

NOMADIC PATHWAYS IN SOCIAL EVOLUTION



NOMADIC PATHWAYS



IN SOCIAL EVOLUTION

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***NOMADIC PATHWAYS
IN SOCIAL EVOLUTION***

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The book is written by anthropologists, historians, and archaeologists specializing in nomadic studies. All the chapters presented here discuss various aspects of one significant problem: how could small nomadic peoples at the outskirts of agricultural civilizations subjugate vast territories between the Mediterranean and the Pacific? What was the impetus that set in motion the overwhelming forces of the nomads which made tremble the royal courts of Europe and Asia? Was it an outcome of any predictable historical process or a result of a chain of random events? A wide sample of nomadic peoples is discussed, mainly on the basis of new data.

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PREFACE

In the year 2000 an important international conference "Hierarchy and Power in the History of Civilizations" was held in Moscow. The Conference brought together many scholars from different countries¹. A great variety of problems ranging from sociobiological preconditions for the relations of dominance to power mechanisms in the post-Soviet states was discussed. Among the Conference panels there was one titled "Hierarchy and Power in Nomadic Societies" (convened by Prof. Nikolay Kradin). Over twenty scholars from France, Russia, Ukraine, and the USA participated in its work.

It is well known that the majority of the nomadology theoretical issues including those of the nomadic sociopolitical organization, have not got final solutions up to now. At present there are many theories which interpret characteristic features of nomadic pastoralists differently. Could nomads overcome the threshold of statehood independently and if yes, how such societies should be defined? Why the economic basis of nomadism has changed so slightly in millennia while the political organization is changing constantly from acephalous tribes and chiefdoms to "nomadic empires"? What do nomadic sociopolitical institutions have and do not have in common with such notions typical for sedentary agricultural societies as the state, class, property, feudalism?

All these questions were raised once and again during the Conference. The approaches demonstrated in the papers and subsequent discussions turned out so interesting and important that it was decided to publish the panel's Proceedings as a separate volume in two languages, Russian and English. It was also decided to broaden the list of contributors by inviting several top specialists in the subject. Unfortunately, not all of them were able to accept the invitation. Besides, there are some differences between the Russian and English versions of the volume.

The contributors were requested to concentrate on the following topics: (1) Theories of historical process and nomadism; (2) The typology of Eurasian complex nomadic societies (tribal unions, chiefdoms, empires, etc.); (3) The structure of power and authority in nomadic societies; (4) Types and models of leadership in nomadic societies; (5) Egalitarianism and inequality in nomadic societies; (6) Relations between nomads and agriculturalists. Let the reader judge what has resulted of all this.

¹ See the Conference report in *Anthropology Today* 2000, Vol. 16, No 6, p.23-24.

We hope that this work will find a reflection in colleagues' publications. We also believe that it will promote further discussions of significant problems of nomadology, a study of the nomadism's place in the world historical process and of evolutionary processes in different social and natural environment milieu. Just this is the theoretical context of our volume.

Thomas Barfield
Dmitri Bondarenko
Nikolay Kradin

INTRODUCTION: SOCIAL EVOLUTION, ALTERNATIVES, AND NOMADISM

Dmitri M. Bondarenko, Andrey V. Korotayev, and
Nikolay N. Kradin

In the modern social sciences and history, there are four groups of theories which variously explain basic principles of origin, further change and, sometimes, collapse of the complex human systems. The first of them are various unilinear theories of development or evolution (Marxism, neoevolutionism, modernization theories etc.). They show how the humanity has evolved from local groups of primitive hunters-gatherings to the modern post-industrial world society. The second ones are theories of civilizations. The proponents of these theories argue that there is no unified world history. Rather there are separate clusters of cultural activity that constitute different civilizations. The civilizations, like living organisms, are born, live and die (Spengler 1918; Toynbee 1934).

The world-systems perspective and multilinear theories of social evolution are intermediate between these poles. The world-system approach (Wallerstein 1974; Chase-Dunn and Hall 1997; Sanderson 1999), like unilinear theories of development distinguish three models of society: mini-systems, world-empires and world-economies. But they are considered in space rather than in time. This makes the conceptualization of history more complete. The modern multilinear theories (Bondarenko and Korotayev 2000; Korotayev, Kradin, de Munk, Lynsha 2000) suppose that there are several possible paths of socio-political transformation. Some of these can lead to complexity, *e.g.* from a chiefdom to a true state; while others suppose the existence of the supercomplex community without a bureaucracy (*e.g.*

Greek poleis); while a third group preserves the tribal system under particular ecological conditions.

In fact, the point here is that different dimensions of world history unfold on several planes at one time. Every dimension reflects corresponding parameters of the social systems' activities on its co-ordinate net. However, none of the enumerated paradigms completely reflects the studied phenomenon's specificity. The principal of complementarity once formulated by the Physicist Nils Bohr presupposes that these theories can explain a natural phenomenon only in the aggregate. It is very important to note at this point that even opposite theories may not exclude each other but rather reflect important structural parameters of the studied object.

This book mainly deals with the multilinear evolutionist interpretation of the historical process. In the majority of chapters the world of nomads is regarded as a specific alternative of social evolution. As far as dealing with this problem presupposes the necessity of preliminary reference to a more general methodological problem of evolutionary alternatively, it turns out reasonable to show briefly how this problem is tackled in contemporary cultural anthropological and historical research.

Evolution and alternatives

There are several independent approaches to the study of social evolution. Naturally, each of those approaches is represented by a number of theories, and their consideration is worth a special monograph. That is why we shall restrict ourselves to a brief discussion of just one theory which is most relevant to the discussion of the problem we rise in this book, that is of correlation between the unilinear and multilinear approaches.

The line is monodimensional. Hence, it appears possible to speak about a line/trajectory of evolution (or a line of development) of a single society. However, if we speak about the line of evolution common for all societies, than this would be true only if one of two conditions is observed.

1) It seems possible to speak about a single line of social evolution, if we apply a single criterion. It does not appear to be reasonable, but is sometimes done. For example, the most influential three-stage scheme postulating the existence of the universal stages of the foraging, agrarian, and industrial societies (to which the post-industrial stage is sometimes added) seems to be simply a result of application of a single technological criterion. The other single criterion scheme is the one stemming from Hegel and applying the criterion of freedom – in Russia there were some attempts to use this approach still in the 1960s (Porshnev 1966: 190–201). However, this does not appear to be the only form of the evolutionary unilinearism, and nobody seems to insist seriously on the possibility of the use of only one

criterion of evolution at the moment. Hence, we shall concentrate on another condition, which could justify the evolutionary unilinearism.

2) It would be possible to speak about the line of social evolution if there were a perfect 100% correlation (functional dependence) among all the main unidimensional parameters of evolution. Strictly speaking, even if just one exception could be found the unilinear scheme would corrupt the reality, and thus it would be reasonable to speak about a plane but not a line of evolution. The actual situation is even much more dramatic: there is no even one pair of significant evolutionary variables with a 100% correlation between them. At least, none of such correlation has been discovered in more than one hundred years of active search (see Levinson, Malone 1981; Ember, Levinson 1991). It is clear that in reality one ought to speak not about a line or even a plane or three-dimensional space but about a polydimensional space, a field of social evolution.

Still let us dwell in some detail on the Marxist version of unilinear evolutionism which preserves its influence in up to now. Indeed, Marx formulated the idea of 100% correlation (functional dependence) among all the basic evolutionary parameters openly and distinctively:

"Take a definite stage of human productive forces' development and you will get a definite form of exchange and consumption. Take a definite stage of production, exchange and consumption's development and you will get a definite social order, a definite organization of family, estates or classes, *i.e.* a definite civil society. Take a definite civil society and you will get a definite political order" (Marx 1846: 402).

In reality to none of the mentioned above parameters' value corresponds unambiguously any other one's value. One can take a definite stage of production, exchange and consumption's development and to get absolutely different types of social order, organization of the family, estates or classes. For example, the African hunter-gatherers Hadza and Kalahari San (Bushmen) and hunter-gatherers of Central Australia are on the same "stage of production, exchange and consumption's development" but in terms of "organization of the family" they occupy almost opposite poles of the evolutionary spectrum. While the Hadza and Bushmen families are characterized by more or less equal women's status, among the Australian aborigines women's status is strongly inferior to that of men and is more similar to the majority of world cultures including complex stratified ones (see Woodburn 1972; 1982; Whyte 1978: 49-94; Artemova 1987; 1993; 2000).

Medieval civilizations of Eurasia and North Africa may serve as another example. They were at basically the same stage in terms of their material production forces' development (as it was convincingly demonstrated *e.g.* by

Iljushechkin [1990 etc.]) but had quite different types of ties between specialized craft and agriculture. These ranged from the almost complete dominance of market relations in some West European societies (Northern Italy, Southern Germany, the Netherlands and others) to the dominance of state-redistributive forms (particularly in the city craft of Fatimid Egypt) or communal-reciprocity in the "village sector" of Northern India (see Alaev 1981: 67–71). This does not mean that evolution along these two parameters is completely unrelated to one another. To be sure there is a regularity but it does not reveal itself as a very rigid correlation. It is not difficult to demonstrate that the same is true with all the other cases of supposed functional dependence postulated by Marx, *i.e.* to show that in all of them there is nothing more than a not very rigid correlation. Accordingly all unilinear models ultimately prove themselves inappropriate for in such situations.

Unilinear schemes also fail to explain the specificity of nomadic societies. It should be noted that for the Marxist theory of historical progress, nomadism has become the same stumbling block as the 'Asiatic mode of production'. How could unchanged nomadic societies be interpreted within a framework of the common march of the production modes? A dialectic theory of social progress assumed, primordially, changes from lowest economical forms to the highest ones. However, the economic "basis" of pastoral societies has remained unchanged: it is the same among the modern Masaai and Arabs as among the ancient Hsiung-nu. Thus, nomadism drops out of the Marxist dialectics of history. On the other hand, if the economic "basis" of society didn't change, then the "superstructure" should be unchanged. But the "superstructure" of the pastoral nomads did not remain static. The nomads periodically created giant steppe empires that latter disintegrated into separate khanates or even acephalous lineage societies, all of which contradict the principles of Marxist theory (Gellner 1988:93-97, 114).

The advocates of nomadic feudalism and the Engels-Stalin scheme of five modes of production "connived" at the difference in economical and cultural development between nomads and agrarian civilizations, thereby overestimating the level of the economic "basis" of pastoralism. In these theoretical schemes, many facts were falsified and fitted to the Procrustean bed of dogmatic Marxism. So, the erroneous division into "early" (pre-feudal and slave-owning societies in ancient Orient and West) and "late" (medieval feudal) nomads has arisen.

Advocates of the pre-class development of nomads criticised the concept of "nomad feudalism" (Markov 1976). As "true" Marxists, they nested up on the development level of the economic "basis" of pastoralists. If

the "basis" of ancient nomads was not a class one, then the "basis" of the later pastoralists must not be class either. On the other hand, primitive "superstructure" should be adjusted to primitive "basis". Therefore, nomads in social evolution at most only approached the late primitive (pre-class, pre-feudal etc.) stage.

This evolution in the discussions of Russian nomadologists was already obvious. For example, analysis of the samples from the *Atlas of World Cultures* of G. Murdock indicates that almost all known ethnohistorical nomads have not approached the state level and class stratification (see Korotayev 1991:157, table XI). But the conclusion relative to the pre-state nature of all nomads led to underestimation of the developmental level of the "superstructure" for a number of pastoral societies such as steppe empires. These empires were also declared pre-state, but was their political organization really of the same type as that found among the Nuer, Hottentots Kazaks or Kalmyks?

Alternativity in evolution

On the first level of analysis, all evolutionary variability can be reduced to two principally different groups of homologous series, just because any society is ultimately based either on a homoarchical (hierarchical, "vertical", non-democratic) or heterarchical (non-hierarchical, "horizontal", democratic) principle. This fundamental distinction among societies, including those of the same level of overall cultural complexity, might be already rooted in the nature of primates (see Butovskaya and Fainberg 1993; Butovskaya 1994) and runs all through the whole socio-political history of the humanity from non-egalitarian and egalitarian early primitive associations (Woodburn 1982; Khazanov 1985: 91–95; Artemova 1993; 2000) to contemporary totalitarian and democratic organizations (see Bondarenko and Korotayev 2000: 6–8). Hence, the degree of socio-political hierarchization is not a perfect criterion for evaluating a society's evolutionary level, though it is regarded as such within unilinear concepts of social evolution.

In contradiction to evolutionist, neoevolutionist, and Marxist views, not all early human associations were egalitarian and the evolutionary process was not reduced just to the appearance and subsequent increase in socio-political hierarchization. On the contrary, social inequality existed in the human society from the very start (*e.g.* Dahrendorf 1970; Rousseau 1985; Trigger 1985; Gellner 1988; Artemova 2000; Schweitzer 2000; Kradin 2001). In addition, and again contrary to the theories mentioned above, one can give not a few examples of complex heterarchical societies in total forming an evolutionary series that do not follow the exceptionally widely spread unilinear scheme of "band-tribe (or independent community)–

chiefdom– complex chiefdom– state"¹. This is especially important because the measure of hierarchization is represented as the main and practically the only "litmus-paper" for a society's level of development in this almost canonized until the 1990s (see Berezkin 1995; Korotayev 1995b; Claessen 2000a; 200b etc.). As Brumfiel wrote several years ago,

"the coupling of [socio-political] differentiation and hierarchy is so firm in our minds that it takes tremendous intellectual efforts even imagine what differentiation without hierarchy could be" (Brumfiel 1995: 130).

Usually, even if the very existence of complex but non-hierarchical cultures is recognized, they are regarded as a historical fortuity, as an anomaly. Such cultures viewed as capable of reaching only rather low levels of complexity and as incapable of finding internal stability (Tuden and Marshall 1972:454–456).

However, on the further level of analysis the dichotomy "homoarchival society vs. heterarchical society" turns out not to be rigid at all. The actual organization of any society employs both vertical (dominance – subordination) and horizontal (apprehended as ties among equals) links (Smith 1985; Blanton 1998; Marcus, Feinman 1998: 11). Thus, even the most "egalitarian" society is hierarchical in some sense. Furthermore, in the course of their history societies (including archaic ones) prove capable of changing their models of socio-political organization radically, transforming themselves from hierarchical into heterarchical or *vice versa* (Crumley 1987:164–165; 1995:4; Bondarenko and Korotayev 2000; Dozhdev 2000; Kradin 2000). Note that in the course of such transformations the organizational background changes as well, but the overall level of cultural complexity does not necessarily change.² Nor should the transition from a more to less hierarchical structure without diminishing of organisms' adaptivity to the environment be regarded as a sign of degradation or regress

¹ In this respect see its fundamental criticism by Mann (Mann 1986), the most radically negative attitude to this scheme expressed in categories of social evolution "trajectories alternativity" by Yoffee (Yoffee 1993), several collective works of recent years (Gailey and Patterson 1987; Ehrenreich *et al.* 1995; Kradin and Lynsha 1995; Kradin *et al.* 2000; Bondarenko and Korotayev 2000a), proceedings of recent international conferences (Butovskaya *et al.* 1998:94-100; Bondarenko and Sledzevski 2000; Beliaev, Bondarenko and Frantsouzoff 2002), as well as already mentioned publications by Berezkin and Korotayev on alternatives to the chiefdom and complex chiefdom, and by Grinin, Kradin, and Possehl on alternatives to the state.

² For examples from ancient and medieval history of Europe, the Americas, Asia see *e.g.* van der Vliet 1987; Ferguson 1991; Korotayev 1995a; 1996; Levy 1995; Chamblee 2000:15–35; Dozhdev 2000; Kowalewski 2000; Kradin 2000 etc.; a general philosophic grounding of regularity of cardinal social transformations not accompanied by a change of the overall cultural complexity, see Shemjakin 1992: 18–19.

according to modern theories of biological evolution (see Severtsov 1949; 1967; Rensch 1959: 281–308; Dobzhansky et al. 1977; Futuyma 1986: 286).

The state as such, even the Early state is not universal either. History knows of societies which were not states but that were also not inferior to states in terms of their degree of socio-cultural complexity and the development of their subsystems or in their ability to answer adequately serious "challenges" of social and natural environment. The cultures we mean here were realizations of alternative to the state evolutionary "projects".

No doubt, the ancient *polis* (or *civitas*) left the most impressive mark in human history and culture among all the types of society alternative to the state. Hardly one had ever hesitated in high, not inferior to that of the state, level of many *poleis*' (especially of Classical Greece) development. In the meantime, the idea of its non-state character that has been sporadically expressed for many decades now seems to be proved by Berent (1994; 2000). It should be also noted that (again, contrary to the widespread view) the *polis* as a form of socio-political organization was known far beyond the chronological and geographical limits of the ancient world (Aglarov 1988; Korotayev 1995b; Bondarenko and Korotayev 1999).

The ancient *polis*, one of the foundations of the modern Western civilization, would be enough for recognition as significant of historical and anthropological research into the phenomenon of supracomplex but non-state societies, for their not attributing as "lateral branches" of the evolutionary process (Bondarenko, Grinin, Korotayev 2002). But some of many other alternatives to the state may also be recalled, such as the Sahara Tuaregs of the 19th century, the Icelandic polity of the "Age of Democracy" (till the middle of the 13th century) or the *kazachye voysko* of the Cossacks of Ukraine and Southern Russia till the end of the 17th century. These examples could be multiplied but what is important to note at this point is that all of the "alternative" societies mentioned above were organized democratically. Thus, it is possible to regard as alternative to each other the evolutionary pathways which lead societies to either political centralization and separation of authority from population or further development of communal foundations and institutions of self-government.

However, both this scheme and the unilinear one that has already gained a foothold long ago remain merely ideal logical models. None of these specific historical cases ever completely realizes the scheme in its totality and without overlapping other evolutionary series (see Blanton 1998). For example, the evidence from Benin Kingdom of the 13th – 19th centuries reveals that not only heterarchical but also homoarchical societies can reach a very high (incomparably higher than that of complex chiefdoms) level of

sociocultural complexity and political centralization without ever transforming itself into a state during the whole long period of its existence. The Benin evidence also testifies that local community's autonomy is not a guarantee of complex society's advancement along the heterarchical pathway. On the other hand, the traditional scheme does not posit the communal autonomy of supracommunal institutions or the overall hierarchical system of socio-political institutions. However, that was just the case in Benin (see Bondarenko 1995; 2000a; 2000b; 2001). In general, it may be supposed that a complex society's character is more determined by specificity of its substratum institution (the community) than by the way in which the local and supralocal institutions correlate (Bondarenko and Korotayev 1999; 2000; Korotayev et al. 2000).

So, alternativity characterizes not only two basic macrogroups of human associations, *i.e.* hierarchical and heterarchical societies. Alternativity does exist within each of them, too. In particular, within the upper range of complexity and integrativity of the sociopolitical organization the state (at least in the pre-industrial world) "competes" with not only heterarchical systems of institutions (*e.g.* with *polis*) but also with some forms of socio-political organization not less homoarchical than the state. The first half of the 19th century Zulu power can serve as an example at this point. Within that vast and mighty militaristic power one can observe high degree of supracommunal institutions' hierarchization and high rigidity of this institutional hierarchy (see, *e.g.* Gluckman 1940; Ritter 1955).

Societies with profoundly elaborated rigid caste systems may be a hierarchical alternative to states, too (Quigley 1999:114–169). By the way, in the democratic part of the socio-political types' spectrum the civil communities (*poleis*) have not only hierarchical but also heterarchical alternatives like the mentioned above Icelandic, Cossack, and some other models.

So, what about the nomads? Which of the enumerated alternatives do they blend with? Or might they have followed an independent evolutionary pathway?

Nomads in evolution

Social evolution among the pastoral nomads have not been studied as well as the problems of general evolution. In generalising essays in cultural evolution, nomads are only touched upon indirectly. The emphasis in these books is on the evolution of agrarian cultures and civilizations (Sahlins 1968; Service 1971; Adams 1975; Johnson and Earle 1987; Sanderson 1999). The Marxist anthropologists gave more attention to this problem (see details on this discussion in: Kogan 1980; Halil Ismail 1983; Kradin 1992; Gellner

1988; Masanov 1995). Discussion has gone through several stages. Until the mid-1930s, all the basic viewpoints concerning the nature of nomadic societies (from primitive-communal to developed feudal) had been offered. But after 1934, the so-called theory of the "nomadic feudalism" gained preeminence, of which several versions were advanced, but only the simplified Stalinist understanding of the steppe feudalism prevailed. Beginning in the mid-1950s, the internal rumblings against this view began and new interpretations of the feudalism of nomads arose that emphasized livestock as the main means of production. During the years of "thaw" other viewpoints appeared that included: (1) concept of *pre-class* nomadic society (Markov 1976; Vainstein 1980; König 1981; Pavlenko 1989); (2) concept of *early state* of nomads (Khazanov 1975; 1984; Preshits 1976; Krader 1978; Escedy 1981; 1989; Bunyatyan 1985; Kychanov 1997); (3) different *feudal* interpretations of nomadism (Tolybekov 1971; Natsadorzh 1975; Zlatkin 1982; Manai-Ool 1986); (4) concept of *nomadic mode of production* (Markov 1967; Bonte 1981; 1990; Masanov 1991).

Over the post-Soviet ten years, this discussion has largely continued in the literature in Russian language (see Kradin 2002). In this discussion, all the above viewpoints have figured to some extent or another. However, the most attention has been attracted by the attempts to substantiate the specific way of developing the societies of nomads-stock-breeders. The subject of discussion has been concentrated on the question of what is a base of the nomadism's specificity –the internal nature of the stock-breeding being the base of so called *nomadic* mode of production or the peculiarities of the outer adaptation of nomads to the agricultural world-empires. At the same time, under conditions of the overcoming of the formation monism, the attempts have been taken to consider the nomadism from the viewpoint of the civilisation approach, to substantiate the existence of the specific nomadic civilization in the history.

It is apparent that the nomadic stockbreeders have created the diversified in the complexity extent forms of political organization. The least complex form of the political system can be for example found among the African Nuer. These are segmentary village and lineage fractions combined by the relations of the real and fictitious kindred into the friable nonstructural associations numbering several tens thousands people. They had no any all-tribal management bodies. The only political figure is "chief in the leopard skin" performing the intermediation functions in the conflicting situations (Evans-Pritchard 1940).

The more complex tribal model was characteristic of many nomads-stock-breeders of the North America and Eurasia (Arabs, Tuaregs, Pashtuns etc.). Their trines were divided into the separate families (clans) which, in

turn, were split up into smaller related subdivisions down to small communities or households. The power of chiefs was insignificant. Their duties could include the following tasks: organization of military campaigns and distribution of booty, direction of migrating, settlements of disputes with respect to territories, stealing of livestock, violation of customs, mutilation and murders and so on. The chiefs had no other way to influence their fellow-tribesmen other than through the force of their own persuasion, authority or, finally, threats to apply their magic abilities. The chiefs of some nomads (Baluchi, Tuaregs) have executed all functions while a division into civil and military chiefs could be characteristic of other nomads (Bedouins).

Second in the complexity extent model of political system - chiefdom - is the stratified society based on the hierarchy and unequal access to resources (in detail see Early 1987; 1991; 2002). In particular, the similar polities are described in the chapter of Kazankov. He notes a presence of chiefdoms numbering several tens thousands of people being at the head of ancestral chiefs *kgosi* for some groups of Tsvana. The chief has personified the unity and well being of a society and performed the most important rituals. To the chief, the military detachments consisting of the young warriors were subordinate. In the society, there has been the genealogical and age inequality, property stratification based on the quantity of livestock and patronage-client relations.

From the point of view of the anthropological theories of the social evolution, the key problem is the question as to could the nomads establish their own statehood? At present, there are two popular groups of theories explaining the origin and essence of the early state. The *conflict or control* theories show the origin of statehood and its internal nature in the context of the relations between exploitation, class struggle, war and interethnic predominance. The integrative theories were largely oriented to explaining the phenomenon of the state as a higher stage of economic and public integration (Fried 1967; Service 1975; Claessen and Skalnik 1978; 1981; Cohen and Service 1978; Haas 1982; Gailey and Patterson 1988; Pavlenko 1989).

However, one can not consider from any viewpoint that the statehood was for nomads internally necessary. All the basic economic processes in the stockbreeding society have been made within the framework of individual households. For this reason, there was no need for the bureaucratic machine dealing with the management-redistribution activity. On the other hand, all the social contradictions between nomads have been settled in the context of traditional institutions of keeping the internal political stability. The strong pressure upon nomads could lead to decampment or application of the reciprocal violence because each free nomad was at the same time a warrior

(Lattimore 1940; Markov 1976; Irons 1979; Khazanov 1984; Fletcher 1986; Barfield 1992; Kradin 1992; Masanov 1995).

A demand for consolidation of nomads arises only in case of wars for means of subsistence, organization of robbery of farmers or expansion into their territory and when establishing a control over the trading ways. In this situation, formation of the complex political organization of nomads in the form of nomadic empires is at the same time a product of integration and consequence of a conflict (between nomads and farmers). From this point of view, the establishment of nomadic empires is the special case of a popular in due time conquest theory (*Überlagerungstheorie*) of the state origin (L. Gumplowicz, F. Oppenheimer) according to which the war and conquest are prerequisites to the further fixation of inequality and stratification.

All of this has predetermined the dual nature of the steppe empires. From outside, they have appeared as the despotic, aggressive state-like societies because they have been established for a withdrawal of the surplus product from without steppe. However, from within the nomadic empires have remained based on the tribal relations without establishment of taxation and exploitation of stockbreeders. But what is it if not state?

Nomadic alternative

Without question, the political system of nomadic empires can not consider as the state. However, this does not imply that such an administration structure was primitive. The complex societies they produced are those that Childe called civilization and could arise without the bureaucratic administrative organization. The thorough studies of experts in the field of antiquity history show that the Greek and Roman polities can not be also considered as states. The statehood with its inherent bureaucracy appears here quite lately - in the epoch of Hellenistic states and during the imperial period of the Roman history (Staerman 1989; Berent 2000).

Some chapters of this book deal directly with this problem. A. Medvedev points to differences between the pastoral societies of the East Europe steppes of the Bronze Age (Arkaim and Sintasha) and period of the Early Iron Century (Scythian culture) on the basis of such archaeological indices as types and sizes of settlements and dwellings, differences in the funeral ceremonies and spatial hierarchy of settlements and sites. The author contrasts these societies as ranked and stratified. He notes carefully that at present it is impossible to answer the question - were the differences between societies caused by different ways of evolution or they were in the phasic nature. However, in none of the cases, it is inappropriate to speak about the specific civilization of nomads.

Yatsenko shows that a thesis of underdevelopment of Sarmatians as compared with Skythians is a myth of the ancient historiography. The archaeological and written sources show the multi-stage social stratification, complex institution of the tsar's power, system of settlements and town sites, developed international relations with other countries, use for the diplomatic correspondence of the written languages of the agricultural neighbours. Unfortunately, available data is insufficient to definitely judge of the fact whether it was a chiefdom or early state but from data presented by Yatsenko, the xenocratic nature of the Sarmatian society is well demonstrated.

For similar societies, more numerous and structurally developed than the complex chiefdoms but not being at the same time, states (even *inchoate early states*), a term *supercomplex chiefdom* was proposed (Kradin 1992: 152; 2000; 2002 etc.). This term was accepted by colleagues-specialists on nomadic societies (Trepavlov 1995; 2000; Skrynnikova 1997; 2000; Marey 2000; see also chapters of Vasjutin and Medvedev in this volume) although initially the clear logic criteria separating the supercomplex chiefdom from the complex one and from the early state were not proposed.

In the theories of social evolution, the simple chiefdoms are a group of communities hierarchically subordinate to single chief. The complex chiefdoms are the hierarchically arranged combination of several simple chiefdoms (Earle 1987; 1991 etc.). However, the supercomplex chiefdom is no mechanical group of complex chiefdoms. Differences here are of the qualitative rather than quantitative nature. In case of simple consolidation of several complex chiefdoms into the larger polities, the latter without the power machine are not often proved to be able to control a separatism of subchiefs. The fundamental difference of the supercomplex chiefdoms is an emergence of the mechanism of governors who have been sent by the supreme chief to manage the regional structures. It is still not a power machine because the number of such persons is not great. However, it is an important structural impulse to the further political integration (the honour of discovery of this mechanism belongs to Robert Carneiro [2000]). At the same time, it seems to us that in its most developed form it is characteristic to a larger extent of nomadic than settled societies.

The institution of governors was a method to maintain the structural unity of the imperial confederation of nomads. The administrative-hierarchical structure of the steppe empire has included several levels. At the highest level, the power was divided into two or three parts - left and right wings or center and wings. The wings, in turn, could be divided into the subwings. At the next level, these segments have been divided into tumens - military-administrative units which could provide approximately 5-10

thousands of soldiers each. From the ethnopolitical viewpoint, these units should be corresponded to the tribal associations or complex chiefdoms. The latter, in turn, have been divided into the smaller social units - chiefdoms and tribes, clan-tribal and communal structures of different extents of complexity which, in military respect, have corresponded to thousands, hundreds and tens. Beginning from the level of segments of ten thousands order and higher including several tribal formations, the administrative and military control has been entrusted with governors from the closest relatives of the ruler of the steppe empire and persons devoted to him. To a large measure, it were the governors which have determined what power over the tribes and chiefdoms being members of the imperial confederation would belong to the metropolis (Kradin 1996; 2000; 2002 etc.).

The supercomplex chiefdom of nomadic empires is already the real forerunner of the early state. The above chiefdoms have had the complex system of titularity of chiefs and functionaries, have conducted correspondence with the neighbouring countries, contracted the dynastic marriages with agrarian states and neighbouring monadic empires. Of them, the rudiments of the urbanistic and monumental construction and sometimes even written language are characteristic. From the viewpoint of neighbours, such the nomadic societies have been perceived as independent subjects of the international political relations.

Could the chiefdoms of the supercomplex type be established by the settled-agrarian people? It is known that the population of complex chiefdoms is measured by, as a rule, tens thousands of people and they, as a rule, were ethnically homogenous. However, the population of the multinational supercomplex chiefdom makes up many hundreds thousands people and even more (nomadic empires of the Inner Asia up to 1-1.5 million people). The territory of supercomplex chiefdoms of nomads was by several orders larger than that necessary for simple and complex chiefdoms of farmers. The management of such large space for nomads was facilitated by the specificity of steppe landscapes and availability of mobile saddle animals. However, the overall armament of nomads (caused in part by their disperse settlement), their mobility, economic autarchy, and aggressive mode of life over the course of the long historical period often prevented the establishment of stable control over the pastoral tribes and separate nomads by would be nomadic elites. On this basis, one can assume that the supercomplex chiefdom, if not necessarily characteristic of the nomads as a form of political organization, was widespread among them both in the form of powerful nomadic empires and in the form of similar quasi-imperial xenocratic polities of smaller size.

Of the supercomplex chiefdoms of nomads-stock-breeders, certain properties are characteristic which were not characteristic of the settled-agrarian chiefdoms and states (see, for example chapters of Dmitriev, Kradin, and Skrynnikova). Among these were specific dual-triad (wings, center) principle of the administrative division of empire, the relationship between all levels of political hierarchy and clan-tribal relations, the general inclusion of all men as soldiers, and policies of extortion with respect to the settled agrarian societies. Some of these properties can be found not only in the pre-industrial nomadic empires but also in a number of the modern states of the Central Asia. All of this allows us to make a conclusion of the specific line of social evolution characteristic of the pastoral nomads.

Some comments to other chapters of the volume

This volume deals with the consideration of nomadism as a specific variant of social evolution. A large number of articles touch on one or another aspects of this subject. However, the origins of this question rest against the specificity of the interaction between nomads and farmers. Barfield, Irons, and Khazanov show how huge influence have had the nomads on the course of historical development, features of political organization and culture of the neighbouring agrarian societies.

At the same time, the peculiarities of the pastoral nomadic societies can not be explained on the basis of only logic of the internal development of nomads. These ideas go back to the famous book of Owen Lattimore *Inner Asia frontier China* (1940) in which it was showed that the specificity of the nomadic society can not be correctly understood without appeal to the cultural ecology and relations of nomadic stock-breeders with the settled agrarian neighbours. In more recent times, at first Anatoly Khazanov (1984) and then Thomas Barfield (1981; 1992; 2000) have attracted attention to this problem. Khazanov has conclusively shown that the great societies of nomads (he assigns them to a stage of early state) have been established due to asymmetry of relations between the nomads and their outer (settled) environment. These ideas were summarised in his chapter of this volume. T. Barfield, rejecting the diffusive interpretations of borrowing of the state by nomads from farmers, has shown that the degree of the steppe society centralization has been directly related to a level of political integration of the settled agrarian society. Subsequently, Peter Golden (1992) using materials of the mediaeval nomads of the East-European steppe developed the ideas of the mediacy of the steppe politogenesis with the agrarian world.

For the Marxist science, such ideas were unacceptable because, based on the theory of formations, the state could come into existence only due to internal reasons - growth of productive forces and struggle of classes. From

this viewpoint, even early ideas of Khazanov advanced in his book of the evolution of the Skythian society (1975) looked quite revisionist. A tradition of drawing the peculiarities of nomadic societies on the basis of only (or largely) mechanisms of internal development remains in the Russian nomadism today also (Kalinovskaya 1996; Kychanov 1997; Markov 1998). Nevertheless, in the literature in Russian language there are also the followers of the Lattimore-Khazanov-Barfield line (Kradin 1992; 1996; Fursov 1995; Skrynnikova 1997; Vasjutin 1998). There is no escape from the conclusion that these ideas become more and more popular on the territory of the former Soviet Union. The new impulse for development of this line can be given by the world-system approach (see, particularly, Hall 1991; Barfield 1992; Chase-Dunn and Hall 1997; Kradin 2002).

The problem of typology of nomadic societies is of no less importance. This subject was considered in chapters of Kradin and Vasjutin. The chapters of Dmitriev, Kradin, and Skrynnikova are also dealt with the consideration of the power structure in nomadic empires. However, Vasjutin polemizes in his chapter with Kradin. He considers that the war has dominated over the redistribution of gifts. Without question, it is correct (which was not disclaimed). However, it should be not remembered that often the results of military campaigns have been also redistributed after completion of military actions. In addition, one can not forget that we are dealing with the pre-industrial and, moreover, archaic society in which the rational and irrational things of economic behaviour have not been divided but have been closely related to each other (Godelier 1984). Even though the power of the steppe ruler had influence on his real military successes his contemporaries also perceived it in its irrational form as well.

The chapter of Dmitriev who appeals to the analysis of a number of such elements of political symbolism of the Eurasian nomads as cut-off head, horsetail, practice of destruction of graves among nomads is an example. By their example, he demonstrates convincingly that the sacral and worldly in the political culture of nomads were closely related. The holder of power in the steppe world (but it is right not only with respect to nomads) acted as the expresser of a certain sacral space, a point of magic power concentration.

Skrynnikova deepens her earlier investigations in the field of political power of steppe empires (1997; 2000). Using the Mongol Empire as an example, she analyses the administrative-political system of the nomadic empire's wings and studies the distribution of power within them. She concludes that within the framework of Weber's concept of a traditional ideal type of supremacy the peculiarities of the concentration of dictatorial functions in the wings of steppe empires were mediated by the dominating notions of the power sacrality. Thus the holder of dictatorial prerogatives was

able to maintain the world cosmic order and stability of society. The indivisibility of a traditional consciousness has given the possibilities for a single person to combine ritual, dictatorial and military functions.

The further factor explaining the reasons of establishing the steppe empires is opened in the work of W. Irons. He gives the attention to some important cultural peculiarities of pastoral nomadic societies which have caused their military predominance over the course of many centuries. Among them are a mobility of nomads which allows to easily escape from pursuit with the stock and property, uncomfortable territory for conduct on it of long military campaigns by farmers, kinship and sense of tribal unity (*asabiya*), good military training of nomads from childhood and availability of a great number of hardy horses.

The final subject which is touched upon in the volume is a problem of the fortunes and heritage of nomads during periods of the formation and development of the industrial world-system. This problem is considered in the chapters of Arapov, Khazanov, and Vasilyev. Arapov gives the attention to the status of Chinggis Khan descendants in local elite of the Central Asia nations. He concludes that the respect of belonging to the Golden clan of descendants of the Chinggis kept the region from entering easily into the political order of the Russian Empire. This tendency, as Khazanov believes quite rightfully, was increased during Soviet times with forced sedenterization and the destruction of nomadic mode of life. It is quite well known what consequences were caused by it and there it little point to enlarge on this in detail. Nature takes cruel vengeance against man's unreasoned actions.

At present, the nomadism faces the complex choice. Will pastoral peoples manage to integrate themselves harmoniously in the dynamic but instable world of global economy? Many are inclined to consider that in new century there will no space for nomadism (Humphrey, Sneath 1999) and studying the nomadic alternative will be a destiny of historians only. The forecast of other researchers is not so pessimistic however (Tomorzhav, Erdentsogt 1999). Although solving this problem is beyond the scope of the scientific community, anthropologists and historians should contribute to it as far as possible.

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2

NOMADS OF THE EURASIAN STEPPES IN HISTORICAL RETROSPECTIVE

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Extensive mobile pastoralism, including semi-nomadism and pure pastoral nomadism in its most extreme forms, is, or rather was, represented by but a limited number of types that reflect both its geographic diversity and economic similarity.¹ In addition, their formation was also not infrequently linked to historical circumstances, such as diffusion, borrowing, migration, etc. Intermediate and marginal forms excluded, the main types of mobile pastoralism are as follows: North Eurasian type (reindeer pastoralism of the tundra zone); Eurasian steppe type, which occupied the temperate zone of the steppes, deserts, and semi-deserts, from the Danube to North China, and sometimes also the wooded steppe to the north; the Near Eastern type, including Northeast Africa; the Middle Eastern type, which in some respects is intermediate between the Eurasian steppe and Near Eastern types and embraces the territory of contemporary Turkey, Iran, and Afghanistan; the East African type of predominantly cattle-breeders, who do not use transport animals such as the horse and camel; and the High Inner Asian type with the pastoralists of Tibet as its principal representatives.

