An interdisciplinary analysis on the state formation and kingship in the Predynastic Egypt

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Introduction

Christiana Köhler[1] presents a clear outline of the state of research into Pre- and Early Dynastic Egypt, specifically the methods used to understand state formation at the time:

> *However, many of these approaches be they historical, theoretical, or archaeological, have only ever been partly successful, which has many reasons. One of these is the limited quantity of archaeological evidence covering all aspects of material culture as well as the different regions of Egypt […].*

Studies of the Egyptian formative period tend to be scattered and unable to garner the general support of the academic community, both due to the scarcity of available data and because existing approaches tend to be either too specific or focused only on meagre evidence.

In this thesis, it is contended that an interdisciplinary, anthropological and archaeological approach could best overcome these difficulties. A fruitful collaboration will be created if the theoretical frameworks of anthropology, ethnography, and other social disciplines are added to the fundamental archaeological data. This interdisciplinary perspective has the ability to overcome certain problems, as the two disciplines complement each other, which helps with improving and developing new approaches. This methodology is the basis of the author's PhD research, which begins from the awareness that the theoretical studies should not be understood as an *ipse dixit*, but rather as a malleable tool, as well as that the meaning of archaeological data is also not a given, but instead depends on the interpretation of the researcher. The interpretation conferred to archaeology and the social sciences is situated within the framework of a general perspective. It is through adopting this point of view that this research intends to begin from the strength of the joint work between archaeology and the social sciences.

Definitions of 'evolution' and 'development'

It is fundamental at this early stage of the work to clarify the use of the words 'evolution' and 'development', particularly as they relate to the framework of state formation and its different aspects. The misunderstanding arises from how these two terms have been used in the early studies of this discipline. For Elman Service[2], the society was a fixed path expected to bring a civilisation from its early and less developed stage – the bands – to the final and most developed

1 Köhler 2010, 37.
2 Service 1975.

form – the state – through the fixed middle stages of tribes and chiefdoms. The final stage of the state was the achievement of every civilisation[3]; if this did not happen, it was perceived as a failure on the part of that society. Even the modern evolutionary scientists reject this evolutionary approach today. The evolutionary scientist Henri J. M. Claessen[4] explained his idea of evolution in relation to the study of state formation, an approach that has been accepted to some extent by much of the academic community[5]. Claessen explains that evolution entails the phenomenon of structural change, a process of structural reorganisation that can possibly produce a form or structure that is qualitatively different from the previous one[6]. On the one hand, evolution can lead to increased complexity (dubbed 'positive' evolution) or to decreased complexity ('negative' evolution). This means that a 'positive' evolution progresses from a specific form of society – such as a simple chiefdom – to a more complex and organised form of society. On the other hand, a 'negative' evolution leads to a collapse or decline of society[7]. This clarification is important if misunderstanding is to be avoided in the use of these terms, or to interpret changes in social complexity as a straightforward process that necessarily leads to state formation. In the past decade, the work of Leonid Grinin[8] has been pivotal in introducing the concept of 'state and chiefdom analogues', which indicates different kinds of societal evolution. Thus, not only can a chiefdom lead to a state, but it can also become a polity that has some traits in common with the state but that cannot be interpreted as a state due to the absence of some fundamental characteristics. These analogues can be also be the end of the evolutionary path for a society or for a stage of its development in a broader and more complex political history. Some authors who subscribe to the theories of social evolution and evolutionary hypotheses, such as Timothy Earle, draw a clear distinction between biological and societal evolution. Earle states that, 'Social evolution has more in common with ecosystem change, involving energy flows, predation, mutual dependency, and increasingly anthropogenic interventions'[9]. Social evolution is the study of internal and external agency within the dynamics of the environment[10]. In the present work, the terms 'evolution' and (in particular) 'development' are used in a neutral way, without any value judgements attached.

3 Spencer 1990. Contra: Yoffee 1993, 2005.
4 Claessen 2006a, 6–8.
5 cfr. Wenke 1999; Carneiro 2003; Grinin et al. 2006; Marcus 2008; Hanks and Linduff 2009; Grinin 2009; Earle and Kristiansen 2010; Spencer 2014.
6 Harris 1968, 25.
7 Claessen 2006a, 7–8; 2014, 3–4.
8 Grinin 2003; 2011; Grinin and Korotayev 2011
9 Earle 2002.
10 Earle 2011a, 28.

PART 1
Theoretical framework

1.1 The theories and studies on state formation and the development of social complexity: From the origins to the modern period

1.1.1 Introduction

The following pages will present an overview of theories on state formation processes, along with the associated definitions of the elements and features of different typologies of polity and societal organisation. The selected theories are, of course, subjective and not inclusive of all research on this topic; nonetheless, an attempt has been made to choose the widest possible range of points of view and approaches while also comparing and contrasting them. Theories that have been taken into consideration include both those that are general (and thus not limited solely to a specific culture, region or case study) and those that highlight a particular feature or an interesting aspect of a state's development, but may still be considered useful and effective within certain sectors of academia. Each theory has strong and weak points, particularly those that deal with several case studies; nevertheless, they are also quite broadly accepted, even if they have been subject to criticism by other scholars. These strengths and weaknesses will be presented for each theory, along with (if present) its initial structure, evolution, and corrections over the years, right up to the most recent theoretical articulation. The aim of this presentation is not to propose a theory that is better or more suitable than any other, but rather to create the theoretical structure necessary to overcome the obstacles that other scholars have encountered when dealing with ancient Egypt's state formation and development of social complexity. Before examining the work of these authors, it is first important to understand the early studies and the development of the research in the field of state formation.

1.1.2 The first studies

Studies on political evolution can be divided into three main categories. The first category includes all studies that deal with arguments regarding the society and states; these are mostly philosophical in nature, adopt a general point of view, and do not employ the empirical scientific method, which is particularly true of the studies published before the 19th century. The second category embraces the early works of scholars who wrote directly on this debate and employed a meticulous methodology, but who also rely on a small or even more limited base of data. In this category, one can find almost all the works from Karl Marx in the late 1800s right up to the 1970s. The last category includes works in which the

theories are compared and verified against a larger set of data.

The period before the 19th century

It is possible to go back to the 14th century for the earliest evidence of a text debating the origin of the state, by the Arab historian Ibn Khaldun[11], who wrote the *Muqaddimah* in 1377. There is also the work of Dante Alighieri, *De monarchia*[12], written between 1312 and 1313; however, this composition is not a treatise on the state or government, but is instead mostly focused on the relation between the secular and the temporal power. Nevertheless, it is interesting to note the elegance of his conclusions. Dante affirms that the Holy Roman Emperor and the Pope were both human, and that both derived their power and authority to rule over their respective domains directly from God; being that they were rivals, neither had power over the other. A more interesting approach is that used in the *Muqaddimah*. Here, the author divided the work into six books[13], which address several fields of knowledge: general sociology, a sociology of politics, a sociology of urban life, a sociology of economics, and a sociology of knowledge. An interesting aspect of this work is the introduction of the 'new scientific method', as indicated by Ibn Khaldun himself. This method was derived by the critic to counter the 'uncritical acceptance of historical data'; accordingly, he relied on groundwork to observe the role played by the state, communication, propaganda and systematic bias in history, an approach that aided in the development of historiography. Among his more interesting conclusions is the theory of the central social conflict between town and desert, or the intuition that increases in tax rates initially increase tax revenues, although the increases in tax rates will eventually cause a decrease in tax revenues (a concept known nowadays as the Laffer Curve).

A century and a half later, Niccolò Machiavelli wrote his famous work *Il Principe* (1513, published in 1523)[14], in which he debates the different forms of government (which he refers to as *Princedoms*) and discusses how to conquer them or establish new ones. In the last section, he outlines the qualities of a Prince (intended to refer to the ruler of a princedom, a typical political entity in Renaissance Italy), and how such a person should maintain his power. This is a work

11 Ibn Khaldun 1967; for a comment: Lawrence 1984.
12 Dante 2006; for a comment: Nardi 1992
13 *Chapter I*: Human civilization in general; *Chapter II*: Bedouin civilization, savage nations and tribes and their conditions of life; *Chapter III*: On dynasties, royal authority, the caliphate, government ranks, and
all that goes with these things; *Chapter IV*: Countries and cities, and all other forms of sedentary civilization. The conditions occurring there; *Chapter V*: On the various aspects of making a living, such as profit and the crafts. The conditions that occur in this connection; *Chapter VI*: The various kinds of sciences. The methods of instruction. The conditions that obtain in these connections.
14 Macchiavelli 2006; for a comment: Sasso 1993.

that cannot be classified as an 'academic' essay (in contrast to the *Muqaddimah*), but is more or less a didactic booklet. Even if the author uses both the inductive and the deductive methods, the aim of the work was to propose the virtues that a Prince should have, not to analyse and study the different forms of government or state.

Shortly after Machiavelli's work was published, in 1576, the French jurist Jean Bodin wrote *Les Six livres de la République*[15]. In these six books, Bodin discussed the best form of government, starting from the question 'to whom should power belong'? He states that 'la puissance absolue et perpetuelle d'une Republique'; here, the Republic is a wider meaning of the State, meaning that for Bodin, the best form of state is the 'absolute and perpetual power of a State'. The monarchy (pure and absolute) is the best form of government for everyone. On the other hand, he argued that democracy is dangerous for egalitarian ideas and disperses power. However, Bodin did not intend the monarchy to be a tyrannical system that stands above the law; while it cannot be made subject to any other branch of government, it is nevertheless limited to some extent by institutions like the high courts and representative assemblies. Above all, the ruler must follow the natural law, which is a reflex of the divine right; indeed, 'the sovereign Prince is only accountable to God'. One of Bodin's most interesting theories is the idea that climate shapes people's character, as well as the most suitable form of government.

The 15th century saw two other philosophers discuss forms of government. The first of these was Thomas Hobbes (1588–1679), who published the *Leviathan*[16] in 1651[17], while the second was John Locke (1632–1704), who wrote the *First Tract on Government* in 1660[18] and published the *Two Treatises of Government*[19] anonymously in 1689[20]. Thomas Hobbes wrote his treatise during the English Civil War; the main purpose of this work was the endorsement of absolute sovereignty. Hobbes stated that civil war – which is a state of nature, a war of human against human – is the cause of the absence of a strong, undivided government. The work of Hobbes is divided into four parts: *Of Man*, *Of Common-wealth*, *Of a Christian Common-wealth* and *Of the Kingdom of Darkness*. One interesting aspect of this study is the second part, in which Hobbes describes the charac-

15 Bodin 1993; for a comment: Mairet 1993.
16 The complete title is *Leviathan or The Matter, Forme and Power of a Common-Wealth Ecclesiasticall and Civil* (in Latin: *Leviathan, sive De materia, forma, et potestate civitatis ecclesiasticae et civilis*).
17 For the text and the comment: Bagby 2007; Malcom 2012.
18 Locke 1997; for a comment: Armitage 2004.
19 The complete title is *Two Treatises of Government: In the Former, The False Principles, and Foundation of Sir Robert Filmer, and His Followers, Are Detected and Overthrown. The Latter Is an Essay Concerning the True Original, Extent, and End of Civil Government.*
20 Locke 1998; for a comment: Dunn 1969; Huyler 1995.

teristics of the state (referred to as the common-wealth) and the sovereign, lists the types of existing common-wealth (monarchy, aristocracy and democracy[21]), and a discussion on the right of succession, religion and taxation. Also interesting are the conclusions of the third part, in which the author debates the role of a Christian state (or common-wealth) and investigates the role of religion in a civil society. Hobbes concludes that the religious power should be subordinate to civil law. As a contrast with Hobbes' absolutist view, Locke replied with his essay, which is divided into two parts. In the first part, the author attacks and rejects the theory along with the contents of Robert Filmer's work, the *Patriarcha*, in which it is stated that civil society was founded on a divinely sanctioned patriarchalism and that the right to rule derives from the rights of Adams and the Patriarchs. In his second treatise, Locke explains his theory on the state. In particular, he provides a detailed explanation of the *state of nature*, and deals also with conquest and slavery, property, representative government, the right of revolution, the basis of political association, and the limits of political action. In general, the works of Locke argue against absolutism, in favour of a limited authority sustained by the people, and in support of natural rights and the willingness to abolish the divine rights. This is an interesting solution discussed by the philosopher as an alternative to absolute power. Locke did not believe in a republic, but rather in a legitimate contract between the people and the ruling part[22], irrespective of whether this takes the form of a monarchy, an oligarchy or other mixed forms; indeed, he stated that the ideal form would be not a democracy, or any form of government, but any independent community[23]. For the author, moreover, it is important that 'whatever form the Common-wealth is under, the Ruling Power ought to govern by declared and received laws, and not by extemporary dictates and undetermined resolutions'[24].

It was in the 18th century that the basis for the modern discussion took shape. First, there was Gianbattista Vico, who wrote the *Principi di una scienza nuova*, 1744[25]. Several years later, in 1748, Montesquieu published his landmark work *De l'Esprit des Lois*[26]; shortly afterwards, in 1754 and 1762, Jean-Jacques Rousseau explained his fundamental ideas in two books: *Second Discourse*[27] and *Du contrat social*[28].

Vico had a strong influence on later authors who dealt with the same topics.

21 Hobbs stated that forms of government other than those already listed cannot exist, as the sovereign power is held either by one (monarchy), more (aristocracy; he did not make distinctions based on the kind of power, whether divine right, birthright or wealth) or all (democracy).
22 Locke 1998, 2nd Tr., sec. 132.
23 Locke 1998, 2nd Tr., sec. 133.
24 Locke 1998, 2nd Tr., sec. 137.
25 Vico and Cristofolini 2004; for a comment: Pasini 1970.
26 Montesquieu 1962; for a comment: Felice 1998.
27 Rousseau 1894.
28 Rousseau and Betts 1994; for a comment: Noon 1980; Williams 2014.

Two of these were contemporaries of Montesquieu, while Karl Marx wrote on a similar subject a century later. The entire title of the most significant work is *Principi di Scienza Nuova d'intorno alla Comune Natura delle Nazioni*[29]. This treatise, which focused upon the philosophy of history, sociology, and anthropology, exuded the spirit of the early Enlightenment. One of Vico's other intriguing ideas was that of cyclical history, or 'Corsi e ricorsi'. He states that man and society move in parallel from barbarism to civilisation, or, in brief, that a society develops, that human nature follows the same evolutionary trajectory, and that the evidence of this development can be observed in the changes of language, myths, traditions and any cultural change in general. In a certain way, he was a pioneer of 'evolutionism'. Vico further explains that every civilisation goes through three ages: the divine, the heroic, and the human. One of Vico's most important legacies is the awareness that language, knowledge and society are bound together, and therefore that the study, or comparison, of societies needs to take into consideration not only the study of society itself, but also its context.

Certainly influenced by Vico's work is the French philosopher Montesquieu, known for having introduced the separation of powers[30]. Montesquieu explained this idea as the second major topic of his work *The Spirit of the Laws*; in the same treatise, he also created an interesting classification of the political systems, dividing them into republican, monarchical, and despotic[31]. The first of these encompasses a range of governments spanning from the democratic republic, where citizenship rights are broadly extant, to the aristocratic republic, where few have access to citizenship rights. If a monarchy is limited by a constitution or fixed laws, then there is a monarchical power; otherwise, it is despotic. Another of Montesquieu's remarkable analyses concerns how culture is influenced by geography and climate[32]. Montesquieu's work has been a great influence for later philosophers in different fields, including political science, sociology, and anthropology, even if some of his approaches have been criticised for a lack of modern rigour.

Last in chronology, but of fundamental importance, Rousseau has been deemed one of the most influential philosophers of his age, and even of later periods; he deeply influenced future studies in politics and sociology, as well as in the moral, psychological and pedagogical domains. The first work in which the author dealt with human development within society is the *Discourse on the Origin and Basis of Inequality Among Men*, also known as the *Second Discourse*.

29 A translation of the title could be: *Principles of Renewed Science About the Common Nature of Nations.*
30 Montesquieu 1962, Book XI.
31 Montesquieu 1962, Book III.
32 Montesquieu 1962, Books XIV and XV.

Rousseau's aim was to analyse the origin of inequality; he concluded that inequality has its origin in the formation of the society, and moreover that there is no inequality in the state of nature, as it is a feature solely of civil society. The work is divided into two main parts. In the first part, he presents the hypothetical condition of man in the state of nature[33]; in the second analysis, he examines how humans developed in civil society, with particular reference to the institutions of private property, the law and governance[34]. In the second work named herein, Rousseau continued his analysis of the social contract (which is also the title of the book)[35]; in particular, he debated whether a legitimate alternative to the state of nature can exist, in which people live under a rightful political authority. He heavily criticised the rightfulness of a state that enslaves people[36] and contended that coercive power is not legitimate. The solution proposed by the author is one in which all of society agrees to be bound by a social contract, under which everyone is free because they all forfeit the same amount of rights and impose the same duties on all[37]. Most interesting is his idea that the size of the territory can determine the nature of the government. Rousseau argues that small territories can perform democracy well (he here refers to direct democracy, not representative democracy), because not as much power is required; accordingly, larger states are more suited to monarchical governments, as they are able to wield the most power.

1.1.3 From the 19th century to the 1970s

Lewis Henry Morgan and Karl Marx: The first theories

By the end of the 19th century, a more modern approach had begun to develop in the field of research into how the state and social formation began. The first work to successfully attempt to use data from the field to construct a theory of social development was produced by the American railroad lawyer Lewis Henry Morgan. During his life, he gathered data from ethnological fieldwork, particularly that of Native American tribes[38]; later on, he was able to assemble all of his data and to postulate several theories, particularly on kinship, social structure, and social evolution. Published in 1877, Morgan's Ancient Society[39] is an important work because it highlights certain key points that were later taken into consideration by

33 Rousseau 1894, 34–84.
34 Rousseau 1894, 84–136.
35 The entire title is: *Du contrat social; ou Principes du droit politique, translated in On the Social Contract, or Principles of Political Law*.
36 Rousseau and Betts 1994, 49–53
37 Rousseau and Betts 1994, 54–5, 129–33.
38 Morgan gathered information on 51 kinship systems, including the tribes of Winnebago, Crow, Yankton, Kaw, Blackfeet, Omaha and others. Moreover, he was an expert on the Iroquois.
39 Morgan 1877.

the authors who came after him (including Marx, Engels, and others), marking the beginning of the discussion regarding the development of societies, both in terms of their government and socio-economic features. His key achievement was his intuition pertaining to the connection between social and technological progress, as well as the centrality of family and property relations. Morgan drew a link between technological development, kin interactions, private property, and the evolution of larger social structures and government systems. He reasoned that societies evolve from savagery to barbarism, reaching their zenith with civilisation. He used technological advancement to help characterise the different stages[40].

Morgan's studies had an important influence on Karl Marx, who read *Ancient Society* many years after its publication; however, the German died before he could publish any work based on Morgan's theories. Nevertheless, the works of Karl Marx greatly influenced any subsequent study of Morgan's writings. Even if Marx did not publish any work directly linked with state development or the evolution of societies, his works on the economy completely changed the approaches of later scholars: Marx's works on capitalism[41], in particular his ideas on accumulation surplus[42] and the exchange of commodities and money, were particularly revolutionary.

The legacy of Karl Marx – Engels' studies

The legacy of Marx, particularly his studies on society, continued with Friedrich Engels, who is considered by some to be the true father of research into the development of society and the state. Engels' most important work is *Der Ursprung der Familie, des Privateigenthums und des Staats*[43], published in 1884. This work represents the culmination of Engels' studies, which, together with Marx's notes on the works of Morgan[44], elaborated a complex and fundamental

40 He identified specific technological innovations for each step of civilisation: for the savage era, the use of fire, bows, and the production of pottery; for the barbarian era, the domestication of animals, introduction of agriculture and metalworking; finally, for the civilisation era, the development of the alphabet and writing.

41 *Capital. Volume I: The Process of Production of Capital* published in the 1867.

42 *Theorien über den Mehrwert*, translated as *Theories of Surplus Value*, was written by Marx between 1862 and 1863, but was only published in the following century as the fourth Volume of *Das Kapital*.

43 It was published in English in 1902 under the title *The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State*.

44 Engels, in the preface, clearly stated that *Der Ursprung der Familie* derives from the work of the two philosophers, along with his own criticisms: 'My work can offer only a meager substitute for that which my departed friend was not destined to accomplish. But in his copious extracts from Morgan, I have critical notes which I herewith reproduce as fully as feasible. […] Morgan deserves great credit for rediscovering and re-establishing in its main outlines this foundation of our written history, and of finding in the sexual organisations of the North American Indians the key that opens all the unfathomable riddles of most ancient Greek, Roman and German history. […] In the following demonstrations, the reader will, on the whole, easily distinguish what origi-

body of work that established once and for all the link between family, private property and the development of social constructs such as the state. In *Der Ursprung*, Engels summarised Morgan's subdivision of 'primeval societies' in three stages, and within them, in three sub-phases:

> Wildheit[45] – Zeitraum der vorwiegenden An-eignung fertiger Naturprodukte; die unstprodukte des Menschen sind vorwiegend Hülfswerkzeuge dieser Aneignung. Barbarei[46] – Zeitraum der Er-werbung von Viehzucht und Ackerbau, der Erlernung von ethoden zur gesteigerten Produktion von Naturerzeugnissen durch menschliche Tätig-keit. Zivilisation[47] – Zeitraum der Erlernung der weiteren Ver-

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nated with Morgan and what was added by myself. In the historical sections on Greece and Rome, I have not limited myself to Morgan's material, but have added as much as I could supply. The sections on Celts and Germans essentially belong to me. Morgan had only sources of minor quality at his disposal, and for German conditions—aside from Tacitus—only the worthless, unbridled falsifications of Freeman. The economic deductions, sufficient for Morgan's purpose, but wholly inadequate for mine, were treated anew by myself. And lastly I am, of course, responsible for all final conclusions, unless Morgan is expressly quoted'.

45 (Translation: *Savagery - time of predominating appropriation of finished natural products; human ingenuity invents mainly tools useful in assisting this appropriation.*) Savagery: Lower stage – this is the starting point of humanity, the first hominids. This stage is characterised by the formation of articulated speech. Middle stage – humans begin to use fire and fish (it is interesting to note how, for Engels, the consumption of fish and the use of fire are linked; he stated that this is 'because fish becomes thoroughly palatable by the help of fire only'). Later, they introduced the first rough stone tools and started to eat baked roots and tubers. When they created the first stone weapons, they became able to hunt and add venison meat to their diet. Higher stage – the new technological advancement is the invention of the bow and arrow, but pottery is still not present. To attempt a comparison of these stages with the modern chronological division, the Lower Stage corresponds to the end of the Pliocene era and the first steps taken by humans into the Pleistocene. The Middle Stage is more or less similar to the Lower-Middle Palaeolithic (Engels stated that the Middle Stage of the Savagery period is characterised by the introduction of the 'Palaeolithic implements of the early stone age'). The Higher stage corresponds to the Upper Palaeolithic, but also to certain features of the Early Neolithic (beginning of settlements and control of food production and use of Neolithic tools, albeit not pottery).

46 (Translation: *Barbarism—time of acquiring the knowledge of cattle raising, of agriculture and of new methods for increasing the productivity of nature by human agency.*) Barbarism: Lower stage – the milestones of the first stage of Barbarism include the introduction of pottery, the taming and raising of animals, and the cultivation of land (it is interesting to note how Engels began to divide history between the Eastern body of land, the Old World, and the Western continent, the Americas). Middle stage – the domestication of animals, in particular for milk and meat production. For Engels, the introduction of grain cultivation was a consequence of demand for stock feed, not for human consumption, while its importance for human sustenance was understood only later (Engels, here, stated that the copious use of meat and milk created a 'superior development of Aryans and Semites' and that the Pueblo Indians of New Mexico 'who live on an almost purely vegetarian diet, have a smaller brain than the Indians […] who eat more meat and fish'). Higher stage – beginning with the melting of iron ore and merging into civilisation through the invention of letter script and its utilisation for writing records. The use of the iron plough allowed for the development of agriculture on a large scale. The next consequence is the clearing of forests and their transformation into arable land and meadows; this process, however, could not be continued on a larger scale without the help of the iron axe and the iron spade. Naturally, these improvements brought about a more rapid increase in population and a concentration of numbers into a small area.

47 (Translation: *Civilization: time of learning a wider utilization of natural products of manufac-*

arbeitung von Naturerzeugnissen, der eigentlichen Industrie und der Kunst[48].

The German philosopher linked these stages with the development of the family. During the *savagery* stage, the form of the family was group marriage[49]; between the stages of savagery and barbarism, pairing families would start to appear[50]. Until the middle stage of barbarism, Engels states that women could still benefit from a certain degree of freedom, but it was in this moment that the rule of men over women began, as did the practice of slavery. The final step in this family development was monogamy[51]. However, to reach this stage, it was necessary to abolish the matriarchal family form and institute the patriarchal; the fundamental step in this process was certainty regarding the identity of the child's father', a matter that remained uncertain in the pairing family structure. To ensure the reliability of the paternal lineage, it was necessary to secure the faithfulness of the wife, with the result that men had authority over women, who were relegated to the house and 'stripped of their dignity, enslaved, tools of men's lust and mere machines for the generation of children'. The intermediate stage was polygamy, while the final stage was monogamy, a feature of civilisation.

In the final chapter of his work, Engels compiled the data from Morgan's *Ancient Society*, along with the 'necessary' additions in the fields of economy and politics derived from Marx's *Capital*. His conclusion was that the state arose from the division of society into classes, and was derived from the economic development and the creation of surplus, along with the request of the upper classes for protection. The author explained that the first step toward the emergence of the

turing and of art.) He did not take the third era into consideration because the state was already shaped, and he was primarily interested in understanding the passages from 'un-civilized' society to the 'Civilization'.

48 Engels 1909, 30–35.

49 Engels 1884, 43-44. On the basis of the studies of Morgan and other scholars, Engels identifies group marriage as the main feature of the savage groups, in which everyone is related to everyone in the group and there are no restrictions on intercourse, with the result that everyone is in some way a close relative of everyone else. The first step toward the monogamous family is the so-called 'punaluan family' (from the name of the Hawaiian family); here, there were some restrictions on intercourse, such as those among siblings or among the same *gens*. Engels 1884, 44–51.

50 Engels 1884, 51-64. Engels defines the pairing family as follows: '*A man had his principal wife (one can hardly call it favorite wife as yet) among many women, and he was to her the principal husband among others. […] At this stage one man lives with one woman, but in such a manner that polygamy, and occasional adultery remain privileges of men, although the former occurs rarely for economic reasons. Women, however, are generally expected to be strictly faithful during the time of living together, and adultery on their part is cruelly punished. But the marriage-tie may be easily broken by either party, and the children belong to the mother alone, as formerly*.' For him, this is the result of the excluding process of the circle in which a person can have marital intercourses, starting with the closest relatives, including all the relatives and finally excluding even the ones legally related.

51 Engels 1884, 64–76.

state occurred during the middle stage of Barbarism[52], when the increased production began to provide a regular surplus to the tribes. This increase occurred due to technological advances, the specialisation of work and the introduction of large herds of cattle. As gens, households and families began to endure this new amount of daily work, an addition of labour power became necessary; this need, in turn, was satisfied by war, which provided slaves in the form of captured enemies. The first great division of society thereby took place, with the owner on one side and the owned on the other. The second division occurred when handcraft was separated from agriculture; as a result, the production and elaboration of materials were no longer located together in the same household or family, while slavery also became a fundamental element of society[53]. This division improved the production of commodities for exchange. Such exchanges were no longer restricted to within boundaries of the tribe, but extended out to other tribes. Even in this phase, if commerce was not yet developed to a basic level, the states that arose were still greatly underdeveloped. Only once the strengthening of the division of labour and the production of commodities had arisen could the final phase, namely Civilisation, begin[54]. The Civilisation phase also introduced another social class, namely the merchants: these individuals did not take part in the production, but only in the exchange of products. This division of classes also gave rise to the necessity of a coercive force, different from the self-organised and armed population, which was necessary to quell class conflicts. The economic supremacy of the upper class enabled the management of this force, and consequently, allowed them to become the ruling political class that could subdue the other classes (even if they were larger in number).

Engels highlighted the different features of the gentile society and the state. The first of these is the division of the members of society on a geographic rather than a kinship basis. The second is the presence of a coercive force that operates in order to maintain the *status quo*, while the third is the presence of taxes to maintain the public power[55]. Moreover, he also gave a certain importance to war and conquest, although he deemed this less important than other scholars have made it out to be. Even if Engels lacks data (and data he has is not very reliable) on which to base his conclusions, and has the stated purpose of criticising 'capitalism' against a 'communist' way of life, his ability to identify three of the most important pillars of the following research was extraordinary. Indeed, in the next pages, it will be possible to see that these features form the basis for distinguish-

52 Engels 1884, 157.
53 Engels 1884, 159.
54 Engels 1884, 161.
55 Engels 1884, 165–7.

ing between those societies with and without a state for almost all scholars who have approached the topic.

In the words of Engels, it is clear that the passage from a gentile society to a civilised one marked the beginning of modern-day societies and way of life (capitalism), but also indicated the starting point of societal degradation: the end of the gentile society, and in particular, of the communism of production and consumption. This political orientation of Engels's work and his evolutionistic approach also gave rise to a certain scepticism among the scholars of the time, resulting in little attention being paid to the theories of the German author. Only in the second half of the following century did his theories come to be seen in a new light; this also occurred thanks to new fieldwork data and new ideas in anthropology, which renewed scholarly interest in societal evolution.

The Austro-German intellectuals

Despite Engels' ideas gaining little traction in academic circles, other intellectuals continued their studies on the origin of the state. The first half of the 20th century saw the rise of a certain number of scholars, mostly hailing from the Austrian and German universities, who anticipated the main theories of the 1960s and 1970s. The first individuals to discuss these topics were Ludwig Gumplowicz and, in particular, Franz Oppenheimer. The former is famous for his work *Rassenkampf* ('Struggle of the Races'), as well as more generally for his contributions to the sociology of conflict[56]; this heavily influenced the work of Oppenheimer, who applied this concept to his theory of the origin of the state, creating the *Unterwerfungstheorie* (conquest theory)[57]. While this theory goes back to Ibn Khaldun and Jean Bodin[58], it was formulated and organised by Oppenheimer, who argued that the inequality on which the state is based (recalling Engels) is generated by a city or tribe's conquest of other settlements or people, with the sole purpose of economic exploitation. The state was a means to strengthen the inequality between the people that arose as a result of such conquest. While there are many similarities with Engels' theory here, it differs in one respect: for Oppenheimer, the conquest of a settlement or a tribe by another was intentional and the basis of the state's origin; for Engels, on the other hand, the important thing was the existence of a dominant and a subjugated class, and conflict was one of the ways to acquire a new labour force (although this could also happen in other ways). In support of the conquest theory, new fieldwork data was available, derived in particular from studies of African state formation. Two authors in particular gave their

56 Gumplowicz 1883.
57 Oppenheimer 1929, 36 ff.
58 *Cfr. supra* p. 12.

support to and extensively utilised the theory of conquest. Richard Thurnwald is an Austrian anthropologist who made several excursions into the field to conduct ethno-sociological research and published many of his theories in a study on the ethno-sociological foundations of human society[59]. Moreover, Diedrich H. Westermann is a German missionary who extensively studied African linguistics and is considered one of the modern founders of this discipline; during his trips, he collected data and published a new work on state formation in the southern Sahara[60].

One of Oppenheimer's contemporaries, Robert Lowie, held an opposing view regarding state formation. He strongly criticised the theories of his colleague[61], arguing that there are case studies of states in which the subjugated classes of the community did not endure economic exploitation, and additionally that evidence existed of pastoral peoples being themselves organised into states before they were conquered by agrarians arriving on the scene. He believed that rational exploitation was alien to the primitive attitude of mind, and that the people studied by Oppenheimer who had conquered others already had the idea of stratification in them. Lowie concluded that the origin of the state could not rely only on the idea of conquest, thereby introducing the idea of *association*: according to this principle, the decisive factor in state origin is the organising capacity, which may express itself in the consolidation of conquests or in voluntary unification. He highlighted examples of the Plains Indians, which he studied through several expeditions into the field. Lowie embodied the general opinion that while conquest was linked to the formation of the state, it could not be seen as the only explanation for its existence. Lowie and other authors cited several cases in which the state arose due to internal development or in a framework of collaboration with nearby societies.

The famous philosopher, sociologist, and economist Max Weber entered into this field with a detailed analysis of authority. In particular, in *The Theory of Social and Economic Organisation*[62], he divides authority into three typologies[63]:

- Legal authority: based on a rational ground, which rests 'on a belief in the 'legality' of pattern of normative rules and the right of those elevated to authority under such rules to issue commands'[64].

- Traditional authority: this rests on a traditional ground, or more specifically 'on an established belief in the sanctity of immemorial traditions and the legiti-

59 Thurnwald 1935.
60 Westermann 1952.
61 Lowie 1927.
62 Weber 1966.
63 Weber 1966, 324–62.
64 Weber 1966, 329–40.

macy of the status of those exercising authority under them'[65].

- Charismatic authority: this kind of authority has roots in the 'devotion to the specific and exceptional sanctity, heroism or exemplary character of an individual person, and of the normative patterns or order revealed or ordained by him'[66].

If the first type mainly describes the modern state, the definition that the author provides of the traditional authority is particularly interesting: 'A system of imperative co-ordination will be called 'traditional' if legitimacy is claimed for it and believed in on the basis of the sanctity of the order and the attendant powers of control as they have been handed down from the past, "have always existed"'[67]. He also highlights that the person or persons exercising authority are designated according to traditionally transmitted rules, and that the object of obedience is the personal authority of the individual, which the person in authority enjoys by virtue of his traditional status. The relation between the chief and the administrative staff is not an impersonal obligation of office, but rather one of personal loyalty to the chief; indeed, they are more 'personal retainers' than officials. The limits of the chief's power have two bases: the traditions, which determine the content of the commands and the objects and extent of his authority, and the personal decisions of the chief. Indeed, the tradition leaves a wide range of possibilities open to him; he can act quite freely within the broad borders defined by the traditions.

