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# Laws of State Evolution – Sub Specie Aeternitatis



## Introduction to the final study

Quoting *Ethics*, the introductory study of this volume recalled that Spinoza advocated the observation of things *sub specie aeternitatis* (under the aspect of eternity). The effect of political interests and actions can be considered the eternal aspect of state development. Underlying the state histories presented in the studies of this volume, we find the political interest groups whose advocacy – directly or indirectly – became a state-shaping force. But how does this hypothesis fit the evolutionist approach? The evolutionist approach seeks the *patterns and laws of development* and strives to build a theory from their interconnection. Characterising progressive development, these patterns and laws illustrate the phenomenon in its process. The state-shaping influence of political interest groups is one of the potential laws of state development, which should be integrated in a more complex evolution theory.

What does the concept of evolution mean in terms of society? The concept of evolution is rooted in ancient Greek philosophy. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, it became a full-fledged theory of biology, influencing all fields of science as a universal social theory. The idea of “progressive development” was present in the natural philosophies for centuries (Anaximander, Empedocles, Epicurus and the Roman Lucretius). In the introduction of *On the Origin of Species* (1859), Darwin refers to Aristotle as the source of the concept of natural selection. In the era of science (before Darwin), Leibniz, Kant and Malthus, too, drew conclusions from social phenomena as regards the theory of evolution.<sup>1</sup> Also before Darwin, evolution as a topic was popularised by *Vestiges of the Natural History of Creation* authored by Robert Chambers, which

<sup>1</sup> MALTHUS 1798.

was a well-liked book at its own time (1844).<sup>2</sup> Mostly influenced by Lamarck's biological works, the concept of the "progress of nature" appears also in Herbert Spencer's sociology, whose works also preceded Darwin's. In the Darwinian concept of the biological evolution, the idea of the survival of certain species rested on the theory of natural selection. The evolution theory became a supreme law to all laws of natural sciences, and gradually began to appear as an operation model of all levels of existence. The fundamental idea of the theory was "adaptive dispersal", with the following cumulative theorems:

- replication (survival and procreational) constraint, that is, the replication of an information (pattern)
- mutation of replication
- survival of the most adaptable mutations (natural selection)
- theorem of complexity

Evolution became the explanatory model of the functioning of inanimate matter, the development on molecular level, and the various biological levels of organisation, from genes to cells and neural systems. Its scope of application as a model covers the levels of cultural, social and technological organisation. From a biological development theory, evolution became a universal law of ever more complex successive levels of organisation. According to the *multi-level evolution theory*, there is a selection (survival) struggle on the levels of genes, individuals and groups. The birth of *sociobiology* as a research area was inspired by the experience that evolution strategy unfolds also in the behaviour of human society.<sup>3</sup> Sociobiology examines the organisation of social behaviour based on biological analogies. This rests on the theorem that social behaviour, too, results from evolution, thus its explanation should also be based on the laws of biological development. Science often mistrusts the above theorems, perceiving them as risky temptations of Darwinism. Indeed, from the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, Darwinism did tempt social theories, giving rise to provocative social explanations and racial theories based on the ideas of social evolution (Edward Burnett Tylor) and social Darwinism

<sup>2</sup> CHAMBERS 1994 [1844].

<sup>3</sup> WILSON 1975. Edward O. Wilson viewed ant colonies as a model for perfectly functioning human societies, leaving several lessons also for those who examine state theory and the functioning of governance.

