Bokshchanin 1998; Perelomov 1974), Lycurgus in Sparta, Servius Tullius in Rome, UruKAgina in Lagash (D'jakonov 1951, 1983: 207–274; 2000b: 55–58, 62, 92), Sargon of Akkad (*e.g.*, D'jakonov 2000c: 57–59), Saul and David in Israel [Weinberg 1989: 99], etc. The history of many early states offers instances of various reforms associated with departure from traditions, for example, religious traditions. King Aśoka attempted to spread Buddhism in India, for which supposedly was removed from power (Bongard-Levin 1973: 71–74). Clovis I, king of Franks, Vladimir I in Kievan Rus and many other rejected the old religions themselves and compelled their subjects to follow suit.

So, **the capability of the power to reform increases in the early states.** However, reforms were a rare thing (although there were periods of quite active reformation). In between reforms and stagnation, there were **regulated changes associated with the activity of supreme power.** And in this respect the early state differs noticeably from its analogues since in the early state this process becomes considerably much more orderly. In Athens, for instance, the people's assembly gathered monthly at first and then, beginning from the 4<sup>th</sup> century B.C., four times a month, that is, weekly (Kuchma 1998: 113). And, since it was supposed to take some deci-

sions, many changes, beside routine issues, were discussed as well.

– **Break-off from certain traditions.**

To many of the traditions the early state was indifferent since they did not yet influence its activity. On the contrary, it relied on some of them for support, converting minor traditions into important or even most important ones. Quite frequently this was relevant with respect to such ‘traditions’ as performance of various labor or military duties and services, payment of tribute, etc. In the Hawaiian state, for instance, the duties and services performed by commoners grew considerably due to squanderousness of the royal court and the nobility, as well as endless state debts. It was especially strikingly expressed in the compulsory collection of sandalwood which periodically resulted in agricultural crises (Tumarkin 1971). On the other hand, many traditions were disliked by the supreme power; however, it could not touch them considering this impossible and even being afraid of doing this.

Finally, the fourth group of traditions includes the ones that put obstacles in the way of solving urgent problems, or achieving important targets, or posed a threat to the stability of the supreme power or even its position. The power, when strong enough, eliminated such traditions or transformed them, as well as broke people's ties with local traditions (Kurtz 1978: 185). And this very **urge to alter certain important traditions or break off from them is very much characteristic of early states**. Why? The matter is that administration only according to tradition requires neither special apparatus nor the performance of special control functions. **In other words, where a tradition is self-sufficient, no state is required** since other principles of social organization do the job perfectly well.

Here is a direct confirmation of this idea by an historian:

‘For lack of state institutions, the relations among people in the Society of Raybūn (in Wadi Hadramawt, South Arabia, the 1<sup>st</sup> millennium B.C. – *L. G.*) were entirely regulated by traditions whose principal keeper proved to be the priesthood’ (Frantsuzoff 2000: 263).

On the contrary, the state is a political form that emerged in the circumstances when departure from certain important traditions, especially from the ones that may be called non-state traditions,

was a must. Serious deviations from a standard situation – such as broken isolation, emergence of a military or other threat, successful wars, sharp growth of trade, internal conflicts, that serve as a sort of stimulus for essential, sometimes even radical, changes in administration and political organization – facilitate transition to the state (Claessen 2002; Grinin 2002b, 2002c).

In the early states the orientation towards the change of traditions becomes more defined and systematic than in their analogues. But, of course, in any society such deviation from traditions was strictly oriented. Here are only a few of numerous examples:

Continuing the Hawaii theme, it may be recollected that the Hawaiian rulers, especially after the demise of Kamehameha I, started imitating Europeans in court ceremonies and rituals, clothing, housing, military display (Johnson and Earle 2000: 294). In Akkad at the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> millennium B.C., the Kings of the Sargonid dynasty ‘broke off with the traditions of early dynasties, including titles, customs, aesthetic tastes’ (D’jakonov 2000c: 59). In some ancient Chinese states the rulers forced the nobility to settle in virgin lands (Perelomov 1974: 23). Shang Yang in the ancient Chinese state Ch’in revised the system of granting titles and divided the country into districts (Perelomov 1974: 23–24). Law was frequently aimed at limiting the rights of the population to use violence, and banning blood feud and similar traditions, as for example, follows from *Lex Salica* (e.g., XLI, 7; Batyr and Polikarpova 1996, I: 249).

