Alternative Pathways of Social Evolution*

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It has always been peculiar to evolutionists to compare social and biological evolution, the latter as visualized by Charles Darwin.[1] But it also seems possible and correct to draw an analogy with another great discovery in the field of evolutionary biology, with the homologous series of Nikolay Vavilov (1921; 1927; 1967). However, there is no complete identity between cultural parallelism and biological homologous series. Vavilov studied the morphological homology, whereas our focus within the realm of social evolution is the functional one. No doubt, the morphological homomorphism also happens in the process of social evolution (*e.g.* in the Hawaii Islands where a type of the sociocultural organization surprisingly similar with the ones of other highly developed parts of Polynesia had independently formed by the end of the 18th century [Sahlins 1972/1958; Goldman 1970; Earle 1978]). But this topic is beyond the present paper's *problématique*.

What is important for us here is that there are reasons to suppose that an equal level of sociopolitical (and cultural) complexity (which makes it possible to solve equally difficult problems faced by societies) can be achieved not only in various forms but on essentially different evolutionary pathways, too. Thus, it is possible to achieve the same level of system complexity through differing pathways of evolution which

appeared simultaneously (and even prior to the formation of *Homo Sapiens Sapiens* [Butovskaya and Feinberg 1993; Butovskaya 1994; 2000; Butovskaya, Korotayev, and Kazankov 2000]) and increased in quantity alongside sociocultural advancement (Pavlenko 1996: 229–251; 2000). Diversity could be regarded as one of the most important preconditions of the evolutionary process. This implies that the transition to any qualitatively new forms is normally not possible without a sufficient level of variability of sociocultural forms (among both the given culture's predecessors and contemporaries).

Within the first level of analysis, all evolutionary variability can be reduced to two principally different groups of homologous series (Bondarenko 1997: 12–15; 1998a; 2000; Bondarenko and Korotayev 1999; 2000b; Korotayev *et al.* 2000). Earlier these alternatives were distinguished either as 'hierarchical' *vs.* 'nonhierarchical' (*e.g.* Bondarenko and Korotayev 2000a), or 'hierarchical' *vs.* 'heterarchical' (*e.g.* Ehrenreich, Crumley, and Levy 1995; Crumley 2001).

In a recent publication on the problem of heterarchy the latter is defined as '… the relation of elements to one another when they are unranked or when they possess the potential for being ranked in a number of different ways' (Ehrenreich, Crumley, and Levy 1995: 3; see also Crumley 1979: 144). It is clear that the second version of heterarchy is most relevant for the study of the complex societies.

However, when we have a system of elements which 'possess the potential for being ranked in a number of different ways', it seems impossible to speak about the absence of hierarchy. In this case we rather deal with a system of heterarchically arranged hierarchies. Hence, it does not appear reasonable to denote the heterarchy alternative as 'hierarchy'. We would rather suggest to designate it as 'homoarchy' which could be defined as '… the relation of elements to one another when they possess the potential for being ranked in one way only'. Totalitarian regimes of any time give us plenty of examples of such a sociocultural situation when the ruled have no chances to get ranked above the rulers in any possible contexts. This stands in a sharp contrast with, say, an archetyp-

al example of a complex heterarchical system – the civil community (*polis*) of Athens (the 5th – 4th centuries BC) where the citizens ranked lower within one hierarchy (*e.g.* the military one) could well be ranked higher in many other possible respects (*e.g.* economically, or within the subsystem of civil/religious magistrates). Consequently, it was impossible to say that one citizen was higher than any other in any absolute sense.

On the other hand, it seems necessary to stress that it appears impossible to find not only any human cultures totally lacking any hierarchies (including informal ones), but also any totally homoarchical cultures. Hence, though in order to simplify our analysis in this paper we speak about heterarchical and homoarchical evolutionary pathways, in fact we are dealing here with heterarchy – homoarchy axis along which one could range all the known human cultures. Within this range there does not seem to be any distinct border between homoarchical and heterarchical cultures; hence, in reality it might be more appropriate to speak not about just two evolutionary pathways (heterarchical and homoarchical), but about a potentially infinite number of such pathways, and, thus, finally not about evolutionary pathways, but rather about evolutionary probability field (see for detail Korotayev *et al.* 2000). Yet, as was mentioned above, in order to simplify our analysis we speak about just two alternative pathways.