These main types can easily be divided into sub-types, sub-sub-types, etc., but typologies and classifications are not the subject of this paper, which is mainly devoted to the pastoralism of the Eurasian steppes, semi-deserts and deserts. The latter is fairly homogeneous, although it is possible to single out its

¹ For more details, see Khazanov 1994; 2000.

several sub-types: The Inner Asian (Mongol), the Kazakstan, the Central Asian, the East European (in the ancient and medieval periods), and the South Central Asian (Turkmen). The differences between these sub-types, however, are not only economic, but cultural as well. Only the South Central Asian type stands out on its own. On the territory of Turkmenistan, the deserts of the temperate zone become the deserts of the sub-tropical zone (the so-called Iranian-Turanian or South Turanian deserts); correspondingly, the pastoralism there acquired some characteristics similar to the Middle Eastern or even Near Eastern varieties.

Inasmuch as pastoral nomadism still lacks a generally accepted definition, I have to start with arguing my own understanding of this phenomenon. Some scholars pay particular attention to mobility and use the term "nomadism" very broadly. They consider such different groups as wandering hunters and gatherers, mounted hunters (the Great Plains Indians of North America), all kinds of pastoralists, some ethno-professional groups like Roma (Gypsies), the "sea nomads" of Southeast Asia, and even certain categories of workers in contemporary societies (the so-called industrial mobility) to be nomads. Others perceive nomadism as a sociocultural system or primarily in cultural terms of a specific way of living, lifestyle, world view, value system, etc. These definitions, however, neglect the economic side of nomadism, which, in my opinion, is the most important criterion. Above all other characteristics, extensive mobile pastoralism is a specific type of food-producing economy that implies two opposites: between animal husbandry and cultivation, and between mobility and sedentism. The size and importance of cultivation in pastoralist societies, along with ecological factors, determines the degree of their mobility and may serve as a criterion for different varieties of pastoralism.

In this case, pastoral nomadism in its most specialized variety is based on the following characteristics: (1) Pastoralism is the predominant form of economic activity; cultivation is either absent altogether or plays a very insignificant role. (2) Pastoralism has an extensive character connected with the maintenance of herds all year round on free-range grazing without stables and without laying in fodder for livestock. (3) The pastoralist economy requires mobility within the boundaries of specific grazing territories, or else between such territories. (4) All, or at least the majority of the population, participates in this mobility. (5) Pastoralist production is aimed at the requirements of subsistence. The traditional pastoral nomadic economy was never profit-oriented, although it was often considerably exchange-oriented. (6) Social organization of pastoral nomads is based on kinship, and, in the case of the nomads of the

Eurasian steppes, and of the Near and Middle East, also on various segmentary systems and genealogies, whether real or spurious. (7) Pastoral nomadism implies certain cultural characteristics connected with its mobile way of life, sociopolitical peculiarities, and some other factors.

Any specialization implies dependency, and pastoral nomadism is no exception. It was an innovative solution for assimilating certain, previously underexploited ecological zones. The emergence of pastoralism, and later of pastoral nomadism, was a crucial moment in the spreading of food-producing economies in the arid, semi-arid and tundra zones of the *oikumene*, because for a very long time they had an advantage there over all other types of economic activity.

However, the shortcomings of pastoral nomadism are also quite evident. First, its specialization was principally different from that in industrial and even in traditional farming and urban societies. This was appreciable already in the early stages of Near Eastern history (Nissen 1988: 43ff.). Specialization in pastoral nomadism implied the division of labor between societies with different economies. The internal division of labor within nomadic societies was very undeveloped.

Second, unlike many types of farming which had the potential for diachronic technological development, in pastoral nomadism, once its formation was complete, the reproduction of similar and highly specialized forms prevailed. Its ecological parameters significantly limited the capabilities for economic growth through technological innovation; they also placed very serious obstacles to the intensification of production.

Thus, an increase in productivity of natural pastures requires extensive development projects that only industrial societies are capable of carrying out. Even temporary maximization of the number of livestock could be achieved mainly by increasing the production base through territorial expansion. As a rule, this was done by military means and/or by turning the sown into pasturelands. Both ancient and medieval histories are abundant with examples of such events. However, this extensive way of increasing production could be neither permanent nor stable. It was too much at the mercy of the balance of power between nomadic and sedentary societies. Besides, sooner or later even the enlarged ecological zone of pastoral nomadism would be completely filled out, which would make further growth in stock numbers impossible.

There was another reason for the dependence of nomads on the outside world. Pastoral nomadism as an economic system is characterized by constant

instability. It was based on a balance between three variables: the availability of natural resources (such as vegetation and water), the number of livestock, and the size of the population, all of which were constantly oscillating. The situation was further complicated because these oscillations were not synchronic, as each of the variables was determined by many factors, both temporary and permanent, regular and irregular. The simplest and best known case of temporary imbalance was periodic mass loss of livestock and consequent famine due to various natural calamities and epizootic diseases. In other cases, stock numbers sometimes outgrew the carrying capacities of available pastures. It was just such cyclical fluctuations that maintained the long-term balance in the pastoral nomadic economy, however ruinous they might be in the short run. In other words, the balance was not static but dynamic.

One of the means of overcoming the deficiencies of the pastoral nomadic economy was the creation of the farming sector. Actually, during long historical periods, many if not most of those who roamed the Eurasian steppes were not pure nomads but rather semi-nomads, practicing cultivation as a supplementary and secondary form of subsistence. However, as the Soviet "virgin lands" campaign has proven, even in the twentieth century, cultivation without irrigation is a risky endeavor in the dry zones and often results in overexploitation of productive ecosystems. In pre-modern times, it was even less stable and reliable. Semi-nomadism was unable to solve the problem of non-autarchy of the pastoral economy. Under this situation, the nomads needed sedentary societies as a kind of external fund vital to their survival. They invested little in this fund, but it was indispensable to them when they got an access to its interest, and sometimes even to its principal. But in order to get an access to this fund, pastoral nomadic societies had to adapt to external sociopolitical and cultural environments.

An integral part of the nomadic ideologies was the antithesis between nomadic and sedentary ways of life, which to some extent reflected the differences in actual conditions of existence. As a manifestation of the universal "we—they" opposition on a symbolic level, this antithesis played an integrating function within nomadic societies and a differentiating one regarding the sedentary world. Moreover, it created a negative view of the sedentary way of life. Nevertheless, historical sources since the very first mention of nomads make it clear that grains and other farm products formed an important part of their dietary systems. These sources, as well as numerous archaeological data, also demonstrate beyond doubt that the nomads procured a substantial part of their material culture from sedentary territories. The economic dependence of nomads

on sedentary societies, and their various modes of adaptation to them, carried corresponding cultural implications. As the nomadic economy had to be supplemented with products of cultivation and crafts from external sources, so too did nomadic culture need sedentary culture as a source, a component, and a model for comparison, borrowing, imitation, or rejection. Even ideological opposition was relative. Suffice it to say that nomads never created any world and universal religion, but made significant contributions to the dissemination of these religions around the world (Khazanov 1993; 1994a). The nomads understood very well certain social and military advantages of their way of life. At the same time, they also comprehended that their culture was less complex, rich and refined than that of their sedentary counterparts. Their attitudes towards the latter had some similarities with the attitude towards Western culture of many in the Third World. Experiencing its irresistible glamour but being outside its socioeconomic sphere they reject it in principle, but strive to borrow some of its achievements. However, nomads did not suffer from an inferiority complex and did not resort to terrorism. Borrowings always underwent selection and filtration with regard to their correspondence to nomadic culture as well as to their utilitarian value (Allsen 2001).

This is quite evident with regard to those nomadic states in which new cultures emerged. Although the nomads, or, to be more precise, their elites, initiated the formation of these cultures and were their main patrons and consumers, they were created mainly by specialists from various sedentary countries: artists, craftsmen, traders, religious preachers, intellectuals, literati. This is why these cultures were eclectic more than synthetic. Perhaps they should be called state cultures because they were created to provide comfort and luxury to ruling nomadic elites and, even more importantly, to facilitate state management. Since these cultures were by no means ethnic ones and were quite different from the synchronous cultures of ordinary nomads, their fate was directly connected with that of the states which engendered them. There was no Golden Horde people, but there was the distinctive culture of the Golden Horde (Kramarovsky 1991: 256-257). The cultures of the Saljuq sultanates, of some Mongol states simultaneous with the Golden Horde, to a lesser degree of the Turkic *qaghanates*, especially that of the Uighur, the still obscure culture of the Khazar *qaghanate*, and, perhaps, even the state culture of the Scythian kingdom may serve as examples.

There is a peculiar tendency in several Central Asian countries, and even in some republics of the Russian Federation, that has become especially noticeable

in the post-Soviet period. It is connected with the specifics of their nationalist mythologies, which, like in other countries, spare no effort in attempting to glorify real or imaginary ancestors (for analysis and criticism of nationalist mythologies in the former Soviet countries, see, for example, Shnirelman 1996; Eimermacher, Bordugov 1999; Olcott, Malashenko 2000). Since these ancestors, or at least some of them, not infrequently were nomads, a number of scholars and pseudo-scholars either tend to overstate their development and achievements, or, on the contrary, strive to prove that they were no nomads at all, but practiced instead a mixed economy. To some extent, such attitudes are an overreaction to Soviet concepts of historical processes that considered pastoral nomadism a blind alley and praised the forced sedentarization and collectivization of the nomads in the late 1920s and early 1930s as the only way of their economic development.

In genuine scholarship there is no need, or reason, for any kind of ideological speculation and unbridled fantasy. The search for direct ancestors prior to the early modern period is a hopeless endeavor considering the specificity of ethnic history in the Eurasian steppes and in the adjacent regions of Central Asia. However, if the glorious ancestors are really indispensable for nation-state building, the nomadic ones are nothing to be ashamed of.

The importance of pastoralism in general, and of pastoral nomadism in particular, far exceeds their successful response to the challenge of climatic and geographic conditions. In the political and ethno-linguistic history of the Old World their impact is hard to overestimate (Khazanov, Wink 2001). Nomads played an enormous role in radical border changes, the destruction of some states and empires and the emergence of new ones. While it is still unclear whether the original Indo-Europeans were nomads or incipient agriculturalists, the spread of Semitic languages, of the languages of the Iranian branch of the Indo-European linguistic family, of many Altaic languages, especially the Turkic ones, and, apparently, of some African languages, i.e. Nilotic, was certainly connected with the migrations, conquests, and/or political dominance of the pastoralists and nomads. In some periods, the nomads served as organizers of and intermediaries in cultural exchange between different sedentary societies. Their contribution to the transcontinental circulation and transmission of goods and ideas was quite significant. In this regard, polyethnic and polycultural empires created by the nomads played a certain positive role (Bentley 1993).

Not only did sedentary peoples influence the cultures of nomads; nomadic cultures in turn influenced those of their sedentary counterparts. The invention of, or even more so the spread, of some cultural traits was their indisputable

achievement. Nomadic arms, ornaments, modes of fashion, and traditions were often imitated in sedentary countries. Among other things, this was reflected in the phenomenon of post-nomadism. The nomadic system of values, the way of life, the rules of social behavior and political traditions were considered prestigious and were imitated in certain strata of sedentary societies long after the nomads themselves had sedentarized or had ceased to be politically dominating.

Still, the indisputable fact is that in economic respects, the pastoral nomads depended on sedentary farming and urban societies much more than the latter on the nomads. Pastoral nomadic economies were never autarkic and could never be so.

The nomads always strove for the acquisition of products from sedentary societies by all means possible. It was a matter of sheer survival for them. This was noticed already by the great medieval sociologist, Ibn Khaldun (1967: 122), who wrote:

"... The desert civilization is inferior to urban civilization, because not all the necessities of civilization are to be found among the people of the desert... While they [the Bedouins] need cities for their necessities of life, the urban population needs [the Bedouins] for convenience and luxuries. Thus, as long as they live in the desert and have not acquired royal authority and control of the cities, the Bedouins need the inhabitants of the latter."

Likewise, the nomads of the Eurasian steppes had to adapt not only to a specific natural environment but also to external sociopolitical and cultural environment. Their interrelations with sedentary societies varied from direct exchange, trade, trade mediation and other related services, or mercenarism, to raids, looting, blackmailing, occasional payments, more or less institutionalized subsidies, regular tribute extraction, and direct conquests and subjugations.

Nomadic conquests and their consequences always attracted great attention. However, a related question, why the nomads with their limited human and economic resources were, for centuries and even millennia, so strong in military respects, has not been sufficiently addressed. Each individual case certainly depended on many circumstances and deserves a special study, but in general terms the answer seems to be connected with the undeveloped division of labor and wide social participation, which provided the nomads the edge in the military realm. With but few exceptions, in sedentary states, the war was a specialized and professionalized sphere of activities. On the contrary, in nomadic societies, every male commoner (and in some of their pre-Islamic societies, even some female when necessary) was a warrior, most of them mounted ones. Only this allowed the nomads, despite their relatively small number, to mobilize sufficiently large

armies. Moreover, their specific way of life, among other things, implied an availability of a large number of horses and almost natural military training. In terms of individual skills, only the medieval European knights and the Middle Eastern mamluks were a match to nomadic warriors; but the training and military equipment of the latter sometimes reflected nomadic military traditions (Nicolle 1976; Amitai-Preiss 1995: 214 ff.; Smith 1997: 255 ff.).

Thus, the economic and social backwardness of the nomads turned out to confer military advantages in the interrelations with their sedentary counterparts. Up to modern times, this advantage often allowed them to transfer these interrelations from the purely economic, or cultural, onto a political plane. Their military superiority gave them the leverage for political domination. This was particularly true for the great nomads of the Near and Middle East and the Eurasian steppes capable of the large-scale intrusions and conquests so numerous in ancient and medieval history.

There is still one more and very important factor that should be taken into account in order to understand the functioning of pastoral nomadic societies. The necessary prerequisites for pastoral nomadism had first been created by the transition from food-extracting to food-producing economies usually labeled the Neolithic revolution (Shnirelman 1980; Clutton-Brock 1987; 1989). Both cultivation and animal husbandry contained the potential for the dissemination with further specialization in different ecological zones. However, for many millennia after the Neolithic revolution, food-producing economies in the Old World were usually based on a combination, although in different proportions, of cultivation and animal breeding. In my previous publications (i.e. Khazanov 1994: 85 ff.; Khazanov 1990: 86 ff.), I argued that pure pastoral nomadism with complete separation from cultivation was a rather late development, although its many important technological preconditions, such as horse riding (Anthony and Brown 1991), had appeared much earlier. Even in the main indigenous areas of its dissemination, being the Eurasian steppes and the Near East, it emerged only around the turn of the second millennium B.C.E. (I mean the forms that without drastic modifications continued then to function for three thousand years). In both areas, it developed from a mixed economy through intermediate forms of extensive and mobile pastoralism with cultivation as supplementary activity. In other areas, pastoral nomadism was formed and spread even later, under the direct or indirect influence of the already existing forms.

This hypothesis still seems to me the most plausible, but not necessarily exclusive. Inconclusive as most of the archaeological data are despite the growing

sophistication of their analysis (Bar-Iosef, Khazanov 1992), they provide some materials for suggestion that primitive forms of pastoral nomadism could from time to time appear in a few regions of the Eurasian steppes as early as the Bronze Age, or even earlier (for example, Shishlina 2000). However, these were hardly more than a temporal adaptation to specific local conditions. Given its disadvantages, pastoral nomadism required not only a trigger, a special motivating stimulus, to emerge, but also a favorable external sociopolitical environment. Only in these conditions could it become a viable economic alternative for extended historical periods. It seems that these requirements, which made possible a long-term break of pastoralism from other forms of food-producing economies, were met only by the end of the second millennium and start of the first millennium B.C.E.

On the one hand, the desiccation of the climate noticeable at that period had apparently modified the natural environment and required further specialization on the part of the pastoral economies. On the other, only from the first millennium B.C.E. did the pastoral nomads form the periphery of sedentary states emerging on the southern borders with the steppe zone. Only at that time did they acquire their optimal milieu. My point here is that for the most efficient and long-term historical functioning, pastoral nomads not only needed simply sedentary societies, but those of a certain developmental level—not primitive and not industrial, but traditional (i.e., pre-modern or pre-industrial) societies that had already achieved the level of statehood, such as the ancient and medieval states of the Near and Middle East, Central Asia, or China.

Primitive societies were unable to supply all the products needed by the nomads and even less to supply them in sufficient quantity. Considering their lack of centralized political organization, the collection of whatever surplus was produced would constitute a serious problem. These societies could easily be robbed, but not systematically exploited. In the pre-colonial period, such a situation existed in East Africa. It is hardly accidental that pastoral nomads there lacked even stable and institutionalized leadership. Horses and camels might have begun to be used for riding earlier than had been assumed by scholars twenty years ago or so, but there is no evidence of mass cavalries before the beginning of the first millennium B.C.E. After all, in order to mobilize and maintain them, one should have adversaries against whom they could efficiently be employed. It is worth remembering that at the dawn of their history, the Cimmerians and the Scythians, in a search for such adversaries, had to cross the Caucasus and invade the ancient Near East. On the contrary, modern and contemporary states have in

abundance everything that the nomads may dream of. However, they are much stronger and almost always are on the offensive in their interrelations with the latter.

Unlike primitive and modern societies, premodern states with stratified social systems provided the optimal environment for pastoral nomads. Not only did they produce a regular surplus product; they possessed mechanisms for its extraction, distribution, and redistribution. In addition, they had a fairly developed division of labor, exchange and trade, and a culture, including the "Great Tradition," on which nomadic cultures might depend. The gap between these societies and their nomadic counterparts in the ancient and medieval periods was not very deep. After all, with the exception of the reindeer pastoralists of the North and the cattle-breeders of East Africa, pastoral nomadic societies were but varieties of the traditional ones.

This brings me to the specifics of sociopolitical development of the pastoral nomads. The Soviet studies of pastoral nomadism, however serious and important they were in many respects, suffered from one important deficiency. Their fundamental premise was the Marxist concept of universal and progressive socioeconomic formations. In accordance with this, every society had to develop in a similar way and in the same direction, and the nomads were in no way considered an exception. Thus, ideology forced Soviet scholars to deal with an unsolvable problem: how to prove that the nomads were developing towards higher socioeconomic systems. This was difficult to do with regard to many sedentary societies and even whole historical regions; with regard to the nomads this was simply a hopeless endeavor, involving a long but fruitless discussion (for one of its last surveys see Kradin 1992). Few scholars tried to avoid the Marxist dogmas (Khazanov 1975; Markov 1976); many more wrote about nomadic feudalism; others about the "military democracy" (using Engels' term) as the developmental level occupied by the nomads; still others imagined a specific "nomadic formation." There are also scholars who construct a more sophisticated evolutionary sequence: the archaic empires - the barbarian states - and the early feudal states; apparently in an attempt to prove that the historical development of the Eurasian steppes followed the West European model (Kljashorny, Sultanov 2000: 82). The circular pattern for the nomads' development was sometimes admitted, since it was too striking to be ignored. But this was often explained by the fact that the nomadic polities which succeeded each other in the steppe had a somewhat different ethno-tribal composition—thus, each time starting the development anew. In spite of these differences of opinion, the emergence of

nomadic statehood was perceived as a spontaneous process, just as had been prescribed by Marxist theory. External factors were either played down or completely ignored.

The whole problem, however, is farfetched. It exists only to the unilinear evolutionists and Marxists, whose understanding of historical process is essentially teleological. At present, only by a great stretch of the imagination and at the great expense of factual data can one adhere to the antediluvian theory of universal socioeconomic formations. So far, the historical process has never been universal and unidirectional. In different regions and in different societies, it took on different patterns, forms, directions, tempos, etc. As for similarities, they were at least connected as much with movements of ideas and populations, cultural and technological borrowings, or with forced imposition of external patterns, as with parallel indigenous developments. Still, even imitation or imposition of forms and patterns alien to recipient societies have many limitations and are far from always successful. This is demonstrated by the difficulties that the process of modernization, and globalization as its latest stage, are facing in many Third World and some other countries. There is no reason to assume that in other periods the situation was any different.

In my opinion, the major units of the historical process were not universal formations, but cultural regions. These are often called civilizations, but I am reluctant to use this term because of its semantic ambiguity. It involves a never-ending discussion about a number of civilizations and the criteria for their definition. In other words, it involves many speculative and subjective taxonomic and culturological questions that I prefer to eschew. In any case, serious long-term regional differences existed and were connected with many factors of geographic, economic, social, political, cultural, and many other orders. All major breakthroughs in human history were results of unique combinations of many and various factors, some of which were almost accidental. History is not a deterministic project. Actually, one can observe only a few, if any, laws and regularities in history, and they are mainly limited to a sequential order (Gellner 1988: 15 ff.).

Be that as it may, for almost three thousand years the political development in the Steppe region oscillated between similar forms of statelessness and statehood; this very oscillation was connected not so much with spontaneous development, but mainly with the specifics of interrelations between nomadic and sedentary societies. For these same reasons, the development was reversible but not completely circular, since the very character and peculiarities of the nomadic

polities to a large extent depended on the character of their sedentary counterparts, which were quite different. The pattern was more or less the same but in the course of history some modifications and innovations can be traced in the forms of nomadic statehood, which reflected changes in the sedentary world.

The nomads of the Eurasian steppes were the most successful of all nomadic conquerors. Their horses trampled the fields of France and Italy, Syria and Palestine, India and Indochina. Noteworthy but not accidentally, the level of their social organization was also higher than that of the nomads in other regions (one should also take into account that warriors on horseback are much stronger than those on camelback — Sinor 1972; 1981).

Beginning from the first millennium B.C.E., fairly big polities appeared to become quite common in the Eurasian steppes. They may be considered as a functional, although not structural, analogue of chiefdoms well described on the example of many sedentary societies. These nomadic polities are alternatively called "tribal associations," "tribal federations," "tribal confederations," etc. I do not consider these terms sufficiently felicitous, because most of these "federations" and "confederations" were created by force. But after all, any terminology is conditional and, therefore, should be a matter of consent, not debate. Much more important is to understand the nature of the political organization of these formations.

Archaeological indicators of the emergence of these polities are the very rich burial mounds which are not infrequently (and not always substantially) called "royal," by analogy with the Scythian ones. In many cases, archaeological materials alone are insufficient in determining the exact level of political development of nomadic polities. As a rule, this can be done only when they are complemented by literary sources, especially if the latter contain sufficient information on the interrelations between nomadic polities and sedentary societies. Thus, we may assume with a high degree of confidence that the Scythians and Hsiung-nu reached the state level, because we have sufficient knowledge about the economic bases of their states. But one should be much more cautious with regard to those who left such burial mounds as the Arzhan, Issyk, Pazaryk mounds, and several others.

Far from all segmentary forms of social organization are egalitarian. Some of them are asymmetric. Structural relativity and balanced opposition in them are upset, and a dominant lineage group acquired greater control of resources and greater power than the others. I call such systems differential or even stratified, and the latter two were the most characteristic of the nomads of the Eurasian

steppes. Segmentary systems do not totally preclude the possibility of the emergence of a central governance agency, but they place serious obstacles to its functioning and limit the sphere of its activities. To a large extent, power in nomadic polities was diffused and was mainly connected with military and managerial-regulatory functions. Correspondingly, their composition was fluid; they were loose and short-lived except in the cases when they underwent transformation as a result of their specific relations with the outside world. In other words, internal requirements for political integration in nomadic polities were too weak to result in irreversible structural change. Their leaders seldom acquired the monopoly of legitimate violence, which, according to Max Weber, is the most important characteristic feature of the state. There is even less ground to assume that these polities were based on class divisions (an opposite opinion was recently put forth by E.I. Kychanov [1997: 5]). Only in a few, rather rare cases did internal development in nomadic societies lead to the emergence of hereditary (although still reversible) social stratification. By and large, "managers" in nomadic societies were less expansive than "managers" in their sedentary counterparts. Ordinary nomads might respect their authority, high status, and even hereditary rank, but they were less inclined to pay for this, especially when regular payments were required. For all these reasons, nomadic aristocracies were not able to create an autonomous power base within their own societies, which would provide them with sufficient freedom of action.

To some extent, social stratification in nomadic societies increased when their aristocracy succeeded in the subjugation of other nomadic groups. However, such subjugations were seldom stable and lasting. The history of various Turkic *qaghanates* proves this unambiguously. Inherent deficiencies of the pastoral nomadic economy made the production of regular and fairly large surplus by the commoners very problematic. In cultural respects, the problem consisted of the same way of life, which implied mobility and, therefore, the possibility of break away and migration to new territories of dissatisfied groups of nomads. In socio-political respects, the problem was connected with a lack of strong machinery of coercion. The example of the early medieval Turks, Mongols, and many others demonstrates that the mobilization of many nomadic formations was indispensable for the creation of a large nomadic state. However, only the anticipation of benefits from joint exploitation of sedentary societies might for a while reconcile subjugated nomadic groups with their dependence on other groups.

In the final analysis, the emergence of nomadic states and their characteristic features, as well as their fate, were connected with specific forms of exploitation of sedentary societies. As a matter of fact, the very term "nomadic states" is to some extent tentative. They were nomadic inasmuch as they were founded by the nomads and/or the nomads occupied the dominant positions in them. However, in one way or another, all of them were based on asymmetric relations with sedentary societies. Otherwise, nomadic states were but rare and transitory exceptions, if such exceptions existed at all. The history of nomadic statehood in Central and Inner Asia, from the Hsiung-nu to the Mongols, and even to the Manchus (the latter were never pure nomads, but in many respects followed the Mongol political tradition) illustrates this point very well.

Following Lattimore (1940), Barfield (1989; 1991) has suggested an interesting model for the explanation of cycles of Chinese dynastic history and nomadic statehood in Inner Asia. He claims that all nomadic empires in the Mongolian steppes and the Chinese dynasties that managed to unite the whole country rose and fell together. By contrast, Manchurian states could develop only in times of anarchy on the northern frontier, when central authority in both China and in the steppe had collapsed. In my opinion, this model has its weak points along with the strong, and, therefore, needs further elaboration. For example, the Hsiung-nu state was founded in 206 B.C.E., when China was on the brink of civil war; it flourished in the early Han period, when central power in the country was not yet completely consolidated (Yamada 1982). The Turkic *qaghanate* emerged in the middle of the sixth century, at least thirty years before China, divided into local regimes, was united again. Barfield's claim that the nomads never played an important role in the collapse of unified Chinese empires is an overstatement, although their impact was often indirect. Suffice it to mention the Uighurs' assistance in the suppression of the An Lu-shan rebellion, which for a time saved the Tang, but certainly ruined the country by turning it into a huge hunting ground and, thus, contributed to the eventual collapse of the dynasty (Pulleyblank 1955). It is also hard to agree with Barfield that the Mongol conquest of China was an aberration of the steppe conquest patterns and was almost accidental. The term "aberration" does not deliver the causes of the conquest and its success from explanation (on this see Franke and Twitchett 1994). Still, the historical process of long duration in China was much more connected with internal rather than external factors. Even China's repeated failures to deal with nomadic threats should be attributed to specifics of her socio-political system and political philosophy at least as much as to the strength of the nomads. On the contrary, the

character of nomadic statehood in Inner Asia and its very existence to a large extent depended on the vicissitudes of the political situation in China.

With a great degree of simplification and schematization one may single out the two main types of nomadic states according to their relations with sedentary societies. In the nomadic states of the first type, these relations were mainly confined to vassal-tribute and other undeveloped and not always completely institutionalized forms of collective dependence. Sometimes sedentary states continued to exist,² in other cases, nomads and peasants-townsfolk were joined within one and the same state. But even in the last case their limited integration took place primarily in the political sphere, without affecting the social and economic foundation of sedentary societies.

Ordinary nomads in such states remained their main military and social support. With regard to their own society, or sub-society, the nomadic aristocracy was positioned as the leading estate rather than as the dominating class. Correspondingly, redistributive mechanisms continued to function among the nomads. It is true that in almost all nomadic states of the first type their own farming and urban sector emerged—in the main, owing to voluntary or involuntary migrants from the sedentary territories. However, as a rule, it was too weak to provide for all of their economic requirements. Thus, these states could not do without towns, which were centers of political power and to a lesser degree of handicrafts and trade. Admittedly, their emergence looks somewhat artificial. It was not so much the state which existed on their account as that they existed on account of the state. They perished with the downfall of the states that had brought them into existence. The fate of Itil, Karabalaghasun, Sarai-Batu, and Sarai-Berke is very indicative indeed.

The Scythian and Hsiung-nu states, the Turkic *qaghanates*, the state of Khitans (Qara-Khitay) in Central Asia, the Mongol Empire under the first great khans, later the Golden Horde,³ and some others, may serve as examples of

² I want to use this opportunity to dispel one misunderstanding. Barfield (1989: 7) criticized me for not taking into account that many nomadic states existed without conquering sedentary regions. I am sufficiently acquainted with the history of Eurasian nomads to ignore this fact, which I never actually did (see, for example, Khazanov 1994: 231 ff.). What I held, and still hold, is that in order to exist the nomadic states had to maintain asymmetrical relations with sedentary societies, i.e. to be able to exploit them in one way or another.

³ After all, the Muscovite state began its career as a fiscal agent of the Golden Horde. The Moscow princes were loyal vassals of and collaborators with the khans. It is due to their obedience more than to any other factor that they were eventually able to take the upper hand over the other Russian princes.

nomadic states of the first type. Eventually, they either underwent a transformation connected with their growing complexity or ceased to exist when opportunities for the primitive exploitation of sedentary societies diminished and vassal nomadic formations broke away. Usually this was followed by primitivization of the socio-political order. In more rare cases the process of sedentarization took the upper hand, especially when the nomads migrated to other ecological zones. As a result, the society ceased to be nomadic and for the most part became a farming-urban society. It still could preserve a significant pastoral sector, but its general development took quite different directions. The Uighurs ousted by the Qirghiz to East Turkistan may serve as an example.

The nomadic states of the second type not infrequently were the outcome of a certain transformation of those of the first type. Among other developments, it was connected with the integration of nomads, peasants, and townsmen into a single political system. Most often this happened when the nomads, after conquering sedentary states, moved onto their territories. In ancient times, nomadic states of the second type were represented by the Kushans Empire; in the early medieval period by a number of states created by nomads in North China in the fourth to sixth centuries; later by the Khitan and Jürchen states in China, the Qarakhanid state in Central Asia, and by the Saljuk state in the Middle East; in the Mongol period by the Yüan in China and the Hülegüid state in Iran; and in the late medieval period by the Shaybani state in Central Asia.

These states were created by the nomads and were ruled by dynasties of nomadic origin. Social stratification in them to a certain extent coincided with economic specialization and ethnic division. These characteristic features allow them to be called nomadic. In such states, nomads and the sedentary population could even belong to separate sub-societies, but only socially, not politically. The integration process usually started with the dynasty and its immediate entourage; then affected all or part of the nomadic aristocracy, which became the upper class of the sedentary population, or one of its upper classes. Political synthesis in these states was somewhat accompanied by a social synthesis, although in practice the latter was nowhere near always fully realized. Nevertheless, socioeconomic and even political relations and characteristics of subjugated sedentary societies, which were more developed than those of their nomadic conquerors, demonstrated a remarkable resilience. In sedentary sub-societies the consequences of nomadic conquest affected mainly the privileged strata. Not infrequently, the nomadic aristocracy, or the ruling strata of nomadic origin, became a landed estate. But more often than not, even the turnover of ruling elites

was not complete, and a certain institutional continuity can be traced in many cases. In the Muslim countries, it was much easier for victorious nomads to replace "people of the sword," the military estate of subjugated countries, than "people of the pen," their bureaucracy. Besides, those nomads who converted to Islam, such as the Saljuqs, Qarakhanids, and later the Shaybanids, never considered, or dared, to encroach upon another group of sedentary Muslim society: the religious nobility, the *ulama*, and the Sufi shaykhs (Bartold 1968). In China, the literati officials survived all nomadic conquests because they were indispensable for ruling the country. In this regard, it is worth repeating once more the old and much-quoted aphorism of the ancient Chinese orator, Lu Tsia, taught to the Great Khan Ögödei, son and successor of Jenghiz Khan, by his Chinese counselor, Yehlu Ch'uts'ai: "Although you inherited the Chinese Empire on horseback, you cannot rule it from that position." Ögödei got the message, and allowed Confucian scholars to be drawn into the civil administration (Munkuev 1965).

It seems that the change in the social and economic relations in the sedentary societies caused by nomadic conquests was often less drastic than it is sometimes assumed. A permutation within the existing socio-economic order was their more frequent consequence than radical transformation. There are many examples of nomadic conquerors that willingly adopted institutions of subjugated societies when they were considered expedient. Thus, the Saljuqs adopted and extended the *iqta* system because it facilitated their rule over a conquered sedentary population.

The main forms of dependence and exploitation in the nomadic states of the second type were connected with the relations between the ruling class, in which the nomadic aristocracy occupied the dominant position, and the conquered sedentary population, in particular the peasantry. However, the positions of the rest of the nomads did not remain immutable either, although they never constituted the main class or even a single class or estate. The nomadic sub-society was becoming more differentiated. The nomads divided into the privileged, less privileged, and the non-privileged, depending on their ties with the dynasty and the nomadic aristocracy, their ethnic and tribal membership, etc. Usually, they formed several intermediary estates and strata, some of which were closer to the ruling class, and others to the dependent ones.

As the integrative process developed, the nomadic aristocracy, and in particular the dynasty, had to decide whether they should identify their interests with those of the state as a whole and with the sedentary sub-society, or to

preserve the loyalty of nomadic sub-society and in doing so sometimes act against the interest of the state.

The dilemma was never an easy one, and a consensus was far from always taken on it, even by various groups of the nomadic aristocracy. As a result, new conflicts often emerged in states of the second type, for example, between the dynasty of nomadic origin and its supporters, on the one hand, and the traditional nomadic aristocracy, on the other; between different groups of nomads; between the dynasty and ordinary nomads, etc.

One of the widespread further developments of these states was their eventual transformation into sedentary states, in which some nomads gradually became sedentary, while others little by little turned into a backward social and sometimes ethnic minority. They became encapsulated in the more developed socioeconomic and political systems. Ottoman Turkey may serve as an example of such development, but this is already another story.

In all, the decisive factor in the emergence and functioning of nomadic statehood was the specific relations between nomadic and sedentary societies. Still, the internal factor should not be dismissed completely. It was, however, connected with the remarkable stability and continuity of the political culture in the Eurasian steppes rather than with the very dubious evolutionary development. This culture was polyethnic and was by no means confined to individual nomadic polities and states (Golden 1982; 2001; Trepavlov 1993; Kljashtorny, Savinov 1994; Allsen 1996).

Ancient and medieval contemporaries of the nomads, as well as many modern scholars, were often astonished by the swift rise of strong nomadic polities, which seemingly sprung from out of nowhere and almost immediately initiated military campaigns against their neighbors, both nomadic and sedentary. Perhaps this would be less surprising if one would take into account that already in the medieval period, most if not all of the nomads of the Eurasian steppes were well acquainted with the idea and practices of statehood. Knowledge, models, symbols, even some traditions of higher forms of political organization continued to exist, though in their latent or semi-latent forms, even in those polities that can hardly be characterized as nomadic states.

Apparently, the original political culture had emerged in the Eurasian steppes already in the first millennium B.C.E.⁴ This polyethnic culture was

⁴ The still-enigmatic animal style, ornamental art with prevailing zoomorphic designs, may serve as one of its earliest symbolic indicators. The semantics of this style were apparently fairly

represented by different synchronic and diachronic variants, but nevertheless bore many similar characteristics across the whole region. Despite modifications, it also demonstrated remarkable stability. This should not be too surprising, since the main characteristics of the sociopolitical organization of the nomads also had many common and stable features. The political culture of the nomads underwent substantial changes only after the cultural space in the Eurasian steppes was fragmented by dissemination of different world religions, especially after most of the nomads converted to Islam (Cohen 1968), and the Mongols converted to Buddhism. Still, some of its traits were noticeable even much later (Manz 1989).

The sources of this political culture are far from being completely understood, and the search for them constitutes an intriguing problem. At the moment, one may tentatively assume that it was based on the original nomadic traditions in conjunction with borrowings from political traditions of various sedentary states and societies which were adapted to nomadic conditions. Likewise, mechanisms of transmission of this culture in different ethnic and linguistic milieus are not yet sufficiently researched (see, however, Trepavlov 1993: 31 ff.). The culture, however, was quite indigenous. The sedentary contemporaries of the nomads, and their distant descendants, might consider them barbarians, but they were rather sophisticate "barbarians." To prove this one may refer to several concepts and practices which for many centuries have been widespread in the Eurasian steppes. They included: the notion of the divine mandate to rule bestowed upon a chosen clan, or even of the divine origin of this clan (Golden 1982; 2001),⁵ and *translatio imperii*—the possibility of transfer of this mandate and, correspondingly, of the legitimate supreme authority from one polity to another; the notion of charisma—the Iranian *farnah*, the Turkic *qut*, the heavenly ordained good fortune and the aura connected with this fortune (Bombaci 1956; 1966; Frye 1989; Gnoli 1990); a quite developed system of imperial (royal), noble, and administrative titles;⁶ imperial symbolism, including

complicated, being related to the nomads' aesthetic concepts, religious beliefs, and system of values. In the context of this paper, it is important to note that the animal style also had certain political connotations and in its different varieties was widespread from the territory of contemporary Hungary to China.

⁵ Rachelwitz (1973) suggested that the ideology of Heavenly sanctioned supreme power was borrowed by the Turks, and later by the Mongols, from sedentary states. However, it had already been held by the Scythians (Khazanov 1975: 36 ff.) and the Hsiung-nu (Kradin 1996: 70 ff.). Therefore, it can be considered common to the nomadic states. The question of its origin remains open, but it seems that it might have various sources (Crossley 1992).

⁶ Remarkably, the Turks borrowed many titles from their non-Turkic predecessors (Golden 2001: 39 ff.).

color; elaborate status and rank traditions and practices associated with crowning, dressing, belting, robbing and headdress; special investiture ceremonies (Allsen 1997: 85 ff.); refugia, sacred territories and cult centers; the notion of collective or joint sovereignty, according to which a state and its populace belong not to an individual ruler but to all members of the ruling clan or extended family as their corporate property, and a corresponding appanage (*ulus*) system; specific succession patterns based on different variations of the collateral or scaled rotating system and seniority within a ruling clan (Fletcher 1979-1980); diets or convocations composed of members of the ruling clan, nobles, and worthies, such as the Mongol *quriltais*; a partial overlapping of administrative systems with the military organization (bipartite or tripartite organization of polities, left-right military-political division, decimal systems); a patrimonial mode of governance that implied a redistribution of various kinds of wealth and goods among vassals, followers, and even commoners; and several other concepts and institutions.