What has been said with regard to break-off from traditions, does not contradict the fact that during the formation of most states conquest was of special importance (Ambrosino 1995; Carneiro 1970, 1978). In a certain sense, conquest may be regarded as an abrupt break-off from some traditions and as emergence of new relations between the winners and the defeated. With the development of the early state, the supreme power begins to gradually replace some traditions with other ones, as well as counterfeit them. Its intentions, in many cases, are effected through the system of statutes, and administrators. Certainly, the break-off from tradition is never complete, and it very often faces resistance and opposition.

#### – **Growing importance of coercion.**

A developed and formalized system of coercion is not a necessary attribute for early states, but what they certainly demonstrate is the increased importance of coercive methods employed by the supreme power. Many researchers regard ‘the presence of the in-

struments of coercion' as 'the most important constitutive characteristic of a state, which makes it different from a chiefdom' (Godiner 1991: 68). Coercion was exercised in many ways, both traditional and new, direct and indirect. The increasing importance of courts, adoption of special laws, spying on the citizens, establishment of the institution of spies and informers (see Lelioukhine 2000: 272), granting more authority to governor-generals, making punishment for neglected performance of duties more severe, direct repressions, especially in the conquered territories, where the army was inevitably used as an instrument of compulsion and violence directed towards the conquered.

This is what made early states different from some of their democratic analogues (like, for example, in Ancient Iceland, where such coercion on the general political level did not exist or was quite insignificant). The greater independence of the supreme power with respect to the freedom of punishment and repression distinguishes the state from its analogues with tribal-clan structure and a weak center, where punitive actions against the violators of liabilities to the center could be taken only with the consent of most clans.

#### **D. REDISTRIBUTION OF POWER**

From time to time, in the early state analogues we observe various kinds of **fluctuations and shifts of the power** from the people to the elite and back, from some groups to other, from the nobility to the chief and *vice versa*, etc., due to internal and external reasons. Sometimes, as the result of these perturbations, the center acquired more power – and large polities emerged. However, if this centripetal movement turned out to be insufficiently steady to take root, a grown-up polity was doomed to short life. Such unstable formations as the Slavic 'state' Samon (Lozny 1995: 86 – 87), the Germanic tribal union under the king Maroboduus (Neusyhin 1968), the Huns' 'empire' under Attila (Korsunsky and Gunter 1984: 105–116), the Geto-Dacians tribal union under the king Burebista (Fyodorov and Polevoy 1984) etc., broke up, as a rule, after the death of the chief or even when he was still alive. In some cases, the supreme power in the analogues became weak – especially in the presence of strong and self-willed nobility (see, e.g., Le Roux 2000: 124 on similar situation with Aedui in the Gaul).

In other cases, small polities united to form more stable formations, such as confederations, poorly centralized theocracies or

monarchic polities of segmentary type (Southall 2000). However, in none of these cases a trend towards strengthening of the supreme power, or towards developing new principles of administration or forms of regulation mentioned earlier, is observed.

Instead, the early state shows tendencies towards **strengthening the importance of the supreme power and the center in power allocation, towards the formation of a sort of a coercive body of the power whose influence on the society becomes more and more pronounced and, with time, even dictating rules, in a way.** I termed these centripetal processes *redistribution of power* (Grinin 2002a, 2002b, 2002c). The power in this case should be regarded as a system of authority functions, rights, responsibilities, instructions, actions, as well as human and material resources and information associated with it.

Power redistribution does not yet mean a complete centralization of the state, but it is already a process of moving towards centralization, as well as towards a stricter organization and regularity in the relations between the authorities of all levels, ranks and lines, as well as between the population and the power in general. Therefore, **power redistribution may be described as a process of redistribution of power between the center and the periphery which makes it possible for the supreme power not only to control the periphery but also to redirect the streams of power functions and actions towards the center where a considerable proportion of the power, as well as of material resources, is concentrated.**

This may be expressed in absolutely any kind of actions of the supreme power aimed at enlarging the scope of its functions and the volume of its authority and stopping the attempts of local officials to avoid control from above. As examples of such actions the following may be cited:

- changing the procedure of appointing or electing local officials (Ivan III, the grand prince of Moscow, in conquered Novgorod [Rybakov 1966, II: 122]);
- forced resettlement of population *en masse* (Assyria, the Aztec State [Kurtz 1978: 177]) and forced resettlement of nobility (Ivan IV the Terrible, the first tsar of Russia [Rybakov 1966, II: 183–209]. Such reforms took place in some ancient Chinese states in the 4<sup>th</sup> century B.C. also [Perelomov 1974: 23]);