In particular, until recently it was considered self-evident that just the formation of the state[2] marked the end of the 'Primitive Epoch' and alternatives to the state did not actually exist. All the stateless societies were considered pre-state ones, standing on the single evolutionary staircase squarely below the states. Nowadays postulates about the state as the only possible form of political and sociocultural organization of the post-primitive society, about *a priori* higher level of development of a state society in comparison with any non-state one do not seem so undeniable as a few years ago. It has become evident that the non-state societies are not necessarily less complex and less efficient. The problem of existence of non-state but not primitive (*i.e.* principally *non-* and not *pre-* state) societies, alternatives to the state (as the allegedly inevitable post-primitive form of the sociopolitical organization) deserves attention.

Of course, in no way do we reject the fact of existence and importance of the states in world history. What we argue, is that the state is not the only possible post-'primitive' evolutionary form. From our point of view, the state is nothing more than one of many forms of the post-primitive sociopolitical organization; these forms are alternative to each other and are able to transform to one another without any loss in the general level of complexity. Hence, the degree of sociopolitical centralization and 'homoarchization' is not a perfect criterion for evaluating a society's evolutionary level, though it is regarded as such within unilinear concepts of social evolution.

As Brumfiel wrote several years ago, 'the coupling of [sociopolitical] differentiation and hierarchy is so firm in our minds that it takes tremendous intellectual efforts even imagine what differentiation without hierarchy could be' (Brumfiel 1995: 130).[3] Usually, even if the very existence of complex but non-homoarchical cultures is recognized, they are regarded as a historical fortuity, as an anomaly. Such cultures are declared as if capable to reach rather low levels of complexity only, as if incapable to find internal stability (Tuden and Marshall 1972: 454–456).

Thus, on the further level of analysis the dichotomy turns out not to be rigid at all as far as actual organization of any society employs both vertical (dominance – subordination) and horizontal (apprehended as ties among equals) links. Furthermore, in the course of their history, societies (including archaic cultures) turn out capable to change models of sociopolitical organization radically, transforming from homoarchical into heterarchical or *vice versa* (Crumley 1987: 164–165; 1995: 4; 2001; Bondarenko and Korotayev 2000c; Dozhdev 2000; Kradin 2000a). Perhaps the most well known historical example of the latter case is Rome where the Republic was established and further democratized with the Plebian political victories. Note that in the course of such transformations the organizational background changes, but the overall level of cultural complexity may not only increase or decrease but may well stay practically the same (for examples from ancient and medieval history of Europe, the Americas, Asia see, *e.g.* van der Vliet 1987; Ferguson 1991; Korotayev 1995a; 1996a;

Levy 1995; Lynsha 1998; Beliaev 2000; Chamblee 2000: 15–35; Dozhdev 2000; Kowalewski 2000; Kradin 2000a).

Nevertheless, vertical and horizontal links play different parts in different societies at every concrete moment. Already among the primates with the same level of morphological and cognitive development, and even among primate populations belonging to the same species, one could observe both more and less hierarchically organized groups. Hence, the non-linearity of sociopolitical evolution appears to originate already before the *Homo Sapiens Sapiens* formation (Butovskaya and Feinberg 1993; Butovskaya 1994; Butovskaya, Korotayev, and Kazankov 2000).