(William Graham Sumner),<sup>4</sup> intended at that time as a justification of competitive capitalism (Sumner) and Nietzsche’s power ethics. The idea of determinism and genetic determination in terms of our social relations collided head-on with the doctrines of social justice. The theory of hereditary behaviour was a breeding ground for the race-based research of intelligence (IQ) (Sir Cyril Burt, Richard Herrnstein). Sociobiology was also received with harsh criticism, inter alia, because it projected the social behaviour of animals on human beings. Sociobiology once again accentuated the theory that humans are not completely rational beings, as the key drive of their actions is evolutionary stability, reproduction and safety – not only at an individual level, but also as a basis for group organisation and actions. The application of evolutionary laws to human societies cultivated uncertainty as regards the postulate of the rationality and freedom of decisions made in human relationships. Political ideologies also made use of sociobiology: the *evolutionary competition of various groups* was an appealing explanation for distinguishing between communists, liberals, or conservatives.<sup>5</sup> Edward O. Wilson’s sociobiology did not bring human ethics into question and did not perceive the “survival of the strong” as a law prevailing in society. He was searching for the motives of the social adaptation of humans. He was instrumental in the process that offered evolution theory, or “adaptive dispersal” (replication) as a working model to social sciences at all levels of existence. He inspired the idea of *cultural evolution*, which explains the organisation of communities as cultures’ strategy for survival.<sup>6</sup>

Finally, a reference should be made to the *law of increasing complexity*. In biological development, this law means that organisms with more complex information processing have adapted more effectively to their environment. Increasing for more than three billion years, biological complexity is best shown by its most successful prototypes: the human brain and nervous system. Over the course of tens of thousands of years, from the first hordes, tribes and small villages of mankind, complexity resulted in exceedingly complex forms of coexistence in human societies: human cultures have been in the evolutionary phase of state development in the past five thousand years.

<sup>4</sup> EGEDY 2009.

<sup>5</sup> ANONYMOUS 2017.

<sup>6</sup> For a summary of cultural evolution see CsÁNYI 1980: 95–112.

## The state as a phenomenon of cultural evolution

In the theory of cultural evolution, the constraint of replication means that a pattern of social coexistence (organisation) will necessarily expand and change (be mutated), through increasing complexity, adaptation and selection. The genesis of the state as a “cultural pattern” can be traced back to the time when the social organisation became more complex. The characteristics of the state have spread in all civilisations (replication) independently of each other (for example, in the Inca or Aztec cultures that developed in isolation from the rest of the world). In terms of its spread, changes, diversity, and in terms of selection – that is, the demise or survival of certain states – *we regard the state as an inevitable result of evolution*. Over the course of the tens of thousands of years of their history, the social organisations in prehistoric communities necessarily progressed towards an increasingly complex and hierarchical organisation: towards becoming a state. The law of increasing complexity is evidenced by the increasingly complex state organisation, institutions, bureaucracies, legal system, and the system of services appearing in society. Earth’s population has increased eightfold in the last two centuries, and this population pressure also influenced the increase in complexity. The other *rule of evolution is the construction of hierarchies*. Based on the research of Tamás Vicsek and Anna Zefairis, we know that all biological organisms operate in hierarchies of increasing complexity, and that the basic pattern of nature is a chain of hierarchical dependencies.<sup>7</sup>

Together, complexity and hierarchy constitute the structure that balances entropy: orderliness and organisation. Entropy is known as the second law of thermodynamics, but scientific research has shown that it is a universal axiom of evolutionary theory, applying also in other areas of life phenomena.<sup>8</sup> According to the law of entropy, the spontaneous process of isolated systems evolves towards an increasing disorder, that is, eventually all structures break down. States, civilisations and social organisations are also isolated systems in which the law of entropy prevails. According to physical reasoning, the energy level that maintains the complexity necessary for order is constantly “consumed” by entropy. In reverse: the energy generated from chaos at the atomic

<sup>7</sup> ZAFEIRIS–VICSEK 2018.

<sup>8</sup> CHRISTIAN 2016.

level maintains order, but only temporarily. To overcome entropy, the energy expenditure must always be increased, otherwise the system will be disintegrated by the loss of energy caused by entropy, therefore all that exist aspires to become more complex, so building evermore complex structures is an evolutionary constraint. This is the dynamic relationship between complexity and entropy. Entropy constantly destroys human-made organisations, such as the state, public administration and all specific state institutions. Therefore, constant change and increasing complexity is a necessity for survival and efficiency in all systems of nature and society. Increasing complexity is a way to “abscond” from entropy. In the operation of social organisations, entropy is the inevitable risk of bureaucratism, dysfunction, cumbersome and corrupt operation. The constant “reforms” of institutions and the compulsion to develop them often seem like self-serving, political overaction. However, according to the logic of entropy, an institution must be kept “under the pressure” of development, otherwise the internal gravity of entropic energy loss will lead to disintegration, deceleration and corruption in the operation of the organisation.

