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History of Society and Democracy: Before New Epoch

Book 1
Beginnings of Democracy in Early Civilizations

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In the first book, having common name "History of Society and Democracy: Before New Epoch", it is paid special attention to the origin and formation of political and republican democracy in ancient civilizations, especially in Ancient Greece and Ancient Rome, and up to the 18th century when democracy acquired a new shape.

A short analysis of the conditions of early civilizations' society in Sumer, Babylon, Assyria, ancient states of Egypt, India, China and another East. Many people think that a democratic basis was born in Ancient Greece. However, researching of early civilizations showed that we are able to find beginnings of democracy in the societies of earlier states.

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INTRODUCTION.

WHAT IS DEMOCRACY…

1. Evolution of the term

Democracy is the most complex and polysemantic type of political regime in the forms of implementation. Debates have not ceased about the meaning of the term "democracy" for seven centuries, since 1260, when the word was first used in the translation of Aristotelian "Politics"[1].

The term "democracy" has become the most common in political science since antiquity when it originated and denoted "power of the people"[2]. However, the mass use of the term did not leave behind it a certain unambiguous content. Until now, political science has not developed generally accepted ideas allowing us to formulate a clear definition of democracy. Various authors focus attention on the individual components of democracy, for example, the power of the majority, its limitation and control over it, the fundamental rights of citizens, the legal and social statehood, finally, the separation of powers, general elections, transparency, the competition of different opinions and positions, pluralism, equality, participation.

Accordingly, democracy is interpreted in several ways:

1) expansive as a social system based on the voluntariness of all forms of life of the individual;
2) more narrowly, as a form of state in which all citizens have equal rights to power (as opposed to a monarchy where power belongs to

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[1] Politics is a work in 8 books of political philosophy by Aristotle. The title of the Politics literally means "the things concerning the polis".
[2] The term originated from the Greek words "demos", i.e., "people", and "kratos", i.e., "power".

one person or aristocracy, and management is carried out by a group of persons); it is an ancient tradition of the interpretation of democracy, originating from Herodotus (the 5th century BC);

3) democracy is understood as an ideal model of social order, as a certain worldview based on the values of freedom, equality, human rights; individuals, groups professing these values, form a movement for their implementation; in this sense, the term "democracy" is interpreted as a social movement, as a type of political orientation, embodied in the programs of certain parties.

The evolution of the meaning of the term "democracy" took place simultaneously with the development of human society. Initially, since its inception, democracy had been seen as the direct rule of citizens as opposed to the rule of the monarch or aristocrats. However, democracy was recognized as "the worst form" of the rule already in antiquity. For the low level of culture of the citizens of the Greek polis states allowed the rulers to manipulate such a "people's power" so that the regimes of democracy were short-lived and passed into ochlocracy[3]; and those, in turn, gave rise to tyranny. Looking at this, Aristotle did not make distinctions between democracy and ochlocracy and opposed to the first form. This assessment of democracy affected its future: democracy was perceived negatively and was forced out of political use.

The next stage in the development of democracy was republicanism in the medieval cities of Northern Italy (the 11-15th centuries). In Florence, Genoa, Venice, Bologna, Padua and several other cities, there was a structure resembling the form that existed in the Roman Republic. The members of the aristocratic families were initially allowed to participate in the work of the authorities of the polis states only. However, over time, the citizens, who stood at the lowest levels of the socio-economic hierarchy, have achieved the right to participate in the management.

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[3] Ochlocracy is the form of the power of the crowd.

Moreover, unlike Rome and Athens, the status of a citizen was associated with the possession of property there.

A middle class consisting of merchants, artisans, bankers, was generated in the cities of Northern Italy. It was not only numerous but also well organized in guilds, partnerships, church fraternities. The institutional structure of the people's power was based on the power of the City Council, a Podesta[4] elected for a year and accountable to the Council, as well as the Assembly of Citizens. The development of republicanism caused the flourishing of economic and cultural life in Northern Italy. However, unfortunately for democracy, in the second half of the 14th century, republics in some major cities began gradually to retreat under the onslaught of the eternal enemies of democracy: corruption, oligarchy, wars, territorial expansion, and usurpation of power by authoritarian rulers.

In parallel with the development of republicanism in Northern Italy were the processes of formation of the system of people's representation in Northern Europe including the Northeastern part, i.e., Northern Rus. For example, the development of democratic forms of government took place in the Novgorod Republic of 12-14th centuries, and then the Pskov Republic of the 15th century. In 930, in Iceland, there was a prototype of the world's first national Parliament, the so-called Althing, which remained a source of lawmaking for more than three centuries. Edward the First (1272-1307), under pressure from the nobility and townspeople, legalized Parliament in England. It grew out of sporadic assemblies of nobiliary class. In the 15th century, in Sweden, the tradition of popular participation in meetings gave birth to the forerunner of the modern Parliament: the king began regularly to gather representatives of various classes of Swedish society – aristocracy, clergy, burghers, commoners.

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[4] Podestà was the name given to certain high officials in many Italian cities beginning in the later Middle Ages.

The development of the urban middle class, which concentrated considerable economic resources, facilitated the formation of representative assemblies in the Netherlands and Flanders. The rulers, who were constantly in dire need of money, were not able to ignore this social stratum, and they had to convene meetings of urban representatives and the main classes of society to enlist its support.

A new stage in the development of the concept of democracy started from the French revolution when democracy began to be considered as a direction of public thought, which forms the objectives of the social and political movement that rejected the monarchy and elitism. The formation of the concept of democracy was associated with the need to justify the new nature of relations between rulers and citizens, caused by the emergence of civil society institutions, as well as the requirements of autonomy and social equality of individuals.

However, the negative attitude to democracy was not overcome even in the 18th century. It is because the ideal model of democracy as a daily and direct participation in the governance of all citizens in large political entities, such as national states, is almost impossible. The original meaning of democracy adapting to the new needs of life was transformed. The culture of a particular society, political and historical traditions, and democratic experience influenced the process of transformation. Thus, the original meaning of democracy as a people's power differed from the variety of practical forms of its implementation significantly. It brought confusion to the understanding of this term.

Differences in the interpretation of democracy, as well as differences in the mechanisms of its implementation in specific societies, due to the lack of unity of methodological principles of its analysis. In the first case, from the point of view of the normative approach, an ideal model of democratic governance corresponding to the mentality of the population, its ideas of fair governance are formed. However, real conditions adapt to the ideal model of democratic governance to the demands of practice. In the second case, from the standpoint of

empirical descriptive approach, democracy turns out to be a set of principles, procedures and political structures that found their effectiveness in the implementation of social and individual needs and goals.

Thus, different theories of democracy either proceed from the priority of the principle of duty or appeal to practice in the formation of the system of government.

2. Democracy and Modernity

We cannot talk about the formation of modern democracy about historical period up to the 19th century. The birthplace of the new democracy, according to most political scientists, became the United States, in which more than half of the adult male population received the right to participate in presidential and parliamentary elections for the first time in the 1820s. It was that moment when the global process of transition to democracy, which has now engulfed the entire planet, began.

What is the difference between modern and classical democracy? Primarily, it is a form of government operating on the scale of large national states, but not urban states, i.e., polis, or cities as republics. It is a representative system, but not direct self-government of citizens' community. Citizens delegate their sovereignty to their elected representatives, who are strictly accountable to voters. At the same time, citizens can directly participate in political decision making by participating in national and local referendums.

Modern democracy is becoming inclusive, i.e., inclusive but not exclusive as it was before. Passive and active suffrage is accessible almost to the entire adult population and it is not subject to a property qualification. The principles of political and legal equality are becoming widespread.

Democracy in developed industrial states is constitutional. Democratic governments strictly operate within the framework of a legal law that protects human rights, minority rights, sets certain limits (not prescriptions) for the free activities of citizens, interest groups, organizations, political parties, and deters the government from any encroachment on the freedom of citizens and associations.

The forms of modern democracy depend on the form of government, electoral and party systems. Depending on the form of government, there are presidential, parliamentary, presidential-parliamentary and parliamentary-presidential democratic systems. Depending on the type of electoral system, there are majoritarian democracies and democracies with a proportional voting system. Depending on the type of party system, there are multi-party, bipartisan and coalition-majoritarian democracies.

Thus, different combinations of these forms influence the effectiveness and stability of democracy. For example, combinations of presidential or parliamentary rule with a majority electoral system and bipartisanship are the most viable. The combination of a presidential form of government with a proportional electoral system and a multiparty system is the least stable.

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CHAPTER 1.

SUMERIAN SPACE

The existence of the Sumerian Kingdom throughout its history represented the development, rising and falling of the city-states. At the end of the 3rd millennium BC, the scribes of the temple of Ur made the first chronological table named "Royal List". According to the research of scientists and chronological tables, reliable history of Sumer began since the middle of the 3rd millennium BC when the reformer Uruinimgina was the ruler of Lagash. In the 24th century BC, the ruler of one of the cities of Lugalzaggesi made the first attempt of unification of Sumer. He geographically conquered almost all the cities of the region, but politically limited himself to the adoption of the title of "lugal[5] of all cities".

However, a hundred years later, the civilization of Sumer ended its way replaced by the Kingdom of Akkad. Young Sargon who belonged to the tribe of nomadic Semites lived in the North of Sumer, began the conquest of Sumer combining political intrigue with decisive military action successfully. The Kingdom of Akkad and Sumer, created him, marked the beginning of Assyria and Babylon in the future.

Initially, the economy of the Sumerians was planned. Temple employees engaged it. The chief priest of the city – ensi – performed all the duties of the political and economic ruler of the city-state. The priests controlled the entire economy and defined the details of agricultural and construction works. The church kept communal working tools, which were daily issued together with draft animals.