Let us consider now in more detail one of the most influential and widespread unilineal evolutionary schemes, the one proposed by Service (1962/1971; its outline is, however, already contained in Sahlins 1960: 37): *band – tribe – chiefdom – state*. The scheme implies that the growth of the political complexity (at least up to the stage of the agrarian state) is inevitably accompanied by the growth of the inequality, stratification, the social distance between the rulers and the ruled, the 'authoritarianism' and hierarchization of the political system, decrease of the political participation of the main mass of population etc. Of course, these two sets of parameters seem to be related rather closely. It is evident that we observe here a certain correlation, and a rather strong one. But, no doubt, this is just a correlation, and by no means a functional dependence. Of course, this correlation implies a perfectly possible line of sociopolitical evolution – from an egalitarian, acephalous band, through a big-man village community with much more pronounced inequality and political hierarchy, to an 'authoritarian' village community with a strong power of its chief (found *e.g.* among some Indians of the North-West Coast – see *e.g.* Carneiro 2000), and than through the true chiefdoms having even more pronounced stratification and concentration of the political power in the hands of the chief, to the complex chiefdoms where the political inequality parameters reach a qualitatively higher levels, and finally to the agrarian state where all such parameters reach their culmination (though one could move even further, up to the level of the 'empire' [*e.g.* Adams 1975]). However, it is very important to

stress that on each level of the growing political complexity one could find easily evident alternatives to this evolutionary line.

Let us start with the human societies of the simplest level of sociocultural complexity. Indeed, one can easily observe that acephalous egalitarian bands are found among most of the unspecialized hunter-gatherers. However, as has been shown by Woodburn (1972; 1979; 1980; 1982; 1988a; 1988b) and Artemova (1987; 1991; 1993; 2000a; 2000b; Chudinova 1981; see also Whyte 1978: 49-94), some of such hunter-gatherers (the inegalitarian ones, first of all most of the Australian aborigines) display a significantly different type of sociopolitical organization with much more structured political leadership concentrated in the hands of relatively hierarchically organized elders, with a pronounced degree of inequality both between the men and women, and among the men themselves.

On the next level of the political complexity we can also find communities with both homoarchical and heterarchical political organization. One can mention *e.g.* the well-known contrast between the Indians of the Californian North-West and South-East:

> The Californian chiefs were in the center of economic life, they exercised their control over the production, distribution and exchange of the social product, and their power and authority were based mainly on this. Gradually the power of the chiefs and elders acquired the hereditary character, it became a typical phenomenon for California... Only the tribes populating the North-West of California, notwithstanding their respectively developed and complex material culture, lacked the explicitly expressed social roles of the chiefs characteristic for the rest of California. At the meantime they new slavery... The population of this region had an idea of personal wealth... (Kabo 1986: 20).

One can also immediately recall the communities of Ifugao (*e.g.* Barton 1922; Meshkov 1982: 183–197) lacking any pronounced authoritarian political leadership compared with the one of the communities of the North-West Coast, but with a comparable level of overall sociopolitical and sociocultural complexity.

Hence, already on the levels of simple and middle range communities we observe several types of alternative sociopolitical

forms, each of which should be denoted with a separate term. The possible alternatives to the chiefdom in the prehistoric Southwest Asia, heterarchical systems of complex acephalous communities with a pronounced autonomy of single family households have been analyzed recently by Berezkin who suggests reasonably Apa Tanis as their ethnographic parallel (1995a; 1995b; 2000). Frantsouzoff finds an even more developed example of such type of polities in ancient South Arabia in Wadi Hadramawt of the 1st millennium BC (1995; 1997; 2000).

Another evident alternative to the chiefdom is constituted by the tribal organization. As is well known, the tribe has found itself on the brink of being evicted from the evolutionary models (Townsend 1985: 146; Carneiro 1987: 760). However, the political forms entirely identical with what was described by Service as the tribe could be actually found in *e.g.* medieval and modern Middle East (up to the present): these tribal systems normally comprise several communities and often have precisely the type of political leadership described by Service as typical for the tribe (Service 1971/1962: 103–104; Dresch 1984: 39, 41).