However, cultural evolution – and therefore state evolution – derogates significantly from the laws of biological evolution in one aspect. In the latter, the main factor of change is biological mutation, characterised by a sort of “blindness”, and nature selects the most adaptable ones from random mutations. But social evolution lacks this “natural blindness”, and development is guided by the “free will” and morality of human beings. Modern philosophy postulates relatively free will, so the selection and mutation of states are determined by the adaptation resulting from the “will of human communities”, that is, political intention or interest. In the structure of the “multi-level evolution” mentioned above, state development in social evolution is determined by the level of political groups as a selection factor. Political activity is the projection of a homogeneous group interest, the process where that group interest becomes a claim for public authority – or, using the terminology of biology, a claim for survival and proliferation – aimed at influencing the supreme state authority and shaping the state. State and politics are connected instants of the same development process, just as the genesis of law is a parallel evolutionary factor in the development of the state.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>9</sup> SZILÁGYI 1998: 66.

It is important to clarify the conceptual framework in which we interpret the state in our thesis. With tolerable simplification, we accept the modern concepts of the state as a common conceptual framework valid from the primary states – dating back to the 3<sup>rd</sup> millennium BC – to the present day. Our concise definition of the concept is that the state is the supreme power over a given population of a given area (following Georg Jellinek).<sup>10</sup> The element of public authority or supreme power is the essential criterion, grasped by Carl Schmitt as follows: the state “creates the unity of a human grouping through the element of power”. According to Max Weber, the essence of supreme power is the “monopoly of physical violence”, which definition applies to all states, from primary to modern. Any further features of supreme power are of secondary importance in comparison, such as the organisation of rule or governance, political organisation, legal order and law enforcement, all of which can be considered the manifestations of “physical coercion” that change over time.

The paradigm of evolutionary theory is *necessity*, or *determination*. The genesis of state evolution is that the state itself appears in history as a necessary stage of development, a public authority organisation emerging as a consequence of society’s increasing complexity and hierarchy. This thesis should not be confused with the Marxist idea that interprets the state as an “objective social need”, perceiving it as the necessary result and justification of the “class struggle”. As mentioned above, in social evolution, the political group level is the selection factor that determines state development. The driving force of state development is political interest, which means that one or more political interest groups underlie all changes of state development, and their effective advocacy – directly or indirectly – becomes a force of public authority and state-shaping.

From the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, there have been attempts – on the part of Marxism and social Darwinism in particular – to define the evolutionary driving force of state development bearing inherent necessity, by generalising the social causes of the genesis of ancient states. The consideration underlying these attempts was the idea that if we unravel the “secret” of state genesis, it can also serve as a general law to explain modern state development. Indeed, the genesis of primary states (pseudo states) – originating in the 3<sup>rd</sup> millennium BC – offers an

<sup>10</sup> For a conceptual summary see TAKÁCS 2011: 162–168; Cs. KISS 2022a.