Weber continues his analysis of the traditional authority by asserting that the chief usually recruits his staff from two sources. The first source is people already related to the chief, such as kin members or people already tied to him by dependant relations (for instance, officers of the household, clients, freedmen, and others; this is called 'patrimonial' recruitment). The second source is from an extra-patrimonial basis, namely all people who have a loyal relationship with the chief (such as favourites and vassals) and who enter freely into a relationship of personal loyalty as officials. Regardless of the source from which the staff is recruited, some distinctive traits are absent from the traditional authority administrative personnel: a clearly defined sphere of competence subject to impersonal rules; a rational ordering of relations of superiority and inferiority; a regular system of appointment and promotion, on the basis of free contract; technical training as a regular requirement; and fixed salaries, which are paid in the form of money. It is interesting to note the lack of a well-defined impersonal sphere of competence; instead of such a sphere, there is a shifting series of tasks and powers, commissioned and granted by the chief on the basis of his arbitrary

65 Weber 1966, 341–57.
66 Weber 1966, 358–62.
67 Weber 1966, 341–2.

decisions, although it is also true that these tend to become permanent and are often traditionally stereotyped.

The evolutionary approach and the renaissance of social studies

After the Second World War, a renewed interest arose among the American anthropologists in the evolutionary approach, particularly in the area of cultural evolution. In particular, Leslie White and Julian Steward were the two principal exponents of the concept of 'neoevolutionism'. The former[68] rejected the historical particularism and psychological reductionism and supported the idea of General Evolution, viewing progress as a feature of the culture in general, although not necessarily of every individual culture. This approach focused primarily on explaining the main trajectory of cultural development, leaving aside the environmental influences on one culture and of one culture on another. White justified his idea by stating that, over the long term, those cultures that failed to keep ahead would be superseded and absorbed by those that were more progressive and would consequently become irrelevant from an evolutionary point of view. This technology became a pivotal point of the research and the main connection to societies and cultures[69].

Steward[70], on the other hand, maintained a more empirical approach to the study of cultural evolution; while he initially focused on ecosystems and physical environments, he soon took interest in how these environments could influence cultures. Moreover, while also keeping ecological adaptations in mind, he believed that in similar natural environments, there would be more possibilities for similar cultural development trajectories to arise. He explained that:

> *'the aim of evolutionary anthropology should be to explain the shared features of cultures at similar levels of development rather than unique, exotic and non-recurrent particulars, which can be attributed to historical accident[71]'.*

The American anthropologists organised all the available data and created an evolutionary theory with seven stages, which followed a society's transition from the hunter-gatherer level to becoming a state. These seven stages were as follows:

Hunting and gathering;
Incipient agriculture;

68 White 1959.
69 Trigger 2010, 386–8.
70 Steward 1955.
71 Trigger 2010, 389.

Formative period (of the state);
Regional florescence;
Initial conquest;
Dark ages;
Cyclical conquest.

Steward's ecological approach helped him to observe that all the societies he analysed arose in arid or semi-arid areas, and thus to conclude that irrigation was a necessary step for the evolutionary progression towards statehood. This irrigation step was fundamental because it required a high level of organisation and coordination; this technological and societal innovation in turn paved the way for a society to undergo a population explosion, as well as concentrating more people in a specific area in a way that could lead, eventually, to state formation. For Steward, conquest was a consequence of the previous steps, but not the main cause that led to a state being formed.

Similar to Steward's view is that of the German historian and sinologist (and playwright) Karl August Wittfogel, who focused his work on the study of the role played by irrigation in the state formation. He began from Weber's idea of the hydraulic-bureaucratic official-state[72]. Supported by his studies, he then analysed different societies, mostly in Asia; the data obtained from this research strengthened his idea that those civilisations developed due to the introduction of irrigation. Expanding his horizons further to other civilisations, Wittfogel gathered additional data and refined his theory of 'hydraulic civilisations[73]'. He believed that irrigation was the main cause of state formation, as the organisation required to manage the resources necessary to create an irrigation system on a large scale was also the minimum specifications for the state, and from that point, the state inevitably developed[74].

The theories of both Steward and Wittfogel[75] were also criticised, since there were in fact examples of states that arose without an irrigation system and societies that had large systems of water control but never became states. It is thus clear that while the introduction and management of irrigation required efforts similar to the ones necessary to form a state (such as a division of labour, the cooperation of many people and a certain degree of administration), irrigation is neither the inevitable cause nor the certain consequence of state development.

In these initial attempts to define a cause of the state formation, some authors[76] also proposed that the state arose when an urban society was established,

72 Cfr. *supra* p. 20-1.
73 Wittfogel 1957.
74 Wittfogel 1957 17–21.
75 Mote 1961.
76 Adams 1966; Childe 1950; Redfield 1968.

linking the development of cities with the necessity of a particular form of organisation and management that was a peculiarity of the state. Nevertheless, in the last decades, this theory has also been refuted by several examples of societies that had a state apparatus but were not based on the organisation of the territory in cities.

At the end of this pioneering period, the work of Morton Herbert Fried marked an important step in the studies of state formation and the development of societies. Although his writings spanned 20 years, his most important works and his primary contributions were during the 60s. In his two key works, *On the Evolution of Social Stratification and the State*[77] and *The Evolution of Political Society*,[78] he defined the process of development from the most primitive societies to the state, with particular attention paid to social stratification, the inequality of access to resources, and the factor of demographic pressure. He identified four steps in the *evolution* of a society: egalitarian, rank, stratified, and finally the state society. For the author, the main differences between the stages concerned more or less equal access to the resources, also on the basis of age-sex differences. Thus, in an egalitarian economic organisation, all adult members have more or less equal access to the resources of the community. In the rank society, the main difference is that there are fewer status positions than persons capable of filling them. More interesting for this analysis are the two definitions that Fried provided of stratified and state society. He stated that:

> *[…] a stratified society is one in which members of the same sex and equivalent age status do not have equal access to the basic resources that sustain life*[79]*[…].* (The state is) *the complex of institutions by means of which the power of the society is organised on a basis superior to kinship*[80]*.*

These institutions exist to maintain unequal access to the resources. In particular, Fried affirms that the use of force is a requirement to protect this *status quo*. If this coercive power is not present, unequal access cannot be guaranteed, and the society returns to a less complex form of social organisation. In addition, Fried, as well as Engels, explained that the starting point of such stratification was the appearance of private ownership over the communal property required for the production of the resources necessary for the community. However, he differs from Engels in explaining why private property appeared: for Fried, the factor responsible is demographic pressure and a consequent major demand for re-

77 Fried 1960.
78 Fried 1967.
79 Fried 1967, 186.
80 Fried 1967, 229.

sources. The social structure, nevertheless, is not directly affected by population growth for so long as there are lands to which the population can spread; only when the lands available are limited will the structure of the society change[81].

1.2 Theories and studies on state formation and social complexity development: The contemporary theories

1.2.1 The new deal: The new archaeology and neoevolutionism

As the study of prehistory based on cultural-historical archaeology became clearly inadequate, scholars came to adopt new approaches based on the disciplines of anthropology and sociology to investigate human behaviours. These approaches took the names of functionalism and processualism. The cultural-historical studies attempted to explain changes by means of external factors such as diffusion and migration; on the other hand, functional and processual studies endeavoured to explain social and cultural systems from the inside by determining how the different parts of these systems are interrelated and how these parts interact with one another[82]. Functionalism is a synchronous approach that attempts to understand how systems operate routinely without accounting for major changes, while processualism seeks to understand how and why such systems change irreversibly.

These two processes are related and complementary; indeed, it is impossible to fully understand either stasis or irreversible change without understanding the other. In the beginning, the functional scholars were mainly interested in how societies worked rather than how change came about[83]. This abandonment of the cultural-historical approach also placed the focus on different aspects of study, as scholars became more interested in human behaviour than in culture and ethnicity. This shift generated particular attention for the archaeological disciplines, which were able to prove and clarify aspects of human behaviour such as artefacts, ecology, and settlement archaeology.

The neoevolutionism: Sahlinis and Service

Two other authors, M.D. Sahlinis[84] and E.R. Service[85], pointed out the difference between the two approaches of White and Steward as one of a general versus a specific evolution. In contrast to this, they also elaborated a speculative and generalised sequence of unilinear development based on the successive stages of

81 Fried 1967, 204.
82 Trigger 2010, p. 314.
83 Trigger 2010, p. 322.
84 Sahlinis 1976.
85 Service 1975.

band, tribe, chiefdom and state, although it was clear that the idea of evolution was dissociated from the idea of progression. The main difference between the evolutionists of the 19th century and the neoevolutionists lies in the intent behind their actions. The scholars just cited believed that humans sought to preserve a familiar style of life unless forced to change by external forces; by contrast, their predecessors saw evolution as a deliberate action taken to better control nature and to improve the quality of human life.

In his introductory section, Service focuses attention on the question of the usefulness of the comparative method: 'What is the justification of the comparative method when it moves from extant stages to extinct ages? Is it justifiable to look to the historically known formation of primitive states, as in the first part of this book, in order to better interpret or reinterpret the formation of the archaic civilizations that are known only through archaeology and distant ancient history?' The author is aware of the risks in the use of this method: for example, if data from the first travellers was utilised, given that these travellers were untrained and some of them could have exaggerated what they witnessed, the validity of the data would be uncertain; on the other hand, when referring to the modern 'ethnographies of trained anthropologists', there is the temptation to use mechanical statistical methods to understand ancient civilisations through the lens of 'modern aboriginal cultures'. Even if these traps are avoided, there remains the problem of evaluating and recognising the differences between a pristine state and a secondary or derivate state. While this difference is very important, the word 'pristine' could possibly be misleading; it would therefore be more accurate to use the term 'precocious', as it conveys more of the sense that civilisation has been achieved earlier in that area, with evolutionary features, without saying that a society in that area is the first or second type of state[86].

Service quotes an important clarification articulated by Hannah Arendt[87]: 'Since authority always demands obedience, it is commonly mistaken for some form of power or violence. Yet authority precludes the use of external means of coercion; where force is used, authority itself has failed. Authority, on the other hand, is incompatible with persuasion, which presupposes equality and works through a process of argumentation... The authoritarian relation between the one who commands and the one who obeys rests neither on common reason nor on the power of the one who commands; what they have in common is the hierarchy itself, whose rightness and legitimacy both recognize and where both have their predetermined stable place.' This passage clarifies that authority and

86 Service 1975, 18–20.
87 Arendt 1961.

equality must be incompatible, since true authority rests on hierarchy[88].

In his conclusions, Service draws a distinction between negative and positive conclusions; he criticises the weak points of the former theories in the first, and the strong ones in the second. One of the criticisms posed by Service concerns the presence of an organised policy that provoked wars, rather than a war that promoted the development of a hierarchical society. Furthermore, he notes that violence alone cannot explain the establishment of a state. He raises the example of the Zulu, which were united and ruled under Shaka with force and terror; however, this was not a government, and it can be said instead that the Zulus were governed only under King Mpande when he introduced an apparatus for the legitimisation and legalisation of authority and power.

The new archaeology and processualism

The focus on cultural regularities supported by the neoevolutionary anthropology promoted a growing amount of attention on ecology and settlement pattern studies in archaeology. This process resulted in the publication of an article by Joseph Caldwell[89], which marked the beginnings of New American or Processual archaeology. These theories attracted a large audience of younger generations of American archaeologists, in particular Lewis Binford, who later influenced the young British archaeologist Colin Renfrew[90]. Binford[91] stated that the aim of archaeology was the same as that of anthropology: namely, to explain the full range of similarities and differences in cultural behaviour. He believed in the presence of regularities in human behaviour, as well as that such similarities could explain both a single instance of social change and a whole class of similar changes. Binford described evolution as the rational human response to a stress produced by natural ecological changes, and not by migration and diffusion, as the cultural-historical archaeologists had previously believed. This is the main shift among the evolutionary scientists and neoevolutionary scientists; both had the unilinear perspective of evolution, but ascribed this to two different causes, not so much as to control nature, but as a response to alterations in the ecological environment. The latter remarked that humans were conservative and that all cultural transformations were a result of ecological rather than social causes[92].

From the perspective of Lewis Binford, along with other processual (or 'new') archaeologists, cultures were adaptive systems composed of three subsystems: technology, social organisation, and ideology. Every aspect of the culture or any

88 Service 1975, 11.
89 Caldwell 1959.
90 Renfrew 1984.
91 Binford 1972, 93–4.
92 Binford 1972, 106.

material item it produces reflects all three subsystems. For example, a knife can be valued by virtue of its material function as something that cuts, while the handle and the quality of the finishing could denote the social rank of the owner; moreover, a symbol on the blade or a stone in the handle could be related to protection by a divine entity or ancestors[93].

The economic crisis that took hold in the American society from the late 1950s, along with other social factors, generated a growing scepticism regarding the benefits of technological progress, along with an increased focus on ecological concerns. In the following decades, the theory of neoevolutionism came to attract heavy criticism, while the basis and the general applicability of these theories were also called into question. The focus on the success of cultural evolution and the idea that successful cultures incorporated failing ones meant that research into vanished societies and cultures was not as strong; accordingly, the new archaeologists failed to explain the collapse of these societies. In response to these critics, Binford attempted to adapt his theories in order to redefine the frames of reference and provide behavioural interpretations of archaeological data. The result of this process was the creation of 'middle-range theory', which focused on the link between specific types of artefacts and human behaviour, aiming to generate a clear connection between material expressions identified in archaeological contexts and specific forms of human behaviour. The middle-range theory greatly benefited the research of the time, in that it raised awareness of the differences between the data base of ethnology and prehistoric archaeology: on the one hand, there is the direct observation of human behaviour as well as of material culture; on the other hand, prehistoric archaeology is bounded to the observation of material culture. Furthermore, archaeology came to be able to draw better distinctions between general theory and middle-range theory, and thus between the explanation of general human behaviour and the extrapolation of this behaviour from archaeological data[94].

Another disagreement arose from the beginning, with a particular focus on the degree to which human behaviour was shaped by ecological factors. One consequence of this was a renewed interest in General System Theory, a body of concepts first theorised by the biologist Ludwig von Bertalanffy[95] in the 1940s. General System Theory sought to identify the underlying rules that govern the behaviour of entities as diverse as thermostats, digital computers, glaciers, living organisms, and sociocultural systems. All the elements of this system can be linked together to create an interactive system, thus giving rise to the possibility

93 Binford 1972, 34–50.
94 Binford 1984.
95 Bertalanffy 1969.

of identifying its function. While this approach has rarely been applied by archaeologists, it had the benefit of encouraging them to investigate the whole cultural system. The importance of this theory was promoted by Kent Flannery, a firm believer in the systemic theories of prehistoric archaeology, who expanded the concept of system analysis beyond a concern with ecology and adapted it for the study of broader issues pertaining to social and cultural change. Flannery focused on attempting to explain the administration and functional approaches rather than adaptational and ecological ones[96].

Other scholars questioned whether the primary objective of archaeological research should be to study cultural systems or social behaviour. Following the idea that the real system consisted of social relations, many processual archaeologists conducted more research into prehistoric societies, while few were interested in cultural studies. Colin Renfrew[97] and Charles Redman[98] were two of the scholars who embraced the social- or societal-archaeological approach.

In an article published in 1975[99], Renfrew introduced the concept of peer-polity, which was further developed into a book that he published with John Cherry in 1986[100]. The model proposed by Renfrew emerged from the necessity of finding a new pattern of state development with reference to the paradigms already proposed: namely, exogenous change, in which the changes are the result of the contact with other and significantly more complex polities[101], and endogenous change, where the scholars search for internal changes such as irrigation, demographic increase and others. Accordingly, Renfrew adopts an intermediate approach: he explains that change is not exogenous if the region of a determined polity is considered, but at the same time, it should not be considered solely within the polity under study. Change instead occurs when polities of the same scale, status and culture within a specific region, through interactions between them, create a more complex polity, usually with the characteristics of a state[102]. This kind of interaction occurs when a dense concentration of similar-sized centres are distributed throughout a limited region, creating a high level of competition; the state that emerges from this interaction is usually competitive and has a main centre that changes several times.

In processual archaeology, moreover, many tendencies developed, one of which was the selectionist tendency; these ideas became the core of Darwinian

96 Flannery 1972.
97 Renfrew 1973.
98 Redman 1978.
99 Renfrew 1975.
100 Renfrew and Cherry 1986.
101 Renfrew 1986, 5–6.
102 Renfrew 1986, 6–8.

or evolutionary archaeology. Selectionism was not a new idea in archaeology, as it had had been discussed before, albeit not as clearly as Mark Leone would later articulate it[103]. Leone was an American archaeologist who posited that cultural systems were self-regulating, exhibited variation, and adjusted to their environmental settings by selecting the most appropriate strategies from among the available variants.

Processual archaeology became a broad category subdivided into several different approaches. During the 1970s, archaeologists became concerned with the issues that processual archaeology was ignoring rather than those it was solving; as a consequence, it became clear that there were more differences in the prehistoric cultures than could be explained by the general evolutionary schemes. The credibility of unilinear evolution collapsed under the anthropologists' critical analysis, which suggested that the models created by Sahlins and Service had characterised the tribal stage of development mainly on the basis of New Guinea 'big-man' societies, as well as chiefdoms within Polynesian societies. All of these issues resulted in an increasing tendency among archaeologists to try to investigate cultural diversities rather than similarities, as well as to explain human behaviour with reference to alternative factors. Another important development in this field was the awareness that societies or cultures were not closed or tightly bounded units that could be studied independently of one another; moreover, it was also concluded that more attention should be paid to the external inputs, which could bring about cultural changes[104].

Post-processual archaeology

Between the end of the 1970s and the 1980s, a new approach arose as an alternative to processual archaeology, which was labelled by Ian Hobber as post-processual archaeology. This new trend could be regarded as the inevitable rediscovery of the concept of culture as a source of cross-culturally idiosyncratic variation in human beliefs and behaviour[105]. Three intellectual movements influenced and accompanied this new discovery: neo-Marxist anthropology, postmodernism, and new cultural anthropology.

The neo-Marxist anthropologists do not consider themselves to be orthodox Marxists, but instead attempt to combine Marxism and structuralism; despite the former having a historical orientation while the other is an ahistorical form of analysis, they instead attempted to use these theories to support one another. This new approach emphasised the role of agency, i.e. human consciousness,

103 Leone 1972, 18.
104 Wolf 1982.
105 Robb 1998.

in all changes, and contended that every human activity was based in ideology, even scientific research. Furthermore, they tried to remedy to a failure imputed to Marx and Engels by attempting to explain pre-class societies[106].

The postmodernists focused on the subjective nature of knowledge and embraced extreme relativism and idealism, even going so far as to reject the idea of the existence of objective knowledge. They further rejected any evolutionary theory or notions of progress, instead expressing a firm belief in random, idiosyncratic cultural variation.

The new cultural anthropology is the third, and most politically conservative, concept to influence the post-processualists. This idea developed in the United States and was critical of the cultural evolution movement, characterising it as being ethnocentric and intellectually untenable in a multicultural and postcolonial environment. These scholars instead focused on documenting cultural diversity, idiosyncrasy, and uniqueness, while at the same time ignoring cross-cultural regularities[107].

Generally speaking, post-processual archaeology was primarily interested in symbolic, structural and critical approaches to the study of archaeological data. In the countries where post-processual archaeology took hold, different lines of this approach developed independently, with frequent disagreements arising between them. During its development, this approach paid attention specifically to agency, with a focus on the structures and forces that might limit and shape human behaviour. In particular, the post-processualists debated the extent to which dominant ideologies influenced individuals. One of the more popular perspectives was that ideologies were intricately linked to anthropological theories, a concept that was based in the cultural and idealist side of anthropology rather than a materialist, adaptational, and functional point of view. Theorists of this ilk also embraced many contradictory theories; unlike the processual archaeologists, however, they were aware of this and supported it. The second main issue was the general relativism and subjectivism, as well as the rejection of the culture as a primary and adaptive system. Furthermore, they denied the value of comparative analysis, the positivist scientific method, ecological determinism, and cultural evolution and other grand narratives.

Processual and post-processual archaeology influenced scholars not only in the United States or Britain, but also in other European countries. However, these two approaches made different contributions to the development of research in these two regions. If processual archaeology encouraged researchers to consider ecological adaptation and the scientific analysis of data across all of Europe, post-processual studies had a much smaller and more sporadic influence. This can likely

106 Bloch 1985; McGuire 1992.
107 Geertz 1988.

be ascribed to the strong historical tradition of continental Europe, which has resulted in an increased awareness of theoretical developments in economic, social, and intellectual history[108].

These two main approaches have been at odds with each other since they first emerged. Of course, over the years, each approach developed and abandoned theories that were found to be incapable of explaining reality – for example, the idea that ecological theories could explain any archaeological data – and arrived at other more feasible theories, such as behavioural archaeology (for the processualists) and idealist explanations (for the post-processualists). Moreover, the Darwinian or evolutionary archaeologists freed themselves from the Spencerian assumptions of unilinearity and teleological development associated with neoevolutionism in favour of embracing a selectionist approach: this is a view of selection, which synergistically combines the properties of function and adaption, as the main factor producing changes in adaptive aspects of human behaviour. It seeks to explain the material culture observable from the archaeological record using the concepts of biological evolutionary theory[109].

One of the most important post-processualist archaeological concepts is that archaeology can only construct, or make inferences or conjectures about, human behaviour and beliefs, but that these cannot be discovered or reconstructed. This approach is referred to as 'middle-range theory', and some examples of these techniques are provided below:

1. Middle-range theory: the conclusive definition provided by Binford[110] was that if a distinctive combination of material traits could be demonstrated to correlate with a specific pattern of behaviour in living societies, the discovery of the same combination of material traits in the archaeological record would permit the association of similar behaviour with an archaeological culture. Binford defined it on his first attempt as the fact that if a specific type of artefact or attribute could be demonstrated to be correlated with a particular form of behaviour or belief in every instance in the ethnographic culture in which its presence was recorded, it could be assumed that such a behaviour or beliefs could be associated with every archaeological culture in which the same sort of artefact or attribute was found.

2. Behavioural correlations: these interpretations depend on establishing, based on ethnological evidence, a cross-cultural correlation between two forms of behaviour, or between behaviours and beliefs. Research of this kind can address cross-cultural uniformities arising from psychological or other biological causes. In each case, however, such a generalisation must be treated as a hypothesis to

108 Trigger 2010, p. 478–9.
109 Cowgill 2000.
110 Binford 1962.

be tested against specific archaeological evidence. One of the problems raised with this approach is the danger of inadequately tested generalisations.

3. Historical interpretation: this simple theory tries to interpret archaeological data in correlation with historical, ethnographical or any other kind of written records pertaining to the same time, place, and social group. This approach has the clear advantage of permitting archaeologists to understand, accurately and in detail, what the meaning and use of the material culture were for the members of that society. Of course, this theory applies only to literate or well-documented societies.

4. Direct historical approach: contrary to the previous approach, the information from historical or ethnographic data of living cultures are used to interpret the archaeological findings relating to an earlier, historically undocumented stage of the same, or of historically closely related, cultures. The major problem with this method is that meaning and form can change over time; indeed, an object or symbol can evolve and change to acquire a new meaning, or the same idea could be expressed in a different form.

5. Empirical approach: this method attempts to work out ancient systems of weight, measurement, or monetary value by searching for orderly differences in weights, the size of buildings or rooms and currency. This is limited only to data with standardised and strictly mathematic criteria.

6. Structuralist approach: Lévi-Strauss first formulated this approach, after which it was later adjusted by Hallpike[111] and others. These scholars defined this approach as follows: in preindustrial civilisations, idiosyncratic and change-resistant core principles (or patterns of behaviour, beliefs, and habits that are not directly related to modes of subsistence) supply complex sets of propositions that play an important role in shaping the elaboration of social organisation, knowledge, and values in historically related societies, often for thousands of years. The main problem with this approach is that the verification depends on the direct historical approach.

7. Intuitive approach: this is one of the most debatable and controversial approaches, and is based on the idea of understanding what prehistoric people experienced by looking at the archaeological remains and their natural settings.

These approaches are, of course, insufficient by themselves; however, if combined together (particularly the first five), they could be useful tools for use in understanding behaviour and beliefs through archaeological data. All these theories and the results that have emerged from single studies can be combined with the contextual approach in order to arrive at a more reliable understanding of the behavioural and cultural significance of archaeological data.

111 Hallpike 1986, 288–371.

Charles Spencer and Kent Flannery: The reconsideration of the evolutionary approach and the introduction of agency

Since the 1980s, many scholars have raised criticisms of processual evolutionism. Several aspects of these theories were critiqued, along with the fact that they neglect the diversity of human cultures; moreover, it was noted that, in using the comparative method to define the typology of a framework, advocates of this theory were unable to explain why the changes occurred. Furthermore, many processual evolutionary scholars failed to pay sufficient attention to elements of human agency, such as the competition for power and resources among individual agents and groups; being overly reliant on cultural materialism, they ignored ideological and religious factors and the fact that evolution does not necessarily proceed from the simple to the complex[112]. Spencer rejects the latter issue, explaining that while there is not always an evolution from the simple to the complex in the short term, it is an overall long-term trend. Moreover, contingent historical processes play a crucial role in generating specific contextual variations[113]. Accordingly, in an attempt to overcome some of these difficulties, the contemporary processualists introduced human agency into their analysis. Brumfield[114] asserted that 'to analyse specific sequences of changes, it will be necessary to alternate between a subject-centred and a system-centred analysis'.

Spencer contends that cultural evolution variability is not randomly generated, but rather responds to strategies, which allows individuals or groups to secure an advantage or to achieve their interests. He notes that different individuals or social groups in the same society may pursue conflicting strategies, and that not all feasible strategies adopted by a group in a given situation will be equally optimal from the actors' point of view. Furthermore, he recognises the importance of 'Marxian' factors such as political competition, class struggle and power-seeking. Analysing the phenomenon in more detail, he states that a chiefdom is characterised by the absence of an internal specialised administrative organisation. The delegation of power in a chiefdom creates a situation of potential usurpation; while a chief will usually try to avoid that, this requires a chief to limit his chiefdoms spatially. In fact, in a preindustrial context, the optimal territory size for a single paramount chief's domain would be such that its radius is no larger than about half a day's travel from the regional centre. Usually, chiefdoms base their economy on self-sustaining thresholds, in that a regional chief will typically concentrate on financing his establishment through surplus mobilisation and the coordination of activity in the region as a whole, while at the same time encouraging the commu-

112 Spencer 1997, 216–9.
113 Spencer 1997, 232–3.
114 Brumfiel 1992, 559.

nity to regulate their own affairs with little interference from him. One important point made by Spencer is that a chiefdom does not inevitably evolve into a state; rather, a state is expected to be preceded by a chiefdom. In the same way that an administration centre is internally specialised, it must first be centralised during the chiefdom stage. If a chiefly administration produces enough funding to maintain itself and to regulate the critical variables, it will have no incentive to convert itself into the more costly administrative form of statehood.

Spencer, in his analysis of human agency, proposes the theory of Leadership Dynamics. He believes that leadership in non-centralised societies is based on the dynamics of individual power-seeking and factional competition. A leader in such a society, who has simply managed to convince his followers to accept him as their leader, holds ephemeral power that is not formally legitimised through a social, political or religious institution; thus, his power could rapidly dissolve in a competition with other leaders. The author presents several examples of societies in which the leader does not balance these two aspects. In one such example, which concerns the Mekranoti-Kayapo[115], the leader cares only about consolidating external relationships but is not concerned with his own faction; moreover, he does not control the exclusive access to external, luxury, and exotic goods, which creates an unstable internal situation. Another example can be found among the Akwe-Shavante[116], in which the efforts are only concentrated on the internal dimension.

By contrast, in a chiefdom, the leader balances both of these aspects, with internal demonstrations of authority towards over labour and services, as well as external recognition as a guardian of sorts who promotes communal peace or resolves interpersonal disputes. In addition to this, there is a father-son succession. This ethnographic and ethnohistorical data seems to confirm the idea put forward by Johnson, who stated that egalitarian systems emphasise the sequential hierarchy of leadership, while in the chiefdoms, a simultaneous hierarchy predominates[117]. The study of other archaeological cases, such as Tehuacán in Mexico and Barinas in Venezuela[118], further clarifies the importance of the aspiring leader achieving some form of initial success in an activity critical to survival. This activity could be the creation of a dam critical for irrigation in a land with scarce rainfall, or a leader's ability to collect enough armed men to protect the area from raiders. This success encourages followers to accept other expressions of authority as part of an overall leadership package, through the mechanism of indirectly biased transmission.

115 A non-centralised society in Parà state, Brazil.
116 Mato Grosso state, Brazil.
117 Spencer 1993, 43–45.
118 Spencer 1993, pp. 48–69.

Another scholar has stressed the importance of the human agent in the process of state formation. In one article[119], Kent Flannery presents five case studies in which human agency seems to be a determining factor in the creation of an early state. He provides the examples of Shaka in Natal/Zulu society, Osei Tutu in the Ashanti society in Ghana, Mir Silim Khan in Karakoram, Kamehameha in a Hawaiian chiefdom, and Andrianampoinimerina in Madagascar. In summarising these case studies, he finds some similarities between these five figures who were a primary cause in this process; specifically, he identifies some of the features that all of these leading figures have in common and that seem to be determinant in the process of state formation. The leader needs to be born as an *alpha* male, with an aggressive and authoritarian personality, and of elite parentage (although not in the main line of succession; just close enough to covet chieftainship). He must gain upward mobility as a military commander, usurp the position of chief (even if this requires assassination), and seek a competitive advantage over more distant rivals by means of military strategy, superior numbers, an architectural advantage (such as irrigation works), or superior weapons. Once this advantage is acquired, he needs to use it to expand into more distant territories and, where the environment permits, utilise corvée labour to provision the army, improve the conditions of the subject in these territories, and keep his followers content by building irrigation canals, rice paddies, or agricultural terraces. Where the environment does not permit such intensification, he needs to raid neighbours' caravans or cattle herds. Finally, once power is acquired, he needs to share that power with the existent aristocratic councils or popular assemblies in order to solidify his position. This sharing of his power, however, does not mean that the state has a democratic apparatus, or that the ruler shares power in a democratic way; he remains the only ruler and the only one who can make a final decision on all matters. Another important factor is that agency usually plays a prominent role in the changing of ideology, introducing a new ideology that is more appropriate for a state.

In the following part of the present work, the chronological framework will be abandoned, and the focus will instead be on authors and topics of particular importance. The authors introduced below are the anthropologists Robert L. Carneiro and Henri J. M. Claessen, the archaeologists Timothy Earle, Charles Stanish, Kent Flannery, and Joyce Marcus, and the sociologist Leonid Grinin. The work of each of these scholars marked a pivotal point in the debate on state formation.

119 Flannery 1999.

1.2.2 Carneiro and circumscription theory

First theorisation

Robert L. Carneiro is a supporter of Fried's theories; in particular, he embraced the idea of demographic pressure, developing it into a persuasive theory that marked one of the most important steps in the studies of this discipline. In a 1970 article in *Science* magazine[120], Carneiro first theorised in full his idea regarding the Origin of the State; this theory had been presented for the first time at an earlier symposium[121], but was explained in more detail in this publication. One of the most important ideas introduced by Carneiro is the concept that the origin of the state is not stochastic, or determined by the willingness of an agent, but is rather a cultural process with determinable features:

> *'[The state] was not the product of "genius" or the result of chance, but the outcome of a regular and determinate cultural process. Moreover, it was not a unique event but a recurring phenomenon: state arose independently in different place at different time. Where the appropriate conditions existed, the state emerged.'*

The author of the article focuses his research on what he calls *coercive theories* (in contrast to the *voluntaristic theories*[122]), specifically on the several theories advanced by different scholars who have considered the force and the non-enlightened self-interest as the *deus ex machina* of the transformation of villages into states. He takes into consideration the works of Herbert Spencer[123], Franz Oppenheimer[124], and other authors who focused on the role of warfare in societies. However, he also takes this approach one step further: while he believes in the central role of war in social evolution, he also states that although it is necessary, it is not sufficient to explain the path to statehood, and thus acts as a mechanism rather than a condition.

Carneiro reached this understanding of the central role of warfare at a time when anthropologists and archaeologists were reluctant to recognise its importance to political development. Until the 1970s, many scholars were supporters of the peaceful-theory model, where violence was ritual and war appeared only with the formation of the state, and refused to associate it with any significant role in the chain of events leading to the rise of chiefdoms[125]. Within academic circles over the last thirty years, however, war has acquired a certain status among

120 Carneiro 1970.
121 Carneiro 1961, 59–64.
122 Carneiro 1970, 733–34.
123 Carneiro 1967, 32–47, 63–96, 153–165.
124 Oppenheimer 1929.
125 Carneiro 2003, 208–11.

the constituent elements of the chiefdoms and states; this is particularly true of Lawrence Keeley's work[126], *War Before Civilization*, which in Carneiro's words 'has performed a very useful service in marshalling overwhelming evidence for the occurrence of warfare in prehistoric time'[127].

In this way, Carneiro legitimises warfare as an important mechanism for reaching the status of statehood. What, however, are the conditions necessary to initiate this mechanism? Carneiro identifies the areas in which states arose indigenously and determines that the circumscription of agricultural lands is the common factor. Each of the areas he examines are offset by mountains, seas, or deserts. The presence of these geographical borders limits people's ability to occupy and cultivate farming lands. This is not however a simple struggle for new land to farm, but is rather a more complex process, which is exemplified by Carneiro through two case studies: one in Amazonia and one in Perù.

The former is presented as a vast cultivable area, with no geographical border, and with the entire Amazon basin available for subsistence uses. In an environment such as this, the villages were sparsely distributed and warfare was not conducted to acquire new lands; instead, motivations for warfare included revenge, taking women, or the acquisition of personal prestige. In this kind of framework, the winners were not interested in subjugating the defeated group or extracting tribute from them; indeed, the latter could simply migrate into another area without even crossing a territory occupied by another group. This situation created a low population density, with villages that were dispersed, essentially autonomous, and lacking in any strong motivation to aggregate themselves into larger political units[128].