The point is that we are dealing here with some type of polity that could not be identified either with bands, or with village communities (because such tribes normally comprise more than one community), or with chiefdoms (because they have an entirely different type of political leadership), or, naturally, with states. They could not be inserted easily either in the scheme somewhere between the village and the chiefdom. Indeed, as has been shown convincingly by Carneiro (see *e.g.* 1970; 1981; 1987; 1991; 2000), chiefdoms normally arose as a result of political centralization of a few communities without the stage of the tribe preceding this. On the other hand, a considerable amount of evidence could be produced suggesting that in the Middle East many tribes arose as a result of political decentralization of chiefdoms which preceded the tribes in time. It is also important to stress that this could not in any way be identified with a 'regression', 'decline', or 'degeneration', as we can observe in many of such cases that political decentralization is accompanied by the increase (rather than decrease) of overall sociocultural complexity (Korotayev 1995a; 1995c; 1995d;

1996a; 1996b; 1996c; 1997; 1998; 2000a; 2000b). Hence, in many respects tribal systems of the Middle Eastern type appear to be chiefdom alternatives (rather than chiefdom predecessors).

We have argued elsewhere (Korotayev 1995b) that in general there is an evident evolutionary alternative to the development of the rigid supra-communal political structures (chiefdom – complex chiefdom – state) constituted by the development of internal communal structures together with soft supra-communal systems not alienating communal sovereignty (various confederations, amphictyonies etc.). One of the most impressive results of the sociopolitical development along this evolutionary line is the Greek *poleis* (see [Berent 1994; 1996; 2000a; 2000b] regarding the statelessness of this type of political systems) some of which reached overall levels of complexity quite comparable not only with the ones of chiefdoms, but also with the one of states. The same can be said about its Roman analogue, the *civitas* (Shtaerman 1989). Note that *polis/civitas* as a form of sociopolitical organization was known far beyond the Classical world, both in geographical and chronological sense (Korotayev 1995b; Bondarenko 1998b), though quite a number of scholars still insist on its uniqueness.

The 'tribal' and '*polis*' series seem to constitute separate evolutionary lines, with some distinctive features: the '*polis*' forms imply the power of the 'magistrates' elected in one or another way for fixed periods and controlled by the people in the absence (or near-absence) of any formal bureaucracy. Within the tribal systems we observe the absence of any offices whose holders would be obeyed simply because they hold posts of a certain type, and the order is sustained by elaborate mechanisms of mediation and search for consensus.

There is also a considerable number of other complex stateless polities (like the ones of the Cossacks of Ukraine and Southern Russia till the end of the 17th century [Chirkin 1955; Rozner 1970; Nikitin 1987; etc.], the Celts of the $5^{th} – 1^{st}$ centuries BC [Kradin 2000c: 149], or the Icelandic polity of the 'Age of Democracy' till the middle of the 13th century [Olgeirsson 1957; Gurevich 1972; Steblin-Kamenskij 1984]) which could not yet be denoted with any commonly accepted terms, and whose own self-designations are often too complex (like *Kazach'e Vojsko*) to have any chance to

get transformed into general terms. Such examples can of course be further multiplied.

And this is not all. There is another evident problem with Service's scheme. It is evidently pre-'Wallersteinian', not touched by any world-system discussions, quite confident about the possibility of the use of a single polity as a unit of social evolution. It might be not so important if Service were speaking about the typology of polities; yet, he speaks about the 'levels of cultural integration', and within such a context the world-system dimension should be evidently taken into consideration.[4]

The point is that the same overall level of complexity could be achieved both through the development of a single polity and through the development of a politically uncentralized interpolity network. This alternative was already noticed by Wallerstein (1974; 1979; 1987) who viewed it as a dichotomy: *world-economy – world-empire*. Note that according to Wallerstein these are considered precisely as alternatives, and not two stages of social evolution. As one would expect, we agree with Wallerstein whole-heartedly at this point. However, we also find here a certain oversimplification. In general, we would like to stress that we are dealing here with a particular case of a much more general set of evolutionary alternatives.

The development of a politically uncentralized interpolity network became an effective alternative to the development of a single polity long before the rise of the first empires. As an example, we could mention the interpolity communication network of the Mesopotamian civil-temple communities of the first half of the 3rd millennium BC which sustained a much higher level of technological development than that of the politically unified Egyptian state, contemporary to it. Note that the intercommunal communication networks already constitute an effective evolutionary alternative to the chiefdom. *E.g.* the sociopolitical system of the Apa Tanis should be better described as an intercommunal network of a few communities (incidentally, in turn acting as a core for another wider network including the neighboring less developed polities [chiefdoms and sovereign communities] – see Führer-Haimendorf 1962).