attractive field for exploring the driving forces of state development.<sup>11</sup> The term “primary” is based on the interpretation of the history state formation as a sequence of primary and secondary stages (following Klaus Eder).<sup>12</sup> From archaeology to anthropology and history, sciences have been mesmerised by “the arche of state theory”, that is, the discovery of the oldest reason(s) of state formation. It seems logical that the explanations of the transformation of primitive societies into civilised states could also refer to the “evolutionary” regularities of later (secondary or modern) state development and politics.<sup>13</sup> At the beginning of the Holocene era (9700 BC), the increasingly large and densely populated societies of farming and animal husbandry gradually developed towards higher levels of organisation and political centralisation. The common point of the theories is that the birth of the states defined by the modern state concept is a necessity in various parts of the world. The inevitable law of the genesis of the state is most convincingly explained by concepts synthesising multiple coefficient factors. The synthesis includes the *theory of internal and external conflicts*. According to that theory, it is necessary that in societies with a critical mass, an internal conflict develops between groups or families of different status, which is temporarily consolidated by the fact that one of the groups achieve supreme power, that is, state authority (victory). The Marxist (Engelsian) hypothesis argues that from the outset, the internal conflict arose due to differences in wealth arising from surplus crops, that is, private property. Thus, in the interpretation of state theories based on Marxism, the state is an oppressive and exploitative organisation of a “ruling class”. The dreadful political and social consequences of Marxist hypotheses manifested in the communist ideologies of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. A convincing explanation for hierarchisation – among the many – is the theory emphasising subordination or cooperative organisation related to the organisation of work in agriculture or construction (for example, irrigation systems).<sup>14</sup> According to 20<sup>th</sup> century anthropology,

<sup>11</sup> By primary states, we mean those social organisations, also considered empires, civilisations and cultures, which can be characterised as “the supreme power over a given territory and a given population”. Some of the most important primary states were the following: Sumer, Hittite Empire, Assyria, Babylonia, Persia, Egypt, Macedonia, Greek city states, Roman Empire, India, Moorish Empire, China, and the Inca, Maya and Aztec empires.

<sup>12</sup> SZILÁGYI 1998: 65.

<sup>13</sup> SERVICE 1962; 1975.

<sup>14</sup> HARARI 2015.

archaic societies may have developed *boss personalities* (“great men”) who managed the above environmental effects (population growth, internal conflicts, farming, war, work organisation) well, and around whom the critical level necessary for the formation of the public power organisation into a state was developed. The theory of inevitable external conflicts – conflicts between societies – was also fuelled by sociological misinterpretations of the concept of the Darwinian evolution’s “natural selection”. According to social Darwinist “theories of conquest” (Ludwig Gumplowicz, Franz Oppenheimer),<sup>15</sup> the conquest instinct of ethnic groups is the engine of state development. Conflict theories are based on the probability of violence within and between societies, but they do not in themselves explain the genesis of a state based on a hierarchical public authority organisation. Throughout history, violent conflicts between societies occur usually, but not necessarily or inevitably, so they cannot be considered the oldest reason or general law of state development.<sup>16</sup> Nonetheless, the likelihood of violent conflicts generated the formation of the stratum of soldiers and military leaders, which led to a progress towards higher levels of political organisation and leadership, that is, to the genesis of the state. According to the synthetic theories, the above-mentioned system effects jointly “funnelled” society towards new levels of political hierarchisation and organisational complexity.<sup>17</sup> Work organisation, territorial protection and religious organisation were the instrumental factors that drove farming village communities (in the ancient Middle East) towards the centralised supreme power and state apparatus, that is, the genesis of the state. In the second stage of development (antiquity), in societies engaged in shepherding, the organisation of trade and conquering militarism (militocracies) built the hierarchy and state apparatus into an actual state (ancient Greek and Roman, and early feudal states). Trade encouraged the development of the legal system, while secularisation, religious tolerance and slavery also appeared. In the third stage of development, the early feudal states (Germanic and Slavic tribes) improved the military-based apparatus, thus

<sup>15</sup> SZILÁGYI 1998: 67.

<sup>16</sup> The monographs authored by Yuval Noah Harari and Steven Pinker are sceptical in terms of the scientific justification of the violent nature of ancient societies. HARARI 2015: 64; PINKER 2011.

<sup>17</sup> LEWELLEN 1992; COHEN 1978: 142.



a decentralised feudal state authority came into being with an emphatic territorial principle (*feudum*).<sup>18</sup>

The generalisable characteristics of the birth of primary states were only the beginnings of the process of state development, the germs of the evolutionary laws and patterns of ancient, medieval or modern state development. The competing policy-making interest groups that determined the formation of the states of later eras were still little differentiated in the early stages of social development. They became state-shaping forces only after state development progressed to a certain level.