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[5] The Sumerian term for "king, ruler". It was one of several Sumerian titles that a ruler of a city-state could bear (alongside "ensi").

Already at this early stage of the development of society, we can trace the relationship between officials and peasants-communists. Groups of 8-10 people, led by an experienced overseer, worked in the areas of the temple fields. People received an equivalent portion of food, drink and clothing for the work and harvest. The calendar of agricultural works attributed to workers to work during the day and protect the fields from thieves and animals at night. As a result, it was necessary to harvest no less than prescribed by the temple. Otherwise, the peasants, who were guilty of the shortage, received less food and clothing and worked off debts.
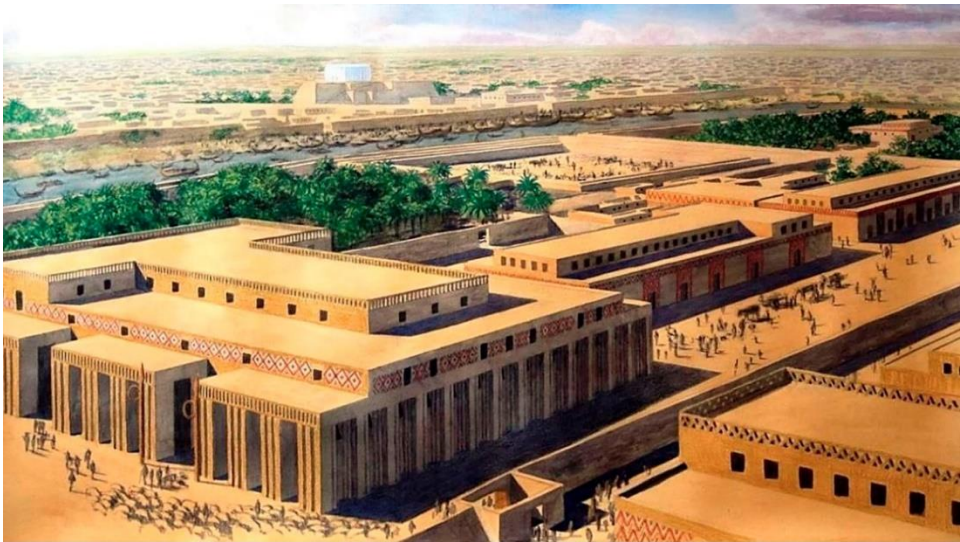
The image of the ancient Sumerian city of Uruk

5-6 millennia before the present day, officials had come to the rationality of rationing of the labour force. To some extent, it reflected the social ideas of a competent approach to the contribution of each profession to the economic well-being of the community, town or land. We can give an example of the daily ration of engars, i.e., simple farmers. The senior of the group received 1.25 litres of grain, gardener – 1 litre, unskilled assistant – less than 0.5 litres. Also, depending on the qualification of an

employee, the temple could provide him with a small area of the field to use personally. Those, who did not have such land, could rent the land for a third of the harvest from it. So two processes, that became the basis for the formation of social relations of all subsequent civilizations and societies, began gradually to occur:

1) stratification of the population into more affluent citizens and less affluent rural residents;
2) separation of the stratum of wealthy farmers and priests, who were the basis of the administrative apparatus of the city or state, from the urban population.

We have to consider the family as a unit of society to make a competent picture of the social situation of the population of any state. The foundations of relations between members of society are laid at the micro-level. If you look at the extant laws of the rulers of Sumer state, many of them were devoted to the family.
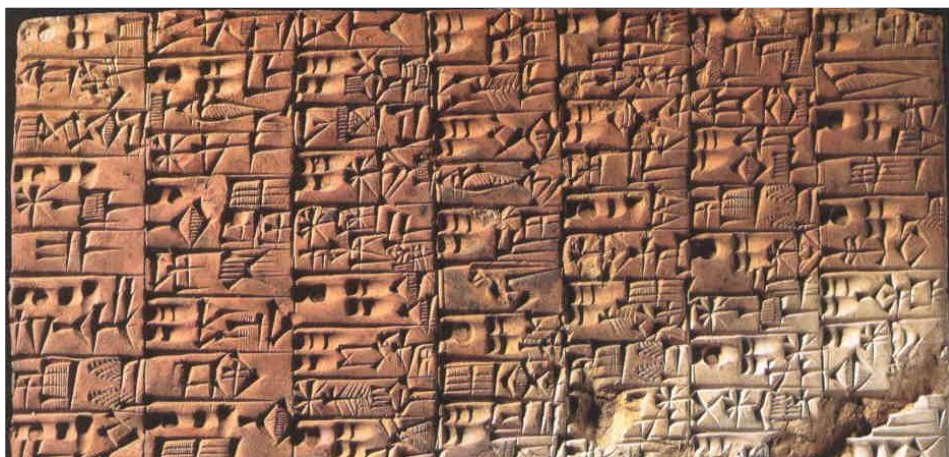
Sumerian writing in tables

In the patriarchal family, the man had one wife, but he was able to acquire concubines who did not have equal rights with the legal wife. Sons kept the house and had to take care of the posthumous veneration

of their father after his death. Only in the absence of sons in the family, a daughter was able to become a full heir to the entire family capital. Mother and father had equal rights to children, and their power was not absolute. They were able to sell their children into bondage for a certain period, but they had no rights to take their lives under any circumstances. In case of son's disobedience or disrespect, the law already determined the punishment: from expulsion from the house or sale into slavery to cutting off the hand.

A woman had quite appreciable freedom in Sumerian society at that time. In addition to the previously mentioned possibility to inherit the economy, it is necessary to note economic rights. She was able to conclude trade deals and to appear in court. According to fragmentary data, scientists confidently attribute the right of administration, i.e., even the rule of the city, to the Sumerian woman. Mostly, they were the queens – wives of the ensi and lugal remaining widows.

However, these freedoms significantly yielded to men ones. The husband was able to give the wife to the creditor in bondage to work off a debt. Also, the husband was not responsible for the debts incurred by the wife before the marriage, and she, in turn, was obliged equally to share the burdens of any duty of the husband. The found cuneiform tablets of the Sumerian period indicate that, according to family law, the husband bought the wife from another family into the property after marriage. The cost of the ransom usually did not exceed the price of one bondwoman. The bride's dowry already became her personal property and was able to pass to the children, born in this marriage, after her death. The wife was able to rely only on the fact that the husband was by law committed to complying with all conditions of the marriage contract, and in the case of divorce on the initiative of the husband, the wife often got an amount that was equal to the size of the average ransom. All the marriage gifts of her husband remained her property in the event of the death of a man only, and they passed into the property of children if she had died before.

The divorce procedure was by the additional social burden of marriage for the woman. The husband was able to request a divorce by law only. Woman's infertility was the main reason in most cases. However, Sumerian law also determined the social protection of a woman. The husband was obliged to return her dowry if she agreed to divorce, and he had to provide his wife with a home and life support if she disagreed for divorce. All this did not concern the article of the wife's charges of waste, theft of property or money. In this case, the husband was able simply to drive the woman out of the house or make her a bondwoman. The woman was drowned for insult or adultery, and according to the laws of Hammurabi, it was waiting for the seducer too.

The woman had the right to freedom if the husband willfully left the community or the town forever, and also, in case of his captivity in the war. The wife was waiting for some years and able to get re-married. The wife returned to the previous husband if he returned, and the children born in a remarriage departed to the second husband.

As we can see, the marriage laws of the Sumerian Kingdom were quite strict. The marriage was valid after the signing of the marriage contract by the families of the bridegrooms and its assurance by city officials only. Liberalism was manifested in the property right of a woman in case of divorce, and in the possibility to marry a free man (citizen) with a bondwoman too. Their children became citizens if their father officially declared them heirs.

Children, born in wedlock, became a full heir of all the property of the parents. Starting from a young age, they had quite a lot of freedom. For example, the minors with their father's consent had the right to enter into trade transactions of purchase and sale. On the one hand, the father could sell his child in bondage to pay off debts. However, on the other hand, he was also obliged to provide for children fully:

- food and clothing before the marriage ceremony;
- bride price;

- the dowry for a daughter.

The inheritance of the deceased parents shared between the sons according to strict order. A wife and children were considered heirs. All economy passed to the child on the man line. Daughters were married, and the dowry was their share of the inheritance. According to the laws of Hammurabi, the eldest sons, who managed to get families before the death of their father and received money from him to buy the bride, were obliged to allocate part of their share to do wedding ransom by their younger brother. The daughter left the family. If she preferred service to the temple, she lost her dowry. After the death of the father, the brothers were obliged to support her and pay her a share of the income from his father's estate. She was able to justify dissatisfaction with the care of the brothers about the inheritance in court and to reassign her share of the economy to another man.

The problem of childlessness was so acute in the Sumerian Kingdom that the legislation thoroughly considered all the controversial issues. Childless families had the right to adopt any lost child. If they took a child from a large family, they could lose him at any time because the genetic family had the right to return their child. If a native child was born in the family, which took the child on the upbringing, it could refuse to foster child but was obliged to pay him a third of the possible inheritance. Foster children had no practical rights and could be severely punished for escaping to their parents or disrespect to foster ones.

Thus, we can see that the social rights and freedoms of the citizens of the Sumerian city-states differed by expressive contrast of despotic supremacy and prerequisites of democracy. As in the subsequent major ancient civilizations, there were tyranny and law, slavery and freedom. The line between them was determined by a complex system of the laws, which allowed a person to move from a condition of complete disenfranchisement to civil status and vice versa.

Slavery, as an integral part of the consideration of the development of democracy in the world, was traditional in the Sumer Kingdom. For example, every temple worker got a bondwoman on a working day to help him. Mainly women and children were slaves because the Sumerians did not capture men. Slavery was relatively temporary. Slaves were able to redeem themselves or get freedom. Such a prospect forced women and few men to remain faithful and tolerant in slavery. The absence of mentioning of slave uprisings suggests that the attitude towards them was liberal, not so oppressive. The man became a slave when a citizen owed to the lender and was in bondage. However, his slavery could not last more than three years and be the court.

