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# Alternatives of Social Evolution at the Societal Level of Medium Complexity: Chieftdoms and Their Analogues

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### **Abstract**

*The general process of the growth of sociocultural complexity was multidimensional and multilinear. That is why the evolutionary phase of medium-complex societies (where the chiefdoms are most often observed) was represented by numerous types of societies.*

*The article is devoted to the analysis of chiefdom analogues or various evolutionary alternatives to the chiefdom: poleis, autonomous towns and complex village communities, cast-clan systems, non-hierarchically organized territorial groups and federations of villages, certain types of tribal systems, etc. All chiefdom analogue forms can be subdivided into a few types: monosettlement analogues (with the majority of the population concentrated in a single central settlement); horizontally integrated polysettlement analogues; and corporate analogues. The notion of chiefdom analogues which we put forward will advance the theoretical analysis of the cultural-political variations among medium-complex societies where chiefdoms are bound to occupy one of the main positions.*

**Keywords:** *alternatives, social evolution, chiefdoms, analogues.*

### **Introduction**

The subject of this article requires us to start with important questions about the place of chiefdoms in political anthropology. First, we must ask if the very notion of the chiefdom has become outdated. Can the chiefdom be regarded

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as an evolutionary stage? Do archaeological data adequately correspond to it (e.g., Drennan, Hanks, and Peterson 2011)? Does it make sense to offer definitions to the chiefdom, and is not the value of all typologies rather limited (e.g., Earle 2017)? Has the introduction of this notion been beneficial to archaeology or has it only obscured the situation (see Carneiro 2010a, 2010b; Pauketat 2007, 2010; see also Drennan, Hanks, and Peterson 2011; Earle 2017)?

We believe the current discussion indicates that the notion of the chiefdom remains useful. On the one hand, the theory of the chiefdom is in need of further development. The rapid accumulation of knowledge on ancient societies demands revision of some stereotypes and rejection of certain rigid theoretical constructions. On the other hand, we do not find it productive and justified to simply reject the evolutionary approach and certain theoretical constructions associated with it, including the notion of the chiefdom (see, e.g., Pauketat 2007, 2010).<sup>1</sup>

In this regard we would like to emphasize that many problems with the use of the notion of the chiefdom stem from outdated unilinear approaches to the study of social evolution, rather than from the alleged inadequacy of the evolutionary theory itself. It would not be at all correct to identify the evolutionary approach with one of its versions – the unilinear understanding of social evolution that explicitly or (more frequently) implicitly can be detected in the theoretical positions of some anthropologists. The treatment of evolution as a unilinear process oversimplifies (and, finally, significantly distorts) our understanding. The result of the competition, selection, and spontaneous search for the ‘fittest’ evolutionary forms and models – that is, the result of very long-term and complex processes – may look as if it was initially predetermined. We believe that if the evolutionary process is approached as multilinear by definition (not declaratively, but systematically, taking into account alternatives to the ‘main sequence’ types and lines at every level of complexity), many problems in principle turn out to be solvable. That is why all the issues analyzed in our article, including the notion of chiefdom analogues, are viewed through the prism of general evolutionary multilinearity.

In this respect the present paper discusses the issues that we considered several years ago in *Social Evolution & History* (Grinin 2009a; Grinin and Koro-tayev 2009a). These articles analyze the macroevolutionary processes that took place during the very prolonged Late Archaic and Early Civilization periods. During those periods two major aromorphoses occurred – that is, (a) the formation of more or less institutionalized political subsystems, starting from the complexity level of chiefdoms and their analogues; and (b) the formation of archaic states and their analogues with further institutionalization of the politi-

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<sup>1</sup> A critique of such approaches – expressed by Yoffee (1993, 2005) or Sneath (2007) – is presented by Kradin (2017).

cal subsystem. We designate this epoch as the epoch of the initial (or primary) politogenesis.

We denote as social aromorphoses the most important (though rarest) qualitative macrochanges that significantly increase the complexity, flexibility, and mutual influence of social systems, and that subsequently open new avenues of evolutionary development for many social systems (for more details see Grinin and Korotayev 2007, 2009b; Grinin, Markov, and Korotayev 2008, 2009, 2011).

Within our approach politogenesis denotes the process of formation of a relatively autonomous political subsystem – the formation of special power forms of societal organization – that is connected with the concentration of power and political activities (both internal and external) under the control of certain groups and strata. Within this perspective the state formation process should be regarded as a component of the overall process of politogenesis (for more details see Grinin 2009a; Grinin and Korotayev 2009a, 2009c).

The epoch of primary politogenesis may be divided into two periods: (a) the one starting with the formation of chiefdoms and their analogues, which we shall denote below as the pre-state period or the period of the elder aromorphosis; and (b) the one covering the formation and development of early states and their analogues, which we shall denote below as the early state period or the period of the younger aromorphosis.

In this paper we will focus on the analysis of processes that took place at the level of social systems with medium complexity, which correspond to the epoch between the early agriculturalists' (and advanced hunter-gatherers') simple social systems and those of complex social systems (starting with the early states and their analogues).

### **Alternatives of Social Evolution**

As we demonstrated before, an equal level of sociopolitical and cultural complexity – which make it possible for societies to solve equally difficult problems – can be achieved not only in various forms, but on essentially different evolutionary pathways (*e.g.*, Bondarenko, Grinin, and Korotayev 2002, 2011; Grinin 2007a, 2009a, 2009b, 2011b; Grinin and Korotayev 2009a, 2009c; Korotayev *et al.* 2000).

For example, one of the most influential and widespread unilinear evolutionary schemes was proposed by Service (1971), following a preliminary approach outlined in Sahlins's well-known article (Sahlins 1960: 37). Known as *band-tribe-chiefdom-state*, it is crucial to stress that at each level of increasing political complexity one could easily find evident alternatives to this evolutionary line.

Let us begin with human societies at the simplest level of sociocultural complexity. Indeed, one can easily observe that acephalous egalitarian bands are found among most unspecialized hunter-gatherers. However, as has been shown by Woodburn (*e.g.*, 1980, 1982, 1988), Artemova (*e.g.*, 1991, 2000a,

2000b), Chudinova (1981), and Whyte (1978: 49–94), some of these hunter-gatherers (the inegalitarian ones, primarily most of the Australian aborigines; see also Bern 1979) display a significantly different type of sociopolitical organization with much more structured political leadership concentrated in the hands of relatively hierarchically organized elders, and with a pronounced degree of inequality both between men and women and among men themselves.

At the next level of political complexity, we can also find communities with both homoarchival and heterarchical political organization. One can mention, for example, the well-known contrast between the Indians of northwestern and southeastern California (Kabo 1986: 180; see also, *e.g.*, Downs 1978). One can also immediately recall the socioculturally complex communities of the Ifugao (*e.g.*, Barton 1922; Meshkov 1982: 183–197), which lacked any pronounced authoritarian political leadership compared with the communities of the Northwest Coast, but with a similar level of overall sociopolitical and sociocultural complexity (see, *e.g.*, Averkieva 1978; Townsend 1985).

Hence at the levels of simple and middle-range communities we observe several types of alternative sociopolitical forms. This article is devoted to the analysis of various evolutionary alternatives to the chiefdom: *poleis*, autonomous towns and complex village communities, caste-clan systems, non-hierarchically organized territorial groups and federations of villages, certain types of tribal systems, and so on.

We have written quite a lot of alternatives/analogues of early states (see, *e.g.*, Grinin 2003, 2004a, 2007b, 2009a; Grinin and Korotayev 2009a, 2009c; Korotayev 1996a, 2000a; Korotayev *et al.* 2000; see also Grinin 2017). We have also pointed to evolutionary alternatives – that is, analogues – of more complex evolutionary types of developed and mature states (see Grinin 2008, 2010; Grinin and Korotayev 2006, 2009c; Korotayev *et al.* 2000). The analysis of social evolution as a multilinear process should be amplified with general evolutionary ideas and conclusions that are directly related to the issues discussed in this chapter (for more details see Grinin 2009a, 2011a; Grinin and Korotayev 2009a, 2009c; see also Grinin, Markov, and Korotayev 2008).

(1) The transitions to social aromorphoses could only take place within a wide diversity of institutions and forms of social systems, as a result of which various versions of social phenomena produced by previous aromorphoses occupy all the accessible niches and apply all the possible versions of narrow specialization.

(2) The transitions to new aromorphoses are only possible in the case of a sufficiently wide general movement toward the growth of organizational complexity and an increase in the density of internal links, including positive feedbacks – that is, the general evolutionary development of social systems (which in each case however, acquires its specific form).

(3) Because of this, for any level of overall sociocultural complexity one can detect a considerable number of alternatives of social development. On the one hand, it makes sense to consider them as equally significant versions of social development, and on the other as a cluster of evolutionary pathways – as a probability (evolutionary) field within which, however theoretically, one may detect main tracks and collateral development lines.

(4) Those developmental pathways coexisted and competed with each other for a long period of time, whereas for many special ecological and social niches the collateral (in retrospective) pathways, models, and versions could well have turned out to be more effective.

(5) Statements on inevitable evolutionary results usually turn out to be correct only in the most general sense: as a result of a long competition of various forms, their destruction, transformation, social selection, and adaptation to multifarious ecological environments. However, for a particular society such a result could well have not been inevitable at all.

### **General Directions of Development: The Pre-State Phase of Politogenesis**

What we said above on evolutionary alternatives suggests that the general process of the growth of sociocultural complexity was rather multidimensional. This is why the evolutionary phase of medium-complexity societies (where chiefdoms are most often observed) was represented by numerous types of societies, some of which left almost no traces.<sup>2</sup> However, before considering these types and forms, it is necessary to proffer a few general comments with respect to the evolutionary process of the growth of sociocultural complexity in early agrarian social systems.

