
Democracy and Early State

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ABSTRACT

*The article is devoted to the problem which is debated actively today, namely whether Greek poleis and the Roman Republic were early states or they represented a specific type of stateless societies. Some scholars suppose that even in the times of their flourishing these societies were stateless ones. I am of the opinion that this conclusion is wrong: and I believe that **Athens and the Roman Republic were early states**. Therefore the present article is in many respects a direct discussion with the supporters of the idea of the stateless character of the ancient societies.*

The problem as to whether Athens and the Roman Republic were early states is important in itself. However, the attempts to settle it inevitably result in a consideration of a wider problem of great importance: what polities in general can be considered as early states. In particular, is it also possible to regard as such the democratically organized societies?

*Thus, in this contribution a specific aspect of the problem of multilinearity in sociopolitical evolution is examined. On the one hand, simultaneously with early states there coexisted complex non-state societies comparable to the states in size, population, other parameters and functions. Elsewhere I termed such polities the **analogues** of the early state (e.g., Grinin 2003c, 2004c; Bondarenko, Grinin, and Korotayev 2002). On the other hand, the diversity of sociopolitical evolution is expressed also in a tremendous variety of the early states proper among which the bureaucratic states represent just one of many types. The democratic early states without bureaucracy were early states of another type.*

In this article I analyze Athens and the Roman Republic as examples of this very type.

PRELIMINARY REMARKS

The problem as to whether Athens and the Roman Republic were early states is important in itself. However, the attempts to settle it inevitably result in a consideration of a wider problem of great importance: **what polities in general can be considered as early states. In particular, is it also possible to regard as such the democratically organized societies?** As a matter of fact, though quite a few scholars insist on the non-state character of democratic polities directly, actually almost all the analyses of the early states attributes explicitly (see *e.g.*, Petkevich 2002: 148) or implicitly proceed from the idea that the early state was obligatorily a hierarchically arranged society of a monarchic type.

This idea determines some rather widespread views on typical features of the early state. In particular that, first, the opportunities to influence politics are concentrated almost exclusively in the ruler's clan or in a rather narrow higher circle (*e.g.*, see how Claessen [1978: 589; Claessen and Skalnik 1978: 633] characterizes the discrepancies between inchoate, typical and transitional early states). Second, the majority of population is excluded from influencing politics. Thus, the common people are only destined to bear the duties (military, tax, and labor) and in order to fix such a distribution of duties the presence of a coercive apparatus is required. Berent's article (2004) is an excellent example demonstrating the prevalence of such views.

Of course, these phenomena can be observed quite often but not always. For example, in Athens and the Roman Republic monarchs were absent, the influence of patrimonial relations on authority was insufficient, the system of staff selection was based on some different principles than in other societies, the citizens were not excluded from political life and violence was applied irregularly to them. Thus, the question, *whether Athens and Rome were early states?* is not vain. See, for instance, about Joyce Marcus's

‘suspicion’ concerning ‘the Greek case’ ‘that societies called “city-states” are often *not* states’ (Marcus 1998: 89).

Certainly, from the Marxist viewpoint they may be regarded as almost classic examples of the state. It is not without reason that Engels paid so much attention to the history of Athens and Rome in his ‘*Origins of the Family, Private Property and the State*’ (1961 [1884]). According to him, the ancient state was primarily ‘the state of slave-owners aimed at suppressing slaves’ (p. 179). Both these polities correspond well with Lenin's famous definition of the state as an agency with the help of which one class exploits another and keeps it in obedience (Lenin 1974 [1917]: 24).

However, some Soviet historians always had problems with applying the concept of historical materialism to the societies of their personal professional concern. As for Greece and Rome, the problems originated primarily from the fact that sometimes it was impossible to apply the notion of social classes to characterize the social strata and early estates (see *e.g.*, Shtaerman 1989: 81–85). Second, the notion of the state was firmly associated with bureaucracy and other features characteristic of Oriental *despoties*. Meanwhile, in Rome and Athens the government officials bear little resemblance to bureaucrats (see *e.g.*, Osborne 1985: 9). Third, some difficulties were encountered when dealing with other features considered obligatory attributes of a state, such as for instance, compulsory taxation (we will return to this point later). These and some other specific features of ancient communities provided grounds for raising a number of complicated questions including such as whether a *polis* was a state (Koshelenko 1983: 31; Utchenko 1965: 18) and whether it was a city at the same time? (Koshelenko 1979: 5–6; 1983: 31; Marinovich and Koshelenko 1995).

At present, some Russian scholars regard Athens, some other Greek *poleis*, and the Roman Republic as stateless societies of a specific type alternative to the state as having comparable level of development and organization complexity (Bondarenko 2001: 259; Bondarenko and Korotayev 2000b: 10–11; Bondarenko, Korotayev, and Kradin 2002: 16; Korotayev, Kradin, and Lynsha 2000: 37; Ko-

rotayev, Kradin, Lynsha, and de Munck 2000: 25). Although I appreciate greatly many of these researchers' ideas, I find it impossible to agree with this statement. And, since to substantiate the idea of the Greek *polis* and the Roman Republic's statelessness they refer to the opinions of Moshe Berent and Elena Shtaerman in the first place, I found it necessary to criticize the arguments of these particular authors: Berent (2000a, 2000b, 2004) and Shtaerman (1989, 1990).

Berent approaches Athens and other *poleis* as stateless communities and Shtaerman insists that the Roman civil community or *civitas* in the times of its flourishing was 'a community restored at a new stage and headed by the type of "authority" characteristic of communities and acting "for the common benefit" of the civic collectivity...' (p. 89)¹.

However, I would like to make a reservation that in this article there is neither a possibility nor necessity to analyze the peculiarities of numerous Greek *poleis*. Athens would be sufficient. All the more so as Berent though speaking about *polis* in general, basically pays attention to Athens. I proceeded from the assumption that, if it were possible to prove that Athens was an early state, it would suffice to achieve my goal. On the other hand, if my opponents were right that Athens was a stateless society, it would also apply to many other *poleis* probably, with the exception of Sparta.

In the meantime, to maintain that all the *poleis* of Ancient Greece were states would be, from my point of view, a bit precipitate. On the contrary, I presume that some of the *poleis*, due to their small size and specific status, simply did not need to have any state form (for such *poleis*, see Andreyev 1989: 72; Koshelenko 1983: 10–11). So some *poleis* failed to overcome the pre-state condition, while others succeeded in outgrowing it by transformation into **analogues** of the early state. Thus, the Delphic *polis* could probably be **an analogue of the early state**² (Gluskina 1983a: 45, 71). But Athens as well as many others undoubtedly were states.

SOME WEAK POINTS OF BERENT AND SHTAERMAN'S APPROACHES IN CONNECTION WITH THEORETICAL PROBLEMS OF STATE FORMATION AND SOCIOPOLITICAL EVOLUTION

First of all, I must formulate my personal viewpoint:

Athens and the Roman Republic cannot be considered as mature states. They were early states. But they were early states of a specific type essentially different from other (especially bureaucratic) types.

Unfortunately neither Berent nor Shtaerman actually make any difference between the mature and early state in their contexts, though the former uses the term *early state* in the very title of his paper and the latter discusses the problem of the border between the chiefdom and the early state at the very beginning of her work. Very often their arguments against the recognition of the state in Athens and Rome are, in fact, the arguments against the existence of a mature or at least *completed* state there. That is the way a substitution unnoticed by the authors takes place: at first it is proved that there is no *completed* state and then the conclusion is made that there is no state at all. For instance, Shtaerman writes, ‘Thus, during its heyday the Roman classical *civitas* can hardly be regarded as a *completed* state. It was a community...’ (p. 89; emphasis added – *L.G.*). But not to be a completed state does not mean at all to be stateless and not an early state. On the contrary, as a rule early states were not completed ones.

Regrettably, the conviction that the early and mature states have the same basic attributes is rather a common mistake. If it were so, the transition from the early state to the mature one would not be so dramatically difficult. However, **the majority of early states failed to become mature states** (see *e.g.*, Claessen and Skalník 1978b; Claessen and van de Velde 1991; Skalník 1996). Why? The reason is the following. The early states developed under different conditions, their structures were quite different too, and various political means were used to tackle their own problems. On the one hand, such states were often quite up to the goals and circum-

stances of the time. On the other hand, their organization lacked the mechanisms and potentials that, under favorable conditions, could push them up to a higher stage of the evolution ladder (or the required favorable conditions failed to turn up). From the point of view of the social evolution theory it means that **there were different types of the early state**. And the difference is not only in size but also in the principle of organization.

From the aforesaid simple but important inferences follow logically.

First, the presence of different types of early states means that later on some of them turned out to have evolutionary prospects while the others evolutionary dead-ended. In its turn, this means that:

a) not all the political, structural and other achievements of early states remained in demand in mature states;

b) however, although many institutions and relations were 'useful' only under certain conditions and in certain societies, it does not mean at all that the polities possessing them were not early states. Let me set a simple example. In the course of evolution, the principle of direct succession of throne (*i.e.* from father to son) was established. However, it does not mean at all that the societies where the crown was passed not to the eldest son but to the senior next of kin (like for example in Kievan Rus) were not early states. The same applies to the principles of formation and functioning of the state apparatus, army, political regime, etc. The very fact that monarchy was the predominant type of state does not mean at all that democratic polities were not states for this only reason. The problem of characterizing such polities should be solved on the basis of comparing them with pre-states and state analogues, as I have already pointed it out elsewhere (Grinin 2002b, 2003c, 2004a, 2004c) and what will be discussed in the present article later on;

c) thus, it is absolutely necessary to give up the unilinear approach to evolution in general and evolution of the state in particular. If we are going to regard as those of the state only the attributes that became the leading ones later on, we shall narrow and distort

greatly *the state formation* and *politogenesis* processes (for the distinction between the terms, see note 3).