### The political group level of state evolution

The theory of the state discusses the “political” character as the *political concept of the state*.<sup>19</sup> We interpret the term “political group” in line with Carl Schmitt’s concept of the “political”, in the dichotomy of friend and enemy. In addition to the community of interests, the construction and maintenance of group unity includes also the logic of “separation from others”. Political interest groups and their aspiration for public authority and state-shaping influence have gradually become more and more diverse and complex. The plural direction of development also provides a *concept of value* to the direction of state development dictated by political interests. Just as human thinking is the pinnacle of biological evolution, increasing complexity in social evolution also means the *development of human values*. According to Steven Pinker, this process was in full bloom during the Enlightenment.<sup>20</sup> Our theory is similar to Hegel’s concept of the state, who perceived *state development as the development of values*, and the progress of moral ideals<sup>21</sup> and freedom.<sup>22</sup> An idealist theorist, Herbert Spencer argued that social development is a value-saturated process, a progress towards perfection. Using physical, biological and anthropological empiricism, he strove to underpin that development is characterised by gradual differentiation, the constantly transforming “dispersion” of matter and force. In Spencer’s theory of development,

<sup>18</sup> SZILÁGYI 1998: 103–124.

<sup>19</sup> TAKÁCS 2011: 189–201; Cs. KISS 2022b.

<sup>20</sup> PINKER 2018.

<sup>21</sup> DELI 2009.

<sup>22</sup> SAMU 1992: 53

integration is accompanied or followed by disintegration, in a perpetual cyclical change. This is a process towards increased heterogeneity, which can be observed in any group of phenomena, including states.<sup>23</sup> A 20<sup>th</sup>-century advocate of the idea of development, Teilhard de Chardin defined the essence of the concept of development as the advance of “good” against “evil”. According to his evolution theory, the goal of the development of the universe is absolute perfection, progress to the highest level of consciousness.<sup>24</sup> There are views contrary to the above, which perceive social development as a process of value loss (devolution), for example the philosophy of Friedrich Nietzsche or Béla Hamvas, whose thought was selected as the motto of this volume.

Axiology is a field of philosophy, while historiography – which describes and explains the development of states – is neutral, metaphysical, and seeks the mechanical regularity underlying the change of states. Why does a state cease to exist or survive for centuries? Why do the state borders or the form of the state change? In general, the historical narrative considers conquests on behalf of the state and interstate agreements (compromise, peace agreement, etc.) *external factors*, while revolution and civil war are typical state-shaping *internal factors*. The 20<sup>th</sup> century marked the appearance, inter alia, of the concept of “international interest” rising above state interests, and the common interest of states (international peace and security). Economic and ethnic–national interests are state-shaping powers. This study cannot assume the task of systemising all these factors, we have only highlighted the main types used in historiography, political science and media discourse narratives. This overview also shows that the real (realistic) public power motives behind the conventional narrative often remain hidden, and the cause or motive of change appears in the guise of “public law fictions” (e.g. state interest, interstate treaty). That is illustrated by the Russian–Ukrainian war that began in 2022. While the war has given rise to changes reshaping the Ukrainian state in historical terms (borders, ethnic composition), the narrative referring to the conflict of Russian and Ukrainian state interests provides insufficient explanation. To reveal the political reality behind the relevant state interests, a more realistic explanation calls for the identification of state-shaping changes: the political interest groups advocating the commencement and continuation of the war, and their political interests

<sup>23</sup> HOWARD 1890: 40–47.

<sup>24</sup> TEILHARD DE CHARDIN 1959.

related to public authority (for example, Russian political interest groups and oligarchies, the interest group of U.S. Democrats, Western European liberal interest groups, global financial interest groups, etc.).

