

Literatur

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ALGAZE 2001

Guillermo Algaze, *Initial Social Complexity in Southwestern Asia, The Mesopotamian Advantage*. [Current Anthropology 42 \(2001\), 199–233](#).

The emergence of early Mesopotamian (Sumerian) civilization must be understood within the framework of the unique ecology and geography of the alluvial lowlands of the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers during the late 5th and 4th millennia b.c. The former gave Mesopotamian societies important advantages in agricultural productivity and subsistence resource resilience not possessed by contemporary polities on their periphery, while the latter gave them enduring transportation advantages. This material imbalance created opportunities and incentives that made it both possible and probable that early Mesopotamian elites would use trade as one of their earliest and most important tools to legitimize and expand their unequal access to resources and power. Given this, a still hypothetical (but testable) model is presented that accounts for the precocious socioeconomic differentiation and urban growth of southern Mesopotamia in the 4th millennium as social multiplier effects inadvertently set in motion by evolving trade patterns. This trade was first largely internal, between individual southern polities exploiting rich but localized ecological niches within the Mesopotamian alluvium during the Late Ubaid and Early Uruk periods. By the Middle and Late Uruk periods, however, inherently asymmetrical external trade between growing southern cities and societies at their periphery in control of coveted resources gained more prominence. In due course, import-substitution processes further amplified the one-sided socio-evolutionary impact on southern societies of these shifting trade patterns. Unequal developmental rates resulting from the operation of these processes over time explain why the earliest complex societies of southwestern Asia appeared in southern Mesopotamia and not elsewhere.

BUTZER 1981

Karl W. Butzer, *Rise and fall of Axum, Ethiopia, A geo-archaeological interpretation*. [American Antiquity 46 \(1981\), 471–495](#).

Civilizations represent human ecosystems amenable to systematic geo-archaeological analysis. The civilization of Axum, spanning the first millennium A.D., had its settlement core on the now-denuded, subhumid plateau of northern Ethiopia. Axum, a new city, began A.D. 100 as a ceremonial center, growing to over 10,000 people, as a prosperous emporium for international trade. Intensified land use led to mass movements in slope soils before A.D. 300, but a range of clayey stream deposits also implicates strong periodic floods and seasonally abundant moisture. The paleoclimatic ensemble suggests that stronger and more reliable spring rains allowed two crops yearly without irrigation, compared to only one with modern summer rains. Trade declined after 600 and Axum was essentially landlocked by 715. Intense land pressure and more erratic rainfall favored soil destruction and ecological degradation during the seventh and eighth centuries. Largely abandoned by 800 and pillaged by border tribes, Axum retained only symbolic significance as power shifted to the more fertile lands of humid central Ethiopia. Axum shows how the spatial and temporal variability of resources, and the interactions between

a society and its resource base, can be fundamental in the analysis of historical process.

CARNEIRO 1970

Robert L. Carneiro, *A Theory of the Origin of the State*. [science](#) **169** (1970), 733–738.

Traditional theories of state origins are considered and rejected in favor of a new ecological hypothesis.

CONNAH 1991

Graham Connah, *The salt of Bunyoro: seeking the origins of an African kingdom*. [Antiquity](#) **65** (1991), 479–494.

Excavations at the salt-making village of Kibiro, on the Ugandan shore of Lake Albert in East Africa, suggest that an important part of the economy of the Kingdom of Bunyoro originated early in the present millennium. The predominance of roulette-decorated pottery, in particular the use of carved roulettes, indicates that Kibiro was first occupied by people with northern affinities, possibly from the upper Nile region or further west. Collectively, these findings provide important clues concerning the origins of the Kingdom of Bunyoro.

CONNAH 2001

Graham Connah, *African civilizations, An archaeological perspective*. ([Cambridge](#) ²2001).

DIAMOND 2003

Jared Diamond, *Propaganda of the pyramids*. [nature](#) **424** (2003), 891.

You would have thought that massive monuments would be built by states at the apogee of their pomp and glory. Not so, according to an argument in which it is states on the up that need to impress.

FLANNERY 2003

Kent V. Flannery & Joyce Marcus, *The origin of war: New ¹⁴C dates from ancient Mexico*. [PNAS](#) **100** (2003), 11801–11805.

New ¹⁴C dates from archaeological sites in Oaxaca, Mexico, support R. C. Kelly's observation that intervillage raiding may begin as soon as a region has segmentary societies. The oldest defensive palisade dates to 3260–3160 B.P. in conventional radiocarbon years, only a few centuries after village life was established. Over the next millennium raiding evolved into war, with residences and temples burned, captives killed, and populations moving to defensible hills. ¹⁴C dates are now available for the first use of hieroglyphic writing to record a captive's name, military victories leading to the consolidation of the Zapotec state, the first skull rack, and the building of a fortress in conquered territory.