We find it appropriate to speak about the complex dynamics of relationships between various lines of the growth of cultural complexity among early agrarian societies – such as politogenesis, sociogenesis, and ethnogenesis – and military, technological, demographic, and cultural development (see Grinin 2007a, 2007c, 2011a, 2011b: Ch. 4; Grinin and Korotayev 2009a, 2009c; Korotayev *et al.* 2000). It is crucial that even societies at similar levels of sociocultural complexity can be significantly inferior to each other politically, socially, or culturally. Indeed, in almost all societies changes took place simultaneously in various spheres – technological, political, social, religious, ethnic, and the like – but (a) the magnitude, significance, and proportions of these changes varied greatly; (b) changes in various spheres could occur in different societies with significant lags; and (c) in each society the advancement

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<sup>2</sup> This approach (unilinear in its essence) is an important reason why many medium-complexity polities tend to be labeled as chiefdoms, even when they could be much more adequately described as chiefdom analogues (Zdanovich 1997).

ratio of different spheres varied greatly, certain subsystems being liable to much greater change than others. Besides, the subsystem lagging behind would take a long time to catch up with the more developed one, or perhaps even never manage to do it. This created a huge variety of combinations and models of development of medium-complexity and complex societies.

Depending on numerous factors, different processes (*e.g.*, religious or economic ones, or social stratification) could dominate certain phases of sociocultural evolution. Sometimes it could even be politogenesis, but seemingly in many cases politogenesis followed – rather than initiated – other processes, at least before state formation. In such cases political power itself was derivative of other forms of society organization and other forms of power (*e.g.*, sacral or economic power, or that based on a leader's personal qualities) and only gradually acquired independence (see Grinin 2009a, 2011a; Grinin and Korotayev 2009a).<sup>3</sup> This hypothesis is supported by the fact that in many cases governing was not in itself a goal for leaders, but rather a means to solve the existing problems encountered by the society or elite (see Claessen 2004: 75–76).

A more universal feature of social development at this level of complexity was the formation and institutionalization of new forms of social inequality. This was revealed in the following ways.

First, one could see this feature in the transition from relatively egalitarian, or primitive non-egalitarian (see, *e.g.*, Artemova 1991, 2000a, 2000b), societies to social systems characterized by inequality formed on a new social basis. New types and dimensions of social inequality emerged – including ones based on genealogical differences and new types of wealth inequality, as well as inequality connected with military activities, access to offices, or public resources.

Second, one could observe a tendency toward increased surplus accumulation and redistribution aimed at the organization of public works and banquets, as well as the material support of rulers, priests, and wars.

A substantial part of this surplus was appropriated by the political center (*e.g.*, the chief) and the elite. The role of tribute and plunder increased. One could observe a flourishing prestige economy whose functioning was supported by the activities of various prominent people, including the administrators (see, *e.g.*, Sahlins 1972a).

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<sup>3</sup> Meanwhile, the relation between political and sacral – as well as relations between the ruler and the priesthood – could be different, which created multiple variants of politogenesis (*e.g.*, see Claessen and Oosten 1996; Frazer 1980). Even if only the model of the chiefdom is considered, in this case there exists a great variety in the combination of power bases in each society. The chief's supremacy is based on elemental powers derived from the economy, warrior might, and ideology (Earle 1978, 1987, 1997, 2017; Mann 1986). *E.g.*, Earle (1987) shows that in certain cases in Polynesia – especially where irrigation was practiced – economic power was dominant, while in other cases military power prevailed (see also Kirch 1994).

Third, one could observe a tendency toward an increase in the social division of labor that was expressed in the emergence of semiprofessional or even professional administrators, warriors, priests, ancient ‘intellectuals’, craftsmen, merchants, and servants. There was also a tendency toward a deeper intercommunal division of labor.

Fourth, even where the growth of political complexity was impeded, the growth of sociocultural complexity was usually accompanied (and supported) by elaboration of decision-making mechanisms and a growth in the role of trade was frequently observed. In general, the growth of sociocultural complexity stimulated the development of the political subsystem (on the diversity of leadership roles in various societies, see, *e.g.*, Belkov 2000; Redmond 1998; Service 1975: 7).

Particular mechanisms and means of securing inequality were numerous, including the right of first settlement, genealogy, traditions, new religious requirements, war, inequitable treaties, and unions.<sup>4</sup> Some of these means are described in Claessen's article (2017) as well as in Grinin (2011a: 101–102).

### **Diversity of Forms of Pre-State Sociopolitical Systems**

In speaking of pre-state sociopolitical forms, we mean principally pre-state forms (not state analogues) and sociopolitical systems with no higher than a medium level of sociopolitical complexity.<sup>5</sup> Importantly, in such societies the demographic scale is beyond (often even far beyond) the one that can be organized by personal relationships in face-to-face interaction. This means that new forms of relations, control, and leadership must have appeared within them.

Alternative social evolution, uneven rates of change and development of various social subsystems, and various combinations of internal and external factors all led to a greater variety of pre-state societal forms and types of relations. Among them are more or less centralized polities headed by a chief, as well as self-governed cities, *poleis*, temple communities, and large rural communities; decentralized chiefless tribes; and various complex acephalous sociopolitical systems.

The population size of medium-complexity systems can vary greatly from several hundred to dozens of thousands. However, for more or less centralized or compact entities like simple chiefdoms and small temple-civil communities,

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<sup>4</sup> Inequality could emerge, say, as a result of the specific spatial position of a city, a village, and even a household. Thus, an advantageous position of a household could positively affect the benefits of its trade through the Congo River (Vansina 1999), while the proximity of a Sri Lankan village to water allowed for growing more rice and thus exploiting the labor of poorer villages (Gunawardana 1981).

<sup>5</sup> Non-state polities comparable to early states in terms of complexity and functions performed are regarded by us as early state analogues (see, *e.g.*, Grinin 2003, 2007b, 2009a, 2011b; Grinin and Korotayev 2009a, 2009c; see also Grinin 2017).

the variation is smaller – from several hundred to several thousand. On the whole, we rely on Earle's estimates of a chiefdom population within a centralized regional structure being in the range of thousands (Earle 1987; see also Carneiro 1981). However, chiefdoms with populations of one thousand or less are known as well, such as typical simple Trobriand chiefdoms (Johnson and Earle 2000: 267–279). New Caledonia chiefdoms counted between 500 and 2,000 people in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century (Shnirel'man 1988: 200). On the Polynesian island of Futuna, small chiefdoms included five–ten villages of 100–200 inhabitants each (see Sahlins 1972b: 85–87, 188–190). Cherokee chiefdoms had 400 people on average (Service 1975: 140–144).

In general, it makes sense to denote chiefdoms with populations in the hundreds as minimal chiefdoms (following Carneiro 1981), whereas chiefdoms with populations in the thousands can be denoted as typical. It is difficult, however, to precisely delineate a boundary between simple and complex chiefdoms. Although we tend to consider 10,000 as the upper limit for a simple chiefdom's population, it appears that a simple chiefdom's population could hardly achieve (let alone exceed) this limit.<sup>6</sup> Their territories were also not usually very large (see, *e.g.*, Spencer 2000: 155–156). Of course, the size of those territories depended significantly on population density and transportation opportunities; this is why among nomadic herders the territories controlled by their chiefdoms could be much larger than among agriculturalists, since nomadic herders were characterized by relatively low population densities on the one hand, and by the usual presence of abundant transportation means – in the form of mounts and/or cartage transportation – on the other.

#### **Various Forms of Links and Factors of Their Diversity**

In every type and subtype of medium-complexity social systems, only a few of the potential types of system links had major importance. The point is that some forms of links (a) could serve as substitutes for links of other types; (b) could make other links excessive; and (c) could not be combined with links of other types. Thus, centralization could weaken horizontal links, whereas military integration could depress economic links. The growth of functional differentiation was not always accompanied by an increase in degrees of social stratification and/or political centralization. Sacred hierarchies or wealth differentiation did not always coincide with political hierarchies, and so on.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>6</sup> By comparison, the population of such a large and complex chiefdom as Powhatan in Virginia in the 16<sup>th</sup> century – at the height of its development – was between 13,000 and 22,000 (Rountree and Turner 1998: 266).

<sup>7</sup> In particular, when one observes a pronounced wealth stratification in the absence of authoritarian leadership, one can often see the emergence of aristocratic sociopolitical systems that were united primarily by the need to solve certain military-political tasks in the absence of solid political unification (Gallic polities could serve here as an example for a higher level of sociocultural complexity).



Even if we consider particular evolutionary types of polities, we find wide variability of characteristics, when some characteristics could be replaced by other ones.<sup>8</sup> All these created a great diversity of chiefdom forms, as well as considerable difficulties in the identification of certain polities as chiefdoms. One can easily find confirmation of this point in the paper by Earle (2017), which maintains that the extent and institutional form of chiefdoms grade seamlessly along alternative lines from egalitarian small-scale societies into state societies. Drennan, Hanks, and Peterson (2011) discuss different ways in which chiefdoms may vary and suggest a lengthy – but not exhaustive – list of characteristics according to which the variations in chiefdom forms may be traced.

For example, one may observe great variation with respect to such an important societal characteristic as the degree of centralization. In particular, social systems can be united on the basis of the core-periphery model, but without any rigid subjugation. For instance, core-periphery relationships were not rigid in confederations (Fenton 1978: 114).<sup>9</sup>

Centralization may have been based on such foundations that differed from the ones on which chiefdoms were based – for instance, it could be based on population concentration (which may have taken place due to economic, religious, or military reasons). In such cases one can observe the emergence of complex autonomous city, *polis*, temple, and other communities. Yet population concentration in a single settlement can also be observed in some chiefdoms, though they usually consisted of a few settlements/communities united under the paramount chief's permanent power (Carneiro 1981: 45).<sup>10</sup> On the other hand, hierarchical centralization principles could be employed in special corporate groups (*e.g.*, secret societies).