Second, three main attributes of state, namely: 1) existence of administration in the form of bureaucratic and coercive apparatus; 2) division of population by the territorial principle; and 3) existence of taxes and taxation, are often pointed out. But these characteristics typical of many mature states, can hardly suit early states, as usually some of these attributes are either missing or expressed not clearly enough (for more details, see Grinin 2002c, 2004b). However, in many early states any of these attributes (which were to become the leading ones in a mature state) could be substituted with other ones, effective enough for solving particular problems. So in this case my aim is to prove that in ancient Greek states law and court substituted developed administration bodies.

Third, if we speak about different types of the early state, the absence of bureaucracy itself in the Greek *polis* and in Roman *civitas* cannot provide a proof of their not being early states. This is a proof of something different: **the *polis* and *civitas* represented not the bureaucratic but a specific type of the early state** (for the similar opinions of some participants of the discussion on the Shtaerman's article, see *e.g.*, Andreyev 1989: 71; Jacobson 1989: 77; Trukhina 1989: 74; see also Hansen 1983: 41).

That is why when Berent and Shtaerman try to prove that there was no state in Athens and Rome pointing out their distinction from large agro-literate states, it means that they actually reduce the diversity of early-state forms to the only one, just because that very form has become evolutionary the leading one.

However, if we recognize the existence of different types of the early state, we must treat all of them as 'correct' (valid) ones although some of them resemble future mature states to a larger degree than others. It follows that common features of early states should be established not through the recognition of a single – a 'standard' and 'correct' – one among various types of them, but that it should be done at a higher level of abstraction. I mean that

such abstract common features of the early state must correlate with each type of the early state (for detail, see Grinin 2004b).

TYOLOGY OF THE EARLY STATE

Working out a typology of early states is a specific and quite a complicated task. I am not trying to cope with it in this article. But it is absolutely obvious that one is perfectly rightful to speak about numerous types of the early state. **The polis and civitas** (although sharing many features) **each represents a specific type of the early state**. Probably it can explain why their evolutionary potentials turned out to be different. The Roman Republic, though not without crises, transformed into a mature state. But the same transformation turned out to be impossible for a small democratic *polis* though a certain evolution took place there in the 3rd–2nd centuries B.C. (see Sizov 1992: 72–73). As for Sparta Finley denotes it as a **model military state**, but the paradox is that this model was destroyed because of the greatest military success of Sparta (1983: 40). However many ancient states were military ones. So it is more correct to regard Sparta as a **military-communal slave-owning** type of state.

Among other types of the early state the **bureaucratic** states should certainly be singled out. The Third Dynasty of Ur in Mesopotamia is a classic example of the type (D'jakonov 2000: 64–65; Vitkin 1968: 433–434). However, we can also speak about ‘**sacral**’ states where bureaucracy is not developed considerably (like, for example, the young states of Oceania that formed at the end of the 18th–19th centuries after the arrival of the Europeans, namely: Hawaii, Tonga, Tahiti); **imperial non-bureaucratic** states like the Aztec state (Johnson and Earle 2000: 306); **predatory** states (like ancient Assyria).

Ancient Rus and Norway provide examples of the *druzhina* type where power of the ruler ‘was measured primarily by the number of his armed followers’ (Gurevich 1980: 131). The *druzhina* (prince's armed forces or retinue) was formed of the prince's

closest supporters who helped him to rule the army and the principality (Gurevich 1970: 173; Shmurlo 2000: 107). We can also speak about **military-trading** states, particularly in regard to the nomadic ones (like the Khazar [Pletnyova 1986; 1987: 206–207; Shmurlo 2000: 38] and Turk [Gumilev 1993: 42] Khaganats). A number of medieval European states, Moscow Rus in 15th–16th centuries, the early Ottoman Empire as well as its predecessor in Asia Minor in the 11th–13th centuries, the Seljuqid state were nothing but **military-servant** (military-feudal) states (Gordlevsky 1947: 69; Petrosyan 1990: 91; Stroeva 1978: 5–11), etc.

A typology of early states can be provided along different lines like for example, the **monarchic** and **democratic** ones. In this case, one cannot help taking into account the fact that any democratic (at least to some extent) state differs from a monarchic one as its citizens with the right to vote are the supreme power while in the monarchic state the supreme power is the monarch's will based on his peculiar rights and privileges. That is why the democratic lifestyle is necessarily associated with a regular transfer of power or replacement of government when such procedural moments as organization of elections, decision-making, etc. become of major importance. As for the monarchies, the questions of making and executing decisions become important at a much higher level of development.

It is worth pointing out that in their theoretical constructions Berent and Shtaerman do not give enough consideration to the specific character of democratic states in comparison with monarchies. So when they point out some features of Athens and Rome (for example, short term of office) as proofs of the absence of a state in these societies they do not take into account that such traits were in fact quite typical of other democratic states (the Italian medieval republics in particular). In other words, some features that make Athens and Rome different from the oriental states are not the differences between states and stateless polities but the differences between the democratic early states and monarchic ones.

NATURALNESS OF THE DEMOCRATIC PATH OF STATE FORMATION AND ITS EVOLUTIONARY NARROWNESS

TRANSFORMATION OF A *POLIS* INTO A STATE

As it is generally recognized, many elements of primitive democracy existed in the hunters-gatherers communities. Though to a lesser extent, democracy was spread rather widely among primitive farmers and cattle-breeders. The stratification into nobility and common people, the wealthy and the poor, those having more rights and less rights as well as the growth of the society in territory and population, pushed it aside significantly. However, due both to the long-standing tradition and difficulty for power usurpation, **democracy remained one of natural paths of politogenesis³ for quite a long period.**

The 'choice' of the democratic form of political organization was determined by various reasons, actually by a complex set of them. Some of these reasons will be discussed later on. One of the most important of them is the community's geographic location as it can become an obstacle on the way of smaller polities' integration into larger ones (*e.g.*, Korotayev 1995).

The *polis* belonged to such small polities. '*Polis* is a comparatively small community (several hundred to several thousand) of citizens, whose main occupation was farming, which was the basis of the *polis* economy' (Koshelenko 1983: 30). It is easy to see that such a *polis* is *an inherently pre-state polity* (Grinin 2003c) from the point of view of the state formation stages⁴. A primitive early state usually incorporates at least from 5,000 to 6,000 people and even with that large population it is not obligatory for a society to transform into a state. **In fact, the formation of a state usually required much larger scopes.**

Consequently, the transition to the early state was connected with the growth of the *polis* in size that inevitably led to changes in organization of government.

Such an increase in size could take place:

– with the enhancement of wars and *synoecism* as a result of it. For even a small *polis* was often formed by the fusion of several

communities. The *polis* was a civic community as a rule, resulted from the merge of territorial communities (Koshelenko 1983: 36; 1987: 40; Kurbatov *et al.* 1986: 44). That was enough to tear certain traditions apart;

– after victorious conquests and as a result the enlargement of a land stock as in the case of Sparta's conquering Messenia in the 8th–7th centuries B.C. (Andreyev 1983: 201). Of course the similar cases can be observed not only in history of *poleis*. Such events happened very often during state formation process as Carneiro (1970, 1978, 2000, 2002) brought it out clearly. Early Rome is the most vivid example of a military way of development;

– in the case of availability of free land resources that promotes natural population growth (the case not typical of Greece with the exception of a few colonies, but found in early Rome where free land, the so-called *ager publicus* was always available);

– finally, with the change of the production basis, that is: a) introduction of more intensive cultures (such as olives, grapes), and, b) increase of the role of crafts, trade and work for market. This way turned out to be acceptable for Athens and a number of other *poleis*.

There is no doubt that certain important preconditions for the emergence and development of the **democratic** state already existed in the pre-state *polis*.

First, traditions in many pre-state societies were strongly democratic.

Second, in the situation of population concentration on a small territory – a typical situation for a city community – the government was based on the direct territorial closeness of people to power and the possibility for the inhabitants to participate directly in governing. It contributed quite often to the emergence of democratic forms of government as well as their evolution towards strengthening of institutionalization, formalism, of the legal and procedural components of the power function. Under certain circumstances, especially at war times, it facilitated the transition of a city community into a state. The history of *poleis* is a good illustration of my idea that **a state is born in the situation of some**

abrupt changes and serious deviations from the standard situation (Grinin 2003c: 155). Revolutions and counter-revolutions of all kinds, migrations, tyrannies and their falls, wars – all of them were able to facilitate the transition from traditional forms of regulation to state forms.

Third, in the course of time the lack of space provoked the necessity for a strict control over the number of migrants. For this reason at a certain moment the community started to restrict their inflow. This is how the ideology of special closeness of a definite number of people, the *polis* citizens, appeared: it was easier to abandon the previously used principles of differentiation according to belonging to a particular family, phratry, or tribe this way.

Fourth, the profane or restricted sacral character of the ruler (or chief) of such a community was on the whole the reason for the **weakness of the royal power**. Besides, a monarch did not have an effective coercive apparatus at his disposal. No wonder then that the Greek *basileis* lost their power. And if we turn to the history of Rome, the reasons for the comparatively easy revolutions and banishment of kings when they started to exceed their authorities will become much clearer. Thus in Rome, according to some researchers, a king: a) was a stranger; b) he had no right to demise his power to a heir; c) in line with the tradition, almost all the Roman kings were assassinated – some of them by the heirs (Nemirovsky 1962: 151–152).

To sum up, it can be stated that, just like the chief's strong power in a chiefdom contributes to the formation of a kingdom, the primitive democracy of a *polis* could grow into a democratic state. However, it should be noted that the developed democracy of a *polis* does not evolve directly out of the pre-state democracy. Using Hegel's expression, it is already the product of the negation of the negation, of a long-lasting rivalry of various tendencies: the aristocratic and demotic, tyrannical and democratic. It 'has been established long ago that the Greek *polis*, prior to acquiring the organization of a democratic state, had to pass a long way in its development, through a number of intermediate stages' (Vinogradov 1983: 394).