The social composition of the Sumerian city-states was diverse: farmers, temple workers, artisans, soldiers, merchants, temple and royal officials and priests. There was a division of wealth in each of these groups. The poor part of the population suffered from the looting of attacking enemies and the constant local levies on military campaigns. In the middle of the 3rd millennium BC, the largest social reform was carried out in Lagash, and as a result, many cities of Sumer were united around this centre. Extortion has reached an astronomical value in the time of Lugalanda[6]. City's beggars were fully devastated. The city could not stand: even wealthy citizens rebelled. A meeting of the city elders overthrew this lugal. Uruinimgina[7], who replaced him, reduced taxes, compiled a list of basic rules governing relations between citizens of the city, which was the first set of laws in the history of humankind. According to the fragmentary data, which have reached us on plates, it is possible to see the depth of social and legislative reforms of the lugal. For example, the plate "Do not dare the strong to offend widows and orphans" enjoyed widespread popularity. Among other changes of the

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[6] Lugalanda was a Sumerian king of Lagash during the 24th century BC. He was the son of the high priest of Lagash, who appointed him as king.
[7] Uruinimgina, Urukagina or Irikagina was a ruler (ensi) of the city-state Lagash during the 24th century BC.

laws, Uruinimgina fully banned the enslavement of free citizens so a beggar could not get into bondage.

The ruler of the country first tried himself to protect citizens from bureaucratic lawlessness. The rich man, who liked the land or part of the property of a beggar, was obliged to pay a fair price, and city officials could not take away land and house for debts.

However, more stringent rules were established regarding the social hierarchy. The artisan, who did not cope with the work during the period of peace, lost "qualification" and went down on a hierarchical ladder. The inept stonemason could become a porter of clay in construction work, and ruined merchant hired as a simple driver in trade caravans. Bad gunsmith passed from expensive weapons to manufacture sickles. This process practically always meant a fall in the social levels only, because it was almost impossible to win the right to move back.

Thus, studying the historical features of the existence and prosperity of Sumerian society, we find a complex system of social values that speak of the origin of the foundations of democratic relations, attempts to democratize society in particularly tense periods of domestic politics. Perhaps, the government of the Sumerians did not exist. We can take bureaucratic-priestly stratum of the population, which was about 10-12% of the city-state, for the people and add merchants and successful artisans who could not get into the bureaucracy under certain circumstances. However, it is hard to replace the concept of the people by these 18-20% of the population. Unlike many later civilizations and states, Sumer provided an opportunity to lead very wealthy people, high priests and merchants, men and women. However, the people's will, the election of positions by popular vote, the participation of ordinary citizens in the affairs of the state in person or absentia were not realized. Therefore, we can talk about the beginnings of democratic ideas of government and social order. However, in the future, many social achievements of Sumer were lost, and subsequent civilizations often ignored them for the sake of easier rule over people.

CHAPTER 2.

THE BABYLONIAN KINGDOM AND ITS SOCIETY

At the time of the Sumerians, the city of Babylon did not yet exist. Only at the beginning of the 2nd millennium BC, new cities, which were built on the banks of rivers, began to form on the remains of the Sumer-Akkadian civilization. Gradually, Babylon, a small settlement whose inhabitants spoke the Akkadian language, began to grow among the emerging and after little time disappeared city-states. In 1792 BC, Hammurabi went up to the throne of the policy. He began the old Babylonian story of the elevation of the city above Mesopotamia.

Mesopotamia was a pitiful sight by the arrival of this illustrious and cruel ruler. Countless wars destroyed the irrigation system of the Sumer canals, the soil in most areas was fully drained and became unsuitable for farming, most of the land, crafts and trade passed into private hands, the posts of priests sold and bought. In the fall of the third Ur dynasty, the inhabitants no longer depended on the state, and crowds of beggars wandered through the cities. The only positive aspect was the fast development of domestic and foreign trade: usury flourished. Small farmers were obliged to borrow the silver from moneylenders at high interest to survive. The inability to pay off their debts led them into bondage or to sell their land.

Hammurabi highly disliked the tendency of land and power concentrating in a small stratum of the nobility and successful entrepreneurs, because he was not interested in the fact that the rich men turned into the main political force. Every five years, he issued a special "decrees of justice", which obliged all the rich men to let the debtors go free and return the land to the former owners.

At the beginning of the 20th century in Susa, the ancient capital of the Elamite Empire[8], French archaeologists dug up a stone stele covered with cuneiform. The 290 Akkadian language laws that introduced during Hammurabi reign were carved in diorite. Their 70 laws were devoted to the regulation of family matters and punishment, and 58 ones more described regulation household, slavery and property.

Image of king Hammurabi

A slave was a property of the owner, but one still had some rights before the law. If the slave did not recognize his slavery, the master had to prove his right to him in court and punish only then. The muskenums, i.e., "people of the king", were in the full power of the ruler and, also, like

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[8] Elam was an ancient Pre-Iranian civilization centred in the far west and southwest of what is now modern-day Iran, stretching from the lowlands of what is now Khuzestan and Ilam Province as well as a small part of southern Iraq.

the situation of the slaves. However, they were not able even to protest their social position. Awilums, free residents of urban and rural communities, remained the only free people, i.e., citizens of the state.

The law defined a severe punishment for its violation. The principle (law) of talion[9] provided for adequate punishment up to the death penalty for murder. For minor offences, the offender could lose his hand, ears or fingers, and get boiling resin on his face, and flogging with a whip was in practice. The 40 different crimes were able to become a cause of death penalty: theft from a temple or a palace, property from someone else's house, false accusation of a crime, premeditated murder and incest.

The position of women, compared to the Sumerian laws, was completely disenfranchised. She was drowned for trying to divorce. The same thing was waiting for her if her husband accused her of negligence or treason. Free and wealthy people were often punished with large fines instead of physical punishment. The amount of the fine ranged from 2 to 30 equivalents of property value. Only in case of especially serious crime, the citizen was expelled from the city, depriving of all property and protection of a family.

The government in Babylon was different from the Sumerian. There were two governing centres – the temple and the ruler's palace. In Babylonia, the city ruler was subordinated to the king, the economic, and city political life was outside controlled, from the capital. The formal division into two structures remained in force:

- a palace or a temple;
- community meeting.

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[9] "An eye for an eye", "a tooth for a tooth" or the law of retaliation, is the principle that a person who has injured another person is to be penalized to a similar degree, and the person inflicting such punishment should be the injured party.

In the Babylonian city, the community structure where huge families jointly solved all the important issues of urban life, already dominated. The Community Council could deny the right to acquire the land of the community member. This refusal extended to the rich man and the king too. However, the role of the community in the decision of vital public issues remained insignificant. The Council of the Elders had no right to appoint or remove the high priest or ruler of the city. It was the prerogative of the ruler of the country only. Consequently, the city power was divided between the king and the temple only. Temple priests participated in the life of the city community quite actively:

- led the standardization of weights and measures;
- controlled usury setting the maximum allowable mortgage interest;
- held actions of an interest-free loan for the poor;
- conducted recruitment of "novices" from families of especial poor peasants;
- held court sessions on issues that did not get into the sphere of interests of the Royal court.

The image of the ancient city of Babylon

Gradually, a kind of competition came between the temples and the king of Babylonia. The king could fully not subdue the rich temple management because it caused the dissatisfaction of the priests and the faithful. The priests were obliged to accept the established tradition of kings to deify themselves and demand divine honours.

The functions of the king in Babylonian society were extensive, but they excluded religion. He became commander-in-chief in wartime, and concluded political treaties and ruled the Supreme Court in peacetime. According to the legacy of Hammurabi, the king "protected by royal law who had no privileges", i.e., ordinary citizens.

Thus, the Babylonian Kingdom took a step forward concerning demos' rights to govern and self-govern. The communal principle of co-existence of the population contributed to the natural transfer of a small part of the management activities to the population of cities. On the one hand, this activity was extremely small, and it was negligible on the scale of Ancient Greece. However, regarding the Sumer Kingdom, the ancestor of Babylonia, it was a significant step forward. Such progress required the formating a highly organized society and some social losses for maintaining the strong authority of kings and nobles in the early stages. The deliberalization of the position of women in society and the desire of communities to preserve their groups by involving descendants to live and work in their hometown became such a concession.

CHAPTER 3.

THE ASSYRIAN KINGDOM

Assyria originated around the same time as Babylonia. At the beginning of the 2nd millennium BC, nomadic tribes of pastoralists settled in the north of Mesopotamia, assimilated with the locals, accepted their culture, language, writing and religion. The city of Ashur became the centre of civilization for almost 11 centuries.

Assyrian rulers imitated Babylon, laying despotic rule of the last Sumerian dynasty in the basis of the state system. However, observing the flaws in the relationship between the Babylonian kings and priests, the Assyrian sovereigns subjugated all aspects of life in the state. The Assyrian king was not only a secular ruler, who exercised political and economic leadership but also a high priest, i.e., the real and only vicar of God in the state. Also, the king was a permanent commander-in-chief, even in those few cases when turtan – the Supreme Commander – took the army. Consequently, Assyrian despotism was brought to perfection.

At the initial stage of existence of Assyria, the nobility of the tribes had access to the regional controls, because it was easier for the kings to manage a large territory. However, large areas were subsequently fragmented. There was viceroy, or belpakhati[10], at the head of each of them. Some of the cities, the most important in economic terms, became independent administrative units but also under the leadership of the royal governor.