However, even more frequently we seem to deal with horizontal links. Such links connected tribal segments – as well as clans and communities – in various acephalous sociopolitical systems, federations, confederations, and so on.

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<sup>8</sup> In one chiefdom wealth differentiation may be quite strong and ritual differentiation not detectable at all, whereas the reverse may be true in another chiefdom (Drennan, Hanks, and Peterson, 2011). Political hierarchy may not have been accompanied by a corresponding settlement hierarchy, even in complex chiefdoms such as the Powhatan chiefdom in Virginia (Rountree and Turner 1998: 272–273).

<sup>9</sup> A few cases of such loose chiefdom confederacies (in particular with respect to early Korean history) are described in Gibson's paper (2017). For cases of tribal heterarchical confederations, as well as weak confederations of chiefdoms among the nomadic pastoralists (see Kradin 2017).

<sup>10</sup> A single-settlement chiefdom could include a few clan communities localized in one settlement. The polities of the Cherokee Indians (who lived in Tennessee, North Carolina, and Georgia before they were deported to Oklahoma) can serve here as an example. In the early 18<sup>th</sup> century, the Cherokee lived in 30–40 settlements with a total population of between 10,000 and 20,000. The average population of a Cherokee settlement was about 400; its inhabitants usually represented all seven Cherokee clans. Each community was independent and headed by a high priest/chief whose power was based on his personal authority and limited by a council of clan representatives (Service 1975: 140–144). Note, however, that such a polity can also be accurately identified as a chiefdom analogue.

There were also a considerable number of societies where power was distributed among many relatively autonomous social institutions organized along kinship, territorial, or corporate lines (Novozhilova 2000: 109; see also McIntosh 1999; Vansina 1999). It is also appropriate at this point to recollect the proposed division of medium-complexity social systems into ‘group oriented’ versus ‘individualizing’ (Renfrew 1974) or ones based on ‘corporate’ versus ‘network’ strategies (Blanton *et al.* 1996), which could lead to different forms of sociopolitical complexity.

This diversity was determined by a great number of factors on various levels. If we take into consideration such an important aspect as the size and convenience of surplus accumulation, one can suggest the following.

(1) An insufficient level of surplus accumulation may hinder the formation of supra-communal organs and institutions (and chiefdoms in general), while facilitating the emergence of horizontal intercommunal links.

(2) The presence of sufficient amounts of surplus may contribute to the formation of mechanisms that make it possible to accumulate surplus for the most active members of an integrated social system.<sup>11</sup> In such cases chiefdoms could emerge; however, this was only possible when other additional conditions were present (*e.g.*, sufficiently developed social stratification and appropriate ideology).

(3) Very large amounts of surplus (as was observed, *e.g.*, in the late 4<sup>th</sup> millennium B.C. in southern Mesopotamia) can contribute to an exceptionally high concentration of population and the emergence of forms that were markedly different from chiefdoms, including relatively large cities like Uruk, as well as to a rapid emergence of early state analogues.<sup>12</sup>

### War Factors

One may agree with Carneiro (1981, 1998) that wars frequently contributed to the emergence and growth of chiefdoms – through the compulsory (or semi-voluntary, because of the necessity to create military alliances) integration of communities, due to the enlargement of certain settlements at the expense of others (see also Lozny 2017). However, as indicated by Earle (2017), this was only possible when certain other conditions were present, including:

- The presence of sufficient and easily attainable wealth.
- The presence of social stratification within respective social systems.

<sup>11</sup> This also includes those mechanisms that Earle (2017) describes as bottlenecks, whereby flows of currencies can be interdicted and mobilized to support and institutionalize political power.

<sup>12</sup> In the late 4<sup>th</sup> millennium, Uruk was a gigantic (for that time) urban center occupying a territory of no less than 200 ha with a population of no less than 20,000 (Bernbeck and Pollock 2005: 17).

•The presence of at least some forms of military specialization (*e.g.*, emergence of semiprofessional military groups, public or secret military societies, formation of special armed groups around specific figures, *etc.*).<sup>13</sup>

•The presence of recognized (socially institutionalized) leaders, in the sense that their power is evident and without protest from social actors.

It was noticed long ago that distant, unrelated societies could display surprising similarities in certain respects, whereas very closely related societies could demonstrate significant differences (Claessen 1989). The point is that the diversity of forms depends considerably on the concrete conjuncture of confronting political forces, peculiarities of involved personalities, various social innovations that could emerge in the process (for illuminating examples see Vansina 1999), and so on.

This is why even similar ethnic composition, natural and social conditions, subsistence economy type, and religion do not necessarily lead to the establishment of uniform political systems in a respective region. For example, in Polynesia one can find considerable diversity in political regimes even within one archipelago (see, *e.g.*, Butinov 1968, 1982, 1985). This was observed, for example, in various islands of the Tuvalu Archipelago. The first explorers found a king having absolute power on one island, a king in combination with a council composed of heads of ramages on another island, two kings with equal powers on a third island, a king and a chief who was formally a subject of the king but who was a real ruler due to his strong personality on a fourth island, and so on (see Butinov 1982: 54). Butinov further notes that although in Polynesia the administration of economic and social life was usually concentrated in the chiefs' hands, priests sometimes managed to establish their control over chiefs and transform themselves into actual rulers of respective islands. For example, on Nanumea Island – where the upper elite consisted of two chiefs and seven priests – the latter actually ruled. On Funafuti Island the supreme priest had more influence than the paramount chief (*Ibid.*: 33–34).

In other regions one could quite often observe the coexistence within one ethnic group of classic chiefdoms (where the chief's will was perceived to be equal to the law) with communities having democratic forms of government – as was described, for example, with respect to the Naga of India (see Maretina 1995). Various types of political systems differ from one another not only in scale, but also in the formal principles by which they are organized (Leach 1970: 6). A wide diversity of political regimes was also observed among the Gallic polities, ranging from a chief's despotic, unrestricted power to complex systems of checks and balances in 'aristocratic' republics (see Filip 1961;

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<sup>13</sup> It is not coincidental that in many chiefdoms (*e.g.*, in Celtic Ireland) war became a privilege of the aristocrats (see Gibson 2017).

Roymans 1990: 22; Shkunaev 1988, 1989; Thevenot 1987; see also, *e.g.*, Grinin 2003, 2004a, 2011a; on the diversity of traditional political systems of Arabia see Dostal 1984; Korotayev 1996a, 2000a, 2000b).

### **Horizontal and Vertical Analyses of the Evolution of Medium-Complexity Societies**

The position of Drennan, Hanks, and Peterson is based on the following statement: ‘The word “chiefdom” used in this way, no longer refers really to a societal type but rather to a *process*’ (Drennan, Hanks, and Peterson 2011: 152). We believe that the most promising ways to solve research problems should not rely on the opposition of evolutionary process and evolutionary type (for more details see Carneiro 2000; Grinin 2007d, 2007e, 2011a, 2011b), and/or the opposition of stages and processes or stages and types (Lozny 2017). Instead we should rely on recognition of the following point: the transition to a higher level of complexity implies almost by definition the emergence of not one, but a considerable number of types and forms that can be considered equal in certain theoretical respects (Grinin and Korotayev 2009a).

Yet later one can observe a natural selection of a number of more evolutionarily promising forms from all this variety. Those forms included polities having centralized (hierarchical) administrations – that is, chiefdoms in the first instance. Chiefdoms (or chiefdom-like polities, to be exact) in general (but by no means always) had greater evolutionary potential than their decentralized analogues.

However, within the range of complexity in question one can also find a number of other potentially promising forms – including democratic, civil-temple, and acephalous urban-like communities – that can be considered as precursors of a number of forthcoming polity types that played an important role in world history.

Thus, when comparing various polities, it makes sense to take into account two analytic aspects: horizontal and vertical. Within the first aspect, different forms of polities of similar sizes and complexity are considered to belong to one stage. Within the second aspect, within a given range of complexity we single out more or less evolutionarily promising forms. Taking into account the wide presence among highly complex societies of centralized and personalized administrative forms, chiefdoms tended to be more evolutionarily promising than acephalous political systems.

However, it took a few millennia to become clear which of the polity types had greater evolutionary potential. A few generations of polity types were necessary before it would become clear that particular principles of political organization were more effective. In addition, in certain ecological niches, evolution-

arily lateral forms turned out to be more viable than mainstream ones. Finally, having higher evolutionary potential does not mean having advantages in a concrete historical setting. Frequently it was the other way around.

Note also that autocratic states (being heirs to the principle of centralized administration that developed among some medium-complexity societies) became the dominant form of statehood in supercomplex agrarian societies. But the democratic line of politogenesis never disappeared entirely, always presenting an alternative to autocratic political organizations, whereas in the modern age democratic political organization gradually became dominant (for more details see Grinin 2004b, 2004c, 2010; Korotayev *et al.* 2000). All this suggests the necessity to take into account (a) the alternatives of social evolution; (b) various dimensions (horizontal and vertical) when comparing different types of societies; and (c) the heuristic value of the notion of chiefdom analogues, which we will discuss below.