The political form quite often depended on particular circumstances and results of political struggle. However, it can be admitted that the democratic tendencies were enhanced by the development of crafts and trade⁵. And there is no doubt that the growth of marketability, crafts, and commerce in Athens led to the growth of political power of the *demos* which found its expression in rough political events of the early 6th century B.C. According to some researchers, in the 5th century B.C. the evolution of the Athenian *polis* resulted in overgrowing the *polis* framework by the economic and political principles, social structure, moral and political values (Gluskina 1983: 7).

EVOLUTIONARY RESTRICTIONS OF THE DEMOCRATIC PATHWAY OF STATE FORMATION PROCESS

The direct democracy (that is a non-representative one) remains optimal up to a certain level of development and a certain size of a society when population can directly participate in governing and the government can easily control the territory. That is why the states with direct (immediate) democracy could only be of a small size (see Shtaerman 1968: 670). However, small states were not the leading line of political evolution. This fact explains why such a form of government as democracy was poorly spread in history up to the recent centuries. The oligarchic and aristocratic republics (such as Carthage or Rome) could expand and become large states⁶. But that was quite a different type of democracy than in Athens and in a number of other Greek *poleis*. Yet territorial expansion made even the aristocratic republics inclined to dictatorship or monarchy as it happened in Rome.

There were some other reasons why the democratic city-states could not become a popular enough form of state government.

First, the craft-and-trade basis of society was less common than the agrarian one and less stable.

Second, because of the unstable political situation that contributed to constant changes in the state structure itself and sooner or later led it to decline.

Permanent political and constitutional overturns and revolutions were typical not only of ancient Greece. The state structure of the Italian communes was also distinguished by extraordinary changeability and represented an amazing picture against the background of medieval life where common law, immobility, and traditions were so important. A saying of those days claimed that “the Florentine law holds on from evening till morning, the Veronese – from morning till midday” (Skazkin *et al.* 1970: 240). In Florence, time of office – in any position – was from two to four months, so the city lived in the atmosphere of permanent elections (Krasnova 2000: 58).

It can also be added here that up to a certain moment the development of democracy allows a democratic state to compete with monarchies – and even win. Is it not a fact that the political and cultural achievements of Athens were associated with the development of democracy? Or take for example, Poland with its considerable political and cultural achievements in the period of the so-called ‘*szlachta* democracy’ in the 15th – 16th centuries. However, if democracy gets out of reasonable limits when according to Aristotle (*Pol.* V. 19, 1310a 3–4) people predominate over the law it may lead to a crisis of the state and its decline. This is what happened in Athens where according to Johann Droysen (1995: 18) the impossibility to introduce the slightest restrictions of the democratic liberties brought this insecure form of state organization into the most dangerous phase of its oscillation. The transition of Poland to a feudal republic headed by an elected king in the end of the 16th century (Livantsev 1968: 55) also meant the slow decline of statehood. The unrestricted freedom of the *szlachta*, when the *Sejm* delegates' unanimous vote was required for adoption of a decision, resulted in a paralysis of the state machinery. Eventually, during the long reign of Augustus III in the 18th century only one *Sejm* (in 1736) managed to complete its work while the other 13 *Sejms* were deranged because of obstruction and sabotage (D'jakov 1993: 81). As it is known, the result of this decay of the state was the partition of Poland.

The Roman *civitas* as an aristocratic republic in certain respects was considerably different from the Greek *polis*⁷. It is important to note that it never reached the completeness of democracy as it was in Athens. This aristocratic component made ancient and medieval democratic states a more stable as well as a more perspective form than the broad democracy. Thus for example, only Venice of all the Italian city-republics enjoyed internal stability and hence existed ‘probably longer than any other city-state in world history – for a whole millennium!’⁸ (Skazkin *et al.* 1970: 248). There is quite a simple explanation of this fact: the political predominance of patricians, a graded and very complex system of elections, and limited suffrage (Skazkin *et al.* 1970: 248–249). Dubrovnik is another example. This tiny city-republic on the Adriatic Sea coast existed for quite a long period in the exceptionally difficult situation of the Turkish domination in the Balkans: from the first half of the 15th till the 19th century (Mananchikova 2000: 50). The maximum of real authority in Dubrovnik was given to the Senate whose members were representatives of the most distinguished families. ‘The aristocratism of the Venetian political constitution was not the last factor to influence the aristocratic character of the Dubrovnik Senate’ (Mananchikova 2000: 55).

BERENT AND SHTAERMAN'S ARGUMENTS AND THEIR DISPROOF

Now we can proceed to discussion of the arguments according to which there was no state in Athens and the Roman Republic. To make the presentation of material more convenient I have tried to formulate the basic arguments of Berent and Shtaerman. They are numbered, indented, and italicized. There was no point to give the exact page number in the works everywhere since either some ideas are repeated many times or I give the essence of the authors' arguments given on quite a number of pages in my own formulations. I have tried to give some sufficiently detailed objections to every argument. Despite all my efforts, I could not avoid repetitions, so I beg my readers' pardon.

1. *There is no application of state apparatus and state power for exploitation (as well as control) of slaves that was a private business (Berent, p. 369–371). 'The statelessness of the Greek polis means exactly that it was not an instrument for appropriation of surplus product, and that the methods of exploitation characteristic of the early agrarian states (taxes, compulsory labor, and other obligations – L. G.) did not exist in the ancient Greek world (at least prior to the era of Hellenistic empires)' (Berent, p. 365).*

Objections. First, in a number of cases such an application of the state's potentials for exploitation and for appropriation of surplus production did take place. It was, for instance, the exploitation of state slaves in construction, as well as for the performance of the police functions and clerks (scribes, secretaries, warders, etc.) in state offices or as oarsmen and sailors (Struve *et al.* 1956: 246; Gromakov 1986: 20). Besides Athens rented the state slaves to entrepreneurs for exploiting mines and other objects. According to Xenophon it was an important source of the state income (Sergeyev 2002: 288).

Second, it should be taken into consideration that such an application was not just required at a large scale. Take for instance the United States where the state apparatus was *not* used for exploitation of black slaves in the South. Slave-owners did it perfectly well themselves. Neither they needed a special police force to catch runaway slaves – they also did it themselves or hired special people.

In Berent's argument mentioned above one can easily detect a syndrome of the Marxist idea that the primary purpose of the state is always to use its power against the oppressed classes. In fact, the need for the state can be explained by various reasons, and almost in all cases there is an external threat, conquests or other circumstances associated with foreign policy. So wars were of great importance in the formation of early states (see *e.g.*, Ambrosino 1995; Carneiro 1970, 1978). As for the appropriation of surplus production, here the old means remained effective enough for a long time.

So Berent's conclusion that there was no state if the citizens could manage slave exploitation themselves is illegitimate. The

cause-and-effect relation is quite the opposite here: if the citizens could manage quite well the exploitation of slaves and keep them in obedience, why then the state should assume this function? As a rule the state will do nothing if the situation is acceptable and the actions can be regulated by other means. It would be quite a different matter if the citizens were unable to suppress slave revolts while the Assembly or administration refused to use power of the state against the slaves. But this situation was simply impossible. On the contrary, it is known that in 462 B.C. Athens sent help headed by Cimon to Sparta to subdue the Helot revolt in Messenia.

It follows that it was quite sufficient to have a state in Athens that sanctioned slavery and did not object to keeping the slaves subdued and managed by their masters. However, when needed, the state could interfere with the master-slave relations. Thus, for example, the Solon's reforms banned slavery of citizens. The Poetelian law of 326 B.C. in Rome was similar to them (Nemirovsky 1962: 262). The Solon's laws also prohibited selling children into slavery (Kuchma 1998: 127). When the situation was tough for the state, it could grant freedom to slaves and citizenship to the semi-deprived of rights and even to slaves. Large-scale campaigns of emancipation of slaves also happened in Greek *poleis* (Fisher 1993: 67–70; Berent mentions this fact too – p. 371. See also Struve *et al.* 1956: 246). In Rome in 312 B.C. during the rule of *ensor* Appius Claudius the Roman citizenship was granted to freedmen (Bocharov 1936: 195) and during the war with Hannibal a certain number of slaves was bought out and joined the Roman troops (Kuzishchin 1994: 82).

As for the direct appropriation of surplus by the state through taxation, it is worth mentioning that *polis* states exerted this method quite actively. Athens, for instance, levied both indirect taxes on the citizens (as well as direct but in special cases only) and direct taxes on the *metics*. Every *metic* was obliged to pay the state tax of about 12 *drachmas* (Struve *et al.* 1956: 242). We will return to the question of taxes later on.

It must be added that though the production basis in Athens was to a very large degree non-agrarian, it is not rightful to insist as

Berent does throughout his article, that the means of accumulation of surplus in such a *polis* and in agrarian states were the same.

2. *'There could hardly exist a state that coincided with a community of citizens and where there was no apparatus of coercion and suppression separated from the people', 'standing above the society and guarding the interests of a single class' (Shtaerman, p. 86, 87).*

Objections. Now let us discuss the relations between classes and state. This problem literally, 'tortured' many Soviet historians who from time to time 'discovered' 'pre-class' states in different epochs and in different regions on the one hand, and classes in pre-state societies on the other.

For this reason Shtaerman's cited statement is, in fact, nothing but an objection to the attempts to discover a state that would perfectly fit the historical materialism conception of the state as an apparatus of coercion detached from the people and acting in the interests of the class of exploiters (Shtaerman, p. 77). But classes in Marxist interpretation of the notion existed neither in many early states nor, strictly speaking, in some mature states. It is not for nothing that the discussions on the Asiatic mode of production, 'the oriental type of feudalism' and similar theoretical constructions went on for decades, and their most important aim was to explain the existence of antagonistic classes in Oriental states in the situation of non-existence or poor practice of private land ownership.