FLETCHER 1995

Roland Fletcher, *The limits of settlement growth, A theoretical outline*. New Studies in Archaeology ([Cambridge](#) 1995).

In this study Roland Fletcher argues that the built environment becomes a constraint on the long-term development of a settlement. It is costly to move settlements, or to demolish and rebuild from scratch, so the initial layout and buildings, and the associated forms of communication, may come to shackle further development and also to place constraints on social and political change. Using this theoretical framework, Dr Fletcher reviews world-wide settlement growth over the

past 15,000 years, and concludes with a major discussion of the great transformations of human settlements – from mobile to sedentary, sedentary to urban, and agrarian urban to industrial. This book is an ambitious contribution to archaeological theory, and the questions it raises also have implications for the future of urban settlement.

FLETCHER 1998

Roland Fletcher, *African urbanism: scale, mobility and transformations*. In: GRAHAM CONNAH (Hrsg.), *Transformations in Africa, Essays on Africa's later past*. (London 1998), 104–138.

Indigenous precolonial African urban settlements displayed considerable diversity. They ranged from small, compact settlements, only tens of hectares in extent, to massive, dispersed settlements covering between 30 and 60 square kilometers such as Kampala and Old Oyo. Some were managed using literacy, as in the Islamic north of Nigeria, yet most of the very extensive ones were not. Mobility played a significant role in their social life. In some cases, as in Ethiopia, the entire community moved seasonally. In the West African forest regions there are indications that a substantial part of a residential community may have moved in and out of its main settlement episodically and seasonally. Residential relocation seems to have played a significant role in the scale and transformations of large African urban communities.

The diversity of African indigenous urban settlements suggests that conventional, universalistic models will not suffice to explain their remarkable characteristics. Instead we need to combine an appreciation of culturally unique social transformations with a recognition of the behavioral constraints with which those communities had to cope. Together these otherwise divergent approaches may help to explain the specific outcomes of a myriad alternative ways in which communities of many thousands of people were organized.

KENNETT 2006

Douglas J. Kennett & James P. Kennett, *Early State Formation in Southern Mesopotamia: Sea Levels, Shorelines, and Climate Change*. *Journal of Island & Coastal Archaeology* 1 (2006), 67–99.

The evolution of the earliest complex state-level societies and cities from small sedentary communities took place in southern Mesopotamia between 8000 and 5000 cal yrs BP during the 'Ubaid and Uruk periods. Attempts to explain this transition often discount the role of environmental change and tend to evaluate available archaeological evidence for urban-based state development either within a static environmental context or assuming conditions similar to those of the present. This practice is no longer tenable given newly available paleoenvironmental records for the region. Post-glacial sea-level rise resulted in the inundation and creation of the Arabo-Persian Gulf, and, as the marine transgression slowed in the Middle Holocene, rich coastal and aquatic habitats formed in southern Mesopotamia. These habitats favored the establishment and growth of 'Ubaid Period communities and the efficient transport of goods, ideas, and people throughout the region. High water tables also promoted early experimentation with irrigation agriculture and the expansion of these systems as populations grew and the humid conditions of the Early Holocene gave way to increasing aridity. We argue that the critical confluence of eustatic and climatic changes unique to this circumscribed region favored the emergence of highly centralized, urban-based states.

Keywords paleoenvironment, sea-level rise, 'Ubaid, Uruk, Mesopotamia

LAWLER 2011

Andrew Lawler, *Did the First Cities Grow From Marshes?* [science](#) **331** (2011), 141.

The world's earliest large settlements may owe their existence as much to the swamps of southern Iraq as to irrigation and agriculture.

MABOGUNJE 1968

Akin L. Mabogunje, *Urbanization in Nigeria*. ([London 1968](#)).

MACDONALD 1998

K. C. MacDonald, *Before the Empire of Ghana, Pastoralism and the origins of cultural complexity in the Sahel*. In: GRAHAM CONNAH (Hrsg.), *Transformations in Africa, Essays on Africa's later past*. ([London 1998](#)), 71–103.

The Empire of Ghana is the earliest textually recorded state in West Africa, yet the ethnic identity of its founders, the time of its foundation, and its socioeconomic basis have remained subjects for conjecture. In this chapter, past arguments which posit a postmetallurgical origin for complex societies in West Africa are reexamined and challenged in the light of recent research. In particular, it is advanced that the first complex societies of semiarid West Africa should be sought not in the Empire of Ghana, but in what are termed 'Mobile Elites'—transitory peaks of pastoral wealth and power accumulation which occurred in the Sahara and Sahel from 4000 BC.