Vertical and horizontal aspects of such an analysis can well be applied to the analysis of transitions to higher levels of complexity. For example, the formation of simple chiefdoms could take place vertically, when a new simple chiefdom emerged in place of a few autonomous communities, whereas the transformation of a confederation of communities in a more centralized polity – which tended to be accompanied by a significant growth of complexity – could be regarded as a horizontal variant of such a process.<sup>14</sup>

### Chiefdom Analogues

The emergence of chiefdoms usually involved a transition to a higher level not only of political but also of general social complexity, and this puts the given evolutionary type of medium-complexity polities in a special position. In several respects the emergence of chiefdoms can be regarded as the leading edge of politogenesis. However, this can only be done with very serious qualifications. The point is that no political system developed in isolation; every political system experienced certain transformations under influence from the outside. What is important is that many primary, secondary, and tertiary early states emerged on the basis of various *polis*, civil, temple, civil-temple, trade-craft (and so on) communities – a fraction of which can be regarded as chiefdoms. Chiefs acted as the leading force of state formation only in some cases,<sup>15</sup> whereas in other cases there were other agents (priests, aristocracy, oligarchic

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<sup>14</sup> See Grinin (2009a, 2009b, 2017) for an analysis of vertical versus horizontal models of evolutionary transformations with respect to state formation. Gibson's paper (2017) also describes cases of such a horizontal transformation of confederations of chiefdoms into states. On the correlation between horizontal and vertical transformations see also Shelach (2002: 11–15).

<sup>15</sup> *E.g.*, Sanders and Webster (1978: 281) argue that most pristine states arose from egalitarian societies without ever having been chiefdoms. Though this statement might be regarded as a possible exaggeration, it still has an element of truth to it.

groups, democratic leaders, *etc.*).<sup>16</sup> Regarding social systems in the medium-complexity range, we must note that the urban/communal type of politogenesis was even more ancient than politogenesis through the emergence of chiefdoms (see Grinin 2009b; Grinin and Korotayev 2009c: Ch. 6; Korotayev and Grinin 2006; Korotayev *et al.* 2000).

On the basis of what has been mentioned above, we believe it makes sense to divide all the diversity of medium-complexity polities (in view of a special role played by chiefdoms in the political evolution) into two major types – chiefdoms/chiefdom-like polities and chiefdom analogues.

Chiefdom-like polities can be defined as hierarchically organized and relatively centralized medium-complexity polities possessing the following characteristics:

- A population in the range of several hundred to several thousand;
- Political autonomy;
- A recognized and stable chief/leader or group of leaders who wield power in the framework of certain traditions and procedures; who are able to exercise real control over important social relationships and resource flows; and who have influential support groups organized around them.

Chiefdom analogues can be defined as polities or territorially organized corporations that have sizes and functions similar to those of chiefdom-like polities but that lack any of their other characteristics, such as high levels of hierarchy and centralization, presence of a formal leader, an organized system of resource control, and political independence.<sup>17</sup>

Such a division of medium-complexity polities into chiefdoms and their analogues:

- Emphasizes that chiefdoms are not the only type of medium-complexity polities, while at the same time indicating their special evolutionary position.
- Demonstrates the diversity of evolutionary alternatives to chiefdoms.
- Allows classification of mid-complexity polities that do not fit the definition of chiefdom, even if there are doubts regarding the exact type of polities to which they belong.

For example, Dillon (1990: 1) notes that although the study of decentralized political systems has a long research tradition, there is no consensus how to classify them if they do not fit the definition of chiefdom. We believe that they can well be tentatively classified as chiefdom analogues.

<sup>16</sup> There could also be intermediate versions. *E.g.*, something rather similar to the urban model of state formation process was observed in West Africa among the Yoruba (see, *e.g.*, Sellnow 1981: 309–310), but the heads of urban communities did not have any despotic powers. On the other hand, the aristocracy enjoyed great influence and was often able to displace rulers (Sellnow 1981: 309).

<sup>17</sup> This is relevant for such chiefdom analogues as corporations and the like.

Let us now consider the functions of chiefdom organization. They can be described as follows:

- The unification of a number of communities (or quasicommunities or a heterogeneous population) into a single system (polity), in whose framework one observes a density of relationships between individuals – as well as between constituent communities – that is significantly higher than between the components and non-components of the respective system.

- Regulation of internal relationships within the given structure.

- The ability to act as a single entity in its relations with external forces.

- Mobilization of the population for collective action.<sup>18</sup>

It is important to mention that practically all the chiefdom analogues that are mentioned below were able to perform (more or less, but generally in quite a satisfactory way) the above-mentioned functions in the framework of the population and territorial sizes that were typical for mid-complexity social systems.<sup>19</sup>

### Forms of Chiefdom Analogues

Below we offer preliminary descriptions of a few forms of chiefdom analogues: (a) monosettlement analogues, with the majority of the population concentrated in a single central settlement; (b) horizontally integrated polysettlement analogues; and (c) corporate analogues.

#### Monosettlement Analogues

Monosettlement analogues of chiefdom can be divided into several types that are described below.

##### *Poleis*

Let us consider Greek *poleis* since among them we can find the best-studied cases of monosettlement chiefdom analogue. Initially, a *polis* was ‘a relatively small (with population ranging from a few hundred to a few thousand) community of citizens whose main occupation was agriculture, the basis of the *polis* economy’ (Koshelenko 1983: 30; see also Yaylenko 1983: 155). It is clear that such a *polis* is a pre-state polity in terms of its level of sociopolitical complexity.<sup>20</sup> Small agricultural *poleis* could well be found in Greece in the

<sup>18</sup> Note that there is also a characteristic that cannot be regarded as necessary for all the chiefdoms and their analogues, but that is found among many of them and is important evolutionarily: the ability to grow in size and complexity, to ‘multiply’ itself through segmentation, sending out colonies, and so on.

<sup>19</sup> For an interesting comparison of functional equality between acephalous chiefless Konkomba people and centralized chieftancy Nanumba people in northern Ghana, see Skalnik (2017).

<sup>20</sup> Even the smallest state cannot have a population of less than a few thousand, whereas polities with such a population only transformed themselves into states very rarely and in very special circumstances. In reality, a considerably larger population was necessary in order that a state

Classical Period, but they were especially typical in the previous periods – Homeric (before the 8<sup>th</sup> century B.C.) and Archaic (the 8<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> centuries B.C.). By contrast with the complex *poleis* of the Classical Period, commerce and crafts were very poorly developed in the *poleis* of the Homeric and even Archaic periods (see Polyakova 1983).<sup>21</sup>

Such an agricultural orientation makes the early *poleis* look similar to most simple chiefdoms. Stratification of wealth among the citizens is found in the *poleis* already in the Early Period (Polyakova 1983: 124). In the meantime it appears possible to agree with Starr (1965: 209) that the *polis* emerged within a very simple society, in which rich and poor identified with the same group. There are grounds to maintain that even the early *poleis* had rather specific sociopolitical characteristics, which allows us to consider them as a special polity type – the civil (or civic) community (Golubtsova, Kuzischin, and Shtaerman 1975: 12–17; Koshelenko 1983: 13; see also Yaylenko 1983). This was connected to a unique sociopolitical organization, whereby citizens of the *polis* felt unified and participated voluntarily in administration and warfare. This system was determined by the fact that the *polis* citizens had certain (though not as rigorously defined as in the Classical Period) rights and duties that could determine the social status of an individual.

It is also important to point out that the territory around the central settlement of the *polis* (note that this settlement was also referred to as the *polis*) was not a periphery subjugated to the central settlement and that its inhabitants had the same rights. What is more, free agriculturalists (who possessed their plots of land on the basis of the developing notion of private property) became an important social layer of the *polis* (Andreev 1982). In the meantime, in the Early Period some *poleis* emerged as a result of *synoikism* (*i.e.*, a unification of a few small settlements into a larger one). This tended to break down traditional clan and lineage links and strengthen civil principles. Though such processes continued in Greek polities for centuries, their first manifestations appeared quite early. In particular, according to Greek tradition, Theseus' reforms in Athens (which apparently included the abolition of traditional clan divisions and the introduction of artificial civil ones) might have taken place as early as the 9<sup>th</sup> century B.C.

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could emerge (for more details see Grinin 2009a, 2011a; Grinin and Korotayev 2009a). Note that in the *Laws* (737e, 745c) Plato indicates that an ideal *polis* (which, within the context of this dialogue, is an equivalent of an 'ideal state') should have 5,000 competent citizens possessing land allotments. This implies that the overall population (including women, children, free adult males without rights of citizenship, and slaves) of such a state would be counted in the dozens of thousands.

<sup>21</sup> Note, however, that in many archaic *poleis* one could observe a noticeable increase in the importance of trade and crafts (*e.g.*, Shishova 1991: 27). In general, the cultural-political complexity of some archaic *poleis* (and their systems) grew to such an extent that it became comparable to that of early states rather than chiefdoms (see Berve 1997; Frolov 1988: 92; Shishova 1991: 27).



With respect to the early *poleis*, one can talk about the dominance of aristocratic clans – even when a king (*basileus*) was present who could not make any serious decisions without a council consisting of aristocratic leaders (Frolov 1988: 78; Sergeev 2002: 122). That in the emerging Greek *poleis* the dominant position originally belonged to the aristocracy was noted by Greek authors such as Aristotle (*Politics*, IV, 10, 10, 1297b). This domination appears to be accounted for by the fact that the strongest part of the Archaic Greek army, the cavalry, consisted of aristocrats (Greenhalgh 1973). However, the aristocracy did not monopolize warfare entirely and a significant role was played by the armed *demos*.<sup>22</sup> Those *poleis* had certain organs – for example, aristocratic councils, or *bule*, as well as popular assemblies that were not influential and hereditary or elected kings who performed judicial functions (Frolov 1988: 78; Sergeev 2002: 122).