Such was the state of affairs in the Eurasian steppes for approximately two and a half thousand years. Everything has changed only since the onset of modern times. The "European miracle," the transition to civilization based on technological innovations, gradually began to influence the development of the sedentary countries of Asia. The nomads, however, remained the same. The great geographic discoveries and improvements in seafaring sharply diminished the importance of transcontinental overland trade, as well as the role of nomads as intermediaries in this trade (Steensgaard 1973; Rossabi 1989). In Eurasia, caravels, and later steamboats, defeated caravans. The centralized colonial empires of Russia, Ottoman Turkey, and China created massive regular armies. They were increasingly employing firearms with ever-growing lethal power (Headrick 1981). Against such armies, the irregular cavalries of the nomads were ineffective. Bows and spears were as toys compared to guns and cannons.

The consequences soon followed. Nomads were losing their independence and had to adjust to new situations beyond their control. Their growing dependence on colonial powers, and later on national governments, indeed on the outside world in general, all of which remained alien to the pastoral nomads, had many detrimental effects. It decreased their territories, disturbed their migratory routes, overstressed their subsistence-oriented economies, and undermined their sociopolitical organization, ideology, and political culture. As a result, traditional pastoralism in the Eurasian steppes, just as everywhere else on earth, cease to exist (Naumkin, Shapiro, Khazanov 1997; Naumkin, Tomas, Khazanov, Shapiro 1999; Humphrey, Sneath 1996; 1999; Khazanov 1998; Sneath 2000).

Still, climate and environment are not subject to even our post-industrial civilization. It is worth keeping in mind that pastoralism was originally developed as an alternative to cultivation in the very regions where the latter was impossible or economically less profitable. In many of these areas the situation remains basically the same. In several arid ecological zones, mobile pastoralism, if sufficiently modernized, may retain some advantages in comparison with other forms of agricultural activity. Soviet communists, and to a lesser degree their Mongol vassals, have already tried to modernize it, but in their own characteristic fashion—i.e., by the worst and most inefficient means possible. The results of this are well known. Now the trauma of the past should be overcome. Now a great deal, if not everything, must be rebuilt from the bottom up. The time has come to perceive that not only the politics but also the economics of development are the art of the possible.

Modernization is a beneficial but cruel process. It has its own winners and losers, but it does not allow anyone to simply sit on the fence. So far, the post-communist period has not been marked by significant achievements in the (re)modernization of mobile pastoralism. On the contrary, at present many tendencies can best be characterized as anti-modern. At the same time, the traditional pastoralist way of life was destroyed in most countries of the region, and many characteristic features of the traditional pastoral culture were probably irreversibly lost. Not ecological and economic factors, and not modernization per se, but abusive, corrupt, mismanaging and exploitative state powers, since the nineteenth century almost always alien to the pastoralists and detrimental to their interests, have ruined extensive and mobile pastoralism in a region where it thrived for millennia, all without replacing it with any viable modern type.

At least since the Bronze Age onward, people have tried to predict the future, but for better or for worse (personally, I think for the better), they have never succeeded. It is impossible to know what will happen to mobile pastoralism in the twenty-first century, but at present there appears to be little cause for optimism.

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3

TYOLOGY OF PRE-STATES AND STATEHOOD SYSTEMS OF NOMADS

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Studies over many years have convinced scientists that there is the specificity to the socio-economic and political processes among nomads (Khazanov 1975; Markov 1976; Masanov 1984; Kradin 1992, 1996, 2000a, 2000b). This has resulted in a specific terminology that has been used to characterize nomadic societies. The conception of a "nomadic mode of production" (Andrianov, Markov 1990) has laid particular emphasis on the nomadic process within a pastoral-nomadic system (Tairov 1993) and the basic economic and social links that appear within a nomadic environment (including biosocial structures according to N.E. Masanov (1984) and nomadic household (*ail*) organization according to S.E. Tolybekov (1971).

The basis of nomadic cattle-breeding economy is determined by such factors as the type of a landscape (e.g., semi-desert, steppe, forest-steppe, intermountain valleys, high-mountain ranges) and climatic conditions that on the whole have remained unchanged for the past three thousand years (Khazanov 1975: 268-270; Kradin 1992:45-52). Therefore, the basis for developing the wide variety of socio-political systems among nomads is not to be found in the nomadic economy, which is in any event highly decentralized and dispersed (Masanov 1984: 123; 1990; Markov, Masanov 1985; Kradin 1992: 162). Similarly social relations formed in the process of nomadism (at least within the limits of nomad tribes) were also decentralized and dispersed. Rather centralization in nomadic societies is the product of armed conflicts or political contests with neighbors, and the activities of traditional or charismatic leaders (Kradin 1992: 164; 2000b: 275-277; Skrynnikova 1997: 66, 100-112, 116-122, 125, 149-184).

The most important problem in the modern study of nomads has focused on developing a typology of political nomad systems. The research in this

field has been carried out intensively for the last ten years. Drawing on work done on agricultural societies and historical material, leading Russian scholars of nomadism have considered many of the socio-political formations found among ancient and medieval nomads to be complex and supercomplex chiefdoms (Kradin 1992: 143-166; 2000a; 2000b: 279-282; 2000c: 91; Trepavlov 1993, 2000; Skrynnikova 1997: 30, 48-49; Marey 2000). Following the classical Marxist theory of political development, including active debates in the 1970s about the nature of early class societies, nomadic political systems were assumed to be varieties of the same systems found among agricultural peoples. They were thus characterized as "feudal", "early-class"/"early-state" or as "chiefdoms." The erroneous nature of such parallels to developments in agricultural societies is rather obvious because a chiefdom is not only a definite type of administrative structures, but also a particular type of social organization that precedes early-class societies (Diakonoff 1994: 19, Kradin 1995: 11). A better way to proceed would have been to distinguish separate typological units that more adequately reflected the peculiarities of socio-political aspects of the nomads' development. This was successfully accomplished by N.N. Kradin (2000c: 91) who argued that the term "nomadic empire" better reflected advanced nomadic political organization than did the more general label of "supercomplex chiefdom".

While the term "nomadic empire" was used for the first time by S.A. Pletneva (1982: 40-72) as part of a typology of nomadic political organization, it N.N. Kradin's (1992: 166-178) use of the term in his own typology which has been the most widely accepted by experts in the field. The definition and classification of these types of empires has taken into account a wide variety of variables, including political structures, economic relations, social links, percentage of settled population, etc. In particular, N.N. Kradin finds that such empires depended on exploiting external resources as the basis of their political organizations (Kradin 1990; 1992: 125-133; 1996: 48). Because of this it may be more appropriate to consider such external political relations as a kind of exploitation that should be distinguished from the main nomad way of pastoral production that could only be connected with nomadic life.

With external exploitation we see the development of a complex of set of relations between nomads and settled people, sometimes including conquered nomadic people as well. These include: (a) plunder in the course of raids and wars; (b) tribute from the conquered agricultural lands; (c) on-equivalent trade at the frontiers; (d) distant exploitation.

The last, distant exploitation, which should not be confused with "tribute," which involves "gifts" and other delivery of goods to the steppe according to an agreement, the violation of which may cause military actions

on the part of nomads (Kradin 1990, 1996: 50, 52-55). Nor should one forget about the profits the nomadic elite derived from transit trade, which was politically supported by the nomads. This type of trade was usually in the hands of sedentary people who possessed the experience and the organizational capacity for international trade such as the Sogdians during the various Turkish and Uighur Empires of the 6th-9th centuries, or Arab and Persian merchants among during the Mongol period. On occasion, China's desire to purchase horses from the nomads caused them to expand the amount of horse breeding within nomadic economy beyond their own needs to meet this commercial demand. A less common but historically documented form of exploitation was the removal of captured sedentary people to the steppe. These craftsmen and farmers were placed in nomadic capitals or special settlements where they produced goods for the nomads (Materialy 1968: 47, 49, 51, 100; 1973: 20, 57, 60-137, notes. 19; Kradin 1996: 43).

Even when considering the importance of the relationships between settled peoples and nomads, we should not consider the internal social relations among nomads themselves to be merely secondary. Too often analysts lose sight of the fact that nomads raided and conquered other nomadic peoples, and not just agricultural regions, in order to gain control of new pastoral territories and their populations. Even though in most cases subordinate nomadic populations were obligated to provide only their military services, there was a diverse system of subordinate ranks for incorporated foreign nomadic groups, such as "*kuly*" and the Turks, "*unagan bogol*" among Mongols, and "*kyshtym*" among later nomads. There are numerous examples of nomads making plundering raids on their pastoral neighbors to grab cattle and pastures. In the 2nd century BC the Hsiung-nu forced out the Tung-hu and Yüeh-chih from Mongolia; centuries later the Hsien-pi occupied Hsiung-nu lands; the Mongolian elite took possession of Kypchak (Polovets) lands in Volga and Black Sea regions. The dependent nomads were obliged to carry the military service and a tax-tribute. There is a typical opinion of the Chinese chronicler that after the Turks subdued the T'ieh-le by their force, they "displayed heroism in northern deserts" (Bichurin 1950: 301). For example after the Wu-huan were defeated by Mao-tun, their people became weak and always submitted to *Shan-yü*, delivering them cattle, horses, sheep annually (Materialy 1984: 65). It is also a well-known fact that before their revolt of 551 the Turks paid a tribute in iron to Jou-jan (Bichurin 1950: 228).

The economic basis for classification of nomadic formations should be examined to determine the exact correlation between nomadic pastoral production and exopolitary "economics" that included various forms and

methods of exploitation. But nomadic empire and other associations with rigid military-political "superstructures" also determined the character of economic processes as well.

The following points about the formation of political institutions should be emphasized:

1. the necessity of ensuring the continued submission of dependent ethnic groups as an important factor in the formation and operation of centralized nomad administrative structures because the nomads had no notion of class struggle (Kradin 1992), but were very well acquainted with interethnic struggles.
2. that nomadic administrative structures standing over the traditional ones were not formed as the result of the internal development of the nomadic pastoral economy complicating its social system (i.e. a class formation process), rather they were derived from the development of their military organization in the course of military conflicts with their neighbors and conquests (Gumilev 1961; 1993: 61; Markov 1976; Masanov 1985; Kljashtorny 1986: 218-219; Kradin 1992: 1962-1966; 1996: 19-26; 2000b: 277). For this reason it is inappropriate to employ the same concepts to characterize political systems of both nomadic and settled societies.
3. because the political system of nomads was created by its military organization, there is a considerable difference between this type of organization and the early state systems of farmers. The nomadic bureaucracy functioned only as part as part of the military and in the judicial sphere. Brutality of punishments, including the death penalty as a rule, was imposed for any violation of military discipline and was a characteristic feature for a majority of nomad peoples. Tax collection was closely connected with military service, as direct taxation on nomads was replaced by tribute from the conquered tribes and peoples, by plundering during the campaigns, and by "farming-gifts" of neighboring farmers.

The admission of some specific military character of nomadic political institutions makes us doubt the opinion asserted by many theorists that even the most developed nomadic societies never achieved the state level of organization (Gumilev 1993: 63; Khazanov 1975: 123, 127-129; Markov 1976:309; Masanov 1984: 95-105; Skrynnikova 1997: 49; 2000: 297; Kradin 1992: 152, 180). This position was held even against the example of the Mongol Empire, which T.D. Skrynnikova argued lacked the necessary formal political institutions, settled legislation, taxation and tax authorities to meet the criteria of a true state. But recently there it has been asserted that nomads did develop their own particular forms of an early state system

(Kradin 1992: 160; 1996: 101-102, 114, 120, 140-142; 2000b: 280-281). It should be noted that since the political structure served only military goals, kinship relationships and clan alliances maintained priority in civil life and consolidated society in face of external threat. Military-hierarchic political administrative institutions were above these clan-lineage relations and were closely interwoven with them (Kradin 1996: 106). Internal Mongolian society did not "grow" into a state and maintained its kinship structure internally even as it developed all the external manifestations of statehood in its military organization that was used against outsiders, a "xenocratic empire" (Kradin 1996: 140-142; 2000b: 281).

The assertion that nomadic polities like the Mongols must be pre-state societies because they rely on traditional lineage-tribe institutions, employ aristocratic councils (*khuriltai*), and have no "officials" in government policy, is undermined when we remember that such a situation was also characteristic in many settled states such as Merovingian France and Kievan Rus'. We can see the development of the Mongol polity in the often analyzed work *The Secret History of the Mongols* which covers an historical period from pre-empire times or through its first steps in history. However, there are such factors that are characteristic of states, including:

1. wide use of code of laws and Chinggis Khan's utterances ("Great Yasa"),
2. special political control machinery and tax collection in the conquered lands (*daruga, baskaks*),
3. the Mongol information service (*yam*) that facilitated centralized taxation system imposed on conquered registered peoples until the middle of the 13th century;
4. a definite military pyramid,
5. transcontinental world-economic relations (trade ways).

All these factors have something to do with the Mongol Empire's destiny and illustrate its considerable political organization change over time. As far as the most important sign of state power is concerned, the legitimate use of force, it is notable that this applied primarily to the military sphere (being late for assemblage, desertion, bad keeping guard, etc.) and not to civil life.

One should not overstate the role of empire leader as the one who gives gifts, who redistributes income from exopolitary exploitation (Kradin 1996: 102; 2000b: 278). First, such practices were traditional for all primitive pre-state societies. Secondly, "the gifts" were insignificant (Kradin 1996: 53) and usually distributed only among small group of nomadic aristocracy. By contrast the additions to ordinary cattle breeder's income came from making plundering raids on neighboring people (Kradin 1996: 89-90) rather than

gifts from leaders. As a rule cattle were redistributed by leaders only in case of starvation and epizootic (Munkuev 1970: 386-402). That is why the main function of nomadic leader was in military control organization and in successful foreign-policy actions. Sometimes, such organizational measures (for example, Chinggis khan's reforms that divided the divided Mongolian people into *tumans* of 10,000, thousands, hundreds), possessed political, that is state activity character. So, it was a military-hierarchic system that served as a mechanism connecting "government and tribes", and not the prestige economy as asserted by Kradin (2000b: 278).

To understand "nomadic empires" as examples of an early-state form, it is helpful to turn to some of the largest examples: the First Turkish Khaganate of the 6th-7th centuries and the Mongol Empire of the 13th-15th centuries. The difficulties among nomads of centralizing power and coping with the difficulties of ethnic stratification were directly proportional to the size of the territory they controlled. Because of the number of conquered nomad ethnic groups and the use of captured farmers within the nomadic state limits, the First Turkish Khaganate and Mongolian Empire can be called as nomadic super-empires and are examples of more centralized nomadic formations on the analogy of supercomplex chiefdoms. These nomad societies also adopted a written language to serve as a means of state propaganda and this accounts for their high level of political development.

The political developments among nomadic societies often take on specific but different characteristics based on their region in which they develop. So, in Inner Asia there was a steady power system that formed the basis of nomadic societies' hierarchy beginning with the Hsiung-nu in the 2nd century BC that ran with some intervals until the dissolution of the Mongol Empire in the 15th century AD (Savinov 1979; Kljashtorny, Savinov 1994). Military and political ruling was secured by the dominating ethnic elite, which formed elite culture (Hsiung-nu, Turks, and Mongols) and the whole complex of military, world outlook and socio-political stereotypes of all nomadic community. The elite strove to unite subordinate nomadic groups under its power for military action against China, and this in its turn stimulated centripetal tendencies in nomadic societies and promoted struggles for power among rival ethnic groups for dominance on the steppe (Kradin 1996: 55-56). Consequently, one of the ethnopolitical elite's aims was to provide steppe area with independence from China. Taking correlation of forces of nomads and China into consideration (the quantity of population, pecuniary resources: an average correlation from 1 to 30 and 1 to 40 - Kradin 1996: 19), this was possible only within a centralized imperial structure.

The influence of Chinese economy and culture brought to nomadic elites into crisis. Receiving Chinese goods as gifts and tribute, cultivating Chinese traditions, and receiving superprofits from its control of the transit silk trade, the nomadic aristocracy lost its unity. There were internecine wars, defeats from the Chinese Army and revolts by previously conquered nomads. The Chinese fully realized these problems. A Han dynasty eunuch Chung-hang Yüeh who deserted to the nomads warned the Hsiung-nu *Shan-yü* Lao-shang (174-160) that.

All the multitudes of the Hsiung-nu would not amount to one province in the Han empire. The strength of the Hsiung-nu lies in the very fact that their food and clothing are different from those of the Chinese, and they are therefore not dependent on the Han for any thing. Now the *Shan-yü* has this fondness for Chinese things and is trying to change the Hsiung-nu customs. Thus, although the Han sends no more than a fifth of its goods here, it will in the end succeed in winning over the whole Hsiung-nu nation. (*Shih-chi* 110:2a; Watson 1961, 2:155; Materialy 1968: 45)

In the beginning of the seventh century the Turkish elite faced a similar challenge when it was bribed by the Sui government with gifts and feasts. The process of the elite's sinification put into danger the existence of the eastern Turkish Khanate (Gumilev 1993: 146-147, 165). Attempts of khagan Hsieh-li to restore the Turkish power failed in 630, when Turks sustained a defeat from Tang Chinese forces and T'ieh-le tribes. The latter soon proclaimed kaganat Sejanto. The Second Turkish khaganate, which was formed in the course of anti-Chinese revolt in 682, soon was under the power of China towards the 740s. At the same time a strong opposition led by the Uighurs was formed within the khaganate. Common efforts of rebels and Chinese led to the fall of khaganate, and the power in the steppes went over to Uighurs.

Most likely the nomads realized the danger of Chinese influence on the steppe, but the habits, fashion and passion of nomadic aristocracy for enrichment at the expense of Chinese gifts prevailed. All this led to the nomadic elite's "decomposition" and disregard of the common nomads' interest. Its organizational base was thereby weakened and this was accompanied by a decline in its military efficiency. There was also internal discord. This was manifested in the struggle for the throne, the formation of pro and anti-Chinese party factions, and the emergence of rival rulers on the steppe (such as the northern and southern *Shan-yüs* among the Hsiung-nu) that encouraged interethnic conflicts and revolts by conquered tribes. As a result, there were changes of elites when new ethnic groups united the nomads. So, every time an elite weakened, it was replaced by more consolidated ethnic group that observed the purity of nomadic traditions.

The elite replacing mechanism functioned thanks to several factors. In the first place, subordinate ethnic groups retained considerable autonomy in their own geographical areas and took part in military and political life of nomadic empires as largely independent units. Because they were more isolated they were less influenced by the Chinese culture and did not lose their nomadic character or kinship bonds. Secondly, these ethnic unions had some considerable experience struggling against the existing nomad elite (Hsien-pi in the Hsiung-nu state, Turks in Jou-jan khaganate, T'ieh-le and Uighurs in the Turkish Khaganates, Kirghiz in the Uighur Khaganate, etc.) and were prepared to carry out a successful coup d'état. The struggle against the nomadic elite was often accompanied by the revolt of several conquered tribal groups. Thirdly, ethnic and political continuity factor was of importance. For example in 91, after receiving a defeat from the Chinese, some Hsiung-nu went over to Hsien-pi and "... began to call themselves Hsien-pi , and from this very moment the strengthening of Hsien-pi began" (Materialy 1984: 71).

So, the history of the Chinese civilization existence and "barbarian" nomadic periphery tells us, that China and the eastern part of steppe Eurasia represented a united historico-cultural and geographical area, where there were two opposite worlds in close coexistence (World Empire and steppe "semi-periphery" (Kradin 2000b: 276, 282-286).

The character of the nomadic elite's coexistence with China was diverse and depended on particular historical reasons (Kradin 1996: 68). There might be years of "peaceful coexistence" and even mutual cultural influence (Hsiung-nu and Han in the middle of 2nd century BC and the Turks and Tang at the middle of 7th century) or years of cruel wars for extermination (for example, after the Hsien-pi's leader T'an-shih-huai's refusal to negotiate peace treaty, based on alliance). For this reason we reject the notion that there was a process of "synchronous development and decay" of China and nomadic societies in Inner Asia as posited by Kradin (2000b: 276). Surely, the first formation of nomadic periphery as a stable system was connected with active penetration of the Chinese in Ordos by the Ch'in dynasty at the end of the 3rd century BC, who defeated Hsiung-nu several times. Then the active foreign policy of Ch'in Shih-huang-ti caused centripetal process in the steppe and led to the formation of the Hsiung-nu state. After the victory their neighbors, the Tung-hu and Yüeh-chih, the Hsiung-nu managed to establish hegemony in Central Asia. "All those peoples who bend a bow turned out to be united in one family" (Materialy 1968: 43). In this case military and administrative structure formation among nomads possessed the character of an answer to the challenge of settled civilization. However, later the correlation between China strengthening and imperial structures formation in

the steppe was not often seen. So, the two Super Empires of the first Turkish Khaganate and the Mongolian Empire were formed at a moment when there was no pressure on the steppe and when there was no united state in existence in China, as N.N. Kradin supposes (2000b: 276). The Turkish Khaganate appeared in 552, and by the 560s had expanded to the Prichernomorskie steppes, whereas the united Empire of Sui in China was formed only in 589. The interval of 20-30 years is rather important according to historical measures. Vice versa, the strengthening of Sui, and then the beginnings of stronger Tang Empire led to approximately fast decay of first Khaganate in 630.

There was a similar situation with Mongolian Empire. By the moment of Chinggis khan's rise to power there were three state formations in China--Chin, His-hsia and Sung. From this point of view there was hardly one of these states for which Mongol Empire served as periphery. There were centrifugal processes in China and only Mongolian resistance could stop them. It is not by chance that opposition of the Sung in south China, in particular, was so long lasting and in fact lasted three generations. It was the fight against Mongolian supremacy that caused the beginnings of a new centralized Chinese state with Ming dynasty at the head.

With regard to the above-mentioned, we offer a rough typology of political nomadic systems:

(1) Nomadic Super Empires (one of the early-state formation form) with strict military-political structures. Such empires defined the norms of civil life as well as the military organization and a single administration applied law for both. Pasture distribution was under the control of princes (*noyon*) distributed among various nomadic territories (*ulus*) (Vladimirtsov 1934: 111-113; Skrynnikova 1997: 51). Examples of these include the Mongolian Empire until the middle of 13th century and perhaps the Turkish Khaganate before its split into eastern and western parts. Nomadic Super Empires disintegrated into more local structures because it proved impossible to effectively rule such a vast territory from one center and because of the strong attraction in some parts of Empire to different farming centers. Internal conflicts and fight against neighboring states were less important.

(2) Nomadic Xenocratic Empires, which resembled supercomplex chiefdoms of farmers in their social structure but, at the same time, maintained a certain number of early-state aspects in the military-political sphere. Examples include the Hsiung-nu Empire, the Jou-jan Khanate, the second Turkish Empire, the Uighur Empire and the Kirghiz khanate. Complex ethnic and lineage-tribal stratification was an important feature of such nomadic empires.

(3) Monolithic nomadic structures created by single ethnic groups that were close to different types of chiefdoms in their degree of political evolution stages. Examples include the Sejanto Khaganate, the Crimea Khanate, and the Nogai Horde. I find V.V. Trepavlov's (2000: 302-303) opinion on the necessity to define classification indications of power in nomadic structures rather important, but one should also take into consideration the functional aspects of power, complexity of its structure, degree of centralization, leader's authoritarianism, etc. If we proceed from on functional basis only, then we can estimate other structures with different parameters equally. For example, the same V.V. Trepavlov defines Mongolian Empire and the Nogay Horde as supercomplex chiefdoms (Trepavlov 1993; 2000), though it is quite clear that they cannot be compared because of administrative structure complexity, degree of military-political centralization, territory scope. It is sufficient to point out the fact Nogai Mirzas possessed total autonomy from Mangit Bi, whom they did not obey even in the case of military conflict (Trepavlov 2000: 305). Such a case was merely impossible in Chinggis khan's state with its strict military discipline.

(4) Structures formed by nomads with a high percentage of settled people. Examples include the western Turkish Khanate, the Khazar Khanate, Danube Bulgaria in 7th century, Qarakhitai (western Liao) and the Golden Horde.

(5) Decentralized amorphous without a single polity in which autonomous territories are ruled by multiple chiefs who are the heads of local lineage-tribal structures. Examples include the Pechenegs, Kypchaks (Polovetes) and the Oguz Turks. It was not possible for these nomadic societies, roaming from place to place in the steppe area between the Volga and the Danube, to leave marks of their presence on the region's farming centers (Byzantium, Kievan Rus', German Empire, the Volga Bulgaria). For this reason the different ethnic segments of the Pechenegs or Polovetes societies represented the periphery of neighboring farming centers and never formed unitary political structures like those formed in Inner Asia between the nomads of Mongolia("peoples bending the bow") resisting a "pax Sinica". What were separate subdivisions of the Pechenegs and Polovetes societies like? The characteristic of the Pechenegs *femes* as chiefdoms (Marey 2000) turns out to be conjuncture-like and doubtful. (It is not likely that one ethnic group was divided into 8 chiefdoms, each of which consisted of 5 clans only). One should consider the Pechenegs *femes* as segments of lineage-tribal structure with its traditional chiefs at the head (lineage elders and tribal military chiefs). Chiefdoms could be formed among Prichernomor nomads, for example, as Polovets unions the Bonjaka Horde and the

Sharukana Horde (Pletneva 1990: 45-53, 60), but they soon disintegrated after chiefs death or military defeat.

(6) Local decentralized groups with lineage-tribal structures (T'ieh-le, Tung-hu, Black Clobuks).

(7) Developed countries, formed by nomads in the farming centers. These include such "conquest empires" (as defined by N.N. Kradin) such as the Khitan Liao, Jurchen Chin, Mongol Yuan (all in China) and the Ilkhanate in Iran. It must be added that one should not always speak about empires (the Hsiung-nu state in China, the Uighur Khanate in East Turkistan). The fleeting process of assimilation and settling turned most nomadic elites into officials and military-nobility who had nothing to do with nomadic process. For this reason such states attempted to ban marriages between nomads and local population was under a ban and frontier wars were mounted to maintain military efficiency (for example, Mongols and Manchus in China).

In this article we discussed two important aspects in the history of nomads: the typology of political systems of nomads and influence of settled civilization on political nomadic process. The main problem for the study of nomads is the need to apply the discipline's accumulated experience to systemization and the creation of a single approach to terminology, classification and characterization of nomadic societies.

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4

CULTURAL CAPITAL, LIVESTOCK RAIDING, AND THE MILITARY ADVANTAGE OF TRADITIONAL PASTORALISTS

William Irons

Introduction

Throughout the arid zone of the Old World (North Africa, the Middle East, and Central Asia), until recently there were a number of pastoral nomadic tribes that had a consistent advantage in military encounters with more sedentary groups. As a result of this military advantage states based in sedentary societies were often unable to control them. States at times dealt with these groups as if they were dealing with other states making what amounted to treaties. At other time, the state had a greater advantage and the negotiation was not between equals, but nevertheless there was negotiation and the tribes were in a position to use military force against the state to back up some of their demands in negotiating with the state. At other time, pastoral nomads, or more commonly large alliance of different group including pastoral nomads along with other groups, would conquer states and establish new dynasties of nomad origin or partial nomad origin. The Mongol Empire was the most dramatic example.

This paper asks why this military advantage existed. The first to note in writing for posterity the military advantage of the nomads was Ibn Khaldun who suggested as a social law that whenever two armies met in combat, other things equal, the more nomadic of the two armies would triumph. He attributed this advantage to the fact that pastoral nomads were united on the basis of kinship, while the armies of sedentary societies were based on citizenship in a state where citizenship was granted to all the inhabitants of the state's territory. Ibn Khaldun believed that kinship was more powerful as a tool for creating solidary groups than was citizenship in a territorial state. I

believe that Ibn Khaldun's social law is correct, but I think the causes of this phenomenon are a little more complex than simple being a matter of kinship versus citizenship.

In this paper, I will explore other bases of the military advantage in addition to kinship. My thinking is actually fairly close to that of Owen Lattimore in *Inner Asian Frontiers of Central Asia* I see several reasons why pastoral nomads had a military advantage over sedentary agriculturalists. I have discussed several of these reasons in earlier publications (Irons 1971, 1974, 1975, 1979, 1994). The specific argument I wish to make here is that pastoral nomads have a form of cultural capital that gives them a military advantage. This is only one source of their military advantage and it combines with other factors to confer an overall military advantage. The other factors consist primarily of (1) residential mobility which makes it possible for an entire society to retreat from an advancing army, (2) a good supply of horses and/or camels as mounts for military purposes combined with extensive knowledge of how to care for and use these animals, (3) residences in a region where it is difficult for the armies of sedentary states to travel or maneuver (usually arid regions where scarcity of water makes travel difficult for sedentary armies, but sometime rugged mountains), (4) a form of organization such as a segmentary lineage system and/or a hierarchy of chiefs that can organize large-scale military operations, (5) a belief in common descent (Ibn Khaldun's kinship) as a rationalization of their unity for military purposes.

Cultural Capital:

The Concept and an Example

Thomas Sowell introduced this concept to me in his book, *Race and Culture*. Cultural capital consists of values, skills, and knowledge that a person acquires as part of growing up in a particular culture that can be used to economic advantage in the original culture, but also in a new setting. Sowell is interested in the fate of immigrants and having studied a large number of immigrant groups that have migrated from and to various parts of the world, he has concluded that the role an immigrant group plays in their new environment is shaped extensively by the cultural capital they bring with them from their original environment.

I can illustrate the concept briefly with an example that is familiar to me, but far removed from the pastoralists of the Old World. In 1996 in collaboration with Lee Cronk (Department of Anthropology, Rutgers University), I did a brief stint of ethnographic field research on the Island of Utila, Bay Islands of Honduras. In preparation of this field research, I read earlier an earlier ethnography of the Island by David Lord (1975) which

described the recent history of the Island. The Utilians were part of an English speaking population that moved west from Jamaica and the Cayman Islands in the early 1800s and settled in the Bay Islands, Belize, and other areas along the coast of Central America. The Utilians originally made their living by growing bananas and coconuts for export.

During the depression, their economy sank to a very low state, but during World War II things turned around because of their cultural capital. The American merchant marine had a shortage of able-bodied seaman during the war. Most able-bodied men in the U. S. were serving in the military.

Around 1941 some American merchant marines happened to visit Utila and discovered that the Utilians made good seaman. They had several "skills" that qualified them. They spoke English the language of the American merchant marines. Because they lived on an island and had extensive experience with boats, they did not get seasick, and they knew basic seamanship. Immediately the American merchant marines began hiring Utilians as seaman for what the Utilians thought were fantastic wages. This led to the development of an island economy based on men leaving the island to work as merchant marines for 9 to 10 months each year while sending money back to their families in Utila. This tradition continued after the war and Utilians continue, up to the present, to travel up to the U. S. to work as merchant marines. Eventually they expanded into other lines of work, but always one's that drew on their familiarity with the sea and seamanship. During the time of my visit many still worked periodically as merchant marines. Other worked on oilrigs in the sea, or on tugboats on the Mississippi, or in the various port facilities of various Honduran fruit companies. The work they found always drew on their special skill as seamen.

The Cultural Capital of Pastoral Nomads

The concept of cultural capital can also be applied to the pastoral nomads of the arid zone of the Old World as well. Here the situation is the following. Among pastoralists, the primary form of wealth consist of livestock. Wealth in this form is especially easy to steal. A consequence is that in societies that are pastoral and have no central authority to enforce law and order, livestock theft and livestock raiding are especially common. Pastoralists spend a large amount of effort protecting their own herds and, at the same time, raiding their neighbor's herds.

Livestock raiding was almost a secondary economy in much of the Middle East before the establishment of effective government control in pastoral areas (Irons 1965). Young men in the age range of 18 to 28 have been observed to be especially drawn to violent and risky activities (Daly and

Wilson 1988) and most probably young men in traditional pastoral societies found livestock raiding an especially attractive activity. Such raiding could be a way to raise bridewealth, to overcome the problem of a limited inheritance, or to make up for livestock losses owing to disease or bad weather. It also could be a means of enrichment for those who had enough but would like to have more.

Typically livestock raids were conducted against neighboring groups who were defined as socially distinct from the raiders. This makes good sense. Stealing from members of one's own community would leave one with enemies on one's home territory. Also many members of one's own community would be close kin. It was much better to travel some distance and rob people to whom one was not related and whom one would not encounter on one's home territory. The Yomut Turkmen whom I studied in Iran in the 1960s and 1970s can serve as an ethnographic example of how this worked.

The Yomut had a segmentary lineage system (Irons 1975: 39-65) that defined a nested hierarchy of named groups based on genealogy ranging from small lineages of a few households to larger descent groups of thousands, and on up to the Yomut as a whole. The smallest subgroups of the Yomut that were consistently internally peaceful were groups in the size range (before recent population growth) of about 5,000 individuals (Irons 1975: 61-65). There were eleven of these groups and they occupied strips of territory about 10 to 30 kilometers across from east to west and about eighty or more kilometers long from north to south. Most of these territories included land suitable for agriculture in the southern part of Yomut country where rainfall was high and land suitable for livestock production in the northern part of Yomut country where conditions were more arid. Typically these groups were internally peaceful, but their relations with their neighbors were hostile and included frequent raiding for livestock. More serious forms of hostile interaction however were usually avoided with these neighboring groups. Wars aimed at taking territory away from neighboring groups were rare, and they did not raid one another for slaves. Slave raiding was conducted further away south of the Elburz Mountains on the Iranian Plateau. Thus the level of violence was kept at a level that the local people felt they could live with. At the same time using their segmentary lineage system as a charter, the eleven distinct tribes would make peace and unite so that the Yomut as a whole could when necessary deal with a large external threat such as an attempt by the Iranian Army to impose a degree of control on the Yomut. As is typical of segmentary lineages, the Yomut were able to unite groups of various sizes for military purposes. Thus between the level of the eleven tribes of the Gorgan Yomut, and the Yomut as a whole there were

two groups of intermediate size (the Choni and the Sherep) who could also unite for military purposes. These groups of intermediate size were likely to be activated when warfare over territory erupted among smaller groups.

Patterns of raiding neighbors for livestock similar to those described above for the Yomut were common throughout the arid zone of the Old World before modern governments were able to take effective control of pastoral populations. This pattern of raiding had the effect of giving the young men of each tribe military training. They all became skilled at planning and executing small-scale military activities. The basic skills of cavalymen were thus part of growing up among politically independent tribal groups in the arid zone of the Old World. This made it possible for tribal leaders to call on skilled cavalry for military operations for time to time. Yomut who were basically acephalous usually elected temporary leaders during times of war. In addition to raiding neighbors for livestock, they could use their military skills to collect tribute from caravans crossing their territory or from sedentary village near their territory. They could also negotiate with state organizations to desist from raiding in return for a payment from the state to a leader of some tribal unit. These payments were often described within the state as payment to a militia that would maintain peace. Also tribal groups on occasion would agree with the state authorities to supply military units to be placed under state command in return for recognition of the tribes' independence within its own territory. Often tribal groups occupied border areas and they would be paid by one state not to raid that state's territory and to concentrate their raiding instead on an enemy state. Various Turkmen groups were at times allied with the Khans of Khiva or Bukhara in this way against Persia to their south. There were many permutations on what these tribal groups could do with their military prowess. They could maintain their independence from state control and thus avoid taxation and conscription, raid neighbors, collect tribute and serve in effect as mercenaries. Most of these permutations could be found in one place or another in the arid zone of the Old World. More important, these groups use their military power to maintain their political independence from the state.

Also at times, these tribal groups could unite large enough confederacies to overpower states and establish their own leaders as the dynasty of a sedentary state. A very high portion of the dynasties in the Middle East were of nomad origin, or traced their origin to a confederacy of groups that include a large pastoral nomadic contingent.

However, such dynasties of nomadic origin were usually not able to indefinitely control the tribal groups from which they sprang (Lattimore 1940 documents this phenomenon for the inner Asian frontiers of China). Once a dynasty was well situated in sedentary and urban society they tended to lose

contact with their tribal allies and these allies preferred to maintain their own independence from the dynasties they gave rise to. They were also in a position to prevent state control because of the inherent military advantage.

The cultural capital that developed among pastoral nomads as a result of their constant involvement in raiding each other for livestock was not something planned. Rather it was a side effect of the fact that livestock are easy to steal and the strong temptation to steal animals from those that are not socially close in a social environment lacking centralized authority to maintain law and order. Among pastoral nomads in thinly inhabited arid regions often the authority of the state was not able to prevent livestock raiding even if in theory is controlled the area in question. Once the pattern became well established other institutions, I suggest were built around it. The formation of tribes of a size that allowed self-defense and the defining of a social and geographic border with neighboring groups whom one could raid was a natural outcome.

Conventions that limited the cost of such raiding also tended to develop in many areas. Among the Turkmen the special role of the Ewlad, small tribes that were putative descendants of the first four Khalifs and who had a special holy status that made them neutral in all inter-tribal hostilities and immune from livestock raiding. These groups could travel safely between hostile groups and often did following raids that were especially successful. In these cases they would plead on behalf the victims of the raid that a portion of the livestock taken be return since the victims had been impoverished. The Ewlad were especially numerous near the no-man's land between the Yomut and the Goklan, where the social distance between the two very large genealogical distant descent groups made raiding especially common and in fact caused the development of a strip of uninhabited territory--a no man's land--between the two groups.

Military Power among Pastoral Nomads

While I am suggesting that pastoral nomads derived a special set of skills from the fact that their main form of wealth was easily stolen, there other factors as well that contributed to their ability to prevent states from controlling them. These were enumerated and in an earlier paper I elaborate on residential mobility as another source of military power (Irons 1974). In this same article, I also emphasized the significance for the Yomut of being situated on the edge of a large desert into which they could retreat and not be easily pursued by the armies of the sedentary, urban Persian state, and the segmentary lineage system as a means of organizing their military activities including their resistance to state control.

The actual extent to which any particular pastoral population was able to maintain independence from state control depended on the exact extent to which it enjoyed the various features above that aided in maintaining independence. Some groups were unable to maintain independence from state control at all and were, in effect, what Salzman call peasant nomads. They were completely controlled by a sedentary state and usually as a result eventually ended up as shepherds for sedentary herd owners. Other groups like the Yomut, and the Teke Turkmen were able at time to maintain complete freedom from state control.