The second example is the coastal area of Perù, where the environment is completely different from the one in the Amazonian basin: the farming communities were settled in 78 short and narrow valleys, delimited by the mountain on one side and the sea on the other, and surrounded by a very dry desert. The number of villages increased until there was no more arable land available. Once there were no more new lands to farm, the inhabitants began to change the technology of their cultivation, introducing irrigation and terracing; more importantly, however, wars became more than simply attempts at revenge or eagerness to acquire land. Thus, due to this new economic motivation, the intensity and frequency of wars increased. The pivotal point was as follows: a defeated group, due to the inhospitable environment around the valley, was unable to flee to another area and begin farming new lands again, and was consequently

126 Keeley 1996.
127 Carneiro 2003, 209.
128 Carneiro 1970, 735–36.

forced to decide between annihilation or subjugation. The latter was achieved via a political subordination to the winning group, generally followed by the payment of a tribute or tax in kind, which was made possible only by producing more food from the same lands that were farmed before, and sometimes also with a further loss of autonomy, such as part of a political group being dominated by the victor.

From this point, the way forward was clear, and the process became swifter. The new political entities fought among themselves, while chiefdoms grew in all the valleys and began to fight for even more farms and power, with a cyclical growth and fall of larger chiefdoms until one of them achieved a strategic, economical or military advantage over the others and subjugated all the neighbour groups, creating a state.

According to Carneiro, the change from autonomous villages to supra-community aggregation is the pivotal point of the entire process. Once this is achieved, the following steps are only logical consequences, a 'change in degree'[129]. In this passage, Carneiro identifies the main process leading to social stratification. Indeed, if the main change occurs due to external acquisitions, the evolution of the social structure is the elaboration of an internal revolution. The spoils of war included subjugated people and confiscated lands, creating a mechanism that in turn created two classes: the first was an upper class, made up of rulers and their kinsmen, along with individuals who had distinguished themselves in the war, all of whom took part in the sharing of the spoils; the second was a lower class, comprising the people who had lost their independence. The latter faced two possible fates: they could continue to work their previous land, but give a portion of the products to the new owner, requiring more to be produced from the same land; otherwise, they were taken as servants, slaves, or specialised workers, exchanging their labour in order to create the economic surplus required to maintain the upper class[130].

This is, however, a somewhat flawed theoretical approach if applied as presented by Carneiro, even as regards the Amazonia case itself. Indeed, the author himself makes some amendments and adds some specifications or clarifications. Two of these in particular are very important, namely the 'Resource Concentration' and 'Social Circumscription' theories. The first explains why chiefdoms (or at least villages with some degree of social hierarchy, or that were governed by a paramount chief with influence over many communities) could also be present in areas with apparently no environmental circumscription. Carneiro returns again

129 As the author has explained previously in the same article, even if he believed that a society needs to pass through the chiefdom stage to become a state, he also affirmed that this is not an unstoppable process that progresses towards the end; a society could remain for a long time at an earlier step, or even never reach the state phase.
130 Carneiro 1970, 736.

to the Amazonian case, where, in the 16th century, the villages on the riverbank were rather large and densely inhabited, with each one close to the other and where social stratification existed in some cases. He explains that there were abundantly fertile lands along the river, which were flooded every year and covered with a layer of silt; furthermore, the waters of the Amazon were rich with fishes, reptiles, and other animals. All of these features made these lands attractive and worthy of fighting for, and the defeated communities who settled in those areas may have preferred to not flee and instead to cultivate these lands, even if this meant being subjugated.

Social circumscription is another theory added by Carneiro on the basis of an idea proposed by Napoleon A. Chagnon, who first introduced this concept during a study of the Yanomamö Indians, a population living in Venezuela in a broad and non-circumscribed area of rainforest located away from any large river. Here, again, we might expect numerous small villages that are widely dispersed and not particularly densely populated; however, Chagnon noted that there was a higher concentration of villages in the central area than in the periphery. This created a situation in which the villages were close together, with the result that there was also a higher rate of warfare among them. Consequently, for the defeated villages in the central area, it was more difficult to escape to another territory due to the fact that the neighbouring territories were already occupied, meaning that the population would have to trespass across these monitored territories to reach the outer lands. The result was an increase in the size of the inner villages, of the frequency of warfare, of the alliances among villages, and of the power of the male authority figures (who were also warlords). Even if the villages preserved their autonomy, they also increased their level of political development.

The author concludes that circumscription can be not only environmental, but also a factor of resource concentration and social circumscription. Each of these factors can constitute a strong impetus to political development. Moreover, it must be taken into consideration that to give rise to social circumscription, we cannot simply consider the population density *per se*, or the total proportion of land occupied, but instead must also take into account the amount of land needed to support the existing population; this depends not only on the number of people living on that land, but also on the mode of subsistence they use[131].

Circumscription theory represents an important step in the evolution of the theories regarding the origin of the state. Carneiro's theory has been accepted by many scholars, as well as heavily criticised by others for not taking certain factors into consideration (e.g. religion, ideology, multi-causality and the like). Nev-

131 Carneiro 1970, 737.

ertheless, it created an important perspectival shift on this topic that forced all subsequent scholars to refer to him, whether to accept or deny either the entire theoretical structure or (more commonly) a part or certain aspects of his theory. One of the most important features of this theory is that it creates a general theory that both comprehends and attempts to explain the elements that have been responsible for success or failure in the origin of states; in short, Carneiro attempted (and was judged by many to have been successful) to explain how autonomous villages (simple) have been able (or unable) to create chiefdoms (complex) and turn them into states. However, within this explanation, there is the implicit idea that the path of a society's development necessarily begins from the autonomous villages and ends with the creation of a state. Carneiro, however, overcomes this criticism, explaining that while the theory has the sufficient objectivity to explain why a state arose and which conditions are necessary for this event, he is not interested in explaining why a society would prefer to develop a different system.

Evolution of Carneiro's theory

Carneiro made no substantial changes to his theory for some time after his article was published in the 1970s; indeed, he subsequently applied his system to different case studies in which a society developed a state, as well as collaborating with several scholars from different parts of the world to help support his theoretical structure with archaeological data (see e.g. the work of the Egyptologist Kathryn A. Bard[132]). However, in 2012[133], on the invitation of the editors of the journal *Social Evolution & History*, Grinin and Korotayev, he proposed a reformulation of his theory that introduced several significant and interesting adjustments to the theory's general structure. More specifically, he adjusted the circumscription theory; in fact, he states that after having attended an academic conference presentation on the political evolution of the Olmec, he had reconsidered the role of circumscription in the rise of the state. The Olmec case[134] made it clear to him that the environmental circumscription (a feature that was absent in the Olmec and Mayan regions) accelerated the process, but did not start it: instead, the population pressure in an circumscribed area caused the people to press against each other and created a greater force than would arise in an environment without limitations, as a result of which the steps that could lead autonomous villages to develop into states took place faster[135]. In this redevel-

132 Bard and Carneiro 1989.
133 Grinin and Korotayev (eds) 2012.
134 Pool 2006.
135 Carneiro 2012 12–13.

oped theory, Carneiro clarifies that the real and unique *deus ex machina* of state formation is *coercion*, or more precisely, warfare.

In his article, as an initial argument, the author deals with the question of the multi-causality of state formation. He asserts that some scholars believe that a large number of causes better explain state formation, being more comfortable in recognising differences and divergences rather than similarity and regularity. In an important statement, Carneiro interprets the multi-causality in a different way:

'[...]while various factors may be involved in the occurrence of a given phenomenon – the rise of the state, in this case – these factors may form a tightly related composite of several causes acting together as a unit. A theory, which recognizes multicausality in this sense, can still be thought of as unitary; the same set of circumstances operating jointly to produce the same effect. Applied to state formation in particular, this means that a single amalgam of elements, acting together, sufficed to account for every case of state formation'[136].

In his unitary multi-causality, Carneiro determines that the same set of different causes can always be found in all states that arise; on the other hand, the first interpretation of multi-causality claims that any state anywhere will have its own unique set of determinants, making it impossible for any theory to account for more than one or two instances. He emphasised that a multi-causal idea of state formation is not antithetical to a unitary theory, and should be understood not as a single factor that explains every case, but rather as a set of four or five of them conjoined in a unitary theory.

A theory, whether multi-causal or unitary, can be assigned to one of two categories, namely *voluntaristic* and *coercive*. The first explains state formation as a matter of individuals who voluntarily transfer their own sovereignty to a higher political authority without the use of force, creating structures that eventually evolve into states in order to obtain a mutual benefit[137]. In particular, he refers to the theories of Claessen[138], who states that ideology is fundamental to the arising of the state, as it justifies and legitimates the position of the subjugated or the people who do not occupy ruling positions. In this voluntaristic group, Carneiro also includes Jan Vansina (who has studied sub-Saharan Africa), Richard Schaedel and David Robinson (in the New World) and Karl Wittfogel (with his 'Hydraulic Hypothesis'). Of additional interest is the inclusion of the supra-village political aggregates as *theocracies*[139]. By contrast, there are the *coercive* theories, which describe the process of state formation as a result of the use of force on a part

136 Carneiro 2012 6.
137 This voluntaristic theory has been comprehensively clarified by Charles Stanish in Stanish 2004, 9.
138 Claessen 2004, 79.
139 Carneiro 2012, 8–9.

of the society or on another society, resulting in a physical or mental subjugation that could bring about the birth of a state. Some authors have attempted to use both approaches; for example, Bruce Trigger[140] described the rise of states as occurring through the decisions of people who agree to be led by a small group of men, although the stimulus for this is not a voluntary decision but is rather due to a religious fear (a fear of the supernatural).

For Carneiro, the basis of the coercive theory is the fact that no entity would ever willingly surrender its sovereignty; surrender must be forced on an entity, whether it is a small independent village or an empire. Of course, he also considers intimidation as a coercive tool, where the threat of the use of a large and more powerful army was enough to subjugate smaller and weaker entities.

In his conviction that warfare is the primary cause for the arising of chiefdoms, and in the case of states, Carneiro provides further clarification on how this process works. In his previous theory, he contended that it was direct and successive military victories that permitted chiefdoms to grow and expand into societies with different classes. In his revised theory, even if he believes that a certain chiefdom could have followed this path, he states that this is simply another mechanism involved in this process. In fact, he emphasises human agency; for example, the warlord of a village being promoted to the position of military authority of an alliance of autonomous villages during wartime, or for military actions against common enemies. During this time of fighting, the warlord had almost unlimited power over warriors, but this power was usually limited to this period; as soon as the military actions were ended, his power also weakened. Here, then, is Carneiro's new idea: he states that when war becomes a continuum without ceasefire, and the villages are always in a status of war-alert, the warlord has the ability to not only continue to exercise his powers, but also to make them stronger and develop relations of loyalty with some of his closer warriors. These men benefit by serving the warlord, and, in return, are personally loyal to him; while they are also aware that they were helping him to become a permanent leader, the advantages for them personally are enormous. Thanks to the efforts of these faithful warriors, a warlord could attempt to establish himself as a supra-village *paramount chief*, with any resistance to this attempt to extend and make permanent his powers being thwarted by his close entourage. To impose himself as a chief *de facto*, he needed time to consolidate this new political arrangement; the next step was to create the legitimisation that allowed him or his successor (most likely his son) to become a chief *de jure*[141].

140 Trigger 2010, 510–2.
141 Carneiro 2012, 17–18.

Carneiro makes another point about warfare itself and the reasons behind it. He identifies autonomous villages in their early stages, beset by conflicts that arose due to vengeance for killings, family-related offences, wife-stealing and others. This is a feature we can observe in the Palaeolithic era. In these cases, the warlords usually led only the men of their village, not combined forces. Only in later stages would wars begin to have a specific purpose, such as gaining new lands to exploit for economic reasons (mostly for agriculture); nevertheless, the defeated were not yet absorbed into the society. Only in an even later stage, when the demographic pressures were greater, would the losers be incorporated into the polity as a new class[142].

Following his revision and clarification of the criticisms of the old circumscription theory, Carneiro took into consideration the topic of population pressure, which was central to his theory and an oft-criticised aspect of the entire structure. He begins by affirming that not all land is cultivable at the same time; in fact, it was common to allow plots of arable land to lie fallow for several years (around 20 years) in order to make them fertile again, a technique referred to as forest fallowing[143]. Under population pressure, it is possible that they would shorten the fallowing timespan and begin to cultivate the land, replacing the previous system with that of bush fallowing[144]. As the shift between these two solutions is not clear in the archaeological record, it initially appears that there were no changes in the habits of people living on those lands. When a culture is forced to do something that otherwise would never be done (for example, shortening the normal cycle of clearing and planting), this indicates that a certain degree of population pressure already exists. At this stage, a village can decide to take the arable land required to support their growth in a population-stimulating war with the neighbouring villages. Of course, in that moment, their focus is the acquisition of new areas to cultivate; thus, they drive off the people living there to take possession of their lands. At this earlier stage of chiefdom-level warfare, it seems that there is no absorption of defeated people into the society[145]. This process is well exemplified by the chiefdoms in the South-eastern United States, where the Mississippian people

142 Carneiro 2012, 19.

143 Forest fallow, consisting of all complexes of woody vegetation derived from the clearing of natural forest for shifting agriculture. It consists of a mosaic of various succession phases and includes patches of uncleared forests and agricultural fields. Forest fallow is an intermediate class between forest and non-forest land uses. Part of the area that is not under cultivation may have the appearance of a secondary forest. Accurate separation between forest and forest fallow may not always be possible.

144 A system of farming in which bushes and trees are cleared from virgin land, then used for cultivation for several years. After the period of cultivation, the land is allowed to lie fallow for several years (usually 10–15) before cultivation begins again, which enables its fertility to be restored.

145 Carneiro 2012, 20.

were expansionists, acquiring new lands but not incorporating their enemies[146]. Nevertheless, it should also be considered that without population pressure, warfare could be used to acquire land that was more productive, more fertile, or even that granted access to raw and prestigious materials such as obsidian, jade (such as in the documented case of the Olmec[147]), or other resources.

On the basis of these observations, Carneiro now believes resource concentration to be an equal, if not an even more important, factor than environmental circumscription in the rise of chiefdoms. Resource concentration seems to be more effective, acting faster and giving results sooner than environmental circumscription. He highlights examples of fishing resources on the Peruvian coastline or the aquatic resources of the Nile in Egypt. On the other hand, social circumscription works in a similar way to geographical conscription, but slower. In fact, the time required for villages to fill a borderless area is much greater; however, when they reach this point, the settlements are squeezed together, and there is a real (even if not physical) obstacle to the movement of people in case of defeat in war. In short, social circumscription acts in the same way as environmental circumscription, but takes more time to accomplish the same result.

All of these different stimuli and accelerators of the rise of chiefdoms and states often work together. The result is a process that undergoes a consistent acceleration, allowing societies to become chiefdoms earlier than their neighbours or under more stable political circumstances. Carneiro highlights the examples of the valley of Mesopotamia and the Nile. In the former, there are two parallel rivers, the Tigris and the Euphrates, with many small branches that create a large fertile plain; in the latter case, Egypt is fed by the Nile, which runs through a long but narrow plain surrounded by the Sahara desert. While chiefdoms in Mesopotamia arose long before Egyptian chiefdoms, political unification in Egypt was achieved first, while a more stable kingdom developed once unification was accomplished[148]. In short, the different geographical features of the two regions influenced the different social and political development of their societies.

1.2.3 Claessen and the focus on the Early States

The theorisation of the Early State

Throughout his studies, Carneiro has shown more interest in the process of societal development; this is mainly evident in his first theorisation of the 'Origin of the State', specifically in the definition of the transition from chiefdoms to statehood. On the other hand, Henri J. M. Claessen and Peter Skalník were more

146 Hudson 1994.
147 Coe 1981, 15–16.
148 Carneiro 2012, 23–27.

focused on the definition of what a state is. In particular, in 1978, they published *The Early State*[149], which later became one of the most consistent alternatives (though it was not necessarily in opposition) to Carneiro's theory. The two authors identified three main problems in the study of the state: definition, character and theorisation[150]. The first problem highlighted was the absence of 'any *definition* of the state that is accepted by the entire community of scholars'; this is a potential problem because any scholar may have their own theory, making it improbably that a 'synthesis' will be reached. The second obstacle was the shortage or inconsistency of data, which precluded comprehensive comparison of different cases; this in turn affected the research, crippling the process of verifying a scholar's theory. The last difficulty encountered in the study of state formation was the disorder among the theories regarding the process of the formation and early development of the state.

In their work, the two authors tried to define a state. They began from the (very) broad statement that a state is an organisation comprising three main components: a number of people, a certain delimited territory, and a specific type of government[151]. Of course, this definition is useless, as it might apply to any community or social organisation, but it creates the framework from which Claessen and Skalnìk started to define the Early State. If they could not say much about the number of people and the territory involved, these were not usable in the definition[152]. Instead, they focused on the *government*, which can be divided into two main features: *power* and *administration*. The authors define the first as 'the capacity to influence the choice of behavioural alternatives of someone else'; this approach comprehends the entire spectrum of power, from the use of brute force to the moral persuasion of authority[153]. It can also be defined as the capacity of the government to maintain itself independently and to eliminate, or keep at bay, any separatist movements. Moreover, the *administration* is the real agent of the government, comprising the hierarchies of functionaries that manage and put into effect the decisions and actions of the rulers. In a similar definition, the government can also be defined as the institution that is meant to regulate the society, particularly as regards the interactions among its social classes or groups.

149 Claessen and Skalnìk 1978.
150 Claessen and Skalnìk 1978, 3–4.
151 Claessen and Skalnìk 1978, 17.
152 When the two authors wrote this article, there were few studies on the demography of ancient societies, meaning that it was impossible to determine the minimum number of people required for a complex society or a state to exist. Even nowadays, this is a controversial topic. However, studies have demonstrated that it a specific minimum number of people are required to trigger the need for societal organisation. This number is subject to several variables, such as the kind of territory and the proximity of other societies, among others.
153 Claessen and Skalnìk 1978, 18–19.

Social stratification is another subject in the complex definition of the state. Different authors have assigned different levels of importance to this topic. To some scholars – such as Engels and all of his followers, including Fried – the unequal access to the means of production is a decisive feature. In particular, the process that brought about the transition from the mere unequal access of 'members of the same sex and equivalent age-status'[154] to an organised apparatus that maintains, organises and exploits this societal division into the two classes of rulers and ruled is one of the key points in the definition of the state.

One interesting and important point stated by Claessen and Skalník is that the process by which society transforms from non-state to state is neither mechanical nor fast; by contrary, the process is long, with different phases of advancement and speed. To enable this long process to be explicated, these authors introduced the concept of the 'Early State': in short, the emergence of a state where a state has never existed before. An Early State exists as the first state of that territory and its surrounding areas. The two authors also identified seven characteristics that can be attributed to the early state. This list was preliminary and revised at the end of the book; it was neither a checklist of all features that a state should possess, nor the list of all primal causes for the state's emergence[155]. The long process that leads to a state being established passes through different degrees of complexity (as defined by the authors)[156], which can be defined as three *types* of early state: inchoate, typical, and transitional. The differences between these three rely have mainly to do with the distance between the ruler and its kinship, and the other governing apparatus, as well as with how developed the features of the state are. Following this preliminary definition, the inchoate early state is strongly characterised by kin relationship, both in the management of the state and within the society itself, such that family and the community are the main societal structures. The tax system is primitive, the officers are part of the ruler's kinship network, and the interactions among the classes are determined by redistribution and reciprocity. The opposite is true for the transitional state: the ruler's kin play only a minor role, while the administrative structure and taxation system are mostly developed, with officers appointed also from among the commoners, and a market economy in emergence. The typical early state is located between these two opposite poles, as there is balance between the kinship and non-kinship territorial ties[157].

154 *Cfr. supra* p. 24.
155 For the complete list see Claessen and Skalnìk 1978, 21.
156 Claessen and Skalnìk 1978, 22.
157 Claessen and Skalnìk 1978, 23.

One of the most important characteristics of the work of Claessen and Skalník is their methodological approach. They tested their theories and hypotheses with twenty-one case studies from all around the world: Angkor, Ankole, Axum, the Aztecs, China, Egypt, France, Georgia, Hawaii, Inca, Jimma, Kachari, Kuba, Maurya, the Mongols, Norway, Scythia, Tahiti, Voltaic, Yoruba, and Zande. These cases span from the year 3000 B.C to the 20th century, with different environments, contexts, and the presence or lack thereof a neighbouring state in the same territory. It is also clear, as the authors stated[158], that in a comparison of social phenomena or cross-cultural studies, the occurrences taken into consideration are different and not always, if ever, perfectly comparable. The two authors solved this problem by comparing the twenty-one case studies on a feature-by-feature basis. This solution required a coordinated organisation of the work in order to individuate those features that are common to all, or at least most, of the case studies. For this peculiar topic, which necessitates examination of the cultural and societal aspects of civilisations in different parts of the world and at different times, it is impossible to find the exact equivalent in all societies; thus, the choice was made to use functional equivalents, which means that phenomena with the same function were compared. The authors identified twelve *key concepts*, and in each of them, one or more aspects to use for comparison: these are territory, independence, population, urbanisation, infrastructure, trade and markets, division of labour, the means of subsistence, social stratification, legitimation of sovereignty, inequality, and the administrative apparatus.

The analysis has identified and compared fifty-one features[159], which are refined into seven criteria used to describe the structural characteristics of the early state. The first of these is *population*. At the beginning of the book, this was defined as 'a sufficient population to make possible social categorisation, stratification and specialisation'; however, during the analysis, it proved difficult to define a range in which a state can be differentiated from a non-state, even if this criterion is interpreted as population density. There is no specific data in the case studies analysed by the two authors to define this criterion. Nevertheless, it is clear that it is necessary to have at least 500 people[160] in a society to create the sufficient degree of complexity required of state organisation. This criterion remains unclear; while the importance of population is understood, it is almost impossible to define it quantitatively. The second criterion is the question of citizenship. An examination of this criterion has brought the authors to state that a person who is living permanently within the boundaries of a state is considered a subject of

158 Claessen and Skalnìk 1978, 536.
159 For the fifty-one aspects, see Claessen and Skalnìk 1978, 537–85.
160 On the argument, see also Birdsell 1973.

the state and subordinate to its rules, including its law, taxations and other duties. The third, quite important criterion refers to many structural characteristics of the cases under study; the authors cite that 'the government is centralised and has the necessary power for the maintenance of the law and order through the use of both authority and force, or the threat of force'. This implies several significant corollaries: the presence of a capitol, or a centre of power where the ruler has its court and palace, and from where the sovereign governs and manages the other population centres, or at least minor settlements and villages (production centres and farms). The ruler is also the head of the three-tier administrative apparatus that helps with governance, delegating both power and duties; this apparatus helps the head of the state to enforce the laws, which are maintained mostly through the power of the authority itself (rather than primarily through the use of force), as well as the administration of justice. The fourth criterion is the condition that the state be independent, with sufficient power (military or not) to resist internal separatist forces and neighbouring threats. This implies the presence of a group of warriors who swear to defend the ruler, along with the presence of a duty for the commoner to be called up to military service in time of necessity; the sovereign is the supreme commander. The fifth is linked to the first criterion regarding the population and the presence of social classes: in a state, the society must be stratified into at least two distinct strata, an upper and a lower class, even if it usually also features a middle class. The upper stratum represents the ruling class, and is constituted by the sovereign, its kin, the aristocracy, the clan and lineage chiefs, the heads of the administration, and the priesthood. These figures are involved only indirectly in food production. Those who are usually directly involved in food production – smallholders and tenants, as well as other producers such as artisans or traders – make up the lower class. This stratum is obliged to pay tribute, in several forms, to the upper class, as well as to serve in the army and act as force work for public buildings or work linked to the state. A requirement and an effect of this class division is the production of a surplus, which is the sixth criterion. The existence of a state requires a surplus that is used to maintain the administrative apparatus, along with the system of exchanges inter- and intra-classes. The surplus could be directly exchanged as tribute or taxes, or converted into currency in order to acquire luxuries to exchange. The seventh and final criterion is the presence of an ideology that creates a legitimisation for the ruler and the existence of a class division. Usually, the ideology refers to a divine or mythic legacy to which the ruler is bound. The sovereign performs rituals, establishes and respects the divine order, but also protects and sustains the ruling class, in exchange for tributes and gifts; the ideology in turn creates reciprocity, whereby the people need to materially sustain the ruler in order to obtain divine protection and prosperity.

One of the most interesting concepts developed in relation to early state theory is the processual idea: the early state is defined as a 'complex of interacting social processes, rather than as a static phenomenon'[161], whereby the administrative, economic, ideological, military, and political functional spheres interact with one another.

When considering the notion of a process, and the implicit idea of a long development, for the transition from a pre-state entity to an early state, it is fundamental to understand that it is impossible to identify a particular turning point or moment in which there is a switch from one form of political institution to another. The change takes a slow and convoluted path, with periods of rapid development of (future) state institutions, as well as phases of stagnancy or disintegration of these structures. When it is possible to identify a creator or a founder of the state, this is mainly because, at a certain point in this long process, a leader has realised the potential to create or organise something anew – or more, probably, has seen the potential to accelerate an already existing process and determine the possibility to gain for itself (or their kin). This change usually comes alive with the introduction of new institutions, regulations, myths, and religious changes.

Most elements present in the early state were already in existence before: complex social structures, social inequality, legitimisation, centralisation, and administration can also be found in chiefdoms. There are many examples, such as Hawaii, Oaxaca, Europe, and others; in this earlier phase, however, these are only tendencies, or are linked to the chief and the state's chronological horizon. Based on this evaluation, Claessen and Skalnìk identified six elements involved in the process of early state formation[162], some of which were already identified by previous authors. In particular, demographic factors and war were two of the factors found to be most indicative and responsible for the birth of a state[163]. A third element is conquest; as has been described above, Oppenheimer backed this idea. The fifth factor, considered important by the authors, is an increase in production, which leads to a larger surplus and the possibility of sustaining a larger administrative apparatus. The sixth aspect is the ideology and the consequent legitimation of the ruler; the last cause identified is the presence of already existing states among the neighbours.

The two authors conclude their work by trying to indicate what factors can definitively differentiate an early state, in particular an inchoate state, from a chiefdom. They stated that it is difficult to indicate a specific quantity or quality of characteristics that are present in both early states and previous forms of gov-

161 Claessen and Skalnìk 1978, 598.
162 Claessen and Skalnìk 1978, 625–9.
163 Fried 1967; Carneiro 1970; Webster 1975, Corning 1975.

ernance; of course, it is possible to identify certain features, such as population growth or a territory becoming more complex. To demonstrate the existence of a new political form, however, it is necessary to find specific elements that are not present or could be impossible to find in specific qualitative characteristics in chiefdoms. The authors identify two aspects: the power to enforce decisions of the central government, and the power to prevent friction. The presence of these elements is indicative of a complex society with specific characteristics, which are the same as those indicated above: a centralised government, the presence of social inequality, a system that legitimates the ruler and the ruling class, surplus to maintain the state apparatus, and so on.

The evolutionary question

As noted above, in the decades before the 1980s, evolution was the main theoretical framework used to explain the rise of the first states. Many authors (including White, Carneiro, Spencer, Fried, and Sahlins, among others) supported the idea of an evolutionary unilineal path from a less complex to a more complex political organisation, with the state at the apex of this evolution. Even at that time, but particularly in more recent decades, many anthropologists rejected this view and embraced alternative theories[164]. While many tried to adopt different theories, others did not dispense entirely with the evolutionary principle, but instead attempted to make it work in a more modern setting. Claessen was among the many scholars who did not reject the concept of cultural evolution. He believed that it was a key part of his theory, which would help to facilitate comprehension of the growing complexity and unilinearity.[165] Claessen introduced the concept of development as change, which can be seen both as growing complexity and as stagnation, decline or collapse. Developing complexity is only one aspect of evolution. In his article, Claessen quotes Charles Darwin, who stated that evolution has no direction at all; it is not inevitable or determined that a form will develop from simple to more complex.[166] This is an important step toward a modern idea of the state formation, or a more general study of societies in their organisational aspects.

The complex interaction model

Beginning from the concept of structural changes, Claessen, in collaboration with numerous authors and researchers, attempted to define the motives behind the occurrence of these structural changes, along with the process by which they

164 Cfr. *infra* p. 75–83.
165 Claessen 2006a, 6.
166 Claessen 2006a, 8.

happened. In 1985, and together with Van de Velde and Smith[167] in particular, Claessen articulated a model capable of elaborating the data and the process behind the socio-political organisational development. They named this model the 'Complex Interaction Model' (CIM). This model combines four factors:

– Population growth: this leads to a complex socio-political organisation when the society in question stays together, and makes an increase in food production inevitable. Later, he defined this aspect even more clearly by relating the number of people to the ability of producing food, the fertility of a territory and the availability of land, a concept that he referred to as the Societal Format.

– Ideology: this explains and legitimates (stronger) forms of leadership. Ideology is usually an elaboration of already existing ideas and includes all the coherent religious and political ideas that have an influence on the behaviour of the people.

– The domination of the economy: A larger population and a more developed form of leadership demand an increase in production, in terms of both quantity and in quality, as well as the creation of specialised handcraft. This, in turn, demands more management and more land being brought under cultivation. Better transport and better storage facilities must also be developed, along with the creation of new infrastructures and a trade network.

– A more complex socio–political organisation demands more functionaries, more juridical measures and more stratification. Over time, a complex apparatus (or bureaucracy) will emerge, as well as a limited military apparatus or police force, which is necessary to maintain external independence and internal safety[168].

The author also clarifies the position of warfare within this model: 'The origin of the state cannot be attributed to war, but can indeed be largely encouraged by war and tension'.[169] The main argument is that the characteristics of war itself include the necessity to be organised, planned and controlled; indeed, the coercive force generated by the existence of a military force must be controlled, and this cannot be 'achieved by binding the military with economic and ideological tethers'.[170] This explanation articulates Claessen's major difference with Earle, who identified war as among the factors required for the rise of a state.

One of the most important points of this model is the possibility to work in both ways on the basis of the conditions in which the model (the society) works, producing growth in complexity or inducing stagnation and decline that could eventually lead to collapse. Claessen[171] lists four conditions that are necessary for the development of an Early State: 1. There must be a sufficient number of

167 Claessen, Van de Velde and Smith 1985.
168 Claessen 2006a, 9–10, 2006b, 224–225, 2010, 23–24.
169 Claessen 2006b, 223.
170 Earle 1997, 106.
171 Claessen 2014, 30–31.

people to form a complex, stratified society. However, in addition to this minimum number of people (even the smallest state, Tahiti, had at least 5,000 people), a certain number of administrators, servants, courtiers, priests, soldiers, agriculturists, traders, and so on are also required. 2. The society must control a specific territory. 3. There must be a productive system that yields a surplus capable of maintaining many specialists, privileged categories, and unproductive people. 4. There must exist an ideology capable of explaining and justifying the hierarchical administrative organisation and extant socio–political inequality, as well as the use of coercion. Nevertheless, even if all these conditions are met, there must also exist a trigger to evolve the state, which could be either positive or negative. Taking natural phenomena as an example, these can be both positive (such as an improvement of the climate or a particularly productive year of the arable lands) or negative (such as natural disasters or droughts); other possible triggers could include invasions or contact with more complex societies, among others. Recently, Claessen[172] has also stressed the importance of the leader in the process of state formation, but this topic is analysed more in detail by other authors.[173]

1.2.4 Earle's process of state formation and the sources of power

Timothy Earle's interest in chiefdoms and states can be traced back to the 1970s, with works focused mainly on redistribution and its role in the state formation process. One of his earlier works is an article[174] on the case study of the Hawaiian chiefdom and the analysis of its economic system, in particular the complex wealth redistribution mechanism. After this preliminary study, Earle broadly analysed the phenomenon of chiefdoms, beginning from his experience with Hawaii. He went on to focus on four areas of interest for the study of this societal system: Oceania, Central and South America, North America, and Europe. These 'areas of interest' are largely influenced by the view of Service, who divided the distribution of the chiefdoms in Polynesia, the circum-Caribbean, the American Southeast, and Europe[175]. He added the concept of the *Precursor to States* to this distribution analysis, integrating it with the evolutionary theory to conclude that the chiefdoms precede state societies. He located the areas of importance in Mesoamerica and Mesopotamia; moreover, as regards the definition of the features of chiefdoms, in relation to the other systems, he took into consideration the scale of integration, centrality of decision-making and coordination, stratification, ideology, and economy. The last of these is further divided into two

172 Claessen 2014a, 2014b.
173 For more information cfr. Spencer 1993; Flannery 1999; Earle 2001.
174 Earle 1977.
175 Service 1975.

additional subcategories, namely management and control. From this subdivision and focus, it is possible to perceive the emphasis that Earle places on the economy, which becomes the main topic in his subsequent works; however, these earlier works were still heavily influenced by evolutionary theories, and were also adversely affected by the paucity of available studies, which increased greatly in number after 1980.

The first theorisation of the sources of power

In his book *How Chiefs Come to Power: The Political Economy in Prehistory*[176], the author makes an interesting and foundational contribution to our understanding of state formation processes. Earle identifies four primary sources of power, all of which are necessary to institutionalise inequalities in a complex society: social relationships, economic power, military might, and ideology.

The first of these[177] is maybe the most 'natural' source of power, but also the weakest; it represents the relationships that exist among persons and groups of people. Additionally, it is common knowledge today that the social position occupied by an individual can determine their authority and access to other sources of power (such as wealth or access to specific social networks). This factor becomes even more important in polities where kinship is the backbone of society, and where a person's social relations and position in relation to the leader are critical to his or her social status; however, this is also a source of power on which one cannot rely. In fact, anyone can build his or her own relationships or claims on kinships. Furthermore, the chief is obliged to assist those in need, and other people may influence the leader through the exchange system necessary to maintain his position. The leaders of kinship-based societies, such as chiefdoms, have every interest in breaking this system, or at least arranging to ground their power in sources other than social relations.

Economic power[178] consists of the ability to manage key productive resources or consumptive goods. Earle divides these into two key categories, namely staple finance and wealth finance. The first of these refers to the wealth produced directly by the revenue derived from the rent of lands and the re-use of the surplus produced; the base for this wealth is the ownership of lands, livestock, or mining sites. Moreover, wealth finance is based on the prestige of goods, along with the control over the processes necessary to obtain and restrict access to these goods; this can be obtained through control over technologies (such as irrigation systems, the melting process and others), restricting infrastructure building

176 Earle 1997.
177 Earle 1997, 6.
178 Earle 1997, 7, 70-4.

(of e.g. boats or wagons), or control over the exchange networks such that the leader has sole access to luxury goods and can therefore exchange them for social power. Economic power is not a power *per se*, but more of a medium through which other power sources are acquired and sustained; as a result, other forms of power are simultaneously required if a leader is to maintain control over it.

