

Classifications of the Ways to Statehood and Democracy

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A new classification of early and modern polities, the ways of statehood and democracy formation is offered. The situation in modern Russia together with the possibility of a democratic state formation are dealt with in detail.

Those polities whose formation is considered more or less natural (meaning possession of technological and organizational maturity while transforming into states) are entitled primary polities whereas those not possessing such maturity but forced into becoming states because of danger emanating from their more advanced neighbors (or the desire to rob them) are, as it were, forced into immature, secondary statehood whose goal is fighting against their more advanced neighbors. Secondary polities, as a rule, exhibit instability of forms, hyperactive military energies and the like. At the same time it is these polities which have produced the existing variety of contemporary states and even cultures. It is those secondary polities (formed by independent merchants/brigands) which formed first protodemocratic states and then, repeating the process, contemporary democracies of Western Europe.

The other issue of the secondary way to statehood is the formation of, so to speak, 'warm cultures' in which people (unlike the usual 'cold cultures', eastern as well as western) unable to reach a consensus about general rules of behavior in standard situations are forced to compensate for their non-existence by personal relations. Warm cultures are exemplified, first of all, by Russia and Latin America. As it seems, warm societies are, in a way, analogous to amorphous solids or solidified hyperviscous liquids which outwardly look like true crystals. Russia has yet to go through the process of crystallization in the future (which, as it seems, is taking place in Chile and Uruguay) and the nearest decennaries will determine whether a cold crystallized Russia will become an eastern or western country.

Keywords: *statehood, democracy, warm cultures, cold cultures.*

When classifications of various major historical phenomena, of stages, formations, civilizations, *etc.* in the first place, are being constructed, two principles of their construction come into collision.

First principle – a combination of communities of the same level of development (for several or at least one parameter) into one class or some other taxon.

Second principle – a combination of simultaneously coexisting and in some way interacting communities, or at least those impacted by the same factors (*e.g.*, climate), into a common taxon.

Globalistics and Globalization Studies 2015 176–192

Let us consider the well-known Marxist classifications as an example. Classical Marxism definitely preferred the first principle¹, although with many exceptions. The modern world-systems Marxism is clearly focused on the second principle. Coexisting and interacting communities of clearly different levels of development are united into a common system, though often having different ways of transformation, for that matter.

Let us note that the basic principles of biological taxonomy are fairly close to our first principle, and ecology and adjacent disciplines focus on the second principle; thus, approaches are put apart from each other, but in the historical disciplines, unfortunately, such a complete separation is impossible.

One can indicate two fairly obvious correlations between the two principles.

Firstly, the more ancient the history and the more distant (geographically) the location of the comparable communities, the less close is the relationship between them and the more important is the first principle. And, vice versa, the closer to the present, the more important is the role of the second approach. For the very ancient and remote communities the first principle is decisive, – it is in terms of development that we compare the communities of the Old and New Worlds, although it is not always convenient and not at all productive (the paths of transformation of the New and Old World communities were not strictly the same), but we simply do not have any other possibility.

Secondly, despite the apparent opposition of the two principles of classification, very clear in biology, there is, in fact, no such clarity in boundaries for history.

As an example of a society, let us consider the classical notion of the Bronze Age. On the one hand, all societies of the Bronze Age were united by a pronounced common feature of technological development (of the productive forces in Marxist terminology). Thus, this seems to be a classification based on the first principle, but in reality is somewhat different. Levels of development of the social structures of societies that used bronze tools, could differ significantly, they could have built cities or not, may have had written language and state or not, *etc.* Even their general level of technological development could have varied significantly, and these differences could have touched upon the use of bronze objects themselves, which is the basis for the determination of the Bronze Age. Some communities could have been leaders in industry and/or production of bronze tools and ornaments, whereas others just used the products of foreign craftsmen.

As a result, the classical classification according to the tools material is closer to the second principle than the first; *i.e.* it rather brings together the existing and directly or indirectly interacting communities, than the communities of one stadial level.

However, although even a classic example turned out to be difficult for our classification, there is no reason to abandon it completely in the analysis of earlier periods; for the Neolithic period it works much better. Naturally, it is most difficult to be applied to the modern world, where everything is closely related and mixed with each other. I will not consider such a difficult case, and will return to an earlier era – the time of formation of early polities, the first states in particular.

In the works of many researchers there are different classifications of early polities (*e.g.*, Claessen and Oosten 1996; Grinin 2004; Grinin and Korotayev 2009). In drawing such classifications, the authors, as it seems to us, considered various ways of early poli-

¹ The productive forces determine the relations of production, and with them together constitute the basis of a society, on which the superstructure depends, the one that presents a totality of social, political and, above all, the legal relationships and forms of social consciousness.