Representatives of the largest noble families of the country held the highest positions at the Assyrian royal court. They often had greater

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[10] The lord of the satrapy, satrap, commander of the military forces of the district; from Assyrian "pahah" – "to collect taxes", "to rule" or Persian "pukten" – "take care", "act".

power and was able even to influence the ruler. There were about 150 bureaucratic positions of all ranks. Most of them dealt with various items of tax collection. Representatives of the highest nobility of the country and some cities, i.e., Babylon, Nippur and Ashur, were exempt from taxes only. Aristocratic families received land and slaves as a gift from the king, and sometimes exemption from taxes.

The ruins of the City of Ashur in present days

As we can see, the rule of demos was very insignificant and seemed by the local management of the royal governors and aristocratic nobility at the state level. However, Arab scientists believe that even this form of public participation in government can be considered the beginnings of quasi-democracy from the perspective of the modern Muslim East. If we consider the current state of democracy in the countries of the Arabian Peninsula and take the monarchy as a certain step or a weak form of democracy, Assyria can claim the right to be called a Kingdom with the beginnings of quasi-democracy. Although the Babylonians precisely came closer to such a term.

Now, we again turn to the way of life of Assyria and its legislation to form a more realistic picture of the social condition of the state. The Assyrian family was patriarchal. The head had unlimited power over all the family members, and it was a miniature of the state. The woman was deprived of all the rights that were preserved in Babylonia. They had to be with the closed face and accompany one of the family members on the street. This fact has still prospered in a number of the states. A single woman could easily be accused of fornication. If she sued for insults by a man, then her family has imposed a large fine.

The laws of Assyria allowed for blood feud if the family of the victim did not agree to financial compensation for damage or compensation by a bondwoman. Sometimes the wife or the son were given there. According to talion principle (or law), the perpetrator was subjected to the same punishment for the injury caused to a free person. The slave was practically equal to a property so this forced the murderer or the fanatic to pay for one as for the damaged thing.

All the population of Assyria was divided into three large classes:

- slaves;
- free people;
- aristocracy.

We have already said about slavery problems above. We can only add that any vacation at will or free for them did not exist. They were captives and descendants of slaves. Slaves-artisans was often sent "for earnings" by owners. The slave worked in a workshop, paid a certain amount of silver the owner monthly to become free. However, redemption could not take place in 99% of cases due to the large sums imposed on a slave, or unwillingness of the owner to let him go away. In this case, an owner released a slave only in old age only.

A free Assyrian poor man was able also to become a slave. Slaves were sold singly or by whole families. The poor family was often sold together with all property – the land and slaves if those were. However, a free

Assyrian could avoid such problems by joining the regular army as an infantryman, archer or javelin thrower. Later he was able to learn to ride. In this case, the citizen could get rich or die on the battlefield.

The aristocratic stratum of the population, which included less than 5% of the total population of the state, was also divided into levels of well-being and opportunities to participate in the management of the state. There were:

- traders and merchants;
- usurers and bankers;
- grandees;
- priests.

The first group – traders and merchants – concerning public affairs very little, paid taxes for commercial activities and participated to considerate local issues of economic policy in the city, setting prices and territory of influence only, but with the knowledge and approval of the viceroy.

The second group of socially well-off citizens already considered financial issues of trade and allocations of the population and the army. Some bankers had a great weight in the society of the city and could secretly influence the decisions of the viceroy. It believed that the financial oligarchy, which had ways of influencing certain state and official positions, was first born in Assyria. Citizens admitted to the treasury or tax system were sometimes particularly gifted among them.

The nobles were the ruling stratum of the population. They held quite high public positions, conducted affairs and policy in the treasury and tax sphere, enforced the decrees of the king and engaged in analytical activities of domestic and foreign policymaking it easier for the king to rule. They saw the only obstacle to their influence on the ruler in the priesthood. The priests, except for Babylonians, no longer had their former power. However, they did not miss the opportunity to interfere in state affairs.

Thus, on the example of Assyria, as well as the other two Mesopotamian civilizations, we observe only some elements of the processes, which can be attributed to the democratic, being quite essential for the evolution of them, but still in their infancy. As already mentioned in the previous paragraph, such processes can be called quasi-democratic only, because they carried the strengthening of personal power over all strata of the population, the desire to control the will of the people through small liberal concessions instead of the desire to involve in the management of sufficiently broad strata of the population or to expand the range of those, who can deal with public affairs.

However, this situation was typical for ancient civilizations. In the next paragraph, we will look at the features of the social structure, perhaps, the most powerful civilization of the ancient world – Egypt – and try to prove the quasi-democratic nature of the first social transformations.

CHAPTER 4.

ANCIENT AND UNKNOWN EGYPT

To imagine the social and inside a political situation in Ancient Egypt, it is necessary to recall some features of the development of this civilization.

Around the 4th millennium BC, the first rulers united the tribes of Northern Egypt, who lived in the fertile Nile valley. The state structure had been already formed to 3500 BC. The climate was milder here than now, so the river valley expanded by 50-70 km from the bed. The history of the Egyptian dynasties was chronologically divided into epochs:

1. Pre-dynastic epoch – 5000-3000 BC;
2. Ancient Kingdom 3000-2200 BC;
3. Feudal period – 2200-2000 BC;
4. Middle Kingdom – 2000-1785 BC;
5. Kingdom of the Hyksos – 1785-1567 BC;
6. New Kingdom – 1567-1075 BC;
7. Later Kingdom – 1075-332 BC[11].

In 332 BC, Alexander the Great, which began the Greco-Roman history of Egypt having little in common with the Egyptian Kingdoms, captured Egypt. Now let us go through these stages considering the features of the social structure of Egyptian society.

The Ancient Kingdom was divided into Early Dynastic (or Archaic) Period and the Old Kingdom. In the Archaic Period, according to the first Egyptian historian Manetho[12], the author of the "History of Egypt"

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[11] It is a simplified variant of chronology.

[12] He lived during the reign of the Hellenistic Ptolemaic dynasty in Egypt, at the end of the 4th – the first half of the 3rd centuries BC; was ahead of an anonymous priest of Serapis.

and the lists of all pharaohs, the ruler Menes (Mina)[13] united under his power the Upper and Lower Kingdoms. This period lasted for two centuries and was the beginning of full-scale state construction. The development of the economic structure required the formation of the state apparatus, i.e., close attention, constant maintenance of order and strict accounting. Gradually, a hierarchical society pronounced was created:

- wealthy nobles – pharaohs and the princes-nomarchs;
- officials;
- beggars.

The image of the pharaoh Menes

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[13] Menes (fl. c. 3200-3000 BC) was a pharaoh of the Early Dynastic Period of ancient Egypt. The identity of Menes is the subject of ongoing debate, although mainstream Egyptological consensus identifies Menes with the Naqada III ruler Narmer.

The state system grew from agricultural communities, and then from independent nomes. The community leaders began to transfer their power by inheritance. The nome leaders, or the nomarchs, maintained relative economic independence even with a single pharaoh. The ruler owned most of the land of the country, all the craft workshops and shipbuilding production. All the nobles consisted of public service: main nome nobility occupied positions at court, and the noblemen of small units were the household officials receiving regular rations. All government officials in the capital and the nomes were directly subordinated to the pharaoh.

The rural community[14] remained the lowest cell of the ancient Egyptian rural society. It was patriarchal. Local government was implemented in community councils[15]. The head of the community[16] reported to the royal officials for the harvest and organized people for public work.

The period of the Old Kingdom was the time of the beginning of the construction of the great Egyptian pyramids and the final design of the state system of the country:

- pharaoh established himself on the throne as the sole ruler;
- the well-being of the nobility sharply increased;
- the number of rural poor grew.

However, by the end of the era of the Ancient Kingdom, the nome nobility began to strengthen the opposition to the despotic ruler. This led to a gradual weakening of the levers of government and the return of great independence of the nomes.

In the feudal era of Ancient Egypt, power passed into the hands of the nomarchs. Their resistance led to the fact that the pharaohs began to move away from power centralized. It led to the disintegration of Ancient Egypt into many small independent nomes. Decentralization

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[14] Else: [nuít] in Ancient Egyptian language.
[15] Else: [kebnét] in Ancient Egyptian language.
[16] Else: [híka] in Ancient Egyptian language.

has especially affected the irrigation system – the basis of the state's life – and caused economic, social and political chaos. All this led to a major popular uprising: beggars robbed the wealth of nobility; there were frequent attempts on the tombs of the pharaohs and the nobility. The nobility and rulers began seriously worrying about the fate of civilization and expressed the desire to unite the nomes. In the middle of the 19th century BC, Mentuhotep I, the Theban ruler, completed this process.

However, the social life of Egypt was not strictly parallel to political collisions. The economic way of life changed. With the collapse of the state economy, nome and rural communities began to play an increasingly important role. The farms experienced the process of specialization in individual crafts, and it became the hallmark of the economy of the Middle Kingdom. However, the formation of a new political device – nomarch's – became the main socio-political feature of this era. The rulers of the nomes won and retained enough large number of freedoms in the future.

The Middle Kingdom is associated with the appearance and dominance of bronze in Egypt. The unified irrigation system was restored, agriculture was established, and trade was revived. The pharaoh's domestic political power was weakened by the strength of the nomarchs. This led to the fact that the country again broke up into the Upper and Lower kingdoms during the 14th dynasty of the pharaohs.

The collapse of united Egypt contributed to the activation of the nomadic tribes of the Hyksos, which captured the country and ruled it for more than a century. The Hyksos pharaohs attempted to reunite the kingdoms, but it was futile. However, that time contributed to small social reforms. The people of humble origin, who had the opportunity to make a career, reached to court; there was a new social class of "dependent people"[17], but not slaves.

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[17] Else: [hemuú] in Ancient Egyptian language. They were also "royal people" actually.