Military might[179] refers simply to the ability of leaders to extend their domains and to coerce other people to follow their lead. The power of intimidation has roots in the fear of attacks from external foes (these can be real, such as other groups of people or animals, as well as fantastical, such as supernatural forces who want the destruction of the world order) and foes from within society. The leader gains power by providing military strength in order to repel external threats and grant internal order. In exchange, people pay a tribute for this protection. In chiefdoms and polities without a complex structure, there are no institutions that control this power; therefore, leaders need to constantly display their strength and ability to wage war in order to keep the other warriors loyal and bonded to them. Even in the case of a power framed inside a state structure, military might is a highly problematic source of power, as it requires resources to manage it constantly in order to avoid warriors rebelling against the leaders, including coups and revolts. If economic and ideological resources are required to maintain control over this power, it is also true that this power is necessary to maintain control over economic and ideological resources. Military strength is also required to maintain access and control over foreign routes or sources of prestige goods, as well as to exercise control over staple finance and to show the leader's strength for ideological purposes.

Ideological power[180] refers to the ability to establish an authoritative structure, institutionalise ruling practices, and codify the social order. It specifies and justifies the reason why specific rights and obligations exist. Ideologies come from cultures, and are bonded to the beliefs, rituals and material culture of the society; furthermore, different segments of society can have different ideologies. The leaders, or ruling groups, need to impose their dominance through ideology, meaning that they need to establish their system as natural or convenient in order to create the paradigm 'leaders must be followed, followers need to be led'. The followers always have the power to overturn this situation; however, ideology is successful when the leaders are able to manipulate the media in order to show that they have the legitimacy and the power to maintain the *status quo*. This process happens through the materialisation of ideology, which creates the tangible reality of the leader's might through means including public ceremonial events,

179 Earle 1997, 8, 106-10.
180 Earle 1997, 9, 141-50.

rituals, symbolic events, public monuments and land modifications[181]. Ideology, of course, is a weak source of power in itself; this is because each individual can develop individual beliefs in an autonomous way, meaning that the number of ideologies could potentially equal the number of people. Ideology requires support from both economic and military power in order to be effective.

Bottlenecks and interconnections between powers

In 2011, Earle finalised his theory on economic power and the control exerted over it. In particular, he introduced the concept of bottlenecks, or 'choke points'. These are the best way to control access to this power, since they limit the flow of resources, personnel and knowledge. They exist when technological knowledge, available resources, or trade must flow through narrowed channels (as along roads, desert caravan routes or a few major rivers), which limits production. Trade bottlenecks can also be controlled through the use of the best available transport technology (long-distance boats) or the best transport routes (often rivers or caravan roads, or a shift from land-based to water-based trade). All of these choke points generate a surplus that can reinvested by the chief into power strategies. In addition, a system of property provides ideal bottlenecks in the agricultural base. Bottlenecks can also be created to control military power, as well as religious ceremonies. In the field of resource ownership, the bottlenecks consist of the control of highly productive staple farming. Ownership of the most productive lands was historically the most common and easiest way to create the redistribution system necessary to fund other activities, such as the construction of new canals or irrigation systems, or to support the warrior elites and priests required for the performance of rituals and ceremonies. The first advantage of possessing the most productive lands is that it enables a chief, or the elite, to accrue more wealth than other people.

The control of specialised transport is based mainly on common people's inability to access raw materials or prestige goods. As a result of such control, only the chief is able to organise and support the expeditions or long-distance trade required to gather such materials. A chief who controls the production and/or the transport of resources is also able to organise specialised crafts, which can be used to transform the raw material provided as taxes or tributes into 'prestige goods'. While these products are not necessary for subsistence, they are indispensable for the maintenance of social relations. Historically, these prestige products were so important for social relations that the nobles needed them in order to demonstrate their status; accordingly, they were obliged to support the chief in order to receive those goods.[182]

181 Earle 1997, 151–8.
182 Earle 2011a, 35; 2011b, 240–241.

The surplus generated from these economic bottlenecks can be reinvested in training and supporting specialised warriors to protect the chief or king, as well as to act as a coercive force to subjugate other lands, control trade routes, or secure sources of raw material. These warriors are not only maintained by the chief's food surplus, but also through training and being supplied with special weapons produced under a controlled knowledge. Furthermore, an economic surplus allows the chief to finance ceremonies, events, temples and public buildings, which create the chief's control over religion and consequently justify his command, as well as establishing social order and creating the patterns for property ownership and warrior loyalty. For states, the surplus is fundamental to creating and maintaining the administrative apparatus. All of these power sources act as dynamic forces that support and complement each other.

The materialisation of ideology

Earle, in association with Elizabeth DeMarrais and Luis Jaime Castillo, further analysed the topic of ideology as a source of power[183]. Ideology is not only a matter of ideas and beliefs, but is just as much a material means of communicating and manipulating ideas as it is a matter of the ideas themselves. Ideology is constituted from both material and symbolic components. The process that transforms an idea into a tangible material entity is referred to as the *materialisation of ideology*. More specifically, there are four processes involved: ceremonies, symbolic objects, monuments, and a writing system. Materialised ideology can achieve the status of shared values and beliefs; moreover, materialisation makes it possible to extend an ideology beyond the local group and to communicate the power of a central authority to a broader population[184].

Materialised ideology moulds individual beliefs into the potential for collective social action. At the same time, materialisation is also a strategic process by which leaders allocate resources to strengthen and legitimate the institutions of elite control. The competition between social segments can materialise different contemporary ideologies; the one that is eventually institutionalised will consolidate the position of the groups that promoted that ideology.

The materialisation of the ideology confers social power in two basic senses:

1. The control of the resources required to materialise ideology reveals the controller's power to the groups that lack these resources, particular as regards the control of the economy and labour. Moreover, an ideology rooted in a material medium can be controlled in the same way as other goods, and may therefore be owned, transferred and restricted[185].

183 DeMarrais 1996.
184 DeMarrais 1996, 16.
185 DeMarrais 1996, 17.

2. The materialisation of ideology permits not only the control of the object, but also of the ideas and the beliefs it contains. Ideas themselves cannot be controlled, as it is impossible to prevent an opposing group from generating their own ideas and convincing others of their veracity. Similarly, it would scarcely be efficient if an ideology was to be embodied in something that is easily available or freely accessible. Ideology must instead be rooted in something that can be controlled by the elite promoting it[186].

The materialisation of ideology is strictly affected by the environment, economic resources, historical circumstances, and other factors. The result is that the ideology is materialised using different means and forms.

Events create shared experiences for members, and are immediate and powerful; this power is primarily the power to negotiate power relations at all levels. In many societies, ceremonies are repetitive and precisely timed to mark agricultural or ritual cycles. This is because an event is, by nature, transitory and temporally brief; moreover, the effects of the shared experience begin to fade as soon as the event has ended, meaning that its long-term effectiveness depends upon repetition. Furthermore, unlike the construction of monuments or the manufacture of symbolic objects, ceremonies are not capital investments; instead, they require a continuous investment of resources. Elites who can host festivals or events demonstrate their capacity to marshal quantities of food and resources that are beyond the reach of others, and eventually create a dependency among those who come to rely upon them. The elites usually designate sacred spaces or construct facilities for events in order to limit access to ceremonial spaces[187].

Symbolic objects are especially efficient for long-distance communication between elites or, more broadly, between political allies or social groups. These objects signify relations of dependency, affiliation, or correspondence. The exchange of these symbols within social groups or lineages creates or reinforces both vertical and horizontal relationships and helps to generate consensus and loyalties among individuals. Due to their nature, these objects can be owned, inherited and transferred, and consequently convey strong social meanings pertaining to individual social position or political power. These objects also accomplish this function after the owner's death when they are used as funerary goods. Obviously, to maintain their value and exclusive association, access to these objects is limited; this involves limiting access to the raw material necessary for their production, the technology of their manufacture, or the skilled labour necessary for their creation. The value of the object is not necessarily linked to the real value of the object itself, as many such objects may be made of inexpensive materials, but

186 DeMarrais 1996, 17.
187 DeMarrais 1996, 17–8.

linked to the ideological context. For example, such objects may have a unique context of production and use, such as the ancient Olympic laurel wreaths[188].

Public monuments and landscapes (mounds or pyramids, ceremonial facilities, large building and centres of political activity, or defensive structures) are designed to reach the largest audience possible simultaneously. They are effective and enduring means of communication, often expressing relatively unambiguous messages of power. Large monuments may be visible to vast populations across broad geographical areas, making them ideal for indoctrination, population control, and the dissemination of propaganda. Generally, public spaces and ceremonial facilities appear first in regional centres, where they serve as the focus of power, representing the elite's monopoly on civic-ceremony activities. These monuments are permanent expressions of ideology and link a group to its territory[189]. In another article, Earle focuses on the modification of the landscape to study the different paths to chiefdom. He affirms that 'landscapes provide a particularly good medium from which to construct social institutions, because they furnish scale (ability to be experienced by a large group of people), exposure (daily experience), and permanence (stability across time)'. Moreover, these chiefdoms usually marked the landscape with rock art, in order to transmit a permanent cultural meaning that is also linked with individual groups, while ceremonies were also performed at these sites that defined the group and reinforced its social and historical charter. 'Landscapes are not static, they are transformed by humans use and work'[190]. Two features of the cultural landscape make it very important: 1. its permanence provides stability through time; and 2. the ease with which they can be understood transfers across diverse cultural viewpoints.

Written documents are direct manifestations of ideas and belief systems, which can formalise rules and relationships. Furthermore, writing and literacy can be strategically controlled, while access to the specialisation required for this materialisation can also be regulated, such as through scribes and interpreters[191].

1.2.5 The discussion of war and conflict

Warfare is one of the main topics of discussion among scholars who study the development of social complexity. It has already been made clear in previous sections that there are two main positions on this issue: those who identify warfare as the main condition required to achieve a more complex society, and those who recognise the importance of war, but do not see it as a *sine qua non* condition for the creation of more complex societies.

188 DeMarrais 1996, 18.
189 DeMarrais 1996, 18–9.
190 Earle 2001, p. 107.
191 DeMarrais 1996, 19.

War as main cause

Carneiro is perhaps the most eminent representative of the first school of thought. As noted above[192], Carneiro believed that, even if it were not the only cause, chiefdoms and states cannot develop without war. In addition to his aforementioned thoughts on the topic, he also published an interesting article detailing some specific aspects of warfare[193]. Carneiro explains that warfare in the chiefdoms was not only conducted for the purposes of conquest, and that evidence of this can be seen in the examples of Fiji and the Cauca valley. Firstly, Carneiro analysed the causes of war. In addition to the causes that give rise to autonomous villages (control and appropriation of material resources), the offenses against the dignity of rank persons were also present in chiefdoms, as were the seizure of lands and the subjection of peoples. It seems that, in the case of the Cauca valley, one of the most important motives for going to war seems to have been the taking of prisoners, although it appears that the fights sometimes led to the conquest of enemy territories. Preparation for war is another important aspect investigated by Carneiro. It seems that there were no persistent armies; the chief marshalled the fighting forces by calling the men to arms, and he usually also called on his allies. Various military alliances were concluded among the chiefdoms as each sought to gain advantage over its enemy. The armies created varied in size. They could be quite small, as in the case of autonomous villages, which could hardly count on more than a dozen men for war, while the number of warriors in a chiefdom was much higher. The average size of an army was 200 – 400 people (in the Cauca valley); even so, the Spanish chroniclers reported that they could mobilise 4,000 – 6,000 warriors, or even as many as 12,000. Once the men were gathered, the hostilities began. Tribal warfare consisted mainly of sneak attacks, followed by a quick withdrawal. In chiefdoms, by contrast, the fight was preceded by a declaration to the enemy, along with a certain amount of protocol and ceremony, including the exchange of messages, warnings, and others. Carneiro states that the chief led his warriors into battle. The chief secured his role through his war exploits and continuing demonstrations of military prowess. He was not only required to lead his men, but also needed to be visibly in the middle of the battle, showing himself to be the bravest and most reputable warrior among them. Taunts and challenges, along with the use of trumpets and other instruments, often preceded the assault. The formations were ordered and organised into sub-units, and the leader decided their order of advancement in battle. Once the hostilities ended, it is difficult to determine how many casualties there were in the battles and the fate of the captives. Carneiro shows how differ-

192 Cfr. *supra* p. 37-45.
193 Carneiro 1990.

ent societies had different uses for captives: it seems that, in the Cauca valley, they preferred to take prisoners than kill them, while in Fiji it seems that the number of casualties was bigger. Afterwards, the campaign warriors (both common and high-status men) were rewarded for their bravery in battle with a new rank status. However, a common man could not expect to be raised to a higher status than a hereditary ranked man.

Another scholar supporting this view is Claus Bossen, who began from the statement 'war made state, state made war' to analyse the role of war in the process of early state formation. For his analysis[194], he took as example two groups of islands, namely Fiji and Hawaii. During his research, he considered only the theories based on war as state-creating mechanisms in order to determine the strengths and the weakness of this approach. In pursuit of this aim, he attempted to avoid some of the usual issues encountered by scholars during this type of study by adopting two conceptual strategies. The first problem is the question of definition; in response, Bossen adopts the strategy of considering the policy to be not totally different from the previous social structures. He conceptualises the early state as 'an ongoing process of construction and deconstruction that only sometimes resulted in a stable, early state of some permanence'. The second strategy is to divide the very different arguments as to how war causes early state formation into three groups, according to whether they treat war as a context, as military organisation or as a means'[195]. He summarises this in three points:

1. War is considered a context for social organisations. The desire to organise warriors and warfare leads to centralised co-ordination, which gives societies the best chance to survive thanks to a more concentrated military power. Service[196] explains how war allows the power monopoly of an emerging state to operate, since 'good government' enhances their chance of survival by offering a more powerful organisation for their protection. This approach establishes a clear link between war and social development. However, Bossen places the focus on two issues that are not clarified under this approach: first, 'how is the transformation of social organisation achieved?' What are the processes that allow war to facilitate higher social complexity? Even if we assume that all people involved in the change agree with this development, the construction of a society is a difficult task. Second: some societies do not seem to develop higher and more complex polities as a result of war. There are many examples of groups living peacefully together. The strength of this approach lies in its explanation of state formation as occurring under the threat of annihilation; on the other hand, however, it does

194 Bossen 2006.
195 Bossen 2006, 238–9.
196 Service 1975, 270.

not explain the process, leaving it as a 'black box'.

2. Focus on military organisation. Military organisation encourages the formation of state-like features, such as centralisation and subjugation. This approach implies a separation and a reintegration of the social and military organisation. Separation is implied because the military structure should develop autonomously and be semi-independent of social organisation, and then this should be transformed into the model of the military. Therefore, the main issue with this approach is whether a military organisation could become semi-independent of the social organisation and subsequently shape the latter to take its own form. Furthermore, if this transfer of powers to the military hierarchies can be accepted during wartime, why should it not be revoked once a state of peace is restored? Additionally, the hierarchical command structure seems plausible for a society under constant threat of annihilation, or an economy based on a centralised and hierarchical structure such as a large irrigation system; however, it is hardly suitable for one organised around agricultural production, trade, political organisation and/or religious life.

3. War increases political power. The conquest of other groups leads to their subjugation, along with stratification and superseding forms of government; this approach contains Carneiro's theory, and moreover has the ability to explain how centralised command, hierarchy, and stratification emerged (i.e. privileged access to basic resources). However, while this theory can explain how entities grow larger and more stratified through conquest, it does not show how political organisation changes as a result. Carneiro does not elaborate on this evolution or transformation. A group subjugated by a chiefdom becomes part of that chiefdom (or at least pays tax to it), not of a state. Thus, an explanation is still required as to how the social structure and political power transform from a chiefdom into a state after another group has been subjugated; the theory cannot explain 'how this would transgress the existing social structure'[197].

Supporters of war as the main cause of state development often emphasise that, in chiefdoms, one of the primary *casus belli* is the acquisition of new lands to improve the production of food, as well as a response to the demographic pressure. This is one of the main arguments that have been harshly criticised by other scholars, who have often presented data to show examples where there were no demographic pressures and enough lands to feed everyone[198]. In 2008, however, Steven A. Leblanc[199] introduced an interesting feature into the organisation of the territory, namely that of 'buffer zones'. He states that these no-man's

197 Bossen 2006, 239–41.
198 See Claessen below.
199 LeBlanc 2008.

lands play an important defensive role, namely that of defending the crops; indeed, one of the techniques used in warfare was to burn or destroy the enemy's crops, but this action requires time to accomplish and is very difficult if the crops are located deep in enemy territory. However, if the borders of two entities are connected and their fields are very close together, those fields are very easy to attack. Moreover, the presence of buffer zones are very useful for eliminating both the surprise effects of the raids and disputes around borders. These 'no-man's lands' were not completely empty, but were rather patrolled or used to hunt. Leblanc shows that, where the data is available, we can find proof of the existence of these buffer zones; their sizes varied, depending on the type of crop being defended (a wide area for standing crops, such as corn, and a narrow area for root crops, like potatoes) and the type of terrain (plains or narrow valleys). The buffer zones are consequential if combined with conflict in the wider framework of increasing social complexity. Indeed, when two or more polities become a new single polity, the buffer zones among them are no longer useful; thus, a large part of the territory becomes available for the cultivation or the exploitation of other resources, and the result is a boost in the growth of the new polity. The author stresses the importance of the buffer zones, mainly when the scholars are considering the use of the lands and the statistical count regarding how much resource availability there should be before population pressure and a need for new lands arises. Leblanc raises the example of R.C. Allen, who, when studying the Egyptian case, argued that there was no population pressure during the formative period[200]; however, Leblanc's opinion is that Allen did not consider buffer zones, and thus the fact that a large portion of the lands considered inhabitable were buffer zones that would thus not be available if a state of warfare was not in place.

War as one of the possible causes

Many scholars do not agree with Carneiro and other anthropologists regarding the role of war in the process of state formation. While these authors recognise that warfare can be assigned the lion's share of responsibility for the formation and development of many societies, they also state that it is neither the main cause nor the *sine qua non* for the progression of social complexity.

Claessen is one among the many who have criticised the approach described above. In his view, one of the first issues to resolve is the definition of war. The author takes several hypotheses into consideration, but in the end, Ronald Cohen's definition emerges as the most suitable: 'publicly legitimised and organised

200 Allen 1997.

offensive and/or defensive deadly violence between polities'[201]. Claessen openly criticises Carneiro, who does not distinguish between war and other conflicts and ties war together with the formation of the state; in Claessen's view, however, Carneiro does not explain how and in which way the state functions. The Dutch professor states that war is a *derivate* factor, citing two examples of situations in which a culture had all the characteristics required to become a state but never developed into it, along with examples of other cultures that increased their political centralisation without experiencing either war or population pressure[202]. Claessen summarises the reasons for wars in terms of four categories:

- Demographic causes: population pressure, exiguous means of subsistence, shortage of land;

- Economic causes: shortages of food and/or of raw materials; competition to control markets, trade routes, or ports; the search for prestige goods to secure people's loyalty;

- Ideological causes: religious differences; questions of honour and shame; reciprocal obligations; feelings of vengeance; struggle for succession;

- Politico-strategic causes: security reasons; elimination of threatening neighbours; claims to influential positions.

The author clarifies the position of warfare within the framework of the discussion as follows: 'The origin of the state cannot be attributed to war, but can indeed be largely encouraged by war and tension'[203]. The main argument here concerns the characteristics of war itself, which needs to be organised, planned and controlled; indeed, the coercive force generated by the existence of a military force must also be controlled, and cannot be 'achieved by binding the military with economic and ideological tethers[204]'.

To return to the main question, namely that of whether state formation and war are connected, Claessen reports a case in which the Betsileo[205] developed from a group of farmers into a state without the intervention of war or other such circumscriptions, or at least not as intended by Carneiro. During the 17th century, a group of inhabitants from the coast arrived in their lands in order to plunder and acquire slaves. In response, the inhabitants simply looked for a safer place to shelter (thus, they were not subjugated, but instead relocated themselves), and accordingly retreated to the hills and built fortifications around themselves. No war ever took place; some skirmishes occurred, but there was no organised action of war with the intent to subjugate or take lands from them. Over the years,

201 Cohen 1985.
202 Claessen 2006b, 219–22.
203 Claessen 2006b, 223.
204 Earle 1997, 106.
205 A population who lived in the highlands of Madagascar during the 16th and 17th centuries AD.

more and more people arrived in these fortified hilltops, and a desire for a stronger leadership grew spontaneously. Hence, a formal hierarchy took shape where once there were traditional forms of leadership, such as family and clan chiefs[206].

The main difference with Carneiro's theory of circumscriptions concerns the absence of war between the groups. Of course, the original inhabitants escaped from threats and arrived in a place that could be seen as circumscribed territory, but there was no war or conflicts among them; instead, the state was generated from the development of their previous traditions into something more formal and defined, not from the subjugation of certain people and the subsequent development of different classes. This view is confirmed from the study of another culture that lived close to them, the Isandra[207]. They were cattle-herders and nomads with a limited socio-political organisation. When threatened by the coastal people, the Isandra withdrew to a safer place in a similar manner to the Betsileo. Over the years, however, the Isandra retained the same socio-political structure, while the Betsileo developed into an early state. According to the scholars who studied these cultures, a state arose in the Betsileo because 'a growing number of people, living together for a longer period of time, need to develop stronger forms of leadership', and not necessarily as a result of resource scarcity. Furthermore, the Betsileo already had an ideology of sacred leadership in place; thus, for them, the passage to a stronger leadership could be easily explained and legitimised.

Claessen articulates certain factors regarding state formation, drawing on the data presented in his article[208]:

- Population growth. This leads to a more complex socio-political organisation, allowing for an increase in food production, when the society in question stays together.

- An ideology that explains and legitimates (stronger) forms of leadership; this ideology is usually an elaboration of already existing ideas.

- Domination of the economy. A larger population and a more developed form of leadership demand an increase in production. This, in turn, demands more management, and more land to be brought under cultivation. Better transport and better storage facilities therefore have to be developed.

- A more complex socio-political organisation demands more functionaries, more juridical measures and more stratification. Over time, a complex apparatus or bureaucracy will emerge.

206 Earle 2006b, 224.
207 The Isandra lived in the same region of the Betsileo. During the 17th and 18th centuries, they occupied many of the caves and fortified them with walls of stone and mortar.
208 Earle 2006b, 224-5.

- A limited military apparatus or police force. This is necessary to maintain external independence and internal safety. This apparatus then develops into a stronger administrative organisation and a more developed economy[209].

The presence of all these factors do not mean that an early state will emerge automatically; other actions or events need to stimulate the development. Claessen concludes that while some connection between state formation and war exists, it cannot be considered a direct relationship, but rather a corollary of certain developments. Indeed, he presents several case studies in which war or violence have not played any role in the formation of chiefdoms or states. Furthermore, violence or war cannot be a necessary or sufficient condition in the development of states, along with other circumscriptions. In short, it is undeniable that war has played an important role in the formation of many chiefdoms and states, but it cannot be seen as the primary and/or fundamental cause for the development of an early state.

By 1975, many critics were receptive to the idea of war as a primary cause of state formation, particularly finding their voice in two scholars. The first of these is Malcom Webb[210], who pointed out an important non-military factor that allowed for change in social structures. He believes that a mechanism leading to the appearance of states would require the shift from a system in which authority, social controls, and resource allocation were decentralised and locally organised towards a new system with a monopoly on coercive force. It is necessary to alter the manner in which the authority of the leadership is ultimately enforced and upheld[211]. Webb contends that the mechanism leading to this shift was long-distance trade. Webster, writing in the same era, expresses a similar view to that of Webb:

> *'On one hand, the structure of ranked society, with its hierarchical organisation of political authority, centralization of some forms of economic activity, and at least incipient forms of wealth accumulation and differential consumption, prefigures basic characteristics of the state – concentration of wealth and coercive force in the hands of a small segment of society. On the other hand, the kinship idiom, which integrates ranked societies, would seem to frustrate the evolution of state-type institutions in several fundamental ways. In such societies wealth accumulation is limited by the reciprocal relations of the chiefs to hi producer-kinsmen. Effective*

209 Claessen 2006b, 225.
210 Webb 1975.
211 Webb 1975, 157.

monopolization of coercive force is difficult because what limited access to force the chief possesses is largely derived from his redistribution activities[212]*.'*

Both authors argue that access to resources external to the chiefdom's economy is the way in which social structures are stressed and the wealth and power necessary to overwhelm other competitors is amassed. War, of course, helped the development of social complexity and military organisation along and led to subjugation; however, war itself does not explain these processes.

1.2.6 The rise of inequality in societies

One of the main features of large and complex societies, both chiefdoms and states, is the presence of social classes. These are distinguished by an inequality in access to resources, rights, and duties, whether because of kin relationships or for other reasons. The rise of inequality remains a matter of debate. One perspective, articulated by scholars such as Carneiro[213] and others similar to him, is that classes come into existence when one group subjugates another group, whether external or internal to the society.

Charles Stanish and game theory

Other scholars, on the other hand, sustain the theory that inequality can also arise without the force of coercion or conquest. In an article on the evolution of chiefdoms[214], Charles Stanish considered this in depth in an attempt to explain the process. Stanish states that the development of rank seems like a natural process that occurs in any human society under the appropriate conditions, and firmly believes that this process can also happen voluntarily; in support of this theory, he outlined case studies where there are no records of coercive attempts to force commoners to accept the elites. In many such cases, some elite families do not participate in the social activity; moreover, ethnographically speaking, it is much more common for a chief to fail than to succeed. In the same way, some families moved from one village to another or transferred their allegiance to other elites without incurring any serious cost. On the other hand, it seems that hundreds of families accepted the elites, or their village became a rank community.

Normally, the shift to a rank society comes at a huge economic cost to the commoners, who often must be forced in some manner to engage in this shift. Stanish, however, argues the contrary, stating that when a community organises

212 Webster 1975, 460.
213 Cfr. *supra* p. 37–45.
214 Stanish 2004.

itself with cooperative labour, or begins specialised production, they obtain much more wealth than egalitarian organisations, thus coming to occupy a dominant position in the region; this predominance of wealth allows them to subjugate the smaller villages close to them.

While the operation is not entirely costless, the costs are supported in social terms. In terms of household production, the labourers have the control of the production from the beginning to the end, and they also manage the distribution of the products, but produce a much smaller surplus. In a cooperative effort, however, the surplus generated is much higher, but control of the wealth is transferred to a managing entity different to that of the producers.

The elite needed to create some kind of mechanism to ensure cooperation of all labour in all stages of the process, and found their solution in the rituals. These permitted them to sanctify and schedule the cancellation of deferred debts, which were necessary to organise a voluntary specialised labour force, by the elite to the commoners; moreover, the establishment of these production systems and exchange rituals can overcome the resistance to more complex labour arrangements.

Stanish concludes by stating: 'In this model of chiefdom (and not state) evolution, ideology is not viewed as a mechanism to mask inequality as it is in the state societies. Rather, some kinds of ideologies, given form in ritual, provide a series of benchmarks that elite must obey that will ultimately result in a redistribution of wealth. Failure to follow those benchmarks will result in a collapse of that labour organisation. Adherence to those ritual obligations provides some guarantees necessary to keep that organisation together'[215].

It is important to note here that Stanish, in his article, uses the term 'chiefdom' in a very broad sense, including any rank society between egalitarian societies and states. Furthermore, he also proposes game theory as an alternative evolutionary theory. Several studies[216] have demonstrated that people do not follow the criteria of economic maximisation models, or other assumptions in classical theories, but instead tend to be both irrationally cooperative and irrationally vindictive under the experimental circumstances that best approximate social life. Irrational, in this context, means that they do not follow the best possible profit maximisation strategy[217]. On the other hand, if information on the players in the game are introduced, 'fair strategies' will dominate. Other works have demonstrated the relevance of punishment. Gintis proposes the phenomenon of 'strong reciprocity'[218], affirming that there is a predisposition 'to cooperate with other and

215 Stanish 2004, 9.
216 Bowles 1997.
217 Stanish 2004, 13.
218 Gintis 2000, 169.

punish non-cooperators, even when this behaviour cannot be justified in terms of self-interest, extended kinship, or reciprocal altruism'.

Stanish further reports the words of Bowles[219] who summarises the model based on *Homo reciprocans*. According to this model, people have a 'propensity to cooperate, they respond to the cooperation of other by maintaining or increasing their level of cooperation, and they respond to defection on the part of others by retaliating against the offenders, even at a cost to themselves, and even when they cannot reasonably expect future personal gains from such retaliation. In particular, when other forms of punishment are not available, individuals respond to defection with defection. Homo reciprocans is thus neither the selfless altruist of utopian theory, nor the selfish hedonist of neoclassical economics. Rather, he is a conditional co-operator whose penchant for reciprocity can be elicited under the proper circumstances'[220].

This theory requires two elements to be reliable from an archaeological perspective:

- Evidence of an economic mechanism that provides benefits of cooperation to balance the costs for individuals; this means that greater benefits are obtained from the cooperative organisation of labour, both in terms of increased economic gains for each individual working alone and compensation for the loss of control over the production process.

- A social mechanism that grants benefits to the co-operators while at the same time punishing the defectors.

The core of the cooperative work is that it changes neither quantitatively (the labourers are forced to work more) nor qualitatively (the typology of work does not change), as there is nothing technically new to learn; what changes is the organisation of the labour, not the nature or intensity of that labour. The pivotal point for the origins of ranked societies is clear: when an elite, thanks to the cooperative organisation of labour, is able to overcome the limits of household economies[221], this elite is able to produce more surplus than individuals or individual households working alone. This results in a clear increase in the wealth and goods available to the entire population, which in turn benefits the individuals in that labour organisation. The benefits of such cooperation are tangible; however, if a group perceives unfairness in the management and share of the products produced through cooperation, and if the costs of defection are lower than those associated with the maintenance of cooperative labour, the end result will be the

219 Bowels 1997, 4-5.

220 Stanish 2004, 14.

221 As defined under 'Chayanov's rule', which states that, without a pressure or opposite inducements, the households will underproduce and underconsume with respect their theoretical capacities, meaning that the household economies will have a considerable reserve of potential labour and wealth production.

collapse of the organisation and a return to household production. The elites thus play the role of keeping benefits high. There are several reasons why a labour organisation might fail, such as:

- Gains for the individuals are insufficient to compensate for the lack of autonomy;
- The presence of freeloaders who take advantage of co-operators;
- Unfairness or disputes regarding the share of wealth;
- The desire of individuals to punish others, even at a cost to themselves.

The elites could not base their strategies for holding these specialised labour organisations together on the promises of fairness and higher wealth alone; they additionally required ideologies, rituals and ceremonies to guarantee the payment of their share, fairness and protection from freeloaders, and the provision of social reward for cooperation over a long period of time. If the elites are unable to guarantee these things, they should be punished with social and supernatural sanctions.

Important for the rituals, and their acquisition of a certain value in the community, is the repetition of their elements and the constant meaning that they signify, as repetition conveys continuity and stability. Ethnography helps in better understanding the meaning of this: if the redistribution of goods is linked to a precise order in the rituals, then correct ritual conduct directly ensures the 'proper' distribution of those resources after the surplus is produced. In this ritual context, the sacral architectures are key features for the elites.

Ideology and religious ceremony – along with feasting and events at which luxury goods are exchanged, both with members of the same community and with elites of other communities – cannot be recognised by archaeology. However, there are several direct products of such practices, such as corporate architecture, the production of elaborate objects and the appearance of exotic materials. All of these are required to ensure the cohesion of organised corporate groups.

Flannery, Marcus, and 'The Creation of Inequality'

In 2012, with the publication of their book *The Creation of Inequality*, Flannery and Marcus[222] provided strong support for this theory, particularly as regards the involvement of ideology in the transition. These authors demonstrate how the reach of a hereditary and unequal society does not preclude a return to an egalitarian status. For example, several Asian societies that created hereditary ranks returned periodically to a more egalitarian way of life, without pressure from climatic change; most probably, the desire for equal treatment periodically overcame hereditary privilege[223]. These authors highlight several other such so-

222 Flannery and Marcus 2012.
223 Flannery and Marcus 2012, 159–60.

cieties, such as the Pueblo at the arrival of the Spanish colonialists, the Avatip in Papua New Guinea, the Maliyaw in Melanesia, the Cauca valley societies, the Bemba in Zambia, and Hawaiian society. This study helps to facilitate a better understanding of Rousseau's conclusion: 'inequality results from people's efforts to be thought of and treated as superior'. Moreover, it is possible to understand that environmental changes, population growth, intensive agriculture, and other factors are insufficient to explain the transition to a hereditary society without a direct and voluntary manipulation of social logic by human agents or a certain sector of society. In the case of the Maliyaw, it is clear that these privileges could be taken away from their rivals, and they should justify these new social logics through changes in the cosmology, attributing powers from legendary ancestors or supernatural spirits. To summarise, inequality is not something environmental or external, but is rather something that must be orchestrated within society; moreover, the privilege must be accepted by the rest of society, not only by the segment that demands them. Archaeologically speaking, an important feature to understand is the shift from the men's house and the temple, resulting in a diminishing of the ordinary people's ancestors and the increasing importance of the celestial spirits in the chief's genealogy[224].

The case of the Hawaiian society is an interesting case study of the joint efforts of anthropologists and the archaeologists. As a result of this combined research, it has been possible to trace the history of social development in Hawaiian society.

When the first Hawaiians arrived on the islands, around 300–500 A.D., they were already a ranked society; in an early layer, archaeologists uncovered a burial site of a nine-year-old child and high-status goods. Furthermore, a red stain that appeared to come from dyed tapa cloth was also found; such cloth could be worn only by people of noble birth or their titled attendants. All territory was divided into *ahupua'a*, or pizza slice-shaped slices of the island; each *ahupua'a* was managed by one hereditary chief, called the *ali'i*, who was the highest-ranking man of his lineage[225].

Around the year 1400, two transformations took place on the islands: the first was the marriage between chiefs and their own sisters and half-sisters, which ensured the high rank of mana for their offspring, along with a change in the cosmology to indicate that such sibling marriage was legitimate; the second was the elimination of the landed gentry, accomplished by declaring all garden land to be the property of major chiefs. With this latter change, the society was divided into two strata, namely the *ali'i* (hereditary nobility) and the *maka'aianana* (the commoners); moreover, the Hawaiian chiefs now could reward their allies with land and deny such boons to their rivals.