ties' formation, but in the first place proceeded from the fact that they all had quite similar levels of development of technologies and social structures, or at least some of the parameters that characterize technologies and social structures. A multitude of options was mainly a habit of evolution (let us look upon it as a kind of personalized entity) to act by trial and error. Therefore, to find the best form of organization of social life of most densely populated human societies evolution had to sort out a lot of options and discard the bulk of them as unjustified. This process has many analogues in biology, – for example, the emergence of the classes of birds (class Aves), mammals (class Mammalia), *etc.* happened about this way. Both appearance and disappearance of the diversity of early polities corresponds to Sedov's law (the law of 'hierarchical compensations'), which alleges that in a complex hierarchical system increase of diversity at the top level is provided by limitation of diversity at lower levels and, vice versa, increase of diversity at the lower level [of the hierarchy] destroys the upper level of the organization (Sedov 1993; Nazaretyan 2010; Tsirel 2005). It is important to specify, that in the beginning the first polities represented the basic (concurrently the upper) level of the hierarchy, represented by a set of options that filled the newly formed niche of social devices (the so-called 'archaic diversity' (Mamkaev 1991)). But, in order to form some superstructures (*e.g.*, court and police) over the few best (and most tenacious) forms, selected by way of 'natural selection', the less tenacious forms get marginalized or, more often than not, die out. But for all that, the state remains to be one of the basic levels of classification of social institutions, over which in the course of social evolution different forms of government (monarchy, oligarchy, democracy, ...) are built, and a tree structure of institutions of different levels spreads out. Alternative forms of polities remain as half-dried twigs with stunted leaves, although hierarchically they are at a state level.

But, oddly enough, in this case the described pattern is just one of the reasons for the diversity of early polities, belonging to the first principle classification construction. There is a second reason, belonging to the second principle, which is only briefly addressed in articles and books; *i.e.* the two principles also have the meaning of two ways of generating the diversity of forms, both principles are incomplete not only when taken separately, but also without a genetic approach, which describes the origin of the phenomena. Therefore, in the future the introduced classifications will take into account not only these principles, but, first and foremost, the genesis of the phenomena classified.

Works of N. Kradin and P. Turchin (Kradin 2008; Turchin 2009) as well as of other researchers point to a clear and significant correlation between the size of societies of nomads and sedentary agricultural empires, with which they were to fight (a fight here, of course refers to wars and raids from both sides). Increase in size of the nomadic communities had been caused by the development of social structures of the nomads only to a small extent. This is indicated by pre-state traditions that prevailed in the heart of the great nomadic empires, and the lack of proper writing. And, even more, complete degradation of many of them to decay, and loss of ties with settled empires, to struggle with which they had been created. Nomadic polities almost completely degraded from huge empires (the Mongol Empire), the Xiongnu Empire, the Rouran Khaganate, both Turkic Khaganates, *etc.*) to pre-state communities.² All these phenomena confirm the conclusions drawn by N. Kradin and P. Turchin, that the main reason for the creation of huge analogues of public entities was the response to the formation of empires.

² Although, of course, the great historical past has never fallen out of the 'cultural baggage', and sometimes manifested itself in unexpected ways at historical turning points.

It makes sense to assume or even to state that this kind of response is typical not only for the relatively late nomadic communities. If more advanced neighbors united in the state, though not very large, but with a fairly organized army and a system of collecting tribute, they gained a great advantage in trade exchanges, and military skirmishes. Then the tribes, neighboring with them, also had to unite their efforts, despite the low readiness for statehood.

The assumption that was put forward allows us to offer a non-traditional approach to the classification of primary and secondary early polities, taking into account the reasons for their appearance. As a rule, the division into primary and secondary polities and cities is based on the time of their appearance and the assessment of the levels of adoption from the already existing cultures. The level of adoption (as well as an opposite in meaning characteristic of ‘degree of autonomy’) is a value that is difficult to measure. Therefore, lists of primary polities vary for different authors, minimalist lists only include Egypt, Sumer, China (Shang or hypothetical Xia) and two civilizations in the New World. Maximalist lists brought the number of primary states up to a dozen or even two dozen. In the most rigid version those considered primary are not even polities themselves, but cultural areas or civilizations, – the Middle East (the Near East), the Far Eastern and the American ones.

We will proceed somewhat differently and will define the primary and secondary states not by the magnitude of adoptions, but by the reasons of their aspirations for statehood and by the equally difficult to describe natural way of their transformation. Beginning with the works of Robert Carneiro (Carneiro 1970), it has become a widespread view, that the most important factors influencing the formation of primary early polities were demographic pressure and circumscription – increase in population density and conflicts with neighbors, due to the limitation (indivisibility) of natural resources exploited on a common basis. At the same time, the secondary polities were formed mainly by adopting the achievements of the primary polities.

In our view, the secondary path is a path in which the formation of a ‘large polity’ was mainly caused by the need to resist to more developed neighbors, or by the desire to profit from their accumulated wealth (these motives are often quite mixed with each other, so we will not try to draw any moralistic distinction for them). We will not consider the causes of wealth of the existing polities either, – really in more advanced technologies (a higher level of productive forces), or in a higher level of culture and/or more organized production and greater consumption of excess product (one that is necessary to meet more complex needs than physical survival). For our purposes these dubious distinctions are less important than other factors.

In order to clarify the image, we will present two extreme cases. The first case: early state formation (*e.g.*, Egypt) in a world of pre-state polities. It is natural to assume, that most important in the formation of Egypt as a whole (for separate nomes the situation was different) were internal processes.

The opposite situation is a pre-state, relatively early culture, caught between the established or still forming states. If we try to look for examples in close proximity to Russia, it is possible to specify the fate of various Finnish and Baltic tribes in the tenth – thirteenth centuries. Of these, only Lithuania speedily managed to create quite a strong state, whereas all the others were conquered by their more developed and powerful neighbors. We are not going to discuss either the reasons for these differences, or their long-term consequences. Let us just note these differences.