A case for the existence of Saharan complex societies by the late Holocene pluvial is supported by the presence of three phenomena: cattle accumulation, valued objects in polished stone, and monuments. A plethora of pastoral or agro-pastoral traditions lacking substantial settlement sites, but possessing burial monuments, are known to have existed across the Sahara from 4000 BC. Associated with these cultures were common assemblages of polished stone axes, hachettes, bracelets, and beads, made of raw materials whose sources are scattered across the continent. Despite this, their ceramic and lithic traditions are distinctive, indicating diverse traditions sharing a common set of valued items and practices.

A form of social stratification within these societies is evidenced by contemporary tumulus and open burial strategies in the Central Sahara, and by the uneven distribution of grave goods at better excavated sites such as Jebel Moya (Sudan). It is asserted that despite their highly mobile nature, often taken as being prohibitive for the formation of complex society in the absence of preexisting states, these pastoral traditions independently developed prestige-goods economies leading to individual and lineage wealth accumulation. It is further suggested that where these usually transitory Mobile Elites encountered additional climatic or cultural stimuli, semisedentary 'Chiefdoms' or 'Medium Scale Societies' developed (for example Dhar Tichitt–Walata and Kerma).

RAHMSTORF 2009

Lorenz Rahmstorf, *Control Mechanisms in Mesopotamia, the Indus Valley, the Aegean and Central Europe, c. 2600–2000 BC, and the Question of Social Power in Early Complex Societies*. In: TOBIAS L. KIENLIN & ANDREAS ZIMMERMANN (Hrsg.), *Beyond Elites – Alternatives to Hierarchical Systems in Modelling Social Formations, International Conference at the Ruhr-Universität Bochum*,

Germany October 22–24, 2009; Teil 2. Universitätsforschungen zur prähistorischen Archäologie 215 ([Bonn 2012](#)), 311–326.

So-called control mechanisms as a basis of social power shall be compared in four societies in Europe and Asia which were in coexistence during the middle and later 3rd millennium BC. While in some cases (southern Mesopotamia) we have good indications for social power operating largely from above, such notions cannot easily be adduced from the archaeological record in other regions (Indus Valley, Aegean), in which there were possibly many different levels on which social power was exercised on an everyday basis. Finally, in the fourth region (Bell Beaker Central Europe) it is hard to recognise not only clear signs of social power, but also any possible basis for distinctions in social power. It will be argued that the establishment of control mechanisms was fundamental to achieve institutionalized and long-term inequality in the societies discussed in this article. The adoption of such control mechanisms enabled a group of people (the elite) to regulate and hence dominate resources. Some of the best archaeological indications are writing, the practice of sealing and the invention and standardisation of metrological systems. The open question is how many members of the given society were able to participate in the regulation of power. The archaeological indications often do not imply a strongly hierarchical society, or a society where a single person (king or chief) and/or his clique could dominate. Instead the archaeological record points to flexible and fluctuating power relations. Therefore, it is argued that some early complex societies of the second half of the 3rd millennium BC (like Greece or the Indus Valley) can be better described as heterarchical than hierarchical. For prehistoric Europe it is argued that social power was highly fluid and that no long-term systematization of power relations is traceable before the Iron Age (and even then it is often debatable). Therefore, any claim for the existence of simple or complex chiefdoms in prehistoric Europe (outside the Aegean) during the Copper and Bronze Age seems to be misleading.

RATHJE 1971

William L. Rathje, *The Origin and Development of Lowland Classic Maya Civilization*. [American Antiquity 36](#) (1971), 275–285.

The southern Maya lowlands present a largely redundant environment which does not possess the potential for major internal symbiotic regions or for irrigation. In fact, the interior of this region is uniformly deficient in resources essential to the efficiency of every individual household engaged in the Mesoamerican agricultural subsistence economy: mineral salt, obsidian for blades, and hard stone for grinding. Yet, in the core of this rain forest region, the basic elements of Classic Maya civilization first coalesced. A model involving methods of procuring and distributing the resources necessary to the efficiency of an agricultural subsistence economy explains the loci of lowland Classic Maya development and the order in which these loci developed. This model can also be applied to the Olmec civilization.

RICHERSON 1999

Peter J. Richerson & Robert Boyd, *Complex Societies, The Evolutionary Origins of a Crude Superorganism*. [Human Nature 10](#) (1999), 253–289.