224 Flannery and Marcus 2012, 187–207.
225 Flannery and Marcus 2012, 332-3.

The society was administrated by three levels of administrative hierarchy: the paramount chief *ali'i-ai-moku*, at its top; below him, the *ali'i-ai'ahupua'a*, who managed the territorial divisions; on the level below, the *konohiki*, minor nobles who directly administered the gardens and the fishponds[226]. As we can see, there were at least three levels of administrative hierarchy, considered a feature of the most powerful chiefly society. Moreover, the paramount leader's ability to manage these titles allowed him to use land as a reward for political and military loyalty rather than a genealogical entitlement. Like the Bemba chiefs, Hawaiian leaders were used to promoting commoners to governmental posts in order to bypass the *ali'i* that might be possible usurpers[227]. This resulted in the creation of a bureaucratic apparatus that did not include heir kinsmen.

An important feature is that the paramount leaders did not live permanently at the civic-ceremonial centre, but rather moved from district to district within their chiefly territories, meaning that the burden of tribute and corvée labour was evenly distributed among their subjects[228]. To sustain this system, they needed to keep adding followers through conquest. One defining feature of these kingdoms was the appointment of loyal commoners to the bureaucratic ranks, usually in order to prevent the usurpation of the nobility.

1.3 Definitions of chiefdoms, states and their differences

1.3.1 The chiefdom

Introduction

It is a key task of this introduction to clarify the meanings of 'chiefdom' and 'state'. In the field of theory, these definitions are not objective, and terms tend not to be comprehensive across multiple cases. Although a definition becomes accepted when it is commonly used and proves to be applicable in most cases, it is however not applicable in all cases; therefore, definitions remain in use until a more inclusive definition is found. Many anthropologists, for example, have debated the definitions and even the existence of the 'chiefdom' and 'state', which have been subjected to critical analysis and reformulation since their appearance in academia. Despite some disagreement, these terms are now reasonably well-defined and agreed upon by most scholars in this field. However, these definitions are not valid in absolute terms, as scholars have criticised the anthropological categories for states and chiefdoms due to the emergence of some misunderstand-

226 Flannery and Marcus 2012, 335.
227 Flannery and Marcus 2012, 362-3.
228 Flannery and Marcus 2012, 336.

ings. Indeed, few evolutionary anthropologists have ever suggested that such stages are uniform, static, and inevitable. In their work, evolutionary scientists highlight the broad range of animals that fall under the biological class *Reptilia*, which comprises creatures as diverse as snakes, lizards and turtles, all of which are groups of creatures that are not evolutionarily static. In the same way, scholars are aware of the heterogeneity within categories such as 'state' and 'chiefdom'[229].

The chiefdom is a notion that came into existence during the 1970s with the works of Service, Sahlinis and Carneiro. These authors defined and placed this concept in the trajectory of unilineal evolution through which tribes transition to states. Since its introduction, this theory has been criticised and revamped many times, with continuous adjustment and redefinitions. In this work, the definition of 'chiefdom' will focus upon the work of the past twenty years; during this time the archaeological data and the scholars reached a level of discussion and agreement that resulted in many of the initial difficulties being overcome, particularly after the idea of unilineal evolution was fully abandoned and attention redirected to the study of the phenomenon in its broader sense, analysing it in terms of all facets and not only as a step between tribes and states.

What is a chiefdom?

Over the years, the definition of chiefdom has been refined, so that today most academics agree on a specific definition. In a 2012 article, Redmond and Spencer[230] attempted to define the features of a chiefdom, which were concluded to be a centralised but not internally specialised administration and an institutionalised social inequality dominated by the hereditary chief elite. This creates competition among members for access to some administrative positions, causing the chiefdoms to become unstable and a cyclical process of growth and dissolution to occur. The authors further identify the optimal strategy for a paramount chief as being the minimisation of authoritative delegation and the control of the regional administrative hierarchy from a first-order centre, with no more than two levels of controlled hierarchy. If no centralised (but not internally specialised) administration exists, this makes the delegation of partial authority to subordinates who are sent to distant localities impossible. As a paramount chief must rule from the centre, the size of the chiefdom is therefore limited by the distance that the chief, or a subordinate, can travel in one day (usually identified as 28 km by foot). Furthermore, the archaeological evidence to support the presence of a complex chiefdom is as follows:

- regional settlements, with two or three levels of site sizes;

229 Feinman and Marcus 1998, 5–6.
230 Redmond and Spencer 2012.

- at the topmost level of this settlement hierarchy, public sectors, buildings and monuments commensurate with their position in the polity's administrative hierarchy;

- a paramount centre that is the largest of these, with impressive public sectors where the rulers lived and presided over large-scale rituals and feasts;

- a social hierarchy evident in the artefact assemblages and mortuary facilities.

The two authors analysed two case studies in order to exemplify the different developments of two similar chiefdoms; namely, the chiefdoms of Cahokia, in the Mississippian region, and those in the Monte Alban region. The authors identify some similarities and differences between them[231]. Indeed, both started their respective formative periods with an increment in monumental public buildings, but these cannot be assumed to represent an internally specialised state; their meaning is more likely linked to propaganda. Furthermore, they established outposts outside the usual limits of chiefdoms, at around 70–100 km from the centre[232]. The founding periods of the two cultures were characterised by two different situations. Cahokia arose in a region without rivals and with high resource availability. On the other hand, Monte Alban was a highly competitive area, with three competitors that fought for control over small valleys; to defeat the other chiefdoms, it was required to organise a large and hierarchical military force, conduct military campaigns, and establish forts, garrisons, and waystations. The Monte Alban chiefdom created a powerful military and internally specialised administration, which was sufficient to allow them to conquer the entire Monte Alban area, take administrative control of the region and assign new administrators. The control of new tributary regions and the hierarchical administration, which was created to organise military conquest, permitted the creation of the institution that formed the base for the Zapotec state. For its part, the leadership of Cahokia did not face the presence of competitors, and consequently had no need to organise a military apparatus. In this case, the existing administrative and military organisation were sufficient to control the area in which they were settled, so that there was no need for a different form of political organisation (such as a state).

Two other authors, Leonid Grinin and Andrey Korotayev, focused their work on the study of chiefdoms and states, and more specifically, on all the forms of political organisation that appear to be associated with these two categories. Grinin and Korotayev analysed the process by which a society could be brought to a level of social complexity that is the same as the chiefdoms, and in which they can be inserted. The authors affirm[233] that a universal (or, at least, close to universally accepted) feature of the social development at this level of complexity

231 Redmond and Spencer 2012, 33–4.
232 Redmond and Spencer 2012, 27, 31.
233 Grinin and Korotayev 2011.

is that it makes it possible to insert the chiefdoms, along with the formation and institutionalisation of new forms of social inequality. The two Russians identify this as the marker that begins to reveal the characteristics of this phenomenon. This is the first feature of a transition from a society that is egalitarian, or primitive non-egalitarian[234], to an unequal society formed on a new social basis. New types of social inequality appear at this stage: not only genealogical differences, but also new kinds of wealth inequality, military activities, and access to offices or public resources. It is possible to note the increase of surplus accumulation and redistribution, aimed at the organisation of public works and banquets, as well as the material support of rulers, priests, and wars. As a consequence, there is also the expansion of the social division of labour, expressed primarily by the emergence of semi-professional, or even professional, administrators, warriors, priests, craftsmen, merchants, and others. Finally, it is usually possible to see that the growth of socio-cultural complexity stimulates the development of a political subsystem, along with the elaboration of decision-making mechanisms; furthermore, it has been observed that there is often a more important role played by trade.

In the article, the authors stress the point that decentralisation should not be identified as a 'regression', 'decline' or 'degeneration'. In addition, it can been observed that in many of these cases, political decentralisation is accompanied by an increase, rather than decrease, in overall social-cultural complexity.

1.3.2 The definition of a 'state'

Introduction

The concept of the 'state' is not at all new. Up until the last 30 years of the 20th century, it was considered the apex of societal evolution; the aim of every civilisation was statehood, which completed the linear evolution of society. Fortunately, this idea is no longer valid, as almost all scholars have since recognised that all societies have their own specific path of development, and that the state is not the last nor the highest step. In fact, it is not even a step, but is rather a phase in a long process of societal development that can reach more or less complex stages (although, of course, the state is the most complex of these phases). While the concept of the state is quite broad, this work is primarily focused on the features of the archaic state or early state, which are the first forms of the state to appear in a given area. 'Archaic states' or 'Primary states' can be defined as 'a political formation that developed through endogenous processes, and not in response to interaction with an external state or states; these latter are referred to as secondary states'[235].

234 Grinin 2011, 283
235 Kirch 2010, 4.

The characteristics of a state

In 1992, the most important scholars working on the concept of state formation were invited to a meeting at the School of American Research. The aim was to produce a volume (later published in 1998[236]) containing specific guidelines, particularly terminology and definitions, pertaining to the archaic state. The authors invited attempted to reach agreement on what an 'archaic state' was and define the minimum terms for it. The result was that a state was defined as having two class-endogamous strata, a professional ruling class and a commoner class, a government that is both highly centralised and internally specialised, and more power than the rank societies that preceded it, specifically in the following areas: waging war, exacting tribute, controlling information, drafting soldiers, and regulating manpower and labour.

Moreover, regarding societies where the texts are available, further features were identified: the archaic states were ruled by kings instead of chiefs; they had standardised temples, implying a state religion and full-time priests rather than shamans or part-time priests; furthermore, they could hold on to conquered territory in ways no rank society could.

The conclusions of the discussion held at the meeting added some features that can be used to distinguish ranked societies, including chiefdoms, from states. While not all participants agreed with each criterion, a degree of support was generally found for each of them. These characteristics are as follows: there is a change in the settlement hierarchy from three to four levels (cities, towns, large villages, and small villages), and consequently a change in the decision-making hierarchy from two to three (or more) levels. Moreover, administrative hierarchy and settlement hierarchy are not synonymous; the former refers to the number of tiers of administrators in the system, and can be detected only through written sources, while the latter refers to the number of tiers of community size (see above) and the administrative institutions present in each tier[237]. Flannery highlighted that, as in the case of Zapotec, the administrators may be present only in the upper three tiers. This does not mean that there are only three levels of administrators in the society, but rather that they are not usually present in small villages. While the presence of a four-tiered settlement hierarchy can be a definitive feature of a state, it cannot always be assumed that the city at the head of that hierarchy is wholly autonomous[238].

236 Marcus and Feinman 1998.
237 Flannery 1998, 17–8.
238 Flannery 1998, 21.

As an additional conclusion, the scholars agreed that a fundamental change in the ideology of stratification and descent was required, such that rulers were conceded a sacred supernatural origin that established their divine right to rule. The emergence of two endogamous strata results in the severing of the bonds of kinship that had once linked leaders to followers in a branching continuum of relationships. On this subject, Patrick Vinton Kirch wrote an interesting book in 2010 stating that the key differences between a chiefdom and a state lay not only in the quantitative variations (such as a larger amount of territory controlled, more hierarchies of settlements and more levels of administration) but also in qualitative variations. Indeed, the system of categorisation of the society's members is very important, while the ideological definition and legitimisation of these categories is even more important. Chiefdoms have an ideology based on kinship, where the connections to the ruling family tie together the whole of society; even more important is the fact that, in theory, each member of society is a descendant of a common ancestor[239]. This means that all the ranks of society, which are clearly ordered in the social hierarchy, comprise members of the same kin group, with the main difference that the closer a family is close to the ruling kin, the more this family can count on better relations and opportunities. On the other hand, a state society, which is made up of a larger number of people and different regions with different traditions and kinship relations, is composed of persons with distinct families and ancestors, who are not connected by bonds of kinship in different grades as they are in the chiefdom. Of course, within a state, the power of the elite families comes from the ruler, although a family not linked to his kin can also acquire such power. An elite group can ascend the social ladder thanks to their wealth, loyalty, or any other factor that gives them the favour of the king.

Another conclusion drafted during the meeting concerned the role of the leader's house and the centres of power. It is possible to see the evolution of the palace as the ruler's official residence, the change from a single centralised leader (e.g. a chief) to a government that employed legal force while denying its citizens the use of personal and individual force, and finally the establishment of governmental laws and the ability to enforce them. In 1974, Sanders[240] identified an interesting difference between chiefdoms and states: namely, while the chiefs could organise corvée labour to build a temple or other public buildings, they could not have their residence built for them in this way. Kings, on the other hand, could use corvée labour to build their palaces. Flannery begins here to clarify the difference between the two typologies of societies. For their part, chief-

239 Kirch 2010, 33.
240 Sanders 1974.

doms are ranked societies, with no social classes and a continuum of statuses without divisions. This means that every village or 'town' has several chiefly families, all of them with their own residences. It is rare for archaeological evidence to identify the chief's house, although it frequently reveals the public palace, common house, longhouse or place where the chief exerted his authority. Many archaic states, on the other hand, were stratified societies that built monumental palace for their royal families. Of course, this is not a strict rule; while there are unquestionable examples of archaic states with palaces, there are others where a palace was built only in second-generation states, as well as additional examples (e.g. Mesopotamia) where the temple was standardised before the appearance of palaces[241]. In short, there are cases in which there was a time lag between the first evidence of statehood and the first unmistakable palace.

Regarding the temple, only the most complex chiefdoms had full-time priests supported by tithes or tribute. Archaic state temples not only had full-time priests, but also special residences for them; the existence of such priestly residential quarters may signal the presence of a state[242]. Usually, in the state context, the gap between high rank and common rank tombs is larger than in the chiefdoms, although the existence of a spectacular tomb alone may not be evidence of a state[243].

During the same meeting, another important clarification was made by Joyce Marcus, who, in presenting the Mayan case, exemplifies what he calls the 'Dynamic Model'. He demonstrates that Mayan states were not static entities, but rather underwent cycles. At the peak of each cycle, the Mayan states were territorially extensive, with a four-tiered settlement hierarchy. At the low point of each cycle, the previously extensive states had broken down into loosely allied or semiautonomous provinces, often with settlements organised in hierarchies of no more than three tiers. The provinces were run by hereditary lords, who continued to call themselves by the title of the previous ruler even though the territories they controlled were now much smaller. Further examples of this cycle include the Zapotec, Central Mexican, Andean, Mesopotamian, Aegean and Egyptian cases[244]. In his conclusions, the author explains that this model is not universal, but does work for case studies of the archaic states for which archaeological evidence is available; moreover, he does not distinguish between states with only one ethnic group and those created by the conquest of foreign peoples (such as the Aztec or Inka). This is a general model, with observable differences in the lengths of the process as a whole, as well as in the dynamic cycles[245]. It is nevertheless fundamental to

241 Flannery 1998, 21–2.
242 Flannery 1998, 36.
243 Flannery 1998, 46.
244 Feinman and Marcus 1998, 61–91.
245 Feinman and Marcus 1998, 91–93.

understand that the state is not the end of a path, but is instead part of a cycle, specifically a phase in a larger cyclical process in which complexity increases and other societies devolve. It is important to not mistake such politically negative development for a period of decline or decay, often referred to as a 'dark age'; during these periods of low complexity, culture and art continues to flourish under the incentive of local chiefs, instead that being promoted by the state[246].

Leonid Grinin and early state analogues

Today, we no longer consider the pre-state societies as primitive and the state as the apex of social evolution; instead, the state can be considered one of many possible results of social organisational development: 'nothing more than one of many forms of the primitive socio-political organisation; these forms are alternative to each other and are able to transform to one another without any loss in the general level of complexity'. Non-state societies can have the same complexity or efficiency as state societies. The scholars draw attention to the problem of the existence of non-state, but not primitive (*i.e.* principally *non-* and not *pre*-state), societies[247].

There are two other key points that are important to keep in mind. The first concerns the existence of types of polity, such as tribal organisations, that do not fit the 'classical' definitions of either bands, village communities, chiefdoms, states, or any stage in between. Secondly, it is well known that the existence of many tribes can result in the decentralisation of chiefdoms, and that this cannot be seen entirely as a regression, decline or degeneration. Indeed, the polities generated by this decentralisation exhibit an overall increase in socio-cultural complexity.

It is thus imperative to identify an alternative development trajectory to 'the rigid supra-communal political structure (chiefdom – complex chiefdom – state) constituted by the development of internal communal structures together with soft supra-communal system not alienating communal sovereignty (various federation, amphictyones etc.)'[248].

Over the last fifteen years, Leonid Grinin, together with Andrey Korotayev, expended significant effort on revitalising the discussion on state formation and penned many articles and books, as well as organising debates on the topic. Grinin focuses on identifying polities with a degree of development equal to the that of early state societies, but that are at the same time lacking some of the fundamental features of states. These societies are not inferior to the states, but simply have a different political structure; Grinin refers to these as 'early state

246 In the meaning of the leader of a smaller community, such as local governors, princes, dukes, majors and many other titles.
247 Bondarenko, Grinin and Korotayev 2004, 5.
248 Korotayev et all 2004, 37.

analogues'. In particular, he concentrates on those societies that reached a certain size and level of socio-cultural complexity, and subsequently continued to develop, but were unable to build a state system for several reasons. The Russian scholar further emphasises the existence of societies that, when compared with those that are unquestionably pre-state societies, are bigger, more complex and have features comparable to those of early states, but differ from the latter in some peculiarities of their political organisation and administration.

Grinin emphasises the issue of the dimension of the societies. He rejects the theories of Feinman, Earle and others, who divide the different political forms on the basis of population (a polity is only considered a state if it has a population of hundreds of thousands, or more). Instead, Grinin and his colleague agree with Claessen, who defines statehood with reference to characteristics other than population (although he still affirms that a state cannot have any less than a few thousand people). He highlights Tahiti, which had only 5000 inhabitants but should still be considered a smaller state. Grinin creates a classification of the states based on their population, progressing from the small early state (with several thousand to several tens of thousands of people) to the huge early state (with more than three million people). Between these two points, there are medium early states (with a population from tens of thousands to hundreds of thousands) and large early states (with populations of several hundred thousand to between two and three million[249]). Early state analogues are also subject to the same classification, although he clarifies that it is rare for an early state analogue to reach a population of more than several hundred thousand without transforming into a state. He continues on to divide all pre-state societies into two large groups: the first category includes all societies that, despite their dimensions and grade of complexity, cannot transform into a state, but are also not small, and calls them 'inherently pre-state'. The second typology contains all polities that, given their features, could become either a small or a large state, which are the 'early state analogues'; of course, a state can develop directly from the pre-state level without becoming an early state analogue[250].

In attempting to distinguish the early state from its analogues, Grinin identifies four criteria that are indicators of the early state. These features are quite abstract, and of course cannot be rigidly applied, as every historical case is different from every other.

The first is the supreme power, which has two subcategories. A) Sufficient potential of the supreme power: an early state must have the ability to introduce essential changes into the socio-political organisation of a society, as well as to expand

249 Grinin 2003, 135–6.
250 Grinin 2003, 163–7.

the domain of authoritative control. B) Completeness of the function of supreme power: an early state must perform both functions of interior and exterior control[251].

The second criterion is that the early state needs new principles of government, which can be divided into three categories. A) Delegation of power and power divisibility: pre–state and stateless societies are characterised by their weak capacity to delegate power, which also affects their dimensions. In stateless societies, the amount of power follows the 'rule of zero': in short, if the amount of power is increasing for somebody, it is decreasing for somebody else. In the state, each functionary also has power, but this does not decrease the power of the king. B) Separation of function performance from the bearer of functions: the supreme power becomes the organiser of managers, messengers, representatives, governors, generals and functionaries, all of which carry out their local duties. The administrative apparatus assumes the role of transmitter between the authority and society. C) New traits in the system of administration and the change in the body of administrators with professionals and functionaries. Thus, if the presence of 'hereditary professionals' continues within the state administration, it offers more opportunities for commoners to become administrators[252].

The third feature of a state is that it must introduce non-traditional, novel forms of regulating social life, such as: A) Reforms and/or gradual modification of administration and various aspects of the mode of social life, including the control and regulation of some areas of social activity, which in stateless societies are the exclusive prerogatives of kin groups. One of the traits of the early states is the power to enact reforms. B) Breaking away from certain traditions: some traditions are the regulators of the pre-state organisation, meaning that the state must overcome and break with these traditions in order to become stronger and necessary. C) The growing importance of coercion: the presence of a coercive system is not necessary to characterise a state, but, if it is present, this constitutes irrefutable evidence that it exists as a state[253].

The fourth and last criterion is the redistribution of power. It may be described as a process of redistribution of power between the centre and the periphery, which makes it possible for the supreme power not only to control the periphery, but also to redirect the streams of power's functions and actions towards the centre, where a considerable proportion of the power (as well as of material resources) is concentrated. In many societies, there are fluctuations and shifts in power between the different strata of the society and among the groups within it, especially in early state analogues. When there is a major concentration of

251 Grinin 2003, 146–8.
252 Grinin 2003, 148–52.
253 Grinin 2003, 152–6.

control in the centre, large polities can emerge; however, if this centripetal movement is not stable and steady, the polity is doomed to cyclically collapse. By contrast, an early state shows a tendency to strengthen the importance of authority and the centre of power distribution, thereby creating coercive instruments that increase its influence over society. Grinin calls this centripetal movement the 'redistribution of power'. This power should be considered a set of authority functions, rights, responsibilities, instructions, and actions, as well as the human and material resources and information associated with it. The redistribution of power does not indicate the mere centralisation of all of these, but rather a complex process of organisation among all levels, ranks and lines of the population and the government. Military force is one of the instruments used to redistribute power, while the redistribution of wealth is of course also closely connected with the redistribution of power. When discussing some examples of power redistribution, the author mentions the introduction of estate systems scattered throughout the country, the neutralisation of any local organisations that provide alternative avenues for the citizen's allegiance and loyalty, the monopolisation of specific functions (mostly judicial), and the glorification of the royal court[254].

Grinin affirms that if one or more of these features are missing, the 'state' definition cannot be applied; however, the polity can instead be identified as an early state analogue, which is a political form that is similar to, but not fully, a state[255]. The author goes on to highlight another question, that of state collapse. It is generally considered that the rulers of early states found a solution to the common tendency towards cyclical collapse associated with chiefdoms. The redistribution of power theory explains this, as the fluctuation of power in and out of central control must have been seen as a normal process. It is almost a utopian situation in which the states are not affected by the temporary weakening of the central power, but the difference between early state and pre/non-state societies is essentially located in the time they spend as a state entity. In essence, chiefdoms are usually in a non-state condition, undergoing some periods of stronger power, larger controlled territory and more centralised and organised administration; on the other hand, the early state societies are characterised by longer periods with the presence of the previous features, along with periods of 'disintegration' during which state structures develop at local levels.

Summarising these four criteria, with reference to the state characteristics identified by Marcus and Feinman in their meeting of 1992[256], it is possible to identify some characteristics of the state, as follows:

254 Grinin 2003, 156–61.
255 Grinin 2003, 138–44.
256 Marcus and Feinman 1998.

The state needs to have a settlement hierarchy of at least four levels: specifically, the main city of the region, medium-to-small-sized cities, medium-sized villages, and small villages. In comparison, chiefdoms can feature up to three levels: a main city with a chief in residence, medium-sized villages, and small villages scattered around the territory.

It is important for an internally specialised administration to be able to intervene directly in the affairs of the local communities, families, and individuals; this requires a decision-making hierarchy of three (or more) levels, compartmentalised into multiple specialised institutions. This hierarchy has a non-kinship basis (i.e. can also include commoners). Chiefdoms, instead, can have a complex system of administration, but not a complex hierarchy, with the titles being mostly assigned based on the kin distance from the chief.

The territorial dimension of the state does not have predetermined limits. This may be thanks to the ruler's ability to dispatch state officials to lower-order centres and strategic outposts without the risk of insurrections. The chiefdom is generally limited to a dimension equal to the distance that the chief can cover in a day; the absence of the chief for more than one day could result in his loss of power and chieftainship.

A state entity needs to be able to establish a government and governmental laws, and must also be able to enforce them through the use or threat of a stable military force, while denying its citizens the use of personal force. By contrast, the chiefdom cannot count on a stable military force; the chief can only prevent the citizens from accessing military technology (i.e., the access to the metal required for the production of weapons, or the knowledge to manufacture weapons, boats and the like), while the coercive use of force cannot be delegated.

A state is characterised by a diversity of public buildings associated with the institutions, such as temples (standardised in their form) and the associated quarters of temple priests, facilities for state production, and military barracks, along with a royal palace identified as the ruler's official residence. In a chiefdom society, the palace (or main hall) is a public building and the chief has his own residence.

A fundamental change in the ideology of stratification and descent is also required, such that rulers are believed to have a sacred supernatural origin (establishing their divine right to rule). By contrast, chiefs must continuously demonstrate their ability to rule, otherwise they risk being overthrown; for example, if their power is based on their warrior might, they must make regular shows of their strength, and anyone could challenge their right to rule by confronting the chief in a duel.

1.4 Applied studies on state formation and social complexity: Examples of uses of theoretical frameworks and archaeological evidence

Europe

In Europe, many scholars have approached and analysed the political processes and development of social complexity. In particular, one of the areas studied more comprehensively in regards to this topic is Northern Europe. Many researchers have worked on these arguments; in particular, here, the works of Kristiansen and Earle will be taken into account, and other authors, using political and economic theories applied to the archaeological record[257]. The chronological framework of their analysis begins from the Neolithic period and extends to the Bronze Age. It is possible to identify the presence of chiefdoms from as early as the transition from the Early to the Middle Neolithic[258]. The construction of megaliths, along with an economy widely based on agriculture, indicate a society organised in the form of a chiefdom with a regional characterisation; the construction of such monumental buildings is the indicative feature of the humans' domination over the land. Amber, copper and battle axes, specifically polished flint axes, were the goods of exchange, and were used mostly to cement inter-tribal alliances and to forge new ones.

The Middle Neolithic was marked by a crisis among the chiefdoms, which collapsed during the process of abandoning agriculture in favour of meat production. In addition, the settlements became more clustered and the tier system of villages disappeared. Warfare became widespread in the lands, the exchange of prestige goods and networks of alliances diminished, and the use of battle axes as votive offering changed in favour of small domestic pottery. By this time, the production of these axes was no longer restricted to the elites; instead, any family could produce them, such that they lost their value as luxury goods.

The Late Neolithic expansion of pasture allowed for the recreation of the surplus necessary to recreate the chiefdoms and the associated interregional exchange systems. Chiefdoms in this period were rooted in the possession of lands for pastoralism, but the importance of prestige goods production also increased in this period. Indeed, it is possible to identify an emerging societal structure at this time, characterised by the production of flint daggers as prestige objects (usually imitations of copper daggers), along with the development of a new elaborated flint technology. Trade in bronze goods, especially axes, increased only at the end of the Late Neolithic period and marked the beginning of the Bronze Age. Dur-

257 Kristiansen 1987; Earle and Kristiansen 2010; Kristiansen and Earle 2015; Earle et al. 2015.
258 Kristiansen 1982, 258–60.

ing this time, imports increased and the local production of metal objects was confined to a small group of objects, mainly daggers and axes, although new centres of metal production developed in this time[259]. The chiefdom societies of the Bronze Age were based largely on the exchange of prestige goods with other external cultures[260].

The spread of bronze technology relied on the construction of new societal features; the production of goods became much more specialised and adopted a wide range of typological production, eventually linked to new status positions; in addition, the exchange system became more differentiated and far-reaching. Warfare also became more efficient and organised, with the new social positions acquired during war being reflected in the burial practices. In addition, ritual and religious organisation become more complex, and settlement structure became differentiated[261].

The production of specialised goods (specialisation) refers to the set of activities in which a part of the society is dedicated for long periods solely to the production of a specific set of goods, usually with specific technologies to produce them, and demands economic support from one or several settlements. In Northern Europe, flint production was not specialised; flint quarries were common, and the technology was quite simple. Although there were of course areas of major flint production, it seems that no monopoly of skills was demanded. Bronze technology is very different: the access to the raw materials was more exclusive, requiring more organisation for both the mining of the materials and their transport to the transformation centre. The production of bronze tools, or weapons, requires specific technologies, skills and equipment; moreover, the creation of centres for the transformation of raw materials into objects demands a society that is well-organised and features a surplus redistribution system. The rapid development and high-skilled crafts of metallurgy in Scandinavia can be explained with reference to the creation and maintenance of well-skilled artisans and access to increased supplies. Evidence for this comes in the form of bronze casting at a few settlement sites and the recognisability of less specialised centres of production. In the same framework, other areas of specialised skills included woodworking; for its part, pottery lost its former ritual and social functions, and its production become widespread and common[262].

This specialisation in the production of prestige goods is also reflected in the exchange system. From the Neolithic to the Bronze Age, a clear shift could be

259 Kristiansen 1982, 260–1.
260 Kristiansen and Earle 2015, 236.
261 Kristiansen 1987, p. 33
262 Kristiansen 1982, 262.

observed in the scale of the exchanges, which transitioned from a closed regional system to an interregional network. The materials being bartered also changed: at the beginning of the period, they were mostly daggers and other flint tools, while during the Bronze Age, prestige goods and technology began to circulate, along with raw materials of high value and people (such as mercenaries and traders).

The advent of the Bronze Age changed the political and economic structure of society, which shifted from a largely finance-based staple economy to a more balanced integration with wealth finance. The societies were no longer based upon the possession of land and production of a surplus to be exchanged for luxury goods; instead, these goods were largely used to demonstrate the status of a class or to create alliances, or invested in the training of specialised craftsmen and traded in a local network. In the Bronze Age, the wealth also came from the creation of long trading routes[263], as well as securing these exchange networks; it was necessary not only to control the copper, tin and salt mines and the other materials, but also to control the trading routes and manage the expeditions in order to ensure that the supply lines developed uninterrupted. This economic and societal shift become possible following the development of new maritime technologies, boats and equipment that facilitated long sea voyages[264]. The introduction of this new way of creating wealth added another possibility for the elites to create a bottleneck in the economy[265]. It was now necessary to hold not only the lands, mines or other productive resources, but also the technology required for the production of weapons and the construction of boats; restricting access to these resources became a way of excluding part of the society from economic power. Moreover, the creation of these new routes required a specialised workforce, not only to organise and carry out the exchanges, but also to make them safe, creating a new warring class[266].

The burial equipment traces the path of the social pattern, which extended from a rather standardised format (with a few exceptions in the Neolithic burial equipment) through a period of increased diversification during the Early Bronze Age, finally reaching high-status burial goods throughout the entire Bronze Age. The latter era exhibits a well-established pattern of social hierarchy, with an established warrior aristocracy that confirms the importance of warfare in the determining of new social hierarchies. Archaeological evidence further suggests that the settlements were not enclosed by walls or other defence systems; this in turn suggests that the warfare was based on a small trading expedition or

263 Earle et al. 2015, 3–5.
264 Kristiansen and Earle 2015, 241.
265 Earle et al. 2015, 8.
266 Earle et al. 2015, 17–18.

settlement beyond their own alliance network, capturing slaves, cattle, and the like with the aim of increasing wealth on a productive basis (more cattle and manpower). Furthermore, it is also probable that the changes in burial traditions were a consequence of the introduction of a new religious mythology, a common mythology linked to the warrior aristocracy and that followed the spread of the bronze sword throughout Northern Europe during the Early Bronze Age[267].

During the period in question, a process of interaction between technological, social and ideological changes took place. The society underwent a development in its social complexity, acquiring clearer hierarchies and an elite class who managed to maintain control over the economic and ideological powers. The grip held by the upper class during the Bronze age was amplified by a new ideology of warrior aristocracies, sustained by more efficient military organisations necessary for the control of economic power, and their sphere of influence increased greatly. The bronze technology developed easily and swiftly where there were more stratified societies, due to their potential to monopolise wealth, prestige and power. The pre-existing social and economic order of the Late Neolithic, with its competitive individualising ideology of social inequality, presented the background required to implant this new technology. The introduction of prestige goods to exchange required skilled specialists, specific technologies and raw materials that were not easy to acquire, and consequently triggered the society's development towards a series of complex chiefdoms based on the control of the commercial routes and the economic power derived from them[268].

Near East

The Ancient Near East is often associated with Ancient Egypt when it comes to discussions of state formation, urbanisation and the development of social complexity. This is of course due to both their geographical proximity and similar origins (which are also a consequence of their closeness). The two regions share some similarities, first in terms of chronology: the formative period for both of them occurred between the fifth and the third millennium, with the more important phase during the Late Chalcolithic, corresponding to the last phase of the Ubaid and the whole Uruk period on the two rivers, and the Pre-Dynastic period for the Nile valley. The formative process ended for both with the Early Dynastic period, which was when the states made their appearance. Under this framework, they share a similar development of institutions, writing system appearance and social structures. Moreover, the development of the political institutions

267 Kristiansen 1987, 41–2.
268 Kristiansen 1987, 47.

in Mesopotamia is often associated with the phenomenon of urbanism, which was not present in Ancient Egypt.

There are several pieces of archaeological evidence that prove the presence of a complex society in the Ubaid period, particularly in south and central Mesopotamia during the Ubaid 2-3 Period. Firstly, the presence of a dual-level settlement pattern hierarchy: a few large sites of 10 hectares or more and numerous small settlements around one hectare. Another piece of evidence concerns the difference between wealthy and poor households in Tell Adaba in terms of their architecture and associated artefact distributions, as well as the emergence of specific individuals in what appeared to be positions of leadership. In the biggest house on the site, which was three times the size of the smallest house, unique burial practices were identified, including a high concentration of stone artefacts (such as mace-heads, carved gypsum vessels and stone palettes) along with administrative artefacts (such as tokens and clay 'proto-tablets'). However, the most convincing piece of evidence is not the discovery of these objects alone, but rather the persistence of this building pattern and artefactual differentiation across all three occupation phases at Tell Adaba. The appearance of specific public architecture, such as rectangular temples, from the first phase of the Ubaid period is likely to be the most important archaeological clue regarding the presence of a complex society, and possible of a chiefdom. Despite the existence of these features in the Ubaid period, however, there is a dearth of other pieces of evidence typical of chiefdoms for the 1500 years prior, such as conflicts, representations of weapons, war scenes or chief's iconography on the seals and other supports, mortuary evidence of chief burials, and the exchange of luxury goods. Only at the end of the Ubaid period (Ubaid 3-4 / Late Chalcolithic 1), just before the transition to the Late Chalcolithic 3 phase, is it possible to find the evidence required[269].