We argue that the law of state evolution is that state development is always shaped by one or more specific political group interests. This approach is realistic, as – abandoning simplifications such as “state interest” – it seeks to identify the human intention, that is, the collective will underlying the changes. The nature of political activity is that people unite in interest groups of “friends” or “comrades”. According to Cicero’s definition, states are formed because “human beings congregate” due to “a social principle that is innate in man”, which integrates people into political groups along public affairs (*res publica*).<sup>25</sup> According to the law of evolution, groups function with dynamics aimed at survival and expansion, acting as a drive for moving towards public power influence and the phenomenon of the state.

The two basic forms of advocacy (influence) are *peaceful and violent* (war, revolution, terrorism) assertion of interests. Within the category of peaceful advocacy, there are two further forms of the appearance of a political interest group, also constituting two phases usually separated in time:

- *groups with pseudo-legitimacy*: political interest groups aspiring to influence or gain legitimate public authority, and thus, to reach a state-shaping position
- *groups functioning in a position of public authority with proper or debated legitimacy* (typically the parties with parliamentary representation in democracies, governing parties of one-party states, prelates of religious states and the rulers of monarchies)

Applying a typology with a different aspect, we can define

- the former as interest groups that only *indirectly* determine the power structure, that is, state development (big tech companies, netocracy, financial interests, civil organisations, media groups)
- and the latter as state-shaping interest groups that appear *directly* in the competition for public authority (political parties, ethnic-based organisations)

<sup>25</sup> CICERO 1928.

In part, the mechanism of peaceful political advocacy is shaped by standards and forms, such as parliamentary or presidential elections, legislation, diplomacy, international treaties, lobbying or corruption, economic pressure and disinformation. We can discover the diverse forms of advocacy in the description of each state-shaping historical event of the past five thousand years of state development.

### Types of state-shaping political interest groups

This study is unfit to aim at outlining the comprehensive system of the historical types of interest groups. In the following, we offer a simplified typology to describe the typical political interest groups, found – with various levels of dominance throughout the historical periods – in the competition for supreme power and in the background of state development. The literature on the historical chronology and characterisation of political interest groups would fill an entire library. Eventually, the political interests of all groups turn into public authority demands, but *their primary interests* may be different, similar, or even identical in each group. Survival and expansion (replication) are immanent for all groups, but, for example, in the case of family/kinship alliances, kinship-based dynasties, or dictators, they become also primary interests. Territorial and military – just like cultural and economic – interests are often linked. Religious and ideological interests can also be combined with others. The main types listed below are only examples, but they are suitable for placing the studies in this volume in the paradigm of state evolution: we are searching for the political interests that determine each point of state development and the – one or more – political interest groups that assert them.

- *Family–blood relationship alliances*: a timeless and eternal pattern of building political will, from archaic societies to modern states. Nowadays, the assertion of interests of the family–kinship alliance is still decisive in the formation of states that have not reached the development stage of urbanisation and democratisation or are stuck there. Basically, this group’s drive to obtain or strengthen their position of public authority is survival.
- *Tribal alliances*: a higher-level organisation of family–blood relationship alliances. A determining factor in the origin and early development of states. The interests that drove tribal groups towards

- gaining state authority were typically the acquisition or defence of territory, and the development of military capability.
- *Aristocratic elites, high castes*: secular orders or castes formed from the elites of the tribal associations were present in all social hierarchies. The social strata with higher power or significant wealth formed homogeneous interest groups and were interested in protecting their wealth or cultural value system, or in expanding them to gain public authority. From the Indian Kshatriya caste to the senators of the Roman Empire (*Senatus mala bestia*), and the baronial and noble orders of the feudal world to today's affluent groups known as oligarchs, these groups shape public authority in an indirect way. Today, they are still dominant in states with developing or weaker democratic institutions.
  - *Urban bourgeoisie, guilds*: the urban bourgeoisie determining the development of the state, merchants, and the interest groups of universities and other professions, from the Greek *polis* to the medieval city states of Italy. Their own autonomous world of values became a homogeneous system of interests that gradually dismantled the feudal European state system from the 16<sup>th</sup> century.
  - *Ecclesiastical, clerical, denominational orders*: the first references made to the influence of religious leaders and groups of religious elite date back to the 3<sup>rd</sup> millennium BC. Their state-shaping influence was decisive in all civilisations. Nowadays, they have public authority in the religious states of the Middle East.
  - *Financial companies, associations*: this network extends from the banking houses of Western countries that became trading superpowers in the early modern era to today's global economic interest groups. The archetype of this category was the East India Company and the House of Rothschild, while today it is represented, inter alia, by the Bilderberg Group and media companies.<sup>26</sup>
  - *Parties*: modern political parties are the most legitimate and simplest forms of political interest groups. Their interests are usually cultural and ideological in nature: they strive to assert their political values with public authority. Party interests in one-party systems are often transformed into the perverse interests of a dictator (e.g. Stalin,