The complexity of human societies of the past few thousand years rivals that of social insect societies. We hypothesize that two sets of social “instincts” underpin and constrain the evolution of complex societies. One set is ancient and shared with other social primate species, and one is derived and unique to our lineage. The latter evolved by the late Pleistocene, and led to the evolution of institutions of intermediate complexity in acephalous societies. The institutions

of complex societies often conflict with our social instincts. The complex societies of the past few thousand years can function only because cultural evolution has created effective “work-arounds” to manage such instincts. We describe a series of work-arounds and use the data on the relative effectiveness of WWII armies to test the work-around hypothesis.

Keywords: Complex societies; Conflict; Cooperation; Gene-culture coevolution.

SHEPHERD 1982

Gill Shepherd, *The Making of the Swahili: A view from the southern end of the East African coast*, In: *From Zinj to Zanzibar: Studies in history, trade and society on the eastern coast of Africa*. [Paideuma 28 \(1982\), 129–147](#).

SPENCER 2003

Charles S. Spencer, *War and early state formation in Oaxaca, Mexico*. [PNAS 100 \(2003\), 11185–11187](#).

SPENCER 2010

Charles S. Spencer, *Territorial expansion and primary state formation*. [PNAS 107 \(2010\), 7119–7126](#).

A major research problem in anthropology is the origin of the state and its bureaucratic form of governance. Of particular importance for evaluating theories of state origins are cases of primary state formation, whereby a first-generation state evolves without contact with any preexisting states. A general model of this process, the territorial-expansion model, is presented and assessed with archaeological data from six areas where primary states emerged in antiquity: Mesoamerica, Peru, Egypt, Mesopotamia, the Indus Valley, and China. In each case, the evidence shows a close correspondence in time between the first appearance of state institutions and the earliest expansion of the state’s politiceconomic control to regions lying more than a day’s round-trip from the capital. Although additional research will add detail and clarity to the empirical record, the results to date are consistent with the territorial-expansion model, which argues that the success of such long-distance expansion not only demanded the bureaucratization of central authority but also helped provide the resources necessary to underwrite this administrative transformation.

STANISH 2011

Charles Stanish & Abigail Levine, *War and early state formation in the northern Titicaca Basin, Peru*. [PNAS 108 \(2011\), 13901–13906](#).

Excavations at the site of Taraco in the northern Titicaca Basin of southern Peru indicate a 2,600-y sequence of human occupation beginning ca. 1100 B.C.E. Previous research has identified several political centers in the region in the latter part of the first millennium B.C.E. The two largest centers were Taraco, located near the northern lake edge, and Pukara, located 50 km to the northwest in the grassland pampas. Our data reveal that a high-status residential section of Taraco was burned in the first century A.D., after which economic activity in the area dramatically declined. Coincident with this massive fire at Taraco, Pukara adopted many of the characteristics of state societies and emerged as an expanding regional polity. We conclude that organized conflict, beginning approximately 500 B.C.E., is a significant factor in the evolution of the archaic state in the northern Titicaca Basin.

archaeology | evolution of cooperation | Pukara | Taraco

TRIGGER 2003

Bruce G. Trigger, *Understanding Early Civilizations, A Comparative Study*. (Cambridge 2003).

This book offers the first detailed comparative study of the seven best-documented early civilizations: ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia, Shang China, the Aztecs and adjacent peoples in the Valley of Mexico, the Classic Maya, the Inka, and the Yoruba. Unlike previous studies, equal attention is paid to similarities and differences in their sociopolitical organization, economic systems, religion, and culture. Many of this study's findings are surprising and provocative. Agricultural systems, technologies, and economic behaviour turn out to have been far more diverse than was expected. Yet only two basic types of political organization are found – city-states and territorial states – and they influenced economic behaviour at least as much as did environmental differences. Underlying various religious beliefs was a single, distinctive pattern that is unique to early civilization and must have developed independently in different regions of the world. Many other shared religious beliefs appear to have been transformations of a shared heritage from earlier times. Esteemed lifestyles that differed idiosyncratically from one early civilization to another influenced human behaviour in ways that often persisted despite changing material and political circumstances. These findings and many others challenge not only current understandings of early civilizations but also the theoretical foundations of modern archaeology and anthropology. The key to understanding early civilizations lies not in their historical connections but in what they can tell us about similarities and differences in human behaviour.

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WRIGHT 1975

Henry T. Wright & Gregory A. Johnson, *Population, Exchange, and Early State Formation in Southwestern Iran*. *American Anthropologist* **77** (1975), 267–289.

Several widely discussed single-variable explanations of the origin of the state are tested using data from Southwestern Iran. These data demonstrate that increasing population or increasing inter-regional trade alone cannot explain the appearance of specialized governments during the fourth millennium B.C. More complex types of explanation are suggested, and methods for testing them are outlined.