In Ubaid Mesopotamia, it is possible that the control of the irrigation system constituted the basis of chiefly power. In addition to the physical control over the water access, these elites needed access to the labour necessary for canal maintenance. A correlation has been demonstrated between household wealth and family size, such that the first labour pool is the kin of the chief. The immediate kin people are likely to be at the base of the initial power and wealth of a household; however, to go beyond the limits of their kin, the chiefs need to further extend their access to labour. Most likely, the chiefs took authority, manipulating the community organisation and taking control of the rituals or the role played by the temple in the agricultural cycle[270]. The chiefs of the several chiefdoms during the Ubaid period managed to exert economic control over local resources, which

269 Stein 1994, 38–40.
270 Stein 1994, 41–2.

was mobilised through the ritual sanctification of authority, in order to avoid the instability that could have originated in an economy dependent on the wealth distribution of exotic trade goods. What is archaeologically visible is a network of numerous small-scale chiefdoms, based on a staple economy and with a long-lasting life and stability. In the last phase of this period, the technology of sealing became common and diffused throughout the area, foreshadowing a new mode of social and work organisation that would develop further in the later phases.

The Late Chalcolithic 3 phase saw the emergence of a more complex political institution, with more centralised networks and a growing bureaucratic and administrative apparatus. These features can be recognised in the archaeological data through analysis of the settlement patterns (which were hierarchically organised into at least three tiers), the widespread presence of seals, new production and administrative techniques, the organisation of production areas and the different status of the burials. During this period, the sealing technology changed: stamp-seals were substituted for cylinder seals, and the use of hollow clay balls (also known as bullae) spread from the southern regions. Only in the Late Chalcolithic 4 period do we see the appearance of numerical tablets, which replaced the clay tokens used for counting. In many sites, the archaeological evidence for these economic and administrative activities could be found in close connection with the famous tripartite buildings, which were monumental structures with ceremonial and administrative functions. In many of these buildings, there are indications of crops storage, the production of vessels, bowls, or other containers, as well as of cooking activities (which usually took place in the courtyard) and of stamp seals. This suggests that the tripartite buildings were part of a complex system of storage, production and redistribution[271].

In the Late Chalcolithic 5 period, administrative systems were developed, the structures of which are observable in the archaeological context: thousands of clay seals, ceremonial buildings, storage and distribution facilities, mass-produced pottery and food remains. All of this archaeological evidence reveals the presence of a large-scale system of food and artefact gathering, production and distribution, as well as the proof of ceremonial events during which some of this food was consumed ritually. From the study of the archaeological remains, it is possible to reconstruct the control structure of the entire production system, with the elite remaining in control through the investiture of officials and the creation of non-residential specialised compounds[272]. In this period, the writing system developed parallel to the administrative structure, while between the end of the Late Chalcolithic 4 and the beginning of the Late Chalcolithic 5 period in the Uruk

271 Benati 2018, 104–8.
272 Benati 2018, 112–4.

and Susa sites, the first tablets with numerical ideograms appear, marked with sequences of numbers and the seals of the officials. Only in Uruk were tablets found with a proto-cuneiform annotation, while only in the second phase of the Late Chalcolithic 5 do we see tablets with administrative-only annotations, making up 85% of the entire Uruk corpus. Most of these annotations refer to the movements of food, artefacts, production, personnel, livestock and cultivated lands. The vast majority of the tablets come from the excavation of the so-called Eanna precinct, which seem to present evidence of the host's productive activities, administrative spaces and ceremonial areas[273]. In the same areas, there are indications of the use of luxury goods not available from the region, such as timber, precious stones, metals, food, and wine, which testifies to the existence of a network used both for long-distance exchanges and for securing areas from which raw materials could be obtained.

The analysis of all of this archaeological evidence, along with the study of the settlement pattern, return a relatively clear picture of the society during the Late Chalcolithic 5 period. The majority of the population were concentrated in some settlements similar to Uruk, where the elite resided and were invested in bureaucratic and sacral powers utilised to control the lower class constituted by the workforce, as well as the class constituted by the slaves and prisoners of war. The elite maintained these lower classes through a system of redistribution that enabled a constant and daily flow of food to be distributed among the labour force; in exchange, the specialised workers were able to produce both the materials for the redistribution and the luxury goods necessary for the elites. All of these production processes occurred not in the household context, but rather in designated production areas; this system was put in place in order to facilitate better control of the mass-production of goods and create a class consciousness imbued with belonging to the kin[274].

Mesoamerica

In the Americas, there is a long tradition of studies on chiefdoms and pristine states; in particular, the studies on several areas have developed a fundamental understanding of this phenomenon. The main studies focus on areas in North America, particularly the plains and the area along the Mississippi river, as well as in Mesoamerica and the Moche of coastal Peru before and after the Incas.

The Oaxaca Valley will be presented here as an example, with its three sub-valley system and Monte Albán located in the centre of this area, acting as a connection point of the three small valleys. In this framework, the first state that

273 Benati 2018, 114–6.
274 Benati 2018, 122–3.

arose in the area was the Zapotec state. The first period to feature complex political entities was the Rosario phase, 700-500 BC, while San José Mogote, with an extension of 60-65 ha and an estimated population of 1000, was the major settlement of Etla; the northern sub-valley, on the opposite side, was located at San Martín Tilcajete, with around 25 ha, the centre of the Ocotlán-Zimatlán sub-valley. Less known, due to lack of excavation data, is the eastern sub-valley, Tlacolula, and its centre Yegüih[275]; the central Monte Albán offered a relatively large buffer zone among the three entities[276]. There are several pieces of extant archaeological evidence, such as periods of burning on the surface of the Rosario phase, which suggest a period of violence and conflicts. This situation changed during the transition from the Rosario phase to the Early Monte Albán I (MA I 500 – 300 BC), when the San José Mogote site was abandoned and a new settlement arose in the previously empty zone of Monte Albán. The site has a central area of 69 ha, with a main plaza and several public buildings, that was possibly built by the same people as Etla; meanwhile, the other two sub-regions of Ocotlán-Zimatlán and Tlacolula continued to expand, with the two main settlements (San Martín Tilcajete and Yegüih) reaching significant dimensions. One possible explanation for the growth of these two sites is that they were independent and not subjected to the Monte Albán entity, with each of them being in control of three-tiered site-sized hierarchical chiefdoms[277]. Throughout the entire Early MA I phase, there is evidence of war between the three opponents, including defensive walls, raids, destruction phases and others. The Late Monte Albán I phase, from 300 to 200 BC, marked a substantial period of stasis in the geopolitical situation of the Oaxaca valley; while the Monte Albán did not control all of the areas, all three valleys developed into a four-tier site-size hierarchical chiefdom. Monte Albán expanded to the north with the creation of military outposts intended to control the north end of the Etla sub-valley; these events were recorded on Building L of the central plaza at Monte Albán, and with the discovery of a fortress and settlements with the same ceramic sets founded over 100 km from the centre. Meanwhile, in the Ocotlán-Zimatlán, the main settlement was moved into a more defensive position at the site of El Palenque, which had an extension of 71.5 ha; while minimal archaeological evidence comes from the Tlacolula sub-valley, archaeologists have confirmed the presence of a four-tier hierarchy of settlements[278].

It was not until the Monte Albán II (100 BC – AD 200) phase that the three sub-valleys were brought under the control of Monte Albán, with archaeologists

275 Redmond and Spencer 2012, 28.
276 Marcus and Flannery 1996, 123–6.
277 Redmond and Spencer 2012, 29–30.
278 Spencer and Redmond 2004, 184.

discovering a layer of destruction corresponding to 100 BC. The newly formed Zapotec state now reached an extension of 20,000 km^2, with a capital of 416 ha in size and a population of around 15,000 people. The state ruled over the second tier-size settlements, built in the three sub-valleys in order to keep them under control; under these, there were villages and the small villages. In this period, there is proof that a large number of specialised administrators were moved from the capital to the second-tier towns in order to bring the bureaucratic apparatus into the entire valley under a more capillary form of management. The conquest of the valley was violent, and the evidence is clear in many sites, particularly at El Palenque, which contains evidence of the destruction of the palaces and temples along with the contemporary construction of the second tier-size settlements at Cerro Tilcajete[279].

The military organisation of Monte Albán, as well as the displays of their victories on the walls of Building L in their capital, could be an indicator of an advantage derived by means of better organisation, not only of the armies but also of the entire society. The first development of a more organised bureaucratic apparatus seems to be the conquest at North of the Etla sub-valley in the region of Cañada de Cuicatlán. This area is far from the core of Monte Albán; thus, to organise military expeditions and exert control over the area for a long period, it was necessary to develop a full military apparatus with a hierarchy and an efficient organisation, which was the result of an internally specialised administration[280]. Once an area was conquered, a further development in power involving the creation of a power delegation was necessary, while it was further essential to give authority to military officials and administrators in order to maintain control over the outposts and fortress in a distance region. This event could have triggered the creation of an administration that was able to create a military advantage, including better defences, armaments, efficiency in both organisation and response time, supply, seizure and reuse of the resources and captives conquered by the opponents[281].

During the Late MA I phase, the features typical of a state appeared in the area of Monte Albán, although this was a long process. Only in the MA II phase, once the entire Oaxaca Valley had been conquered, was the Zapotec state fully developed and lasted 300 years.

279 Redmond and Spencer 2012, 33–4.
280 Spencer and Redmond 2003, 30–1.
281 Redmond and Spencer 2012, 34

China

Another interesting case study is in China. In the North Plains, along the Ying River and the middle and lower Yellow river, several Neolithic cultures formed the first state in the country. The chronological framework is the third millennium B.C., during the period referred to as Longshan, as well as the Erlitou culture period, which spanned from 2000 to the 1500 B.C.

The Longshan culture was central to the development of the first state in China. Indeed, during this period, the society transformed itself, as testified to by the archaeological remains. The archaeological evidence shows that many cultures developed new traits usually associated with social development during this period: these included the introduction of a writing system; the use of metal technology; the presence of defensive structures and archaeological layers of destruction or other indications of wars and raids; differences in the burials and in the grave goods that revealed a clear difference in the social classes; and the presence of ritual objects and luxury goods resulting in exchanges. All of these features can be read as the results of a rising complexity in the Neolithic societies[282].

Scholars studied the development of this area, taking into account the archaeological sites of this large area, which were divided into clusters of sites on the basis of their grouping and closeness, as well as climatic factors and the river movement. To facilitate better understanding, the Longshan cultures were compared those of the previous period, the Yanshao culture, during which time a warmer period was responsible for higher precipitation, and consequently the inundation of the lowlands with river water. The sites could be divided into the large settlements (very few in number, located in the highlands), the middle areas, and the smallest villages scattered around the lowlands. In the following period, due to the cooler and dryer climate, the Longshan cultures began to occupy all of the lowlands that had once been covered by waters, while the archaeological data reveals a significant population increase in the plains clusters. The areas close to the lowlands saw a decrease or a stabilising in the number of sites, as proof of migrations from the hills to the much richer plains; however, the sites in the highlands underwent the phenomenon of settlement nucleation as they greatly increased their size. The rivers of the areas altered their courses, in particular around 2600 B.C.: at this time, the Yellow river changed its lower course, freeing a vast part of the lowlands from its waters and creating a large free area to which many people migrated. This migration facilitated the interaction of cultures that had previously been cut off by the natural barrier constituted by the large river[283].

During the period of Longshan culture, the settlement pattern became clear: a

282 Liu 1996, 242–3.
283 Liu 1996, 267–70.

change occurred from a two to three tier site-size hierarchy, but with three different models of regional patterns. In the first system, it is possible to individuate the centripetal system, with the main settlement located on the highlands in a circumscribed territory, the second-tier site-size clustered around it, and the remainder of the small villages surrounding these. There were no defensive walls, while the remains suggest the existence of a highly integrated social system. The population increased rapidly due to the migration from the surrounding areas, as people were attracted by the circumscribed position. The large population and settlement pattern suggest that these were the most complex chiefdoms in the entire area.

In the second settlement pattern model, the sites are located in an area of semi-circumscription among the highlands and the plains. It is possible to identify a similar pattern to the previous, with a few large settlements and several smaller ones close to them; however, the degree of social integration is lower, likely due to the possibility of easy access to the more fertile lowlands. As before, the chiefdoms are complex, albeit to a lesser degree of social and political integration; Liu referred to this as a Centrifugal Regional System.

The last model, the Competing Regional System, exhibits the opposite characteristics to the Centripetal Regional System: there are only medium and small-sized centres, but defensive main towns with walls were evident. The archaeological data shows a low degree of integration with the lowest chiefdom complexity of the three areas analysed, together with a high level of competition among the different centres. Of interest here is the fact that there is an almost regular spacing between the sub-regional centres, the same phenomena as can be observed in Iron Age Europe, indicating strong competition and independence among them. The average distance between them is 40 km, which respects the 20km radius of the one-day trip on foot that is common in almost every chiefdom in the world[284].

When summarising the development of chiefdoms during the Longshan period in northern China, it is possible to identify three main patterns. The most complex chiefdoms are in the Western part (clusters 1 and 2), on the highlands and within a circumscribed area, with no sign of competition among the main centres. The chiefdoms of medium complexity (clusters 3 and 4) are in the central part of the area, between the highlands and lowlands, with a lower degree of social integration and a semi-circumscribed environment. The less complex chiefdoms (clusters 5, 6 and 7), are in the lowlands in the East, with high competition among centres and very low social integration. In the following period, the Erlitou culture made its appearance in this area, particularly in the central area, taking part of the lands occupied by the chiefdoms of clusters 3, 4, and 5 and

284 Liu 1996, 272–3.

dominating the period from 1900 to 1500 B.C. This period can be divided into Erlitou phases I, II and III. Contemporary to phase II, the Proto-Shang culture emerged in the western part, where the chiefdoms of clusters 6 and 7 were located. The earlier phase of Erlitou did not yet exhibit signs of a state society, but phase II showed evidence of palatial and temple foundations, bronze workshops, jade ritual objects, and written inscriptions. From the archaeological evidence, it seems quite clear that the Proto-Shang culture exhibited signs of state features after Erlitou, most likely as both consequence of and response to the expansion of the Erlitou cultures in those regions[285].

The most important data point to highlight is that the first state emerged in a situation of possible semi-circumscription, with a low level of social integration but in a context of high competition. Warfare, along with the necessity of organising rides, conquest, and management of the annexed territories, stimulated the development of the society into a state. In this case, there was no direct development from the most complex chiefdom; on the contrary, moreover, this development occurred from the medium-complexity or least complex chiefdoms, with only two (or in a few cases, three) levels of settlements, through either peer polity interaction or a factional interaction process[286].

Hawaii

Hawaiian chiefdoms are often taken into consideration when it comes to debates about this topic. This, of course, is also the consequence of the fact that the region's transition from chiefdoms to statehood occurred in the 18th century following contact with the British. Thus, the relevant information could be gathered both from the people who directly witnessed the events and from the oral history collected directly from Hawai'ians. In this way, it is possible to arrive at an accurate reconstruction of the 15th century onwards, with history confirmed from the archaeological data. Many scholars have studied Hawai'ian history, particularly Timothy Earle and Patrick Kirch[287]. From their works, it is possible to develop a clear picture of Hawai'ian society, from the formation of the chiefdoms to the emergence of the state under King Kamehameha.

The first colonisation of the Hawaiian Islands occurred around the first half of the first millennium A.D., and was accomplished by a group of people, numbering no more than a few hundred[288], who probably came from the Marquesas Islands[289] and likely brought the traditions of a ranked society with them. The islands were

285 Liu 1996, 273–7.
286 Cfr. *supra* p. 79–83.
287 Kirch 2010; Earle 2011a.
288 Earle 1997, 41.
289 Kirch 2010, 16.

divided into triangular parts, each of which were assigned to a chief, the highest-ranking man of the kin, called *ali'i*, with a hereditary tradition. The smallest islands were the base of usually no more than one chief, but the largest five were inhabited by multiple ranked societies. These ranks were determined by the distance from the peak of the kin, with the ranks decided on the basis of marriages; the leader's first wife was part of the family, and usually a sibling, but at the same time he could take other women as his wife that were half-siblings or the offspring of relatives. Offspring that were the result of a union of parents more distant from the chief, were positioned lower in the ranks of the society. If someone were the offspring of commoners, or of a high chief and a commoner, they were part of the lowest strata of society[290].

The archipelagos saw their population increase until the 13th century A.D. due to the availability of lands and resources. It was also during this period that one of the main decisions was made that changed the societal structure of Hawaii: in short, the chiefs decided that all lands in their domains were their property and divided the society into two determined strata, namely the *ali'i* (which became the hereditary nobility with lands) and the commoners (the *maka'ainana*). Before this, there were intermediate positions among the elites and the commoners; these were the landed gentry, who were the people still part of the chief's kin but not close to it. This action created a reward for people who were faithful to the chief that did not depend only on kin distance[291]. From this period onwards, the chiefdoms began to increase their dimensions and to fight among themselves for the conquest of new lands or control over the entire island. The necessity of new lands to increase the production, as well as land with which to attract new subjects, drove the chiefs to embark on a period of continued warring[292]. The lower strata were used as a labour force on the land, in workshops and as anglers, while the higher classes were composed of warriors, priests, and the court. As in other areas of the world, the creation of a surplus was necessary to maintain this apparatus; thus, agricultural technology was developed, and in parallel, new ideologies were developed to legitimise their power and subjugate the lowest class.

This situation continued until the 18th century. While there were chiefdoms able to conquer vast parts of the major islands, or even more islands together, maintaining this control was difficult, especially at the moment of the chief's death, when the domains were split among the kin members (not without bloodshed). It was only with the arrival of the British ships that one chief, Kamehameha, came to understand the importance of their military superiority. Thus,

290 Kirch 2010, 36–7.
291 Flannery and Marcus 2012, 333–4.
292 Earle 1997, 43–5.

he concluded an agreement with them, made two of them his counsellors, and acquired their superior firepower and strategy; now, nothing could prevent him from conquering all the islands, and above all, from maintaining control with this new coercive force.

In this case, human agency acquired an extreme importance. Indeed, Kamehameha understood not only the necessity of military advantage, but also the need to reform society to maintain the power and pass it on to his son. Firstly, he added a new administrative level: he maintained the office of paramount leader, but between him and the subchiefs (who supervised the minor nobles and the last level of the administration), he introduced the role of governors of the occupied islands. Of course, these governors were necessarily men faithful to him, typically the father of his favourite wife for the second biggest island, and other relatives for the other islands. Further reforms were introduced; he broke several taboos in doing so, notably in breaking the traditions of the conquered islands, where he installed an ideology supporting loyalty to the paramount leader of the Hawaiian archipelago[293].

1.5 Where to find the archaeological evidence for social evolution

Introduction

The bulk of the theoretical discussion presented so far is fundamental to the next step of this work. However, before the Egyptian case is analysed, a further stage in this research requires discussion.

On the basis of the studies, criteria, and features, it is possible to extrapolate what kinds of archaeological evidence need to be searched for in order to understand the process of societal development, both to ascertain the presence of a state, chiefdom or other form of political system and to study the related social changes. It is important to highlight which forms of archaeological evidence should be present in the different case studies, as well as, where this is unclear, what data should be sought after clarification. This is particularly important if one considers a society in which the state phase is well documented and investigated, but in which evidence for its earlier history is rather unclear.

Archaeological evidence for the societal structure

The previous chapter has outlined the defining criteria and features of different types of societies, particularly chiefdoms, states and their analogues. There are three main areas of research: the economy, the administration and delegation

293 Flannery and Marcus 2012, 346-–8.

of power, and the religion and ideology. Of course, these major areas also interact with one another; for example, ideology has a strong influence on religion, which is in turn used to justify taxation and the role of the ruler. Research into one area will thus also involve the study of the other areas, where data is available, in order to develop a more comprehensive understanding.

The economy of a chiefdom is classified into two categories, namely staple finance and wealth distribution. The first of these refers to the mobilisation of surplus staples, such as cereals, to support the elite, while the second refers to the manufacture or procurement of special products (such as craft goods or exotic material) that are exchanged for staples and redistributed among the elites as badges, rank, or rewards for service. The staple economy is of course more stable than the wealth distribution, but makes the expansion of the chiefdom more difficult, even when coercion is used. By contrast, elites that use wealth distribution can rapidly expand their sphere of influence. The two systems can exist either independently or in combination[294].

Wealth distribution can be recognised archaeologically with the presence of the following characteristics: exotic goods as markers of status in the prestige economy[295]; centrally located specialists focusing on the production of prestige goods; a pronounced differentiation of elites, especially through emphasis on foreign connections as means of access to exotic knowledge and goods; and higher levels of inter-regional competition and warfare.

It is important to point out that these aspects are evidence of the presence of a wealth distribution system, and do not preclude the existence of chiefdoms. By contrast, a staple economy might yield the following archaeological evidence: economic differentiation; centralised storage facilities for staples; evidence for rural production of surpluses; either village-based craft production, or high proportions of local (as opposed to long-distance) exchange; and evidence for either ritual, kinship-based, or coercive modes of surplus mobilisation.

Regarding a state economy, the important details to investigate are the presence, or the origins, of a taxation system with (and here it is linked with the administration) an administrative apparatus dedicated to collecting taxes. This includes not only officers, but also the buildings in which taxes are stored (such as granaries), as well as the presence of 'public' estates or domains focused on the production of specific goods. A larger degree of production of specialised materials and prestige goods is needed to sustain the needs of a larger upper class or classes. Often, the luxury goods exchanged in a previous period become common objects or objects with a wider distribution, meaning that new and different

294 Earle 1997, 70-4.
295 Earle 2011a, 35.

luxury goods are acquired, usually from more distant areas that require organised expeditions with military forces and a more complex administrative apparatus. For example, in the early Pre-Dynastic era, some types of pottery were prestige goods; later, however, it became too simple to produce them, so the goods accorded prestige changed to other products such as ivory, metal, and luxury goods from foreign countries, among others. The discovery of serial production areas of the same variety of objects is usually a marker of specialisation and a growing economy. Moreover, tombs could offer a gauge of the wealth of the ruling class and how the exchange network of luxury goods expanded.

The administration and delegation of power is a pivotal aspect of the definition of the state, as it exemplifies the shift from kinship to non-kinship relations. For this, it is important to understand when the first institutions appear, when the administration becomes so hierarchical that it makes the presence of commoners clear, and when offices begin to be held by people who are not tied to the ruler through kinship[296]. On the same level, it is important to understand when the ruler begins to delegate power, in terms of the management of the state, as well as taxation, justice and religion; e.g., it is fundamental to understand when the first professional priests appear and when the ruler delegates to them the power to celebrate rituals on his behalf. The archaeological evidence in this area comprises texts or titles on documents, labels, seals, found in tombs or other contexts. Unfortunately, it is not always possible to use written sources, both due to the absence of a writing system or the use of perishable materials. It is also possible to search for evidence of the administration and delegation of power elsewhere in the archaeological context. Buildings used by the administrative staff are usually close to storage facilities or the chief's palace, while in the lower-level settlements, the evidence of interest would be edifices (both where the representatives of the ruler were located, or where the ruler could administer justice). While these are often associated with religious structures, they could also be independent and located in the centre of the village.

Regarding religion and ideology, as a general observation, a shift in ideology and religion can be the marker of a change in the societal structure; it is possible to find evidence of such a shift in the introduction of new rites and the favour of gods that are not linked to a specific area or region. It is usually possible to note an ideological transformation, or an evolution of the role of the ruler in the cosmology, in order to legitimise his power. More specifically, there are three main groups or analyses linked to this topic: ideology and legitimisation, religion, and the temples and priesthood.

296 Grinin 2003, 146–8.

In a chiefdom, the ideology is kin-based and needs only to justify social inequality. Moreover, religion and ideology can only legitimise the kin's right to rule, rather than the rule of an entire apparatus, as the latter takes legitimacy away from the lineages of the family's heroic past. By contrast, in a state, ideology and religion need to act together to establish and legitimate the divine right to rule, which inheres in the office of the ruler and not in kin relationships. It is within this framework that complex religions and cosmogonic myths arise. This process passes thorough the materialisation of the ideology, with ceremonies, buildings, and landscapes, or specific iconographical representation on different supports.

With regard to religion, one of the main differences between chiefdoms and states is that of scale. If, in the case of chiefdoms, there is a strong regionalism with a preponderant influence of local gods, there is an official (state) pantheon with its own temples in a particular state. The local gods survive, having their own shrines and temples, but are subordinated to or become regional expressions of a main god. Another distinction relates to standardisation: the religion of a chiefdom is not standardised, and the 'main' pantheon is based on the gods or spirits worshipped by the ruling kin or from this native area. By contrast, one of the main features of a state is the presence of sacred text or written sources, along with dogmas and religious instructions.

Regarding temples, in the chiefdoms, only the most complex temples had full–time priests supported by tithes or tribute, while the majority of them were local shrines. In the archaic state, temples had not only full–time priests, but also dedicated priestly residences[297]; the existence of these may signal the presence of a state apparatus. Together with the development of the temple structure, the priesthood also began to be organised in a hierarchical structure. It is indeed fundamental to understand when the first professional priests appeared, and when the ruler began to delegate to them the power to celebrate rituals on his behalf.

Archaeological evidence for social development

In addition to the political structure present in a society, another element that needs to be analysed is the social development of chiefdoms, states or other social forms. The presence of determined social structures is usually linked to specific kinds of societies. The different social institutions or organisations can be divided into classes or different groups: non-segmentary and segmentary societies, egalitarian village societies, societies with hereditary rank, and pristine states.

Non-segmentary and segmentary societies are those without a specific political organisation, such as most of the late Pleistocene groups. Previously, these were

297 Flannery 1998, 36.

referred to using the term 'band', a basic organisation of mobile hunter-gatherer groups; however, this expression did not properly explain the level of organisation involved, and was not sufficiently flexible or explainable. Raymond C. Kelly[298] preferred to use the distinction between unsegmented (or non-segmented) and segmented societies: the former represents the base organisational level, with no organisation beyond the local group, no stable extended families, and rare formation of segments such as a lineage; moreover, the clans are essentially warless. This situation changes when the societies are divided into equivalent segments, such as patrilineal, matrilineal, or ancestor-based cognate descent groups, which combine to form progressively inclusive units. Here, if a member of any segment is killed, they can be defended by any other member of the same segment.

Kelly outlines three features that must be researched to identify these segmented societies, namely social segments, intercommunity raiding, and bride wealth, which may join or replace the bride service when marriage partners are exchanged between social segments. The introduction of agriculture in a segmentary society is, usually, the cause of demographic growth, even if some segmentary societies remain only foragers and do not develop into a more complex society. There are three main archaeological clues indicating the presence of these societies: the creation of cemeteries for the corporate segment's dead, which usually are separated from the cemeteries of the other segments, reinforcing the impression of competition between segments or groups; the construction of defensive works in response to 'group-versus-group violence'; and finally, the circulation of goods as bridal wealth.

Egalitarian village societies are usually represented by Neolithic societies, even if these are characterised by a broad variety and it is difficult to place all Neolithic cultures in a category. The main feature of these societies is the lack of strong centralised authority and the leadership based on a blend (with different percentages from one society to another) of kinship and achieved status. These cultures were constituted by different, often opposed, segments, bonded together through a common ideology or religion. In archaeological analysis, these societies could be able to build nuclear family houses, such as in Mexico, or the European multifamily long houses or extended family houses typical of the Near East, but not palaces or central governing building in which the ruler and court could reside. Moreover, these village societies began to build ritual structures, or more generally, early public buildings, which usually evolved until the creation of the early temples.

The following typologies are the hereditary rank societies, in which the soci-

298 Kelly 2000.

ety is divided by ranks, either as a 'conical clan', ranked individuals or a caste-like hierarchy of chiefly and commoner clans. From the point of view of the archaeologist, these societies can be recognised by the presence of prestige goods. It is important to point out that, sometimes, these luxury objects are collected for bridal wealth for the purpose of attaining status in egalitarian cultures; thus, some archaeologists concentrate on the burials of children who could not have attained any higher status via marriage, as the wealth is buried only to indicate the rank of the child's family. Moreover, the presence of monumental buildings is not a specific marker of hereditary ranks; indeed, the egalitarian societies were able to organise enough labour to erect them, and it is rather the role of these buildings and their nature that can indicate whether or not ranks are present. The erection of large buildings to be used as common areas for all people is something also achievable by egalitarian cultures, but erecting these for the glory of the ruler is something possible only in rank societies. This class takes the place of the chiefdoms, where the main settlement is linked to and rules over the smaller villages of the region. The Valley of Oaxaca contains potential evidence of these chiefdoms, with the presence of construction stones coming from the nearby villages. A high number of shared ceramic design patterns have been found in these villages with a main settlement rather than two independent settlements linked solely by exchange relations.

The last form of typology is the pristine state, which are still ranked societies but with a system of organisation that is usually wider, deeper and more complex. The difference from the previous forms of societies is marked by a four-tiered site-size hierarchy, with the upper three tiers forming the administrative classes. It is possible to determine the existence of these four levels only after a complete survey of the settlements and their patterns, during which it becomes clear that what is present is one city, several towns, a greater number of large villages, and still greater numbers of small villages[299]. The archaeological evidence used to distinguish between one ranked society and another more complex one (namely a state or its analogue) has been presented in the previous paragraphs.

1.6 List of the state criteria divided by archaeological evidence

The conclusion of this first part is the integration of all the theories presented and the archaeological evidence linked to them. In order to better visualise all of the work done up to this point, the criteria will be presented based on the characteristics that it is most broadly agreed that a state should have. This information

299 Marcus 2008, 259.

is presented in the table below, combined with the main areas of key archaeological evidence to be sought after. This table is also used at the end of each of the chapters of the second part.

1 Settlement hierarchy of four levels: zentralort, medium settlements, small villages, and farming nucleus.
2 A centralised decision-making process that is both hierarchical and compartmentalised into multiple specialised institutions.
3 New principles of government:
a) delegation of power and power divisibility without the risk of insurrection;
b) separation of the performance of functions from the bearer of functions;
c) new traits in the system of administration in the early state and changes in the body of administrators: the state is now administrated by professionals, or functionaries;
d) an internally specialised administration with the capacity to intervene directly in the affairs of the local communities, families and individuals, that has a decision-making hierarchy of three (or more) levels, and that has a non-kinship basis (i.e. can also include commoners).
4 Diversity of public buildings:
a) standardised temples and the associated quarters of temple priests;
b) the facilities of state-level industries;
c) identification of the 'palace' as the ruler's official residence.
5 A fundamental change in the ideology of stratification and descent, such that rulers are associated with a sacred supernatural origin (establishing their divine right to rule).
6 Specific properties (attributes) of supreme power:
a) redistribution of power to control the periphery;
b) sufficient potential of the supreme power to introduce essential changes into the socio-political organisation of the society and to expand the domain of authoritative control;
c) completeness of the function of supreme power (an early state must perform the functions of both interior and exterior control).
7 Non-traditional and new forms of regulating social life:
a) reforms and/or gradual modification of administration, and of various aspects of the mode of social life;
b) breaking from certain traditions linked to kin-based societies.

Economy	
Estates and domains	4b. the facilities of state-level industries.
Collection, taxation and treasury	2. the centralised decision-making process is both hierarchical and compartmentalised into multiple specialised institutions.
Storage, production and redistribution	4b. the facilities of state-level industries.
Administration and delegation of power	
Territorial subdivision	6a. redistribution of power to enable control of the periphery.
	3a. delegation of power and power divisibility without the risk of insurrection.
	1. settlement hierarchy of four levels.
The administrative apparatus	7a. reforms and/or gradual modification of the administration and of various aspects of the mode of social life.
The titles linked to the Egyptian court	7b. break from certain traditions linked to kin-based societies.
Toward a highly structured literate administration	3c. new traits in the system of administration in the early state and changes in the body of administrators: the state is now administrated by professionals or functionaries.
	3d. an internally specialised administration.
Ideology and religion	
Ideology and legitimisation	5. A fundamental change in the ideology of stratification and descent, such that rulers are associated with a sacred supernatural origin (establishing their divine right to rule).
The festivals and ceremonies	
The modification of landscape and the erection of new buildings	4c. identification of the 'palace' as the ruler's official residence.
The ruler, the kingship and their iconographical representation	6b. sufficient potential of the supreme power to introduce essential changes.
	6c. completeness of the function of supreme power.
Societal division: the classes	7b. break from certain traditions linked to kin-based societies.
Religion	5. a fundamental change in the ideology of stratification and descent.
Priesthood	3b. separation of the performance of functions from the bearer of functions.
Places of religious worship	4a. standardised temples and the associated quarters of temple priests.
Funerary architecture	5. a fundamental change in the ideology of stratification and descent.

PART 2
Archaeological evidences

2.1 Chronology

The study of the period that preceded the Old Kingdom in Egypt is subject to an obvious issue: namely, a lack of the abundant archaeological data and written sources that could be used by scholars to connect all the archaeological and historical documents. Thus, if during the long period of Egyptian history, the framework of the dynasties provided a place for all of this information, this was not possible for the previous periods (clearly not for the Pre-Dynastic period, and also a difficult task for the Early Dynastic period).

There are two main problems with the chronology of the period before the 4th Dynasty, namely the terminology used and the relative comparability of the scales (relative, absolute, and historical).

The first problem pertains to the evident use of different terms to indicate the same period, as each of these terms could have different meanings. Going through the study of this formative period, it is easy to encounter terms such as Pre-Dynastic, Proto-Dynastic, Early Dynastic, Badarian, Naqada (with different periodisation, such as IIIa or IIIA), Amratian, Gerzean or Semainean, Maadi culture, Buto-Maadi culture, and even Chalcolithic or Bronze Age. While some of these terms are now no longer used, it is still possible to find them in books and articles published before the 1980s. Most of the overlap in terminology is due to the many attempted studies and corrections made by scholars to cast light on this period. William Matthew Flinders Petrie was the first to create a relative chronology based on the comparative analysis of ceramics, creating four distinct cultural periods: Badarian, Amratian, Gerzean, and Semainean[300]. He developed 'sequence dates' from the pottery found at the Naqada, Ballas, and Diospolis Parva sites[301], identifying different classes of pottery and studying their evolution; based on the development of shapes, decorations and introduction of new classes, he created a stylistic chronology that grouped them into four main sets. The names were based on the sites in which different cultures had been found. According to Petrie and other early scholars, a change in ceramic style occurred due to a new race of people arriving and dramatically changing the culture in Egypt. Today, however, this idea and this chronological division are no longer used, and the division between the Badarian and Naqada periods is more generally accepted. Recent excavations have demonstrated a continuity in the cultural assemblage, especially in Upper Egypt. The Proto-dynastic period was initially used instead of Naqada III[302] in order to indicate change in the socio-political organisation, as well as to mark the start of a proto-dynastic period in which the Egyptian state

300 Petrie 1920.
301 For Naqada and Ballas: Petrie and Quibell 1896; For Diospolis Parva: Petrie 1972.
302 Baumgartel 1970.

was in development; however, even these terms are now considered slightly old-fashioned, with modern scholars preferring Early Dynastic or Naqada III. In reality, the two terms do not perfectly overlap: while the latter refers to a cultural periodisation based on archaeological data, the former is based upon historical sources that overlap with the chronological limits of the Naqada period.