We also do not find it productive to describe this alternative type of cultural integration as a world-economy. The point is that such a designation tends to downplay the political and cultural dimension of such systems. Take for example, the Classical Greek inter-*polis* system. The level of complexity of many Greek *poleis* was rather low even in comparison with a complex chiefdom. However, they were parts of a much larger and much more complex entity constituted by numerous economic, political and cultural links and shared political and cultural norms. The economic links no doubt played some role within this system. But links of other types were not less important. Take, *e.g.* the norm according to which the inter-*poleis* wars stopped during the Olympic Games, which guaranteed the secure passage of people, and consequently the circulation of enormous quantities of energy, matter and information within the territory far exceeding the one of an average complex chiefdom. The existence of the inter-*poleis* communication network made it possible, say, for a person born in one *polis* to go to get his education in another *polis* and to establish his school in a third. The existence of this system reduced the destructiveness of inter-*poleis* warfare for a long time. It was a basis on which it was possible to undertake important collective actions (which turned out to be essential at the age of the Greek-Persian wars). As a result, the *polis* with a level of complexity lower than the one of the complex chiefdom, turned out to be part of a system whose complexity was quite comparable with that of the state (and not only the early one).

The same can be said about the intersocietal communication network of Medieval Europe (comparing its complexity in this case with an average world-empire). Note that in both cases some parts of the respective systems could be treated as elements of wider world-economies. On the other hand, not all the parts of such communication networks were quite integrated economically. This shows that the world-economies were not the only possible type of politically decentralized intersocietal networks. Actually, in both cases we are dealing with the politically decentralized civilization, which for most of human history over the last few millennia, constituted the most effective alternative to the world-empire. Of course, many of such civilizations could be treated as parts of

larger world-economies. Wallerstein suggests that in the age of complex societies only the world-economies and world-empires ('historical systems', *i.e.* the largest units of social evolution) could be treated as units of social evolution in general. Yet we believe that both politically centralized and decentralized civilizations should also be treated as such. One should stress again the importance of the cultural dimension of such systems. Of course, the exchange of bulk goods was important. But exchange of information was also important. Note that the successful development of science both in Classical Greece and Medieval Europe became only possible through an intensive intersocietal information exchange, whereas the development of science in Europe affected, to a significant extent, the evolution of the Modern World-System.

It is important to stress that the intersocietal communication networks could appear among much less complex societies (Wallerstein has denoted them as 'mini-systems' without actually studying them, for a recent review of the research on the archaic intersocietal networks see Chase-Dunn and Grimes 1995; Chase-Dunn and Hall 1993; 1994; 1995; 1997). Already it seems possible to speak about a communication network covering most of aboriginal Australia. Again we come here across a similar phenomenon – a considerable degree of cultural complexity (complex forms of rituals, mythology, arts, and dance well comparable with the ones of early agriculturists) observed among populations with an apparently rather simple political organization. This could largely be explained by the fact that relatively simple Australian local groups were parts of a much more complex whole: a huge intersocietal communication network that apparently covered most of Australia (*e.g.* Bakhta, Senyuta 1972; Artemova 1987).

Thus, it is possible to contrast societies that followed the pathway of political centralization and 'authoritarianization' with cultures that further elaborated and perfected democratic communal backgrounds and corresponding self-government institutions. However, such a culture as the Benin Kingdom of the 13th – 19th centuries can make the picture of sociopolitical evolution even more versatile. In particular, it reveals that not only heterarchical but also homoarchical societies can reach a very high (incomparably higher than that of complex chiefdoms) level of sociocultural

complexity and political centralization still never transforming into a state during the whole long period of existence. The Benin evidence also testifies that local community's autonomy is not a guarantee of complex society's advancement along the heterarchical pathway. We have suggested elsewhere to define this form of sociopolitical organization as 'megacommunity' (see *e.g.* Bondarenko 1994; 1995a: 276–284; 1995b; 2001: 232–249). Its structure may be depicted in the shape of four concentric circles forming an upset cone. These 'circles' are as follows: the extended family, extended-family community (in which familial ties were supplemented by those of neighbor ones), chiefdom, and finally, the broadest circle that included all the three narrower ones, that is the megacommunity as such (the Benin Kingdom as a whole). The specific characteristic of megacommunity is its ability to organize a complex, 'many-tier' society predominantly on the basis of transformed kinship principle within rather vast territories.