*Poleis* also had mechanisms of cooperation for the conduct of collaborative internal actions, as well as external military ones; at the same time, a salient feature of their political life was represented by the struggle between aristocratic clans (Andreev 1976: 104ff; Koshelenko 1987: 45). However, such a competition in the context of weak legal principles within the Homeric *polis* (Koshelenko 1987: 45) itself created certain forms and precedents of the regulation of *polis* life. This could be observed in many similar ‘barbarian’ societies, where the restraining force of the blood feud and mediation played an important role in the preservation of a minimally necessary unity of respective social systems.<sup>23</sup> In the Archaic *poleis*, the role of the courts increased and they became an important tool for aristocratic domination.

#### ***Protourban and Urban Societies***

Berezkin (1995a: 67–68; 2000: 263) brings attention to medium-complexity acephalous protocity polities with populations of between 2,000 and 2,500 people. Judging from archaeological evidence, such polities were relatively widespread in the ancient Near East – first, during the Neolithic in Palestine and Syria (the 7<sup>th</sup> millennium and the early 6<sup>th</sup> millennium B.C., ‘Ayn Ghazal, Tell Abu Hureyrah), and Anatolia (the 6<sup>th</sup> millennium B.C., Çatalhöyük); and second, in the Late Chalcolithic, as well as in the Early and Middle Bronze ages (the 4<sup>th</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> millennia B.C.) of southern Turkmenistan (Ilgynlydepe) and eastern Iran (Shahr-e Sukhteh). The population of Shahr-e Sukhteh could have reached 10,000.

<sup>22</sup> It seems appropriate to recollect at this point that these were the data from the history of Homeric Greece, on which Lewis Henry Morgan (1877) relied when developing his theory of military democracy as a necessary stage in the development of barbarian societies.

<sup>23</sup> On the other hand, feuds between noble clans can frequently be found in more developed polities – e.g. in the Italian city-states of the Medieval and Early Modern periods (it is not coincidental that such a feud acted as basis for the plot of the Shakespearean masterpiece *Romeo and Juliet*).

As we have already mentioned, the urban type of politogenesis was one of the leading ones. There were many types of urban and quasi-urban settlements, as well as types of political regimes observed within those settlements (on some of these regimes, see, *e.g.*, contributions to Sinclair Paul 2002). For example, there were quasi-urban religious or ritual centers (such as towns of the Creek Indians in Georgia and Alabama; see Sturtevant 1978); there were also temple cities where the dominant political role was played by corporations of priests. However, even if a city was headed by a chief, prince, or king, it was not unusual when other organs (like the ancient Russian *veche*, organs of military democracy, *etc.*) played an important role. In any case, such cities could hardly be regarded as chiefdoms, because a chiefdom is usually regarded as a polity uniting a few villages under the power of a supreme chief (see, *e.g.*, Carneiro 1981), whereas a city – even if it has a certain rural vicinity – has a spatial structure that is different from that of a chiefdom. Note also a difference in the degree of economic specialization.<sup>24</sup>

However, there were also fully self-governed democratic or even acephalous<sup>25</sup> protourban and urban communities (Berezkin 1995a, 1995b; Bolshakov 1989: 44–58; Frantsouzoff 2000). A relatively late (yet unusually well-known) case of a complex city community is provided by pre-Islamic Mecca (see, *e.g.*, Bolshakov 1989: 44–58; Dostal 1991; Peters 1994: 77–166; Simon 1989; Simonsen 2000).<sup>26</sup>

### ***Large Compact Villages***

The population of such villages could be very large – up to 11,000, as in the case of Yako in southeastern Nigeria (Forde 1964; see also McIntosh 1999). Such settlements were integrated by horizontal ties that linked various associations and secret and cult societies. The supreme power was absent, but high-status members of such societies wielded religious or judicial power; they also exercised control over the moral dimension of social life.

### ***Aristocratic Enclaves Within Large Ethnopolitical Systems***

There are grounds to maintain that within a number of complex stateless political systems (early state analogues) that cannot be classified as complex chiefdoms, one can find semi-independent aristocracies with power that can be compared with the leaders of simple (or even small complex) chiefdoms. Such aristocrats had substantial autonomy within their realms, a right to judge and

<sup>24</sup> Within chiefdoms the main activity of their population is usually agriculture. Of course, some degree of technological specialization can usually be found in chiefdoms as well, but craft and trade specializations are significantly more typical in urban and protourban polities than chiefdoms. What is more, in cities the concentration of non-agricultural activities is usually more pronounced, playing a much more important role in urban development.

<sup>25</sup> That is, lacking any permanent political organs controlling a city as a whole.

<sup>26</sup> However, the Meccan polity on the eve of Islam should be identified as an early state analogue (see Grinin 2009b, 2011b:159, 252; Grinin and Korotayev 2009a).

punish, and (seemingly most important) their own armed forces. A salient example is provided here by the Gallic aristocrats on the eve of Caesar's conquest, when noble Gauls could have a few hundred *cliens* – and other dependent people – from whom they could form cavalries that could act as substitutes for the general levies and thus confront the main mass of the Gauls.

The most noble aristocrats could have a few (up to ten) thousand of such *cliens* (Caesar, *Commentarii de Bello Gallico*, I: 4; Bessmertny 1972: 17; Thevenot 1987; see also Filip 1961). Polibius wrote about patronage among the Gauls long before Caesar; he also described advantages that patronage provided for the upper strata of the Gallic polities (Filip 1961). The power of the aristocracy deprived the commoners of their political rights; Caesar claimed that the status of Gallic commoners was close to that of slaves; and many commoners became actual slaves of aristocrats after not being able to pay their debts (Caesar, *Commentarii de Bello Gallico*, VI: 13; see also Filip 1961; Leru 2000: 125). It is also appropriate to note here that 'patron/client' relationships were widespread in both complex pre-state polities and state analogues (see, e.g., Crumley 2002; Grinin 2009a; Service 1975: 82; see also Filip 1961 regarding patronage among the Celts of Ireland).

Populations organized by Gallic tribal unions and confederations could be very large indeed (Filip 1961). For example, the number of Helvetians who attempted to migrate in 58 B.C. to Western Gaul – according to various estimates – ranged between 250,000 and 400,000 (see, e.g., Shkunaev 1988: 503).<sup>27</sup>

### **Polysettlement Analogues United by Horizontal Links**

In addition to monosettlement analogues, an important role was played by the polysettlement analogues, which can be divided into a few types.

#### ***Systems of Acephalous Communities***

Another type of chiefdom analogue is defined by the non-hierarchical systems of acephalous communities with the salient autonomy of small family households, like the ones that were described among the Apatanis of northeastern India. Their language belongs to the Sino-Tibetan family. According to some data, the Apatanis' first contact with Europeans occurred in 1897, when British officials stayed in the valley for two days. The Apatanis were studied by Christoph von Furer-Haimendorf (1962, 1980) in the 1940s – that is, before the Indian federal state established clear control over them. It was Yuri Berezkin (1995a, 1995b, 2000) who first suggested treating the Apatani political system as a decentralized alternative to the chiefdom.

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<sup>27</sup> For more details on Gallic polities as early state analogues, see Grinin (2003: 140–141, 2004a: 97–98, 2011a: 258–260).

The Apatanis lived in seven villages at an altitude of 1.5 km. Each of those villages could be treated as a separate unit, but due to extensive horizontal links they can also be treated as a single system. Issues of law, order, and conflict settlement were regulated by informal councils of respected men. The Apatanis preferred to avoid conflicts. It is very important to stress that the Apatanis believed in the institution of private ownership of land. Inhabitants of any village had the right to acquire land in any other village; there were no restrictions on buying or selling land.

There were extensive horizontal economic links among the Apatani villages. Other types of horizontal links were represented by mass calendar ceremonies, as well as prestige potlatch-type events (*lisudu*) that were accompanied by the distribution of gifts. *Lisudu* events were also a means to limit the accumulation and stratification of wealth. In the meantime the Apatanis had two intersecting systems of social stratification: (a) aristocratic and commoner clans, in which the latter were ritually dependent on the former but had the same economic rights; and (b) separate systems of wealth stratification. The heterarchical set of two systems appears to have blocked the further hierarchicalization of the society. However, there was a significant degree of socioeconomic stratification among the Apatanis that involved slavery, bondage, and wage labor. In 1961 the total Apatani population reached 11,000 in 2,520 households.

Numerous interesting examples of such complex village communities lacking a central command structure, which is especially impressive for the pre-modern New World where chiefdoms were very widespread (see Carneiro 1981), can be found among the Pueblo Indians in northern New Mexico. Even when Pueblo communities had more or less formal political leaders, those leaders did not possess significant powers: there were no dominant chiefs who could command immediate obedience from their people (Creamer 2001). Pueblo villages were situated very close to each other. Their general population at the time of first contact with the Spanish is estimated to have been between 20,000 and 60,000 people, distributed among a few dozen (30–65) villages. According to Creamer, the unity of the whole region was supported by the Pueblo religion (including the activities of secret societies and various rituals). Creamer believes that religion and rituals have a key importance for understanding the development of sociocultural complexity in the northern Rio Grande region.

Some Pueblo settlements had more than 1,000 inhabitants. In contrast with the Apatanis, these autonomous settlements frequently fought each other (which could contribute to the concentration of population in settlements); there was a cult of war and war leaders (Creamer 2001: 55). Wars also contributed to the growth of complexity, since they pushed settlements to establish alliances whose emergence led to the formation of more or less stable settlement clusters (Creamer 2001: 56).