In the era of the New Kingdom, foreign slaves began to be a large stratum of the population. They were used not only as domestic servants but as well as in agricultural work and the army. Royal hemuu, or "dependent people", and state labourers gradually transformed into a class of hereditary artisans – semdeth. They had a little more freedom to choose a profession. The state was able no longer to force them to develop the necessary sectors of the economy. Gradually, representatives of the lower class began to get the opportunity to occupy minor priestly positions, places of small officials in the nome and temple farms.

The image of the pharaoh Amenhotep IV (Akhenaton)

The ancient nome aristocracy served as a pillar of the throne and was able to dictate its terms to the pharaoh, came under almost complete dependence on the ruler in that era. The nobles still had their possessions, but all the land was the property of the pharaoh. However, the higher temple nobility continued to flourish and enrich themselves.

The position was temporarily changed by the pharaoh Amenhotep IV (Akhenaton), who introduced monotheism and tempered enthusiasm of the high priesthood, and depriving it a part of wealth. However, after his death, everything gradually returned to the former situation. Under Ramses XI, the priesthood completely seized power, which led to another split of the state in the 11th century BC.

In the Greco-Roman period of Ancient Egypt in each administrative unit – province[18] – the plenipotentiary head sat under the prefect[19]. The tax burden became extremely heavy. Taxes were paid for the land, own houses, the sale of goods and the harvest. Farmers were obliged to take part in fieldwork and to fulfil the royal duty. All the peasants became tenants and paid a firm fee for the land, as well as for the rent of cattle because the king now owned the land.

The head of the rural community[20] was responsible for a superior officer for the collections from all over the village and he was entirely responsible to him for all its members. It led to dissatisfaction with the peasants and their escapes. Gradually, a new class formed for Egypt. It named hierodules, or "sacred slaves", commoners, who worked for the temple. Their position was not so difficult, but the temple dependence was hereditary.

Under the Greeks, the bureaucratic administrative system reached unprecedented prosperity in the country. It grown in several times and exercised total control over all the aspects of economic life. Officials received allotments and monthly money allowance from the king. Also, the Ptolemies introduced the mercy of the king's taxes. However, taxes were one law for everybody. The use of slavery for debt became

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[18] There were six provinces: Egypt, Augustamnica, the Thebaid or Thebais, Arcadia Aegypti, Libya Superior, and Libya Inferior.
[19] During the Classical Roman Empire, the governor of Roman Egypt was a prefect who administered the Roman province of Egypt with the authority of the emperor delegated.
[20] Else: [komárh] in Ancient Egyptian language.

widespread. Slaves-debtors worked in agriculture or as servants in houses.

Now we should consider the features of socio-political relations in Ancient Egypt from the position of the state structure.

"Per jet" was a set of estates of a huge noble economy, which was inherited. The central manor of the nobleman, where all the income was accumulated and from where the management of smaller rural holdings, handicraft shops and servants were conducted, was the main centre of "per jet". The nobleman was served by personal protection, suite, official scribes, musicians, and relatives. The state of the economy was the scribes, custodians of business archives, and the overseers of the workers. In the era of the Old Kingdom, there was an association in groups of five people[21] to organize work of lower level of employees. Every five employees obeyed the overseer, who supervised the implementation of the daily rate of fieldwork and craftwork, and participated in them. On several fives working in the same area, was the manager of the units, which combined work with the office of the scribe to issue materials.

There was a daily rate for each employee. Guilty of a defect was being beaten with sticks. Hard worker surpassing plan, took remnants for personal use. However, it was a rarity as the norms were strongly inflated, and whips were often used to implement them. The beggars were fully supported by the owner of the economy there. Throughout the day, even the assistants of overseer gave workers a light beer. Also, according to some data, workers was able to earn a part-time by market trade.

The so-called "own house", or "property", passed by inheritance if the pharaoh claimed the heir only. Otherwise, the economy went to the man, who held this position. Therefore, the nobles kept their places in the civil service and were ready to fulfil any pharaoh orders. Scientists

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[21] Else: [jizút] in Ancient Egyptian language.

suggest that it was even more effective than just bureaucratic subordination. Free citizens rarely possessed the land, since it belonged to the pharaoh and were given in rare cases. A small proportion of the plots were sold only.

After the nobles and their social status, let us move on to hemuu. Hemuus were the royal people, i.e., all the citizens of Egypt, who were not related to nobility, priesthood, or the bureaucracy. This category of people employed in agriculture or handicraft. Hemuu became the next stage in the evolution of the socio-economic position of people, replacing fives. Hemuu received the portion of the field or craft business in rent. As you can see, hemuu was a highly specialized worker. Specialization was inherited, and retraining was almost impossible, i.e., there was no right to choose a profession.

The virtual reconstruction of the pre jet in Ancient Egypt

Hemuus were not slaves. They remained free citizens personally, but they had no personal property on production means and the resulting

product. Citizens worked at the noble's farm and received allowances. They were not able to fall under serfdom. The slaves were undivided property including their offspring.

The penal system of a royal hemuu was hard enough. An official from the royal administration, convicted of a crime, was reduced to a farmer without hope return to public service.

In the Middle Kingdom, there were "royal works", i.e., labour service at the level of the royal or national economy, i.e., large construction works, repair and expansion of irrigation system, development of mines, rowing on the state vessels. Many men from all the nomes were taken to this work every year. It was hard and necessary.

The lowest position in the ancient Egyptian society was occupied by bakus or slaves and property of the owner. Initially, they were prisoners captured during the hostilities. Bakus fully belonged to the nobleman as personal property, as well as their heirs. They worked in unskilled jobs or as servants.

Thus, in this part, we have considered the socio-political situation in Ancient Egypt. As we will see in Book Three about Ancient Rome, the democratic processes, which were inherent in later civilizations, did not affect the Ancient Egypt of the Greco-Roman era. The Egyptian Empire retained all the features of ancient civilizations remaining despotic and conservative. The social situation of various segments of the population remained almost unchanged, someone of the commoners was able to improve their status very rarely, and it was unreal to partake in the management of the state or the solution of state issues.

CHAPTER 5.

STATES OF THE ANCIENT EAST

Now, it should analyze the social and political situation in the Ancient East civilizations to complete the review of the pre-democratic stage of human development.

The earliest type of society, which replaced the primitive, was formed in the Ancient East civilizations. Economically, it was characterized by the domination of patriarchal subsistence farming, the stability of state forms of land ownership and communal land ownership, the extremely slow development of the individual private property.

Most of the population in the states of the Ancient East were peasants united in rural communities. Slavery did not play a crucial role in production despite its rather widespread use in some of the countries, which were discussed earlier. Persons belonging to the apparatus of state power, court and property nobility occupied a privileged position in society. Modern researchers attribute ancient Eastern societies as the local civilizations of agricultural type.

The social and political ideology of the Ancient East was affected by the traditionalism of communal life and immaturity of classes. Patriarchal rural communities limited the initiative of man, keeping him within the framework of age-old customs. For a long time, the political thought of the Ancient East developed because of religious and mythological worldview inherited from the tribal system.

Myths about the divine, supernatural origin of social orders dominated the social and political consciousness of early class societies. Kings, priests, judges and other authorities were considered as descendants or deputies of gods and were allocated with sacred traits.

Political views were closely intertwined with philosophical, moral and

other ideas. For example, the oldest legal prohibitions were worldview principles, religious precepts, and moral precepts simultaneously. Such views are traced in the legal precepts of the Talmud and Indian spiritual books. In the states of the Ancient East, social and legal doctrines were not yet separated from myths, and they were formed into a relatively independent sphere of social consciousness.

Social and legal doctrines of the Ancient East were purely applied. The issues, related to the art of management, the mechanism of power and justice, were by the main content of them. State power was identified with the power of the king or emperor. The reason for this was the tendency, being inherent for the Ancient East, to strengthen the power of individual rulers and form such a form of public administration of society as Eastern despotism. The supreme ruler was considered the personification of the state, the focus of all state life. According to the Indian treatise "Arthashastra", "the sovereign and his power are the main elements of the state".

Political and legal doctrines of the Ancient East were not separated from morality and were ethical and political ones. Transformations in society and the state of many ancient Eastern doctrines were associated with changes in the moral appearance of people. The very art of government was sometimes reduced to the moral improvement of the sovereign, the management of the power of personal example. There was in the Chinese book "I Ching" or "Yi Jing"[22]: "If the Governor approves its perfection, communities of criminals will not be in all its many people".

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[22] "Classic of Changes", or "Book of Changes", is an ancient Chinese divination text and the oldest of the Chinese classics. Possessing a history of more than two and a half millennia of commentary and interpretation, the "I Ching" is an influential text read throughout the world, providing inspiration to the worlds of religion, psychoanalysis, literature, and art. Originally a divination manual in the Western Zhou period (1000-750 BC), over the course of the Warring States period and early imperial period (500-200 BC) it was transformed into a cosmological text with a series of philosophical commentaries known as the "Ten Wings".

Many social protests were held under the slogans of moral content and pointed against specific carriers or usurpers of power. The popular mass advocated the restoration of justice, redistribution of wealth. However, it did not call into question the economic and political foundations of society.

It was also characteristic that doctrines that religious and mythological views preserved and developed in them. The predominance of practical-applied and moral themes led to the most common, abstract questions remained without solutions or solved with the help of the views, which were provided by religious and mythological consciousness.

Social and political theories of the Ancient East were complex ideological formations consisting of religious dogmas, moral ideas, and applied knowledge of politics and law. The ratio of those elements in different doctrines was different.

Religious doctrines expanded were created by the ideologists of the ruling classes, i.e., the ideology of Brahmanism in India. These doctrines covered social inequality, the privileges of the nobility, and the power of the elite. Divine institutions declared the foundations of society, and any attempt to encroach upon them was regarded as a challenge to the gods. Awe of the divine power of the sovereign was inspired and humility and submission were instilled to popular mass.