- introduction of the system of estates scattered throughout the country instead of the solid bulk land possessions belonging to grand aristocracy, or rewarding for the services in a similar way (Kamehameha I in the Hawaii; William the Conqueror in England; *oba*, the ruler of Benin [Bondarenko 2001: 221]);

- ‘neutralization of local organizations which provide alternatives for the citizen's allegiance and loyalty’ (in the Aztec state [Kurtz 1978: 180]);

- monopolization of certain functions, judicial in particular, by the supreme power (as was done by Wegbaja, the first king of Dahomey [Kochakova 1986: 256]);

- enhanced significance and splendor of the royal court (Hawaii in the 19<sup>th</sup> century after demise of Kamehameha I, as well as some states of Ancient China [Pokora 1978: 203]) where the relatives of local rulers were kept sometimes as hostages or wards (Benin [Bondarenko 2001: 222 – 223]), etc.

- Quite often it assumes the form of very demonstrative material actions, such as, for instance, relocation of the capital (as it happened, *e.g.*, in Japan in 639 A.D. [Paskov 1978: 34]), or making a previously unimportant town a capital (Sargon in Akkad [D'jakonov 2000c: 57], Russian prince Andrey Bogolyubsky in Suzdal-Vladimir Principality [Rybakov 1966, I: 617]), or erection of a temple of national importance (Solomon in Jerusalem [Weinberg 1989: 99]), etc.

- It may also be expressed in concentrating and accumulating the most important information, such as, for example, legislative materials or data proving noble descent. Thus, after having been elected the Great Khan in 1206, Genghis Khan established a supreme court, a body of public power that, beside performing its direct legal functions, was to register, in writing, all administrative and judicial decisions and rulings (Kradin 1995: 193).

Accordingly, we can frequently observe the formation of such a node of power in the center that influences the society more and more and whose urge to accumulate additional power, resources and information becomes stronger and stronger.

On the one hand, military force is one of the main tools of power redistribution. But on the other, power redistribution in the early state has partially traditional character since the supreme power often tries to make this process look as agreements, coordination and the like. Many things in the relations between the center and the periphery have not yet taken a developed shape, and

the government is required to exert much effort to retain the redistributed power, not infrequently making concessions and showing the capability to rely upon various sectors of population and social forces. And, since neither government institutions nor political and administrative boundaries have yet stabilized, the histories of such societies demonstrate sharp fluctuations associated with the rise of a ruler or a dynasty and the abrupt territorial expansion of a state in one case, and with their decline in another. For instance, in the second half of the 15<sup>th</sup> century the territory of the Inca State increased hundreds of times (Haviland 1991: 245; Mason 1957). At one time, the ruler is bound hand and foot by his kin, advisors, aristocracy, traditions; at another, suddenly becomes a tyrant and a butcher. As exactly noted by Helmut Berve (1997: 19), ‘The contradiction between two tendencies – unrestrained and restricting – is, however, a feature common to the archaic times’.

There is a point now to give an additional explanation of the term that I have suggested. Certainly, it is not always proper to equal power to material wealth, but the analogy between them explains much in the characteristics of early states and their specificity; besides, there are solid reasons for it to be applied.

First, redistribution of wealth and redistribution of power are closely interconnected since no state power can do without material means and therefore puts accumulation of such resources as one of its major targets. Second, property power and political power have common features. Third, it is rightful enough to regard power as a sort of wealth to be regularly reproduced and consumed; for if power is not used it tends to decrease. Fourth, in both cases power and wealth must circulate via the center from which they return to the point of departure in far less than one hundred percent cases, sometimes even going to other subjects.

The character and the exact orientation of power redistribution are very much dependent on specific conditions, such as size, population number and its ethnic structure, exterior encirclement, natural conditions that facilitate or hamper centralization, historical traditions, etc. In small states, for instance, power redistribution is associated with the struggle for leadership between centers or bodies of power. In this respect, we may cite as a characteristic example the case of the so-called *lugal*-‘hegemonics’ of Mesopotamia who, starting from the middle of the 3<sup>rd</sup> millennium B.C.,

pushed aside military and sacral chiefs (*lugals, enami* and *ensi*) [D'jakonov 2000b: 51].

– **Power redistribution and collapse of state.**

The opinion that ‘any theory of “pristine” state formation must be able to explain how incipient ruling class manages to overcome the tendencies toward cyclical collapse associated with chiefdoms’ (Gledhill 1994: 41) may be subscribed to. The concept of power redistribution makes this explanation somewhat easier.