Now let us consider the basic situation. There exists some early or even not very early polity X (as well as, perhaps, polities Y, Z, *etc.*), and next to it there exist tribes, chiefdoms and other pre-state formations. If polity X (and its developed neighbors Y, Z, ...) is not in a state of complete decay, then it is at the same time a grave danger and a tidbit for the weaker and more backward neighbors. To protect themselves and/or implement their own selfish intentions, 'backward' neighbors must quickly improve their organization to such a level, that they are able to present an army of about the same number of soldiers with about the same level of armament. Obviously, the further course of events depends on their level of organization, relationships and chosen tactics (let us use this word in the plural, for plans and circumstances may vary).

Some neighbors of X are close to X not only geographically, but also close in culture, language and level of development. Then they have two extreme tactics: to submit to X on honorable terms, or, vice versa, quickly turn into X № 2 and start a battle with X № 1. Despite the enormous political differences of both ways, for us they are close to each other. Both are just pushing ahead the natural process of creating a new state (or its equivalent) and a culture akin to X, or a natural extension of X, which includes the adoption of cultural elements of assimilated peoples. Therefore, from our point of view, both options are natural primary processes, which expand and enrich the culture of polity X.

Now let us pay attention to other neighbors of X, those who are poorer and more backward, as well as more distant from X in language and culture. Of course, they can also try to negotiate with them about yielding under honorable conditions. However, the chances of observing these conditions are very weak, and the most honorable conditions may turn out to be very difficult for the majority of the population that imagines itself more or less free. In addition, they may not generally manage to do anything, before on their lands the X army starts hunting down all living creatures, including themselves.

But let us suppose a more optimistic scenario. In view of these or other reasons, history has provided enough time to respond to real or imaginary schemes of X. Then, to confront X, 'backward' neighbors can voluntarily come together under the leadership of the most powerful chiefdom (or the chiefdom with the most charismatic leader). Or, vice versa, the most powerful chiefdom or the most ambitious and charismatic leader may try to override the weaker neighbors. In any case, either in the process of uniting, or in the process of fighting for a union, they will require new forms of organization, which they did not have in their former independent position. The source of these forms can be X (who is a better source for drawing secrets of organization and the art of war from if not a strong and successful enemy?), or may develop from their own cultural elements that had not been developed so far; or they may be formed ad hoc in the complex process of association. In addition, there may be some distant examples, *e.g.*, real or imagined opponents and predecessors of X, *etc.*

In any case, the newly created state-like customs are primarily the customs of the highest ranks of the victorious chiefdom or chiefdoms united, rather than the general population, not ready for quick changes, if only they do not bring about immediate benefits.

This approach seems to encompass one of the ways of resolving contradictions between different ways of explaining the emergence of democratic societies. The underlying nature of the conflicting approaches to this subject, in our opinion, is largely due to the complexity of the relationship between liberalism (in the classic sense) and democracies.

As it is known, some political scientists argue that democracies (Dahl 1989; Collins 1999 *et al.*) are formed while clans, that have been struggling for power for a long time, cannot beat each other, and eventually conclude an armistice and agree upon more or less peaceful methods of struggle for power, involving more or less extensive groups of population. When these arrangements are successful and become a tradition, a democratic society gets formed after that. Although it remains unclear, why centuries' or even millennium long habits of personal power gets forgotten to such an extent, that no charismatic leader is able to appeal to tradition and disregard some elite agreement that crosses out ancestral customs.

In any case, on all post-Soviet space in general and in Russia in particular, this way to democracy has not been a success so far. Democratic features of some Russian regions, generated by a balance of forces in the struggle of elites (Gel'man 1999), have not survived the anti-democratic changes of the last decade. Moreover, with huge contrasts in the level of education and living standards of various Russian regions (with a Russian-speaking population), the progress of socio-economic and even of value changes is common to all of Russia.³ Differences in living standards by 3–5 times for only 1–2 years (3 at most), slow down or speed up the general tendencies, but are unable to change them.⁴

The latest example, showing the ineffectiveness of such a way, is: changes in the Ukraine after the victory of Yanukovich in the presidential election, when even a deep internal split of the Ukraine has not become an insurmountable obstacle for the development of authoritarian tendencies.

Other scholars, such as historians or researchers studying contemporary societies (Putnam 2000, 2002; Welzel and Inglehart 2005; Tilly 2007 *et al.*) do not agree with them and believe, that political scientists describe only one of the mechanisms for implementing an advance to democracy.

A real basis for the formation of stable democratic societies lies in democratic traditions, customs, institutions, *etc.* of various peoples (Welzel and Inglehart 2005). The second point of view seems to be more convincing, but at the same time, one must admit, that with such an approach the enigma of the formation of democratic societies is substituted by the mystery of the formation of democratic institutions, customs and traditions. Inglehart (Inglehart and Welzel 2005) points to the previous economic successes of the future democracies and the reduction of the role of the concerns of a physical sur-

³ Comparison of the Russian regions (with Russian-speaking population) to the U.S. states shows, that the former differ greatly from each other in socio-economic characteristics, but are much closer to each other in value concepts and the dynamics of transformation. Given that even in the nineteenth century the classics of Russian literature had noted great regional differences, and the civil war at the beginning of the twentieth century had split the country in two, the Soviet unification process of attitudes and values (as well as the language) of the Russian population within such a short period of time requires special consideration.