The political views of the oppressed people opposed the prevailing ideology. They criticized official religious dogmas, sought new forms of faith, for example, early Buddhism, opposed oppression and arbitrariness, put forward demands to defend justice. The establishment always had to take into account the requirements of the exploited majority in its ideology. Some ideas of the social grassroots, i.g., the call of the biblical prophet Isaiah to beat swords into ploughshares, have been still used in political ideology.

Due to economic backwardness, wars of conquest and other causes, many states of the Ancient East lost their independence or perished. The

social and legal ideas that arose in them, as a rule, were not developed. The consistent continuity of the history of political and legal thought have been preserved in India and China only.
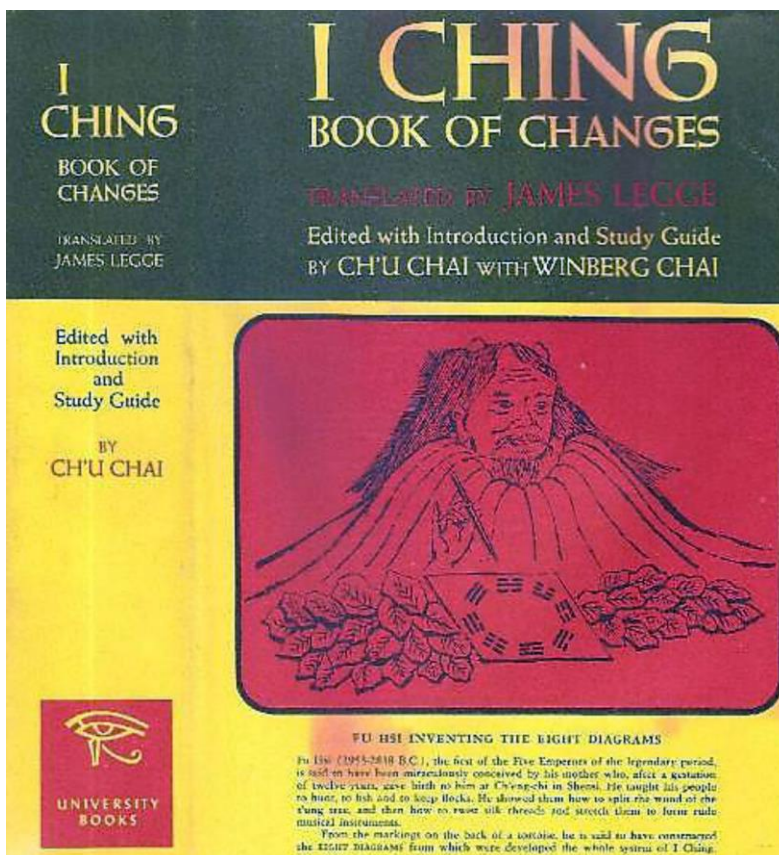
The title of the book "I Ching", translated by James Legge

CHAPTER 6.

PHILOSOPHY OF ANCIENT INDIAN SOCIETY

Brahmanism and Buddhism were the leading trends in the social and legal ideology of Ancient India. They arose in the middle of the 1st millennium BC, when the Aryan tribes, conquered India, began the formation of classes. The roots of both directions went back to the religious and mythological worldview, which was outlined in the Vedas – the ancient ritual books of the Aryans. The ideological differences between Brahmanism and Buddhism arose from the interpretation of the myths and rules of conduct sanctified by religion. The most acute disagreements (collusion) between them were related to the interpretation of the rules for varnas, i.e., tribal groups, or social classes, which marked the beginning of the caste organization of Indian society. There were four varnas in the Ancient India:

- Varna priests (Brahmanas);
- Varna of warriors (Kshatriyas);
- Varna of traders, handcraftsmen and farmers (Vaisyas);
- Varna of the labourers forming the lowest rung of the society (Shudras).

According to Vedic legend, varnas originated from the body of the cosmic giant Purusha. Brahman was born from its mouth, Kshatriya – from hand, Vaisya – from thighs, Shudra – from feet. The members of the first three varnas were considered full-fledged community members. Sudras were in subordination to them.

The ideology of Brahmanism was aimed at establishing the supremacy of the tribal nobility in the forming states. The social and political ideas of the various schools of Brahmanism are reflected in numerous legal and political tractates. The most influential among them was the treatise

of "Manusmṛti"[23].

One of the cornerstones of Brahmanism was the dogma of the soul reincarnation. According to it, the man soul after death will wander through the bodies of people of low origin, animals and plants, or, if a person has spent a righteous life, will be reborn in a man of higher social status or the celestial. The behaviour of man and one's future rebirth were judged by the Brahmans according to how man fulfilled the precepts of Dharma – the cult, social and family duties established by the gods for each varna.

Comparison of the images of the Indians of the varnas

The Vaisyas had to cultivate the land, graze the cattle, and trade.

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[23] "Instruction on Manu Dharma" is an ancient legal text among the many Dharmaśāstras of Hinduism and one of the first Sanskrit texts translated into English in 1794 by Sir William Jones. It was composed in the period from the 2nd century BC to the 2nd century AD.

"However, the Lord pointed out one business to the Shudras only, i.e., to serve these (three) varnas with humility", written in the Laws of Manu. Formally, the Shudras were free, but the position, assigned to them by the Laws of Manu, differed little from the status of slaves. In the ideology of Brahmanism, the rules of life were developed for the Shudras in details, as well as for other lower classes, which included people born in intermarriages, slaves, and untouchables. Slavery was recognized as a natural phenomenon for foreigners and tribes, which did not know the division into varnas.

To justify the caste system and the privileges of the hereditary nobility, to justify the servitude of the lower varnas, the doctrine of Dharma was formed. Class membership was determined by birth and was lifelong. The Brahmans allowed the transition to the higher varna after the death of man only, in "future life", as a reward for service to the gods, patience and meekness. Government coercion understood as the continuation of the punishing power of the gods, was institute providing caste regulations in Brahmanism. The idea of punishment was a fundamental principle of political theory. It had such great importance that the science of government was called the punishment doctrine. The Laws of Manu declared: "The whole world obeys employing punishment". Defining coercion as the leading method of the realization of power, the priesthood ideologists saw its purpose "to encourage the Vaisyas and Shudras to perform their inherent cases earnestly, as, avoiding the inherent cases, they stun the world".

According to the Laws of Manu, state power was represented by the sole rule of the sovereign. In each well-maintained state, there were seven elements: king (emperor), adviser, country, fortress, treasury, army, and allies.

The most important element in this list is the king or emperor. The doctrine of the "seven-membered kingdom" corresponded to the development level of political institutions in early class society in the epoch of despotic regimes and was one of the first attempts in history

to create a generalized image of the state.

The ideologues of the priesthood deified the imperial power with the caste positions. The rulers of the Kshatriyas and Brahmans were equated with the gods, while the kings, belonging to the lower castes, were likened to the owners of brothels.

The treatise of "Arthashastra"[24] occupied a special place in the history of ancient Indian social and political thought. Most scientists suggest that its author was Brahman Kautilya, an advisor to the king Chandragupta, who founded the powerful Maurya Empire[25] in the 4th century BC. The treatise contained Brahmanism provisions about the caste regulations, the need for support of the law of Dharma by harsh punishment, the superiority of the priesthood over other classes, its monopoly on worship. In full accordance with the postulates of Brahmanism, the ideas of domination of hereditary nobility and subordination of secular rulers to priests were enforced. The king had to follow the royal priest "as a disciple to the master, as a son to the father, as a servant to the lord". The idea of a strong centralized king power was brought to the fore in the Arthashastra. Unlimited autocratic ruler presented the emperor here.

Buddhism was formed in the struggle against the priestly religion. It arose in the 6-5th centuries BC. According to legends, Prince Siddhartha Gautama, known as Buddha, i.e., enlightened, was its founder. The earliest Code of the Buddhist Canon, known to modern historians, was the "Tipitaka", or "Three Baskets", dated about the 5-3th centuries BC.

Early Buddhism was a religious and mythological doctrine. The idea of the liberation of man from suffering, the cause of which are worldly desires, became central. According to Buddhists, the exit of man from

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[24] It is an ancient Indian treatise on statecraft, economic policy and military strategy, written in Sanskrit.
[25] It was geographically extensive Iron Age historical power based in Magadha and dominated the Indian subcontinent between 322 and 187 BC.

the world and entry into the monastic community were declared by a precondition for salvation. In early Buddhism, there were two systems of religious and moral precepts: for members of the monastic community and the laity.

The statue of the Golden Buddha

Only free people were allowed into Buddhist monastic communities. A man, who entered the community, had to give up his family and property, cease to observe the precepts of his varna. Monastic life was regulated in detail. The rules for laymen were not elaborated in detail and were largely borrowed from the traditional norms of the Vedic religion.

The peculiarity of Buddhistic views on castes was manifested only in that Kshatriyas were called the first in the list of varnas instead of Brahmans. Buddha preached that there are four castes, i.e., Kshatriyas, Brahmans, Vaisyas, and Shudras. Kshatriyas and Brahmans are superior among the

four castes. The social requirements of Buddhism were essentially reduced to the equation of castes in the religious sphere and did not affect the foundations of the social system. For all its apparent limitations, Buddhism undermined the authority of hereditary Brahmans, their claim to ideological and political leadership in society. The oppositional and anti-priestly nature of Buddhism, its indifference to caste in matters of faith, the preaching of psychological affirmation of the face of suffering earned it wide popularity among the underprivileged and dispossessed people.