Horton (1971) notes the presence of acephalous dispersed territorial societies in many regions of Africa. They are territorially defined local confederations with lineages of mixed origins, which results in disjunctive migrations in respective regions. There is no supreme power, but confederations are united in a political-ritual way by cult organizations (see also McIntosh 1999).<sup>28</sup>

A very good example of the aristocratic acephalous system is provided by the society of the Yi (Nuosu) people in the highland Liangshan area of the Sichuan province of China. There were four estates in this society; one of them (called just Yi/Nuosu), the 'black', was considered to be noble in contrast with the subjugated 'white' estates; in particular, the noble 'black' estate was not engaged in agriculture or crafts. The other three ('white') estates were dependent on the 'black' in various degrees, ranging from a sort of serfdom to direct slavery. In the meantime the development of such a complex system of social stratification was not accompanied by the formation of a comparably centralized political structure (Its and Yakovlev 1967; Kubbel 1988: 241–242). The above-described special sociopolitical system began to emerge in the 7<sup>th</sup> century, when groups of pastoralists began to subjugate a few agriculturalist communities in the respective region (Its and Yakovlev 1967: 79).

Slavery was widespread within this sociopolitical system. The Nuosu raided the Chinese settlements, capturing their inhabitants and enslaving them. Finally, the members of the 'black' estate constituted just a very small percentage of the total population (*Ibid.*: 82). The male members of the noble 'black' estate were socialized as warriors from their early childhood. 'Arrogance, contempt toward the other estates and ethnic groups, and bellicosity constituted salient features of the Nuosu psychological constitution. The Nuosu women pursued a mostly idle lifestyle except for looking after household slaves' (*Ibid.*: 84).

The total population of the Liangshan Yi was about 10,000 by the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. However, by 1838 it had increased to between 40,000 and 50,000. Until that time the respective polity/polities could well be regarded as a simple chiefdom analogue (taking into account a rather weak degree of integration of Yi settlements). In the subsequent period and until the mid-1950s, their population continued to grow and reached 630,000, of which 60,000 were unassimilated Han slaves (*Ibid.*: 79–80). Thus, beginning in the 1830s the Nuosu sociopolitical system was transformed into an early state analogue (for more details see Grinin 2011a: 283–284).

### ***Federations and Confederations of Communities***

One can find chiefdom analogues among federations and confederations of relatively small communities – for example, among highlanders (see, *e.g.*,

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<sup>28</sup> Larger agglomerations of this type, which politically organized dozens of villages with an overall population of dozens of thousands, as was the case with some Igbo polities (McIntosh 1999: 9), may be regarded as early state analogues (see Grinin 2004a, 2011b).

Aglarov 1988; Grinin 2007f, 2011a, 2011b; Korotayev 1995a, 2006) or nomadic herders.<sup>29</sup> In contrast with the previous type, federations and confederations had a higher degree of integration; sometimes they even had specific formal institutions (*e.g.*, supra-communal councils). Among more complex societies, this has been studied with respect to tribal confederations of American Indian ethnic groups like the Creek (Sturtevant 1978), Huron (Loginov 1988: 233; Tishkov 1988: 148), and Iroquois (Fenton 1978).<sup>30</sup>

### *Asymmetric Lineage Systems*

Even some systems of lineages that are symmetric, as described in *African Political Systems* (Fortes and Evans-Pritchard 1987a) among such ethnic groups as the Logoli (Wagner 1987), Talensi (Fortes 1987), or Nuer (Evans-Pritchard 1987a, 1987b), can be regarded as incomplete chiefdom analogues since they performed a number of important functions that were analogous to the chiefdom functions.

However, it is important to note that there were various other forms and principles of the integration of lineages, including asymmetric forms that we will discuss in more detail below. It appears that there was a wide spectrum of such lineage systems, a considerable number of which could well be regarded as chiefdom analogues. Miller (1976) provides a telling description of various systems of lineage integration (based on territorial links or integrated with symbolic links, pseudo-kinship relationships, *etc.*) among the Mbundu of Angola in the period of state formation in this part of the world.

### *Tribe*

According to many researchers, the notion of the tribe is somewhat vague and polysemantic and can be used to denote a small group of 10–20 persons, or a large group of stateless peoples with a population of hundreds of thousands and even millions (see, *e.g.*, Claessen 2011; Fried 1967, 1975; Grinin 2007c, 2011a: 143–144; Grinin and Korotayev 2009a, 2009c; Helm 1967; Khoury and Kostiner 1990; Korotayev 2000a, 2000b, 2006: 18, 114–120; Malinowski 1947: 252–261; p'Bitek 1979: 27–32; Tapper 1983, 1990; Vansina 1999).

What is relevant for us in the context of the present article is that *some* forms of tribes (but not all of them, of course) can be regarded as chiefdom analogues. We would also like to add that these are not only secondary tribes that can be regarded as chiefdom analogues; the same seems to be relevant for

<sup>29</sup> In other contexts larger federations of highland communities may be regarded as early state analogues (see Grinin 2003, 2004a, 2007f, 2011a).

<sup>30</sup> On such tribal confederations of the American Indians, see also Drennan, Hanks, and Peterson (2011) and Grinin (2011a).

tribes among the early agriculturalists as well.<sup>31</sup> It also seems appropriate to note at this point that in many such cases we are dealing with ‘tribe-like’ polities rather than simply tribes (see, *e.g.*, Creamer 2001: 55).

### **Corporate Analogues**

Brown (1951), Kabbery (1957), and Horton (1971) discovered that the basic links constituting fundamental structures of medium-complexity social systems were not necessarily connected with lineages. An important role here may well have been played by horizontal links established through various institutions such as age classes and rituals, as well as special corporations such as secret societies, ritual groups, or title societies (see also McIntosh 1999: 9; Vansina 1999). Indeed, firm sorts of horizontal links are often capable of playing an exceptional role in the institutionalization of relationships between individual communities and within – or even between – individual tribes. We believe that some types of corporations that we discuss can well be regarded as corporate chiefdom analogues.

### ***Secret Unions and Societies***

Secret societies are especially well described for Melanesia and sub-Saharan Africa, yet they were also found in other ethnographic regions of the world – for example, in Micronesia or among certain ethnic groups of North American Indians (on the role of such societies among the Pueblos of northern Mexico, *e.g.*, see Creamer 2001: 55–57), whereas linguistic and cultural reconstructions suggest their presence among the Indo-Aryans and other ancient peoples of Eurasia. As we mentioned above, in some regions secret societies were a widespread mechanism that established intercommunal relationships. They could be used in order to enhance the status, prestige, power, and wealth of their members, and for the realization of their potentials and ambitions.

The number of secret societies was very large; for example, Butt-Thompson (1970) described about 150 such societies in West Africa. Many dozens of secret unions were described in various islands of Melanesia, some of which claimed a monopoly over certain types of witch craft (Tokarev 1990: 308–311). There were also ‘professional’ secret societies composed of warriors, healers, dancers, and so on (see Novozhilova 2000: 110). Butt-Thompson (1970) divided the secret societies of West Africa into three types: mystic-religious, democratic and patriotic, and ‘perverted-criminal’.<sup>32</sup>

Though types of secret societies could be quite diverse, many principles of their formation and functioning were frequently quite similar (Kubbel 1988:

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<sup>31</sup> In some cases particularly large and solid tribal alliances can be regarded as analogues of the early state (see Grinin 2007a, 2007f, 2011a: 254–256 for some concrete examples).

<sup>32</sup> On the role of secret societies, in particular the union of hunters in the politogenesis among the Mbundu, see Miller (1976).

238–241; Novozhilova 2000: 110–111; see also Belkov 1993: 94–97). It is very important that those principles were in direct opposition to the principles of clanship, and in general an emphasis on the break with clan structures was strongly associated with secret societies (see Andreev 1998: 45; Kubbel 1988: 240–241; Novozhilova 2000: 110). Secret society members were not recruited on the basis of kinship criteria; other criteria were applied (professional, territorial, wealth, *etc.*). New principles of social stratification emerged as the differences between a secret society's members developed on the basis of their rank, functions, wealth, contribution, and personal merits. In order to enter such a society, one often had to have guarantors and pay a significant initial contribution; sometimes there was severe discipline, a special secret language, and the like.

Like chiefdoms, secret societies could have complex hierarchical structures with several grades of subjugation of junior members by senior members; what is more, we believe that in this respect secret societies had a more articulate organization and more rigorous hierarchical principles than many chiefdoms. Secret societies could be regarded as embryonic forms of administration and the apparatus of repression and assumed a police function. In some cases they played a generally important role regarding the formation of statehood institutions (see Grinin 2011a: 276–277; Kubbel 1988: 241; Tokarev 1990: 307).

Secret societies could effectively perform functions that were typical for chiefdoms: the integration into a single system of individuals and groups residing in a certain territory but belonging to different kinship groups and different communities; the formation of supra-communal and supra-clan organization; and functions of mediation, justice, and punishment. Thus, secret societies could prevent conflicts between communities,<sup>33</sup> perform redistributive functions, and create new legal norms.

#### ***Agglomerative-Type Organized Groups***

One could well regard as chiefdom analogues various groups (which sometimes even formed a sort of quasi-tribe) of dissenters, adventurers, freedom lovers, criminals, and profiteers. It was not unusual for such armed conglomerates to emerge as a counterweight to the growing formal power of an emerging state. As Friedrich Ratzel (1902: 1, 445) notes, 'These dissident parts of the population often acquire a significant strength due to their freedom from legal oppression, as well as to the respect which they enjoy among the bravest and the poorest of neighboring tribes'.

<sup>33</sup> In particular, this has been observed in some areas of Nigeria beginning in the late 17<sup>th</sup> century, when the Egbo (Ekpe) secret society coordinated trade and other activities of large merchant houses, smoothing down the competition between them. This secret society had a sort of monopoly over the settlement of trading disputes and control over debt payments (see Novozhilova 1999: 37).