⁴ For example, a high level of education and welfare of Moscow city-dwellers and liberal views (as was said) spread among them, did not prevent either mass vote rigging during the election campaign or the charismatic power of the corrupt government of Luzhkov, but it also did not interfere with his emphatically rough resignation. At the same time, in the richest regions of Russia, primarily in Moscow, consumption of vodka (the main cause of mortality in Russia) is reduced, the number of people involved in sports starts to grow, the number of victims of violations of traffic regulations begins to reduce. Thus, in the richest regions the beginning of the 'second demographic transition' and the spread of post-material values is combined with the submission to authoritarian rule, political apathy, corruption, indifference to social injustice and environmental problems of the country, as well as with a minimal distribution of other civil virtues. With some delay this combination extends to the population of other cities.

vival in favor of a more complex ('post-material') requests as one of the explanations for this.

However, a comparison of the countries rich in raw materials (mainly oil) with the poorer countries of Eastern Europe shows the limitations of such an explanation with regard to commitment to democracy, at least for short periods of time. In any case, as Inglehart points out, major changes require a change of generations and cannot be achieved in a short period of time. According to the hypothesis put forward earlier (Tsirel 2008), the first real steps towards democratization in Russia may begin no earlier than in 2035–2040, when a new generation, the generation of children of the first post-perestroika generation, will come into the political limelight.

Though the descriptions of the paths to democracy, put forward by various modern scholars, look like almost the opposite, in fact, they all share a common idea, – that a more or less stable democracy should follow the propagation of liberal values.

At the same time, a difference or even a contrast of liberal values to the democratic way of governing has historically been commonplace for many political thinkers (beginning with John Locke or Thomas Jefferson), who did not believe in the interest of the poor and uneducated people in the liberal freedoms. However, the relation of democracy to liberalism has also been mentioned by many classical authors, from which, first and foremost, Rousseau and, of course, and A. de Tocqueville should be mentioned.⁵ But it would be even more correct to refer to the fact that, in spite of all the complexities of combining democracy and liberalism, ancient Greece, and especially the republican Rome, were both a homeland for democracy and for liberalism; this does not preclude the presence of deep contradictions between them, though. In contemporary political science literature this issue was highlighted by Fareed Zakaria in his brilliant book 'Illiberal Democracy' (2003).

The main difference between the two approaches lies in the fact that the first group of political scientists believes, that the spores of elites are able to implement liberal values in their environment, and then in the whole society in a fairly short time. And the basis of the transition may be a relatively random factor, – the inability to identify the winner by force and a compelled use of softer methods of struggle, based on the opinions of the population in general. From their point of view, such changes, as well as restrictions on the rights of winners, worked out over time comparable with the duration of the struggle, lead to changes in the entire political culture and to the spreading of liberal values.

The second group insists on the need for a long-term functioning of liberal (semi-liberal), customs or even the need of the shortest possible illiberal practices.

Currently, as the examples of Eastern Europe, of some countries in Latin America and especially East Asia show, there is a third way, when the authoritarian government itself, logically the main enemy of liberal ideas and practices that limit its power, looking at the success of the liberal-democratic countries, in one way or another propagates alien habits. Not all authoritarian countries, of course, go along this way (in Russia, we rather see the usual opposite way, except for short periods of reforms), but this road to democracy is evident in the modern world, though so far it has not brought any country to the final goal.

⁵ With all the differences of their range of interests and philosophical views, it should be noted that both in one form or another pointed to the role of religious beliefs, relevant education or the natural desire for freedom and solidarity not necessarily common to all peoples at all times.

In our opinion, the described above mechanism of the formation of early polities sheds some light on the problem of one or another way to liberal democracy. If tribes⁶ not ready yet for the formation of classical forms of monarchical power are forced to unite to confront their 'early state' neighbors, then, when united, they rely heavily on their proto-democratic customs. Thus, these analogues of early states often have many democratic features. And some of them retain them for a long time in their institutions and traditions.

Let us note, that this statement does not in any way contradict the classical political science approaches. The formation of a large polity was an imperative, and there was simply not enough time for its implementation in the form of a convincing victory of one of the clans, in securing it in the form of a monarchy and monarchical institutions. To speed up the process, it was necessary to fix proto-democratic institutions and considerable rights of ordinary fathers of families. If a proto-democratic form of government defeated a more developed *X* state (otherwise the proto-democratic society under discussion would not have left distinct traces in the narrative or archaeological sources), then this was an important step towards a more mature democracy.

After all these words, which could be understood as praise to proto-democratic analogues of early states, I should note that an absolute majority of proto-democratic communities, generally speaking, have been predatory. We are talking about the ancient Greeks and the Vikings, the Malay pirates and the highland peoples of the Caucasus mountain region (on the frequency of democratic norms with highland peoples, see Korotayev 2005). In such communities each armed robber (or a small gang leader) fancied himself an independent predator and did not wish to obey the chief's or imperial power, typical for more mature communities.

It is these proto-democratic, as well as early democratic societies, that are characterized by the simultaneous existence of the category (categories) of people that are unusually free and have the rights of citizens, alongside with another big category of people, who are absolutely not free, even without any human status. Examples of this include ancient slavery, slavery in the European colonies and in the United States of the nineteenth century; human traffic (hostage-taking), practiced by many peoples of the Caucasus, stands in the same row.