Initially, Buddhism reflected the views of ordinary farmers, community members, and the urban poor. It includes many ideas based on communal orders, remnants of tribal democracy and patriarchal traditions. For example, the first kings were depicted as elected and ruled in full harmony with the people. Condemnation of rulers trampled ancient customs because of selfish desires, were often heard in the canon books. Buddhistic parables also preserved stories how the people outraged by the injustice of the rulers beat the royal priest to death and expelled the king from the country.

Subsequently, Buddhism underwent significant changes. Interested in supporting the ruling classes, the leaders of Buddhistic communities subjected the doctrine to revision. The motives of obedience and non-resistance to the existing government increased, the requirements of extreme asceticism softened, ideas of the salvation of the laity arose in it. Secular rulers began to use Buddhism in the struggle against the priesthood and sough dominance to adapt Buddhistic dogmas to the official ideology.

Thus, we see that, for example, in Ancient India, the caste system, formed at the dawn of civilization, created a kind of social relationship. Every democratic thought was drowned in the provisions of the Laws of Manu and Buddhism that followed them. Otherwise, in all probability, it could not be. Asia is a region where origins and religion are very powerful. Therefore, perhaps, this part of the world society has

retained the features of inequality and quasi-democratic regimes till now.

CHAPTER 7.

ANCIENT CHINA AND THE BEGINNINGS OF DEMOCRATIC THOUGHT

However, it is necessary to consider the situation in Ancient China, as another significant state of antiquity to form a holistic picture of the social and political transformations in the world society in the ancient civilizations' era.

The flowering of the social and political thought of Ancient China refers to the 4th-3rd centuries BC. In that period, there were profound economic and political changes due to the emergence of private ownership of land in the state. Growth of property differentiation in communities caused an eminence of prosperous class, easing of patriarchal clan relations and the deepening of social contradictions. A fierce struggle for power between the property and hereditary aristocracy started. The Zhou monarchy, supported by the authority of the nobility, broke up into numerous warring states.

In search of a way out of it, the ideologists of the opposing classes put forward programs of measures, which could strengthen the position of the layers represented by them. Different directions were forming in social and political thought. The most influential socio-political doctrines of Ancient China were Taoism (or Daoism), Confucianism (or Ruism), Moism (or Mohism) and Legalism (or Fajia).

The Taoism emergence is associated with the legendary sage Laozi (or Lao Tzu) living in 6th century BC under the legend. Most of the scientists suppose that he was an author of the canonical treatise "Tao Te Ching"[26] ("Book about Tao and Te"). The ideology of early Taoism

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[26] This treatise can be translated as "Book about Tao and Te".

reflected the views of the communal elite and part of the nobility, their protest against the excessive enrichment of the rulers, the strengthening of the bureaucracy and the expansion of state activities. Having lost their former influence, this class sought the restoration of patriarchal orders.

The statue of legendary sage Laozi, a founder of Taoism (Daoism)

The doctrine is based on the concept of "Tao" (way). It was borrowed from traditional Chinese beliefs, where it meant the right way of life of a person or people, corresponding to the dictates of heaven. Rethinking this concept, the founders of Taoism sought to debunk the ideology of the ruling circles and primarily the official religious cult with its dogmas of "heavenly will" and "sovereign – son of heaven", granting the laws of Tao to the people. Tao appears to man as a supernatural law governing the world. In the face of this all-pervading force, man has only to realize his insignificance and try to prolong his life by liberation from passions.

In social and ethical terms, the condemnation of arrogance, the preaching of middle income and moderation are the leitmotif of Taoism.

Laozi taught that "a person, who accumulate much, will suffer heavy losses" and "a person, who knows the measure, will not have a failure", and "a good merchant, having full barns, pretends that they are empty". "Tao Te Ching" widely reflected ideas among the communal peasantry about property redistribution for the poor. It is stated in the Canon that "heavenly Dao takes away superfluous and gives taken away who need it; the heavenly Dao takes from the rich and gives to the poor what is taken from them".

Laozi associated his hopes to restore the natural simplicity of human relations with intelligent leaders among the hereditary nobility, who would be able to see the "wonderful mystery of Tao" and lead the people: "If the nobility and sovereigns can to observe it (Tao), all beings become calm. Then heaven and earth will merge in harmony, happiness and prosperity will come, and the people will calm down without orders."

The Taoists taught that a wise sovereign should rule the state by the method of non-action, i.e., abstains from active interference in the affairs of members of society. Laozi rebuked his contemporary rulers because they were too active, and set a lot of taxes and restrictive laws. He urged the nobility and rulers "to settle closer to the earth", to restore the order that existed in ancient times, when people lived in small scattered villages, to abandon the use of tools and to wean the people from knowledge. Also, Laozi said that "in ancient times, those, who followed the Tao, did not enlighten the people, but they made ignorant it; it is difficult to manage people when it has a lot of knowledge".

The social and political concept of Taoism was a reactionary utopia. Those layers of the aristocracy and the community elite, whose position was undermined by the growing property and social stratification, practised it. Lacking the real power to fight the new aristocracy, these layers claimed to be the guardians of sacred wisdom, which was inaccessible to others. At the same time, they sought to improve their property affairs, to equalize wealth with the aristocracy using the

communal traditions of mutual assistance.

Confucianism was the most influential doctrine in the history of Chinese political and legal thought. Confucius (551-479 BC), the founder of this direction and an author of the book "Analects"[27], defended the interests of the layers, seeking to reconcile the property and hereditary nobility.

According to Confucius, noblemen led by the sovereign, "the son of heaven" are called to govern the state. Confucius argued that the division of people into "higher" and "lower" could not be eliminated. The difference between his views and the views of the hereditary nobility was that the philosopher distinguished the noble on moral qualities and knowledge, but not on the grounds of origin. According to these criteria, Confucius proposed to nominate people for public service: "If to nominate the just and eliminate the unjust, the people will obey".

The idea to govern with help of the nobility was a compromise at Confucius: views, typical for the ideology of the hereditary nobility, i.e., the recognition of innate differences between people, their graduation to "higher" and "lower", were combined with the provisions to open access to the state apparatus non-noble community leadership.

The main task of the noblemen was to cultivate and spread throughout humanity. Confucius put the particular content, which did not coincide with contemporary one, in this concept. The behaviour, which corresponded to the moral values of family-clan collectives and patriarchal communities, was understood as philanthropy. It included:

- the care of children;
- filial piety in the family;
- fair relations between those who are not bound by ties of kinship,

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[27] Literally "Selected Sayings", also known as the "Analects of Confucius", written during the Warring States period (475-221 BC), is an ancient Chinese book composed of a collection of sayings and ideas attributed to the Chinese philosopher Confucius and his contemporaries, traditionally believed to have been compiled and written by Confucius's followers.

for example, "piety to parents and respect for elder brothers are the basis of humanity".

According to the third point, the general principle of relationships between people was the principle "do not do to others what you do not want yourself".

These principles had to serve as the foundation of the management system. Confucius suggested starting its reconstruction from the correct names, i.e., from the restoration of the true, original meaning of the social titles and its duties: "the ruler should be ruler, the dignitary – dignitary, the father – father, son – son". The ruler was obliged to treat his citizens as his children. He had to take care of the food supply in the country, protect it with weapons and educate the people. In turn, the people are obliged to show filial reverence to the rulers, unquestioningly obey them. The management of family clans and tribal communities (patronymics) was the prototype of the organization of state power for Confucius.

He condemned the rulers, who relied on frightening legal prohibitions, and advocated the preservation of traditional religious and moral methods of influencing the behaviour of the Chinese: "If to govern the people by laws and to maintain order by punishment, the people will seek to evade punishment and will not feel shame. If to govern the people by virtue and keep in order by ritual, the people will know shame and be reformed".

However, Confucius and his followers did not exclude that punitive campaigns against the rebellious will require for the onset of happy times. They believed that it was the most important to give the orders of punitive campaigns by a noble and loving ruler who was amateur of the people. Punishment should be applied in a fatherly way, i.e., with love for people. Confucian doctrine rejected arbitrariness of administration, especially in the field, and limited the willfulness of ruler by the moral framework.

The social and political program of early Confucianism was generally conservative, although it contained progressive ideas too. Carried out in practice, it contributed to the consolidation of patriarchal relations and asserted the dominance of hereditary aristocracy. Confucian ideas of renewal of the ruling class at the expense of representatives of the unprivileged layers could not lead to a radical restructuring in the state, because the representatives of the unprivileged layers, being nurtured on ancient traditions, turned themselves into active defenders of the organization of power, which was defended by the nobility. The concept of the nomination of the fairs assumed the weakening of the conflicts between the old and the new aristocracy only. The ideas of moral knowledge distribution and training of people regardless of their class belonging should be accounted to progressive provisions.

Mozi (479-400 BC)[28], the founder of the school of Moism, criticized the government of the hereditary aristocracy. The followers articulated his doctrine in the book "Mozi". Moism expressed the interests of small proprietors – free farmers, artisans, traders, and lower ranks in the state apparatus, whose social position was unstable and contradictory. On the one hand, they were close to the peasant masses and accepted their beliefs to a certain extent. On the other hand, had achieved a certain position in society, they sought to approach the ruling elite, demanded the privileges of the higher classes for themselves.

Reproducing some representations of the lower classes, the followers of Mozi condemned replacing public office according to the principles of descent and kinship. They argued that all men are equal before the heaven: "Heaven does not distinguish between the small and the great, the noble and the vile; all men are servants of heaven". The wisest, regardless of origin, should be nominated for public service. Moji pointed out that the source of wisdom is

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[28] Mozi or Mo Tzu, original name Mo Di, was a Chinese philosopher during the Hundred Schools of Thought period (475-221 BC).

knowledge drawn from the lives of ordinary people, but not innate virtues or reading of books. The government does not require training. Man's capacity to govern is determined by his business qualities – desire to serve the common people and zeal in business: "If a man has abilities, he must be nominated, even if he is a simple farmer or artisan".