Strengthening of the positions and the potential of the supreme power does not exclude fluctuations and temporary weakening of the center, attempts to regain independence and disorder in the system of power redistribution. On the contrary, this is quite typical. Redistribution of power is inseparably linked with military factors (presence or absence of external threat, victories or defeats) that enhance or lessen it. All this signifies that not only processes in a single state but the evolution of statehood at macro-regional and inter-regional levels should be taken into consideration, since regress in some societies not infrequently secures progress for other societies (see *e.g.* Kochakova 1986: 270; Ambrosino 1995; Kowalewski *et al.* 1995). The search for more successful solutions often took the route of destroying some state to establish another in its place. As a result, the power redistribution process was renovated.

This factor becomes important when discussing the problem of immunity of early states against decentralization. Cohen (1981: 87–88) views the tendency towards collapse as qualitatively less characteristic of state structures while considering the regular dissolution of pre-state formations to be an important feature of the latter. To large extent it is true. However, the capability not to dissolve (as well as not to be conquered) is a trait of a sort of an ideal state. Only few of the ancient and medieval states were close to it. That is why it is important to point out that **disintegration processes in many of the large states bore characteristics that made them essentially different from disintegration processes in pre-state and non-state formations.** This was expressed in longer periods of existence of the states (sometimes for centuries) as compared to those of pre-state formations and state analogues, as well as in that disintegration of the state quite often contributed to the

development of state structures at local levels (establishment of local administration, local capitals, etc.).

## CONCLUSION

Thus, we know of numerous polities, which are comparable to early states in size, complexity and a number of other parameters, and, at the same time, are significantly superior to typical pre-state formations – such as simple chiefdoms, tribes, independent simple communities. For these reasons, it would be wrong to regard such complex non-state societies as being at the pre-state level of development. But since many of them preceded the formation of the early state historically, I have suggested to divide all pre-state societies in two groups. The first group are the societies that may be termed as **inherently** pre-state because their available sizes and complexity levels do not allow them to transform even into a small state. The second group are the polities that, with their available characteristics, may, potentially, transform into a small or a larger state. This second type of polities may be termed as **early state analogues**. I also include complex societies that for various historical and cultural reasons have not become states into the analogues group. They may be regarded as non-state alternatives to early states. Bringing such dissimilar societies under the single common title ‘**early state analogues**’ has been done, first of all, with the aim to contrast other alternatives with the state alternative of the development of complex post-primitive societies.

According to their sizes, all early states may be divided into small, medium and large; respectively, their analogues should be also divided into **small, medium and large state analogues**. Naturally, these types of analogues differ noticeably between themselves. To have a more adequate idea of the state formation process, it is very important to understand that societies may start the process of transformation into early states both from the **inherently** pre-state level and from the levels of small, medium and even large state analogues. Which means that in different societies the transition to state started from different levels of socio-cultural and political complexity, and a society, having reached such size and complexity from which transformation into a state becomes possi-

ble in principle, may continue to develop without acquiring the political form of an early state for a long time. Such approaches allow to single out, within the politogenesis, of evolutionary alternatives to the early state, both at any level of its complexity and development and from the point of view of correspondence with its size.

On the basis of what has been mentioned above, I have suggested that such criteria of the early state as size, necessary quantity of surplus used to support administrators and other elites, sufficient level of complexity and social stratification, etc., should be used exclusively when comparing early states with inherently pre-state societies – but not when comparing early states with their analogues, since the latter incorporate all or some of these features. Major dissimilarities between early states and their analogues are not in size and complexity level – they are in the peculiarities of political organization, and in the methods of government – therefore, to distinguish an early state from its analogues other criteria are required. I have singled out and analyzed four of such features or criteria:

1. Specific properties (attributes) of supreme power.
2. New principles of government.
3. Non-traditional and new forms of regulating social life.
4. Redistribution of power.

In this way, it follows that the early state was only one of the many forms of organization of complex societies that became typical only during a lengthy process of evolutionary selection. However, it is very important not to miss another point: although comparing perspectives of various lines of sociopolitical evolution is a subject of a special study (for detail see Grinin 2001, 2002b), at the end it was the state that became the leading political form of social organization. All the other forms that for a long time had been its alternatives finally either got transformed into states, or disappeared, or turned into deadlock evolutionary types (Bondarenko, Grinin, and Korotayev 2002; Grinin 2001, 2002b).

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## NOTES

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<sup>1</sup> On the problems of classifying societies that have already topped pre-state level but not yet become states see also Lloyd 1981: 233; Marcus and Feinman 1998: 6.

<sup>2</sup> But this only regards early states and not the mature ones, the differences between them being very considerable (Claessen and Skalník 1978b; Grinin 2002b). Many researches point out that most of the early states fail to mature (Claessen and van de Velde 1991; Skalník 1996). However, comparing early and mature states is beyond the subject matter of this paper.