However, if one applies an extended interpretation of the social classes concept, it turns out that they can be marked out in many early states⁹. By making use of such an approach one can regard the *patricians* and the *plebeians* in the Roman Republic as social classes. Besides it is necessary to mention that the state did exploit the *plebeians*, especially through military service. Therefore, though in the early Roman Republic the state also fairly coincided with the community of citizens (Shtaerman is right at this point), the population of Rome by no means coincided with the community of citizens. In other words, only a part of the inhabitants had political and economic rights.

So I think that these social groups (the *patricians* and the *plebeians*) are closer to the Marxist conception of classes than for exam-

ple, a prince and his retinue (the *druzhina*) in Kievan Rus. After all, in the first example, the *patricians* had the privileges over the *plebeians* for hundreds years in the main point according to Marxism – in the land-owning rights, *i.e.* the means of production. And in ancient Rus the prince's main advantage was in military force and status (though some scholars believe that the *druzhina* was a new social class. See *e.g.*, Shmurlo 2000: 107).

After the *plebeians* had achieved the equalizations of rights those were classes of slaves and slave-owners that developed quickly in Rome. The late Roman Republic gives us excellent examples of class struggle: the slave revolts in Sicily, the revolt of Spartacus and their merciless suppression by the state force in particular.

Probably the class division was expressed even more vividly in pre-Solon Athens of the 7th century B.C. than in early Rome: land was in the hands of aristocracy, the peasants were becoming poor and getting in debt dependence, the court as a body of reprisal was on the side of the landowners and creditors, the debtors were sold in slavery. Later, in classical Athens there always were many thousands of slaves, and also inhabitants who did not enjoy full rights (the *metics*), they paid taxes and were involved in military service (Gromakov 1986: 19) but did not participate in governing¹⁰.

Thus, the Roman Republic and Athens used the state for creating and keeping social and political inequality, economic exploitation and privileges of one group over the others, and did it not worse but even better than many other states.

3. *In Athens and Rome power was not alienated from the citizens.*

Objections. First, there are analogues of the state (*e.g.*, Hawaiian complex chiefdoms) where power is rigidly alienated from the population but there is no state (see *e.g.*, Johnson and Earle 2000; see also Grinin 2003a, 2003c: 142–144; 2004c: 99–100). Second, in democratic states the alienation of power is also available only not permanently, but temporarily in the form of delegation of power. This alienation of power is regularly authorized by a source of power presented by the voters in democracy.

In general the alienation of power from the population in the process of politogenesis occurs in different ways. The monopolization of power became the main of them, and as a result the legal power was concentrated (usurped) in the hands of a certain patrimonial group, family, narrow oligarchy. Such a system actually triumphed almost everywhere.

But also **in ancient democratic societies** in spite of the fact that the population influences the formation of administration, or even directly elects it, **the alienation of power from the people is also present** though it has specificity of its own. After all if in the states with monopoly of power, the supreme position in a society is very closely connected with a certain clan, family, or stratum, in democratic states it is the office that is permanent while the persons occupying it can fulfill the duties temporarily. Hence, if the cities needed officials, court and military leaders, **the alienation of power from the population takes place inevitably**. It is just this **very alienation of anonymous power, power of a post** with a certain balance of rights and duties that occurs but not the power of a certain clan, person, family, or anointed sovereign in the given territory.

Thus, the voluntariness of delegation of power in the *polis* and *civitas* by no means testifies automatically the state's absence. On the contrary, pure power is detached here but not in connection with certain persons, families, or clans. Besides, as Hansen fairly notices (1989: 20–21, 28) the Athenians separated the political sphere from other spheres of life. Therefore many important aspects of society were not discussed in the political assemblies. Thus 'the *polis* was a state, not a fusion of state and society' (ibidem: 21). So in the political sphere the Athenians acted as citizens and isolated themselves from *metics* and slaves. If a slave or a *metic* was caught attending a political meeting, he was sentenced, perhaps even to death. On the contrary, in the social, economic and educational spheres, they mingled with foreigners and slaves (Hansen 1989: 20–21). The religious sphere was a mixture. *Metics* and slaves were not admitted to some of the festivals. It is important to

remember that the Athenian priests (*hiereis*) were never state officials (*archai*) [ibidem: 20–21, 41].

We must not also forget that Attica was divided into ten *phylai* and each of them in its turn was composed of ten *demes* (Gromakov 1986: 30). Naturally, local affairs were decided at the assembly of *phylae* and *deme* (Gromakov 1986: 30–31; Rhodes 1993).

Though the officials in Athens and Rome differed from officials in the general modern sense, on the whole the administrative character of the state machinery's activity is obvious enough. As Max Weber (1994: 392) noted that in antiquity the common strata's complete or partial victory had an important consequence for management and the structure of political union where an 'administrative character' emerged (about Rome, see also Kuzishchin 1989: 93).

Besides the opportunity of the population to participate in political life and formal opportunity for any citizen to get the supreme positions did not mean at all that it was easy even for a talented person. Especially if those posts were unpaid or considerable expenses were required to get them. Though it was more characteristic of Rome, but in Athens the supreme magistrates of *strategi* were unpaid too, so mainly rich people were able to occupy them, as well as the positions dealing with financial management. Thus, 'being a subject of political law did not mean participation in government: the division into the governors and governed did not coincide with political participation' (Dozhdev 2000: 276).

4. *No special coercive apparatus was available in the polis and civitas.*

Objections. First, both in Athens and Rome some elements of this apparatus were available for example, the *lictors* [*lictóres*] in Rome or the police in Athens (see below). Besides in Athens and other *poleis* at the beginning of the second half of the 5th century B.C. the contingent of mercenaries was growing up and later it became the dominating one (Bocharov 1936: 195; Marinovich 1975). Gradually the irregulars fell into such a decay that no one took care even of the arms at all (Bocharov 1936: 161). But in Rome at the end of the 5th century B.C. soldiers began to receive salary and then

state arms and foodstuffs (Bocharov 1936: 195). Further, as it is known, the element of professionalism in the Roman army had been growing consequently until the army finally became wholly professional as a result of reforms of Gaius Marius at the end of the 2nd century B.C.

Second, as it has already been mentioned, to cope with slaves, such an apparatus was not even required. When it was necessary, the army perfectly carried out the function as it was in Rome during the slave revolts in the 2nd–1st centuries B.C.

Third, some means of coercion were also available for the citizens. Those were courts. The judicial authority can serve as a part of the administrative machinery, and the judicial functions can be a part of administrative ones, when for example, a governor of a province or a liege in *seignoria* concentrated the full power in his hands. However, the court can act as an independent repressive body. In monarchy, power usually aspired to control the courts. They were more independent in the *polis* and *civitas*.

It is quite possible to consider courts as an apparatus of coercion in Athens and Rome, as they gave sanction to apply force though they quite often left it to the interested part itself to execute the judgement (but in general only in civil suits). Nevertheless, it was quite enough to have such functions of the court. Anyway, both in Athens and in Rome the number of judicial lawsuits was huge and it was increasing, people were afraid of them, as well as they were afraid to ignore the judicial sessions as it could draw adverse consequences (Kuchma 1998: 131, 216).

5. *There was no government; there were no professional administrators and experts in polis (Berent). The mechanism of the executive power was insignificantly small in civitas (Shtaelman, p. 88).*

Objections. Perhaps, the reference to the weakness of their apparatus of government and violence and of the executive power on the whole, the small number of professional officials, continuous replacement of the officials is the most important argument used to prove the absence of the state in Athens and Rome. However, this argument does not work under an attentive analysis of the problem.

Actually, the number of bureaucrats in the *polis* and *civitas* was small (about Athens see *e.g.*, Finley 1977: 75) as in any non-bureaucratic state. However professional politicians were available there. Finley maintains that they 'were a structural element in Athenian political system' (1985: 69). And those were high-class professionals whose activity was an example to follow for centuries and also a base for establishing a new science about politics. 'The principle of the arrangement of *polis* assumed alongside with the national assembly ... [the presence of] groups of leaders who carried out direct implementation of work within the *polis*' (Yajlenko 1983: 180).

The officials were also available, sometimes even in a very considerable quantity. These 'functionaries of the *polis*' (Weber 1994: 393) were providing the state machinery's activity satisfactorily enough, though the system of their payment (or its absence) and designation (sometimes by lot), and also the short terms of office did not make these employees a special social group.

Thus, it is possible to say that **the state apparatus was available both in *polis* and *civitas* though it was of a specific type**. But this way of governing perfectly met the level of development of the early state and provided a competition of the given states on the external arena. The fact that the evolutionary opportunities of such political organization turned out to be weak does not mean that it was stateless. Evolutionary, the majority of the early state types and government systems turned out to be dead-end.

For example, let us consider Sparta. This type of the state, as well as its administrative system, evolutionary turned out to have no prospects even to a greater extent than a *polis* type. At the same time even the supporters of the idea of *polis* as a stateless society, hesitate over denying Sparta's state status¹¹. There was almost everything that must be in a state: the armed and 'idle' privileged minority, the exploited unarmed majority deprived of any rights, a professional army that since the 5th century B.C. had also included mercenaries (Marinovich 1975: 18–23), regular and tough violence and direct reprisals against the oppressed, the ideology of submission to the leader, the system of election and administration, rigid

control over military leaders and ambassadors; regulation of citizens' life up to their style of dressing and form of beards and moustaches (Andreyev 1983: 204–295).

But on the other hand, in Sparta we do not see several important features typical of many early states including the *polis* and *civitas*. In particular, there was no property stratification among the citizens for a long time, and also there was a direct interdiction of normal money, trade, and crafts.