Still, another evident alternative to the state seems to be represented by the supercomplex chiefdoms created by some nomads of Eurasia – the number of the structural levels within such chiefdoms appear to be equal, or even to exceed those within the average state, but they have an entirely different type of political organization and political leadership; such type of political entities do not appear to have been ever created by the agriculturists (*e.g.* Kradin 1992: 146–152; 1996; 2000a; 2000b).

Besides the Benin megacommunity and nomadic supercomplex chiefdoms, the first half of the 19th century Zulu power can serve as an example at this point. Within that vast and mighty militaristic power one can observe high degree of supracommunal institutions' hierarchization and high rigidity of this institutional hierarchy (see, *e.g.* Gluckman 1940; Ritter 1955). Societies with profoundly elaborated rigid caste systems may be a homoarchical alternative to also homoarchical (by the very definition; see Claessen and Skalník 1978: 533–596, 637–650) early states, too (Quigley 1999: 114–169; Kobishchanov 2000: 64).

So, alternativity characterizes not only two basic macrogroups of human associations, *i.e.* homoarchical and heterarchical societies. Alternativity does exist within each of them, too. In particular,

within the upper range of complexity and integrativity of the sociopolitical organization the state (at least in the pre-industrial world) 'competes' with not only heterarchical systems of institutions (*e.g.* with *polis*) but also with some forms of sociopolitical organization not less homoarchical than the state.

Among numerous factors capable to influence the nature of this or that society, the family and community type characteristic of it seems to deserve notice. The distinction in the correlation of kin and neighborhood (territorial) lines is in its turn connected with the dominant type of community (as a universal substratum social institution). A cross-cultural research conducted earlier (Bondarenko and Korotayev 1999; 2000b) has generally corroborated the initial hypothesis (Bondarenko 1997: 13–14; 1998b: 198–199) that the extended-family community in which vertical social ties and non-democratic value system are usually vividly expressed, being given the shape of kinship relations (elder – younger), is more characteristic of homoarchical societies.[5] Heterarchical societies appear to be more frequently associated with the territorial communities consisting of nuclear families in which social ties are horizontal and apprehended as neighborhood ties among those equal in rights.[6]

In the course of our cross-cultural research in the community forms, another factor important for determining societies' homoarchization *vs.* heterarchization was revealed. It appeared that probability of a democratic (heterarchical) sociopolitical organization development is higher in cultures where monogamous rather polygynous families dominate (Korotayev and Bondarenko 2000).

However, besides social factors (including those mentioned above), a set of phenomena stemming from the fact that political culture is a reflection of a society's general culture type, is also important for determining its evolutionary pathway. The general culture type that varies from one civilization to another defines the trends and limits of sociocultural evolution. Though culture itself forms under the influence of different factors (sociohistorical, natural, etc.) the significance of the general culture type for the sociopolitical organization is not at all reduced to the so-called 'ideological factor' (Bondarenko and Korotayev 2000c; Claessen 2000b).

It influences crucially the essence of political culture characteristic for a given society, 'most probably revealing itself as fully as economic, religious, artistic potential from the very beginning' (Zubov 1991: 59). In its turn, political culture determines human vision of the ideal sociopolitical model which correspondingly, may be different in various cultures. This way political culture forms the background for the development of character, types and forms of complex political organization emergence, including the enrolling of this process along either the homoarchical or heterarchical evolutionary pathways. But real, 'non-ideal' social institutions are results of conscious activities (social creativity) of people to no small degree, though people are frequently not capable to realize completely global sociopolitical outcomes of their deeds aimed at realization of personal goals. People create in the social sphere (as well as in other spheres) in correspondence with the value systems they adopt within their cultures in the process of socialization. They apprehend these norms as the most natural, the only true ones.