<sup>3</sup> Cohen (1978: 2–3) suggested to divide all definitions of the state generally into two groups, the first of which related the state to social stratification of society and the second one did to the structure of administration and power. True, Cohen also mentions the informational approach by Wright and Johnson (1975). Proceeding from such a classification, my own understanding would seem to be closer to the second group – but with the ideas of Wright and Johnson being taken into account (as the reader will see in the section 'New principles of administration').

<sup>4</sup> What I mean are the following functions that are characteristic of both early states and early state analogues, namely:

- establishment of political and ideological unity and cohesion within enlarged society (or a group of closely related societies) directed at solving common problems;
- ensuring security from external threat and providing conditions for expansion;
- ensuring social order and redistribution of surplus product in the conditions of social stratification and in the context of the growing complexity of problems to be solved;
- provision of a minimally necessary level of government including legislation and adjudication, as well as ensuring the discharge of compulsory duties (with respect to military service, property, labour) by the population;
- creation of conditions for economy reproduction (especially where coordination of common efforts was required).

<sup>5</sup> It should also be pointed out that these analogues may differ in their development levels or, using the terminology by Claessen and Skalník (1978b: 589),

the analogues of inhoate, of typical and of transitional early states may be encountered. This subject, however, is beyond the scope of this article.

<sup>6</sup> The estimates of the Inca state's population are being within 3,000,000-37,000,000 people (see Schaedel 1978: 293–294).

<sup>7</sup> It was suggested to use the term '**politogenesis**' to denote the formation of a complex political organization of any type, the term '**state formation process**' – for the description of formation of the state proper, which process should be viewed as a more specific, narrow one (Bondarenko, Grinin, and Korotayev 2002; Grinin 2001, 2002a; see also Bondarenko and Korotayev 2000b).

<sup>8</sup> However, I do not agree with Berent (2000) who maintains that Athens should be regarded as a stateless polis (Grinin 2001, 2002b).

<sup>9</sup> States, however, may also be components of analogues of medium and large states. I presume that in this instance the unions of *poleis* in Greece (such as the Athenian Naval League, the Peloponnesian League, etc.) or 'multipolities' that consisted of more or less strong states at the center, strong chiefdoms or tribes on the periphery and politically autonomous civil or civil-temple communities (Korotayev *et al.* 2000: 23; Korotayev 2000b: 266). Unfortunately, it is out of the scope of this article to support these ideas with detailed argumentation.

<sup>10</sup> As to when the Scythian state emerged there is no unanimity of opinions (see, *e.g.*, Smirnov 1966: 146–150). I support the opinion that it happened exactly during the reign of the King Ateas, and my reasoning is as follows. From political and social points of view, what happened was: other kings were eliminated, and royal power was strengthened. Along with the expansion of the territory of the polity, the ethnic heterogeneity became more pronounced, the exploitation of the dependent population grew, and the degree of social stratification increased. From economic point of view, a firmer foundation for building a state appeared as a result of expanding trade that was controlled by the elites, as well as of accelerating sedentarization processes (Khazanov 1975; Rybakov 1966, I: 219–220).

<sup>11</sup> It should be pointed out that some authors also refer other society types to forms alternative to the state. Thus, in the view of Bondarenko (1995, 2000a, 2000b, 2001) Benin in the 13<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> centuries should be regarded not as an early state but as a specific type of the complex non-state hierarchical socio-political society that may be called 'megacommunity' since this society was from top to bottom penetrated with communal and quasicommunal relations and notions and on the whole represented a sort of a single gigantic 'megacommunity'. However, I have not included 'megacommunity' into my own classification of analogues because I consider Benin to be an early state rather than a specific alternative type of a state analogue.

<sup>12</sup> Sometimes such a definition as 'delegation of tasks' is used (Claessen 1978a: 576), but it is only a part of the principle that I refer to. Similarly, 'delegated decision making' (an expression used by Charles Spencer [2000: 157] to describe 'the strategy of dispatching specialized lower-level administrative officials to locations other than the state capital') is also only a part of this principle.

<sup>13</sup> In China, at the very beginning of the state formation process, ‘a maxim is born that likens the structure of a state to that of a human body, namely: the king is the head and the dignitaries and officials are his hands, feet, eyes and ears’ (Bokshchanin 1998: 213). A similar image was also exploited by the Hawaiians – but only after their state was formed in the 19<sup>th</sup> century (see Johnson and Earle 2000: 302).

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