The features mentioned above emphasize figuratively once again the important point that **the early state is an incomplete state. In every such polity there were some aspects missing which then arose in the mature state** (for detail, see Grinin 2004b). **Thus in every case a set of features and attributes (as well as an absence of any of them) is peculiar or even unique.**

The same applies to the presence of customary government in the *polis*. In Athens the Council of Five Hundred and the Board of Ten *Strategi* carried out the role of government, *i.e.* the executive power. Nevertheless the Athenians aspired to separation of delegated power and consequently their executive power was much weaker than in a monarchy or even in Rome. However, it does not prove the statelessness of Athens. In many early states there was no complete set of branches of power or some of them were developed more and others less. In the early monarchic states the legislative and even judicial power did not always exist as separate branches; more often the executive power comprised both of them.

If evolutionary the model has triumphed where the state administration is formed of professional officials and among the branches of power the executive one becomes the main, it does not mean that there are no other possibilities. The *polis* is one of them¹². As it was a democratic state, it is natural that the legislative and judicial powers were more developed there. So the civil executive power could be weak. The executive military power was much stronger. We shall come back in this paragraph to the detailed analysis of the state administration in Athens and Rome.

In order to find out the presence of the early state in this or that society, the main point is to determine whether there is a

political and governmental organization based on new principles, i.e. on the principles differing from those characteristic of pre-state societies. However, these new principles of government were not necessarily connected just with professional officialdom (for details about the principles see further). It is easy to find an analogy. Today the court may consist only of the professional lawyers but it also may be a jury, i.e. non-professionals, who are constantly changing and whose activity is unpaid. However, nobody will state that only the former can be called a fair court.

6. *The economic burden of the polis fell directly upon the rich rather than poor citizens (Berent). It is possible to speak about the state only in case when 'extractions and obligations become compulsory and are strictly spread on a certain part of society (peasants, craftsmen)' (Shtaerman, p. 93).*

Objections. As it is known, in Athens and other *poleis*, the citizens did not pay direct taxes, except some extraordinary (only customs duties, trade taxes, and so on). But there were so-called *liturgies*, i.e. the rich people's duty to pay for any common activity or to do something for the whole society at their own expense: to construct and repair ships, to organize festivals, games, competitions and so on. However, the *metics* and the freedmen paid direct taxes including extraordinary ones and they were also involved in some *liturgies* alongside with the citizens (Struve *et al.* 1956: 263–264; Gromakov 1986: 19).

In any case, the fact that in Athens the economic obligations were borne basically by the rich people, in my opinion cannot be a serious argument against the presence of the state there. Otherwise, we should deny the presence of the state in many modern countries where the rich citizens pay basic taxes directly or indirectly. The fact that the *polis* in a certain sense supported the majority of the population, that is *demos*, is really not typical of ancient states but on the whole it is not a unique case among states. Do not modern states provide many advantages to the majority of the population and modern *demos*? Do not the solvent tax bearers complain today that the state distributes social allowance and other help too gener-

ously at their expense? This is a distinctive feature of a broad democracy.

By the way, tyrants frequently aspired to impose tax burden on the rich part of the population (Berve 1997), and Berent considers tyrannies as polities of a type close to the state (p. 367, 372).

The same can be said about Rome. If noble or rich people paid more for the rent of public lands, they used them more. It was their privilege. If they bore expenses for elections and performance of public positions, they tried to get these posts by any means. But it is significant to mention that since a certain moment Rome (and Athens since the moment of the Delian League formation) had received the main incomes from tributary lands as it was in the Assyrian, Inca, or Aztec empires as well as in some other early states.

Athens and the Roman Republic are also good examples of application of the state structure in political and social struggle between rich and poor people. However, the results of such confrontations and conflicts are not predetermined. In other words, it is wrongful to think that rich people should always win. Even in large empires there happened victorious revolts of peasants and slaves in the past and there were revolutions that resulted in the socially oppressed classes coming to power in the 20th century. In *poleis* and *civitas* the outcome of the struggle between groups of the citizens depended on many variables. It is natural that the victorious part of the citizens began to use the state to change their status and to secure the results of the victory. As Karl Kautsky wrote, 'the class struggle becomes here (in the states of Greece – *L. G.*) a vital element of existence of the state. Participation in such struggle was not considered reprehensible but, on the contrary, it became a performance of the civil duty. In Athens since Solon's time there had been a law in effect that everyone who at a break of the internal struggle did not join any party and did not defend it with the weapon in hands, lost his civil rights' (Kautsky 1931: 334–335; see also Aristotle, *Ath. Pol.* 8.5).

And although evolutionary the states with political domination of ruling groups combined with their economic superiority began to prevail however, there is no absolute correlation here. For ex-

ample, in modern societies one part of population can force the other to agree with its requirements through elections. Therefore there is not any reason to regard the state as an organization where one part of a society **constantly** predominates. It is more correct to consider the state as an organization that helps one part of population force constantly or **temporarily** the other part to agree with its wishes, or both parts meet a compromise. If one applies such an approach, it will not be a surprise that the *demos* established its political supremacy in Athens.

7. *In the polis 'application of violence is not monopolized by an agency or a ruling class, and the ability to use force is more or less evenly distributed among the armed or potentially armed population' (Berent, p. 364). In Rome 'coercion was applied only sporadically', and 'in time of distempers the matters were solved in street fights without intervention of governmental bodies' (Shtaerman, p. 87, 88).*

Objections. The *monopoly of legitimate application of physical coercion* (Weber) is missing not only in many early states¹³ but also in the mature ones. Did not a serf-owner in Russia or slave-owner in the Southern States have the right to apply violence towards their serfs and slaves? So, such a monopoly cannot be a distinctive attribute of either the early state or the state in general. As Ernest Gellner notes fairly, this Max Weber's principle obviously takes the centralized state of the Western type as a sample although there are states that neither wish nor are capable of ensuring the observance of such monopoly (Gellner 1991: 28–29). Or we should rather add, they do not consider it necessary and do not aim at it.

However, on the whole in the state formation process there was an evident tendency towards exactly the state concentrating the right **to recognize guilt or innocence, to authorize the application of coercion on the part of individuals so that it would not be an obvious arbitrariness** (for example, towards a slave, a debtor and so on). So it is not only the monopoly of application of coercion that is typical of an early state but the **concentration** of lawful application of force. It could be expressed in monopoly on **some kinds** of application of lawful violence (for example, in exe-

cution of judicial verdicts) or in monopoly on the authority **sanction** to apply force even if a verdict was carried out by the interested part, or in **interdiction of some types** of violence (for example, regarding the blood feud; see *e.g.*, about the Aztec state [Kurtz 1984: 307]) and so on.

A certain (and rather considerable) concentration of legitimate compulsion and violence took place in Athens and other *poleis*, as well as in Rome. The power there first of all aspired to supervise the distribution of the sanction to violence. If the interested parties or activists were able to deliver the accused people to the court themselves, it meant that no special state apparatus was required for this purpose. In this case a more important fact is not that the citizens had arms and quite often arrested the accused or criminals to deliver them to the court but that the body that pronounced judgment on the culpability or innocence, *i.e.* the court, as well as the execution of death penalty verdicts, both were in hands of the state.

Thus, a developed apparatus of coercion is not strictly obligatory for an early state. However it is evident that in the process of state system development the combination of the tendency towards monopolization of the right for violence on the one hand, and the formation of special bodies of violence on the other hand, reveals itself as evolutionary leading and becomes the most widespread factor.

As for the settlement of disputes between groups of the citizens in 'street fights' it was not only typical of the Roman Republic but it took place in other states too. In the Novgorod Republic in ancient Rus parties of aristocrats (*boyars*) were at enmity and sometimes a meeting finished in fights of debaters ([Bernadsky] 1967: 268; Froyanov and Dvornichenko 1986: 235, 238). But it is not an argument to name Novgorod a stateless society.

8. *In polis the imperious actions depend on the correlation of strength of different social groups and groupings of the citizens. On the contrary, in agrarian states the overwhelming majority is discharged of power and main political actions are carried out between parts of elite (Berent).*

Objections. It is necessary to take into account once again that *polis* is a democratic state. Any democracy, especially the one where it is honorable to have political rights, is always connected with the electorate power.

Thus, we come back to the problem **whether the early state should only be the means of dictatorship of a social (class) minority or there can be alternatives.** I believe that though the first case was more spread and evolutionary dominant, the situation could turn the other way round.

However, it is necessary to emphasize that even in the mature states of the East the state rather frequently acted as an independent supra-class and supra-estate force. As Alayev fairly remarks, in the medieval Asia ‘the state as an apparatus was not the representative of class interests of feudal lords (rent receivers as a whole) but on the contrary, was a structure built over the main classes’ (1995: 623). So people of the lowest ranks together with their supporters can take the helm of state machine when a revolt or revolution succeeded.

Thus, the general features of the state as a machine that can be conducted by different forces were available both in democratic and monarchic societies. The only difference is that in the former such a rotation occurred regularly while in the latter it was casual.

Undoubtedly, in the monarchic states in most cases ‘*the main political actions took place among parts of elite*’. But let me point out that the more despotic the state is the smaller is the role played by parts of elite. And the main intrigues sometimes are simply transferred to the palace or harem of a sovereign. So basically, the elite is already removed from influencing the decision-making process. Besides, a reshuffle of personnel structure took place quite often in bureaucratic states and thousands of officials lost positions and power.

On the other hand, when the power was in more difficult situations, decisions were taken very frequently on the basis of ‘*correlation of strength of different social groups*’ and their wishes. Then the parliaments, *Estates General*, *Zemskij sobor* (the analogue of States General in Russia), and similar bodies were called.