Modernization

A number of recent historic changes have eliminated the military advantage of pastoral nomads. These are mostly technological innovations that have conferred advantages on the armies of states at the expense of nomads. The first was artillery which nomads could not for the most part maintain. The second was aircraft which again were available to the military organizations of states but not of smaller nomadic pastoral populations. In more recent time, innovations in military technology have changed the balance overwhelmingly to the favor of sedentary states. The full effect of these innovations has only been felt during the last century.

For a long period of history, pastoral nomads were able to enjoy a military advantage over sedentary populations and to maintain a more alternate to state organization in their own territories. Some times this alternative organization was hierarchic as were states, but in other case the organization of large pastoral nomadic populations was much more egalitarian than state organization.

When these groups did have hierarchies of chiefs, they still differed from states in that they lacked bureaucracies, and usually the chief was not seen as having a right to monopolize the legitimate use of force.

Ibn Khaldun's Social Law

The social law postulated by Ibn Khaldun in the fourteenth century is largely correct. It is clearly the case, that, throughout the arid zone of the Old World before certain technological changes, whenever two armies met in combat, other things equal, the more nomadic groups would prevail. Ibn Khaldun attributed their superiority to the reliance on kinship rather than citizenship in a territorial state as the basis of their solidarity. No doubt their kinship in the form of a theory of common descent and their cultural homogeneity together were an effective source of solidarity. However, on the basis of the considerations discussed above I think we can identify a number of other factors that contributed to the superiority of nomadic pastoralists in

the military sphere. Other factors, such as residential mobility and the other features of nomadic societies mentioned above, have been discussed in earlier publications (Irons 1974, Lattimore 1940). The one that is new in this paper is the suggestion that livestock raiding provided a kind of military training for the young men of nomadic societies. The skills acquired in such raids can be seen as an example of what Thomas Sowell describes as cultural capital.

This process of constant raiding was an almost inevitable outcome of the fact that livestock are easily stolen and that in thinly inhabited areas state restriction of this activity is not easily made effective.

Endnotes

1. I use the word "tribe" for groups of this type as a straight-forward translation of the words I learned for these groups in Iran. For me, "tribe" is a named group with a political organization separate from the state that allows the group to maintain internal peace and to organize for military purposes separate from the state. Actually the word "tribe" is an especially appropriate word for groups of this sort because the various groups described in the English translations of the Old Testament as tribes were groups of this type (cf. the description of ancient Hebrew "tribes" in Friedman 1987). This is a usage of the word "tribe" that is familiar to most speakers of English. A part of the history recorded in the Old Testament is a struggle by the various monarchies that arose among the ancient Hebrews to supplant the tribes with a state organization (Friedman 1987). This is a process that was acted out many times over in the later history of the arid zone of the Old World. Until recent developments in military technology, pastoral nomadic tribes were especially effective in resisting the efforts of states to supplant their tribal organization.
2. Theory from evolutionary biology maintains many species of organisms (including human beings) have an evolved propensity to be more helpful to, and less competitive toward, close genetic kin (Hamilton 1963, 1964). However, the kinship Ibn Khaldun was appealing to was not the same thing. Tribes of pastoral nomads are too large to consist mostly of close kin. Distant kinship should not be itself be a strong basis for solidarity. What is more likely is that the belief in common descent and the cultural homogeneity of these groups created a sense of solidarity that they described in the idiom of kinship. However, I would suggest that the real basis of their solidarity was a form of reciprocity enhanced by what game theorists describe as hard-to-fake signs of commitment (Frank 1988; Nesse in press.) Sedentary states with more cultural heterogeneity

and greater differences of wealth were less able to build solidarity in a similar way.

3. The political organization of tribes in the arid zone of the Old World commonly combines a hierarchy of chiefs and a segmentary lineage system. Tribes differ in the extent to which they emphasize a hierarchy of chiefs versus a system of segmentary lineages. Some groups are organized mostly around the chiefly hierarchy while others are organized almost exclusively by lineages (Salzman 1999).
4. Knowing exactly how to count the tribes of the Gorgan Yomut is a little difficult. Residence groups and descent groups correspond only imperfectly. Eleven corresponds to the named groups shown on the map on page 64 of Irons 1979. Some of the eleven named residence groups are however composites of two descent groups that are not closely related but have been allied for a long time; others correspond to a single large descent group. Whether to refer to such composite groups as a single "il" of two "ils" is a matter of context. One hears them describe both way on different occasions. Fuller details are to be found in Irons 1979: 39-65.
5. See endnote 1. This "kinship" is not the same as that discussed in Hamilton (1963, 1964).

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5

NOMADIC EMPIRES: ORIGINS, RISE, DECLINE*

Nikolay N. Kradin

At present, the study of different forms of empires is among the most actively developed problems. One of the very urgent aspects of these subjects touches on a wide circle of questions related to investigation of the interrelations of the agrarian world-empires with the nomadic world. It seems plausible that the most important and interesting problems are concentrated around a phenomenon of so called "nomadic empires": How and why have these empires arisen? What made nomads to undertake the endless military campaigns and conquests against the neighbouring agrarian people? Why have these empires disappeared so rapidly as appeared? What have, in effect, these "empires" of aggressive and mysterious nomads presented?

Nomadic Empire: what is it?

The Empire is one of the forms of the state. Specific signs of empires are 1) the presence of large territories; and 2) the presence of a metropolis of the empire and periphery subsystems depending on a metropolis. Periphery can be the quite different in the complexity level types of social organisms: from local group to the state inclusive. As to the degree of integration of these subsystems of empire, there are early and late empires. In the early empires, the metropolis and periphery have not formed the strong interconnected unified system and differed by many indices such, for example, as ecology, economy, level of social and political development. Among the classic examples of the early empires can be the Roman Power, Incas state, Carolingian kingdom etc. The late empire is characterized by the less differentiated infrastructure. In it, the periphery subsystems are restricted and

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have a form of the raw-material additions with respect to developed agrarian, industrial and trading mechanisms of metropolis. As an example, we can refer to the Britain, Germany or Russian empires of the beginning of the present century (Eisenstadt 1963: 6-22, 61 ff; Thapar 1981: 410 ff).

As one of the variants of early empire, the "barbarian" empire should be considered. The fundamental distinction of the latter was in the fact that its metropolis was only developed in the military respect whereas it was less structurally integrated and differentiated in the social-economic and other respects. Here, itself was a periphery and province. All empires established by nomads were barbarian. However, not all barbarian empires were founded by nomads. Thus, the nomadic empire should be identified as a barbarian variant. In this case, the nomadic empire can be defined as nomadic society organized on the military-hierarchical principle, occupying a quite large space and exploiting the nearby territories, as a rule, by external forms of exploitation (robbery, war and indemnity, extortion of gifts, non-equivalent trade, laying under tribute etc.).

One can identify the following signs of nomadic empires:

- (1) multistage hierarchical character of the social organization pierced at all levels by tribal and super-tribal genealogical ties;
- (2) dualistic (into wings) or triad (into the wings and center) principle of administrative division of the empire;
- (3) military-hierarchical character of the social organization of the empire's center, more often, on the decimal principle;
- (4) horse relay messenger service (*yam*) as a specific way of organizing the administrative infrastructure;
- (5) specific system of power inheritance (empire is a property of the whole khan clan, institution of co-government, *kuriltai*);
- (6) specific character of relations with the agricultural world (Kradin 1992; 1996a).

It is necessary to distinguish the classical nomadic empires from (1) the similar mixed agricultural-pastoral empires in which the nomadic element played a great role in their history (Arabian caliphate, state of Seljuks, Dunai and Volga Bulgaria, Ottoman Empire) and (2) the quasi-imperial nomadic statehood formations which were smaller than empires (European Huns, Avars, Hungarians, Priazov Bulgaria, Kara-khitans, Tatar khanates after the Golden Horde collapse).

How did nomads come to empire?

A great number of different special and popular studies have been devoted to the problem of the origins of nomadic empires. Joseph Fletcher, referring to the works of the Chinese historian Ch'i-ch'ing Hsiao, believed

that all theories explaining the reason of formation of the nomadic empires and their invasions to China and other agricultural countries could be reduced one or more of the following seven explanations:

- (1) the greedy and predatory nature of the inhabitants of steppe region;
- (2) climatic changes;
- (3) overpopulation of steppe;
- (4) unwillingness of farmers to trade with nomads;
- (5) necessity of additional livelihood sources;
- (6) need in a creation of supertribal unification of nomads;
- (7) psychology of nomads, including their aspiration to see themselves as the equal to farmers and their faith in a divine predestination given to them by Heaven (*Tenggeri*) to subjugate the whole world (Fletcher 1986: 32-33).

While the majority of the factors listed are plausible, the importance of some of them has been overestimated. For example, according to the available paleogeographical data there is no strict correlation between periods of global dryness or wetness on the steppe and the prosperity of nomadic empires (Ivanov, Vasilyev 1995 table 24, 25). Similarly a thesis of class struggle among nomads proved to be erroneous (Markov 1976; Khazanov 1984; Kradin 1992). The role of demography is not entirely known because of the difficulties in determining the relationship between the human population and the animal population. In particular the growth or decline of herd populations has much more variability than changes in the human population. Both can create problems: too rapid an increase in the number of livestock can lead to destruction of grasses and a crisis in the ecosystem; too rapid a decline because of disease or sudden frosts can threaten the human population with hunger. The importance of military development among nomadic peoples is important, but it should always be remembered that farmers had their own military advantages. Farmers outnumbered nomads many times over, they had an ecologically complex economy, reliable fortresses and more powerful handicraft-metallurgical base.

Political integration and subsequent origins of state are often attributed to factors such as a favourable ecological and economic system, population growth, technology, irrigation, war and conquest, foreign impact, ideology, or caste endogamy (Claessen, Skalnik 1978: 619-635; 1981: 619-635; Khazanov 1979: 127-146). The importance of these factors for the evolution of nomadic societies was quite specific. For example, while pastoral societies remained far behind agrarian ones with respect to technology development, their riding technology for horses and camels gave the nomads of Eurasia and North Africa long periods of military predominance. Although the size of the nomadic population was always much lower than its sedentary neighbors,

nomads could mobilise as much as seventy-five per cent of their adult males for army service, a much higher percentage than among sedentary people. These examples could be continued.

It seems to me that the following important factors should be taken into account:

(1) Ethnohistorical studies of the present pastoral people of Asia and Africa show that the extensive nomadic economy, low density of population, absence of a settled way of life do not assume the need to develop any legitimated hierarchy. Thus, one can assume that a demand in the state system has not been intrinsically necessary for nomads (Lattimore 1940; Bacon 1958; Krader 1963; Markov 1976; Irons 1979; Khazanov 1984; Fletcher 1986; Barfield 1992; Masanov 1995).

(2) The degree of centralization among nomads is in direct proportion to the extent of the neighboring agricultural civilization. From the viewpoint of the World-System approach, nomads have always occupied a place of semi-periphery which has consolidated different regional economics into a common space (local civilizations, world-empires). In each local regional zone, the political structurization of the nomadic semi-periphery was in direct proportion to the size of the core. That is the reason why, in order to trade with oases or attack them, the nomads of North Africa and the Near East united into tribal confederations or chiefdoms, nomads of the East-European steppes living on the margins of the Ancient Rus' established quasi-imperial state-like structures while in Inner Asia the nomadic empire became such an important mode of adaptation (Grousset 1939; Lattimore 1940; Barfield 1981, 1992; Khazanov 1981; 1984; Fletcher 1986; Fursov 1988; Golden 1992; Kradin 1992; 1996).

(3) Thus, the imperial and quasi-imperial organization of the nomads in Eurasia first developed after the ending of the axial age (Jaspers 1949), from the middle of the first millennium BC at the time of the mighty agricultural empires (Ch'in in China, Mauryan in India, Hellenistic states in Asia Minor, Roman Empire in the Mediterranean) and in those regions first, where there were available large spaces favorable to nomadic pastoralism (regions off the Black Sea, Volga steppes, Khalkha-Mongolia) and, secondly, where the nomads were forced into long and active contact with more highly organized agricultural urban societies (Scythians and old oriental and ancient states, nomads of Inner Asia and China, Huns and Byzantine Empire, Arabs, Khazars, Turks and Greeks).

(4) It is possible to trace a synchronism between the processes of growth and decline in agricultural world-empires and in the steppe semi-periphery. The Han Empire and Hsiung-nu power appeared over one decade. The Turkish Khaganate appeared just at that time when China has been

consolidated under the dominion of the Sui and T'ang dynasties. Similarly, the steppe and China entered into periods of anarchy one after another over a short period of time. When, in China, the sedition and economic crisis started, the system of remote exploitation of nomads ceased to work, and the imperial confederation collapsed into separate tribes until peace and order were reestablished in the south (Barfield 1992; 2000).

(5) Besides these general regularities, other more accidental factors (ecology, climate, political situation, idiosyncratic features of political leaders and even luck) have played some role in determining the course of historical development in each particular case.

Pathways of origins for nomadic empires

There were four variants of the formation of power on the steppe. The first variant represents the classic internal integration of the tribal nomadic ethnos into a centralized empire. As a rule, this process was related to the appearance of a talented political and military figure who succeeded consolidating all the tribes and chiefdoms (=khanates) "living behind felt walls" into a common state (Maotun of Hsiung-nu, T'an-shih-huai of Hsien-pi, She-lun of Jou-Jan A-pao-chi of Khitan, Chinggis Khan of Mongols). After the consolidation of the nomads, the ruler must arrange an incoming of surplus product from without to support the unity of the empire. If he had not succeeded in this, the empire would have collapsed. As this variant of steppe empire formation is most often associated with the name of Chinggis Khan in can be called **Mongolian**.

The second variant was related to formation, at the periphery of an already developed nomadic empire, of political consolidation with strong centripetal tendencies. In the struggle for sovereignty, this union overthrew its exploiter and occupied its place in the economic and political infrastructure of a region. This variant describes the interrelations between Turks and Jou-Jans, Uighurs and Turks, Jurchens (with some reservations because they are not entirely nomads) and Khitans. We will call this variant **Turkic**.

The third variant was connected with nomadic migration and subsequent submission of the farmers to them. In the literature, the opinion has been formed that this was typical of the origins of nomadic empires. However, conquest of the great agricultural civilizations was in fact more often accomplished by already developed nomadic empires (Khitan, Jurchen, Mongols). The formation of the state T'o-pa Wei was a classic example of this version of nomadic empire formation (or more adequately semi-nomadic or even agricultural-stock-breeding). However this model is found most often, on a smaller scale, in the form of the quasi-imperial formation of

nomads (Avarian, Bulgarian and Hungarian powers in Europe, period of disturbance of 4-6 centuries in the North China (the "epoch of 16 states of five barbarian tribes" in Chinese chronicles), Kara-Khitans in East Turkestan). We call this variant **Hunnian**.

Finally, there has been a fourth, quite peaceful variant. It was connected with the formation of nomadic empires from the segments of the greater World empires of nomads existing earlier. There were two such empires: the Turkish Khaghanate and the Mongolian Empire. In the former case, the empire divided into the East Turkish and West Turkish Khaghanates (later, the Khazar Khaghanate and other quasi-imperial formations of nomads originated based on the West Khaghanate). In the Second case, Chinggis Khan's empire had been divided among his heirs into the ulus of Jochi (Golden Horde), ulus of Chaghadai, ulus of Hulegu (Il-Khans of Persia), and the Yuan Empire (Khalkha-Mongolia and China proper). Subsequently, the Golden Horde collapsed into several independent Khanates. This variant may be, for example, called **Khazarian**.

Types of nomadic empires

What variations of nomadic xenocratic formations and empires could take place? Nomadologists have repeatedly discussed this question emphasising the discussion of pastoral empires of Inner Asia (Wittfogel, Feng 1949: 24-25; Tamura 1974; Khazanov 1981; 1984; Pletneva 1982; Barfield 2000). Despite the original conclusions of every author all of their concepts are quite similar. The reason for this is that the basis of the typologies, as a rule, are based on the differences in ecology and economy of the nations that were members of multinational xenocratic polities as well as differences in the nature of relations between the conquering nomads and conquered farmers. The typology elaborated in my studies is in the general stream of conceptions mentioned above. I propose to distinguish three types or models of nomadic empires and quasi-imperial xenocratic nomadic formations (Kradin 1992: 169-178; 1995).

As to the first type, the nomads and farmers have neither a common interrelated economic system nor a common political system. A receipt of surplus product for supporting the nomadic metropolis is derived by distant exploitation (war, robbery, enforced vassalage, extortion of gifts, intermediary non-equivalent trade). In this case, terms "dependent" and "subsystem" can be only conditionally applied to the agrarian societies as their subordination to nomads was not formally recognised. But farmers played the role of an additional part of energetic resource for pastoralists and, in this sense, they can be considered as a part of the nomadic energetic system. Because these empires were, to larger extent, more nomadic than

remaining types they should be called **typical** nomadic empires (Hsiung-nu, Hsien-pi, Turk and Uighur Empire, Huns, Avars, early Mongols).

The nomadic empires of the second type are characterised by the fact that the nomadic and settled subsystems form common political organism but there is no close relation between their economic systems. Although the nomads have conquered the agrarian society, they lived separately from the settled peoples. Basic form of exploitation in these empires is a tribute relation. Political centres of these empires, "headquarters" of leaders, have been gradually transformed into place of concentration of bureaucratic staff which has controlled the settled-urban territories. It is in these centres that goods collected elsewhere were redistributed and where captive craftsmen and builders provided prestige goods and dwelling for the nomadic elite. Because of the wealth accumulated in these "headquarters" centres they attracted traders from distant parts of the world. Overtime what began as administrative encampments developed into large towns that had their own distinctive multinational culture and ideology (Karakorum, Sarai-Batu, Sarai-Berke).

Three variants are possible in their evolution:

- (1) separation of agricultural subsystem, desolation of steppe towns, nomadisation of population, transformation of metropolis into the state characteristic of the typical nomadic empires or collapse at all (the Golden Horde, Yuan Empire);
- (2) further sedentarisation and transformation into the complex agrarian-pastoral state (Khazar Khaganate, Liao Empire);
- (3) migration of nomads to the territory of agrarian state and change into the empire of third type (Il-khan state).

As the basis of these empires was the levy of tribute they should be called the **tributal** nomadic empires.

The nomadic empires of the third type were developed after the nomads have conquered an agricultural society and moved into its territory. The pastoral metropolis and townspeople and agricultural population became members of a common society (Northern Wei, Uighurs in the East Turkestan, Parthian Empire, Late Scythian kingdom, Danube and Volga Bulgaria, Seljuk Empire). This variant was possible primarily in regions where herdsmen and farmers resided in the same ecological zone (African Interlacustrine). Because the nomadic empires of this type developed toward the transformation of the society into the complex agrarian-urban state with a significant pastoral way of life, they should be called the **transitional** nomadic empires.

The tributal nomadic empires were the intermediate typological forms between typical and transitional nomadic empires. They differed from the typical empires by:

- (1) more regular character of exploitation (instead of episodic robberies, extorted gifts etc.; there is regular tribute);
- (2) and, hence, urbanisation and partial sedentarization in steppe;
- (3) possibly, transformation of metropolis from chiefdom into the early statehood society;
- (4) forming the bureaucratic machinery to rule the occupied agricultural societies.

These empires also differed from the transitional ones by

- (1) closer symbiosis of economical, social and cultural relations between conquerors and occupied peoples in the transitional nomadic empires;
- (2) in the tributal empires ordinary pastoralists mainly supported the ruling authority while in the transitional empires the pastoral elite undertook measures for political isolation of nomads-soldiers;
- (3) for transitional empires the regular taxation of farmers rather than levy of tribute was characteristic.

Thus, in accordance with two tendencies (for the synthesis with farmers or against) coexisting and opposing in nomad societies one can reveal three models of the specific pastoral states and empires. It should be noted that the nomad empires have appeared only as the means of adaptation to great agrarian civilisations. Therefore, the models identified were more often found in history in the form of xenocratic nomad complex and supercomplex chiefdoms rather than in the form of huge empires. In this respect, there was no fundamental difference between the pastoral formations of different chronological periods and continents of pre-industrial World.

The Structure of Nomadic Empire

Nomadic empires were organized in the form of imperial confederations (Barfield 1981, 1992). The confederations had an autocratic and state like look from the outside (they were created to withdraw the surplus products outside the steppe) but were consultative and tribal inside. The nomads, in a given situation, took the part of class-society and state-society, rising as a building over the settled-agrarian foundation. For this, the nomad elite performed the functions of bureaucracy and commanders, while the ordinary pastoralist provided the military arm. Such a society might be called **xenocratic** (Kradin 1992; 2002 etc.).

The chiefs of the tribes which made up a steppe empire have been incorporated into the military hierarchy of the hundreds and thousands, however their internal policy was to a certain degree independent of the

policy of the center. This peculiarity has been thoroughly analyzed by Thomas Barfield using the example of the Hsiung-nu empire (1981, 1992: 32-84). The relative autonomy of pastoral tribes was determined by the following factors:

- (1) economic independence made them potentially independent of the center;
- (2) basic sources of power (predatory wars, redistribution of tribe and other external subsidies, external trade) were quite unstable and outside the steppe world;
- (3) general armament restricted the possibility of political pressure upon tribes;
- (4) for the tribal groupings displeased by a policy of a Khan there was the opportunity of moving to new places, desertion under the protection of the agricultural civilization or revolt with the aim of overthrowing the disagreeable ruler.

For these reasons, political relations between the tribes and management bodies of the steppe empire were not purely autocratic. Supratribal power was kept by virtue of the fact that, on the one hand, membership in the imperial confederation provided the tribes with political independence from neighbors and a number of other important advantages and, on the other hand, a ruler of nomadic power and his surroundings guaranteed for the nomadic tribes a certain internal autonomy within the limits of empire.

The stability of steppe empires has directly depended on the skill of the supreme power at organizing the extraction of silk, agricultural products, handicraft articles and delicate jewels of the settled territories. As these products could not be produced under conditions of a cattle-breeding economy, obtaining them by use of force and extortion was the priority task of the ruler of nomadic society. Being a sole intermediary between China and the steppe, the ruler of a nomadic society had a chance to control the redistribution of plunder obtained from China and, thereby, strengthen his own power. It allowed him to maintain the existence of an empire that could not exist on the basis of the extensive pastoral economy alone.

A mechanism connecting the "government" of the steppe empire and pastoral tribes was the institution of a gift economy. By manipulating gifts and distributing them among comrades-in-arms and tribal chiefs, the ruler of the steppe empire strengthened his potential influence and prestige as the generous khan. Simultaneously, he has bound the persons receiving gifts by the liability of the return gift. Tribal chiefs receiving gifts might, on the one hand, satisfied their personal appetites and also strengthened their own intratribal status by a redistribution of gifts to fellow tribesmen or by organizing ceremonial feasts. Besides, in receiving a gift from the ruler the

tribal chief felt as if he also received some part of the ruler's supernatural charisma which contributed additionally to rise of his own prestige.

One can assume that an integration of tribes into the imperial confederation was performed not only by symbolic exchange of gifts between chiefs of different ranks and the khan. The same purpose was also achieved by inclusion in the genealogical kindred of different stockbreeding groups, diverse collective arrangements and ceremonies (seasonal meetings of chiefs and festivals, battues, erection of monumental funeral structures, etc.).

A certain role in the institutionalization of the power of the rulers of nomadic societies has been played by their performance of the functions of a sacred intermediary between a Socium and Heaven (*Tenggeri*) which would provide patronage and favor on the side of the otherworldly forces. Subject to the religious conceptions of nomads, a ruler of a steppe society (Shan-yu, Khaghan, Khan) has personified a society centre and, in virtue of his divine abilities, performed rituals which should provide prosperity and stability to the society. These functions were of colossal importance for the society. Therefore, in the case of natural stress or disease and loss of livestock, an unlucky Khan could weaken or lose his charisma. The unlucky Khan or chief could be replaced in some nomadic societies or even killed. But ideology has never been a predominant variable in power among the nomads. The life of the steppe society has been always filled with real alarms and dangers which have required from the leader active participation in their overcoming. As a whole, as noted above, the power of rules of the steppe empires of Eurasia has been largely based on external sources.

Nomadic empires and settled civilizations

The nomads used several boundary strategies to realise their aims, which could change each other over the course of the history of one society:

- (1) strategy of raids and robberies (Hsien-pi, Mongols in the XV-XVI centuries in respect of China, Crimean khanate in respect of Russia etc.);
- (2) distance frontier strategy (Barfield 1981, 1992) of alternation of raids, extortion of tribute and trade (Hsiung-nu, Turks, Uighurs);
- (3) subjecting of the agricultural society and laying under tribute (Scythia and Skolots, Khazaria and Slavs, Golden Horde and ancient Russia) as well a control of the transcontinental silk trade;
- (4) conquest of the settled-town state, quartering of the garrisons on its territory, sedentarisation and taxation of peasants for the benefit of new elite (Toba, Khitans and Jurchen in China; Mongols in China and Iran).

As a rule, over the course of long period, the nomads could use several different strategies. One can identify four stages of the Hsiung-nu - Han

relations (for details, see Kradin 1996a: 42-68). At the first stage (200-133 BC) for extortion of ever higher profits, the Hsiung-nu attempted to alternate the war and raids with the periods of a peaceful co-habitation with China in return for direct subsidy payments and trade. The second stage (129-58 BC) of the Hsiung-nu - Han relations was one of active hostility because the Han emperor Wu-di decided to abolish the strategy of appeasement and began active military expansion to the North. The war was waged with a variable success and debilitated both parties so that neither could claim any victory. In the third stage (56 BC - 9 AD) a policy of paying direct subsidies to the nomads by means of gifts was formally replaced by a system of tributary relations. The Hsiung-nu agreed to recognize formally the suzerainty of Han and to pay a nominal tribute. For this, the emperor provided the Shan-yu his protection and gave him a larger number of return gifts. The fourth, last stage (9-48 AD) of relations between the Han Empire and Hsiung-nu imperial confederation was similar, by its content, to the first stage. The difference lay in the greater aggressiveness of nomads which, likely, is explained by an internal political crisis within the Han dynasty, a weakening of the frontier defences and impossibility of sending rich gifts to nomads as before.

Notwithstanding ordinary opinion, the nomads did not at all seek to direct conquest of the agrarian territories. They did not need in this. To rule the agrarian society, the nomads would have to have "dismounted from the horse". Instead they have contented themselves with the return from non-equivalent trade with farmers and numerous presents from the Chinese emperors. The whole external exploitation policy of nomads was directed at the exploitation of neighbors-farmers from over a distance. The Uighurs, for example, even sent their armies to help the T'ang suppress internal uprisings and to stabilize the dynasty's hold on political power in China in order to keep the flow of gifts coming into the steppe. Only during periods of crisis and collapse in settled societies were the nomads forced to enter into direct relations with the farmers and townspeople as if a political vacuum had sucked in them inside the agrarian society.

Such dynamic bipolar structure of political ties between the agrarian civilizations and surrounding them nomads (barbarians and Roman, Scythians and states located within the Black Sea region, nomads of the central Asia and China etc.) have been cyclically repeated in the history of pre-industrial world many times. This has been well described in the works concerning World-System theory (Hall 1991; Barfield 1992; 2000; Chase-Dunn, Hall 1997; Kradin 2002 etc.).

Decline and Fall of Nomadic Empires

Researchers have repeatedly cited a set of reasons that could lead to the decline and collapse of nomadic empires. Among them are:

- (1) natural phenomena (drying of steppe, short-term climatic stresses and epidemics);
- (2) foreign policy factors (invasion of enemies, delayed wars, cessation of outer incomes, crisis of nearby agrarian civilizations);
- (3) internal causes (demographic outburst, loss of the internal unity and separatism, gigantic sizes and weakness of the administrative infrastructure, class struggle, intestine wars of khans and civil wars, talentless political rulers).

Natural phenomena as a causative factor were popular explanation in earlier years but more modern data has now thrown doubt on it. As noted above, the paleogeographical data of the recent ten years suggests a lack of direct relation between the global cycles of drying/moistening of steppe and periods of collapse/rise of steppe empires. A thesis of the class struggle of nomads proved to be erroneous because the same for nomads was not observed (Markov 1976; Khazanov 1984; Kradin 1992). However, the majority of the other causes cited above had real impact on the fortunes on one or another steppe power and comparative-historical analysis often shows that the collapse of nomadic empires was more often the product of multiple simultaneous factors. As a rule, misfortunes never come alone. The internal intestine wars could be accompanied by both local ecological catastrophes (Hsiung-nu, Uighurs) or invasions of enemies (Jou-jans, Uighurs).

At the same time, there have been causes which potentially contributed to the structural instability of nomadic empires:

- (1) external sources of receipt of surplus product which have integrated the economically independent tribes into the unified imperial confederation;
- (2) mobility and armament of nomads forcing the supreme power of empires to balance in the search of a consensus between different political groups;
- (3) specific tanistrial system of the power inheritance according to which each of the representatives of the ruling lineage from main wives had the right subject to the queue by the age for a promotion of the administrative status including the right for a throne;
- (4) polygamy among the highest elite of nomads (Chinggis Khan had, for example, about 500 wives and concubines, Jochi - 114 sons, Khubilai - 50 sons etc.). This has caused an excessive surplus of potential inheritors, intensification of competition between them for inheritance and civil wars.

Let us illustrate the last thesis with an example drawn from the history of the nomadic empire of Hsiung-nu. As turned out, an overproduction of

elite in the Hsiung-nu society was closely related to periods of introduction of new grand titles granted to those "king's" relatives who were deprived of the possibility to hold some or other traditional posts in the military-administrative hierarchy of the steppe power. Several periods of the most active introduction of new titles are identified (Kradin 1996a: 125-32). The first one falls on approximately 100-50 BC. During this time interval, an excessive surplus of the representatives of the Hsiung-nu elite has arisen. Because all members of the noble clans could not be provided with a place in the public hierarchy corresponding to their origin, an intense competition for a possession of one or other high status and material values corresponding to it has arose between them. Eventually, this competition led to the temporary division of the Hsiung-nu into several rival formations that first competed politically and then in a civil war between 58-36 BC.

The second period of mass introduction of new titles and posts began during the last third of the first century CE. The increase in the number of representatives of the highest elite of nomads caused an intensification of conflicts for the limited resources and division of the Hsiung-nu steppe empire in 48 AD into the northern and southern confederations. The third and last extensive appearance of new titles falls already on the post-imperial time. It has been related to new repartition of power in the Hsiung-nu union.

Finally, the fortune of the steppe empire has often depended on the fact how could the ruler of empire be able to settle the problems, to direct energy of his numerous relatives and brothers-in-arms from without his own society. However, this could not continue to infinity. The majority of nomadic empires have not often existed more than 100-150 years. Nevertheless, such is a fortune of not only nomadic but also all empires. And even the "long-lived" empires established by nomads (Hsiung-nu, Golden Horde, Ottoman) confirm only this regularity of the World History.

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6

PECULIARITIES OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE SARMATO-ALANS AND THEIR IMAGE IN THE EVIDENCE OF OTHER CULTURES

Sergey A. Yatsenko

The study of the social development of early nomads has historically been based largely on "typical" materials derived from information about the Northern Pontic Scythians and Mongolian Hsiung-nu. Similar evidence available from other contemporaneous nomads, such as the Wusun tribes in Semirechye (Kychanov 1997: 46-50), Kang-Küians in southern Kazakhstan, and the Sarmatians and early Alans in Europe, by contrast, has usually been neglected or ignored entirely.

This has remained the case even though there is abundant Sarmatian material available that is of great interest for nomadic studies. These include not only archaeological materials, but ethnographic traditions still current in the region such as the those of the Ossets, descendants of nomads of the Roman time whose traditions in many respects may be traced back to very early periods. These include valuable documented relics of archaic Nart heroic epics and long standing ethnographic traditions (For changing opinions of these sources and how they can be used, see Yatsenko 1998: 67-68 and Chochiev 1985). In spite of this, investigators have not provided a full analysis of the available material. Although the field is ripe for cooperation among related disciplines (archaeology, classical philology, linguistics, folklore studies and ethnology), there are still no serious works on the Sarmatian social system, even though their archaeological monuments are presently among the most investigated ones of any early nomads

in Eurasia.

Lack of attention to the Sarmatians has its roots in the classical tradition where they were treated as an inferior type of Scythians. Greco-Roman authors often idealized Scythians by presenting them as a wise people living a simple life who were invincible because of their just customs and their refusal to adopt the norms of Hellenic civilization. There was no trace of such delight when classical authors wrote of the Sarmatians and the Early Alans. Florus characterized them in this way: "they so-to-say supposedly stagnate in such barbarous ignorance, that they do not even understand the surrounding world" (Flor. *Liv. Epit.* II. 29). Others reproached them for their treachery (Tacitus, Tertullianus). There was little or no praise of Sarmatian crafts and arts, with only Pausanios acknowledging that these "barbarians are capable of art not less than the Hellenes", when describing a richly decorated piece of armor kept in Asclepius temple in Athens (Pausan. I. 21. 5). As an English researcher D. Broun (1994: 169) has noted, ancient authors have used the concept of "Sarmatian "barbarity" as a means to investigate Greco-Roman "civilization." Because of this classical descriptions of the Sarmatians have always been deeply influenced by their authors' ideological biases.

One reason for the classical world's openly negative evaluation of the Sarmatians is connected with *the difference in cultural orientation* between them and the Scythians. The Sarmatians had more contacts with eastern civilizations (China, Parthian Iran, Kushania and others), and were consequently less influenced by the Greco-Roman civilization. Indeed their own traditions influenced Greek colonists, themselves especially beginning from 2nd century AD (so-called *sarmatization*) (Yatsenko 1994a: 201). The more exact translation of fragment from "*Wei Lio*" from Chinese with commentaries has recently been done. The fragment is a witness of strong and long lasting political dependence of the part of the Sarmatians (including the Lower Don region – Lyu) from the Kazakhstan "nomadic empire" Kang-Kü / Kangha from the beginning of the first century to the beginning of the third century AD (Zuev 1995: 39-40). It is interesting to note that the appearance of expensive imitations of so called "gold-turquoise animal style" with images of West Turkestan fauna (panther-cheetah, dappled deer, etc.) are remarkably different in appearance from Bactrian and Parthian objects and coincide with the political strengthening of Kang-Kü in the beginning of the 1st century AD (Yatsenko 2000a: 178-179).

If the tendentiousness of Greco-Roman writers in writing about the

Sarmatians can easily be explained, the reasons of their being ignored by modern scholars is more difficult to understand. It may be that we too remain partially captivated by *antique stereotypes* and evaluations of the Sarmatians and the Scythians. In addition, because the Scythian tradition has traditionally been perceived as the standard one (being much better known and studied longest), researchers can be easily disoriented when they encounter basic differences in Sarmatian social structure, system of values, and noble burial rites.

For example, leading specialists have agreed that the "social distinctions of the Sarmatians in all periods being fixed first of all... through the instrumentality of physical labor resources for making burial mounds" (Skripkin 1992: 29).

But an examination of actual Sarmatian tombs shows this is not the case. In sharp contrast with Scythian tombs, the richest barrows of Sarmato-Alan kings (those that were literally swimming in gold, silk and semi-precious stones) were outwardly plain small hills with modest structures under them and some lateral hiding-places (where most valuable things were placed). From this we may conclude that *the Sarmatian society had a more rational and economical attitude towards material values than the Scythians*. Unlike Scythian royal tombs with their tens of strangled servants and sacrificed horses placed within the burial of a dead king, the Sarmatians symbolically substituted a bridle to represent a sacrificed horse; the grave itself was hidden rather than ostentatiously displayed; and they deposited only a few representative utensils as gravegoods rather than complete sets of every type. In spite of these rational limitations, some analysts continue to see these differences as more evidence of Sarmatian *backwardness* when compared to the Scythians (Yatsenko 1994a: 203).

The founder of "sarmatology" was the well-known scholar M.I. Rostovtzev who formulated his basic ideas on cultural and social history of the Sarmatians in the beginning of 1920s. He is credited with the best grasp the ancient written records among sarmatologists and lauded for his brilliant insights. Rostovtzev focused primarily on the how Sarmatia integrated frequent migration waves into Europe from different parts of West Turkestan and the eastern orientation of these ethnic groups in their early history. In Rostovtzev's opinion (1989: 198), the Sarmatians created a series of primitive states with urban centers and a rather developed social structure that exercised a big cultural influence on Greek colonists and subordinate sedentary tribes in the region.

Rostovtzev's work fell into disrepute in the Soviet Union after his forced emigration to the West when his works were condemned as those of a confirmed

monarchist, a "bourgeois scholar" and "white-emigrant." His publications and ideas became the object of constant evident and covert criticism by Soviet Marxist investigators. One may even say that many of the main postulates of Soviet sarmatology created by these polemics simply presented a *negative mirror reflection* of Rostovtzev's conception, that is the opposite of whatever Rostovtzev proposed was assumed to be true.

As a result of this process, the main conclusions in the Soviet period (often derived *a priori* on the basis of generally-theoretical thesis) came to the following. The role of migrations in the history of Sarmatian peoples (in accordance with the academician N.Ya. Marr doctrine officially approved by Stalin) was insignificant. Thus the whole picture of social development of a dozen different peoples, changing each other during many centuries in Sarmatia, was reduced to the indivisible, slow and onward march of history (Gutnov 1997: 16). All tribes had the same level of development. There was no question of statehood, hereditary reign, any complex social structure, of stable proto-estates, semi-professional trade and crafts, cities, coinage. (All records of ancient authors and epigraphy testifying to the opposite view were explained as a succession of misinterpretations or by the inaccuracy of informants, etc.). Because the Sarmatians were assumed to have an extremely primitive culture and art, there could have been no serious sarmatization of neighboring peoples. Any outstanding artistic works of non-Greek or non-Persian appearance were automatically declared to be imported from remote countries by way of the Silk Road. In fact, the only recognized stimuli of social progress came from the outside by way of such things as trade. Weak contacts with Greco-Roman civilization served as undoubted evidence of the Sarmatians' greater primitiveness when compared with the Scythians.

Unfortunately, the use of none too numerous but deliberately selected facts served to buttress this version of Sarmatian history for more than a half century. It still influences current conceptions and migrates from book to book on the subject. For example, references to supposed "matriarchal" traditions are used to reject the possibility of statehood¹ *a priori* on theoretical grounds alone, supported only by some constantly quoted but vague references from the

¹ Among not numerous exceptions there are the opinions of separate scholars about the existence of the states of the Siracs in Kuban Region (Struve 1968: 187 and oth.) and the Alans of the I-II cc. AD in Lower Don region (Gagloyti 1966: 83 and oth.).