Hence, it is evident that the general culture type is intrinsically connected with its respective modal personality type. In their turn, the fundamental characteristics of modal personality types are transmitted by means of socialization practices which correspond to the value system generally accepted in a given society and can influence significantly its political evolution (see Irons 1979: 9–10, 33–35; Ionov 1992: 112–129; Bondarenko and Korotayev 2000a: 309–312) though scholars usually tend to stress the opposite influence, *i.e.* the influence of political systems on socialization processes and personality types.

The ecological factor is also important for determination of the pathway which this or that society follows (Bondarenko 1998b; 2000). Not only natural environment but the sociohistorical one as well should be included into the notion of 'ecology' in this case. The environment also contributes a lot to the defining of a society's evolutionary potential, creating limits to its advancement along the homoarchical or heterarchical axes. For example, there is no predestined inevitability of transition from the simple to complex society (Tainter 1990: 38; Lozny 2000) or from the early state to mature one (Claessen and van de Velde 1987: 20 etc.).

Let us discuss now the implications of the approach discussed above for the study of the state formation processes and 'politogenesis' in general. The tendency to see historical rules always and everywhere the same results in gross perversion of historical reality. For example, concurrent political processes are declared consecutive stages of the formation of the state. Besides, the features of already mature state are illegitimately attributed to its early forms and in consequence of this it becomes impossible to find any 'normal' early state practically anywhere.

The notion of 'politogenesis' was elaborated in the 1970s and 80s by Kubbel (*e.g.* 1988) who imployed it to define the process of state formation. But it has become evident by today that processes of archaic societies' political evolution should not be reduced to the rise of the state exclusively because this is rather just one particular version of those processes. We suggest to use this term in order to denote the formation of any types of complex political organization, which also looks more justifiable from the etymological point of view: in ancient Greece the word *politeia* meant the political order of any type, and not 'state'.

We believe that among the students of politogenesis one can observe a tendency to narrow the analysis to the study of the state formation process only. This entirely legitimate intention to restrict and define the study field still leads to the underestimation of the fact that for long periods of time the state formation process was inseparably linked with other evolutionary processes (*e.g.* processes of religious evolution), and this seems to hinder any really profound explanation of the state formation processes themselves. We believe that such explanations may be only achieved if the state formation processes are studied against background of all the other contemporary evolutionary processes.

It seems impossible to say that such an approach was always ignored (see *e.g.* Claessen and Skalník 1978; Claessen 2000a [especially p. 2]). However, notwithstanding substantive achievements in the analysis of the general cultural context of state formation processes this problem still appears to be far from its real solution.

One of the causes of this situation can be defined as 'politocentrism'. *Volens-nolens* the state formation starts to be regarded

as a central process of the evolution of medium complexity cultures not just because of initial definition of the research objective (which seems to be entirely legitimate); it starts to be regarded as an objectively central process, whereas this is not always true, because in many cases other processes (*e.g.* sociostructural or religious) could be more important (for details see Grinin 2001).

On the other hand, sure enough, there were not one but many models of politogenesis in the time of the transition from more simple societies to more complex (both socioculturally and technologically) ones. The resultant cultures often differ from the state, but it is incorrect to consider them prestate structures, because they could be well compared to the early state as regards their complexity, functions and causes of their formation.

Therefore, the evolutionary pathway within which the features of the state familiar to us are guessed retrospectively, is only one of the possible 'branches' of the politogenesis. But since later most alternative sociopolitical structures were destroyed by states, absorbed into states, or transformed into states[7], it might be reasonable to recognize the 'state' branch of the politogenesis as 'general' and the alternative pathways as 'lateral'.

This, however, does not deny the fact that the alternative sociopolitical structures mentioned above cannot be adequately described as prestate formations, that they are quite comparable with early states by range of their functions and level of their structural complexity. Therefore, it seems possible to designate them as ***state analogues***. The term '***state analogue***' underlines both typological and functional resemblance of such forms to the state and differences in structure. The introduction of this term makes it possible to describe the process of politogenesis more adequately.