In the *polis* much depended on the correlation of power of the citizens' different social groups and groupings. The vector of its social policy depended on those who possessed the state power at a definite moment. Such a system is rather typical of some medieval states for example, Italian city-republics. Were there not many turnabouts in the social and economic policy in the 20th century because of the political victory in elections of a certain party? Was it not the way Nazism had been established in Germany? Was it not in Chile in 1970 when socialists came to power? But anyway, in modern societies the state is better conceived as an arena where competing groups struggle to gain a greater share of social power but it is not an instrument under the collective control of a dominant class (Stuart-Fox 2002: 136).

Thus, in *polis* and in the Roman Republic (if we ignore the separation of the slaves and people not possessing full rights from participation in public life) **the state acted as a special machine, as a special means of implementing the goals of the groups that temporarily became its masters.** Meanwhile in most cases the state was a patrimony of certain royal families having the specific sacral rights. Such a system ideologically unacceptable for us, at the same time was evolutionary much more stable and consequently progressive than the democratic *polis* system which is ideologically closer to us.

However, we would like to argue once again that it is impossible to consider the evolutionary crystallized type of the state as the only type of the state in general.

ATTRIBUTES DISTINGUISHING THE EARLY STATE FROM ITS ANALOGUES IN APPLICATION TO THE *POLIS* AND *CIVITAS*

From my point of view, in order to prove that Athens and the Roman Republic were early states despite all their specificity, **it is also important to show that the four attributes I have formulated to distinguish an early state from its analogues (Grinin 2002b, 2003c: 145–161; 2004c: 105–119) are characteristic of *poleis* and *civitas*.** The analysis of the state structure and political

functioning of Athens and the Roman Republic in such respect provides additional proves for the argument that they were just early states but not analogues.

I remind that I pointed out four distinctive attributes of the early states:

- specific properties (attributes) of the supreme power;
- new principles of government;
- non-traditional and new forms of regulating social life;
- redistribution of power.

Specific properties of the supreme power

Regardless of the way the political system of Athens and Rome can be interpreted, the supreme power in these societies undoubtedly demonstrates sufficient might, completeness of functions, and ability to self-reforming. Sometimes there were too many changes and they happened too often that made power for example, in Athens quite unstable.

But the role of the supreme power is different in large and small states. For small states like Athens, the supreme power as I have already mentioned, is something quite inaccurate from the geographical point of view (Grinin 2002b: 27). Actually, Athens gradually became the geographical center because of her hegemony in the Delian League.

But in terms of supreme rights the strength of this power in Athens is quite obvious. The supreme source of power, *i.e.* the assembly of citizens (*ecclesia*), and bodies to delegate its power are available. It is combined with a precise order and special procedure of making, processing, approving, and canceling decisions as well as of their performance supervision. It is significant to remark that the power structure and system of division of powers is getting more and more complicated in the course of time.

The role of the supreme power is self-evident in large states. The center of an empire is the largest center of power affecting somehow all peripheries. The city of Rome gradually became such a center. The orders proceeded from there and also the governors were sent to the provinces, settlers left for the dependent lands, the

victorious armies with loot came back there, grain and other products from the conquered territories were also delivered there.

The specific properties of the supreme power do not mean that it always acts reasonably, far-sighted, in the interests of the society, and so on. The main point here is that the supreme power can impose its will, change important relations in a society, mobilize its forces to solve the major tasks, levy or cancel taxes, and so on. Whom such a will proceeds from (the monarch, aristocracy, national assembly, senate, etc.) depends on the state structure. But the important point here is that this is a) the will of not hundred percent of a society; b) the decisions or requirements stated by this will are the most legitimate; c) in order to change the already existing provisions, the decision of the same supreme power and a special procedure are required; d) disobedience to this will and moreover, denying its rights is considered as a serious offence and is punished severely. In particular, in Athens in 410 B.C. a special law was adopted which declared a public enemy everyone who would try to depose the democratic regime of Athens or take any post during the deposition of democracy. Those who were guilty of this crime were to be subjected to death penalties and their property was to be confiscated. Everyone could easily kill such a malefactor and receive half of his property. After the deposition of the government of the Thirty Tyrants this law was complemented by the permission to inform against those threatening democracy (Berve 1997: 261–264; Vipper 1995: 253).

Both in Athens and Rome we see that the supreme power turns out to be capable to implement active foreign policy and sustained wars, mobilize resources, impose new taxes or cancel them, change radically the political regime and territorial arrangement, expand as it was in Rome or narrow the civil rights as it was in Athens, change the property relations¹⁴, etc.¹⁵ It can be rather severe towards the citizens: to exile innocent people (the *ostracism* in Athens), hand them over to the court, confiscate their property.

New principles of government

a) New phenomena in formation of the government apparatus

As it has been noted, not all the early states were bureaucratic ones. Some of them were not bureaucratic at all because of their small

size (for example, the Anglo-Saxon states in the 7–8th centuries (Blair [1966]: 240–241) or their bureaucratization was relatively weak, especially in the conquered territory as in the states like the Aztecs' (Johnson and Earle 2000: 306). I consider it wrong not to refer such polities to the early states. Therefore I tried to describe the new principles of government as generalized as possible in order to make them more eligible for both bureaucratic and non-bureaucratic states.

Let me remind that I have pointed out **the new approaches to the administrative body (and/or armies) formation** among the new principles of government (Grinin 2002b, 2003c: 151–152; 2004c: 110–111). It means that essential changes occurred in the methods of selection for administrative and military posts in the early states; and also that the importance of the new types of functionaries and warriors increased there in contrast to the situation in state analogues. However, these changes in government are not connected everywhere with the presence of professional officials, police, regular army, etc. In many cases these institutions have been replaced with others.

For example, there were many functionaries and officials but few career officers in Athens and Rome. Though the apparatus of management and coercion in Athens and Rome was not so powerful as in bureaucratic countries, it was still quite numerous, especially in Athens. In the 4th century B.C. there lived only 200,000 people including slaves and *metics*. At the same time many hundreds of citizens were directly involved in administration (being elected or chosen by lot). If those who took part in sessions in turn (as in the Council of Five Hundred where only fifty members worked permanently during the 1/10 of a year) were added, the number of functionaries would go over a thousand. The technical staff like secretaries was also available in the Council of Five Hundred. Besides many officials operated outside Athens (in the interests of the Navy and on diplomatic matters). According to Aristotle (*Ath. Pol.* 24.3), the number of such people was up to 700. Besides, each of the ten *phylai* and each of the hundred demes had some officials (Gromakov 1986: 30).

There was also a judicial body (*heliaia*) of 6,000 (!) judges (but actually they were not professionals. The members of the court

were selected by lot)¹⁶. There were also 30 judges in every deme (Gromakov 1986: 30).

So the main difference between Athens and Rome on the one hand and a bureaucratic state on the other is in the methods of staffing, replacement and payroll payment of the officials. However, it is exceptionally important to point out that the *poleis* and *civitas* form of government differed greatly from the pre-state and state-analogue forms and should be regarded as an early state. Let us give a more detailed consideration to this point.

One of the major innovations of the Athenian administration was that the absolute majority of officials and judges received salary. Due to this the major part of citizens could be supported. According to Aristotle, over 20,000 people were getting allowances from the state treasury. Besides the officials mentioned above, there were 1,600 archers plus 1,200 horsemen... When the war started later on, in addition to them there were 2,500 *hoplites*, twenty patrol ships, plus ships for transportation of 2,000 garrison soldiers, ... and also warders in prisons (Aristotle, *Ath. Pol.* 24.3). Moreover, the citizens began to receive payment for visiting national assemblies and other public events.

We can give examples of pre-state and state-analogue polities where officials were selected by voting or by lot. There were also officials among them, particularly judges who got some compensation (for example, in medieval Iceland). However, I do not know examples of non-state polities where the administrative posts were so widely used to keep the citizens' well-being (the analogy with socialist states where everybody was either a state worker or an employee can be drawn at this point). According to Vipper's calculations, about 150 talents that is 3/8 of the local (only Athenian) budget, or 1/7 including the allies' payments, were spent on this purpose during the rule of Pericles (Vipper 1995: 215).

The fact that the Athenian polity supported its citizens at the expense of the taxes levied on the allies, state ownership and taxes imposed on the *metics*, proves once again that it was an organization acting in the interests of not the whole but a part of the popula-

tion also aimed at exploitation of other polities. In other words, it was an early state.

The repressive apparatus was also available. For example, the total number of police sub-units in Athens was initially 300 and later 1,200 people (Kuchma 1998: 121–122). Though certainly it was not police from the modern point of view (Hansen 1991: 124).

Thus, some new principles of government were present in Athens. Though there were not so many professional managers, some of them usually occupied the supreme positions (in particular, those of *strategi*) and the others provided the continuity of management in various bodies as technicians. It is worth reminding once again that the army gradually became totally professional.

Quite a considerable number of officials were available in Rome too and it was growing constantly (though on the whole there were much fewer officials than in Athens). Meanwhile, the hierarchical structure of magistrates had been becoming more and more harmonious and distinct. The special Roman officials (the *prefects*) worked in a number of Italic communities.

Unlike in Athens, most of the offices in Rome were unpaid. But, the executive power was stronger there than in Athens. The range of *consuls'* authorities was always significant and their power was simply unlimited in wartime including the right to adjudicate the death sentences that were irreversible (outside Rome). On the whole, a governor of a province, *proconsul* or *propraetor*, had all the dictatorial authorities, *i.e.* full military, administrative, police, and fiscal power.