"*Avesta*" (Vend. I. 20, 76-78) about some nomads from the Volga living "without rule" and "not knowing the power of high authorities." Similarly statements about their sedentarization are dismissed as impossible under any circumstances and so ignored. Modern authors have also not warmly greeted Sarmatian attempts to illustrate their own mythology and epics without reference Greco-Roman traditions (Yatsenko 1996b; 2000b; 2000c) or to develop their own original attributes of power. Without any evident cause, these elements have been considered to be one more proof of their "backwardness".

Comparing Scythian and Sarmato-Alanian cultures scholars unintentionally use a "double standard." For example, the high percentage of Sarmatian women-warrior burials has been interpreted as a special archaism in their social organization, but scholars have refused to draw analogous conclusion for the Scythians! (Yatsenko 1994a: 202-203; pl. 1, 1). Cities and other stationary settlements of the Scythians, never mentioned before in a single source, have been properly identified and investigated. However, Sarmatian cities and numerous "Sarmatian settlements" repeatedly referred to by Plinius, Tacitus and Ptolemeos (Hippol. Port. Lib. Generat. 34) are believed to be phantoms, a result of "mistakes" done by ancient authors, confusion of their informants, etc., and they have never been looked for (Yatsenko 1994c: 69-70). As a result, only one early Alanian city, Zilgi in the North Caucasus (Ossetia) from the 2nd-4th centuries, has been investigated (Arzhantseva, Deopik, Malashev 2000: 211-250).

The original history of research of social structure and culture of the Sarmatians, and its peculiar "negative dependence" on "standard" conclusions made about the Scythians, has more than once been the subject of my special attention. This has resulted in a number of reports² and articles since 1990 on the social structure of the Sarmato-Alans (both recorded and archaeological ones). The resulting picture has turned out to be rather unexpected both for me and my fellow sarmatologists because it has undermined the generally accepted opinion that "records gave us extremely little evidence... as far as their public relations were concerned" (Moshkova 1988: 208). On the contrary, a detailed review of records (including all Greco-Roman and Armenian ones³) demonstrates that

² First of all it is a report "About Social-Political Development of the Sarmato-Alans" in the Scytho-Sarmatian department of the Institute of Archaeology in Moscow, 16.05.1990.

³ Widely spread for the last ten years, hypersepticism prevents the records from being actively used by archaeologist (and not only classic philologists and epigraphists). There is a point of view, that

there is considerable available evidence on Sarmatian social structure. In volume and quality it is equal to and sometimes even surpasses analogous data on the Scythians although it often needs additional analysis such as clearing up the sources of information, dating of the messages and their territorial localization (Yatsenko 1996a: 182-185).

In many respects these written sources on the Sarmatians are unique for early nomads on the whole. They include descriptions of an exceptionally wide variety of events and Sarmatian practices:

- (1) coronation ceremony (Plut. *De Fluv.* XIV. 3),
- (2) rulers' attributes and the special status of queens (Dio Chrys. *Orat. Borisph.* II.48; Polyæn. *Strat.* VIII.56),
- (3) brothers-rulers ("Kartlis tshovreba": Bazuk and Ambazuk and probably Ferosh and Kavtia; "the greatest kings of Aorsia" in Olbian inscription).
- (4) mobilization and training of women-warriors (Pomp. Melae. *De Chorogr.* I. 21. 5, 114; III. 4. 35),
- (5) regiments of professional warriors (P'austos Buzand. *History of Armenians.* III. 6-7),
- (6) general census of men-warriors ("Martyrdom of Sukuasyants"),
- (7) usage of battering-rums city sieges at the siege of the Armenian capital by Sanesan in 336 AD (P'austos Buzand III. 6),
- (8) city fortification of early nomads (Uspa of the Siracs) and about royal palaces of the Aorses (Tacit. *Annal.* XII. 17-18),
- (9) descriptions of a whole series of cities in the steppe, including names and even geographical co-ordinates (Ptol. *Geogr.* V. 8),

The Sarmatians also attracted attention as the first group of Eurasian nomads who had become at least partially converted to a "world religion", Christianity, at the turn of the II-III cc. AD. Tertullianus in particular mentions separate tribes, such as the Yazyges of the Danube, as among these converts (Tertul. *Adver. Iud.* VII). Because the Romans fought against the Sarmatians far more than the Greeks did against the Scythians, they describe their war customs at greater length (including battle tactics, the organization of raids, capture and ransom of captives, and the training of women-warriors).

Sarmatian rulers, or to be more exact the royal clan (Lucian. *Tox.* 51; Moses

the latter (as narrow specialists) are guaranteed against mistakes, and an archaeologist is not be able, if necessary, to consult a good epigraphist about the precise translation.

Khorenatsi. *History of Armenians* II. 50, 58) displayed great diplomatic activity in sending their ambassadors and interpreters to Rome itself and many remote countries. The languages of Sarmatian diplomacy were obviously both Latin and Greek as can be seen in the preserved letter from Eunonos of Aorses to Roman Emperor Claudius and the letters from Alanian king to Tiridatus III Armenian. When preparing wide-scale wars the nomads of Sarmatia formed alliances with many independent sedentary tribes at the end of the first and beginning of the second century AD in both the Caucasus ("Kartlis tshovreba") and in the Crimea (inscription of the tutor of Sauromatos I discovered in 1985 in Kerch (see Vinogradov 1994: text 15). The contribution of conquered peoples such as the Ozes in Central Europe (Tacit. *Germ.* 43) could also be added to the strength of their sedentary allies. Apparently, the income derived from captives ransom by their relatives played an important role in Sarmatian society as can be seen in a whole series of historical works from different periods (Ovannes Mamikonyan, *The History of Taron*; Dio Cass. *Hist. Rom.* LXXIII. 3; Ambros. *De Excid. Urb. Hieros.* V. 1). The comparison of recorded evidence from different countries with archaeological sources let reconstruct the ethno-political history of one "Late Sarmatian" ethnic group of between the second and fourth centuries in the North Caucasus (the Alans-Mascuts / Massagatae of Daghestan from flat country (Yatsenko 1998c: 86-95).

According to V. Abaev's observations, Sarmatian kings had titles, close to Scythian *ksais*, and the chieftains of smaller tribes and local princes – the title of *ardar* ("holding in a hand") (the latter may be compared to "scepter-holders" (Tacit. *Annal.* VI. 33)⁴; slaves were named *čagar*. Probably, originally free men-warriors were called "nobles" (Amm. Marc. *Res gestae.* XXXI. 2. 25), it was still kept preserved in most archaic communities in Ossetia in the 19th century (Bzarov 1994: 43). There is evidence about some social duties of Early Alans, for example, about "the second man after the king", "lying on the second place" and did not belong to the royal clan (Antony the Anachoret, *Martyrdom of Sukiasyans*) and about judges in communities, appointed out of experience warriors (Amm. Marc. *Res gestae.* XXXI. 2).

Determining the identity of social groups based on the archaeological

⁴ According to the data of the earliest Armenian agiography, the Alanian aristocrats, who got to the Armenia, "were glorious and powerful in their native land and belonged to the highest rank of the society and were the first in the battle" ("Martyrdom of Voskyans").

material such as artifacts from burials has proved difficult. E. Gorokhovskiy (1989: 19) subdivided Sarmatian burials into four types: princely, aristocratic, ordinary and poor. Up to the middle 1980s, sarmatologists were mostly interested in burials of ordinary shepherds, but recently there has been a renewed interest focusing on the publications of aristocratic barrows first studied at the end of the 19th and early 20th century. Excavations of last fifteen years have shown that the burials of Sarmatian kings were especially rich ones and often contained thousands of golden things in their hidden recesses even though practically all of them were at least partially destroyed or robbed.

In the report mentioned above, I offered the criteria of distinguishing partially robbed graves of royal families' representatives (Group 1)⁵ and high rank of aristocrats-*ardars* (Group 2)⁶ in the first through mid-second centuries. Group 1 burials were characterized by gold torques with zoomorphic images or seals the sets of imported silver dishes and oilstones in gold setting. Additionally such attributes as a belt and a sword richly decorated with gold, personal flags (*dachi*), horse harness with gold roundels, silver vessels of various types with images of local mytho-epic scenes, silver cups with zoomorphic handles were characteristic for men. For women in Group 1 there were gold diadems and bracelets with mythological plots, gold cups with a zoomorphic handle and toilet flasks. Group 2 burials for men contained belts and horse harnesses with gilded clasps and roundels and simple in décor gold bracelets, and swords with much more modest gold décor and imported bronze dishes. Group 2 tombs of aristocratic women contained plain diadems or torques with small gold elements, special scepters, amulet necklaces and a bag of amulets, single little idols, silver toilet flasks and rings. Most items were colored red. Characteristic of a whole the series of these noble women's burials were cult functions, including a large number of amulets and other cult attributes that were known only for the Sarmatians (Yatsenko 1986: 182-184). Such burials are especially characteristic for supposed wives of small tribes chiefs – *ardars* or "scepter-holders" (see in detail, Yatsenko 1994b: 85-86).

⁵ Dachi; Kosika, grave 1; Vysochino VII, barrow 28; Sadovy; Porogy; Zaporozhsky (men); Khokhlach; Kobyakovo, barrow 10; Migulinskaya; Nogaychin; Armavir, purchase of 1904; Tuzluky, barrow 2/1(women) should be referred to this group.

⁶ Nikolskoye, barrow 12; Kirsanovsky III, barrow 2; Volga-Chogray XXXVIII, barrow 1 (?); Grushka; Pervomaysky VII, barrow 14 (men); Sokolova Mogila; Chuguno-Krepinka, barrow 2; Sladkovka, barrow 14; Ust-Labinskaya, barrow 32 (women) are referred to group 2.

A large number of nicknames penetrated into Sarmatian centers and are known through the epigraphy of neighboring Greek cities. Such names (as preserved in Greek transcription) were evidently given to adults and reflected their social status, professional specialization, religious affiliation, etc. The nicknames of presumed professional warriors, sedentary craftsmen and traders are especially interesting (Yatsenko 1998b: 54-55). Their Finno-Ugrian neighbors took such Sarmatian words as "friend", "prince", "god", and words connected with military raids such as stallion, crossroads, to fear, sword, battle axe, etc. (Abaev 1981: 87-88).

The position of the woman in Sarmatian society was higher than in Scythian (which is proved through the absence of information about harems for the elite and repeated comments about their financial independence and the freedoms of married queens (Polyaen. *Strat.* VIII. 56; Dio Chrys. *Orat. Borisph.* II. 48) and fewer number of women-warriors in burials (when many Sarmatian women could not kill the sufficient number of enemies and stayed unmarried) (Yatsenko 2001). But there are no grounds to see these cultural elements as survivals of an early prehistoric stage. Rather such differences may bear witness to a different mentality and ethno-cultural tradition specific to the Sarmatians. It is interesting to note that the "Late Sarmatian" tribes (mid 2nd through the end of the 4th centuries AD) had a tradition of burying mostly old men of a definite status in barrows (Balabanova 2000: 206). The Sarmatians (to be more exact – the Alanians of the Lower Don region between the 2nd and 3rd centuries AD) brought into use the standard equipment of professional warriors (Bezuglov 1997: 137-138).

On the whole, the opinion about substantial social backwardness of *all* Sarmato-Alanian tribes if compared to European Scythians of 5th-4th centuries BC for example – is not confirmed. Nowadays it is clear that approximately every 100-150 years new groups of eastern migrants came into the region and brought substantial changes into the local social processes (Yatsenko 1998a: 146).

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THE DEVELOPMENT OF HIERARCHICAL STRUCTURES IN THE BRONZE AND EARLY IRON AGE SOCIETIES OF THE SOUTH OF EASTERN EUROPE

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Modern Russian archaeology is positively distinguished by its search for new methods in the study ancient societies that were previously regarded as late primitive. In particular, the sociocultural level of the Bronze and Early Iron Age societies of the steppe and forest-steppe Eurasia has been re-evaluated and they are now considered 'non-primitive'. This determination has been based on a number of subjective and objective circumstances. First of all, by the beginning of the 1980s traditional theories and new archaeological materials had become incompatible. The most vivid example of such materials include the Bronze Age sites of Sintashta and Arkaim where the barrow necropoli contained burials with chariots and some other prestigious materials, and the settlements were distinguished by radial planning structures and fortification systems (Gening et. al., 1992: 375-387; Zdanovich 1995: 21-42). In studying of such archaeological objects it has gradually become clear that the evidence indicates a considerably high level of sociocultural organization for these societies.

Another influence on the interpretation of the social level of the Bronze and Early Iron Age cattle breeders was the interest that scholars began to take since the 1950s in the works of Dumézil. His theories about the organization of early Indo-European and Indo-Iranian societies posited that their social structure was divided into three social classes: priests, warriors and commoners (1958). His work has significantly stimulated research on ethnosocial and ideological problems in the history of the Eurasian steppe communities during the 2nd-1st millennia BC. This has led to a more concrete

social interpretation of archaeological objects by many scholars (Khazanov 1974: 183-192; Kuz'mina 1974: 68-87; Smirnov, Kuz'mina 1977: 54-57; Raevsky 1977: 145-147), although such research did not completely prove his ideas (Medvedev 1997: 99-113).

The appearance of the whole new range of theories concerning ancient pastoral societies was also the product of achievements in the field of political anthropology. In particular, modern Russian scholars studying the theoretical problems of sociogenesis have worked out the significant terminology for the description of transitional stages between the primitive social system and early state society (complex society, early class society, chiefdom, early state) (Kubbel' 1988; Pavlenko 1989; Korotayev, Chubarov 1991; Kradin 1995; 2001; Kradin, Lynsha 1995; Popov 1997 etc.). Finally, many scholars began to re-evaluate traditional theories under the influence of the theory of civilizations, that has been actively influencing Russian social science since the end of the 1980s and has gradually replaced structural approaches.

Russian archaeologists were also involved into this process. Since the beginning of the 1990s they have been aspiring to use the fashionable new civilization terminology in studying the Bronze and Early Iron Age societies of the steppe and forest-steppe Eurasia, and thereby raise (or modernize) the level of their historical development. Unfortunately, this raising was often not the product of any new detailed source analysis. Rather it simply applied the label of 'civilization' and its derivatives to the ancient pastoral communities of this period even though all their features (as reconstructed by the same archaeologists) did not meet the generally accepted criteria for such a label. As a result, the label was applied before the theory behind it was proved. But as the development of the science shows, some time later such conclusions become more and more usual, transforming into axioms, though the normal procedure of its proof is absent or based on the obvious concept substitution.

The civilizational approach to the ancient societies of the Eurasian steppes was first used in Russian scholarship by A.I. Martynov who proposed the existence of a vivid Early Iron Age phenomenon he called the 'Scytho-Siberian unity' that constituted a special pastoral civilization of steppe nomads (1989:284-292 etc.). He tried to find the source of its origins in the previous epoch of the steppe Bronze Age cultures of the 2nd millennium BC. In his opinion, the Scythians, the Saka, the ancient Altai population, the Tagar and Ordos nomads undoubtedly had their own states. However, practically no one else in the field supported this bold idea, though his proposal caused a certain resonance in the discipline. In 1990 a special conference dedicated to this problem was held at the Department of the

Scytho-Sarmatian archaeology of the Russian Academic Archaeological Institute. There specialists in the field expressed an almost unanimous opinion based on strong evidence that the complex of original nomadic cultures of the steppe Eurasia in the Scytho-Sarmatian times were not ethnically or culturally unified and did not constitute a civilization (Soveshchanie 1993: 3). The scholars studying early civilizations also spoke against considering early nomadic communities as belonging to this historical stage (Bashilov 1993:36-36). In the Conference summary A.I. Martynov's conclusions were acknowledged to be the obvious overestimation of the sociopolitical level of 'the Scytho-Siberian world' and some scholars also expressed their reasonable doubts as to the existence of a 'Scythian civilization' (Zuev 1991: 58-63).

In spite of the cold reception to Martynov's proposals, the civilizational approach has nevertheless become prominent since the end of the 1980s and been applied to the Bronze Age steppe as well. An important reason for this was the sensational archaeological discoveries in Sintashta and Arkaim that led some researchers to declare that Sintashta - Arkaim type sites could be regarded as evidence of a 'protocivilization', 'proto-urban civilization', 'the ancient center of civilization', etc. (Gening etc. 1992; Zdanovich 1995: 35-42; 1997: 47-62; Zdanovich, Zdanovich 1995:48-62; Bochkarev 1995: 28-29 etc.). Some scholars even started to speak about the civilization processes in the Bronze Age pastoral communities of the Eurasian steppe and forest-steppe, even if it was a kind of 'civilization leap' that finished with 'unsuccessful civilization' (Pryakhin 1996: 3; Zdanovich 1995: 39-42). This trend has even led to the appearance of such word-monsters as "the Indo-European (Indo-Iranian) non-urban civilization of the paleometallic epoch of the Eurasian pastoral history-cultural province" (Malov 1995: 7-10). All this scientific word-building and scholarly competition among Russian archaeologists to define (in an almost obligatory fashion) the Bronze Age societies as 'civilizations' is not just a mere curiosity, but is evidence of an interesting scientific phenomenon, an attempt to work out a new research paradigm. However, it must correspond to the problems studied. For this reason we should examine (at least, briefly) the main approaches to the comprehension of a civilization. While there are as many as 300 definitions of the concept they fall into four types (Grinin 1998:10-13; Mchedlova 1999: 139-153).

1. The stadial approach in which civilization is regarded as the highest level of the development of human society and its culture that begins with the stage of class formation and rise of the state. This evolutionary approach is mainly based on the famous triad of 'savagery-barbarity-

civilization' suggested by such 19th century theorists as Lewis H. Morgan, Friedrich Engels and V. Gordon Childe.

2. The cultural approach in which civilization, or more precisely, civilizations, are types of cultures displaying unique systems of originality and style as used in the works of Oswald Spengler and Arnold Toynbee.
3. The normative approach in which civilization is viewed as the embodiment of the profane and material basis, as opposed to culture which is something mental and spiritual (Immanuel Kant and following German philosophers).
4. The 'French' usage in which the word *civilisation* is applied to culture irrespective of its level of complexity (Littre 1889: 670). This has allowed French scholars to easily find such things as 'the forest civilization', 'the bow civilization', 'the spear civilization', 'the granary civilization' in the tropical Africa (Maquet 1970).

In modern Russian archaeological literature employs both the enlarged comprehension of civilization ('the French' style) and the stadial approach. Some scholars also try to find the archaeological features of civilization in the local Bronze Age cultures, though this problem is not studied in the detailed way in scientific articles.

There are some general criteria for the definition of early civilization and many of these can be recognized archaeologically. Commonly, the famous triad includes: (1) rise of cities; (2) monumental secular and temple architecture; (3) a script system (Kluckhohn 1960; Renfrew 1972). This list of diagnostic civilization features may be expanded, however all these features characterize more the cultural complex of civilization. The inner socio-economical nature of this phenomenon is the rise of class society and state (Masson 1989: 9). Using the archaeological approach we can identify the concrete types of archaeological objects containing the information needed. However, it is more difficult to find the sources that could be comparable by their main features. These can be:

1. settlement patterns indicating the social and spatial organization of ancient communities;
2. prevailing settlement types containing miscellaneous demographic and social information;
3. dwelling dimensions that are determined by such important social factors as the type and structure of family;
4. differences in tomb construction dimensions that denote social heterogeneity;
5. location of prestigious burials in the burial site structures and separate barrows.

All these are well-fixed details that can be easily measured and compared.

Certainly, the settlement structures marked out by the means of modern spatial archaeology (Clark 1977) may be considered the most important ones for our research. The stage of the civilization in formation can be distinguished by the rise and progress of multi-level social organization (Carneiro 1967: 234-243). This is indicated by a certain (bi-, tripartite) settlement hierarchies within an archaeological micro-region. This was first observed by McAdams while studying the settlement system around Uruk (McAdams and Nissen 1972). In fact, the vertical social structures should correspond to horizontal ones, i.e. the settlement hierarchy indicated archaeologically (Johnson 1986: 92-103). As we know, without an hierarchical organization a complicated social system is unable to react adequately in response to external influences or internal stresses and finally starts to break up. At present, the degree of the hierarchy is often used as an important unit for measuring the social complexity. As some scholars suppose, the transition from the two-level settlement system, characteristic for chiefdoms, to the three- and four-level ones can be regarded as the evidence of the state organization appearance (Johnson 1986: 98-100; Antonova 1998: 122-126).

The research of the Middle and Late Bronze Age settlements in the steppe and forest- steppe demonstrates that economically and politically they were quite independent from each other (I don't mean seasonal stands). They were approximately similar in their internal structure and actually formed the united administrative level. More or less significant features of the hierarchical progress in social systems of the Bronze Age of Southern Russia are still unknown. Such hierarchy is not found in 'the Land of the Cities' of the Southern Urals (17-16th centuries BC), where the most 'progressive' community existed, according to modern data.

The development of hierarchical settlement structures is fixed quite distinctly in the East European forest-steppe beginning with the 7-6th centuries BC when hundreds of big and small fortified sites along with a number of satellite settlements appear all over the Eastern Europe (Medvedev 1992: 59-60; Boyko 1994: 30-31 etc.). Almost all of them, together with accompanying burial sites, form quite distinct archaeological micro-regions that probably indicate the territory of particular chiefdoms (Medvedev 1996: 14). This is one of the most clear and mass features of the non-primitive character of the Early Iron Age societies.

This analyzed feature is closely connected with another one, namely the settlement types and dimensions that contain not only of quantitative demographic indices, but also qualitative social ones. Since the work of

V. Gordon Childe (1950: 9), settlements in which more than 5000 people could live have been called the urban. Although this criterion is hardly indisputable, a better one has still not been suggested. And using this definition we cannot find any 'cities' ('urban settlements') in the Middle and Late Bronze Age. Even the settlements of the Arkaim type do not reach this level. In area they do not exceed 2-3 ha and their maximal population has been estimated only at 2-2.5 thousand people (Zdanovich 1995: 35). In addition, the dwellings of Arkaim are all very similar in dimensions and planning. They surround the central square without any traces of administrative or sacral center characteristic of cities (Medvedev 1999: 124-128). Most probably, the institutionalization of authority that was separated from masses and having its own residences and attributes was not completed there. Moreover, there are no range differences among separate fortified settlements in this 'Land of the Cities' (Berezkin 1995a: 38). The area of even the largest Bronze Age settlements here rarely exceeds 1-2 ha, and a population - 100-200 people (Gryaznov 1953: 146; Pryakhin 1993: 14 etc.). The exception is presented only by agricultural settlements of the Sabatinovka culture of the Black Sea region that encompass areas between 5-18 ha (Sharafutdinova 1982: 42).

The situation changes significantly in the Early Iron Age of the Eastern Europe. In the 7-6th centuries BC the forest-steppe saw the construction of hundreds of well-fortified sites, which sometimes considerably exceeded the minimal quantitative index of Vir Gordon Childe. The giant fortified town-sites, such as Matroninskoe (200 ha), Trakhtemirovskoe (500 ha), Nemirovskoe (1000 ha), Bolshoe Hodosovskoe (2000 ha), and of course the famous Bel'skoe (4000 ha) appear in the Dnieper region. For instance, the Bel'skoe could have been populated by at least 40-50 thousand people (Shramko 1984: 225). Such concentration of people required completely new administrative (actually, political) structures, different from the traditional primitive ones.

Large fortified sites also appear in the steppe beginning in the second half of the 5th century BC. These include the well-known Kamenskoe and Elizavetovskoe fortified sites that not only engaged in trade and handicrafts but also served as administrative centers of certain regions of Scythia. From any point of view, when compared with those from the Bronze Age these fortified sites of the Scythian epoch objectively testify a qualitative new level of societal development, containing powerful authoritative structures that demonstrate the ability of the these societies to complete giant works. The archaeological indication of these structures consist of aristocratic burial sites containing 'royal' barrows (Chertomlyk, Oguz, "P'jat Brat'jev".) and are located near steppe fortified sites. These barrows can be regarded as the

obvious index of power concentration in hands of the Scythian kings and their subordinate nobles. The dimensions of their barrows are much bigger even than the similar burials of later nomadic emperors of the Middle Ages. Certainly, these archaeological objects are vivid evidence of the existence of nomadic super complex chiefdoms gradually turning into early states.

Finally, we should describe one more type of archaeological source that sensitively reflects a society's level, namely the absence or presence of social stratification. This can be observed in the barrow burial sites that are the most widespread and probably best researched archaeological objects in the Eurasian steppe and forest-steppe. Since the 1970s specialists in the Bronze Age history have been speaking about social differentiation and stratification, estate division of the Bronze Age societies, existence of the social groups or even estates of priests, chariot warriors (chariot aristocracy) and cattle breeding commoners (Kuz'mina 1974: 85; Matveyev 1991: 117-119; Tsimidanov 1996: 79-81; Zdanovich, 1995: 46; Sinyuk, 1996: 293-323 etc.). Some scholars have reported finding in the Russian steppe all the features of *varna* and even caste system of Indian type (Pustovalov 1995: 21-32 etc.).

However, while studying this problem I found out that the problem of the existence of social groups and even estates in the pastoral communities of the 2nd millennium BC is not so clear and obvious as many archaeologists write (Medvedev 1997: 165-171). As examples I would question the assertion that difference between the series of prestigious burials belonging to chariot warriors are proof of their organization into the certain estate. The presence of social parameters in a burial is not enough for defining the social status. It is necessary to ascertain the connection of these parameters and the spatial structure of other burial sites or even among individual barrows. Only by such a strict comparisons can we speak about individuals belonging certain corporative group (Akishev 1999: 29).

Specialists in the field of the Early Iron Age nomadic cultures are aware of not only the royal necropoli of Chertomlyk and Solokha ("Herros" of Herodotus), but also of warrior burial sites that contain barrows from the Scythian period along the Sula River and the Middle Don and the 'the Golden Cemetery' of the Sarmatian epoch in Kuban (Il'yinskaya 1968; Gushchina, Zaset'skaya 1994; Medvedev 1999). In these warrior burial sites only 50 per cent of those buried (practically all of whom are men) really had attributes of warriors such as arms or armor. As a rule, they were buried individually in separate barrows, forming big burial sites consisting of tens and sometimes hundreds of barrows. It is quite possible then that we can fix the existence of professional warriors and warrior aristocracy in pastoral societies to the beginning of the Scythian epoch. For an estate division of society to exist, social groups must distinguish individuals by their ascribed

social positions that are fixed by custom, religion, and later law (Kubbel' 1986: 190-191). It is well known that in the historic estate societies (*varna*, caste, etc.), members of different estates were usually buried in separate necropoli or different parts of a single cemetery. For example, the Athenian aristocratic *eupatrides* were buried in a special necropolis apart from the ordinary people (*demos*) (Yaylenko 1990: 19). Similarly, one of the main attributes of the Roman patrician class was their common burial place that included a *gentilius tumulus* or the gentile barrow (Suet., *Tib.*, I, 1).

It appears that even the most significant Bronze Age burial sites that have been examined in a very detailed way (such as Sintashta-Potapovka) fail to meet completely this important criterion because they contain burials of both commoners and chariot warriors. Moreover, within the same barrow prestigious and ordinary burials were almost everywhere combined, a pattern that is usually regarded as the evidence of their common relationship or membership in the same family or clan social group. In some barrows the most prestigious burials (those with the largest dimensions and prestigious material) were situated in the central part and the ordinary ones were at periphery, but in other cases the socially prestigious burials were found mixed among the peripheral ones. From my point of view, these facts can be regarded as the evidence of a certain social homogeneity of within the communities that left these barrows because the tombs contained people of both high and common social status. One reason for this was that rank and prestige appear not to have been permanently inherited. Thus the later descendents (or other relatives) whose grave goods indicate they were of low social status reused older barrows created initially to bury their more highly ranked ancestors. Similarly there are cases in which the main burial could belong to an ordinary community-member (without any special material) while one of the later periphery burials belonged to a representative of a higher social level. For these reasons it appears that the pastoral communities of the Middle Bronze Age were distinguished only by the rank institutions, as testified by the differences between the material in burials of chariot warriors and ordinary cattle breeders. They never reached the level of social isolation characteristic of the aristocracy burial sites.

Thus, the diachronic research of the Bronze and Early Iron Age communities of the South of the Eastern Europe demonstrates quite considerable structural differences between them. Certainly, the Early Iron Age societies had more complex sociopolitical organization than the Bronze Age ones. They were distinguished by the rise of a certain settlement hierarchy within local micro-regions and the presence of very large fortified settlements that were the focus of trade, handicrafts and administration. They had widespread dwellings for a small patriarchal family, and constructed

separate necropoli for the warrior aristocratic elite. This aristocratic elite's domination over the Scythians is clearly confirmed by Greco-Roman written sources (Herod., II, 167; Ps.-Hyp., De aere, 22, 30; Luc., Scyth., 1, 3, 5; Athen., XII, 27). Moreover, these sources also testify the presence of the Scythian state system with ruling royal dynasty (Khazanov 1975: 149-179). The development of this royal institution is reliably confirmed not only by the Greco-Roman tradition but also by iconographic images of carnivores (often in the typical heraldic positions) that were authority symbols in early chiefdoms and states (Berezkin 1995b) and, of course, by the Greco-Scythian anthropomorphic art and numismatic materials (Raevsky 1977: 145-171). The presence of quite complex authority structures not only in the steppe, but also in the forest-steppe is indicated by Herodotus' passage concerning 'kings' of the Budini, Geloni, Melanchleni, etc. who participated in the famous military council during the Scytho-Persian war (Herod., IV, 102, 119). The barrows of the local forest-steppe nobility, found from the Middle Don region in the East to the right bank of the Dnieper in the West, testify to the same thing because this material is completely different from the culture of ordinary fortified site population (including even its ceramic complex) (Medvedev 1999: 117). It's quite possible that the politogenesis models of the Scytho-Sarmatian period were directed towards forming of the early state system. Archaeologically it becomes apparent in the formation of a special elite subculture.

However, even given this complexity of Iran Age steppe pastoralists, I still would not necessarily accept the existence of a Scythian civilization in its stadial sense. By its nature a pastoral society did not need such complicated control systems such as those known for the earliest river civilizations. The written and ethnographic sources indicate the absence of original script systems among the majority of pastoral nations and that knew only primitive sign systems (e.g. *tamga*) (Drachuk 1975). Probably, the same can be said about the culture of the earlier Bronze Age cattle breeders, though some modern scholars, in spite of the lack of evidence, insist on the emergence of writing in pastoral societies of the 2nd millennium BC (Häusler 1985: 1-9; Harmatta 1990: 124-127; Pryakhin 1999: 103) and even find in some signs the analogues of the Near East proto- and early alphabetic script systems.

The expressed opinions on the sociocultural level of the pastoral societies of the 2nd millennium BC and nomads of the 1st millennium BC should not be regarded as the absolute truth. These are just the results of the author's search and discussions with his colleagues who are specialists in the Bronze Age cultures. However, the approach described has some advantages in comparison with the civilizational and ethnological ones. By comparing

these societies instead of treating them as isolates and avoiding a static approach we can discern the deep, qualitative differences between them. This can be accomplished by making typological or stadial distinctions to see that there are two types of the development for nomadic societies, especially because there is no direct link between them because of the historical disjuncture that accompanied various catastrophes during the transition from the Bronze to the Early Iron Age. But it seems to me that these two models of social organization can demonstrate two stages in the development of ancient pastoral nomadic societies with obvious features of the hierarchical and early state structure formation.

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PENETRATION OF NOMADS TO THE ARABIAN SOUTH AND FORMATION OF TRIBAL ORGANIZATION AMONG THE NORTH-EAST YEMEN AGRICULTURAL POPULATION*

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In the second half of the 1st millennium CE the North-East Yemen political system consisting of a weak state in its center and strong chiefdoms on its periphery (see, e.g., Korotayev 1996) appears to have been transformed into a system consisting of a bit stronger state in its centre and true tribes (but not chiefdoms)¹ (see, e.g., Robin 1982b; Dresch 1989:191).² Within this system the tribes and state constituted one well integrated whole (Obermeyer 1982; Dresch 1982; 1984b; 1989; 1991; Abu: Ghani: 1985:98–138; 1990; vom Bruck 1993; 1996; Kropp 1994).

There does not seem to be any grounds to consider this transformation as "degeneration", "regress", or "decline", as there was no significant loss of the general system complexity and elaboration; one complex political system was transformed into another one, structurally different, but not less complex, highly organized and sophisticated.

A significant influence on the tribal organization genesis among the South Arabian agricultural populations appears to have been made by North Arab nomadic tribes who were in close contact with South Arabia during all its late pre-Islamic and Early Islamic history (Chelhod 1970; 1975; 1979; 1985:45–46; al-Hadi: thi: 1978:68, 81–96; Hoefner 1959;

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Robin 1982b:29; 1984:213, 221; 1991d; Wilson 1989:16; von Wissmann 1964a:181–3, 195–6, 403–6; 1964b:493).

There does not seem to be much doubt that the influence of political culture of nomadic North Arab tribes played a considerable role in the formation of high-status "tribal" agricultural population in North-East Yemen. Their important contribution here seems to have been constituted by the fact that they appear to have brought to the Arabian South what could be called the "genealogical culture". The ancient South Arabian communities, *sha`bs*, were emphatically territorial communities lacking any elaborate genealogies:

"In strong contrast to the North Arabian practice of recording long lists of ancestors (attested also for the pre-Islamic period in the Safaitic inscriptions), E[pigraphic] S[outh] A[rabian] nomenclature consisted simply of given-name plus name of the social grouping (usually the *bayt*), with optional insertion of the father's given-name, but never any mention of an ancestor in any higher degree. One is irresistably reminded of the remark attributed to the caliph `Umar, 'Learn your genealogies, and be not like the Nabataeans of Mesopotamia who, when asked who they are, say "I am from such-and-such a village", which Ibn Khaldun quotes with the very significant comment that it is true also of the populations of the fertile tracts of Arabia... [The] *qabi:la...* [is] fundamentally kinship-based and totally different in nature from the *sha`b...* In the Qur'a:n (49:13) *ja`alna:-kum shu`u:b^{am} wa-qaba:'il^a* clearly refers to two different types of social organization, and Ibn Khaldun when speaking of the settled populations of Arabia is careful to use the word *shu`u:b* and not *qaba:'il*, reserving the latter for the nomads" (Beeston 1972a:257–258; see also: Beeston 1972b:543; Ryckmans J. 1974:500; Robin 1982a, I; 1982b &c).

In early Islamic times, under the influence of northern Arabian tribal culture which acquired the highest prestige in the Muslim world, many southern Arabian *sha`bs*, while remaining essentially territorial (Dresch 1989; Serjeant 1989:XI), were transformed into *qaba:'il*, tribes structured formally according to genealogical principles.

* * *

It seems necessary to mention that the "qabilization" of some Sabaeen *sha`bs* appears to have already begun in the pre-Islamic period. The most remarkable document is represented here by inscription Fa 74, dated (lines 6–12) to the month of *dhu:-Madhra'a:n* of year 614 according to the Himyarite Era, which was believed to correspond to July 499 CE, though now it seems more likely to be 504 CE (depending on the solution of the Himyarite Era beginning, see, e.g., de Blois 1990; Shahi:d 1994;

Kitchen 1994; Robin 1996a; 1996b; Robin *et al.* 1999). The 6th line of this inscription denotes *SB' KHL*ⁿ as *`s²rt*. It seems necessary to mention here that in the 2nd and 3rd centuries CE *SB' KHL*ⁿ was the "central" *sha`b* of the Sabaean cultural-political area, whose core was constituted by the civil-temple community of the Sabaean capital, Ma:rib, which already in that time had a rather special socio-political organization that differed considerably from the one of the rest of the Sabaean *sha`bs* (see, e.g. Loundine 1973a; 1973b; Korotayev, 1994a; 1996: Chapter III etc.); however, at that time this community was quite consistently denoted only as *s²b*, but never as *`s²rt* (Ja 653, 1; 735, 1; Sh 7/1; 8/1 etc.). At the meantime the term *`s²rt* (corresponding to the Arab designation of a clan-tribal group of a certain level, *`ashi:rah*) was used in the Sabaic inscriptions to designate just the Arab "genealogical" tribes, *qaba:il*, which differed fundamentally from the South Arabian territorial *sha`bs* (Beeston 1972a:257–258; 1972b:543; Ryckmans J. 1974b:500; Piotrovsky 1985:53, 69 etc.). It seems necessary to mention that well before Islam in the Internal Lowlands the *sha`bs* appear not to have been so absolutely "antigenealogical" as the Highland *sha`bs* (Robin 1979; 1982b). In addition to this, the *sha`b* Saba' Kahla:n was one of the first to experience the influence of the "qabilization" processes, which could be easily explained to a considerable extent by the position of Ma:rib at the border of the internal desert. i.e. in one of the South Arabian zones which in the 1st millennium CE were objects of the most intensive infiltration on the part of the nomadic Arabs.

It appears necessary to stress that there is some direct evidence regarding the integration of some Arabs into the *sha`b* Saba' in the 6th century CE. E.g., Ry 507 (July 523 CE – line 10) mentions certain *TMMⁿ bn M`Dⁿ d-QSMLT SB'Yⁿ*, "Tami:m, the son [of the clan] Qasmalat, the Sabaean" (line 12). As has been convincingly shown by Piotrovsky (1985:54–57), this Tami:m is of the Arab origins – from the bedouin tribe Qasmalah (= al-Qasa:mil) from the Najra:n region; at the meantime *SB'Yⁿ* is nothing else but a very clear designation of one's affiliation to the *sha`b* Saba' (Beeston 1978a:14).

* * *

On the other hand, the transformation of territorial *sha`bs* into "genealogical" tribes was also the result of the southern Arabians' intense effort aimed at developing their own genealogies, as well as their passionate (and quite successful) struggle for the recognition of their genealogies by the Arab elite. In this way they were able to attain quite high positions in the dominant Arab ethnoses within the early Islamic state in the 7th – the middle of

the 8th centuries (Piotrovskiy 1977, 1985). Within this context one should keep in mind that the Yemenis managed to achieve something which was not achieved by almost anybody else (with very rare exceptions):

"With the conquests, the Arabs found themselves in charge of a huge non-Arab population. Given that it was non-Muslim, this population could be awarded a status similar to that of clients in Arabia, retaining its own organization under Arab control in return for the payment of taxes... But converts posed a novel problem in that, on the one hand they had to be incorporated, not merely accommodated, within Arab society; and on the other hand, they had 'FORGOTTEN THEIR GENEALOGIES'³, suffered defeat and frequently also enslavement, so that they did not make acceptable *hali:fs*; the only non-Arabs to be affiliated as such were the Hamra.' and Asa:wira, Perian soldiers who deserted to the Arabs during the wars of conquest in return for privileged status... It was in response to this novel problem that Islamic walā' [i.e. the system of incorporating non-Arabs into Islamic society as dependent low-status *mawa:li*: – A.K.] was evolved" (Crone 1991:875).