Concluding the topic of the formation of early democratic societies, we would like to add, that Western European feudal societies were not only initially formed in the same way, but, unlike the others, followed the examples of Greek and Roman democracies (and to some extent, the era of the Judges of ancient Israel). Although, of course, examples of ancient democracy were somewhat distorted by the realities of the empires of Diocletian and Constantine and the whole of Byzantine history (which Western thinkers have rejected, although made use of the Code of Justinian and of many cultural achievements of the Byzantine Empire). But, nevertheless, the ancient democratic ideals and laws inspired the European history for a long time, sliding into the shadows and re-emerging to the forefront at times of low and high Renaissance.

Thus, stable societies of the western type formed in case of coincidence of two conditions.

1) The first condition common to all proto-democracies is the proximity of a people with a tribal organization and trade-and-predatory practices to major early states and the need to resist them (both for self-defense and for robbery).

⁶ Here the concept of 'tribe' is opposed to the concept of 'chiefdom'.

2) The second condition was realized only in Europe, it was the presence of great ancient examples of not just only autocratic empires, but successful democracies as well.

It seems to us, that it was the presence of revered traditions of the great democracies of the ancient world that saved Europe from regeneration into an oriental empire (for example, in the fifteenth-sixteenth centuries, during the period of Spanish domination) that has been the end for all the other well-known democracies and proto-democracies, including Greece and Rome. We would like to stress, that both conditions are necessary. Other heirs of ancient democracies that lacked the support of Celtic or German proto-democratic customs were not able to keep to the same path. Byzantium and North Africa got easternized (the first gradually, the second in one jump). Another direct descendant of Rome, the Venetian Republic, was, despite the name of its form of government, one of the most oligarchic states of Europe; whereas a quasi-feudal era of Zhou in China preceded an extremely severe and brutal autocracy of Qin Shi Huang.

However, the presence of a proto-democratic past or just a few proto-democratic customs in the past, though does not overlap the return to the general line of development, to communities of an oriental type, still leaves indelible traces in the culture of these countries. For example, Turkey, Lebanon and Tunisia, despite the very long imperial periods in their history, have more democratic customs than most Muslim countries.

Even more clearly can be seen the traces of proto-democratic past on the Far Eastern outskirts of the Chinese civilization. Japan, Hong Kong, and especially Taiwan and South Korea under the influence of the West got westernized much more than mainland China (where the differences also remained of a more authoritarian and 'state-like' North and a more liberal South). Let us note in passing, that in Korea not only liberalization and democratization, but also Christianization has involved a significant part of the population.⁷

But, on the other hand, the insufficient taking root of the liberal tradition leaves ways back to undemocratic forms of government. Most obvious is the experience of the European 1920–30s, when, in the process of mass urbanization, the urban society was diluted by former peasants that had lost their traditional base for existence. In the period before World War II, not only they or the inhabitants of the Eastern outskirts of Europe, but also the leading intellectuals of the old liberal democracies were willing to reject democracy in favor of left-wing or right-wing authoritarianism and totalitarianism. In our view, for the preservation of Western liberal democracies we should above all be most obliged to the mass fear of the horrors of German nazism, as well as a number of random contingencies.

Therefore, the aforementioned way to democracy through a voluntary concession of authoritarian governments is based only on technical, economic, military and geopolitical success of Western countries that had de-legitimized other forms of government.

Economic and geopolitical setbacks of the U.S. and the EU, and vice versa, the success of illiberal China and other authoritarian countries may turn the efforts of authoritarian governments in the opposite direction and slow down, halt or even reverse the wave of global democratization. We can see the precursor of this movement in Russia and the neighboring CIS countries.

⁷ According to the 1995 census, the percent of Christians in South Korea is somewhat higher than of Buddhists (26 per cent vs. 23 per cent), although the Chinese tradition to perform rites of several religions simultaneously and a huge percentage of respondents who called themselves atheists (49 per cent of the population) of course show, that this not a sign of complete Westernization, but rather an indication of its great influence.

At the same time, the well-known appraisal of Przeworski (Przeworski *et al.* 2000) shows, that the democratic changes that have occurred in periods with relatively high living standards and were accompanied by their rise are highly resistant. The reasons that force people to violate ancient customs, as indicated by Inglehart (1997), lie in the fact, that with an increase of welfare and personal safety there happens a shift from survival values to 'post-material' values of self-expression, as well as in the formation of 'privacy', so uncharacteristic of the traditional oriental way life. Therefore a stop of democratization is more probable than the reverse movement. However, there has been no really tough test of liberal and democratic changes in the Oriental countries, whereas the European examples of the first half of the twentieth century are not very encouraging.

Returning to the original topic of this article, let us again focus our attention on the fact, that an abundance of options and analogues of early states were formed not only and not so much because of the 'habit' of evolution to act by trial and error, but because of the need of insufficiently mature tribes and chiefdoms to withstand the early polities.

For the second type of polities the following things are by no means mandatory, but rather characteristic:

- hypertrophied military function;
- often a large size (and a large population), characteristic of more developed countries;
- poor development of other non-military functions (such as specific institutions, *veizla*, or *poliudie*, a mounted patrol of their lands instead of regular tax collecting);
- a lot of imitative or simply copied institutions;
- a high rate of formation and often a large decay rate, accompanied by complete degradation.