The second issue is that of the correspondence between the different scales and chronologies. The first point of concern here is the comparability of the Upper and Lower Egyptian relative chronologies. The Southern part of Egypt relies mainly upon the dating of cemeteries with a well-developed chronology. By contrast, the Northern part of Egypt uses two main chronological systems: the first of these is based on the cultural division from the data of the two main sites, Maadi and Buto, forming the Maadi-Buto culture; the second is used to compare this area with the Levant, using the Chalcolithic and Bronze relative chronology[303]. Furthermore, even within the same geographical area, there are problems associated with finding a chronological homogeneity among the whole area. This is true for Upper Egypt, and even more so for Lower Egypt, where the relevant data is only now emerging. Nevertheless, there are far more serious problems connected with the conservation of the sites.

For Upper Egypt, in the 1957, Werner Kaiser[304] made the first extensive revision of Petrie's chronology. The main problem with the English archaeologist's dating sequence is that Petrie needed to create an artificial compromise between the typology of vessels excavated from the three sites and the necessity of grouping them together without distinction between typology and chronology. Although he recognised that there were cemeteries from different periods at the sites, he did not take the spatial disposition of the tombs among all the sites into consideration. Kaiser attempted to overcome this problem by starting with the Armant cemetery and studying the horizontal distribution of pottery, which resulted in three main divisions of the Naqada culture. He divided all the classes and types of objects into *Stufen*, with three main categories and sub-categories: *Zeitstufe* Ia-c, *Zeitstufe* IIa-d, and *Zeitstufe* IIIa-c (later, the word *Zeitstufe* was substituted with the Naqada culture). The main problem with this classification, which was already known to Kaiser himself, is that Armant forms the only base for the whole structure, while the Naqada Ia-b and Naqada IIIb are missing from that particular site; thus, they are reconstructed only by hypothesis, even if Kaiser used data from other cemeteries.

With the benefit of modern tools, several scholars were able to apply comput-

303 For a better explanation of the concordance between Maadi-Buto, Naqada, and Southern Levant chronology, refer to the work of E. Christiana Köhler in Köhler 1998.
304 Kaiser 1957; Kaiser 1959; Kaiser 1964.

er seriation to the relative chronology of the Upper Egyptian Naqada culture[305]. However, such seriation requires one to group some of the types together, which can result in each group featuring a broad range of heterogeneity, meaning that several anomalies and uncertainties are associated with the results. From the late 1980s onwards, new sites and data became available, which allowed focus to be redirected from typological classification to the spatial distribution of artefacts. Several scholars applied this methodology to a number of different research sites[306]. These scholars applied the base methodology of Kaiser's study to the cemeteries, taking into consideration the horizontal distribution of the objects within the site itself; their analyses, both in terms of spatial distribution and object typologies, suggested the existence of analogous patterns between the sites. Of course, the comparability of these cemeteries is only possible at the level of spatial distribution and class artefacts; it is not certain that these sites, even if similar, are also contemporary, as there are too few absolute dates. Nevertheless, Hendrickx identified eleven groups (and for three of these, a further two sub-groups) identifiable in the cemeteries, which have their characterisation in two elements referred to as space and class objects. Today, Hendrickx's Chronology is used not only by the author of the present thesis, but also by the majority of scholars since its publication. Hendrickx's Chronology can be easily identified by the use of upper-case letters and Latin numbers: for example, Naqada IA-C, Naqada IIA-D (with Naqada IID1-D2), or Naqada IIIA-D (with Naqada IIIA1-A2, Naqada IIIC1-2)[307]. For the region of Lower Egypt, moreover, the present work relies on the chronologies provided for single sites or areas, e.g. Maadi, Wadi Digla, Tell el-Fara'ĭn – Buto, and Tell el-Farcha[308].

Adding further uncertainty to this period, the correspondence among relative chronology, absolute chronology and even the dynastic sequence is unclear. The first and main problem concerns the limited availability of material from the Pre-Dynastic period that can be used for dating. For radiocarbon dating, there are a few materials for which the analysis has already been obtained over many decades; this means that they are not reliable and lack the precision required today[309]. Furthermore, the dates obtained are consistently one century older than that forecasted, resulting in the Second Dynasty spanning a longer period than the historical sources would lead one to believe. A similar problem occurs when

305 Among the most important: Kemp 1982; Wilkinson 1994; Wilkinson 1995.
306 For the whole list of cemeteries involved, consult Hendrickx 2006, 69.
307 Hendrickx 2006, 72–3.
308 Cfr: Wunderlich 1989; Schmidt 1993; Faltings 1998a; Faltings 1998b; Köhler 1998; Hendrickx 1999; Joffe 2000; Faltings 2002; Levy and Brinks 2002; Cialowicz and Jucha 2003; Ciałowicz 2008.
309 Gorsdorf et al 1998; Midant-Reynes and Sabatier 1999; Kroeper 2003; Hendrickx 2006, 90-3; Dee 2014.

an attempt is made to find a link between the Naqada culture chronology and the tombs of the Early Dynastic period. It is commonly agreed that the Early Dynastic period corresponds with the Naqada IIIA1, following a list of such links[310]:

Naqada IIIA1: Abydos U-tombs: U-a, k, o, r, qq, j. Tomb U-i and U-f are in doubt because they are placed between the tombs of this period and the following period. For many scholars, the king Scorpion belongs to this period, while others eventually linked the Scorpion emblem to other interpretations or suggested that he is contemporary to other rulers, even Sekhen/Ka or Nar-mer[311].

Naqada IIIA2: Abydos U-tombs: U-g, h, s, u, v.

Naqada IIIB: Abydos U-tombs: U-t, x, y, z. Abydos B-tombs: B1-2, which probably belonged to Irj-Hor, and B 7-9, owned by Sekhen/Ka. These tombs have more associated data, and most researchers agree that these tombs date to the Naqada IIIB period. Nevertheless, there is no precise overlap, meaning that while the ruler Sekhen/Ka is of course of this period, it also covers part of the Naqada IIIC1 period.

Naqada IIIC1: The same argument is also true for the rulers of this period; they are mostly represented by ceramics of the Naqada IIIC1 period, but their tombs contain few ceramic remains related to the following period. It is also the time at which the First Dynasty began. Nar-mer owns the tomb B 17-18, ʻAha owns the tomb B 10-15-19 and Djer the tomb O. The Naqada IIIC1 seems to be a short period spanning approximately 50 years. During this timeframe, it seems that the first tombs of Saqqara made their appearance. The tomb with ʻAha, S 3357, and Djer's material, S 3471 and 3503, belong to this cultural horizon.

Naqada IIIC2: this period, of about 80 years, corresponds to the middle of First Dynasty and the rulers Djet, Den and ʻAdj-ib. In Abydos, the tombs related to these rulers are tombs Z, T and X respectively; meanwhile, in Saqqara, the number of tombs increases dramatically, as does the amount of material found in them. This period belongs to S 3504, associated with Djet, S 3035, 3506, 3507, X, 3036, with materials of Den, and S 3038, 3111, and 3338, related to ʻAdj-ib. The ruler known as Semer-khet, unfortunately, has little data available due to the few objects that can be associated with him; consequently, he can be placed both in this period and in the following period where his successor is located.

Naqada IIID: the end of the First Dynasty is associated with the ruler Qa-ʻa. After him, the Second Dynasty begins, where the data is scarce and unclear. Associated with the last ruler are the tomb Q in Abydos and four tombs in Saqqara, S 3121, 3121, 3500, and 3505. This period needs to be further clarified with the data derived from ongoing excavations. Nevertheless, the equipment of

310 Hendrickx 2006, 89.
311 See below.

the tombs related to Qa-ʿa is clearly of the NIIID period, although it is also comparable to the few objects from the late Second Dynasty; at the same time, it is quite different from the artefacts of the tombs of Per-ibsen and Kha-sekhemwy.

2.2 The state of art regarding the formative period

2.2.1 Introduction

The author of this thesis agrees with Alice Stevenson's statement[312] that focusing on an understanding of only political history could lead to some important points of information being overlooked. For example, finding out the true identity of the mythical Menes is completely futile and adds no value to the ongoing research, while determining who achieved Egyptian unification may not be helpful at all. Understanding the personification of Menes does not contribute to the comprehension of the historical processes, as Menes is itself a mythical figure created three millennia later, while the unification of 'Egypt' was a process that began during the Naqada period and ended with the definitive decline of Egyptian culture. The control of the Nile Valley under one polity was quite possibly achieved specifically at the beginning of the First Dynasty; by the Second Dynasty, however, it seems that there was no such unity, while this unity may have been regained at the end of the same Dynasty and lasted until the First Intermediate Period. The process is cyclical: if Nar-mer is considered the first ruler to have power over the entire Nile valley, he is solely the last of a line of rulers that has progressively extended, and reduced, their power over it. Furthermore, as also stated by Christiana Köhler[313], the achievement of this hypothetical unification does not mark the endpoint of the state formation process.

The information retrieved by the historical processes gains importance if viewed in the framework of the societal and cultural modification. The analysis of art, iconography, religion, ideology, economic processes, and all other features of a culture can help to facilitate an understanding of the whole picture of the formative period of the Egyptian civilisation.

The following pages provide a short presentation regarding the historical process. This is intended to form a basis of understanding for the following analysis of the Egyptian evidence during the Pre- and Early Dynastic Period pertaining to the economy, the administration and delegation of power, and religion and ideology.

312 Stevenson 2016, 445.
313 Köhler 2015, 3.

2.2.2 Pre-Dynastic period

Naqada I

The Pre-Dynastic period begins with the transition from the Badarian to the Naqadian culture. The continuity between the material cultures of the two periods is clear, as is their contemporaneity in Upper Egypt. In sites such as Qau-Matmar, where the Badarian assemblages are common, there are no burial sites or settlements with material recognisable as from Naqada IA; in other areas of Upper Egypt, however, an early Naqada I material culture appears[314]. Continuity is also visible in the similar burial customs, with the main difference being observable in the ceramic assemblage.

The Naqada I period witnessed heterogeneous development in material assemblage and technology, which continued from a 'Badarian or Badarian-like period into the early Naqadian period'[315]. The study of the material culture has demonstrated that it is impossible to consider Pre-Dynastic Upper Egypt as a single culture that developed from Neolithic to Early Dynastic as a unique group; on the contrary, it is possible to distinguish between regionalism and local tradition, which changed in different ways across areas and time[316].

The development of sedentary habits and cereal agriculture characterised the Naqada I period; simultaneously, the signs of an increased social complexity appeared. This is mostly visible in the sites of Hierakonpolis, Naqada and Abydos for Upper Egypt and Maadi, Wadi Digla and later Tell el-Farkha in Lower Egypt. The ceramic assemblage is dominated by the Black-Topped pottery, which covers more than half of the entire corpus, followed by the Red-Polished ware (which is more frequent in Naqada IB) and the White crossed-line typology. The three sub-periods of Naqada I are distinguished mainly by an increase in the variability of typology and forms[317].

Naqada II

The second period of Naqadian culture is more problematic to define and makes even clearer the differences among the sub-phases of the Naqada II period, rather than in the transition between Naqada I and II. Theoretically, the difference between the two periods lies in the different prevailing pottery: the first period is dominated by the Black-Topped pottery, and the second by the Rough Pottery. However, this distinction is not so clear nor so distinctive in each region. The Rough Pottery can be found with the furniture of cemeteries only

314 Horn 2014, 44.
315 Horn 2014, 45.
316 Köhler 2008, 523.
317 Hendrickx 2006, 71–5.

during the Naqada IIB period, only to eventually lose favour and be replaced by the Wavy-Handled and Decorated pottery during the Naqada IIC period. Thus, it is possible to observe a greater distinction between IIA and IIB than between IC and IIA. In his analysis, Hendrickx seems to suggest that the chronology should be adjusted, including the IIA in the first period, and that IIB should be made the first Naqadian II sub-phase, although he prefers to maintain Kaiser's division[318]. It is also necessary to keep in mind that the Rough Pottery does not appear in the Naqada II period, but was a common ware since the previous period, appearing in the burial furniture only during this period; previously, it was mostly common in domestic use, but not in the tombs.

Another problem arises at the end of this period. While Kaiser finds a difference in the assemblage, subsequent excavations have proven that it is minimal, if not absent entirely. In particular, the presence (in Kaiser's *Stufe* IId2) and absence (in *Stufe* IIIa1) of the Black-Topped types cannot be taken as a marker; indeed, its presence is already minimal in Kaiser's IId2, and cannot be consistent enough to represent a real difference with its absence in the following period. Other types of pottery show little difference between one period and the other, such that it is almost impossible to be sure that the attributions are mostly arbitrary and not consistent. In his chronology, Hendrickx opined that the difference between Naqada IID1 and IID2 remains and can be found in a reduced diversity of the Rough pottery, but *Stufe* IIIa1 could not be said to form a separate phase, so that he included it in the IID2 period[319].

In an overall analysis of the period, the difference between the IIA-B and the IIC-D periods is evident through an examination of the archaeological remains. The first half is still characterised by the previous period's artistic features, such as the presence of anthropomorphic figurines, zoomorphic models, decorated tusks, esoteric tags and unusually shaped mace-heads, which disappeared[320] in the second half of this period. Moreover, the ceramic production underwent a more drastic change during the IIC period: new classes of ceramic became common, with the Black-Topped pottery almost vanishing, in addition to the increase in Rough pottery already observed. The Wavy-Handled pottery began to develop in importance[321]; not only its shapes or design, but also the technology used for its realisation changed, due to the increasing importance of the use of marl clay.

Similar to ceramics, funerary traditions seem to have changed significantly between IIB and IIC and less between IC and IIA. The first half of Naqada II

318 Hendricks 2006, 76.
319 Hendrickx 2006, 80.
320 Stevenson 2016, 439.
321 Hendrickx 2006, 78.

shares the same cemeteries of IC, even if it is possible to identify distinguished groups of tombs of IIA and IIB. On the other hand, the settlement and burials of IIC appear in new areas that were not previously occupied. This suggest a period of increasing expansion into new territories, as well as the creation of new and more stable trade networks.

On the other hand, archaeological data – particularly from recent excavations – reveals a rich society that increased rapidly in terms of both population and social complexity. Sites such as Hierakonpolis depict a society with flourishing art, represented by the decorative pottery, palettes and the small findings found in the tombs[322]. The society is stratified into at least three classes. There is a ruling class, represented by the magnificent tombs of the Elite cemetery of HK6, which begin from the Naqada IC period and continue until the end of Naqada IIB, revealing a continuity between the two periods in Hierakonpolis[323]. The wealth of the tombs is undeniable, with funerary masks, animal burials (exotic and otherwise), complex mortuary architecture and the presence of luxury goods imported from afar, a testament to long-distance trade networks. From Naqada IIC onwards, the importance of this site decreased; there are also traces of fire and possibly destruction, and other cemeteries become important[324]. The so-called Hierakonpolis Fort Cemetery, dating to the second half of Naqada II, seems to also contain the famous decorated tomb 100. The sites dedicated only to production signify the presence of a class of specialised workers. The site HK11C[325] is an example: here, the archaeologists have found evidence of production of large quantities of meat and fish, most probably not only for domestic use, but (being close to the HK6 site) also for celebrations or other activities. Other sites include HK24A, for the brewer of beer, and HK25D, for the production of pottery. The site HK29A[326], formed by a large precinct 45m long and 13m wide, with four large postholes in the centre, areas for ritual butchery, and high-quality pottery, can also testify to the presence of a ritual area. While archaeologists today are more cautious in defining it as a shrine, it is without a doubt a delimited space for specific activities with a highly ideological or sacred meaning.

In Upper Egypt, the Naqada sites are similar to Hierakonpolis; the high-status tombs testify to the presence of an elite ruling class, with their power likely derived from their control over the Wadi Hammamat and consequent access to the rich regions of the Easter Desert. Excavations have revealed two main settlements, the so-called South Town and North Town, comprising large structures,

322 Hendrickx 2014, 265–6.
323 Hendrickx 2014, 266.
324 Hendrickx 2014, 267.
325 Takamiya 2008.
326 Friedman 2009.

mud-brick walls and residential areas[327]. The cemeteries of Naqada cover the entire Pre-Dynastic period, with data from different classes, showing, during the Naqada II period, a clear difference between the common burial sites and the elite necropolis, called 'Cemetery T'[328]. Here, there are tombs with brick structures and rich furniture – rich not only in quantity, but also in prestige goods, a marker of the importance of this area during Naqada II. The area controlled by Naqada seems to be quite large in this period, and could represent the apex of this settlement.

For the Abydos area, the lack of data to indicate a large settlement complicates attempts to reconstruct the history of this site. The data from the cemeteries reveals an unusual path for this site: Cemetery U[329] has tombs from the Naqada IC period, and probably from the early Naqada II, but there are no tombs, or scarce data, from the periods IIB-IID. It is possible that the elite cemetery of this period was located in a different area and has not yet been discovered; alternatively, the settlement of Thinis may have endured a period of decline before the expansion of the following period. Unfortunately, as there is no uniformity in the data from the different sites, it is difficult to make sense of the meagre available data, because the data is incomplete and there are sites that are yet to be discovered.

In Nubia, there are several sites marked by A-group cultures and Naqada II materials, demonstrating the connection between these two areas and the existence of a network of exchange and mutual influence[330].

In Lower Egypt, recent excavations have resulted in new findings and new light being shed on the region. The first site to be studied extensively and to have a complexity similar to that of the Upper Egypt sites is Buto[331]. The chronology begins in a previous period; however, being a small settlement, it becomes an influential site in the Delta during the Naqada II period of Upper Egypt. The level of Buto IIa corresponds to that of the Naqada IIA-B and to the Wadi-Digla II period. The Naqada IIC-IID2 period correlates with Buto IIb, while Naqada IID2 correlates with Buto IIIa. The site represents one of the major cultures in the Delta, and the excavation reveals a degree of social complexity similar to the one present in Upper Egypt.

During Naqada II, another site in the Easter Delta developed; excavation work has revealed features similar to Hierakonpolis and Tell el-Farkha. The settlement, excavated by a Polish team, presents sites of specialised production, such as brewing, food processing, cult worship and cemeteries. The importance of this site reached its zenith during the Naqada IIC-D.

327 Barocas, Fattovich, Tosi 1989.
328 Davis 1983.
329 Dreyer 1999.
330 Shinnie 1996, 43–50.
331 For a complete reference, see the site at https://www.ees.ac.uk/farain4

Naqada III

The last period of the Naqada culture complicates attempts to find homogeneity and a clear transition in the archaeological remains between this and the previous period. This is despite the fact that the ceramic assemblage, at least in the first period, underwent few changes from the end of the Naqada II period. In terms of general features, the Naqada III period saw a widespread diffusion all over Egypt, as well as the appearance of writing. During this period, Egypt underwent a transition from small or medium local political entities, such as Abydos, Hierakonpolis, Naqada, Buto, Tell el-Farkha and others, to the rule of one man over the entire Valley.

Pottery exhibits a continuity with the previous period, with few differences observed; at the beginning of this period, it is possible to identify a decrease, ending in a complete disappearance, of the decorated pottery common in the IIC-D period. The identification of the Late pottery and its fabric is not easy, and could have been misled by incorrect attribution in the past. Also, Rough ware decreased, mostly during the IIIA2 period, in favour of the Wavy-Handled pottery, which was one of the classes more commonly used for long-distance trade. In the late Naqada III, the Late pottery became much more important, overcoming the Wavy-Handled class, which also diminished during the IIIC2 period in favour of stone vessels. The final phase of the Naqada III period is the least defined and the most unclear, mostly due to the lack of data, although there are a few tombs that can be assigned without doubt to this period.

It is interesting to point out that, even if a major diffusion and circulation of the pottery could be observed during this period, along with the increasing power of one or more Upper Egyptian entities, the ceramic assemblage does not increase its homogeneity in respect to the previous period. An interesting study by Christiana Köhler[332] pointed out that from the Naqada II to III, the homogeneity of the assemblages increased only slightly, and that each region continued to produce their own pottery; the only difference is that the main production centres were located more often than not in Upper Egypt[333]. This means that 'cultural unification' is far from confirmed, although this concept is often invoked in contrast to a military conquest that occurred just before the rule of one man over the entirety of Egypt. Köhler goes further to state that it is important to focus on the similarities already present since the previous periods, rather than on the differences. This could lead to an understanding that the degree of homogeneity found in the entire Nile Valley since the Neolithic could be interpreted as a similar response – a 'common behavioural pattern' – of the different communities to the

332 Köhler 2014a.
333 Köhler 2014a, 174.

economic and ecological conditions and the changes in the same[334]. Moreover, the lack of homogeneity in the material assemblage 'is not a question of lacking cultural identity, but of lacking centralised economic patrol in a political landscape of numerous regional polities and kingdoms'[335].

In Upper Egypt, the cemeteries and sites of the Naqada III period are the same as those in the previous one. However, Abydos reached its height during this period, with its cemeteries becoming the wealthiest and most expansive; this state of affairs continued until the construction of the large complex of the B cemetery and the tombs of the other Dynasty 1 rulers. Contemporary to the rise of the power of Abydos, the other settlements decreased in importance until the end as sites for the burials of rulers or the elite. Lower Egypt, on the other hand, saw the flourishing of new settlements, such as Memphis, and neighbouring cemeteries, particularly Helwan[336].

2.2.3 Early dynastic period

Introduction

The Early Dynastic period refers to the historical period in which the Egyptian civilisation was still in its formative stages, but had some characteristics of the Old Kingdom state. Also known as the Archaic Period of Egypt, this was the phase that followed the unification of Upper and Lower Egypt and usually includes the First and Second Dynasties, lasting from the Naqada IIIC archaeological period until the beginning of the Old Kingdom with the Third Dynasty[337]. Dynasty 0 is usually considered part of the Late Pre-Dynastic period, corresponding to the Naqada IIIB period; to ensure a better narration of the facts, however, it will be presented here together with Dynasties 1 and 2. While, of course, dynasties were a much later invention and there were no such divisions at this time, the divisions of the first three Dynasties are easy to recognise in the historical events. Dynasty 0 is marked by the regional level of the entities, while Dynasty 1 is characterised by a sovereign who ruled over the entire country, as well as strong centralisation and elements comparable to a state entity (or, for some scholars, a true state). The Second Dynasty is characterised by uncertainty and likely the return to a regional power; only with the last rulers of this period did Egypt appear to be united again under one ruler. The following ruler, Djoser, held power over the entire Valley, and it would appear that he was at the head of a well-established state or state-like entity, marking the beginning of the Third Dynasty.

334 Köhler 2014a, 175.
335 Köhler 2014a, 176.
336 Köhler 2014b.
337 Shaw 2000, 479.

Another issue concerns the use of the term 'Dynasty 00', which refers to some rulers found in several cemeteries; however, some of them seem to overlap with the Dynasty 0 rulers, while others can be inserted among the Late Pre-Dynastic rulers of the different sites. In line with many contemporary authors[338], the author does not consider the concept of Dynasty 00 to be a relevant one.

Dynasty 0

The idea of a 'Dynasty 0' comes with its own set of problems, primarily, the definition of the chronological borders, as well as who is listed in it. The first to use this term was Quibell in his excavations of Hierakonpolis[339]: 'thus two of these kings probably belong to the close of the dynasty of ten kings before Mena, which, as it preceded dyn. I is here called dyn. 0 (about 4800 B.C.)…'. Another problem concerns the concept of a dynasty itself, which is inapplicable to the situation; indeed, it does not refer to a homogenous corps of rulers from the same family, or who are related to one another, but rather includes rulers and chiefs from different sites, such as Abydos, Buto, Helwan, Hierakonpolis, Qustul, Tura, and Tarkhan. The common trait is chronology. All the rulers listed in Dynasty 0 are from a period that spans from the Naqada IIIB to the Naqada IIIC1, or to Nar-mer for some authors, although Nar-mer is considered here to be the first ruler of the First Dynasty.

At Abydos, the B cemetery refers to two of the rulers of this Dynasty, and contains the tombs of Iry-Hor and Sekhen/Ka, in addition to Nar-mer and 'Aha of the following Dynasty. Kaiser, in his excavations, reconstructed the line of Abydos rulers: the first was Iry-Hor, followed by Sekhen/Ka and subsequently Nar-mer. The archaeological evidence indicates that Sekhen/Ka was a direct predecessor of Nar-mer, while Iry-Hor was the first *de facto* of the line[340]. As demonstrated by Kahl[341], the presence of the word 'Hor' in the name of the first ruler is associated with the same combination of words for other rulers (e.g. Ny-Hor, Hat-Hor, and Pe-Hor) who ruled only locally and in contraposition to the elites present in the other chiefdoms (such as Thinis, Hierakonpolis or others).

The names of other rulers are referred to only in an archaeological context, but do not provide us with a clear understanding of their chronological position; some of them are rulers of the same area, forming a line of succession unknown to us while other rulers could be contemporaries in different sites.

338 Hendrickx 1996.
339 Quibell 1900, 5.
340 Kaiser and Dreyer 1982, 238.
341 Kahl 2001b, 106.

Several authors have attempted to cast some light on Dynasty 0. In particular, the work of Francesco Raffaele is quite helpful in gathering all the available information and data on this period[342]. The present work uses the data on the ruler and their provenience gathered by Kahl[343] and listed in his article on relative chronology. The list drawn up by him is as follows: Ny-Hor from Tura, Hat-Hor from Tarkhan, Trio (three circles surmounting vertical strokes) from Eastern Delta, and perhaps Tura, Pe-Hor (alternatively read also as Iry-Hor, and thus assignable to him) from Qutsul, Ny-Neit from Helwan, Crocodile, and Bird and vertical Sign, both from Tarkan, Scorpion from Hierakonpolis, and an indecipherable name from Buto[344].

Debates on the rulers are still ongoing, as are those on the use and origin of the *serekh*[345]; indeed, there are problems associated with identifying the different rulers and placing them in a chronological order. Scorpion, in particular, is one of the most hotly debated of these rulers; there is little evidence of this person and few representations of the scorpion, while the only such representation that could be linked to a royal context is the Scorpion Mace-head found in the Main Deposit of Hierakonpolis. No tombs linked to him have been found, even if some authors believe that the complex of the tomb 1 at the elite cemetery HK6 of Hierakonpolis belongs to him[346]. Dreyer proposed the tomb B50 of Abydos as Scorpion's burial site[347], but there is no evidence to support this, and as most authors agree, there is no evidence that Scorpion had any power on Abydos. On the other hand, Kemp contends that both Scorpion and Nar-mer came from Hierakonpolis. Still, it is highly improbable that Scorpion is the same as the person of Nar-mer[348]. The issue here is that even the reading of Scorpion as the name of a ruler is subject to debate. The sign of the rosette close to the scorpion symbol is the pivotal point here. While the widespread interpretation of this sign is 'ruler', this has never been definitively proven, although it is comparable with the rosette close to the name of Nar-mer in its palette, and close to other ruling figures on some other objects[349]. As the symbol was never found in subsequent periods among the standard hieroglyphs, there are no later meanings that could help with its understanding. For what it is worth, the representation of the scorpion symbol could refer to some local deity known in Hierakonpolis[350]. Even the lack

342 Raffaele 2003.
343 Kahl 2006.
344 Kahl 2006, 95.
345 Kaiser and Dreyer 1982; van den Brink 1996 and 2001; Hendrickx 2001; Jiménez-Serrano 2001 and 2003.
346 Hoffman and Adams 1982, 43ff; Adams 1995, 46–7.
347 Dreyer 1987;
348 Lankester 2011.
349 Smith 1992.
350 Hendrickx Huyge and Adams 1997–8, 26–9; Hendrickx 2014, 271.

of any administrative objects bearing his name precludes us from unraveling the real nature of this hypothetical 'ruler Scorpion'.

As stated above, at this point, it seems likely that Upper Egypt was under the influence of one polity, or in the process of becoming a single entity, during this period; unfortunately, at the moment, it is difficult if not impossible to understand these events and how they developed.

Dynasty 1

The history of the First Dynasty is, contrary to that of the previous and following dynasties, quite well-known, with both historical and archaeological sources to support its reconstruction. The succession of rulers, which is agreed upon by the vast majority of scholars, is as follows: Nar-mer; 'Aha; Djer; 'Serpent' (here spelled Djet, but it can be found also as WaD(j)); Den; 'Adj-ib; Semer-khet; Qa-'a. Most of the scientific community accepts that the ruler Meret-neith, the only female monarch referred to so far in the Early Dynastic period, followed the reign of Djet and acted as regent for the son Den until he was old enough to rule[351].

One of the main problems with this Dynasty concerns Nar-mer. As has already been mentioned, he is often listed as the last of the Dynasty 0 rulers; however, in the present work, and in concurrence with many other scholars[352], the author considers him to be part of the First Dynasty. This is because he is the first ruler to have power over a territory that is not only regional, but also spans the entire Nile valley. Nar-mer ruled both a regional entity and over a united Egypt. It is interesting to note the analysis provided by Joris van Wetering on the concept of the *Unification of the two lands*[353]. van Wetering states that this 'unification' does not refer to Lower and Upper Egypt, but rather to the two entities of Upper Egypt, namely Hierakonpolis and Thinis/Abydos. The union of these two settlements occurred at the end of the Pre-Dynastic period, and van Wetering points to Nar-mer as the first to rule over both; indeed, he was the first Thinite ruler to have an important presence in Hierakonpolis, mostly in the Main Deposit. Furthermore, the last tomb of the HK6 cemetery, tomb 1, is contemporary to the reign of Nar-mer. The unification is not described in any historical source, and there are no traces of it in the archaeological remains. Thus, it could have happened by conquest, possibly taking advantage of a moment of weakness due to the death of the Hierakonpolis ruler, or in a peaceful way, whether due to the end of the dynastic lineage of Nekhen or through some marriage or alliance.

351 For an extensive study on the succession and the sources of the First Dynasty, compare Kahl 2006, 96–101.
352 Wilkinson 1999, 68; Morenz 2002; Kahl 2006, 94–5; Hendrickx 2014, 271. *Contra:* Stevenson 2016; Raffaele 2003.
353 Van Wetering 2012, 97–8.

The fact is that Nar-mer was the first ruler to wear both the White and the Red Crown, regardless of whether these represent Upper and Lower Egypt or two entities in Upper Egypt. The power held by Nar-mer at the beginning of his reign, thanks to the unification of the several polities in Upper Egypt, allowed him to point north and focus on those regions. The acquisition of the Delta areas remains unclear; there are no traces of destruction in the archaeological strata, and the monuments, such as the City Palette, can be interpreted in several ways, providing no clear hint as to what happened. Nevertheless, at the end of his reign, his successor held control over the entire Nile Valley as far south as the Nubian region. The rulers who followed, starting from Aha, consolidated the administrative structure, the economic backbone and the ideological framework for the future Egyptian state.

Dynasty 2

The reconstruction of the period referred to as the Second Dynasty is complex and there is still some uncertainty associated with it. The first part of the Dynasty is quite certain, with Hetep-Sekhemwy as Qa-'a's successor, followed by Ra'-neb and subsequently Ny-netjer[354], who reigned for a long time. These three rulers are listed together, often with one followed by the others; nevertheless, their influence is not clear, as most if not all of the data comes from the Memphite region. Hetep-Sekhemwy moved the place of his burial from Abydos to Memphis, and the successors also had their tombs there.

The central part of the Second Dynasty is not very well understood, and remains probably the most uncertain both chronologically and geographically speaking. The rulers were as follows: Weneg, Nub-nefer, Sa(?), and Sened. The Horus name of Weneg is unknown; in the Step Pyramid, the name *nsw bjt nb.tj* Weneg is mentioned, but in another inscription, the name of Ny-netjer is written over Weneg, facing the Horus name of Ra-neb. Kahl suggests that Weneg is the *nsw bjt nb.tj* name of Ra-Neb rather than a separate ruler in his own right. Moreover, the *nsw bjt nb.tj* name Nub-nefer is referred to only twice on stone vessels; it is plausible that he was a ruler who lived shortly after Ny-netjer, but no other information is available. Another *nsw bjt nb.tj* name, Sened, appears in the historical sources, but other references are missing; a second documentation of his name appears in a funerary cult inscription of the Fourth Dynasty. Sened has been identified both as the last ruler of the Upper and Lower Egypt before Kha-Sekhemwy, with the Horus name Sa[355], who ruled over Lower Egypt contemporary to Peribsen, referred to in Upper Egypt[356].

354 Kahl 2006, 102.
355 Kahl 2006, 104–5.
356 Wilkinson 1999, 88.

While the last period seems to shed some more light on this dynasty, it nevertheless presents enough problems that a clear reconstruction of events is not possible. The next two names in the sources are Horus Sekhem-ib (Per-en-maat?) and Seth Per-ibsen. It seems that Per-ibsen is mentioned only in documents from Upper Egypt, except for a funerary cult associated with Sened at Saqqara[357]; on the other hand, Sekhem-ib has references in a tomb of Per-ibsen in Abydos and on some stone vessels in the Step Pyramid, although of course the latter could have been brought there after his death. The three hypotheses circulating among scholars are, firstly, that the two names belong to the same person, who went by two different names at the same time; secondly, that the same person bore both names, but sequentially (first Horus Sekhem-ib and subsequently Seth Per-ibsen); and thirdly, that they were two different rulers, with the succession line in this case being Seth Per-ibsen followed by Horus Sekhem-ib. At the moment, there is no consensus regarding this conundrum[358].