It is amazing that such a highly-qualified specialist in early Islamic history as Crone managed to overlook another (and much more important!) exception; the Yemenis (most of whom do not seem to have belonged to the Arab proto-ethnos by the beginning of the 7th century AD). The possible explanation here might be that Yemeni efforts aimed at persuading the Arabs that southern Arabians had always been Arabs, were as Arab as the Arabs themselves,⁴ or even more Arab than the Arabs (*al-`arab al-`a:ribah* as distinct from *al-`arab al-musta`ribah* [e.g. Piotrovskiy 1985:67; Shahid 1989:340–341; Robin 1991:64 &c]) turned out to be so successful that they managed to persuade not only themselves and the Arabs (see, e.g., Ibn al-Kalbi: 1966, I:40–1), but the Arabists as well. At the meantime it appears necessary to maintain that notwithstanding all the evident differences between the Yemenis and the above mentioned Persian soldier groups (suffice to recollect the fact that in the Early Islamic Epoch the total number of the Yemenis was quite comparable with the total number of all the Arabs taken together), a certain resemblance between those two cases may still be observed.

Like the above mentioned Persian soldiers, the Yemenis appear to have managed to get integrated into the Early Islamic society as its full status members to a considerable extent because just at that time the Islamic society experienced an especially acute need in the military power, whereas the Yemenis constituted a sizeable part of many Islamic armies, and in some Islamic armies the Yemenis constituted the majority.

"One reads that the warriors of [the early Islamic conquests] were northerners... It now seems very doubtful that they were predominantly northerners, let alone exclusively so, for the manpower required for such speedy and vigorous military campaigns was to be found only in the Yemen. The Yemen of the 1st/7th century, like the Yemen of today, was the only area of the Arabian Peninsula of sufficient population density to provide large numbers of troops. What is more, we are not simply talking of the other ranks. The presence of vast numbers, often in the majority, of Yemenis participating in the great Islamic conquests of the 1st/7th century in predominantly tribal companies from the highest to the lowest rank is amply attested and, what is more, they were seasoned fighters, not any raw recruits. It follows also that great numbers of those Yemenis participating in the conquests settled in the territories which they helped to conquer" (Smith 1990:134; a brilliant factological justification for the statements above could be found in al-Mad'aj 1988:69–70, 86–8, 123–5, 127, 132, 140–3).

Of course, if we remain realists, we should admit that the Yemenis did manage to integrate so smoothly into the Early Islamic society (and the Arab ethnos) as its full status members (and not low status *mawa:li:*) not because their genealogies looked so convincing, but rather because of the extremely important role played by the Yemeni warriors in the Islamic conquests.⁵ It seems to have been just the extreme importance of the Yemeni regiments that made the Arabs get persuaded that their brothers in arms are as Arab as themselves (and, hence, that the genealogies which the Yemenis claimed were as solid and authentic as the Arab genealogies). To consistently insist on non-Arab origins of the Yemenis, on invalidity of their would mean to alienate military powerful forces, which was counterproductive for any major Arab faction of the Early Islamic society; and that is why any such faction could not afford such a luxury.

In any case, as a result of the processes specified above the main mass of the agricultural population of the Northern Highlands found themselves in possession of deep, ancient (and quite veritable even from the point of view of the Northern Arabs) genealogies, which provided quite a strong "ideological" basis for the struggle by this population for the preservation of their high social status.

The "genealogical ideology" (the representation of the tribes and their confederations as descendants of certain eponym ancestors tied by kinship relations) turned out to provide also a suitable basis for the development of the tribal political culture, assisting in the working out of the mechanisms of flexible interaction of the tribal entities of various levels.

Thus, the North Arabian nomadic tribes appear to have influenced significantly the formation of the "tribal ethos" among the agricultural population of North-East Yemen.

NOTES

1. Thus, according to Dresch in al-Hamda:n's time (the 10th century AD) "Upper Yemen may well have been in a state of transition from a quasi-feudal system to the tribal one" (Dresch 1989: 191); similar conclusions have been produced by Gochenour (1984a: 36ff.). the medieval political system of North-East Yemen (as well as the Middle Sabaean political system [the 2nd and 3rd centuries AD]) included in addition to state and tribes (of course, not chiefdoms as it was in the Middle Sabaean case) some other important elements. It seems sufficient to mention here the "religious aristocracy" (*sayyid/sa:dah*), tracing their descent to Muhammad, and performing in the tribal areas e.g. important mediating political roles, as usual without occupying there any formal political functions and remaining mainly outside the tribal (and in many cases state) hierarchy (Serjeant 1977; Chelhod 1970a: 80–81; 1975: 70–71; 1979: 58f.; Gerholm 1977: 123; Stookey 1978: 95; Obermeyer 1982: 36–37; Dresch 1984b: 159f.; 1989: 140–145; Abu:Gha:nim 1985: 212–227; 1990). Within the medieval North-East Yemen political system the *sayyids* appear to have taken some functions of the pre-Islamic (or, to be more correct, pre-monotheistic) system of temple centers, on the one hand, and ones of the *qayls*, on the other (though, unlike the *qayls*, the political leaders of the pre-Islamic *sha'b*, the *sayyids* in most cases did not act as formal political leaders of the North Yemen *qabi:lah*). "The true source of political power lies with the tribal leaders who will accept no control from their peers. The solution to this impasse was worked out even prior to Islam by the evolution of the organization centered upon the sacred enclave, managed by an hereditary religious aristocracy respected and protected by the tribes" (Serjeant 1977: 244).
2. In the meantime in the Southern Highlands (in the former Himyarite area) there persisted more regular state structures (see e.g. Dresch 1989: 8–15, 192).
3. The emphasis is mine. This is simply to draw attention again to the important role of the possession of valid genealogies for one's integration in the Early Islamic society as its full-right member – A.K.
4. And these efforts were by no means senseless, as some Arabs for some time refused to recognize the Arab identity of the Yemenis (e.g. Piotrovskiy 1985:67).
5. Of course, one should not also forget here such important factors as the basic cultural (including linguistic) proximity of the Arabs and Yemenis, the intensive contacts between the South Arabian civilization and the Northern Arabs during all the time of its existence, a significant degree of the arabization of Yemen prior to Islam (due to infiltration to the area of considerable groups of Arabs) &c.

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MODES OF POLITOGENESIS AMONG THE TSWANA OF SOUTH AFRICA

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From a researcher's point of view the modern Tswana are divided among the Tlaping, Rolong, Kwena, Kgatla, Kgalagadi, Tawana, Hurutshe, Gwaketse, Ngwato, Tlokwa, and Maletse. Groups of Kgalagadi speak dialects that may be classed as forming a distinct language but all languages and dialects of the Sotho-Tswana group are mutually intelligible. The term Tswana originates from Isikhosa language where it signifies, collectively, any Bantu ethnic group of inner parts of Southern Africa (Tlou, Campbell 1984: 62-68; Schapera 1943: 13-15, 23-25; 1955: 1-7).

Three-fourths of the Tswana live in the Botswana regions of South Africa (predominantly in Transvaal). Kwena are the dominant group among the southern Sotho (RSA). Setswana, the state language of Botswana belongs to the Kwena linguistic group. About 80 % of the Botswana population speak Setswana, which serves as the language of education and mass media. The Bible has been translated to Rolong dialect. Ngwato dialect (in the northern regions in its Setawana form) and is also widely used in Botswana. About 40 % of the Botswana population also speak English, which is the second state language (The Tswana of Southern Africa; Tlou, Campbell 1984: 57-62).

Traditional Tswana society was based on the paternalistic principles and cults of ancestors (*badimo*). *Badimo* were thought to influence behavior of the living to a great extent. Tswana were structured into lineages, sublineages and local communities. The traditional councils (*kgotla*) regulated (and still regulate) various aspects of local social life up to the present (Schapera 1970: 18-25, The Tswana of Southern Africa).

The origins of the modern Tswana ethnic groups may be traced through their oral traditions back to the beginning of the 13th century when the

Sotho-Tswana ethnolinguistic entity emerged in the western Transvaal (Highveld) and southern Botswana. The ethnic groups that constituted this entity were agriculturalists and knew iron working. Their numbers in Botswana at that time were relatively small and they regularly mixed with the San (Bushmen) and Khoe aboriginal populations. Ceramics of the historically known Tswana groups is typologically similar to the ceramics from the western Transvaal of the period beginning about AD 1200. The groups that produced these ware belonged to the tradition of the South African Later Iron Age people (Tlou, Campbell 1984: 57-62; Phillipson 1977: 198-206). The ethnosocial processes stemming from this period led to the formation of the five groups of the modern Tswana ethnic entities. They are:

1. Kgalagadi (including Bakwateng, Bangologa, Babolaongwe, Baphaleng, and Bashaga): These groups arrived first at the southern outskirts of the Kalahari, from whence their generic name was derived. It is interesting that the rest of the Tswana groups call Bakgalagadi only by their generic term (i.e. "People of the Desert"), and some of the Transvaal Tswana still call all Tswana of the Botswana "Bakgalakgadi". Thus "Bakgalagadi" is not an endo-ethnonym, but rather a derisive exo-ethnonym (Tlou, Campbell 1984: 68).
2. Bafokeng, including Badigoya: According to oral tradition they trace their formation (splitting from the ancestor group) back to about AD 1150.
3. Groups of the western Botswana, including Bahurutshe (Bahurutse) and Bakwena: According to oral tradition their formation period can be traced from around AD 1220. Later from Bakwena detached Bamangwato and from the latter, in their turn, Batawana split out.
4. Southern Tswana, including Barolong: time of splitting AD 1150.
5. Bakgatla, including Bapedi of the northern and eastern Transvaal. Time of splitting around AD 1400. Traditions of Bakgatla say that once they were single people with Bahurutshe and Bakwena (Tlou, Campbell 1984: 60).

The traditional way of life and social organization of the Tswana peoples of the 19th century may be described as follows. Tswana that lived in the highveld of the eastern part of the country (Botswana) could grow stable crops of cereals and Curcubitae and lead settled way of life. These included the Bakgatla, Bahurutshe, Batlokwa and part of the Bakwena (Bakwena ba ga Mogopo) (Tlou, Campbell 1984: 71-72). They lived in large settlements of up to 2000 or more persons often encircled by the stone walls. The archaeological evidence of such walls in the Transvaal goes back to the fifteenth century AD (Phillipson 1977: 198-202; Tlou, Campbell 1984: 71). The above named Tswana groups also gathered *veldkos* (wild plants) in times

of droughts and organized long (up to several months) hunting journeys, bringing back to major villages dried meat, skins and during the last third of the 19th century ivory and ostrich feathers.

Among the southern Tswana (Barolong, Bahlaro and Batlaping) hunting was somewhat more important than among their eastern Botswana relatives. Western Botswana groups such as the Bakwena ba go Kgapo, Bangwaketse, Bamangwato and Batawana "relied on hunting and grew a few quick crops such as beans and melons, and gathered wild plants" (Tlou, Campbell 1984: 71; Schapera 1943: 26-33). The range of the hunting expeditions of the western Tswana was exceptionally large. The Batawana who controlled the Ngami region since 1795, for example, hunted and grazed cattle in summer as far as around Karakuwisa (Namibia), more than 300 kilometers west of Ngami Lake at the beginning of the 20th century. Actually though this grazing and hunting was done by the Batawana's Herero clients (Wilmsen 1989: 134).

The backbone of the social and political structure of all Tswana societies was the *merafe*, the ruling homes with attached side lineages of relatives. Heads of the *merafe* (it is a plural form in the Setswana language, while *morafe* is a singular) were the Kgosi chiefs of the ruling patrilineages. Direct lines of Kgosi formed ruling elite. If members of the *merafe* became discontented with a certain chief's policies they could split off and resettle under the guidance of another member of the ruling home (assuming of course that the latter was also dissatisfied with the chief's decisions). Such groups were self-designated among the Tswana group as "Bakaa," which literally means in the Rolong dialect "they may go" (Tlou, Campbell 1984: 67). This system of a political splitting is similar to the situation found among Polynesian chiefs whose younger brothers regularly sailed off in search of uninhabited islands (see Kullanda 1992). In both cases the necessary condition for the splitting was the availability of free lands (islands). The outskirts of the Kalahari in 13-18th centuries were thus analogous to that of the unexplored vastness of the Pacific.

In some aspects of ritual activities the politically autonomous *merafe* who split still kept their hierarchical bonds with the mother *merafe* if the members of both lived close enough to each other (Schapera 1943: 3). It is worth mentioning that oral tradition gives at least one example of a female chief (Mohurutshe of the 16th century), although other such cases were not reported ethnographically. At the same time it is well known that among at least in one Nguni group (Swazi) women frequently were ruling queens. All this makes possible the analytical reconstruction of the probable transformations of power succession systems among various historical Sotho-Tswana groups, but that is a task for future research.

The *Kgosi* was the unconditional ruler of his *morafe* unless they split away from him. He performed the rituals of rainmaking, served as the chief judge, personified the power of the army and the health of the people, and was the supreme owner of the cattle and the land of all *morafe* members. No important decision in the political life could be carried out without his consent (Schapera 1943: 40-45). In his rule secret advisers (*khudutamaga*) assisted a *Kgosi*. They could condemn someone to death publicly together with the chief, but also secretly as well, the execution being carried out by the members of the chief's guard (usually during a hunting expedition) (Tlou, Campbell 1984: 78).

Since the *Kgosi* was the supreme owner of *morafe's* cattle he could allocate large herds to his relatives who, in their turn, redistributed cattle among their own relatives, retainers and commoners. A commoner having shown disrespect to the ruling family could be stripped of his cattle. A member of *morafe* possessing large herd of cattle might lend some animals to his clients. This system of clientship was called *mafisa*. Peoples who received cattle were obligated to help the patron with herding and agriculture and "supported him in trouble, fought for him and even provided domestic service in his home" (Tlou, Campbell 1984: 72). The client benefited in that he could keep for himself and his family milk and newborn calves. Among *mafisa* clients were San as well, who in addition could serve as scouts and warn the Tswana of an approaching enemy.

Among Tswana there was stratification not only by the genealogical closeness to the ruling family, but by richness as well, which was measured by cattle possession. Cattle served as a vital contribution accompanying any important social event or transaction, such as marriage, birth, circumcision, disease cure, funeral etc.

Strata inside *morafe* were quite tangible and all Tswana societies were vertically organized and paternalistic. In the center of these hierarchical structures stood persons (and their families) who could trace their descent to the original founders of the *merafe*. They had ritual names (*seboko*) and formed the ruling class. Among the *seboko* bearers the principle figures were of course the chiefs and their closest relatives (Schapera 1955: 30-32). Second in political importance in the *merafe* were members of the attached *merafe*. Their quarters in the central village were adjacent to the quarters of the ruling class. Bantu "ethnic minorities" such as Bakgalagadi, Birwa, Ovambanderu, Balozi, Ndebele Bakalanga represented a lower stratum. The lowest stratum in the Tswana political structure was represented by the Bushmen (San). They (as hunter-gatherers) were obliged to settle outside villages and were not considered members of *merafe* (Schapera 1955: 7-12, 43-47). Marriages were generally contracted only within the major strata.

Tswana could take secondary wives from Kgalagadi and Bushmen, but the offspring of such "marriages" were brought up as serfs (*malata*) and were not included among the *merafe* members. The position of the Kgalagadi among the Bakwena was as low as that of the Bushmen. Bushmen who neglected their duties (e.g. having lost cattle due to negligence) were severely punished and even executed (Baines 1968: 147).

The villages of the Tswana were divided into wards-*kgotla*, which included the sons of the *kgosi* from each of his wives, families of the latter and attached to them commoners-*batlanka*, which had right to possess cattle and grow their own crops. Bakgalagadi, who worked for the *kgosi* relatives and even for the *batlanka* did not have such rights and normally could not settle within the wards. A typical *morafe* in the 18th or 19th centuries may have included *Kgosi* himself, his family, families of his brothers, uncles and cousins with their respective *batlanka*. These constituted the backbone of the *morafe*, known as *kgosing*, which normally placed itself in one village. Within eyesight next to this village another village would be situated that with populated by the members of the younger *morafe*, who had their own chief the latter being subordinate to *Kgosi*. Still further afield and out of sight lay the villages of the Bakgaladi serfs.

In 1880 the balance of powers between Tswana and Bushmen (!Kung and Nharo) changed drastically even in the northwestern Kalahari. By 1879 Tswana of Ngamiland already possessed rifles, horses, oxen and wagons. They had received these in trade first from the Griqua (mixed Boer-Khoe offspring who were the first wagon traders in the Ngamiland) and later from white hunters, traders and adventurers. By Richard Lee's data Tswana started to organize summer hunting trips to the region of the present northern border between Botswana and Namibia in 1880s (Lee 1979: 77; see also Kanji 2000). Even at that time the !Kung San of that region (/Kangwa valley) hid from the strangers possibly after experiencing the violence at the hands of Hendrik van Zyl's hunting parties. This despotic Boer adventurer was known to have massacred 33 !Kung in the region in the late 1870s (Tebraveld) bordering Kangwa valley (De Klerk 1977: 51-52).

Batawana activities, unlike these of the Boers in RSA or Matabele in northeastern Botswana, were not aimed at exterminating Bushmen. Tswana rather wanted to include the hunter-gatherers in the system of *mafisa* (see above) and exploit them. According to archaeological data the Tswana ancestors of the early 13th century lived in small tightly knit communities distributed at considerable distances from one another over vast stretches of territories in southern Africa. Presumably they spoke dialects which were closer to each other than the modern Setswana, Sekgalagadi, and Sesotho languages (Tlou, Campbell 1984: 57).

According to oral traditions Barolong group was named after the chief Morolong and formed about AD 1270. Batlaro split around AD 1400. About AD 1500 their chief was Malope. One of their stories says that Malope's first wife did not have sons, she had only a daughter called Mohurutshe. The second chief's wife, however, had a son called Kwena. After Malope's death part of the people wanted Mohurutshe to become a chief, while others chose Kwena, so the Barolong people thus split to Bahurutshe and Bakwena. The comparison of the dialect distinctions corroborates the oral tradition data (Tlou, Campbell 1984: 62).

Tribal traditions contain information that various Tswana social entities constantly grew numerically and split, although their rulers remained dynastically bound with one another. The cores of the newly born social structures were formed by the responding *merafe*. So by AD 1400 in the west of the core Tswana territory lived Bakgalagadi, in the south Barolong, in the east Bahurutshe, Bakwena and Bafokeng, and in the north Bakgatla and Bapedi. The numerical strength of the various *merafe* always oscillated depending on the ecological and sometimes on the political conditions. Droughts stimulated splitting of the *merafe*. For example in about AD 1550 a chief called Kgabo led away about sixty men and settled near Diteiwane. Fifty years later the size of his group was around 1000 people, so obviously lots of "side" people have joined the small original *merafe*. People from aside joined for various reasons: having lost their own chiefs or militarily defeated, having lost cattle in droughts, being conquered etc. Such an amalgamation process was especially characteristic for the Difeqane period, when there were mass movements of the aboriginal South African populations under the pressure of the white colonizers in the end of the 18th and beginning of the 19th centuries (Tlou, Campbell 1984: 62-70). In drought times *merafe* split due to necessity of seeking new pastures and water resources. With the increase of the size of new *merafe* the power resources of their chiefs enabled them to commit raids upon the parent *merafe* and take away their cattle. So changed the configurations of the polities among the early Tswana. Until the middle 13th century they all lived in the Transvaal Highveld though (idem).

One of the first Tswana groups penetrating the territory corresponding to that of the modern Botswana (its western part) was the Bakgalagadi. Now their dialects are more distinct in comparison with the rest of the Sotho-Tswana languages and dialects. Between AD 1200-1400 the ecological situation in Botswana was favorable with plentiful summer rains, so the numbers of the people and cattle in such groups as the Barolong and Bafokeng grew. In the 14th century several strong droughts occurred during which weaker *merafe* split or perished while the strong or lucky ones grew in power at the expense of the weak. All this was accompanied by movements

of population in search of new pastures. In particular Barolongs settled from Transvaal to the south in the Molopo-Vaal River Basin. Here they mixed with those of the Bakgalagadi who had not been earlier forced out to Kalahari borders and with Bakgothu. A part of Bakgatla split out under the Batlokwa name and they later played a prominent role in the Tswana ethnogenesis. Movements of the Barolong caused migration of the various Bakgalagadi groups into the Kalahari, in particular Bakgwatheng into Molepolole region and Bangologain to the Matsheng pans area.

Around 1500 from the Baphofu living in the upper stream of the Lipopo River singled out Bahurutshe and Bakwena (see above). Later Bakwena split into Bangwaketse and Bangwato. After another drought around AD 1540, part of the Ngwaketse and Ngwato under the lead of Mogopa moved to the modern Pretoria region, while others under the leadership of Magopa's younger brother Kgabosetled in Diteiwane to the west of Molepolole. Here they subjugated local communities of Bakgalagadi: Bakgwatheng, Babolaongwe, and Baphaleng. Great droughts similar to the one that ended around 1540 and are still remembered by the Tswana as "*Tlala e e boitshegang*" and they caused the re-settlement of a number of Tswana-speaking peoples from the south into Botswana territory. Apart from Bakwena these included the Batlaping (around middle of the 16th century), Bakgatla and Bahurutshe (beginning - middle of the 17th century). From the Barolong living Magoshwe singled out the Bakaa. The Bangwaketse and Bangwato, who earlier had split out from Bakwena, also settled in Botswana. Many small chiefs sought independence and the only way to achieve it was to move to the north. By the beginning of the 18th century various, often heterogeneous by origin groups of Tswana settled in all suitable for life areas of southern and eastern Botswana (Tlou, Campbell 1984: 62-70). The northern and western parts of the country, however, were still in possession of the Khoesans most of whom led hunter-gathering way of life (see Kazankov 2002: 27-87).

There are considerable distinctions in the way of life of the Tswana proper and Bakgalagadi. The latter lived for considerable spans of time in the oases of the inside Kalahari and in the 19th century were primarily herders goats and sheep who also gathered wild vegetable food (veldkos) and were only minimally involved with farming. They had (in comparison with other Tswana) a loose political organization with military organization. They did no metalwork but instead bartered for iron from the Barolong and led quite mobile way of life. Between the 18-20th almost all of their groups were centuries politically subjugated by other, non-Bakgalagadi, Tswana groups (Tlou, Campbell 1984: 68-70). It is quite possible that some elements of the Bakgalagadi culture were maintained through the 18th - 19th centuries that

gave them some continuity with the Early Iron Age Bantu cultural tradition. Younger brothers of the Bakgalagadi chiefs constantly settled away with their retainers, a pattern stimulated by the ecological conditions of the Kalahari (Tlou, Campbell 1984: 57-60, 70; Phillipson 1977: 204, 224).

The principal scheme of the Tswana political consolidations may conveniently be observed through the example of the Batawana history. Around 1790 in the land of Ngwato political turmoil was looming. The *Kgosi* of the Ngwato people Matiba had married a woman from the Kwena people and she gave birth to a son called Tawana. After that Matiba took his principal wife. At the tribal council Matiba declared that his heir would be Tawana, but not Khamason of his principal wife. The *morafe* split and there was danger of a civil war. This example shows that Kgosi was not an absolute despot but rather a hostage of custom with a limited degree of freedom in his decisions. Matiba did not consent to the advice of the prominent members of his *morafe*, so his son Khama attacked him with his army that consisted of regiments of Tawana. The latter, together with his father, were forced to flee and hide on the territory of the neighboring Kwena. The Kwena finally forced Matiba and his son to leave their territory and move far to the north where the Boteti River joined with the Ngami and Dou lakes. From there they then settled in the Kwebe hills. Matiba eventually returned to the Kwena people, but his people who stayed in the north ultimately formed a new ethnoses, Batawana, and a very powerful one, indeed. In the Kwebe area Batawana joined with the local Bakalahari people (Bangologaand) and started to take second and third wives from them. Thus they revived numerically. By 1784 they quite regained the power of their former (with Matiba) *morafe* and moved to the Ngami Lake. Here they relatively easily subjugated the local agricultural-fishing people, Bayeye, who spoke a Khoe language. Together with the Bayeye, Bangologa, and Bushmen the Tawana moved to the western edge of the Ngami land and fought there eastern Herero Ovambanderu who they finally forced out of the Ngamiland.

Then Batawana had to fight (now under the head of Tawana's son Moremi) with the famous (see novels of Mein Raed) invaders from the south Makololo people who linguistically were Sotho. Their chief was Sebitoane. Makololo twice defeated Tawana and took most of them as captives to Chobe River in Zambia. Then the Tawana, already freed and having some of theirs as Sebotiane councilors, were forced to flee from Chobe fearing for their lives due to intrigues. They reached Ngami and joined here with the Bangologa and with the Nawana who had managed to stay in the Ngamiland after the defeat from the Makololo. Here Tawana, using the traditional social "technology" once again restored the power of their *morafe* and control of the

Ngamiland. They established the capital in Toteng at the western edge of the lake. Bayeye paid tribute to Tawana and were obliged to send their lads to the Tawana regiments. Luckily Sebotoane could not be a threat to Ngamiland anymore, since he met with very serious political troubles at Chobe (Tlou, Campbell 1984: 98-100).

By the time of the first white appearance at Ngami this lake was "discovered" (in 1848 by David Livingstone) the supreme Nawana chief Lechulathebe controlled territory from Maun to Tsau, i.e. almost all of the present Ngamiland Botswana province. The successors of Lechulathebe, using the benefits of their trade with Griqua and whites, widened the zone of Tawana control up to the Ghanzi area (Guenther 1986; Kazankov 2002: 47-48).

Now let us sum up some of the results. It was possible to build a chieftainship or pre-state polity among the Tswana despite the exceptionally tumultuous political situation in Southern Africa due to the following prerequisites:

1. Presence among the Tawana of the well worked out traditions of the flexible incorporation into their *morafe* people of heterogeneous ethnic origins or establishing patron-client type relations with them.
2. Presence among the Tawana of the well-developed system of political centralization with strong rule of their chiefs. These chiefs' bright personal qualities also, of course, played a significant role too.
3. Presence in Ngamiland of almost limitless (within the framework of the Tawana demands) territorial and human resources. We may metaphorically state that Ngamiland was Botswana's Siberia.
4. Presence among Tawana of a Nguni-type military organization, which was sufficient for subjugation of any local people of the northern Botswana (but not Nguni, as the example with Sebotoane shows).
5. Lucky historical coincidences that prevented the Tawana polity from being completely destroyed by the Makololo.

All these prerequisites (except for the third and the fifth) were present among other Tswana peoples, which enabled them to build quite successful African state. If the tradition of the vertically organized power structures is probably a common feature in most Bantu cultures, the ability to incorporate flexibly local human resources into these structures seems to be a Botswana indigenous invention. Cattle value orientation of the Tswana civilization served as an axis along which it was possible to them to restore their economic and cultural potentials. Equally important was that Tswana society was a patrilineal one, but not rigidly patrilineal, which made it possible to concentrate resources under one man's will quicker and more effectively, say, as among matrilineal Herero.

Typology of the Tswana social organization presents considerable interest from the angle of comparative research. It was characterized, equally with some other agricultural societies of sub-Saharan Africa, by combination and interplay of the agricultural and pastoral ideologies. In particular, cattle played in their society a role of universal social mediator (see above). This gave to the ruling elite means to form a broad net of vertical (hierarchical) social constructions. Such constructions were absent in purely and predominantly pastoral societies, such, for example, as Nuer which had rather horizontally than vertically organized social networks (see Evans-Pritchard 1940). For Tswana societies, apparently due to their ancient Bantu heritage, principles of vertical organization (subordination to chiefs and representatives of their power) constituted the basic model of social behavior. With the presence of so powerful social mediator as cattle (and possibilities of its accumulation and distribution) very powerful hierarchical structures (chiefdoms) indeed could be created. From the background of the accepted principles of classification of the archaic communities we should consider *merafe* as kinds of heterogeneous large-family communities (Sledzewski 1978: 115 footnote 5). The definition of heterogeneity of a community presupposes that it consists of the elements of different origin, united by binds of different types. Thus heterogeneous communities may be not only of "neighbor-large family type", but also of "lineage-family" or "large-family-neighbor-lineage" types (Butinov 1967). Among the Tswana likewise as among the Bini "the core of the heterogeneous community is constituted by the kin community (lineage) (Sledzewski 1978: 114-116; Bondarenko 1997). In the structural sense such a community is a unit of large families, bound together by neighbor-corporative ties with the preservation of the kin ties (see Maretin 1975). Large families in this context retain and develop principles of hierarchical social organization and non-democratic principles of social interaction (see Bondarenko 1995: 48-49, 133-152; 1997 106-122; Bondarenko, Roesse 1998; Bondarenko, Korotayev 2000).

We may add that the above-considered observations were made on the basis of agricultural peoples. It among them that in sub-Saharan Africa in pre-colonial times distinctively hierarchical communal structures were observed. The communities of the Early Iron Age in Transvaal Highveld (6th - 10th centuries AD) were, judging by archaeological data, relatively small in size and hierarchically organized. They had cattle but only in small quantities, and acquired it from the local Khoe people of the Limpopo Valley (Ehret 1967). The Later Iron Age Bantu arrived in Transvaal in 12th century AD and possessed large herds of cattle (Phillipson 1977: 181, 198-202; Huffman 1990: 4-5). It is with them that modern Sotho-Tswana (as well as Nguni) are genetically bound. So we may conclude that some of important

prerequisites of the Tswana chiefdoms took their roots in acquisition of the originally predominantly agricultural Bantu of the large quantities of cattle, which spurred, together with other factors (such as Nguni invasions) the formation of the large-scale power structures.

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POWER AMONG MONGOL NOMADS OF CHINGGIS KHAN'S EPOCH*

Tatyana D. Skrynnikova

In the beginning XIII century Chinggis Khan's activity resulted in the establishment of the Mongol nomadic empire, which evolved from supercomplex chiefdom to tribal confederation. The question on the structure of power within the Mongol *ulus* assumed as the mechanism of regulation of the social body functioning aimed towards preservation of its integrity is still open. The corporative ownership of power was a characteristic feature of Mongol society, related with the legalization of the privileged position of the *Borjigin* clan to which belonged Chinggis Khan and which acquired the name "Golden clan". Power and authority relationships were expressed, in the lack of a developed administrative apparatus¹, through the system of blood relationships that took two forms:

1. Legitimization of social links, through which power and authority relationships were manifested and access to supreme power realized, by

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¹ It is difficult to say whether Chinggis Khan created an administrative body of the Mongol *ulus*, though, starting from S.A. Kozin, who was the first to translate the Secret History into Russian, scholars consider the appointments mentioned there as the apparatus formation: "Namely from the guard of *keshiktens*, first of all, there was formed the *ulus* administration in charge of the Khan headquarters and army. They were administrators, some with the title of *cherbi*, responsible for the Khan estate, cattle, stables, board, movements, and executing police functions" (Kychanov 1997: 188). This problem - presence of lack of the administrative apparatus among Mongols, still wants special research, its solution dependant on the lack of material. It is noteworthy that the title of *cherbi* was bestowed by Chinggis Khan in his junior son Tolui, and the title acquisition was accompanied with the description of the function related with this title - the ritual one. One can recollect that the written script creation (Naiman Tatatunga) and administration (Khitan Yelui Qu-cai) are associated in the Secret History with foreigners, though they were merely Khan's will transmitters (Sandag 1970: 37).

means of *genealogy* adaptable to social and political practices and able of originating fictitious genealogies;

2. Designation of relationships within tribal confederation through *the terms of blood affinity*, marking its leaders: father - son, senior brother - junior brother, blood brother (*anda*) (Skrynnikova 1997: 30-32).

How was Mongol *ulus* and power within it divided? Scholars studying the social organization and political system of the nomadic societies of Eurasia unanimously point to the organizational principle of the nomads' division into three parts: the center and the wings (right and left). This division was reported for the first time for the Hsiung-nu in the 2nd century BC. Their empire was divided by Shan-yu into three parts: the "center", "left" and "right" wings. The Shan-yu himself was in charge of the center, the wings were governed by his closest and most entrusted kinsmen. As a rule, the senior son and legate was in charge of the left wing (Kradin 1996: 115-116). According to Sima Qian, ranks were distributed geographically as follows: "All the princes and commanders of the left wing live on the eastern side...; the princes and commanders of the right wing live on the western side..., bordering with the *yue ji*" (Ibid., p. 115). The designation of the eastern side as the left one, and the western side as the right one corresponds to the East Asian archetype of traditional consciousness with its general southward orientation. This was formulated in Chinese tradition in the following way: "There is no need, as Confucius said, for a truly virtuous sovereign to be engaged in affairs of administration; it was enough for him *to sit with dignity southward* (put in italics by myself.- T. S.), that was all" (Malyavin, 1989: 523). The meaning of the sacral function of the sovereign for even earlier state societies functioning was noted by Claessen (following Kradin, 1996: 101).

The division into the wings was related to the inheritance of father's property by his sons. Whether it was really true for the Mongols, we shall attempt to consider by drawing on specific Mongol material from the *Secret History*. Though it is a commonplace in Mongolian and nomadological studies to verify the division of Mongol *ulus* into the three parts, it is important to note that the problem of the power and authority structure associated with this division is unsolved. For example, according to Kychanov,

"Initially Chinggis Khan's army was divided into two wings - two divisions of 10,000 (ones of Jamuqa and Ong Khan), and the center. The right, western division of 10,000 (*baraun gar*), adjacent to Altai, was in charge of Boorchu; the left, eastern one (*jungar*), adjacent to Kharaun Chingdu, Big Khingan, was under Mukhuli, having the Chinese title of *go wang*. The center was lead by Naya" (1997: 197).

Here the researcher notes the link between the right and left wings and the center, first of all, as a military command, leaving the problem of distribution of imperial functions beyond the study's scope.

V.V. Trepavlov, who specifically studied the problem of social and political organization of the Mongols also mentioned the ruling aspect:

"The Mongol state was divided into the center and the wings - the right one (*barungar*) and the left one (*jungar*), with *formal seniority of the eastern* (from here and below my italics - T. S.) (left-hand) khans over the western (right-hand) ones. The question arises: the rank of which wing was regarded higher among the Mongols? Let's appeal to some authorities, like Abulgazi: "According to Mongols' notions, the left side is more esteemed than the right one, as the heart is the king within the bodily realm, and the heart is located by God in the left side" (See below on the specificity of sacrality of the left side among the Mongols - T.S.). Or Pan Daya: "The most honorable is the center, then goes the right (side), and the left (side) is regarded even more inferior". There is no contradiction between these establishments. For the Mongols and some Turkic-speaking peoples, the southward orientation is traditional, when east is on the left hand, and west on the right hand; among the Chinese, oriented northward (virtually for the Chinese the most sacral side is the southern one - T. S.), it is vice versa, east is on the right, west on the left. Then, *the higher status is the jungar's...* After the accession to the throne Temujin distributed the *male population* of Mongol tribes and correspondingly the *tribal nomad territory* into the two wings (then named *tumens* - sic! T. S.) - the right, near-Altai one and the left, Khingan or Kharaun-Jidaun one. Between the wings of the *tumens* there was situated the middle *tumen* within the watershed of the Onon, Kerulen, and Tola. All the three *tumens* were united into the center's domain - *Golun ulus* and presented the Root yurt - family domain of Chinggisids" (Trepavlov 1993: 93-97).

The author notes the simultaneous distribution into the wings both of the male population and Mongol nomad territories. Below he writes that

"the sources accordingly refer the *uluses* of two elder sons of Chinggis Khan to the right wing, similarly unanimously the location of the Chinggis Khan brothers' domains are noted in the *jungar* of the empire; the center's domain is in charge of Tolui" (Trepavlov 1993: 98).

Comparing facts from these two quotations, it follows that in the Mongol empire the status of Chinggis Khan's brothers was higher, but it remains unclear why and what status?

We can see that the author does not show how power was shared in the wings and what types of power were identified. Similarly it is unclear what formal seniority of the eastern khans means. To my opinion, it is possible to comprehend the *potestas* and political relationships among the Mongols if to pay attention to power distribution among the Mongols in three spheres: ruling, military, and sacral. We shall try to answer these questions, based on the Mongolian text of the *Secret History*. It is worth noting that there is no

explicit data found on this case in the source, the problem is solved with the help of indirect facts, related with the distribution of responsibilities by Chinggis Khan among his kinsmen and *nukers* in 1206. Precisely at this time there emerges for the first time the known division of Mongol *ulus* into the two wings (*ji'ur*) or hands (*qar*) - the right/left ones.

Of interest is the fact that power was divided into temporal and military (the latter related with distinguishing in each wing of warfare units - *tumens*, which enlisted the population of the right and left hands). Only *tumens* commanders are distinctly defined, as § 220 says:

"Then I said that they had acted according to Law, keeping in mind the Great Cause, approving I decided to appoint him to a high post. I charged to Boorchu the right-hand division of 10,000, to Mukhali go wang I entrusted the left-hand division of 10,000. May Naya (N31 in the total list of 95 Chinggis Khan campaigners - T. S.) be in charge of the center division of 10,000 (Nayaa *Tüb-ün Tümen medetükei*)".

In this quotation one has to pay attention to the notion of the *center*, expressed by the Mongolian term *Tüb*. It is noteworthy in connection with the fact that Chinggis Khan, while speaking about the formation of the *keshiktens'* unit extended to the *tumen's* size, relates himself with the center as well, though expressed in another Mongolian word *qol*:

"Thus there gathered 8,000 Turkauts. The Kebteuls and Khorchins made 2,000. So, the *keshikten* constituted a *tumen*. Chinggis *kagan* also said: "May behind us, increasing the *keshiktens'* *tumen*, stay the army of the Great Center!" (minqat minqad-aca ilqaju irekset naiman minqat turqa'ut bolba kebte'ül qorcin-lu'a qoyar-gü minqat bolba tümen kesikten bolba cinggis-qahan jarliq bolorun bidan-u ca'ada tümen kesikten-i bökelejü *yeke qol* bolun atuqai ke'en jarliq bolba).