However, not all such communities have completed their way with a collapse accompanied by complete degradation. Another way, described above, was to become a well-developed polity with mature institutions of a western or eastern type.

We would like to note in passing, that those were great secondary polities that turned out to be the least stable ones. The disappearance of powerful enemies and/or charismatic figures of their founders (*e.g.*, Attila) led to the disappearance of the polities themselves. At the same time, rather frequent was the case when certain customs and forms of government, not being able to hold the ground at an imperial level, proved more tenacious at local levels. Relatively large proto-states or super-chiefdoms of Early Europe (including Kievan Rus') had broken up, and the small principalities, tenements, counties, *etc.* that had formed inside of them, remained and survived.

At first glance, the list of ways of formation of early states, which have already been discussed, exhausts all possibilities. Nevertheless, there remains at least one option that does not fit in the scheme of 'West-East'. An immature polity with ill-formed institutions could have been influenced by polity *X*, which would have certain customs, after that by polity *Y* with other customs, and, finally, by polity *Z* with customs of a third type. If an immature polity has resisted a variety of enemies (whether due to militancy and solidarity of its people, due to geographical features, or just by luck), experiencing all this time a heterogeneous impact, then the immaturity and instability of the institutions can become a strong tradition in itself.

We call such cultures 'warm' as opposed to conventional 'cold' cultures with stable institutions (Fig. 1).

Now let us introduce a more stringent definition. Cold societies are societies, where people have agreed upon the rules of the game (no matter how they are called, – laws, customs, traditions, sacred commandments, *etc.*) and no longer need to establish personal relations to resolve standard situations (closest to this definition are West European countries and countries of South-East Asia). In such societies the main variety of institutions is concentrated on the upper levels of their hierarchy and is intended to resolve difficult situations. With some exaggeration we can say, that in cold societies in simple and standard situations (in a shop, a cafe, at a post office, station, *etc.*) in the first place we observe an interaction of social functions and not of people.

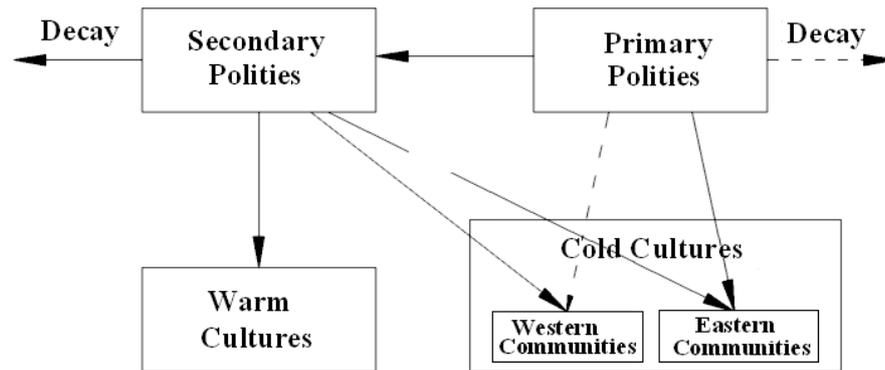


Fig. 1.

Warm societies are the ones where people, by contrast, were unable to agree on common rules. People are forced to compensate the absence of common rules (in other words, the simultaneous existence of different rules) by personal relationships or temporary draconian rules and a personal mystical virtual communication with the leader. Moreover, even corruption, which brings chaos and disorder to the functioning of cold societies, often serves not only as a transgression in warm societies, but is also a source of some (illegal) order, in which the performance of official duties turns from personal services into a paid job.

A typical example of such an order are the well-known from Russian history ‘Feedings’ [*i.e.* resources provided by those interested in their area of business], in which a certain field (a kind of activity, institution, *etc.*) were given under control of an official (boyar, governor), with the subaudition that he would not only manage, but also collect tribute in his own favor from the residents and workers. As a result of the state territorial reform of 1555–1556, the system of ‘feedings’ has been eliminated, but acting elements of this institution survived even in the twenty-first century.

A lack of effective laws makes it necessary to have a permanent access to their primary sources, including the notions of justice, and for this reason justice is often understood as universal equality of income, or even equality of lawlessness, and holds a high place on the scale of values. At the same time the lack of a regulator of justice (of law, custom, *etc.*) very often leads to greater injustice and greater stratification than in warm societies. Currently, it is even possible to specify the formal economic criterion of warm societies, –

the value of the Gini coefficient $\geq 0,45$.⁸ If you try to compare this opposition to the classical opposition West vs East, it is easy to see, that the opposition of West vs East characterizes the type of institutions in the first place, and the opposition of 'cold society' vs. 'warm society' the number of institutions and their sustainability.

It is easy to see, that Russia in the first place, as well as countries close to it, and Latin America too, belong to the category of warm cultures. Countries of tropical Africa could also be listed in the same category, but they are so young that many of them are closer to the secondary early polities rather than to the warm cultures, that have preserved some of their features.