In addition, it is noteworthy that in Rome the magisterial service was unpaid but it was combined with the fact that according to the approved regulation all the officials had a certain number of low-ranked employees (*apparitores*) paid from the state treasury. When a change of magistrate took place this entire staff passed to the disposal of a new chief. The *lictors* who performed the security functions and those of the guard of honor were the most important among low-ranked employees. They could detain offenders and punish them if a high-rank official ordered. The number of *lictors* ran from six to twenty-four depending on the rank of magistrate. In

addition to the *lictors* the magistrate was also given messengers, heralds, secretaries, clerks, accountants, and others. State slaves were given for the affairs humiliating free people (Kuchma 1998: 165–166).

It is also significant that though the term of office for Roman magistrates was limited (normally a year) and it was forbidden for a person to occupy several supreme posts in a row, however this rule was not strictly observed or actually was not observed at all (Mommsen 1993: 41). Moreover, the senate had the right (which was used widely) to expand the officials' authorities after the expiration of the term of their service (however not in the city of Rome). The main point here is that since the 4th century B.C. it had been approved that 'all those who had performed the duties of *consul*, *ensor*, *praetor*, or *curule aedile* were obligatorily included into the structure of the Senate after the term of office had been over' (Mommsen 1993: 42). Taking into account that the rank of senator was lifelong and that *proconsuls* and *propraetors* got appointments in provinces, basically from the former magistrates, it turned out that a man elected for one of supreme magistracies for a year actually was included in the layer of governors for his whole life. The law on the order of magistrate operation of 180 B.C. strengthened the role of the Senate in the promotion of nominees for positions (Kuzishchin 1994: 92).

Hence, it is quite possible to speak about a certain stratum of professional governors in Rome, and to provide such professional governors for the state was a tradition in many families. This layer gradually managed to use its official position for deriving some material benefits (Utchenko 1965: 125; Vipper 1995: 287–292).

The tendency of the Roman army towards becoming regular and professional has already been discussed.

b) Other changes

A new feature wide-spread in *poleis* and *civitas*, **the reporting of the officials and supervision of their activity**, should be noted. For example, every four years the senators in Rome were approved again in their positions on the basis of the decision of special offi-

cials. (About such supervision in the Roman Republic see *e.g.*, Mommsen 1993: 42; Vipper 1995: 287–291).

It is also easy to notice in Athens and Rome the development and increasing importance of other new principles of management:

- *delegation of power*;
- *new distribution of administrative functions (separation of decision-making from execution)*.

Besides, one can also point out some other changes in management. It was especially expressed in the development (sometimes even hyperdevelopment) of the procedure. It is necessary to note that **the increasing complication of government inevitably leads to a certain formalization and complication of the procedural component of making, executing, and checking decisions as well as management in general (actually just this is the process of bureaucratization)**. However, in many city-states, including of course the *polis* and *civitas*, such formalization sometimes becomes more important and more complex than even in some classical states. Thus, in city-states there still was available an important element of bureaucratization.

A high degree of development of the procedural part is characteristic of Athens and Rome. In particular, in Athens decisions of the Assemblies were recorded and kept in archives. A citizen could protest this decision as ‘unlawful’ by submitting a special complaint within a year. There were some rules of speeches for orators, and the Assembly chairman could fine the orator for their violation. It is necessary to point out the officials’ accounts (and not only financial) including those of every member of the Council of Five Hundred as well as obligatory check of those assuming the office (Kuchma 1998: 119–120; Gromakov 1986: 24–25).

In Rome somehow even a more complex procedure was used. While in Athens the majority of appointments were defined by lot, in Rome filling a post was always connected with competition during election campaigns. Therefore there was a special system of admitting candidates to elections and a number of special laws forbidding unfair methods of pre-election struggle. The sanction for such infringements was a ten years exile¹⁷. The majority of the of-

officials were to submit reports after abdication as it was in Athens, and in case of detection of any abuses they could be punished (Kuchma 1998: 157–159).

In Rome a rigid hierarchy of magistrate positions bringing together its administrative system contributed to the final establishment of the bureaucratic states.

The officials both in Athens and Rome did not have any special rights for a post (justified by a tradition, kin ties, etc. as it used to happen in other societies). This right arose only as a result of delegation of authorities from the source of state power (the national assemblies, the Senate and etc.). Certainly it was a weak point but also an advantage. This may be the reason why there were practically no cases of separatism in the history of republican Rome and Athens (of course I mean only the Athens polity proper but not the Athenian navy).

It is necessary to note that development of the procedural part in bureaucratic societies usually resulted in the improvement of the system (form) of transmitting the orders through the hierarchical ladder of employees as well as through the procedure of control and report. Say, the order of inheritance to the throne, appointment for supreme posts in the state, the volume of power given to officials and so on, were regulated much more rarely. Probably it is connected with the fact that the right for the throne and for supreme power in monarchies was based not on acts of the law or juridical collisions but on sacralization of the ruler or on the fist law. Besides in monarchies the executive power did not want any restrictions upon its activity (consequently the state and legal intention did not develop in this direction).

On the contrary, in democratic states the citizens were always preoccupied with the problem of escaping subordination to the executive power. That is why they tried to secure themselves. Sometimes it got features of excessive complexity. For example, in Venice in 1268 the governor (*doge*) was elected in the following way. The Big Council chose thirty people from its staff who in their turn selected nine people to elect forty electors among the Council members and non-members. Then those forty people chose twelve

to elect forty-five people who in their turn selected eleven and, at last those eleven defined forty-one people who finally named the *doge* (Skazkin *et al.* 1970: 249).

Non-conventional and new forms of social life regulation

It is possible to point out the following non-conventional and new forms of regulation of life in the *polis* and *civitas*:

- increasing regulation of life by the Assembly, the Senate, officials including a growth of importance of compulsion and interdictions for the population outgoing from the officials;

- amplification of the court's importance;

- quite often reforms;

- constant changes in laws. It is worth mentioning that there was the so-called Board of *archons* of nine people in Athens. The main duty of six of them was to provide annual reports to the Assembly on contradictions and gaps in the law currently in force alongside with proposals on their rectification (Kuchma 1998: 120). It is worth marking out a huge role of the Roman *praetors'* lawmaking activity as they actually created a new type of law (Kossarev 1986: 21, 44–47);

- increasing importance of compulsion and supervision of execution including the institution of supervision over the activity of officials (exile, reporting);

- monitoring loyalty of the population through spying (the *sycophants* in Athens);

- large citizens' involvement in state activities.

All that led to a gradual change in various spheres of life including 'control and regulation of some areas of social activity which in stateless societies are exclusive prerogatives of kin groups' (Kurtz 1978: 183), for example family relations. In particular, Solon's laws are an excellent example of such interference. Besides one can observe the process of replacing traditions by political will, that is by assemblies' decisions, new laws, and new bodies. So one can observe a growth of the rational aspect in reforming the society regardless of traditions and other stagnancy. One of this process indicators is 'people's deliberate choice of so-

cial intermediaries for forced regulation of civil cases' (Kurbatov *et al.* 1986: 67).

Both the character of political life and means of its regulation are under change in the new state *polis*. While in the Homeric *polis* according to Andreyev (1976: 104–105), everybody struggled against everybody and the struggle of noble clans among themselves was in the first place (Koshelenko 1987: 45), in the democratic state the struggle between social and political but not patrimonial groups started to predominate. It was a new phenomenon, too. The new laws, bodies and procedural rules start becoming the means of regulation the leaders' and political groups' power and opportunity to provide a compromise between, and rotation of the officials.

It is important to note that in the Homeric *polis* according to some researchers, 'there was almost no "legal basis" protecting a person and property' (Koshelenko 1987: 45). Hence, the emergence of the state in this aspect also meant the enhancement of 'a legal basis' as a new instrument of life regulation. The court served as the drive gear in the work of this new instrument.

Ernest Gellner (1983: 4) believed the state to be a specialized and concentrated force to maintain the order. 'The state is that very institution or set of institutions specifically concerned with enforcement of the order. The state exists where specialized order-enforcing agencies, such as **police forces and courts**, have separated from the rest of social life. **They are the state**' (emphasis added – *L. G.*) I have already mentioned that the early state is first of all connected with providing sovereignty and external safety. However, the Gellner's idea makes some sense.

Just in this aspect the ancient societies give us a good example proving that we are dealing with real states. While police was not a very important body, the court achieved a high degree of development and significance. The court acted as the major body for keeping the internal order and regulation of social life. Otherwise what would 6,000 judges of *heliaia* do in Athens? 300 sessions of court per year (see Koshelenko 1987: 69) is a large figure for a *polis* of 200,000–250,000 inhabitants. It is not casual that in societies

where exchange relations are well developed, the court plays a much more important part than in others. It was not occasional that a special trade court and most likely, a special trade legislation were available there (Struve *et al.* 1956: 263). But the court preserved not the economic order only. In Athens in the classical and subsequent periods the court protected the democratic regime itself as a citizen could process a legal case against anybody whom he suspected to damage state interests. No law in Athens could come into force without an approval of *heliaia* (Gromakov 1986: 25) and in this sense it was like the French courts (*parlements*). The court was even used as a body of international relations as for Athens it was a means of supervising the allies (Golubtsova 1983a: 363, 364).

Redistribution of power

Elsewhere, I defined **redistribution of power as the 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 power, as well as of material resources, is concentrated** (Grinin 2003c: 56–59; 2004c: 115–119).

The redistribution of power in the early states (especially small ones) is connected with the struggle for superiority between different centers (bodies) of power or their unstable coexistence. In Athens the redistribution of power is expressed in the struggle of groups of population and bodies through which they can influence the state. Respectively some bodies get more rights while others lose them. For example, in Athens in the 5th century B.C. we observe the increase of the National Assembly's role and decrease of that of the body of aristocracy, *Areopagus*, as well as of the aristocracy's positions in general. According to Aristotle, in the 7th century B.C. the Areopagite Council took charge of the majority of the most important matters in the state peremptory imposing penalties and punishments on all breakers of order. But later, by the end of the 5th century B.C. it had almost lost any political significance and had turned into a special court for trials of cases related to religion.