This text definitely says that the Great Center formation was connected with the *increasing* of the group (*keshiktens*), ever present at Chinggis Khan's side, fulfilled due to the additional recruitment of warriors from all the parts of Mongol *ulus*, what contradicts the assertion by V. V. Trepavlov that *Golun ulus* presented the consolidation of three *tumens* - the right, left, and middle ones.

Here it is important to make one remark, significant for understanding the mechanism of the wings' system functioning, based on the observation by V.V. Trepavlov of the secondary wings, into which the Turkic *khaganates*, Dorbet principalities, Mongol *uluses*, etc., were divided. It is necessary to consider the wings' system for a certain time period and discreetly for each generation (or under every new *khagan*, having come to the throne), as sharing of the deceased ruler legacy leads to division of the *ulus* into domains, their heads, in their turn, allocating power under their jurisdiction according to the wings, this giving rise the different level system of the wings: of the first order (the Great *uruk* of Yisugei), of the second

order (Chinggis Khan's *uruk*), of the third order (his sons' *uruks*), etc. For example, Yisugei, Chinggis Khan's father, and his younger brother Daridai-otchigin, Chinggis Khan and his younger brother Temuge-otchigin, Chinggis Khan's sons (the senior ones - Jochi and Chaghatai, and junior - Ogodei and Tolui), etc. Unfortunately, more often scholars combine in one context both different regions and various levels, reflected in the V.V. Trepavlov's conclusion on the composition of the right and left wings and the center (see above: Trepavlov, 1993: 98). It is absolutely obvious that the above mentioned cases (§§ 220, 226) are associated with military command of the right, left and central divisions of Mongol *ulus* (on the difference between *tüb* and *qol* see below) in Chinggis Khan's lifetime.

With regard to civil/temporal command of its parts, there is no direct reference found in the text of the *Secret History*, though we are able to reconstruct, proceeding from indirect data only. Thus, in § 212 Chinggis Khan refers to Tolui as *another wing* (*öröle ji'ür*) of his father, while saying to his junior son that he is granting him a thousand, and for having assisted him in assembling the *ulus*, he is bestowed with the title of *cherbi*: "cinggis-qahan tolun-a ügülerün ecige kö'ün ö'ere minga ker medegü büle'e ci ulus quriyaldun ecige-dece *öröle ji'ür* bolun jiktüldüjü ulus quriyalduqsan tula cerbi nere ökba-je". The mentioning of *another wing* allows us to assume that there should have been the *first* (or *right*), not specially mentioned in the text and comprising Chinggis Khan's senior sons, of what impartially wrote V.V. Trepavlov. Among the two elder sons (Jochi and Chaghatai), who was predominant? It is noteworthy, that of all the sons, but Tolui, Chinggis Khan mentions Jochi in the following context: "kö'üd-ün minu *aqa joci bui-je* qunan geniges-iyen teri'ülejü joci-yin dooro tümen-ü noyan boltuqai". Here it is emphasized that, firstly, Jochi is the senior son, and, secondly, under his command is the *tumen* commander Gunan. Though, above, in the same paragraph, where the military hierarchy is manifested, Chinggis Khan says to the same Gunan: "ta bo'orci muqali teri'üten noyat-ta (You *noyons* are at the head along with Boorchu and Mukhali)".

In traditional societies the symbolic embraced throughout the entire field of culture, so the co-position of the names *Boorchu-Mukhali* in the text can be interpreted as *senior-junior*, corresponding to the opposition *right-left* and allows *the Jochi's status* to be defined as one of the *head of the Right wing*. By way of additional proof of the fact that Jochi was associated with the Right wing can serve the following assertion of the *Secret History*:

"§ 239. In the year of Hare (1207) Jochi was sent with the Right hand troops against the forest people (ta'ulai jil joci-yi bara'un qar-un ceri'üd-iyer hoi-yin irgen-tür morila'ulba)".

It can be said that this way the military and civil imperious functions in the Right and Left wings of the Mongol *ulus* were distributed in the early 13th c., the civil and military power being possibly joined in one and the same hands.

The notion of the *Center* deserves a special interpretation, as in the *Secret History* two terms are used. To my opinion, it is determined by far more complicated factors than merely lexical differences. First, let us reveal cases of the usage of the term *qol*. It is possible to speak about its two meanings in the text of the Secret History. One is always linked with warfare activities and signifies probably the central group of the troops. For example, in § 247 it says that Chinggis Khan heads the troops of the center - cinggis-qahan *qol cerik* darucaju (p.224). In § 142, where the beginning of the war of Jamuqa against Chinggis Khan and Wang Khan is described, it is said that

"having decided to fight in the morn, the advance guard returned and stayed overnight in the Center (*qol-tur neyilen qonoba*)" (p.86).

The analogous meaning of the word *qol* is found in § 193 (the war of Chinggis Khan against the Naimans):

"Having fattened up our horses, we shall drive their guard until joining the Center/in the Center (*qoltur anu neyile'ülün*)" (pp.150-151), similarly in § 195 "Chinggis Khan himself lead the advance guard, charging Khasar with the Center (*qasart qol jasa'ulba*)... The Naimans, returning from Chakir-maud, fortified their position at the foot of the Mount Ebur of the Nakukun locality (I think a more precise translation could be like "on the southern slope of the Mount Naku-kun" - T. S.). Our watch chased the Naiman guard until it joined the Great Center (*yeke qol-tur anu neyeletele*) at the Mount Nukukun" (p.155).

In the last case we encounter the second meaning of the center, as it signifies the Great Center, what allows the assumption that it rather has another status than merely the central group in a battle. It is confirmed by the data from § 208 where Chinggis Khan, enumerating Jurchedai's deserts in the war against the Kereits, says:

"All the best warriors you suppressed, reaching the Great center (*yeke qol-tur qürcü*) and fell down Sengum, wounding him into his gentle cheek" (p.181).

The last two facts allows us to presume that the notion of the Center (*yeke qol*) is not only associated with the leader at the head of the army, but with his headquarters, on one hand, testified by the Kereit case. On the other hand, proceeding from the Naiman material (§ 195), the Center is not strictly specific towards geographical locality, it rather roams with the army, but not stays with the main populace within the ancestral territory, what is related with specific nature of nomadic life. One can say that the term *qol* marks the center, associated with the ruling function.

What meaning has the Center denoted by the term *tüb*? Above it was mentioned in connection with the Naya's appointment as the *tumen* commander in this part of Mongolia? But it is also possible to recollect

another case of using this term in the text *Secret History*, related to Tolui (§ 213). Firstly, he was immediately bestowed with the Left wing, secondly, his central position in Chinggis Khan's lineage was mentioned. Chinggis Khan says to Tolui (§ 212):

"As you have participated the assembling the *Ulus*, being another father's wing, I grant you the title of *cherbi* (ecige-dece öröle ji'ur bolun jiktöldüjü ulus quriyalduqsan tula cerbi nere ökba-je)".

While continuing the distribution of responsibilities, Chinggis Khan gives the following order:

"§ 213. Onkur and Boroul, you two, sitting on the right and left sides, while distributing food, avoid doling out share of those who sit on the right, who have grown by your side, and sit on the left.... Onkur and Boroul, you both ride about the encampment and give food out. During feasts sit on the right and left sides of the Great Vessel with Wine and supervise the distribution. May Tolui sit between you (more accurate: May Tolui sit with you in the center - T. S.) (önggür boro'ul qoyar bara'un jewün ete'et ta qoyar bawurcin ide'en *tüke'erün* bara'un ete'et bayiqsan sa'uqsan-a ülü duta'ulun je'ün ete'et jergeleksen eseksen-e ülü duta'ulun ta qoyar-i teyin tüge'e'esü minu qo'olai ülü qucin setkil amuyu edö'e önggür boro'ul qoyar morilaju yabuju ide'e olon gü'ün-e tüge'etkün ke'en jarlig bolun *sa'uri sa'urun* yeke *tüsürge*-yin bara'un jewün ete'et ide'e basa'alaju sa'utqun tolun-tan-lu'a *tüblen* sa'utuqai ke'en sa'urin ji'aju ökba)".

This passage draws our attention, as the known translations do not allow us understand what food distribution is being talked about. In fact, it is not related with distribution of food to satisfy biological needs of Man.

Let us consider the meanings of the words put in the text in italics. The verb *tüke'erün* which points in the context to the food distribution is undoubtedly related by its significance with the action surviving among the Western Buryats named *tohoreyon* which may accompany different rituals. While performing this rite, the central figure is distinguished - the rite performer and two helpers- on the right and left. The rite performer offers sacrifice to divinities - spirits of the locality, and the helpers distribute food to every rite participant, the rite as a rule having a clan character. To verify that exactly this is talked in § 213 serves the mentioning of the sacrifice ritual attributes placed from the south to the north in front of the rite performers facing south as follows: the sacred vessel - yeke *tüsürge*, and throne - *sa'uri sa'urun* Tolui is associated with. In the Mongolian text the central attribute yeke *tüsürge* is correlated with *sa'uri sa'urun*, the rite being executed by Tolui what determines its central position (tolun-tan-lu'a *tüblen* sa'utuqai), while Onkur and Boroul are located on the right and left from yeke *tüsürge*.

There is hardly any doubt that in the given case we encounter the ascertaining of Tolui's place within the ritual system likely of Chinggis Khan's lineage (Chinggis Khan's *uruk*), and the term *tüb* signifies the sacral

center of the new community. The center (*tüib*) having the sacral significance as it was associated with the ancestral hearth always possessed of a special meaning. The junior of the clan - *otchigin* acted as the ancestral hearth fire guardian. As such in 1206 was Daridai, younger brother of Yisugei, Chinggis Khan's father. To kill him meant to extinguish one's own fire what would lead to the community ruin. This way Boorchu, Mukhali and Shigi-Khutugu stipulated for Chinggis Khan the necessity of saving Daridai as Chinggis Khan wanted to have him punished in Mongol *ulus* for entering the collusion with the Kereits against the Mongols:

§ 241. "It is like putting out your fire! It is like demolishing your home! He is the sole uncle left as the memory of father... May the smoke rise over your father's home!".

The next passage from the Secret History is important for comprehension of the significance of the *otchigin's* function: "§ 257. De'üner-ece otcigin-noyan-ni yeke a'uruq-tur tüssüjü " (Racheviltz 1972: 153). E.I. Kychanov, relying on the S.A.Kozin's translation, wrote:

"Still in 1219 starting the westward march, Chinggis Khan charged the governing over the Great Aurukh on his junior brother Otchigin-noyon (Temuge - T. S.)... the term Aurukh was close to the term horde..." (Kychanov 1997: 189),

presuming obviously that the transition of power over the Khan's headquarters is being meant. In fact, the translation runs as follows: "Among the junior brothers the *otchigin* relies on the Great *uruk*" (translated by myself). I think here it is important to pay attention to the fact that Chinggis Khan not simply names the *otchigin*, but stresses that he is a younger brother, firstly. Secondly, of much significance for understanding of the meaning of the passage is translation of the verb *tüssüjü* which means "to lean for support, rely, count upon", namely pointing to the ritual activity of the *otchigin* of the Great *uruk*.

Both in 1206 and 1219 the question is of the role of the sacral center and correspondingly of the ritual significance of the *otchigin* (Daridai, Temuge) for protection of community integrity associated with the unifying activity of Yisugei - the Great *Uruk* (yeke uruq). Already in Chinggis Khan's lifetime we observe probably several levels of the division into the wings (right/left, senior/junior): Yisugei - Daridai, Chinggis Khan - Temuge, Jochi - Tolui.

"Tolui Khan, its honorable nicknames being Eke-noyon and Ulug-noyon, head of home and root yurt of his father" (Rashid ad-Din 1960: 19).

The phrase "head of the home (=hearth) and root yurt (=the place where one is born; where one's placenta is buried, in this case one of Chinggis Khan) allows us to assume he was the hearth fire guardian of Chinggis Khan's *Uruk*, through without the formal title of *otchigin*. We perceive that for this

period two models structurizing Mongol society were equally important: the Great *Uruk* of Yisugei and the *Uruk* of Chinggis Khan (later the Golden *Uruk*). It is reflected in the acts of enthronement when power and authority structure is undergoing remodeling.

Temuge-otchigin, Chinggis Khan's junior brother was located to the east of Chinggis Khan and made the left wing with regard to the latter. We have no data on the right wing of the Great *Uruk*, Chinggis Khan was in the Center as we have seen. In 1206 proclaiming himself Khan, Chinggis Khan models power distribution through the establishment of the wings' system: the right one - Jochi and Chaghatai, the left one - Ogedei and Tolui. One can say that by appointing Tolui Chinggis Khan models and manifests the new social space - the community of his own lineage members and their predominant position in the wider tribal confederation forming Mongol *ulus*.

The significance of the two models (the Great *Uruk* and the Golden *Uruk*) is ascertained in the source *Secret History* as follows in § 269:

"In the year of Mouse (1228) Chaghatai and Batu leading the sons of the Right hand, otchigin-noyon, Eku and Yesunke leading the sons of the Left hand, Tolui leading the sons of the Center (Tolui *teri'üten qol kö'üt*)... The senior brother Chaghatai elevated to the Khandom the junior brother Ogedei Khan... being the special 10,000 *keshikten* standing behind Khan-father, my brother Chaghatai and Tolui recognized Ogedei Khan as Khan. Similarly recognized the people of the center (*qol-un ulus-i mün yosu'ar tawulba*). Ogedei Khan having become Khan accepted the inner *tumen* of *keshiktens* (*dotona yabuqun tümen kesikten-i*) and people of the Center (*qol-un ulus-i*) (p.252-253).

More accurate meaning of the passage is following: Ogedei Khan having become Khan took under his charge (*ö'er-dür-iyen bolqa'ulun*) the inner *tumen* of *keshiktens* and people of the Center. This text entails the next that the left wing of the Golden *Uruk* acquired in Chinggis Khan's epoch the meaning of the Center (*qol*), retaining the meaning of the sacral center (*tüb*). But if in Chinggis Khan's lifetime power stipulated by the character of sacrality, in the left wing belonged to Tolui without any mentioning of the place in power to Ogedei, then after Chinggis Khan's death *power* in the left wing (the root yurt of Chinggis Khan) goes to the senior of the ancestral territory - Ogedei. Tolui retained the ritual function (§ 271: "to remind of the past, to awaken the asleep").

After Chinggis Khan's death and further fracturing of his *ulus* into the wings there emerges the problem of correlation of the *khagan* (the senior in the Central *ulus* located within the ancestral territory) and the *senior* in the conic clan of the Golden clan. It is worthwhile to pay attention to the senior's functions. Thus, during Ogedei's enthronement,

"Chaghatai Khan took Ogedei Khan by his right hand, Tolui Khan by his left hand, his uncle Otchigin by his loins and sat him down on the *kaan* throne" (Rashid ad-Din 1960: 19).

Sending the troops to conquer western countries, Ogedei ordered:

"May at the head of all the youths be Batu (Jochi' senior son - T. S.)! ... May those from the Center be lead by Guyuk (Qol-aca qaruqsad-i güyük aqalatuqai)".

During Ogedei's rule his performance of imperial functions meant for the entire population of the Central *ulus* is recorded, seniority secured by the *senior* branch of the Chinggisids - Batu (the *Right wing*). Here we see re-distribution of power in the next after-Chinggis Khan generation. It may lead to the conclusion that *qol* is formed from power/military, and *tüb* from ritual activities.

One should note the conjugation of the two sacralities in the social space organization: sacrality of the *senior* within the clan possessing supreme power with sacrality of the junior - the *hearth* guardian of the patrimonial territory. It is noteworthy to pay attention to sacrality of the senior having a *universal character*. For traditional culture, to which the medieval Mongol one can be referred, the predominant element of the world-view was the Center executing a cosmogonic function via which relationship among the Universe's zones were realized and due to which both social and cosmic space was harmonized. As the Center markers there could act both discrete attributes (= clan hearth) and selected personalities, like clan *seniors* and *khagans* as rulers of the Mongol territory proper (for instance, simultaneously Chaghatai and Ogedei, Batu and Munke). The latter is of particular interest for us, as performance by the chosen ones of the Heaven the function sacralizing and harmonizing cosmos and community is possible thanks to the possession of charisma (*sülde*) and through the Supreme Law - *törü/Yeke törü*. Linked with the ruler thanks to charisma (= Center associated with the "hub of the Universe" where the Universe originated and spread widely from), *törü/Yeke törü* sacralizes space due to distribution according to the cardinal directions. This link of the *ruler - charisma - Supreme Law* defines sacral (as priest) functions *characteristic* of traditional Mongol culture both for ruler and clan seniors (Skrynnikova 1997: 100-148). The senior son is father's successor, owner of the sacred - charisma of the clan and mediator of Supreme Law. It is directly pointed in the *Secret History* that the senior brother Chaghatai elevated to Khandom his junior brother Ogedei (Ca'adai-aqa ögödei-qahan-ni de'ü-yü'en qan ergüjü). The seniors possess supreme sacral power: Chaghatai elevated to the throne Ogedei, Batu did the same to Guyuk, what as I perceive is defined by the fact that, being the clan seniors, they were clan charisma owners and, respectively, actors of social rituals for community prosperity.

It is likely worthwhile of considering the *conjugation of the two sacrally relevant* and, respectively, authoritatively relevant *paradigms: clan senior* - supreme head as the clan charisma owner, *clan junior* (otchigin) - related with the throne located within the ancestral territory where the most important role is played by the center (*tüib*), marked by the hearth, its cult being the junior's function. There was no problem in Chinggis Khan lifetime - he performed ruling functions (charismatic type of power). After his death, when there should have been restored traditional mechanisms, there constantly emerged the problem of power redistribution - as a result of further fracturing of the domains into the wings. As, I have shown, both principles were important: ultimo- (the junior of the juniors) and primogeniture (the senior of the seniors), the Mongol society of the 13th-14th centuries was characterized of overproduction of elite what stimulated struggle for power. Correspondingly, two tendencies permanently clashed: power of the *senior* or power of *Khan* related, as a rule, to the left wing - the sacral center of the Mongol Universe.

The study of the wings' system allows the getting more complicated structure of power and authority among the nomads to be revealed, though the main principle of its organization is still the clan one. Permanent redistribution of ruling functions is related, to my opinion, with transformations in power structure among lineages even within the framework of one clan - the reigning clan Borjigin. It should be mentioned that if power in the Right wing was immediately and forever secured by Chinggis Khan' senior sons (without regard of the subsequent generational fracturing), then power in the Left wing and the Center could be redistributed, what is clearly illustrated on the example with Tolui, associated with the sacral center (*tüib*) and simultaneously with the Left wing in Chinggis Khan's epoch (§ 212, 213) and with the Left wing and the Center (*qol*) under Ogedei (§ 269). As we see, the sacral center *tüib* and the temporal *qol* can superimpose.

One can recollect the Hsüing-nu, among whom a similar power distribution was reported: the Right and Left wings and the Center. The Mongol material allows the character of power among them to be understood, too. On one hand, "among the Hsüing-nu the left, eastern side was regarded as honorable" (Kychanov 1997: 12), on the other hand, seniority of the right side is manifested by distribution of places by the retinue around the central figure: "those who are placed on the right and on the left from him" (Ibid.: 13). That the right side is named first marks its seniority. On the left side were placed juniors: "Under Shan-yu Huan-ti (85-86 BC) the left luli-wang was Shan-yu's junior brother, the left xian-wang was also a junior brother" (Ibid: 15-16). But, to my mind, the

relationship of the junior with the ancestral territory (sacrality of the ancestral land) is determined by the fact that the title of *Shan-yu* was practically always, remaining in the left wing, inherited by the junior son's lineage. In Mongolia also the throne was always secured by the left wing, related with the Mongol ancestral territory. With regard of domain distribution, then

"it is obvious that the territory of the left and right wings of the Hsiung-nu state was composed from the domains of the xian-wang, luli-wangs, and the rest of domains-*uluses*, as if there were "huge domains", then there were lesser and not so strong domains-*uluses*" (Ibid: 15).

The study of the social organization and its structure among the Mongol nomads can facilitate the solution of the problem of politogenesis in its regional and temporal forms. Moreover, nowadays it is obvious that pre-state societies can appear not less comprehensive, and the mechanisms functioning within them not less effective, as the choice of society development ways are defined by the society itself as a result of its adaptation both to the environment and socio-cultural media, what is demonstrated, in my opinion, by the material from the Secret History, its origination related with the epoch of historical events narrated about. Power distribution in the wings was determined by notions, typical of traditional Mongol (and at a wider level: nomadic) society, about the sacral essence of power according to which its owner was able of maintaining the Universe cosmic order and integrity of the community (Mongol *ulus* or the reigning "Golden clan"). Inseparable character of traditional consciousness stipulated also a possibility of one individual to combine the ritual, ruling, and military functions.

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**POLITICAL CULTURE OF THE
TURKIC-MONGOLIAN NOMADS IN
HISTORICAL AND ETHNOLOGICAL
PERSPECTIVE**

Sergey V. Dmitriev

The traditional political culture of the Turco-Mongolian nomads is a currently a poorly examined subject. Instead research has focused on the formation of these societies and their broad cultural similarities using historical ethnographical material. As a result, many aspects important in the real life of the nomadic societies are neglected. For example, while nomadic social and political structures, law, and material culture have all been studied, the question of political behavior itself within the nomadic culture has been less explored. The situation has begun changing now that that political anthropology has begun to pay attention to the nomadic communities of the Central Asian region. In this regard, the works of N. Kradin (1992), V. Trepavlov (1993) and especially T. Skrynnikova (1997) have paid particular attention to the political culture of the Turco-Mongolian nomads. The main stress of these works, however, depends on the analysis of the historical material itself.

The traditional political culture of the Central Asian nomads has a long history and demonstrates considerable temporal and spatial unity. This unity can be seen in the integrity of the nomadic model of the culture. Across Eurasia such steppe nomadic societies display striking similarities which are the products of their similar origins, long centuries old of co-existence, and their periodic participation in large nomadic states. As a result they share many common, even identical, notions based on their general cultural values and shared traditions.

The theme of the traditional political culture of the Asian nomads is very broad and cannot possibly be covered in a single article. Here we are as much propounding the problem and examining only a sample of its aspects and archetypes that will require much more study by many scholars in the future. The cases are drawn from many periods of time but in general run from the middle of the first millennium BC until the 19th century of our own era. Selection of the cases has focused on those elements which represent ritual points of the concentration of the vital force of the ethno-political social body, particularly the ritual and symbolic elements surrounding the struggle for the political power and for the domination of symbolic political space. These include (1) the concepts such as *sulde* that legitimize power, (2) ritual political violence associated the taking of heads, (3) the destruction of royal graves by enemies, and (4) the importance of ritual flags and banners in group identity.

1. *Sulde*: Political Terminology of Eurasian Nomads

The terms used for the legitimization of the power of a specific leader or dynasty, particularly in a monarchical form of government, are very revealing culturally. Among the medieval nomadic people of the Inner and Central Asiatic steppes the term *sulde*, a type of protective spirit, soul or charismatic element of a leader, was one such very important feature of successful rulership.

B.Ya. Vladimirtsov first investigated the concept of *sulde* as it was applied to Chinggis Khan. He focused on its connection to the "nine-staff white standard" that was erected during the coronation of Chinggis Khan and which became the main attribute of the state cult in the Mongolian Empire. According to Vladimirtsov, this standard was a

"custodian of the genius of the family of Chinggis" that "protects his troops, leads them to the victories, to conquer everybody, all the countries because it is Chinggis Khan who was told by the Entire Blue Sky to govern all the nations" (Vladimirtsov 1922:72).

Because *sulde* was both the soul itself of the great man and the genius-custodian of his family, tribe and people, its incarnation in the standard gave it a terrific symbolic power.

Other scholars have elaborated Vladimirtsov's basic points, among them T. Skrynnikova, who views *sulde* as a type of charisma. She notes that the terms *sulde* and *suu jely* originally expressed the same notion of a charismatic sacral substance that in her opinion was manifest as a halo around the head of a leader of a family or tribe. "*Sulde* is an indication of the substance protecting their own social unity and frightening and winning the strange social unity" (Skrynnikova 1997:164, 165, 188-189).

Beginning with B. Vladimirtsov scholars analyzing the term *sulde* have assumed that it is composed of the word stem *sul* but have interpreted it as if it were *sur*. *Sur* is extremely widespread in the Turco-Mongolian languages term and is generally accepted to mean "souls". This term reflects the energetic essence of a man, his activity: it is regarded as a personification of energy and human will. The development of the term tends to imply "fear, horror, formidable, terrible, ferocious; greatness, power" etc. It is this semantic field that is proposed for the interpretation of the term *sulde*.

But how valid is this interpretation? First of all, we should note that there is an extremely widespread term used by Turco-Mongolian people to denote a specific part of a sacrificed animal carcass that has the same stem (*julde/iulde/ iulde/ zuld/ziuld*). For Mongolians this consists of "the head of a sacrificed animal flayed together with its wind-pipe, lungs, liver, heart".

The term *zuld* also related to "hunting luck" and served as an important symbol and talisman of a successful hunt. For example, L. Potapov (1949:35-36) writes that the hunter who first struck a beast received the heart, lungs and the lower jaw of the animal he killed in addition to an equal share of the rest. The hunter then had to offer the tastiest bits of the quarry to his "spirit-patrons". After such a success, the hunter left his companions on the same or next day to return home. On the day of his arrival from hunting, he hung the animal's heart and jaw in the sacrifice corner where effigies of the hunt spirit-patrons were kept and left them there for a whole night. In the morning this hung meat was chopped up and boiled after which it was eaten by all the family.

The question of hunting gifts leads us directly to the topic of the ritual hunting behavior and sacrifice where the communicative aspect between worlds is particularly well defined. According to the system of signs, during the offering the partner of the communication is to send "the soul" of the sacrificed animal. This is the part that represents the most completely the object given and most adequately serves to designate its value. Hence the existence of particular techniques of killing and dividing of the carcass that facilitate correctly extracting "the soul" from it. Methods of killing could include smothering or cutting the aorta and gathering the blood, both manipulations connected with the breath or blood that serve as "receptacles" (signs) of the "soul". Similarly the custom of conserving intact the sacrificed animal's skin, leg bones, head and hooves all indicate an eagerness to provide the spirits something unique and set off from the mundane world.

In light of the discussion above, we would propose that there is a well-delineated chain of the possible changes of the meaning and extension of the semantic field that explains how such concepts of "sacrifice" and "hunting

luck" develop into the abstract categories of the luck in general, success, destiny and that are embodied in the *zuld/suld* of Chinggis Khan.

The etymological research of the Turco-Mongolian languages along with the ethnographic material makes it possible to follow the history of the formation of the concept "luck" under the conditions of the hunting society and its further evolution. In many cases concepts that initially had highly naturalistic meanings in early societies were in the course of history were adapted to meet new conditions and needs in cultures of societies in later epochs. This is just the case for concepts that were drawn from the hunting cultures of the ancestors of the Turco-Mongolian people. As these people became pastoral nomads and developed more complex political structures, their general conception of world outlook changed. Of necessity they adapted their earlier cosmological views to the conditions they now confronted. The concepts of *sul(-sulde)* could not avoid the same destiny.

In a hunting society luck takes a very material form, success in hunting animals. Leadership and prestige are directly tied to displaying evidence of such "successfulness". After acquiring hunted quarry with help of his "luck", the successful hunter is expected to distribute the meat generously to the members of his tribe and by this means he derives more authority within the community. The more he gives out, the more prestige he accumulates, and the more considerable his arguments become in making decisions.

Our main conclusion is that in this situation the owner of *sul* is *sulde* or "the *sul*-owner." These views originated from the hunting tradition of the peoples of the Central Asia and Siberia. It was here in the depths of the hunting economy and hunting culture that the terms "happiness", "luck", and "success" were worked out. For without them, according to the aboriginal population of the region, it is not possible to hunt the animals successfully. In the process of evolution into protostate and state organizations, these older naturalistic concepts became more broadly applied and more abstract. Thus the concept of *sul/sulde* that had originally been applied to individual hunting luck and to sacrifice to hunting spirits to forms the foundation for a the institutionalized "luck" of a leader and his descendants. In the Mongol Empire Chinggis Khan's *sulde* underpinned the legitimacy of his descendants as the "golden family" which had the right to rule forever. In this way Chinggis Khan acquired a theological character that become the foundation of a Mongolia-wide cult honoring him personally as ruler (see more detailed in Dmitriev 2000).

2. Ritual political violence among nomads of Eurasia

As far back as in antiquity and medieval times there were have been descriptions severed heads as trophies or used in some ritual manner by

steppe nomadic societies. While these reports have been cited many times by modern scholars there are few specific studies on this topic. Our aim here is to both enlarge base of sources about severed head and to reveal, systemize and specify the motives connected with this practice using the framework of region's traditional political culture (see Dmitriev 2000).

According to the ancient sources acquisition of the head of enemy killed in the battle was closely connected with the right to claim a share of any spoils from a military campaign. Herodotus (*History*, IV, 64) mentioned that according Scythian customary law, a warrior needed to bring the head of an enemy he killed to the ruler or he would get no part of booty. A similar report comes from the other end of Eurasia where the Chinese historian, Ssu-ma Ch'ien (*Shih-chi* 110), said that among the Hsiung-nu a warrior who captured an enemy in battle or took his head would be awarded a cup of wine and receive a share of the spoils and slaves (Taskin 1968:41). The preciseness of the wording in both cases appears to be evidence of a certain codification of the practice in societies across the steppe.

There are also numerous reports of presenting severed heads to rulers in other historical sources where warriors and vassals compete for a prize or to confirm their military prowess. The Oguzian epics give us such a formula for the characteristics of daring warrior: "He cut off a number of heads, shed blood, was awarded a prize, and achieved glory" (Bartold 1962) Such practices existed as late as the 18th century when it was reported that the Turks were surprised that *giaurs* ("disbelievers" meaning Russians) lacked the custom "to pay a gold piece for any prisoner or severed head of unknown origin" (Resmi 1842:109). Travelling in the Middle Asia in the 19th century, A. Vambery (1874: 123-124) observed that the special oriental robes given as rewards and for heroes in military camps were graded "four-headed", "twelve-headed", "twenty-headed" and "forty-headed" in recognition of the number enemies killed. Such gifts were called *in'am*, "a reward for a head or pair of ears" (Bregel' 1961:183).

A similar tale is told of Ong Qan, the 13th century Kerait leader who was Chinggis Khan's first patron and ultimately his rival. On the run after being defeated by Chinggis Khan, he was killed by a Naiman warrior who did not recognize him. When rumors about his death reached Naiman ruler Tayang Qan, his mother said: "Ong Qan was an aged, great qan of old. Fetch [ye] his head. If it truly be [his], we shall sacrifice [into it]". The head was brought to Naiman's camp and recognized. After that they spread out large white *coshma*-carpet put the head on it and began sacrifice, keeping their hands in a position of adoration. They forced their daughters and sisters-in-law to sing ceremonial songs to the accompaniment of lute (*hur*). Suddenly the head laughed. "It hath laughed" – said Tayang Qan and then commanded that the

head be trampled and crushed into pieces. This action was interpreted as a sign of weakness that was believed confirmed when Chinggis Khan defeated Tayang Qan and the Naiman (Cleaves 1982: 116).

The cult of the severed head and headhunting are both manifestations of the same ideological complex. It may be that even in different parts of the world the causes for creation of initial idea of the role of the head were very similar. The most generalized questions aroused by humanity were the problems of life and death, of the attitude to nature, of the human place in it, of the attitude to the animal world, the earth, the other persons – i.e. the all matters that compose the culture as an integral system. Depending on these integral questions, on the mood of creation of the ideological system, "the main myth" concentrated the other secondary motifs, was the concrete manifestation of them – in our case it is the attitude to the head and attendant motifs.

The motif of soil and human fertility linked with head is one of the most widespread in the world cultures. But in systems of life and death and resurrection equally embody this motif is not more than a variant of an universal conception of existence of universal vital power. This vitality could leave, return, concentrate and in concentrated form it can be used in solution of a number of questions, include connected with power. That is why evidently the cases of concentration of a great number of heads and skulls in particular places? Fixed by different sources since Neolithic up to the end of 19th century (for example, in a form of pyramids composed from skulls).

Judging on a number of traits, the creators of such compositions wanted to obtain the force similar to those that had been described in the discussion of *sulde* earlier. It is the force that summarizes forces of numerous personas the same time borrowing it from enemies. This force is bearing different names in different cultures (*charizma, farn, de, mana* and so on). Each of them is conceptually grounded from a point of view of predominant ideological scheme that is typical of each concrete historical and cultural region. This vital force could be fought against, destroyed, obtained, concentrated or used for somebody's aims. Together with the head this force could be hidden and protected within the community. Or if the head was lost, this force (or the part of it which was embodied in it after a death) could be lost to another society along with its personal name. Thus the loss of a head of any member of community was morally esteemed as a shame and initiated aspirations of revenge to get the skull back or take another in compensation. If this head was of the same social and political "quality" as the one lost, it could redress the loss and even be used for burial with another's body.

3. Practice of ravage/destruction of graves

Real acts of violence often bears either direct or mediated character. Direct actions, for example, physical punishment for some crime are often could be explained simply. It is more difficult to understand mediated actions which could be of an abstract character. Mediation according to the theory of ritual must favor to obtain some concrete planned goals and have original but logically explained character. It is to be noticed that apparently direct actions often (in dependence of context) could be of ritual abstract character, which could be only explained from the positions of traditional ideological system.

Among different kinds of symbolic violence which have a ritual form the author focuses on a practice ruining graves. This theme is quite well elaborated in sources on Central Asian history, but did not explain detailed and systematical things yet.

Dynasty and family cemeteries in the system of the traditional culture are concerned to a list of the consecrate sites. The remains of ancestors were respected with a high piety and a struggle for the graves acquired political nuances. The "family" graves were usually conserved while the "strange" ones could be easily ruined.

The belief in "evil eye" from the part of the deads is widely-spread. It particularly concerns the deads who were while living people famous for something. Such a person could support the members of his family in some starts even after his death but he can also make harm to both members of his family and the others, strange to his family people including by the "order" of the alive relatives and descendants. To neutralize his actions the grave used to be dug out, and the bones of the dead were cut into pieces and thrown out of it. In the political culture such episodes can be met frequently and serve as an example of following the existence of the ethnographical realities of social character in the political level.

The third item is a unity between the deads and alives within the same social political organism. There is a whole complex of the early naturalistic view here. First, the idea of reincarnation of the deads into their descendants, secondly, the united force of the socially active members of the society which is formed of the sum of the separate forces. A loss of one of its parts leads to the weakness of this social organism.

Summarizing these three items we can conclude that in the described by us act while judging and understanding it is necessary to put on the first place the logical scheme of causes and consequences, which is based on the shaman's views. The killed, being a member of the community, of social political organism, is presented as an owner of a certain part of sum-total force; this organism, in its turn, not only consists of presently alives but of their ancestors as well. It is represented as a close system where a correspondent list of names exists; it is quite frequent that the descendant is a

new embodiment of an ancestor who is called with his name and is treated adequately. Leaving for spiritual world person could return. One of the conditions which have to be fulfilled to return usually (or most often) is the intact skeleton, the presence of all bones safely. Break of this order according to accepted logic have to lead to the idea of possibility of picking out separate parts from summarized social and political community. So ritual and magic aspects of political culture here comes at the first plan in the enemy's activity and in their rationally formulated aims.

Probably the massive destroying of burials and skeletons of rival's ancestors could have this nuance, and this way the action of violence over the whole social political organism ruling the family was made etc.; its joint force which was accumulating in the course of a series of generations which enabled holding power by this family was depreciated. The elimination of family and dynastic cemeteries was an apparent sign of decadence of the old dynasty and assimilating of real geographical and political area by a new dynasty. It can be an evident reason why in 13th century the Mongolians suing the sultan Djalal-ad-Din dug out of the ground and burned the bones of all buried sultans as "they considered that all these sultans were of the same origin" (Nasavi 1973: 242). To protect their joint social political force from the ritual political violence various ways were used. One of the most spread ways was secret hidden burials and guarding the cemeteries by especially provided for this purpose groups of people (more detailed on this theme; Dmitriev 2000).

4. Standard in Military Culture and its Semantics

Existence of a standard has an important historical retrospection since ancient time. Ideologically conditioned character of standard complex had a special role in the system of formation of power in the military political culture on a whole.

In the system of the political relations the banner made mark of the sovereignty or, on the contrary, of the dependence from the local leader. It was handed by the governor to the vassal as a sign of delegating the power. Within the union the banner was one of the consecrate attributes of the power. According to the views of the Mongolians, if the banner is stolen it will be impossible to resist the adversary (Potanin 1899: 305).

Each Kazakh family had its own banner and each unity - its badger which were brought out only to the war. In this case the sultan put out a banner near his tent, in the allied tents the badges were erected and the armament gathered and after meeting in one place was divided into "circles" and chose its military leader. The latest chose two commands-in-chief and no of them used to stand as a head of the troop and the second was charged with

the custody of the main banner (Levshin:1832, 51). Making decision about a war the syndic and the sultan governing the family stood out the banner near his tent: just at this moment all the family hurried to arm, the couriers hurried to the allied villages. After meeting in one place the armament was divided into "circles" at the head of which a leader was chosen. These leaders chose two commanders-in-chief "famous by their courage and experience". one of them stood at the head of the troop or, according to A. Geys, was a chairman and governor of the council, and without him it was impossible commit any action and the custody of the family banner was charged to the second. If in the war operation several families participated the four superior leaders of the army were chosen and the two of them kept custody of the main banner and the others governed the council (1897:72-73).

The main events in the battle took place round the main standard allocated in the center of the main forces of the enemy. They tried to overturn, crush it, to stick in the ground its top and to break it (in the funds of the Russian Ethnographical Museum in Saint-Petersburg the standard with broken top is reserved – No 6772-128). The presence in the troops of "coronated" person made a great moral influence on the less eminent rivals who simply declines the battle frequently. This custom was widely spread as in the personal dispute the question of power, of usurping the region etc.. was being resolved.. This situation was frequently used including the cases of the war hooks using the standards. Sometimes the khan was in the tactic reserve and his appearance in the crucial moment under his standard made crucial influence on the course of the battle. There were occasion when the leader even not having at a certain moment outnumbering forces simply put his standard provoking a fuss and panic in the enemy's camp.