<sup>26</sup> POKOL 2004. According to Béla Pokol, capital groups as a new level of the building of political will and global political force appeared in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. More recently, Zoltán Pogátsa discusses the issue in his work entitled *A globális elit*. See POGÁTSÁ 2022.

Mao Zedong, Fidel Castro, Pol Pot, Ceaușescu, Kim Jong-un, Lukashenka).

- *Perverse individual interests – dictators*: throughout history, one-person “political interest groups” have been formed by individuals driven by extreme ambitions, who assumed a historical state-shaping role in public authority with legitimacy gained with military force, by taking the position of party leader, or by having dynastic legitimisation, such as Napoleon, Hitler, Stalin. Their interest was the realisation of their own ideological system, that is, “historical survival”.
- *Secret societies*: their role as a state-shaping public power is not proven in the discipline of history or in political science, but they have a place among political interest groups. As examples, the “Templars”, the order of the Illuminati, the freemasonry movement, or Opus Dei could be mentioned. Fourteen U.S. presidents were Freemasons, the brothers of Napoleon were the leaders of the Grande Orient de France.<sup>27</sup> The continuity between the Templars and the Freemasons, their role in the French Revolution, and the relationship between these movements and the leading financial interest groups is also examined by historiographic research.<sup>28</sup> *The Square and the Tower* authored by Niall Ferguson provides a scholarly examination of the state-shaping public authority role of the network of secret societies, particularly the history of the Illuminati. Ferguson presents the conspiracy network consisting of nearly a hundred legal and secret organisations and interest groups, the role of which – as he puts it – is generally underestimated by mainstream historiography and stubbornly exaggerated by conspiracy theorists. The author of this study shares the approach of János Bátky – the protagonist of the novel *The Pendragon Legend* penned by Antal Szerb – regarding the role of secret societies, which is similar to his assessment of alchemy.
- *Criminal organisations*: groups of organised crime stand for the illegal form of secret societies, their state-shaping role is typical in African and Latin American developing countries, but it was also present in the history of state development in Italy, Russia, the United States and the Balkans in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The scope of their influence is hard to determine, the interest motivation is basically economic

<sup>27</sup> HAHNER 2010: 30.

<sup>28</sup> SÁGHY 2010: 49.

in nature, while their position in public authority is rather a tool than a goal.