### ***Castes and Quasi-Castes***

As a result of conquests, intercommunal specialization, and other factors, one can observe in some cases the emergence of caste and quasicaste systems (see, *e.g.*, Kubbel 1988: 241). Castes and quasi-castes existed not only in early states – for example, in India or medieval Arabia – but also in pre-state and para-state societies in Indonesia, Oceania, eastern and northeastern Africa, Sahara, southern Nigeria, and so on (Kobischanov 1978: 254–260, 1982: 145–149; see also Quigley 1999: 114–169, 2002: 146, 153). Castes performed many functions of chiefdoms: integration of individuals within certain territories, norm creation, justice, mediation, and redistribution. Sometimes we find within them developed hierarchical structures up to paramount leadership.

### ***Age Classes (Groups)***

Age classes (groups) served as an important mechanism of integration for a number of medium-complexity societies, as well as complex ones (on complex systems of age classes, *e.g.*, see Kalinovskaya 1976; van Gennep 2002; on the role of such an age system among several Naga groups of highland northeastern India, *e.g.*, see Maretina 1995: 83). There are cases when principles of secret societies and age classes were combined into one system (*e.g.*, among the Sioux and certain Algonquin tribes; Tokarev 1990: 313). In some cases age classes could act as integrated corporations. This is particularly relevant for the age-gender class of young male warriors, which in some societies could be transformed into an armed force with its own leader – a force that could become especially formidable in case of its alliance with sorcerers and medicine men (numerous examples of this can be found in East Africa; *e.g.*, Bocharov 1995). In this respect age classes can be regarded as incomplete chiefdom analogues.

### ***Complex Chiefdom Analogues***

In this article we do not analyze complex chiefdoms; however, we find it appropriate to mention here that one can also identify analogues of complex chiefdoms. Such analogues were composed of confederations and federations of tribes and chiefdoms. Gibson (2017) mentions examples of confederations of chiefdoms, in particular in Ireland and Korea.

Let us focus on his definition that ‘a chiefdom confederacy consists of a number of genealogically related and unrelated chiefdoms which were unified through coercion or common agreement’ (Gibson 1995: 123). It is evident that in the case of coercive unification, this may be an entity headed by a privileged clan that could be transformed into an aristocratic social stratum (Tapper 1990: 68) or by a dominant chiefdom/tribe. In case of a common agreement, the structures of the lower layer can be quite similar to chiefdoms, whereas at the upper level one can observe various permanent or occasionally convened councils without any stable and strong paramount leader (various councils of chiefs or elders). Such structures can be found with respect to American Indian peoples;

however, their confederations tended to be rather loose (on the Creeks, *e.g.*, see Sturtevant 1978).

The Iroquois tribes had a rather different system of organization: clan- or family-based villages were headed by non-military leaders (*sachems*) who were elected rather than hereditary. What is more, they were elected by women normally for life; however, if there was a strong dissatisfaction with them, they could be removed (see Fenton 1978: 122).<sup>34</sup> The *sachems* were members of tribal councils. Military leaders achieved this position through their personal merits. In the case of exceptional achievements, an individual could get the title 'chief of the Pine-tree' that was not hereditary (such chiefs pronounced speeches on behalf of the Tribal Council and performed other assignments).

The Iroquois Confederation also had the third (highest) administrative level. The Council of the League comprised representatives of each tribe according to the number of clans; the total number of council members was 50 (Fenton 1978: 122) and a consensus was necessary for council decisions to be formally made. The numerical strength of the population (between 15,000 and 20,000; Morgan 1877: 74; Snyderman 1948: 41) and an exceptionally high level of integration supported by effective political mechanisms (see Fenton 1978: 121; Hunt 1940; Vorobyov 2000: 158) suggest that the Iroquois political system may be regarded not only as a complete analogue of the complex chiefdom, but also as an incomplete analogue of the early state (see Grinin 2007b, 2011a, 2011b; Grinin and Korotayev 2009c: Ch. 5).

### The Evolutionary Place of the Tribe

There are several points of view on the evolutionary place of the tribe. The most influential approach, which interprets the tribe as an evolutionary link between the hunter-gatherer band and the chiefdom (Sahlins 1968; Service 1971), regards the tribe as an intermediate stage, while another approach sees it as a link between local groups and the state (see, *e.g.*, Cohen and Schlegel 1967). Morton Fried expressed the viewpoint (accepted by many anthropologists) that a classical tribe, with an orderly organization and hierarchical power headed by the chief, is secondary – that is, that it appeared under the influence of Europeans upon the primitive periphery (Fried 1975; see also Sneath 2007). On the other hand, the tribe has been virtually banished from some evolutionary models (Carneiro 1987: 760; Townsend 1985: 146). However, the political forms entirely identical with what was described by Service as the tribe can actually be found, for example, in the medieval and modern Middle East: these tribal systems normally comprise several communities and often have precisely the type of political leadership described by Service as typical for the tribe (Dresch 1984: 39, 41; Service 1971: 103–104).

<sup>34</sup> However, titles were inherited through the maternal line. As a result, the number of people possessing the title of chief significantly exceeded the number of actual leaders having this title.

What is important is that here we deal with a type of polity that cannot be identified with bands, village communities (because such tribes normally comprise more than one community), chiefdoms (because they have an entirely different type of political leadership), or states, and that cannot be inserted easily into the Elman Service scheme somewhere between the village and the chiefdom. Indeed, as has been shown convincingly by Carneiro (see, *e.g.*, 1970, 1987, 2000), chiefdoms normally arose as a result of political centralization of a few communities without the preceding stage of the tribe. On the other hand, a considerable amount of evidence suggests that in the Middle East many tribes arose as a result of political decentralization of the chiefdoms that preceded them.

It is also important to stress that this type of polity cannot in any way be identified with a *regression*, *decline*, or *degeneration*, since we can observe in many of such cases that political decentralization is accompanied by an increase (rather than a decrease) of overall sociocultural complexity (see, *e.g.*, Grinin 2011a; Grinin and Korotayev 2009b, 2009c: Ch. 5; Korotayev 1995b, 1996a, 2000a, 2000b; Korotayev, Klimenko, and Prussakov 1999, 2007). Hence in many respects tribal systems of the Middle Eastern type appear to be chiefdom alternatives rather than chiefdom predecessors (Grinin and Korotayev 2009c: 192; for an interesting metaphor regarding this, see Belkov 1991: 40–41; about nomadic societies see Kradin 2017).

Evidently, special conditions are required both for chiefdom formation (see, *e.g.*, Lozny 2017) and for its stable reproduction. If (*e.g.*, ecological) conditions change and surplus production decreases, a chiefdom can be transformed into another type of polity that it is often reasonable to view as a chiefdom analogue.

Undoubtedly, in macroevolutionary retrospective the chiefdom was a much more evolutionarily promising type of sociopolitical organization than the tribe. However, for certain regions – especially ecologically marginal ones – the situation was fundamentally different. For example, though in most Middle Eastern tribes the supra-tribal political structures (higher authorities) were weak but not absent, their weakness in tribal regions was frequently connected with the efficiency of tribal organization. The latter allows for a sufficiently developed population of ecologically low-productive regions to maintain a high sociopolitical level without centralized political organization, which would require an excess of resources. In other words, in these special ecological regions the populace was able to create a ‘cheap government’. This is why the transformation of chiefdoms into tribes in Yemen could not in any way be identified with a regression, decline, or degeneration.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> The phenomenon of state fragmentation and return to tribal organizations in the former state's area was well known in Africa (Tymowski 2008: 176), as well as in the Middle East (*e.g.*, Korotayev 2000a, 2000b, 2006). It is usually said that such transformations could hardly be characterized as a mere regression, since they normally involved a change in the type of sociopolitical

At this point we will try to define the type of tribe that in our view is analogous to the chiefdom.<sup>36</sup> In this perspective a tribe can be defined as a sociopolitical segmental system with a population of thousands or tens of thousands with a common ethnocultural nucleus, name, consciousness, territory, and political organization, allowing it to sustain internal order and self-organize to achieve its own military goals.<sup>37</sup> The following traits may be also regarded as important characteristics of those tribes that can be considered as chiefdom analogues: (a) the presence of recognized leaders, at least at the level of tribal segments; (b) the presence of at least informal functionaries performing certain functions at the tribal level; and (c) the presence of some ideology of unity, which will be discussed below.

### Similarities and Differences

The issue of similarities and differences between the tribe and the chiefdom (as ideal types) remains important. Below we will try to summarize the main similarities and differences between the tribe and the chiefdom on the basis of our previous research, as well as the research of other anthropologists (*e.g.*, Carneiro 1981; Earle 1987; Fried 1967; Sahlins 1968; Service 1971).

### Tribes and Chiefdoms: Similarities in Functions and Levels of Organization

#### *Polity Sizes*

As mentioned above, the population of simple chiefdoms generally did not exceed 10,000. The population of some tribes was larger and comparable to the population of complex rather than simple chiefdoms. However, this difference in size tended to be offset by a smaller degree of cohesion of tribes in comparison with that of chiefdoms. In any case, the relationships between settlements and individuals within polities of these types were significantly denser than between members and non-members of tribes/chiefdoms.

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complexity rather than its straightforward decline (*e.g.*, Grinin 2011a; Grinin and Korotayev 2009a, 2009c; Korotayev 2000a, 2000b, 2006); note also that, in particular, African states were organizations built *over* tribes rather than *in place of* tribes (Southall 1991; Tymowski 1987, 2008: 176; Vansina 1962). It should also be taken into account that the tribal forms resultant from state disintegration tended to be more developed than the ones that existed prior to state formation; a similar phenomenon was observed with respect to local sociopolitical systems that were absorbed by state structures in the earlier period, but then became independent or semi-independent units as a result of feudal decentralization in the Middle Ages. Such independence tended to result in the rise of culture in many provinces and towns that became capitals of new duchies, counties, and principalities.