Also we have tried to define position of present Russia in 'world classification' by means of the cluster analysis, using indicators from world socio-economic databases (World Economic Forum, Global Competitiveness Report, The Global Information Technology Report, World Development Indicators *etc.*). Since it is difficult to settle upon an indisputable method for choosing grouping rules and separation measures, multiple cluster analyses were conducted using various rules and measures. Unfortunately, the use of cluster analysis did not lead to the definition of a group of countries, to which Russia may be unambiguously assigned with respect to the analyzed formal indicators. Nonetheless, since the results of the analysis were quite interesting, we shall briefly review them here. The entire classification tree, including Russia's position, changed significantly, depending on the choice of grouping rules and separation measures. The varying positions found for Russia can be summarized by a few instances.

1. Russia forms a small cluster with Ukraine, Belarus and Bulgaria, often with the addition of Romania in the same cluster, or, less frequently, Latvia and Lithuania. This cluster either stands completely apart, or has as its near neighbor a cluster of other East European countries or a cluster of Latin American countries.

2. Russia is in a large cluster of East European countries, which includes the above-mentioned countries and, frequently, Poland, Greece, Estonia, the Czech Republic and Slovakia.

3. Russia is in a large cluster, including several East European countries, as well as some countries of Latin America and the Middle East.

4. Russia is in a cluster of non-European developing countries, most often together with some Latin American countries (Uruguay, Jamaica, Guatemala, *etc.*) and less frequently with Nigeria and Jordan.

The obtained data, in our opinion, it is possible to interpret as follows:

- Russia has profound nearness with the orthodox countries of Eastern Europe, strengthened by the general Soviet inheritance (from high level of corruption to good mathematical school education).

- To a lesser degree the essential nearness is inherent in all countries of Eastern Europe especially entering into the Soviet block (decreasing on a measure forgetting the Soviet period).

- All warm cultures, despite distinctions of a historical way, have the generalities, and the generality of Latin America and Russia is shown especially strongly.

In warm cultures instability of basic institutions prevents the formation of institutions of a higher level. It is natural, that with the 'institutional poverty' and weakness of the

⁸ The only exception to this rule is Hong Kong, with its specific economics. And at present, of course, the cold society in the U.S. is approaching this value, which apparently leads to a weakening of traditional American institutions.

warm societies' self-organization the most characteristic type of government for them is authoritarian (and sometimes – even totalitarian), which brings the warm societies closer to the Eastern ones and makes many social scientists rank the warm cultures among those of the Oriental type. However, there are many differences that prevent such confusion.

– While the authoritarian governments in the warm societies are more stable than in the democratic ones, they are unstable if compared to monarchies and dictatorships of the cold Eastern societies, are prone to frequent and strong transformation and may even at times give way to democratic or quasi-democratic rule.

A graphical analysis of the trajectories in the phase space of ‘prosperity (GDP per capita)’ – ‘level of democracy’, carried out by J. Goldstone and A. Kocornik-Mina (2010), identified two types of trajectories (Fig. 2), where the vertical lines up and down (I) denote the movement of warm societies⁹ (see examples in Fig. 3), and the right arrow above (II) denotes the movement of cold societies. A more detailed path of the cold societies is shown on the right sidebar below, where the upper curve above the Lipset line (Lipset 1960) is more typical for communities of the Western type, and the lower curve – for communities of the Eastern or semi-Eastern type.

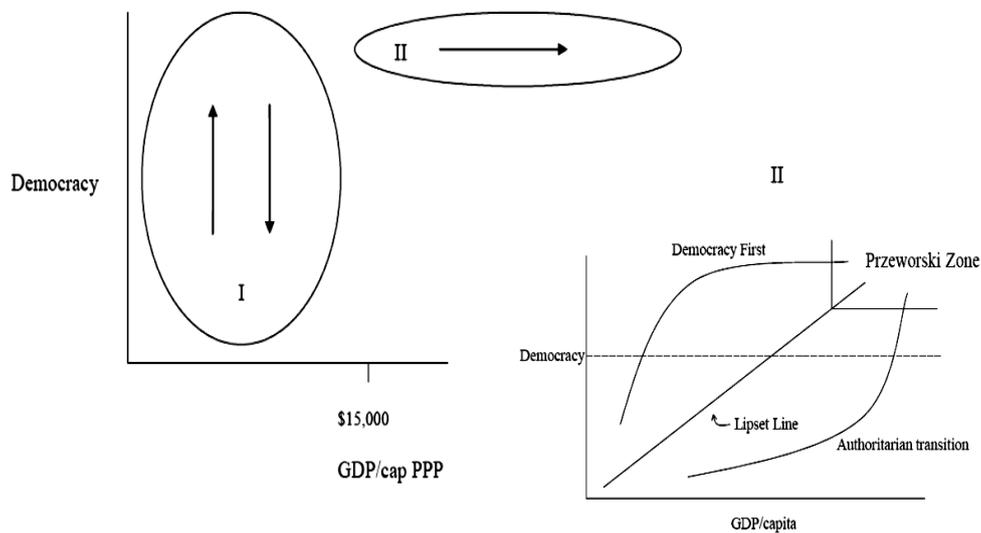


Fig. 2. Goldstone and Kocornik-Mina 2010.

⁹ The author has discussed this issue in his private correspondence with J. Goldstone, and we generally agreed upon the fact that societies with complex motion paths represent a special type of cultures with unstable institutions.