- *Kinship-based dynasties*: in all civilisations, until the genesis of modern democracies (republics as regards the form of state) and one-party states, state development was based on the competition for survival and alliances of dynasties. Inter alia, the most important modern European dynasties were the following: Habsburg-Lorraine, Hohenzollern, Windsor, Karadjordjević, Bourbon and Bonaparte. With the survival of monarchies and some dictatorships (e.g. North Korea), the state-shaping influence of dynasties based on royal descent continues to this day.
- *Modern international institutions*: in the new world order following World War II, international and intergovernmental organisations of political and economic nature (World Economic Forum, World Bank, IMF, institutions of the European Union, NATO, OPEC, International Chamber of Commerce, etc.) were interested in strengthening their own institutional influence on public power and legitimacy, implemented through their influence on the supreme power. Their interests are a mix of ideological, cultural and economic motivations, and self-centred institutional survival. Their leaders form an international elite, and their management develops specific neocracies (bureaucracy, juristocracy), forming into political interest groups. Their principled requirements on state governance (e.g. *good governance*) call for inclusive governance with economic actors.
- *Global companies*: the global economy of the 20<sup>th</sup> century started a tendency that enhances the concentration of capital, so today's world economy is concentrated in the hands of fewer and fewer companies, which have greater financial resources than most countries in the world.<sup>29</sup> These companies strive to influence public authorities primarily with economic motivation and, secondarily, with advocacy affecting consumer culture. Tech giants should be treated as a separate category.
- *Tech giants*: big tech companies<sup>30</sup> build a position of power in the modern information and media society with a specific power policy

<sup>29</sup> *Global Wealth Report 2022*.

<sup>30</sup> For example, Apple Inc, Amazon.com Inc, Microsoft Corporation, Alphabet Inc. (Google), Facebook Inc., Tencent Holdings Limited, Alibaba Group Holding Limited, Samsung Electronics Co., Ltd, IBM, Intel Corporation, etc.

of influence over people (netocracy) and can indirectly influence state development and governance to an increasing extent (for example, by inciting revolutions, uprisings, manipulating public elections).<sup>31</sup> Their interest motivation is basically economic in nature.

- *Civil movements*: civil organisations based on the freedom of association of the 20<sup>th</sup> century: the civil rights movements of the USA, the pseudo-party movements that determined the development of the Eastern European states (e.g. the Polish Solidarity movement, the Lakitelek and samizdat circles in Hungary), and today’s human rights and NGO networks. Their more recent forms are the university and scientific associations forming into civil movements of advocacy.

Table 1: Summary of political interest groups

Historical type of interest groups	Nature of the original group interest
family–blood relationship alliances	<i>survival</i>
tribal alliances	<i>territorial, military</i>
aristocratic elite, high castes	<i>cultural, economic</i>
urban bourgeoisie, guilds	<i>cultural, economic</i>
ecclesiastical, clerical, denominational orders	<i>religious, ideological</i>
financial companies	<i>economic</i>
parties	<i>cultural and ideological</i>
perverse individual interest – dictator	<i>survival</i>
secret societies	<i>ideological</i>
criminal organisations	<i>economic</i>
kinship-based dynasties	<i>survival</i>
modern international institutions	<i>ideological, cultural</i>
global companies	<i>economic, cultural</i>
tech giants	<i>economic, cultural</i>
civil movements	<i>ideological</i>

Source: Compiled by the author.

<sup>31</sup> Kis 2019.



## Conclusions

According to our thesis, the effect of state evolution is not exclusive to the level of state interests, but it also appears at the level of political interest groups operating largely on the basis of a demand for public authority. Research should aspire to seek the political group interests underlying the various forms of state development, which – at a higher level – are considered interests of national, economic, or ideological nature. The paradigm of political interest groups demystifies the references made solely to “state interests” or “great power interests”, that is, to the ideals of ideological, economic, or political values. In that regard, following Béla Hamvas’s thought selected as the motto of our volume, this paradigm intends to close the gap between theory and reality. It is to be reiterated that this paradigm is of descriptive and fact-finding nature. In our value-based, idealistic approach, the building of political will and the interstate relations should indeed be driven by sovereign state interests and legitimate governments. In the conservative nationalist ideal of state evolution, state development is shaped peacefully by legitimate governments representing the national interest. The thesis of our research and the studies of this volume may shine new light on historical entities, such as the Transatlantic Alliance, Asia, Europe, the European Union, Western and Eastern Europe, Central Europe, nation states, or the Austro–Hungarian Monarchy. The evolutionist paradigm of research can uncover the pre-Westphalian, modern state history and the true drives of the post-Westphalian, ongoing political sovereignty debates, and identify the real motives underlying the issues of sovereignty.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> MÁTHÉ 2023.

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