The image of Mozi, the founder of the school of Moism

Mozi put forward the principle of universal love in contrast to the Confucian principle of philanthropy. True philanthropy implies equally fair relations for all people without distinction of kinship or class. In this part, the concept was based on being perceptions of mutual assistance and property redistribution in the community. Simultaneously, Mozi interpreted universal love as a mutual benefit, which gave a completely different meaning to his concept. Concerning the relations within the ruling class, mutual love meant, for example, that advisers and officials

showed diligence in the service and obeyed him without reflection for the love of the ruler; and he paid them back with love – demanded a high salary, awarded to the ranks of nobility and plots of land, gave people to the obedience. As we can see, this understanding of virtue did not envisage equality and real love for people.

Mozi considered the state with the wise ruler and the debugged performing service by the perfect organization of power. He saw the pledge and the basis of power strength in the uniform enforcement officials the will of the ruler. It proposed to impose unanimity, eradicate harmful doctrines and encourage denunciations to establish the full unity of the state: "hearing about good or bad, everyone should inform the parent, and if the parent finds the right, everyone should recognize the right, and if the parent finds it wrong, everyone needs to recognize wrong". This order had to maintain through punishments and rewards proportionate with the committed actions.

Thus, the ideas of equality were discarded in the concept of Moism. The conception ended with the praising the despotic and bureaucratic state, which excluded any possibility to the people participate in the government and discuss public affairs. Mozi's views on state unity approached the idea of power centralization.

Thus, in the concept of Moism, the ideas of equality were actually discarded. The concept ended with the praise of the despotic and bureaucratic state, which excluded any possibility to the people participate in the government and discuss public affairs. Mozi's views on state unity approached the idea of power centralization.

In the history of the evolution of Chinese social and political thought, Mozi's concept occupies an intermediate stage between Confucianism, sustained in the spirit of patriarchal morality, and the practically applied theory of the Legalism. Moism reflected the escalating of patriarchal community in territorial, development of relationships built on estimation and pragmatism, but reproduced the ideology of the layers, which were not able to overcome community ties.

The legists defended the interests of the property and noble employees. The largest representative of early Legalism was Shang Yang (390-338 BC), the famous initiator of the reforms, which legalized private ownership of land in the state. His reforms and decrees were included in the treatise "Shang Jun Shu"[29]. Shang Yang was guided by the aspirations of the serving nobility and wealthy community members, who sought the elimination of patriarchal orders. Another feature of Legalism were the elements of the historical approach to social phenomena. Since the private interests of the new aristocracy contradicted the archaic foundations of communal life, its ideologists had to appeal to the change in social conditions compared to the past. In contrast to the followers of Taoism, Confucianism, and Moism, who called for the restoration of the ancient order, the legists argued that it was impossible to return to antiquity: "It is not necessary to imitate antiquity to benefit the state". Their historical views helped to overcome traditionalist views, shattered religious prejudices and so prepared the conditions to create a secular political theory.

The ideologists of Legalism planned to carry out an extensive set of social and political reforms. In the field of government, it was proposed to concentrate all power in the hands of the supreme ruler, to deprive the viceroys of power and turn them into ordinary officials. The treatise "Shang Jun Shu" says: "A clever ruler does not indulge in turmoil, and he takes power into his own hands, establishes the law, and brings order with the help of laws". It also foresaw to abolish the redeployment by inheritance. Shang Yang recommended first nominating to administrative posts of those who proved their loyalty to the ruler in the service of the army. To ensure the representation of the wealthy layer in the state apparatus, it was provided to sell official positions: "If the individuals, having a surplus of grain, are among the people, let them bureaucratic positions and ranks of nobility for the delivery of grain".

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[29] "Book of Lord Shang" is an ancient Chinese text from the 3rd century BC, regarded as a foundational work of "Chinese Legalism".

Business qualities were not taken into account. Shang Yang made one demand to the officials only to obey the ruler.

The legists believed it is necessary to limit community self-government, to subordinate family clans and patronymics of the local administration. Without denying community self-government 3rd in principle, Shang Yang came up with reform projects (zoning of the state, service of officials in the field), which aimed to put citizens under the direct control of the state power. The implementation of those projects marked the beginning of the territorial division of the citizens in China.

It also proposed to establish uniform laws for the whole state. Shang Yang understood the repressive policy and administrative orders of the government by law.

The statue of Shang Yang, the famous initiator of the reforms

Shang Yang considered the relationship between the government and the people as a confrontation of the warring parties: "When the people

are stronger than their authorities, the state is weak; when the authorities are stronger than their people, the army is powerful". The power of the ruler rests on force and is not bound by any law in a model state. Shan Yang did not know the concept of the rights of citizens, their legal guarantees. The law acted as a means of frightening preventive terror. Shang Yang argued that the slightest offence should be punished by death. This punitive practice was to be supplemented by a policy aimed to eradicate dissent and stupefy the people.

The practical application of Legalism concepts was accompanied by increased despotism, the exploitation of the people, the introduction into the citizens' consciousness of animal fear of the ruler and general suspicion. Given the discontent of the masses by Legalism order, the followers of Shang Yan refused the most odious provisions, and, filling the legalism of moral content, brought it to the Taoism or Confucianism.

In the 2nd and 1st centuries BC, Confucianism, supplemented by the ideas of Legalism, established itself as the state religion of China. Taoism, interwoven with Buddhism and local beliefs, acquired magic traits and lost influence on the growth of social, political, and legal ideology over time.

Thus, for all their primitive social, political and legal structure, compared with modern criteria, the earliest civilizations contained some elements of the democratic basis, which was already developed and theoretically justified in Ancient Greece later. Naturally, we cannot assume transformation in those societies by purely democratic, but it was impossible to create even a liberal society at that stage of human development. Therefore, we have to consider and evaluate the micro-steps to the people's rule at the regional or local level at least as a quasi-democratic, or similar.

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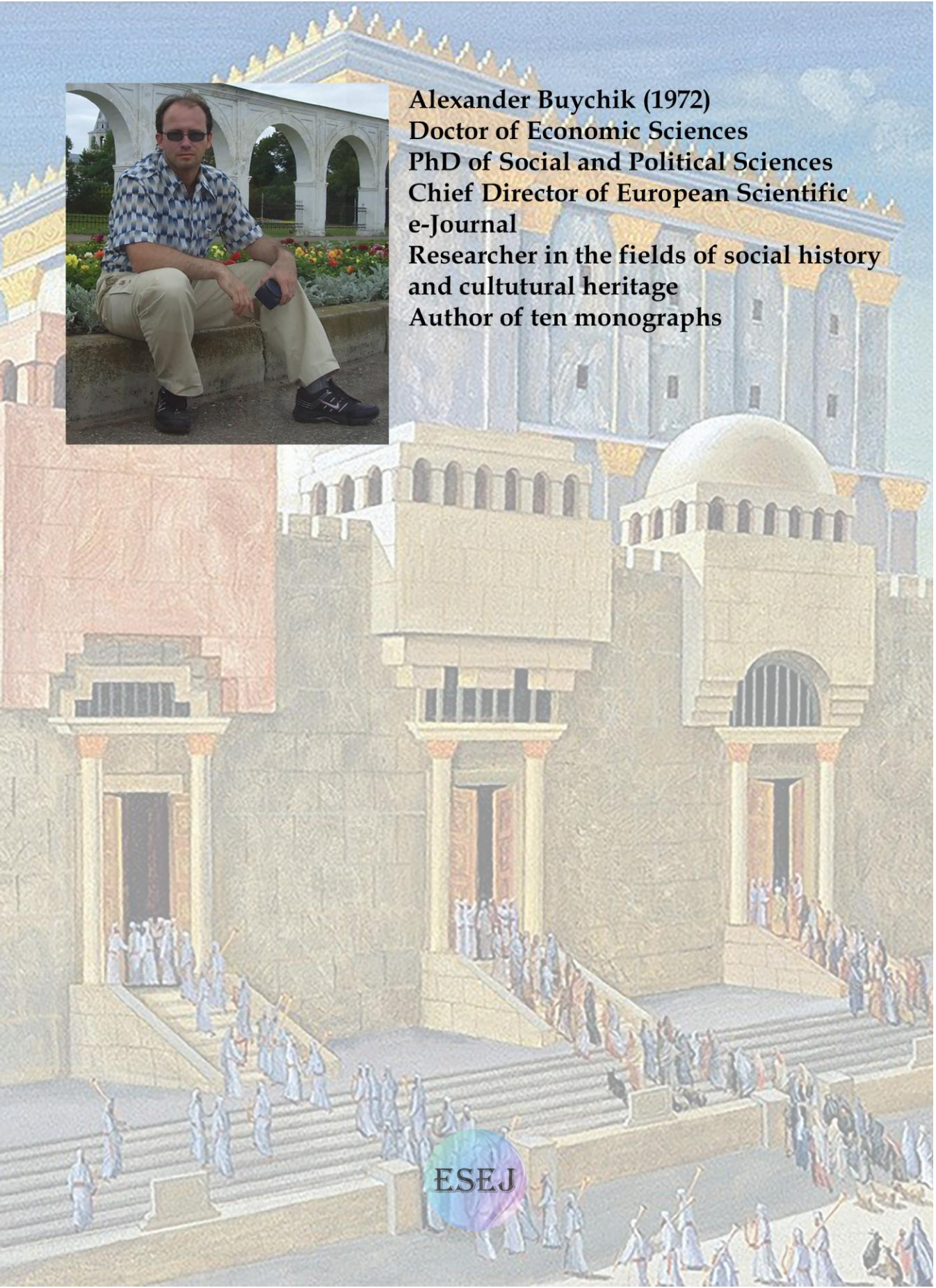Book 7. Formation of democratic ideas: Dutch and English schools of the 17th century

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