<sup>36</sup> When developing this definition, we partially relied on some ideas produced by Irons (2004: 473) and Shnirel'man (1982).

<sup>37</sup> The territory of a tribe (especially a nomadic pastoralist tribe) may experience serious changes due to various causes; this is why (in contrast with the state) a permanent territory cannot be regarded as a necessary attribute of the tribe. However, in normal circumstances a tribe controls a certain territory, which it regards as its own and defends from outsiders.

### ***Systemic Organization and Capacity to Grow***

Both polity types had complex structures; they consisted of quite large components and had two or three levels of organization.<sup>38 39</sup> They possessed strong internal relations, allowing for a structure to constantly reproduce itself (though principles of organization and relations differ). Besides, both polity types were potentially capable of complexity growth through union, consolidation, and incorporation.

### ***Regulatory Capacity***

That is, the capacity to regulate relations and conflicts inside the structure between its segments.<sup>33</sup>

### ***Ideology of Unification***

That is, a belief about the chief's special rights or tribal *asabiyyah* in the sense implied by Ibn Khaldun (1958).

### ***Implementation of Certain Functions***

For example, population mobilization, acting as a single unit in relation to external forces, and common rituals.

## **Tribes and Chiefdoms: Differences**

### ***Differences in Structure***

In general, the chiefdom was a much more consolidated and governable polity than the tribe, because the political structure of the tribe was rather loose.

<sup>38</sup> This is why we agree with Fried's statement: 'An essential element of the concept of tribe [is] transcendence of the individual community and, *pari passu*, that tribalism [consists] in functions aggregating otherwise discrete villages into an interacting whole' (Fried 1975: 39).

<sup>39</sup> Service maintains that 'leadership is personal ... and for special purposes only in tribal society; there are no political offices containing real power, and a "chief" is merely a man of influence, a sort of adviser. The means of tribal consolidation for collective action are therefore not governmental. ...Tribe ... is composed of economically self-sufficient residential groups which because of the absence of higher authority take unto themselves the private right to protect themselves. Wrongs to individuals are punished by the corporate group, the "legal person". Disputes in tribal society tend to generate feuds between groups' (Service 1971: 103). However, we (Grinin and Korotayev 2009c; Korotayev 2000a, 2000b, 2006) believe that what should be treated as an essential characteristic of tribal *organization* is not the conflicts between residential groups (these are also completely normal for primitive societies lacking any specifically tribal organization, which are considered by Service to belong to the 'band level of sociocultural integration'; Service 1971: 46–98), but the fact that tribal organization imposes limits on such conflicts. *E.g.*, feuding parties are constrained to carry out their conflict according to certain rules; and in other cases highly developed mechanisms of mediation are provided to the feuding parties by the tribal organization, which often effectively block the most disintegrating consequences of such conflicts, without alienating the 'sovereignty' of the resident group. Service addresses this issue on the pages that follow the above quotation.

***Leader's Status***

Tribal leaders became leaders due either to their personal qualities (*i.e.*, informally) or through the presence of formal hereditary chiefs – the latter having no powerful leverage. In the chiefdom leaders possessed a formal status of chiefs officially endowed with powers (usually hereditary).

***Degree of Centralization***

Though both tribes and chiefdoms played a system-creating role, uniting a number of community groups and settlements, supra-communal organs were either absent from the tribe or weak and amorphous (acting occasionally), while the chiefdom usually had a center of power in the main settlement headed by the chief.

***Character of Relations***

Settlement, administration, and social systems in the chiefdom were vertical, while those of the tribe were largely horizontal.

***Level of Inequality***

Both political and social-economic relations in the chiefdom were characterized by inequality to a much greater extent than those in a tribe. Thus, economic relations in a tribe were more of horizontal exchange (reciprocity), while those in the chiefdom were vertical (redistribution), with features of compulsory labor and semi-compulsory gifts.

**Tribes and Chiefdoms: Variation and Continuity of Forms**

However, those differences are relevant first of all for theoretical (ideal) models of sociopolitical organization. In reality, differences between those polities that tend to be denoted as tribes versus chiefdoms may not be so salient, and one can observe a sort of continuity of various intermediate types between the ideal type of the chiefdom and the ideal type of the tribe.

This continuity corresponds to a wide range in the possible powers of the chief. On the one hand, one may observe an authoritarian chief with power close to that of an absolute monarch (note, however, that such chiefs tend to be observed in complex chiefdoms like those of the Hawaiian Islands). On the other hand, one may find chiefs of the Cree Indians of Canada, with all their power ‘concentrated at the tips of their tongues’ (Service 1975: 51); that is, they could only convince their tribesmen to do anything through their eloquence. This imprecision of the notion of chief is relevant for a deeper understanding of the diversity of the versions of sociopolitical organization of the barbarian societies that are often denoted as chiefdoms, due to a mere presence of political leaders who are described as chiefs in respective ethnographies. Such a practice can hardly be called reasonable, and as a result the same polity

can be identified by different scholars as a chiefdom, a tribe, or something else.<sup>40</sup>

The continuity of intermediate forms is particularly salient among the nomadic pastoralists, where the same polity tended to combine chiefdom characteristics and features of the tribe. Thus, it appears that (depending on which traits were prevalent) in some cases we may speak about tribal chiefdoms, whereas in other cases we are dealing with chiefly tribes; sometimes we confront quasi-tribal systems consisting of chiefdoms, while in other cases we are dealing with chiefdoms consisting of tribes; and so on.

Correspondingly, a huge variation was observed regarding the position of leaders within respective political systems. In particular, many Bedouin tribes of Arabia (as well as other areas of the Middle East) had no paramount chiefs (Khazanov 2008: 181; Kradin 2017; Marx 1977; on his definition of the tribe, see Tapper 1983, 1990). However, such tribes tended to have political leaders with respect to their sections. Sweet (1965: 138) suggests that we are dealing here with the tribes consisting of chiefdoms, since he regards such tribal sections (*fakhds*) as chiefdoms.<sup>41</sup> Is this right? It is hard to judge. In any case, his suggestion does not appear to have been widely accepted. In general, we tend to agree with Khazanov (2008: 198) that within such a context it might be more reasonable to make judgments based on functions rather than structure, whereas functionally we are dealing here with tribal sections rather than independent polities.

We suggest that chiefdoms in their classical form should not coincide fully with ethnic tribes, since in this case ethnocultural and ideological ties (perceptions of kinship, mutual assistance, *etc.*) would become primary, while political relations would be secondary. Meanwhile, the classical chiefdom is in the first instance a political (sociopolitical) system.<sup>42</sup>

In political anthropology tribes are commonly regarded as segmental political structures (Fortes and Evans-Pritchard 1987a; Sahlins 1968; see also Middleton and Tait 1958; Southall 1988, 1991). However, here exists a great variety. The classical type of such structures consisting of lineage segments is per-

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<sup>40</sup> Claessen's article (2017) frees us from the necessity to minutely analyze the indefiniteness of the chief notion and the variety of chief types.

<sup>41</sup> Nevertheless, this was not only typical for nomadic pastoralists; a similar situation was observed, *e.g.*, among the Saxons on the eve of their conquest by Charlemagne. The Saxons had no royal power but the tribal sections were headed by dukes and the general military command was performed by a duke drawn by lot (Kolesnitsky 1963: 186). The overall political organization of the whole territory was executed in a form of a sort of federation of particular areas. Decisions on issues of common interest were made at the meetings of representatives of the Saxony areas in Marklo at the Weser (Kolesnitsky 1963: 186).

<sup>42</sup> This is how he is depicted by Carneiro, *e.g.*, who emphasizes the acquisition of political power and territory by the supreme chief, which in turn contributes to the emergence of a new level of political power.

ceived to be a system where all lineages are equal and their interrelations are symmetrical. '[T]here is no association, class, or segment which has a dominant place in the political structure through the command of greater organized force than is at the disposal of any of its congeners' (Fortes and Evans-Pritchard 1987b: 14). Evans-Pritchard also maintains that every tribal system characterized by segmental structures is a system of balanced opposition between tribes and tribal segments, from the largest to the smallest. No unified power can exist in such tribes (Evans-Pritchard 1949: 142).

However, one can find numerous examples (including those among nomadic herders) where opposition is asymmetric. Included in this group are certain structural segments that are larger and more powerful, such as among Cyrenaica's Bedouins (Evans-Pritchard 1949: 54–55; Khazanov 2008: 176; Peters 1967: 271). Also included are segments of the population that possess special privileges – for example, chiefs being selected mainly from this structure, such as among Arabian bedouins, where only the representatives of certain lineages are chosen to be section chiefs (Khazanov 2008: 176; Sweet 1965: 143; on African cases see also Tymowski 2008: 172). Khazanov characterizes these structures as differentiated segmental systems. They are closer to chiefdoms, but not identical to them. Within these structures the centralization of power is not sufficient. The chiefs are controlled by social factors – councils of elders and meetings of free men (Tymowski 2008: 172).

Thus, at the intermediate level of sociopolitical complexity one can observe an enormous diversity of sociopolitical types and forms. In the horizontal aspect we can regard them as belonging to the same evolutionary level. However, in the vertical dimension one can identify polities with different evolutionary potentials. Such polities existed among both chiefdoms and their analogues. In conclusion, we hope that the notion of chiefdom analogues that we have put forward will allow us to help advance the theoretical analysis of the cultural-political variation among medium-complexity societies, within which chiefdoms are bound to occupy one of the main positions.

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