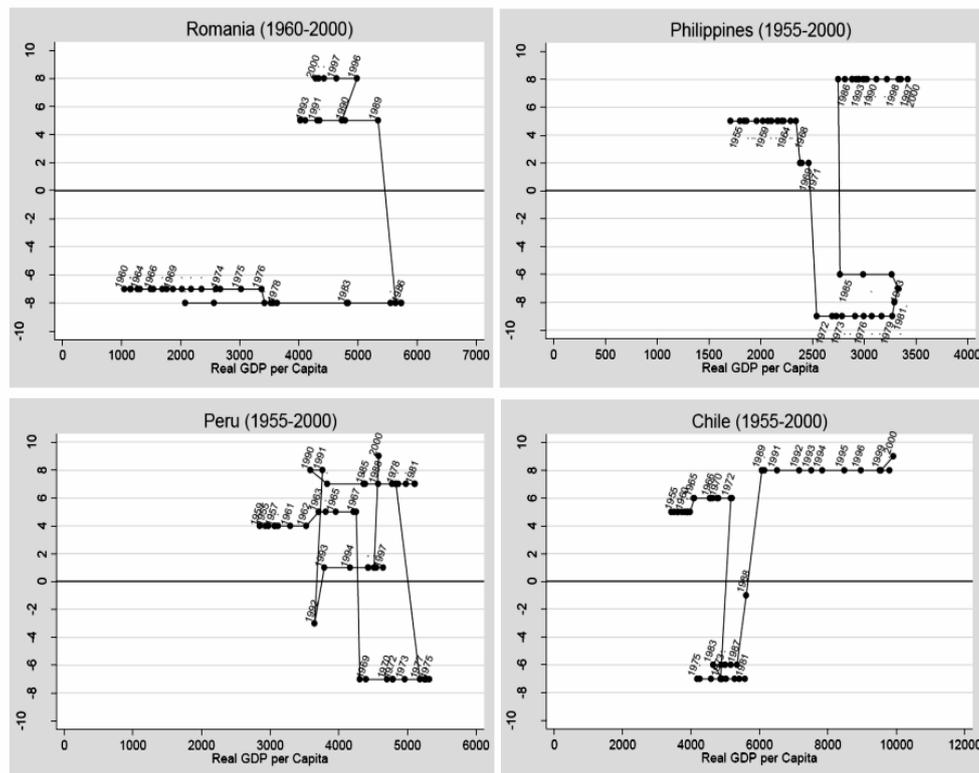


Fig. 3. Examples of chaotic motions of warm societies in the coordinates of 'level of democracy' – 'GDP per capita' (Goldstone and Kocornik-Mina 2010)

Cultures of warm societies are also subject to transformation, are often split, first one, then another discourse come to the foreground. Various conflicting views about the nature of their society coexist within the elite, gaps and contradictions prevailing over agreement among the prevailing autocratic institutions and cultural traditions. Despite the authoritarian nature of power, excepting the periods of the worst repressions, people of the warm societies have considerable freedom, often manifested in areas not typical of cold societies of any kind. For example, the freedom to break rules and laws, the ease of obtaining forgiveness from the society for the most unworthy actions, the freedom to lie and not fulfill promises, the mobility of any deadlines (by the way, including deadlines for handing in papers and abstracts). Not without reason, it is quite a common point of view in Russia, that Russia is the freest country in the world. And those saying these words are not so wrong; they simply appreciate other kinds of freedom, different from those of the cold cultures.

Some people in Russia, on the basis of these peculiarities, believe that Russia is ahead of other countries, and such freedoms, sometimes actually contributing to creativity, are the future of mankind. But, taking into account the need to comply with the rules for high density of residence in the first place (traffic rules, rules of conduct in society, rules of preserving the natural environment, *etc.*), it is difficult to accept this point of view. Moreover, this type of freedom, bordering on chaos, for the bulk of the population is not just

a privilege, but an increasing burden. Warm countries stand out by security or, rather, the absence of security in the streets¹⁰ (see Fig. 4). Not without reason demands for order in Russia (and to some extent in Latin America) that are not accompanied by requirements of law not only restrict the specific freedom of disobedience, but also block the attempts of constructing a liberal democracy.



Fig. 4. The level of security in the streets according to the estimate of the population¹¹ (English and Ray 2010)

Most likely, a warm society is an analogue of an amorphous material, stiff viscous fluid, outwardly hardly distinguishable from a truly crystalline solid substance. Russia still has to go through a crystallization process (which, apparently, is taking place in Chile or Uruguay). And, judging by the trends and norms of the modern world, if the crystallization occurs in the coming decades, the cold crystallized Russia will become a western democratic country.

However, if the crystallization is again postponed (as is likely), the crisis in the West will start again in 10–12 years, in accordance with the schedule of Kondratiev cycles (which is also very likely; see Korotayev and Tsirel 2010), and the progress of China and other East Asian countries will not stop and not slow down (which is less likely), it is more logical to expect that Russia will become a cold crystallized modernized Eastern autocracy. Or, at best, democracy of an Eastern type, yet not really formed in any country.

However, what country, Eastern or Western, will the crystallized Russia be, and when the expected crystallization will take place, depends not only on global processes, but even more on what is happening in Russia itself, and on us personally as well.

¹⁰ However, in periods of harsh dictatorships streets in these countries may be quite safe (if you do not take into account the possibility of arrest or assassination by the secret police).

¹¹ <http://kireev.livejournal.com/599071.html>.

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