Moreover, due to the change in the system of staffing, it also lost the role of the main body of the oligarchy (Aristotle, *Ath. Pol.* 3.6; Koshelenko 1987: 44, 68). Frankly speaking, this process was irregular and rough. In particular, during the period of 478–462 B.C. the influence of *Areopagus* increased again and finally weakened as a result of activities of Ephialtes, Conon, Themistocles and others (see Aristotle, *Ath. Pol.* 25.1–3; for the description of the struggle between noble clans and also between nobles and the *demos* in the 6th century B.C., see Zelyin 1964).

The whole history of Athens can be represented as the process of redistribution of power from aristocracy and outstanding people to the *demos* and the poor: the Solon's reforms that strengthened the foundation of democracy; the distribution of funds to the *demos*; the law on exile (*ostracism*); the right of the population to participate in operation of courts; the obligation of rich people to give money for state affairs; the restriction on the number of people enjoying the right of citizenship; development of the system of informing about the citizens' loyalty; introduction of death penalty for an attempt on democratic regime; introduction of payment for visiting national assemblies at the beginning of the 4th century (for the latter see Kovalyov 1936: 289; Struve *et al.* 1956: 399), and so on.

Certainly, the process of redistribution of power from aristocracy and rich people to the poor cannot be really completed. However, in Athens it went too far and that was one of the reasons why the Athenian early state was unable to transform into mature one like the Roman.

The other lines in redistribution of power are also evident in the history of Athens (as well as of Rome). In particular, it is worth mentioning the struggle of the National Assembly against concentration of too much power in hands of any bodies or people. The famous law on exile (*ostracism*) was aimed at it. Either the struggle of groups meant additional bodies or additional representation. For example, the tribunes of the *plebs* (*tribuni plebis*) in Rome were of this kind. The other point was the satisfaction of the democratic layers' demands to introduce the written fixation of legislation as it

was with Draco's code in Athens and the Law of the Twelve Tables in Rome (Frantsev 1956: 672; Kuzishchin 1994: 56).

In Athens and in some other large *poleis* since the 5th century the process of redistribution of power had started moving in the classical direction because of the growth of their significance as centers of the Delian League (the Athenian navy) and the Peloponnesian League. In this case, the redistribution of power from the allies to such *poleis* is observed. However, this process did not go too far.

The classical process of redistribution of power from the periphery to the center began in Rome on an earlier stage than in Greece states and made it possible to reinforce the state mechanism and make it steadier. However, in Rome there was also a struggle for determination of the bodies' authorities and for the predominant role among those bodies. From this point of view it is interesting to trace the development of the Senate that gradually transformed the national assemblies (not so powerful as the Greek ones) into a secondary body though formally these assemblies remained the supreme power holder. Theodor Mommsen wrote: 'Little by little the Senate had actually appropriated the right to cancel the decisions of a community under the pretext that the community later on would approve its decision, but the consent of a community normally was not asked after that' (Mommsen 1993: 42; see also Andreyev 1989: 73; Utchenko 1965: 85). The power of the Senate had become extensive, especially since 354 B.C. when it included the supreme magistrates upon the termination of their service. 'War and peace, contracts, an appointment of the commander-in-chief, organization of colonies, all the finance management issues were in the Senate's competence, the Senate did not interfere only judicial cases, military issues, and current administration' (Mommsen 1993: 42) as it was the prerogative of magistrates.

In Rome the process of redistribution of power then developed according to the empire pattern when Rome joined Italic territories one by one and one province after another. Respectively Rome as the victor appointed absolute governors, redistributes lands, imposed taxes and plundered that territory (especially provinces), and so on. Eventually in Rome the concentration of power over huge

conquered territories, as well as the concentration of slaves in Italy, reached such a high level that the whole state structure could not survive. A reorganization was required. So in the late 2nd and during the whole 1st century B.C. Rome saw attempts of radical reforms, dictatorships, civil and allied wars, slave revolts, reprisals and proscriptions – all that what finally led to such changes.

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NOTES

¹ If not indicated otherwise, all the quotations from Berent are taken from (Berent 2004), from Shtaerman are from (Shtaerman 1989).

² Of course, there is not enough evidence on the domestic affairs and political history of the Delphic *polis*. However there are some points able to prove this assumption: the great role the Delphic oracle played in the community life, the control over the temple property and lands exercised by so-called Amphictyonic League (Delphic Amphictyony that consisted of representatives of different Greek tribes); the small size and military weakness of this polity and also the other states' interference in its affairs (Gluskina 1983a).

³ It was offered to use the term 'politogenesis' to denote the formation of a complex political organization of any type, and the term 'state formation process' – for the description of the formation of the state proper that should be viewed as a narrower and more specific process (Bondarenko, Grinin, and Korotayev 2002; Grinin 2001, 2002a; see also Bondarenko and Korotayev 2000b).

⁴ For such *poleis* only would be right the statement of Claessen (2002: 104) that *poleis* as well as chiefdoms and large big-man conglomerates were earlier forms of organization than state.

⁵ On the exceptionally tight connection of the development of navigation, commerce, the demographic growth and statehood in ancient Greek *poleis* during the pre-classical period see *e.g.*, Kurbatov *et al.* 1986: 40–43.

⁶ By the way, one cannot help mentioning the resemblance of the state structures in Carthage and Rome (as well as their similarity with Greek *poleis*), and this fact is pointed out by many researchers (Harden 1971: 72; Tsirkin 1987: 105–106; Vipper 1995: 266–267). This resemblance was already noticed by Aristotle (see Dovatur 1965: 12).

⁷ According to Rousset's opinion, in Rome a more distinctly expressed state system proper appeared very early with the conception of the Senate and some magistrates' particular power (especially of the supreme ones with their typical *imperium*). This power could be opposed to the citizens' will (Rousset 1976; also see Koshelenko 1983: 23).

⁸ It is quite possible that the Phoenician city-states existed longer but they were monarchic and not republican polities.

⁹ In any case, considerable **social inequality supported (or authorized) by the state, was present in every early state**. Actually, theorists of the early state emphasized the presence of at least two such classes (the rulers and the ruled) in the early state as its obligatory attribute (Claessen 2002: 103; Claessen and Skalnik 1978a; see also Majak 1989: 95–96).

¹⁰ According to Erenberg's calculations, in 360 B.C. in Athens there were 85–120,000 citizens (of all ages and both sexes), 25–50,000 *metics* (including women, children and old men), and 60–100,000 slaves (see Koshelenko 1983: 35; for some other points of view regarding the population of Athens in the 5th–6th centuries B.C. see also Struve *et al.* 1956: 241; Finley 1977: 54–55). Summing up different calculations Koshelenko writes that the majority of students consider slaves to constitute from one quarter up to 43 % of the population in Attica (1987: 57–58).

¹¹ This is Berent's indistinct position revealed both in the articles and his doctoral thesis. He definitely refers to Athens and other *poleis* as to non-state polities but hesitates either to reject Sparta's state status or to recognize it as a state for rather doubtful reasons (see: Berent 1994: 181–200). In any case he regards Sparta as the exception among other *poleis*, and that would require a special discussion (Berent, p. 382, note 6).

¹² Some Italian republics of the 13th–15th centuries can be regarded as another variant when a foreigner was invited as a military leader, judge, etc. usually for a year. He brought all his staff (including notaries, judges, etc.) and property with him, and the city paid his service and charges. So a significant part of the executive power was annually replaced too (Skazkin *et al.* 1970). In the Novgorod republic they had something similar when a prince with his retinue were invited.

¹³ For example *Russkaja Pravda* (Russian Law) of Yaroslav the Wise (11th century) recognized the blood feud (Shmurlo 2000: 112); the same can be said about the laws of Moses in Israel (Annens 1994: 32–33).

¹⁴ For example, in the 4th century B.C. in Rome the laws of Licinius and Sextius were adopted which limited the possession in a public field up to a norm of 500 jugers (approximately 125 ha [Kovalyov 1936: 81; Nemirowsky 1962: 261]). At the end of the 2nd century B.C. the Gracchi brothers have renewed with some amendments (about them see Nechay 1972: 187) the action of such restrictions. In the result of the defeat of the Gracchi the law of Spurius Torius was adopted in 111 B.C., according to which revisions of community-state lands were forbidden, and land allotments became a private property of their owners (Kossarev 1986: 61).

Therefore, from the legal point of view the right for property to all lands (except small sites handed over as the property to the citizens) belonged to the state (Luzatto 1954: 53).

¹⁵ In this respect the supreme power in Athens and Rome corresponds with the tasks which Carneiro (2000: 186) regards as indispensable for a government of a **state**, namely: to have power to (1) draft men for war or work, (2) levy and collect taxes, and (3) decree and enforce laws.

¹⁶ By the way, the number of professional officials in highly bureaucratic countries could be not so large. For example, at the beginning of the 19th century in China the number of civil officials was about 20,000 people, of military ones – 7,000 (Kryukov *et al.* 1987: 34). More than 300 million people lived in China at that time (*ibid.*: 63). If we compare it with the above cited data on Athens we can see that the latter could compete with the most bureaucratic states in the ratio of functionaries in the state machinery and population.

¹⁷ They did not manage to overcome bribery of the voters. It became rampant by the end of the Roman Republic's existence, so people came to elections already bribed; the amount that made it possible to achieve supreme magistracies was known beforehand. It was one of the most vivid expressions of the crisis of the republican regime (see Utchenko 1965: 117).

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INVITATION TO DISCUSSION

Dear Colleagues,

The editors of 'Social Evolution & History' invite you to express your opinion on the problems discussed in Grinin's paper, especially whether Greek poleis and the Roman Republic were early states or stateless societies of a specific type. You are encouraged to contribute to the discussion by a either a full-length article or a brief comment for 1 or 2 pages.