In this context a series of functional characteristics of the standard is considered, and we drafted some not settled yet by this work ideological categories that serve the standard complex (Dmitriev 2000). The place of the standard in the system of military political coordinates has been determined. First of all, this is a standard as a symbol of the power, mark of a system-forming center with the ideological functions in the system of the tribe and , later, state cults. As it seems to the author, being one of the centers of the social political marking of the social unity and space, the standard is, on the one hand, covers in itself, attracts into the orbit of its influence not connected with it primarily views, and on the other hand, disperses into the other spheres of the culture its energetic (ritual) functions encouraging the consolidation of the social unity and its ideology in its developing field of the political culture.

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THE CHINGGISIDS AND THEIR STATUS IN CENTRAL ASIA AND EAST EUROPE

Dmitri Yu. Arapov

The continuing high status granted to the descendants of dynasties that formerly ruled large areas of Eurasia presents an important historical problem. The case of the descendants of Chinggis Khan, the "Great Conqueror of a World", who continued to receive titles, rights and privileges as representatives of an imperial family from successor regimes long after their own empire had collapsed is especially interesting.

According to the academician V. Barthold, the Turkish title of the *khan* in the Mongolian Empire, formally used as a prince's title, came to be reserved as the title of the sovereign only and was restricted exclusively to the direct heirs of Chinggis Khan. The title of *sultan*, formerly the highest temporal title of sovereign was applied to every member of the Chinggisid dynasty who were patrilineal descendants of its founder.

The most important decisions concerning the dynasty were resolved by congresses (*khurultais*) that served as an "an organ maintaining the state" in which the descendants of Chinggis Khan, as members of the ruling dynasty, played a decisive role (Safargaliev 1960: 44). It was at such *khurultais* that the election of a new khan was officially proclaimed.¹ The members of dynasty who were present at coronation of the selected lord, exposed their

¹ The heirs of Chinggis Khan's according to his last will were his four sons from the marriage with his senior wife Borte – Jochi, Chaghadai, Ögüdei and Tolui. Only patrilineal descent from the founder entitled one to claim for a throne of sovereign.

¹ The number "nine" in traditions of Mongols and Turks was sacral. Chinggis Khan always gave the special importance to the given number. He personally defined the number of specially appointed noblemen, each of whom was saved from punishments for nine misconducts. (Vladimirtsov 1948).

heads, disentangled belts or even hung them on their necks in the sign of obedience (Trepavlov 1993a: 69, 70). They also participated in a rite when they raised the *khan* on a felt, carried up him on a throne, set him on a horse (as a rule white in color) and gave him their oaths of allegiance. In completion they enacted before him a rite of nine worship.²

During the 14th century, those Chinggisids living in western part of the Mongolian possessions in Eurasia had largely accepted Islam as their dominant religion. But at the same time "they considered the rights inherited from Chinggis Khan traditionally to be of more importance" because it was descent from "the Great Conqueror of a World" (and not religion) that in the eyes of their subjects legitimized their monopoly of the imperial throne (Arapov 1998: 45). However, over time substantial real power to rule fell into the hands of their non-Chinggisid governors. These governors, who could not claim direct patrilineal descendant of Chinggis Khan on a man's line, often tried to elevate their social status by marrying Chinggisid princesses to gain the right to the title of "son-in-law" (*güregen*) to the *khan*'s family.

The most famous example of this was Central Asian conquer Timur who in the beginning of his reign employed only the title of *emir* (leader). After the marrying a Chinggisid princesses he became a *güregen* and wielded immense power in the name of powerless puppet Chinggisid *khans* (Barthold 1968). The names of these *khans* were minted on coins and according to Mohammedan rules were mentioned during the *khutba* (the Friday prayer) in main mosques of the Timur's empire (Islam 1991: 285). The same practice was also seen in the Golden Horde where Mamai, another "son-in-law" of the official Chinggisid dynasty, ruled his possessions in Eastern Europe in the name of puppet *khans* till 1380 (Safargaliev 1960: 116).

After Timur's death in 1405, his descendants (known as Timurids) ruled Central Asia during the 15th century as temporal sovereigns with the title of *sultan*. During this period the practice of employing powerless Chinggisid *khans* gradually disappeared. However, when the Timurids were defeated in 1506 by Muhammad Shaybani Khan, leader of the Uzbeks from Dasht-i-Kipchak, there was a "Chinggisid restoration" of sorts because the leaders of the new Shaybanid dynasty claimed direct descent from Chinggis Khan and restored the prestige of the *khan*'s authority. The most renowned ruler of the Shaybanids, 'Abd Allah Khan II (reigned 1557-98), managed to subordinate

² The number "nine" in traditions of Mongols and Turks was sacral. Chinggis Khan always gave the special importance to the given number. He personally defined the number of specially appointed noblemen, each of whom was saved from punishments for nine misconducts. (Vladimirtsov 1948).

all of Central Asia to his rule by applying cruelty. At this time Bukhara became the capital of the Shaybanid state and so the whole realm was known as the Bukharan khanate (Gafurov 1989: 274).

Another branch of Chinggisids, the Janids (or Ashtarkhanids) replaced Shaybanids in Central Asia at the beginning of the 17th century and they ruled in Bukhara up to the middle of the 18th century. During this time the *khan's* authority again became quite feeble and the last representatives of the Chinggisid dynasty were turned into puppets by Uzbek tribal nobility. A similar situation also emerged in Kokand and Khiva, which had separated from Bukhara by this time in which the elite of nomadic tribes changed from one puppet Chinggisid sovereign to another at will in "the game with *khans*" (Ivanov 1958: 100).

Emirs of Manghit tribe, the representatives of nobility of one of the largest Uzbek tribes, usurped the authority in Bukhara at the end of the 18th century under conditions of anarchy and ruled until 1920. Although they called their state an *emirate*, it was also traditionally known as the *khanate* of Bukhara in Russian formal documents and the scientific literature during the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century (Arapov 1993: 13). New states were also established in Central Asia where the Qonghirat dynasty established itself in Khiva in 1785 and ruled until 1920 while Uzbek Ming dynasty ruled in Kokand from 1710 until 1875 (Ivanov 1958: 108, 158). The title of *khan* was reserved for the head of state in Khiva and Kokand even though new owners were not direct descendants of Chinggis Khan. They in assuming this title they broke a tradition established in Eurasia from the beginning of the 13th century.

Rulers of the Giray dynasty, which ruled over Crimean khanate from 1428 to 1783, were the last full Chinggisid khans in the west. Over time, Crimea was gradually transformed from an independent state into the vassal territory of the Ottoman Empire. By the end of the 16th century the Crimea became a peculiar Mohammedan buffer between Turkey, the Moscow state and Retch Pospolitaia (Poland and Lithuania). The Giray *khans* frequently were the puppets for the Turkish governors, but this family was considered to be the second in prestige only after the Ottoman sultans in the Turkish political hierarchy. The English historian C. Bosworth has gone so far as to contend that in Turkey "everybody understood involuntarily, that, if the Ottoman dynasty has stopped the existence, Girays would state the claims to the Turkish throne" (Bosworth 1971: 210, 211).

Russia from the 13th through 15th centuries was a dependency of the Golden Horde and this produced a particular attitude toward the Chinggisid dynasty. In Russian medieval sources titled Chinggisid *khans* like are labeled *czars* while other descendants of Chinggis Khan were called *czarevitches*.

Descent from Chinggis Khan was very highly valued and his descendants were considered to be equal to those of Rurik of Kievan Rus and Gedemin of Lithuania. Annexation of Kazan and Astrakhan *khanates* by Moscow in the middle of the 16th century raised the international political status of the Russian czar Ivan (IV) the Terrible (Trepavlov 1993b).

Since at least the 14th century, numerous of subjects of the Golden Horde had joined the of Russian nobility. Those who had adopted Orthodox Christianity, including Chinggisids, immediately received all the rights and privileges of the accorded to the highest strata of the Russian elite. The legal status of the Mohammedan nobility of the Golden Horde origin, including the posterity of Chinggis Khan, was registered officially soon after the annexation of Crimea to Russia in 1783 under the terms of a decree issued by Empress Katharine II on February 22 1784. This act extended to "the princes and *mirzas* of Tartar genesis who remained Mussulmen" and lived in European Russia "all freedoms, profits and advantages" that belonged to the Russian nobility except for the right to possess Christian serfs (FCLRE I, 1830a). (This legal solution corresponded closely to the standards of the "*Common Establishment*" of 1649 by which Mussulmen were prohibited from having Christians in their service and as their property.

This decree presented the authorities of the empire with a particular legal case soon after it was implemented. Districts in the territory that had formerly been ruled by Retch Pospolitaia was home to a western Muslim aristocracy ("the Lithuanian and Polish Tartars") that traditionally possessed peasants of different religions, including Christians. After imperial authorities were convinced of loyalty of the western Muslim aristocracy to the Russian Empire, further decrees were published in 1795 and 1840 that recognized and retained the special patterns of ownership of the of the Mohammedan elite in Western Russia (Arapov 1999).

Under the initiative of the outstanding statesman M. Speransky, who was the governor of Siberia from 1819 to 1821, the empire adopted statutory rules for engaging the descendants of Chinggis Khan in Russian service in the southeast. Speransky prepared it with the help of G. Batenkov, who became a Decembrist after some time (Fedorov 1997: 158). As affirmed by Emperor Alexander I in 1822, "*The Charter About the Siberian Kirghiz*" declared that "the external districts of Omsk area" were to be considered "the country of the Siberian Kirghiz" [i.e., of the Kazakhs]. This group of the population was considered as a part of "the estate of nomadic *inorodcy*" [i.e., the native born nomadic population] for which a special management system was set up. A large role in this system was reserved for Chinggis Khan's posterity.

The Charter defined the Chinggisids as *sultans* who belonged to "the heritable ... to the highest and honorable Kirghiz estate" who were to be immune from corporal punishments. The sultans exhibited devotion to Russian throne and became a key source of managerial personnel in for the local district and *volost* administration. The representatives of this class group received the public payment and had the right to wear Russian uniforms after being confirmed in their positions. They were afforded the special land grants during their periods of a service and had the right to organize personal caravans for trade inside and outside of Russian possessions.³ "The Charter" also granted *sultans* the right to receive material support from their "communities ... according to the present regulations" during their periods of their service.⁴

The authors of "The Charter" defined the position of the sultans in the imperial administrative hierarchy rather uniquely. Under this law *sultans* were "neither possessors, nor landowners" in their relations with the other inhabitants of steppe. Instead they were viewed as "the local officials assigned for control by the people". *Sultans* lacked the right to judge independently, but they did serve as the first initiators of judgements that could be appealed to the highest provincial authorities. The population could also appeal their behavior and acts. An important duty of *sultans* was the maintenance of Mohammedan clerics who undertook religious activities in their territories under the control of the *sultans* who paid them.

In the *volost sultans* were "the *volost's* governors assigned by the highest heads with the consent of the people". In accordance with "The Charter" the *volost* governor was elected for the period of three years and received a grade of the 12 classes (up to 1884 in an army service it corresponded to a grade of the lieutenant, in a civil service – to a grade of the *gubernian* secretary). The *sultans*, as the *volost's* governors, were obliged "to execute all the directed rules, to protect public and private safety, and to

³ The *high sultan*, as the chief of a district had the right to utilize for the farming the ground "convenient for agriculture, cattle breeding and other economic activities" by the area of 6 – 8 km² located near to his residence during his service in the post. The *high sultans* also reserved the right to graze their cattle on the pastures of their "communities".

⁴ In the nomadic societies there was a traditional custom of regularly presenting gifts to a senior person by someone lower in rank as a sign of an admission of subordination and special respect. The number of subjects engaged in giving gifts was relevant. The odd numbers (3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13, and 15) were sacred in Mongolian and Turkish tradition and these were customarily selected. If the basis for the gift was the number "nine", then each category of gifts should contain this number: 9 horses, 9 bales with dressing gowns (in each bale till 9 dressing gowns) etc. (Andreev, Chekhovitch 1972: 98, 132).

provide calmness in *volosts* in general". They could appoint their sons or other close relatives to serve with them as assistants.

There were ordinarily between 15 and 20 *volosts* integrated into a single district. The local *sultans*, who lived at each *volost*, elected the high *sultan* who controlled the whole district for the period of three years. The *high sultan* was considered by "*The Charter*" to be "the chief of *zemstvo*, to whom the local control was entrusted by the Russian government after his election on the position by the representatives of a tribe". The *high sultan* was obligated to maintain the "preservation of silence and order and the achievement of the welfare of the people subordinated to him". The *high sultan* had the right "to be recognized in a grade of the major of the Russian service everywhere during the period of his service".⁵ After serving in the position of the selected chief of a district during three periods, the *high sultans* had the right to ask the Russian czar to grant them of a diploma of hereditary nobility of the Russian Empire. (FCLRE I, 1830b). By similar ways a number of Chinggisid families entered the structure of the Mohammedan nobility of the empire. Among these was the Valikhanov dynasty, including the family of the glorified Kazakh enlightener, Chokan Chinggis Valikhanov (Strelkova 1983).

From this historical review it is clear that the officials of the Russian Empire correctly understood and tried to utilize the huge reservoir of respect held by conventional Asian society for the political authority of the descendants of founder of the Mongolian Empire. The reverence for Chinggisids as members of a dynasty descending from "the Great World Conqueror" remained firmly entrenched (if informally) throughout Central Asia during all period of its Soviet history. It remains there now, and it will be doubtless continue to influence the future course of ethnic and political processes in the region (Masanov 1996).

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⁵ In 18th and the 1st half of the 19th century, obtaining the rank of army major (8 classes) entitled one to hereditary nobility, the rank of the lieutenant (14 classes) to personal nobility. Under the decree of 1856, there was an increase in the service qualification for nobility. Now the right on hereditary nobility was connected with the attainment of a colonel rank (6 classes), and the right to personal nobility required the grade of the captain (9 classes) (Rikman 1992: 19-21).

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GOVERNMENT OF THE TURKISTAN REGION NATIVE POPULATION IN THE RUSSIAN EMPIRE

Dmitri V. Vasiliev

The population of Russia's Central Asian possessions that was incorporated into the empire during the second half of the 19th century had not previously experienced a unified administrative system. Under the earlier rule of khans of region, the nomadic population had been divided into tribes, the tribes into divisions, and these divisions into subdivisions. The khans used such traditional tribal principles of segmentation as the basis for creating their own administrative divisions for their nomadic populations. The leaders of these nomadic tribal groups held the titles of *manaps*, *sultans* or *senior beys*. The ordinary *beys*, governors of tribal divisions, served as their subordinates while local subdivisions were ruled by the *tugachies*. The ranks of *manaps*, *sultans* and *beys*, both senior and ordinary, were inheritable except in those infrequent cases when a tribe or division considered the heir too unworthy to control the people. In such cases, the notables of the tribe elected a new leader who had to be approved by the local *bek* as the *khan's* representative (Palen 1910: 3). Though according to customs these *beks* had only the right to approve the tribal leaders who had been selected by the local population, they frequently used their own discretion to veto inconvenient choices and replace them with candidates of their own choosing. Only the *tugachies* were elected exclusively by the tribe's notables and their rank was not considered heritable.

Originally, nomad tribal leaders served only as a police force left the judicial functions in the hands of special judges. These positions were held by anyone who had the high respect by the people. However, as the influence of the *sultans* and *beys* increased over time, they eventually also became judicial authorities in their own right and only occasionally allowed parties in

judicial proceedings to elect a mediator to solve their disputes. The *tugachies* never obtained judicial authority and remained police bodies.

The sedentary population was divided into *aksakhalships* in which the natives were clustered into small-sized administrative units based on their location. Each sedentary settlement or block (a division of a large settlement) was managed by *aksakhals* who were elected by the people and affirmed by the *beks*. Neither law nor custom regulated the order and term of office for these *beks*. The *aksakhals* had both police and administrative authority, and also managed collection of some taxes. *Aksakhals* divided their managing authorities with other bodies. In populous settlements there were *raeses* (assigned by the *beks*) who looked after religious observances and regulated trade in the bazaars. *Raeses* also had a right to disassemble the family proceedings.

The staff undertaken by the collecting of taxes was more numerous. The collecting of the land taxes was managed by the special government officials, *serkhers*, and their assistants, *merabs*. *Arik-aksakhals* supervised the distribution of water and played a considerable role in tax collection. The personal property tax was levied by *ziakhetches* (assigned by the *beks* or *khans*) under the control of *mirza-bashy*. Tax collection among the nomads was not as well organized and proved unsatisfactory.

Right after the conquest, the attention of the Russian authorities was consumed by the political problems their conquests had created. They therefore paid no proper attention to the organization of internal affairs and simply allowed the indigenous officials from the old regime to serve at their existing posts. There were no changes in the process of assigning tribal leaders and *aksakhals*. However, this began to change with the promulgation of the "*The Temporary Statute for Governing of Turkistan Province*"¹ in 1865 that aimed to draw the Central Asian possessions into the administrative orbit of the Russian empire. This statute gave the military governor of the province the authority to control the indigenous population based on the general rules established for the governors elsewhere. Thus, he had the right to rule the indigenous population directly by assigning new officials or dismiss old ones from their posts. These included the existing tribal leaders among the nomads (*beys* and *manaps*) and the offices of *aksakhals*, *raeses*, *bazaar-bashy* and *kazys* in sedentary areas. In this way, the *managers of the native population* became the direct chiefs for all local administration. They reported directly to the chiefs of regional departments into which Turkistan Province was now divided. These *managers* supervised

¹ Province was a large special administrative and territorial unit. As a rule, its territory and value was less, than *governors*. Consisted of *uezds* or departments.

activities of the people's courts, protected caravans, conducted forest patrols and regulated irrigation systems. They also oversaw regular taxation and performed any other duties or requirements that the administration need done at the local level. (FCLRE II: No 42372).

The first attempt to legalize a new local administration took place in 1867 when the province was converted into the Turkistan General-Governorship (*general-gubernatorstvo*) and the promulgation of "*The Statute for Governing of Semiretshenskaya and Syr-Darya Provinces*" was approved. This called for all of the indigenous population of the region to be divided conditionally into nomad and sedentary categories that were given the general ethnic tags of Sart (settled) and Kirghiz (nomad).

In this reorganization, the nomadic population was divided into districts based primarily on Russian administrative usage. Each community was assigned an to an *uezd*,² which in turn was divided into a *volost*,³ down to the most local level of an *aul* (the indigenous term for an encampment group). The *volost* was operated by the *volost manager*, and the *aul* by the *aul foremen*. The population during *aul* meetings and *volost* congresses elected both *volost* and *aul* officials for the period of three years. Thus, the elections of the officials of native management became two-staged process, although the representatives of imperial management vetted their outcomes. *Volost managers* and *aul foremen* maintained an armed police force and held administrative authority in their districts. *Volost managers* reported to the chief of the *uezd* who represented the Russian administration. Their major obligations were to preserve social order, enforce of the judicial decisions, and to impose administrative punishments for minor legal violations. In the settled areas, the local police and administrative authority belonged to an *aksakhal* who was assigned to each settlement or urban quarter. The procedure of election to this post was the same as for the nomadic population and the *aksakhal* had the same police powers held by the *volost manager* among the nomads.

It is interesting to note that in 1867 the government established a system of privileges and honors for the native officials to encourage their closer cooperation with the Russian administration. The most deserved representatives of indigenous population could be awarded the rank of the honorable citizen, receive medals, be given honorable dressing gowns (a traditional mark of favor in the old khanates) or receive cash payments. By incorporating conventional local views this reward system made the

² *Uezd* is an administrative and territorial unit, group of *volosts*, as a rule, gravitating to city.

³ *Volost* is an administrative and territorial unit, subdivision of *uezd* in agricultural terrain of Russia.

administration more effective and attractive to the new Russian subjects (Materials 1960: 289-293).

In 1871, the Tashkent administration modified its governmental organization in "*The Statute for Governing of Turkistan General-Governorship*." It retained the structure, rights and authority of the *volost* control practically without changes, but modified the procedure of elections for the *aul foreman*. The position of *volost congress* and *volost manager* remained without changes. (RSAMH 1871-1872: 22–24). Larger changes were implemented in 1873 when new regulations ("*The Statute for Governing in the Provinces of Turkistan General-Governorship, 1873*") when the division of the local population into Sarts and Kirghiz was changed to "settled" and "nomad" to more accurately reflect their economic and social status. While the old system was largely based on this distinction, the sedentarization of some formerly nomadic groups meant that they now more resembled their farming neighbors than other nomads. The main object of administrative reform was to propose giving both nomad and settle communities the same administrative system with uniform police and administrative organization patterned after of two-stage Kirghiz model. *Aksakhal* bodies in settlements were supposed to be exchanged by rural (common) in the first instance (applicable to *aul* management for the nomads) and to be supplemented by the *volost* bodies in the second (highest) authority pursuant to same for the Kirghiz. (RSAMH 1873: 34-36)

In 1881, the government concluded that the local population of the Turkistan region should be treated more like other parts of the empire. It determined that the situation of the region most closely approached to the lowest estate of empire, the condition of a rural estate, and should not use any special advantages. This was implemented in "*The Statute for Governing of Turkistan General-Governorship, 1881*" and released the natives from a compulsory military service, from corporal punishments and granted some privileges. The new draft law equated Turkistan both rural (common) and *aul* foremen and *volost managers* in their rights and duties to the applicable officials of the rural societies elsewhere in the empire. The entity of rural meetings and of *volost* congresses for superintendence of public, economic business and election of officers was enabled, being applied to local conditions, on the basis of "*The Statute of February 19, 1861*" (The Explanatory Note 1881: 53– 9).

A visit to Turkistan as part of Senate audit laid the groundwork for the next project, "*The Statute for Governing of Turkistan Region 1883*." This confirmed the general tendency of treating the indigenous population of the general-governorship on the same basis as the lowest estates of taxpayers in the empire. Additionally it permitted the military governors to assign the

special police, *aksakhals (kurbashy)*, in cities and populous settlements to preserve public safety and order (The Statute 1883: 5–9). This was followed upon by a similar draft law in 1884 that changed only the service time on the positions of *volost* managers, common and *aul* foremen to five years (The Statute 1884: 7–8, 11).

The draft laws of 1871, 1873, 1881, 1883 and 1884, though the central authority did not approve them, demonstrated two directions in development of institutes of native management. One of them was aimed at the better distribution of the general imperial orders, and the other of using caution and gradualness for any changes because of fear provoking counteraction and rebellion by parts of the local population.

A new Statute for Governing of Turkistan Region was prepared in 1886. In this law, the improved system of organization of governing for the settled population was proposed. It took into account that with flow of time the percentage of recently settled part of the population among the natives had steadily increased in response to Russian policies designed to encourage the sedentarization of nomads. The Statute of 1886 finally created a unified two-stage management system for both the nomads and settled inhabitants of the region. Under the new law, all household heads became participants in rural (common) meetings, instead of electing deputies from 10 households, as it was done in 1867. This innovation completely corresponded to "*The General Provisions on the Peasants of 1861*." Besides, it was emphasized that the rights and duties of *volost* manager, of common foreman, of *volost* congress and of common meeting were determined by The General Institution for *Governs*, but with some additions. (FCLRE III: No 3814).

There is a fact of great importance. During organization of the control of indigenous population, the representatives of the Russian power had underlined the necessity of adopting a simple management system that could be used for the nomads (Kaufman 1885: 51; Girs 1883: 60). The new authority aimed at drawing the nomads into an administrative service that created favorable conditions for their obtaining a secondary and professional education (Kaufman 1885: 440-442). Such special arrangements for nomads could be explained by the fact that (according to the opinion of the representatives of imperial management) they were far removed from Mohammedan fanaticism. Moreover, they were ready for installation of the solid Russian power, which guaranteed them tranquillity and stability in a greater degree. (Girs 1883: 7, 8). Therefore, just the nomadic population should become a basis for the imperial management in Central Asia. The imperial government esteemed the nomads as conductors of its policy in Turkistan in the long term.

This research of dynamics of the Turkistan local law demonstrates that by beginning only with cautious attempts at implementing intrusive elements of an all-Russia management system, the imperial government in 1886 gradually created an administrative structure rather close to the national model. The local management of the nomads and settled population, which had differed very much from one another in the past, gradually gained more and more similarities. After more than two decades of the Russian power in Central Asia, the system of authority became quite European in its characteristics and came to approximate the situation of similar bodies of local management in other parts of Russia.

The further development of administrative system and statehood in Central Asia up to present day has shown the tendency for a symbiosis with the European tradition of statehood and the existing pre-state stage and early-state stage forms of hierarchy that existed in the region. In general, the Czarist authorities established themselves during the first years of Russian rule in Turkistan.

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14

CONCLUSION

Thomas J. Barfield

As the chapters in this volume demonstrate, nomads have always fascinated students of social evolution because they display such a broad range of social and political organizations and because they provoke a myriad of questions:

1. In what ways are nomadic pastoral societies they different from sedentary societies?
2. Why are there so many different levels of complexity found among different nomadic pastoral societies?
3. Are developments within nomadic pastoral societies internally or externally generated?
4. Can they be analyzed fruitfully as stages in some evolutionary sequence?

Defining nomadic pastoralists

Nomadic pastoralists live in societies where the husbandry of grazing animals is viewed as an ideal way of making a living and the regular movement of all or part of the society is considered a normal and natural part of life. Although in this volume and elsewhere there is a tendency to use the term "nomad" and "pastoralist" interchangeably, or to assume that one automatically includes the other, this is not always the case. Nomadism refers to movement (a feature that applies just as well to hunter-gatherers for example), while pastoralism is a subsistence type that may or may not demand movement. Thus not all pastoralists are nomadic (dairy farmers and cattle ranchers) nor are all nomads pastoralists. Organized around mobile households rather than individuals, it involves men, women and children in all the various aspects of production. This distinguishes nomadic pastoralists examined in this volume from shepherds

in western Europe or cowboys of the Americas who also earned a living herding animals because they were men recruited from the larger sedentary society to which they regularly return. And when raising livestock develops only an individual occupational specialty that is firmly embedded in the surrounding sedentary culture, no separate society of pastoralists ever comes into existence even though animal husbandry may be a major part of the economy.

One of the difficulties in comparing nomadic pastoral societies is that so many of them are also engaged in other subsistence activities (agriculture, trade, wage labor, hunting, military service) and have very different patterns of movement. For this reason scholars have spilled considerable ink in trying to decide which societies should be considered true nomadic pastoralists based on how the exclusivity of their pastoralism and extent of their movement. Typically they divide them by degree of movement (e.g. sedentary, semi-sedentary, semi-nomadic, nomadic), transport equipment (baggage animals, tents, yurts) and amount of agriculture they do (Bacon 1954, Johnson 1969). Such typologies are often instructive but generally fail because they search for ideal "pure nomads" who should subsist entirely on meat, milk or blood, avoid farmers, farming, and grain, and have few relations (mostly hostile) with villages or cities. However this stereotype goes against more than a century of ethnographic and historical research that demonstrates such pure nomads are largely illusions, sometimes created by nomadic pastoralists themselves as a way of defining their independence and cultural distinctiveness. Nevertheless, this cultural aspect of self-definition is of particular importance because pastoral nomadism is as much a way of life as it is a way of making a living. Although pastoral nomads may engage in other subsistence activities they put the welfare of their animals first. Trade or wage labor is seen as a means to obtain more animals; farming is viewed as an adjunct activity that will be abandoned if staying put places the herds at risk. It is only when they either abandon animal husbandry (by necessity of choice) or when people no longer move as an ordinary part of life that we can say they have truly abandoned a pastoral nomadic way of life. An example of this attitude was well put by a shepherd I traveled with in northern Afghanistan in 1975 who told me that one wealthy member of the tribe was no longer a true pastoralist because he now put his land first. Sedentarization is thus less about movement and subsistence than it is about maintaining a framework of cultural values. That framework of values may survive the end of a nomadic pastoral economy for some time, as can be seen among ruling dynasties that had their

origins among nomadic peoples or among people who have sedentarized but still have living generations who grew up as pastoral nomads.

Many of the chapters in this volume that describe the history of nomads who conquered sedentary areas echo this refrain. Examples include the descendents of Chinggis Khan who ruled the Mongol Empire (Skrynnikova, Arapov, this volume) and the Khitan Liao that established its own dynasty in northwest China (Pikov 2002). In these cases we have to look carefully at a specific historical problem: at what point should we stop treating these cases as examples of expansion by pastoral nomads and begin thinking of them as élites with a nomadic pastoral heritage and history? It is clear from the examples cited by Dmitriev (this volume) that although the Turko-Mongolian political institutions founded in a steppe pastoral milieu also had a continuing impact on the powerful dynasties that ruled over sedentary regions for many centuries such as the Ottomans, Seljuks, Ilkhanids or Timurids, to name but a few of the most famous.

Cultural ecology of nomadic pastoralists

Pastoralism is made possible because domesticated animals can digest grass and other forage that human beings cannot. Human beings live off the products of these animals (meat, skins, wool, milk, blood) either by consuming them directly in different forms or through exchanging such products for grains or manufactured goods. By moving from one seasonal pasture to another nomadic pastoralists are able to maximize the use of extensive but scattered forage resources in a way that sedentary people cannot to maximize the number of animals they can raise. The domestication and use of such animals opened up a very large grassland environment ranging from southern Africa to the edge of the steppes of Eurasia that had previously supported only foragers. The number of domesticated animals is surprisingly small: sheep, goats, cattle, camels, horses, yaks and donkeys. How these animals were combined and how they were exploited depended on the ecological conditions and scheme of cultural values. Some were primarily for subsistence (sheep, goats, cattle), some primarily for transport (horses, camels, donkeys) and some did double duty (horses on the steppe, camels in the desert, yaks in highland Asia). This produced six pastoral zones, each with a fairly uniform culture and a distinctive key animal that is raised to cultural preeminence.

1. The Eurasian steppe where horse raising is culturally preeminent but herds also include sheep, goats, cattle, and Bactrian camels. Historically groups such as the Scythians, Turks, Mongols, Kazaks, and Kirghiz were famous for

their horse riding and archery, military talents used to founded large empires that often terrorized their neighbors under leaders like Chinggis Khan and Attila the Hun (Barfield 1989).

2. Mountain and plateau areas of southwest Asia and Central Asia where sheep and goat pastoralism predominates, while horses, camels, and donkeys are used for transport. Groups such as the Bakhtiari, Shahsavan, Qashqa'i, Basseri, Lurs, Pashtuns have a symbiotic relationship with neighboring towns and villages as pastoral specialists, trading meat animals, wool, milk products, and hides for grain and manufactured goods (Barth 1961).
3. The Saharan and Arabian deserts where the Bedouins specialize in raising the dromedary camel for food and transport. Historically they also supplemented their income by selling protection to oasis farmers, providing camels for the caravan trade, and receiving subsidies for military support (ibn Khaldun 1967, Lancaster 1981).¹
4. The sub-Saharan savanna where cattle are highly valued by groups such as the Nuer, Dinka, Masai and Turkana. Labeled a "cattle complex" by anthropologists, sheep and goats also play a major role in subsistence as does seasonal agriculture. Using huts instead of portable tents, they use only donkeys for transport (Herskovits 1926).
5. The Asian high altitude plateaus where the yak makes pastoralism viable. Herds also include yak/cattle hybrids, high altitude varieties of sheep, cashmere goats, and a few horses. Tibetan pastoralists trade wool, skins, salt and milk products to valley villagers for barley which is a mainstay of their diet (Goldstein & Beall 1989).
6. High latitude pastoralists who herd reindeer exclusively (not discussed in this volume). Because reindeer are restricted to lichen that other domesticated herbivores cannot eat, this zone is has little overlap with the others. It is probably better seen as part of a continuum of reindeer exploitation that ranges from just hunting them as prey in North America to keeping large herds of domesticated reindeer that provide groups such as the Lapps with meat and skins as well as transport.

¹ I depart here from Khazanov's typology (this volume) that sees the entire Middle East and Central Asia as one zone because of the importance given to the camel by Bedouin people and their ability to use deserts that cannot support sheep or goats.

Levels of social complexity

Although the technology of animal husbandry and the techniques used to conduct it are not radically different from one zone to another (outside of the reindeer zone), the degree of social and political organization does vary and not randomly. Across Africa and Eurasia the size of political units and their centralization grows progressively more complex as one moves on a northeasterly line from the cattle a keeper of East Africa to the mounted horse nomads of Mongolia. The reason for this seems to have less to do with the internal demands of organizing pastoral production than it does with coming to terms with the outside world. As Khazanov (1984) as documented more fully, nomadic pastoralists do not live in a vacuum but rather in constant interaction with their non-nomadic neighbors. As I have suggested elsewhere (Barfield 1993) we see four different types of social and political organization common to nomadic pastoralists in sub-Saharan Africa, the desert Near East and North Africa, the plateau areas of Anatolia, Iran and Central Asia, and the steppe zones of Eurasia. These coincide with the level of complexity of societies pastoral nomads encountered when dealing with their sedentary neighbors:

1. Acephalous segmentary lineages in sub-Saharan Africa where tribal societies encountered few state societies until the colonial era;
2. Lineages with permanent leaders but no supra-tribal organization that rarely reached more than 10,000 people each in North Africa and Arabia where tribal societies faced regional states with which they had symbiotic relations;
3. Supra-tribal confederations that had populations of a hundred of thousand or more people apiece with powerful leaders who were part of a regional political network within large empires in Iran or Anatolia linking tribes to states as conquerors or subjects;
4. Centralized tribal states ruling over vast distances with populations that could sometime approach one million on the steppes north of China supported by extractive relationships with neighboring sedentary civilizations.

A closer look shows that each of the larger units incorporates elements of the smaller ones. That is lineages of some type are common to all, but in the larger units they are not autonomous. Similarly nomadic states that ruled over huge territories were subdivided into smaller supra-tribal component parts. A basic question therefore arises as to whether such developments were the result of internal evolution or adaptation to the outside world. Pressure from the inside is unlikely to be the operating factor. It does not really require higher levels of organization to raise different types of animals. Also since nomadic populations

were dispersed with low population densities, no significant division of labor, and hard to tax, there was little potential for such development. But when pastoral nomads were confronted with sedentary societies more centralized than themselves, they tended to organize to meet it militarily and politically (cf. Irons this volume). An historical example of such a change was the rise of the Zulu in the 19th century that transformed political relations among all pastoral nomadic societies in southern Africa (cf. Kazankov this volume). In response to European expansion a formerly decentralized lineage system was transformed into a centralized state in a manner strikingly similar to that seen on the Chinese-Mongolian frontier two millennia earlier.

This interaction was not always one way as Korotayev's example (this volume) of changes in tribal structure generated by nomads in Yemen demonstrates, but in general nomads rarely had more highly centralized political organizations than their sedentary neighbors did. It should also be noted that the higher the level of organization the more expensive the system was to maintain. The Hsiung-nu and Turkish states that dealt with China extorted from it millions of dollars worth of subsidies and trade goods annually that were then redistributed downward through the system. Far from deriving revenue from the pastoral peoples they ruled, nomadic empires facing China derived the revenue they needed from the outside. When political order in China collapsed and such quantities of wealth were unable to flow to the Mongolian steppe, their states also collapsed (Barfield 1989). This may be one reason why the militarily powerful Mongols never attempted to incorporate the Bedouin areas of the Near East: these areas did not have enough revenue to finance a large tribal confederation, so they remained on the Iranian and Anatolian plateaus where enough revenue could be extracted from the regions farmers and traders (Barfield 2002).

An evolutionary sequence?

The history of treating the development of nomadic societies was well outlined in the introduction of this volume. It demonstrates that the use of simple unilinear models of evolution have largely been abandoned along with the assumption that nomadic pastoral societies must be fit into categories designed for sedentary societies. Still the range of complexity from very decentralized and egalitarian to those that are complex and statelike invites an evolutionary perspective. I would argue, however, that the types of complexity among pastoral nomadic societies and the reasons for their origin debated by Vasjutin and Kradin (this volume) cannot be evaluated as systems unto themselves. That is we do not

see a linear projection from simple lineages without leaders to supercomplex chiefdoms or even nomadic states within any single nomadic society. Instead the jumps are often breathtaking, such the transformation from a decentralized and anarchic political system at the time of Chinggis Khan's birth into the most highly centralized and unified political organization in pre-modern Eurasian history at his death in 1227. The rise of the Zulus within a single generation in the 19th century shows an equally rapid transformation in southern Africa in the 19th century in an area where nomadic pastoralists had not previously dealt with powerful states, but only people like themselves organized around lineages and age sets.

One element that may be more fruitful in looking at an evolutionary sequence is the striking degree to which nomads that appear and reappear in supercomplex chiefdoms or nomadic states maintain a higher degree of hierarchy as an accepted cultural norm than in those that do not. For example in North Africa and the Near East groups such as the Bedouin were highly egalitarian in terms of both their kinship structure cases and their political organization. As ibn Khaldun (1967) first noted centuries ago, dynasties there rarely lasted more than four generations and it was easy for one ruling elite to replace another. By contrast the Turko-Mongolian systems of the Eurasian steppe were hierarchical in both their kinship structure (elder brother-younger-brother, senior generation-junior generation, etc.) and political organization. Here once a ruling dynasty was founded it had remarkable staying power: four to five hundred years for the Hsiung-nu ruling house, eight hundred years for various successors of Chinggis Khan and the Ottoman Turks. Even when the steppe empires of Mongolia collapsed and the nomads there reverted to less complex systems of social organization they still maintained the cultural predisposition to accept hierarchy, making it much easier for a charismatic leader to establish a new empire and maintain it. In the Near East and North Africa, by contrast, there was a cultural rejection of hierarchy that made unification based on tribal links difficult. For this reason ibn Khaldun argued that the Bedouin tended to unite in the name of religion (and often under non-tribal leadership) because such movements transcended tribal ties, the rise of early Islam being one of the best examples. On the Eurasian steppe, however, religion played little or no role in the organization of large nomadic polities except to confer blessings on their leaders. Here, perhaps, looking at the evolutionary potential of each system would help explain different impact each group had when they expanded from their core areas into Anatolia, the Iranian, Plateau and Central Asia. The Bedouin legacy was the

Islamic religion and not long lived dynasties ruled by the descendants of tribal leaders. The Turko-Mongolian expansion in the region, by contrast, was marked by an almost unending string of dynasties that ruled the entire region for almost one thousand years, from the time of the Seljuks in the 11th century to end of the Ottoman in the 20th.

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