In order to find solutions for a certain range of political anthropology problems it is necessary to consider the genesis of early state in the general context of socioevolutionary processes coeval with it. This could make it possible to appreciate more exactly the correlation between general evolution and state formation processes. For example, it seems evident that the early state formation is finally connected with general changes caused by the transition from the foraging to food production. This generally resulted in

the growth of sociocultural complexity. This led to the appearance of the objective needs in new methods of organization of societies and new forms of contacts between them. But in different societies it was expressed in different ways. So, over long periods of time, the growth of sociostructural complexity, the exploitation of neighbors, development of commerce, property inequality and private ownership, growth of the role of religious cults and corporations etc. could serve as alternatives to purely administrative and political decisions of above-mentioned problems. And in these terms, the early state is only one of forms of new organization of the society and intersociety relations.

As a result we could suggest the following points for the future study of the socioevolutionary processes in medium complexity cultures:

1) interrelatedness and inerconnectedness of the political aspects of the politogenesis and the other aspects (religious, sociostructural etc.);

2) causes of underdevelopment and fragmentary character of the administrative institutions in the early states;

3) causes of relative easiness of the transition from one pattern of growing sociocultural complexity to another;

4) determining of *sociopolitical* evolution models by historical-cultural and geographical conditions.

NOTES

[1] Note, however, that in fact this was frequently essentially Spencerian vision which was implied in such cases; that is the evolution was perceived as 'a change from an incoherent homogeneity to a coherent heterogeneity' (Spencer 1972 [1862]: 71).

[2] The state is understood throughout as '…a sufficiently stable political unit characterized by the organization of power and administration which is separated from the population, and claims a supreme right to govern certain territory and population, i.e. to demand from it certain actions irrespective of its agreement or disagreement to do this, and possessing resources and forces to achieve these claims' (Grinin 1997: 20; see also Grinin 2000: 190).

[3] See also its fundamental criticism by Mann (1986), the most radically negative attitude to this scheme expressed in categories of social evolution 'trajectories alternativity' by Yoffee (1993), several collective works of recent years (Patterson and Gailey 1987; Ehrenreich *et al.* 1995; Kradin and Lynsha 1995; Kradin *et al.* 2000; Bondarenko and Korotayev 2000a), proceedings of recent international conferences (Butovskaya *et al.* 1998; Bondareko and Sledzevski 2000).

[4] There is considerable difference in the general 'world-system' and civilizational approaches. While the former tends to develop the globalistic viewpoint on history, the latter emphasizes regional trends and tendencies of evolution. At the same moment, our employment of the 'world-system' approach in this part of our paper, in our opinion must not be apprehended as a contradiction within our overall 'civilizational' approach. First, there is an important aspect the respective approaches share: both of them stress supra-local (of more than one society) trends of changes in different spheres; and, second, pre-modern 'world-systems' as they are represented in the corresponding approach supporters' works (except A. Gunder Frank's version [*e.g.* Frank and Gills 1993]) look very similarly with what is called 'civilizations' within another approach [*e.g.* Abu-Lughod 1989; Sanderson 1995; Chase-Dunn and Hall 1997]. Furthermore, it looks very much like that in the United States the general understanding of the necessity to study evolution and history on the supra-local level came through Wallerstein while in reality it was the civilizational approach (especially of the Danilevsky – Spengler – Toynbee 'brand') for which this principle became most fundamental much earlier.

[5] This appears to be especially relevant for those societies where extended families are dominated not by groups of brothers, but by individual 'fathers' (see *e.g.* Bromley 1981: 202–210).

[6] Note that among not only humans but other primates too, the role of kin relations is greater in homoarchically organized associations (Thierry 1990; Butovskaya and Feinberg 1993: 25–90; Butovskaya 1993; 2000; Butovskaya, Korotayev, and Kazankov 2000).

[7] However, such transformations could only happen when certain conditions were present. *E.g.* this could happen as a result of the influence of neighboring state systems.