The last ruler referred to is Horus-Seth Kha-sekhemwy, who is mentioned in multiple sources, with several documents seemingly confirming him as being succeeded by Netjery-khet (Djoser). This seems to confirm that the Second Dynasty ended with him, while the following period began with Netjery-khet[359]. The archaeological data and the historical sources point to the assumption that Kha-sekhemwy[360] ruled over the entire Nile Valley by the end of his reign. He appears to have begun his reign in Hierakonpolis; or, at least, this town was particularly important for him, as the name Horus Kha-sekhem (probably an early form of his name) was documented mostly in Hierakonpolis. Only one inscription of his name has been found on a diorite vessel in the Step Pyramid, while his funerary monument was built in Abydos. Later he changed his name to Horus-Seth Kha-sekhemwy, probably referring to the fact that he had pacified the two lands, and possible also conquered the northern part of the country; however, we have no evidence for this, being a hypothetical reconstruction only[361]. The only document in which there is a mention of fighting are two statues found in Hierakonpolis, with the mention of 'northern enemies 47.209'[362] and the representation of defeated people.

Unfortunately, there is no further data to assist in the reconstruction of what happened in this period. It is only possible to speculate on the fact that, after the reign of Qa-'a, the situation in Egypt deteriorated, with a possible division of the

357 Kahl 2006, 105.
358 Kahl 2006, 105.
359 Kahl 2006, 106.
360 Wilkinson 2000, 91–4.
361 Wilkinson 2000, 92.
362 Quibell and Greem 1902, pl. XXIII bottom.

country into two or more regional entities. Some rulers are referred only for the Memphite area, with others referred to only in Upper Egypt, with no certainty as to whether they were contemporary or not.

2.3 Egyptian evidence during the Pre- and Early Dynastic Periods regarding the economy, administration and delegation of power, and religion and ideology

2.3.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the archaeological evidence is presented and analysed. This information is divided into three main categories: the economy; the administration and delegation of power; and religion and ideology. These three groups represent the macro-topics necessary to the analysis of a society's features and structure. Of course, these topics are interconnected and closely related to one another, with the division being mostly used to arrange the data and simplify the exposition. Economy and administration are the categories richest in information; unfortunately, when it comes to religion and ideology, the nature of the subject often impedes its reconstruction. The sources used are mostly derived from the objects found in the tombs or deposits of objects (e.g. the Main Deposit in Hierakonpolis), from the analysis of the structures of the sites, and from analysis of the iconographic motives presented on the objects, tomb decorations, and rock art. The objects taken into consideration for analysis are labels, seals and seal impressions, vessels of different material (such as pottery, stone, and others), mace-heads, palettes, and annals.

2.3.2 Economy

2.3.2.1 Introduction

The first macro-area for the analysis of the Egyptian polity is the economy. As has been presented in previous parts of the thesis, it is necessary for a supra-regional entity to have an organised and complex economic structure in order to create sufficient surplus to maintain the state apparatus. In order to understand what to investigate, it is first important to define what an 'economy' is. In brief, this term refers to production, distribution, or trade, and the consumption of goods and services by different agents, either private or public. To outline the economy of a society, moreover, it is necessary to involve some key factors: both those external to the society, such as geography, natural resources, and ecology, and those internal to the society itself, such as the culture, technologi-

cal development, history, social organisation, political structure, ideology, and (if existing) legal systems. These factors provide context and content, and further establish the conditions and parameters according to which an economy operates; an economy is not something that exists by itself, but is rather a product of the society, the environment, and connections to other entities.

To analyse the economy of Egypt during the Early Dynastic period, it is necessary to consider several sources. Most of the information is derived from the analysis of the inscriptions present on seals, vases, and labels, with the majority of these coming from tomb equipment. The names, titles, places, and other information that appear on these artefacts return a certain amount of data on the economy, as well as on the other main categories.

The main activities of the economy concern the production, distribution, or trade, and consumption of goods and services. However, is it possible to identify these actions from archaeological evidence? For Egypt, the evidence allows us to recreate the system of production, storage, redistribution, taxation of the system, and the division of the work and the responsibilities.

The first part follows the production pipeline, which begins with the institution of the royal foundation system for the harvesting of materials; within this, there were two main categories, namely the domains (*ni.wt*) and the estates (*ḥw.t*). The products were collected in the form of goods, tributes, and taxes, among others. Subsequently, the products were stored in storehouses, organised in departments, or sent to places dedicated to the production and transformation of raw materials, such as wineries, oil presses, slaughterhouses, and others; the next step was redistribution. The functioning of this complex system was entrusted to an administration, which was divided into several departments with their own hierarchies.

2.3.2.2 Estates and domains

The royal foundation system

The royal foundation system is the only productive organisation that is known about; given that the data comes from royal tombs, there is very little information regarding the organisation of private property, particularly as regards the lands owned by the communities or members of the elite. While it is known that the communities were required to provide part of the resources produced on their lands in the form of tribute or taxation, there is unfortunately no data as to how the private production was organised, while little is also known about the division of the labour and the use of corvée. These topics will be dealt with in a later section.

The system of royal foundations is fundamental to the positive development, in the sense of growing complexity, of the economic system in Egypt. Some features of these institutions provide information regarding their purposes. First of all, they are mainly located in the Delta, specifically its western part, and secondly, they are linked to agriculture and livestock. The Delta was chosen not only for its natural fertility, but also (if not mainly) for the land control of this area; the foundation of domains and estates provided the governing elite with direct control of the lands included in these new institutions. The elite acquired the land by taking it out of the previous owner's control. This not only generated an increase in the ruler's surplus stores, which could be later reinvested in specialised production, but also created an outpost for the control of lands that were distant from the 'capital', which was the same reason behind the shift from Upper Egypt to Memphis. Of course, this operation required legitimisation, as it was not possible to take lands from people without a proper ideological justification, particularly if there was no military conquest. As a legitimisation, the ruler referred to the divine kingship, stating that he was able to take the land because he was justified in doing so by a higher purpose. The Egyptian ideology justified the importance of kingship via its direct connection to the divine worlds and its importance in maintaining order in the universe.

It is important to underline that under Djer, who was the first to found a domain to produce part of his tomb equipment, there is a legitimised use of 'public lands' for a private purpose, namely his mortuary cult. This was made possible because the ideology changed and the cult of the dead ruler became part of the rituals employed in order to maintain the order in the universe.

Thanks to the objects found in the elite cemeteries, two typologies of foundations make their appearance in the inscriptions: the domains, *nỉ.wt*, and the estates, *ḥw.t*. The main differences between these foundations concern their functions and their administration. Of course, the clearest distinction is in the way the names are written: in the *nỉ.wt*, they are inscribed inside an oval frame, often represented with a notch, while in the *ḥw.t*, they are written in a rectangular structure, also drawn with a smaller rectangle in the bottom left corner. The functions of these are not exactly known, but it is plausible that the domains were built to provide the products for the royal mortuary cult. By contrast, the estates seem to be more generally associated with the king and the court maintenance; even if the products are often linked with funerary offers, they are not solely dedicated to them.

Domains – ni.wt

This name refers not only to a physical place, but also to the personnel, both in the administrative and the productive centres. The domain likely refers to large areas, including the lands, the villages and the communities who live there. The sign of the enclosure around the name, that characterize these domains, is not clear whether should be interpreted as a simple fortified wall, otherwise if it more close to the meaning of *ni.wt*, literally 'city'[363]. In both the cases, it can have three different origins. The first are the *ni.wt* created where villages already existed, such that the domains incorporated the lands and villages into their territory and used them to produce funerary goods. The second type are those created anew by the king, most probably on reclaimed lands, and the *ni.wt* includes the name of the king. The last type are the domains founded by private citizens, which are recognisable by the name of the person who contributed to their establishment; while these are the property of the state, the management and usufruct were given to a private. The lands themselves were small, constituted by a few fields or a small area of pasture, and were used by one or two families. In this case, they could have served to support the funerary cults of privates[364].

It is probable that the images of the *ni.wt* could provide some hint as to the real characteristics of these domains. Indeed, it is most likely that these were small rural centres, including lands for farming, pasture and other productions, villages, and an administrative staff dedicated to that domain.

The earliest evidence comes from the period of Djer, who named it *ḥr-sḫnty-ḏw*.[365] It is interesting to see how this domain was maintained by subsequent rulers, until Den and later rulers thereafter. One or more new domains were founded; for example, Djet founded *W3ḏ-ḥr*[366], while Den instituted the two new domains of *tpi-t-w* and *ḥr-tpi-ḥt*.[367] It is clear how the names are closely linked to the cult of Horus. Domains are frequently referred to during the First Dynasty, but there are few domains recorded for the Second Dynasty; this could be due to the lack of sources from this period, as well as possibly also because of a contraction of the economy and the control over the lands. Thus, it is probable that most rulers maintained the already existing domains. Only Hetep-Sekhemwy, Peribsen and his successor Khasekhemwy (at the end of the Second Dynasty) set up new foundations.

363 In the present work, the words domain and *ni.wt* are used to indicate the same concept.
364 Jacquet-Gordon 1962, 3–21.
365 Petrie 1901, pl. XVI, fig. 124.
366 Petrie 1900, pl. XVIII, fig. 5.
367 Respectively Petrie 1900, pl. XXI, figs. 22, 23.

Here, the list of the domains founded by each ruler and the *nỉ.wt* of the previous ruler still in use under the ruler is presented[368]:

- Djer: *Ḥr-sḫnty-ḏw*[369], remained active until Den[370].
- Djet: *Ḥr-wꜣḏ*[371], still active during Den.
- Den: *Ḥr-tpy-ḫt*[372], no further evidence for this name.
- ʻAdj-ib: *Ḥr-sbꜣ-ḫt*[373], no further evidence for this name.
- Semer-khet: *Ḥr-dšr-ḫt*[374], no further evidence for this name.
- Qa-ʼa: *Ḥr-nbw-ḫt*[375], no further evidence for this name.
- Hetep-sekhemwy: *Ḥr-ḫꜣi-(m)-sbꜣ*[376], no further evidence for this name.
- Seth Per-ibsen: *wiꜣw-itỉ*[377], maintained active under Kha-sekhemwy.
- Kha-sekhemwy: *Ḥr-sbꜣ-bꜣw*[378], no further evidence for this name.
- Netjery-khet (3 Dyn.): *Ḥr-sbꜣ-ḫntỉ-pt*[379], still in existence during the XIX Dynasty[380].

In total, there are 60 references in the sources for the *nỉ.wt*. Every ruler of the First Dynasty founded their own domain to maintain their funerary cults; during the Second Dynasty, Hetep-sekhemwy, Per-ibsen and Kha-sekhemwy founded their own, for a total of nine *nỉ.wt* created. For most of the cases, the ruler created their own domains and used them for their cult. The exceptions are the first two domains, *ḥr-sḫnt-ḏw* (founded by Djer) and *ḥr-wꜥḏ* (founded by Djet), which were both in use until the reign of Den, as well as the *nỉ.wt* of Per-ibsen used by his successor. The explanation for this behaviour can lie either in the importance of the cult of Djer and Djet, or may be because other rulers used their supplies for their own tombs. It is further interesting to note that, in most of the references, there are 54 cases in which the *nỉ.wt* is associated with one or more titles of an officer.

The many titles associated with the name of the domains indicate that their administration was detailed and hierarchical. In particular, three titles are of importance: *ꜥḏ-mr*, a sort of ʻadministrator', *ḫrp*, with the functions of controller or direction of the domain, and *ḥrỉ-wḏꜣ*, who seems to have an operational function linked to the warehouse. All three of these titles coexist and are not substituted.

368 Helck 1987, 204–5.
369 Kaplony 1963, abb 22, 126.
370 Emery 1954, 116-7, fig. 151–2; Kaplony 1963, abb. 189.
371 Emery 1954, 116, fig. 150; Kaplony 1963, abb. 84; 99; 176.
372 Kaplony 1963 abb. 87; 89; 91; 93; 199; 203; 215; 216; 219; 220; 221; 225; 227; 230; 231; 233; 234; 235; 273; 276; 277; 298; 306; 731; 732.
373 Petrie 1902, pl. IV; Kaplony 1963, abb. 205; 278; 300.
374 Kaplony 1963, abb. 253.
375 Kaplony 1963, abb. 228; 256; 279; 738.
376 Kaplony 1963, abb. 281.
377 Kaplony 1963, abb. 283; 285; 286.
378 Kaplony 1963, abb. 291; 297; 303.
379 Kaplony 1963, abb. 304.
380 Garstang 1903, 21.

The first title, *ꜥḏ-mr*, is referred to since Djet, while for nearly every ruler, there is also a reference to an administrator of a domain. While it is impossible to determine the true meaning of the title from the hieroglyphic[381], it is likely that it was initially related to irrigation. Nevertheless, even if it began with this association, evidence from the end of the First Dynasty containing the title *ꜣḏ-mr zmḥt* (administrator of the desert) indicates that these associations eventually became invalid[382]. It is probable that this title indicated the general administrator of a specific geographical area who was in charge of the management of lands, products and infrastructures. The other two titles appear under Den, with the flourishing of the positions of controller or director, probably linked to a development of the administrative structure. The second title, *ḫrp*, first referred to in connection with domains under Den, appears to have a more direct control over the staff of the domains, possibly in juxtaposition to the *ꜥḏ-mr*. The last title mentioned, *ḥri-wḏꜣ*, seems to be connected with the supervision or direction of the storehouse[383], and is possible linked to the management of the products and the flow of the goods produced in and out of the domains. Other authors[384] have linked the title with the word *wḏ*[385], which means to order, with a more executive meaning of the title and the function of enacting royal decrees. However, the present author does not share this interpretation; this is because the graphic representation of *wḏ* differs from the hieroglyphic used in the titles, which is instead the same as the word *wḏꜣ* (warehouse). Overall, it is interesting to point out that the offices of *ḫrp* and *ḥri-wḏꜣ* disappeared with the advent of the Third Dynasty; *ḫrp* last appears on a seal of Per-ibsen and *ḥri-wḏꜣ* on a seal of Netjery-khet. The only title that survived the Early Dynastic period is *ꜣḏ-mr*, which in the Old Kingdom designated a district administrator.

Estates – Hw.t

The first widely accepted evidence of estates appears with Djet, although there is an uncertain attribution of a *ḥw.t* under Djer. Nevertheless, a cylindrical jar stand found in Abydos and dated to the Naqada IIIA/B[386] seems to feature a decoration representing a *ḥw.t* with three signs inside; the author attempted to read these as *ḥw.t-kꜣ šn* or *ḥw.t sn-kꜣ*[387]. This jar stand probably belonged to a ruler of Dynasty 0, or immediately before it, and may demonstrate that this type of

381 Kahl 2002, 100.
382 Wilkinson 1999, 22.
383 Jones 2000, n. 2202; Kahl 2002, 129.
384 Wilkinson 1999, 122.
385 Kahl 2002, 128.
386 Harvey 1996, 369–72.
387 Harvey 1996, 375–78.

institution was already present before the Dynasty 1, and that it was institutionalised into the Egyptian economic system from Djer or Djet, this was. The *ḥw.t* were presumably introduced to manage the resources or to produce specialised goods.[388] A name can identify different buildings or places[389]; from the sources, a certain number of *ḥw.t* are known, with many of them appearing to be linked to livestock, although estates are also known to be linked with the queen's household *ḥw.t ỉpti*[390] during the reign of Semerkhet (First Dynasty), or even interpreted as a royal palace, perhaps in Buto *ḥw.t p-ḥr-msn*.[391]

The *ḥw.t* were identified by the sign of a rectangular enclosure, often with a small square in the bottom left corner. Already, from the graphical representation, it is possible to imagine the estates as a land of around 2 to 110 arura[392], within an enclosure and with a villa to manage it. The function of the estates is not completely clear; sometimes they seem related to the funerary offerings, but it also seems that they were sometimes linked with the *pr-nws* and used to support the court, the royal family and the king.

The following is the list of the rulers and the *ḥw.t* referred to for their reign:

- Djer: *ḥtp-nṯr(-?)*[393]
- Djet: *ḥw.t ḫnn*[394]*; ḥw.t mḏḥ*[395]*; ḥw.t wḏ*[396].
- Meretneith: *ḥw.t ḥḏ-s*[397]*; ḥw.t ỉhỉ.w*[398]*; ḥw.t r-kȝ*[399]*; ḥw.t iṯ-ḫnmw*[400]*; ḥw.t ḫry-ˁ-ḥḏ*[401].
- Den: *ḥw.t ḫȝsty-gstiw*[402]*; ḥw.t sbȝt*[403].
- ʿAdj-ib: *ḥw.t sȝ-ḥȝ-Ḥr*[404]*; ḥw.t nsw-bjt mr-p-biȝ p-Ḥr-msn*[405]*; ḥw.t ḥtp-msn*[406]*; ḥw.t ˁȝ(t)-gswt*[407].
- Semer-khet: *ḥw.t p-Ḥr-irỉ-nbty*[408]*; ḥw.t nsw-bjt mr-biȝ iwȝ-nbw; ḥw.t ỉpt*[409].

388 Dreyer 1998.
389 Moreno García 1999, 2008.
390 Petrie 1900, pl. XXVIII.77.
391 Lacau and Lauer 1959, pl. 4, fig. 21.
392 Husson and Valbelle 1992, 28.
393 Petrie 1901, pl. XII.3.
394 Kaplony 1963, abb. 197.
395 Kaplony 1963, abb. 197.
396 Kaplony 1963, abb. 197.
397 Petrie 1900, pl. V.7.
398 Kaplony 1963, abb. 118.
399 Kaplony 1963, abb. 115.
400 Kaplony 1963, abb. 241.
401 Kaplony 1963, abb. 194.
402 Kaplony 1963, abb. 182.
403 Kaplony 1963, abb. 185.
404 Petrie 1902, pl. V.1; Lacau and Lauer 1959, pl. 3.6–7.
405 Kaplony 1963, abb. 246; 250; 735.
406 Petrie 1900, pl. VI.8.
407 Kaplony 1963, abb. 251.
408 Kaplony 1963, abb. 229.
409 Kaplony 1963, abb. 210; 236.

- Qa-ʼa: *ḥw.t s3-ḥ3-nb*[410]*; ḥw.t p-Ḥr-msn*[411]*; ḥw.t s3-ḥ3-Ḥr*[412]*; ḥw.t ḥpty*[413]*; ḥw.t msn*[414].
- Hetep-sekhemwy: *ḥw.t* [...]*ʒḫt-nṯr*[415]*; ḥw.t k3-Ḥr-ḥtp-sḫmwy*[416]*; ḥw.t s3-ḥ3-(?)*[417]*; ḥw.t nsw-bjt ḥtp-nbty*[418].
- Ra'-neb: *ḥw.t Ḫt-ḥrw*[419]*; ḥw.t p-Ḥr-msn*[420].
- Ny-netjer: *ḥw.t k3-Ḥr-ḥtp-sḫmwy*[421]*; ḥw.t p-Ḥr-msn*[422]*; ḥw.t nṯr.i-nṯrw*[423]; *ḥw.t s3-ḥ3-Ḥr*[424]*; ḥw.t nbw*[425]*; ḥw.t smr*[426]*; ḥw.t ḥmt*[427]*; ḥw.t m3*[428]*; ḥw.t nbt*[429].
- Kha-sekhemwy: *ḥw.t p-Ḥr-msn*[430].

In the first two dynasties, there are 38 estates mentioned, with 70 inscriptions detailing their names; in the archaeological record, they mostly come from the funerary context. While it is unclear how long the estates lasted, the *ḥw.t P-ḥr-msn* had a long life. It was first founded by ʻAdj-ib, and the name it is referred to by is used at least until Kha-sekhemwy. It could be that it is the same estate, and that the name was repeated under different rulers. It could be interpreted as the name of a palace; they likely were used as palaces, or residences for the royal court, when they were in the north of the country, possibly in the area of Buto. Similar to this is another domain, *s3-ḥꜥ-nb*, which is mentioned on materials from the reigns of Adjib, Hetep-sekhemwy, and Ny-netjer [431]. Other estates have names that could have had specific assignments; the *ḥw.t-ihi.w*, located in the western Delta, were associated with livestock[432]; the *ḥw.t nṯr.i-nṯrw* seems linked to the production of the ʻnatron[433] of the gods'; *ḥw.t ipt* is doubtful, but could be interpreted as an estate linked to the production of supplies for the harem; finally, for *ipt*, the name is also connected to a storehouse of vases.

410 Petrie 1900, pl. VII.12; IX.1,2,4,5; XXX; 1902, pl. V.2; Lacau and Lauer 1959, pl. 4. 8-11; pl. 9.46.
411 Petrie 1900, pl. VIII.13-14; IX.3; XXX; Lacau and Lauer 1961, pl. 4.3.
412 Petrie 1900, pl. VIII.11.
413 Kaplony 1963, abb. 260.
414 Kaplony 1963, abb. 737.
415 Petrie 1901, pl. VIII.11; Lacau and Lauer 1959, pl. 11.59–60.
416 Petrie 1901, pl. VIII.9-10; Lacau and Lauer 1959, pl. 12.61–62.
417 Lacau and Lauer 1959, pl. 17.83.
418 Kaplony 1963, abb. 281–2.
419 Kaplony 1963, abb. 264; Helck 1987, 195, 213; Engel 2006b, 28, abb. 6.
420 Kaplony 1963, abb. 295.
421 Lacau and Lauer 1959, pl.15.74.
422 Kaplony 1963, abb. 748; Lacau and Lauer, pl. 12.4,6,9; pl. 80.163–6.
423 Kaplony 1963, abb. 749.
424 Lacau and Lauer 1959, pl. 6–7
425 Lacau and Lauer 1965, pl. 14.1–5.
426 Lacau and Lauer 1965, pl. 32.4.
427 Maspero 1890, 410.
428 Maspero 1890, 415.
429 Lacau and Lauer 1965, pl. 13. 1-5; pl. 14.
430 Kaplony 1963, abb. 767.
431 Helck 1954, 57.
432 Kahl 2002, 54.
433 Kahl 2002, 258.

The administration of the estates is even less clear. There are different types of titles, with the presence of the previous titles confirmed as *ꜣḏ-mr* and *ḫrp*, but not *ḥri-wḏꜤ*; besides these, there are also religious titles, such as *sḫn-ꜣḫ* and *wtj-inpw*, and other administrative titles, such as *ḫnty* and *imy-r*.

2.3.2.3 Collection, taxation and treasury

The collection of goods and tributes is one of the main ways in which power is exercised, regardless of whether the entity takes the form of a chiefdom, a state or any other form of entity. The collection of resources is mandatory if enough surplus is to be accumulated to redistribute it where necessary. Typically, with taxation comes all the management of the duties and rights of the people who live under a ruler, a chief, or an elite. In Egypt, it seems that one of the first forms of power management utilised during the Pre-Dynastic Period was exercised thanks to the *šmsw ḥr.w*, 'the Followers of Horus', which represented a mobile administration that collected taxes and administrative justice. This archaic form of management was soon flanked, and probably would have been substituted in its practical functions, by more stable organisations; the names of the tax-collecting institute, buildings or offices changed during the Early Dynastic Period. The earlier name for the treasury was *pr.w-ḥḏ*, 'white house', possibly in contrast to the *pr.w-dšr* ('red house') mentioned under Den, which is known from a seal in the tomb of Meret-neith[434]. Unfortunately, the picture of the institutes or titles linked to the taxation is not yet clear; these will be dealt with in the upcoming pages.

The followers of Horus – šms ḥr

The presence of this practice is well known since the beginning of the Early Dynastic period, and could be easily assumed to be inherited from the previous period, i.e. a continuation of a practice used in one of the entities in Egypt before Dynasty 1[435]. The Palermo Stone shows that, until Djer [436], the *šmsw ḥr.w* occurred periodically (every two years); after him, however, there were no Followers of Horus recorded until Ny-netjer[437], Kha-sekhemwy[438] and Netjery-khet[439]. It is impossible to say whether the *šmsw ḥr.w* had the same functions and purposes as in the First Dynasty; it may have lost the practical functions of tax collection and the administration of justice, retaining only its ideological and ceremonial meanings[440].

434 Petrie 1900, pl. XXII. 36; pl. XXIII. 40.
435 Schäfer 1902, pl. 1. Ziele 2, n.1.; Wilkinson 2000, 220–1.
436 Schäfer 1902, pl. 1. Ziele 3, n.4, 6, 8, 10.
437 Schäfer 1902, pl. 1. Ziele 4, n.1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13, 15.
438 Schäfer 1902, pl. 1. Ziele 5, n.1, 3, 5.
439 Schäfer 1902, pl. 1. Ziele 5, n.9, 11.
440 Wilkinson 2000, 220–1.

The *šmsw ḥr.w* probably took the form of a royal tour across the land, which was controlled for several purposes. The first is, of course, the collection of tributes from the subjugated territories, while other purposes could include the administration of justice and (last but not least) the espousal of ideological meaning by displaying the ruler and his/her court. This journey had both the practical and the ideological purpose of creating a bond that not only ensured the people's loyalty towards the ruler, but also showed them that the court was dedicated to solving their problems. Once they arrived, the court most probably redistributed the surplus, as well as offered celebrations and feasts. This is probably the meaning maintained after the Early Dynastic period, when other institutions carried out the collection of the taxes.

As previously stated, the *šmsw ḥr.w* gave the ruler and the administration the possibility of operating directly on the territory from time to time. On the inscriptions, there are several references to different activities conducted during these trips, suggesting that there was a focus on the performance of religious acts: for example, the production of the statue of Anubis, *ms(w)t Ỉnpw*[441], under 'Aha. During the reign of Djer, the celebration of a festival, *ḥb-dšr*[442], was recorded on the Palermo stone; this festival was an obscure activity that has been translated as 'censing of sacrificial victims'[443], or '[festival of] censing the decapitated folk'[444]. Regardless, the celebration probably involved some form of sacrifice, or possibly the commemoration of a victory or similar. The creation of several statues[445], and even a military campaign, *sḳr sṯt*[446], ended with the defeat of the lands Setjet, where the term *šṯt* usually indicates the Levantine area[447]. Under Den and Semerkhet, the activities were similar; only from Ny-netjer onwards do the activities recorded seem to change. Under him, Kha-sekhemwy and several registered *ṯnw*[448], a count occurred; most of the time, however, there were no indications of what the subject of the count was (a census, the counting of livestock, tributes etc.). In an ink inscription on a vase, the words *ṯnw bḥs*[449] and the counting of livestock are visible; on two occasions on the Palermo stone, moreover, the count refers to *nbw* and *sḫwt*[450], respectively gold and fields. It is not clear how this count happened; whether the *ṯnw* took place every two years and everything was counted,

441 Schäfer 1902, pl. 1, Vordseite, Zeile 2, nr.1.
442 Schäfer 1902, pl. 1, Ziele 2, n.4.
443 Wilkinson 2000, 98.
444 Claggett 1989, 69.
445 Schäfer 1902, pl. 1, Ziele 2, n.8,10, Ziele 5, n.10; Wilkinson 2000, fig.4, row 2, n.1,3,7,9; row 3, n.8.
446 Wilkinson 2000, fig.4 row 2, n.5.
447 Wilkinson 2000, 190.
448 Schäfer 1902, pl. 1. Ziele 4 and 5.
449 Lacau and Lauer 1965, 88.173.
450 Schäfer 1902, pl. 1. Ziele 5, n.3,5; Wilkinson 2000, 133.

whether it was not mentioned in the annals, or whether it was organised differently. Nevertheless, this practice is mentioned only in the latter half of the Second Dynasty, particularly under Ny-netjer; it is possible that he introduced it in order to restore control over lands under his power.

The 'big house' – pr.w-wr

The attribution of this institute to the treasury is completely tentative and hypothetical, as there are no references or sources that could help with the understanding of the role of the *pr.w-wr*, often this building is interpreted as a prototype of shrine or tabernacle[451]. The hypothesis of the 'big house' as an institute for the collection of taxes is merely based on the lacking of this kind of office before Den. Chronologically, the institution of the *pr.w-wr* is attested to be contemporary, if not antecedent, to the *šmsw ḥr.w*, although it is unfortunately almost impossible to identify the precise role of this office. The *pr.w-wr*[452], 'the big house', is identified from a label from the Naqada IIIA1/2 period in an Umm el-Qaab tomb[453] to Den. The representation of the *pr.w-wr*[454] is a structure, similar to the shrine of Upper Egypt, and probably embodies a structure that already existed before Dynasty 1. It is always accompanied by the representation of a lion, with one to four (but more commonly three) vertical strokes, with a curve in the middle rising from the back of the animal, while the lines are sometimes connected at the top. Unfortunately, there are no readings for this sign, and even if referred to later, its meaning is unclear. The title is often associated with *mḏḥ*, the axe, in representations of the deity Mehyt[455], or during the Old Kingdom in relation to scribe titles. It is not possible to understand whether this is a title or something else. The *paradigm* of the whole title is clear, and it is referred to in the following way on each seal: name of the person – lion with the curved stick – Upper Egypt shrine. It is possible to guess that even before the graphical representation of this title, an oral title with these three elements in this order already existed, such that when writing began to be used, the title was represented in the same way without hesitation. If, hypothetically, the 'big house' specialised in collecting tributes or goods from the territories controlled by one of the entities of Upper Egypt, it could be supposed that from the period of Djet or Den onwards, it was substituted (or initially flanked and then replaced) by the *pr.w-ḥḏ*.

451 Kemp 2000a, 95, fig. 37.3; *cfr. supra* p. 166, 182-4..
452 Kaplony 1963, abb. 137-42, 145–57, 160-6, 168–74.
453 Dreyer 1998, 122.61–9.
454 Kahl, 2002, 152.
455 Jones 2000, n.1718.

The 'white house' – pr.w-ḥḏ and the 'red house' – pr.w-dšr

Tax collection during the Early Dynastic period appears to modern scholars to have been somewhat chaotic. This is mostly due to the names, which underwent several changes, or at least are presented as two different names; these referred either to the same institution or to two different institutions. Since Den, two institutions, *pr.w-ḥḏ*[456] and *pr.w-dšr*[457], appeared; however, the role of these institutions is unclear, as is the question of whether or not they were two different institutions. Indeed, these two are not mentioned under every ruler, while in most cases, when one of the two is present, the other is not. The first official appearance of *pr.w-ḥḏ* is on a seal impression from the tomb of Meret-neith[458], who held power in the name of her son Den. It is possible that the white house was already present under Djet, but the reference is not clear, being seven labels[459], and probably eight[460]. The inscription *pr.w-ḥḏ*, the representation of the lion forepart *ḥ3.t*, and the content, which likely reads as 'white house', is the best quality representation of NN"[461]. The problem with these labels is the juxtaposition and absence of names on all but one. These labels were found in the tomb S3504 at Saqqara, and are usually ascribed to Djet; however, on one of the labels, found together with the other, there is a *serekh* with the name Qa-'a[462]. Thus, it is possible to hypothesise that the institution of the *pr.w-ḥḏ* was present under Djet and/or Qa-'a. In that case, they can be ascribed to Djet. Moreover, the institution of the 'white house' must be retro-dated to Djet, suggesting that this institution and the *pr.w-wr* were contemporary, at least under the reign of Djer and Den.

Under the successor of Den, 'Adj-ib, there are no references to *pr.w-ḥḏ*; instead, there are references to the *pr.w-dšr*, the 'red house', accompanied by the mention of a royal vineyard. The last ruler of the First Dynasty seems to have both of these institutions mentioned: on two labels[463] and a *stele*[464], there are mentions of the 'red house', while the indication of the 'white house' was seen already on the label coming from the tomb S3504. After Qa-'a, at the beginning of the Second Dynasty, there is no evidence of any of the treasury institutions, which only returned under Ny-netjer. There are also some problematic issues in

456 Kahl 2002, 153–4.
457 Kahl 2002, 153.
458 Kaplony 1963, abb.106.
459 Emery 1954, 106–7, n.115–20, 123.
460 Emery 1954, 106, n.121. As the label is erased in the centre, there are no signs; however, judging by the space and the similarities with previous labels, it is possible that the representation of *pr-ḥḏ* did exist there.
461 Emery 1954, 106, n.9; Kahl 2002, 284.
462 Emery 1954, n.123.
463 Kaplony 1963, abb. 209, 738.
464 Petrie 1900, pl. XXX.

this case, as while the *pr.w-dšr* is referred to on two seals[465], it is also possible that there are at least four ink inscriptions on stone vessels from the Step Pyramid[466] that could be ascribed to Ny-netjer. There are no indications of the ruler's name on the inscription; however, they are located in an area in which the other object also present can be linked to that ruler. The remaining rulers of Dynasty 2 have evidence associated with an alternation in the institutions in question: Horo Sekhem-ib and Seth Per-ibsen have four[467] and two[468] seals bearing the inscription of *pr.w-ḥḏ*, whereas Kha-sekhemwy has four seals[469]; finally, Netjery-khet of the Third Dynasty has at least three[470] seals that reference *pr.w-dšr*.

To scholars, the translation of the two institutions as 'white house' and 'red house' has often hinted at the existence of a division of the treasury, following the division of Egypt into Upper and Lower; here, White equals Upper Egypt, while Red equals Lower Egypt. Wilkinson[471], who agreed with this theory, supports this thesis with two premises: the first is that the two names were alternated, and were never presented under the same ruler, such that each ruler chose one or the other institution to collect the tributes and taxes on the basis of necessity; the second is that from Sekhem-khet, the second ruler of Dynasty 3, the name of the treasury changed to *prwi-ḥḏ*, 'the two white houses'. Helck[472] also supports this idea, suggesting that the 'red house' was located in two palaces, called *P-ḥr-msn* and *š3-ḥ3-nb*. The author of the present work does not entirely embrace this theory, as there is no evidence to support or reject it. The archaeological data is unfortunately unclear and casts some doubt on the idea that each ruler had only one of the treasury institutions mentioned; indeed, it is possible that both the *pr.w-wr* and *pr.w-ḥḏ* were placed under Djet and Den, while similarly, the *pr.w-ḥḏ* and *pr.w-dšr* were placed under Qa-'a and Ny-netjer (in particular, Qa-'a has his *serekh* associated with both 'houses'). On the other hand, it seems that the *pr.w-dšr* were strictly linked to the vineyard, as more than half of the resources marked with the 'red house' also cite the name of a vineyard located in the Delta. Excluding the vineyards, there are no clear indications on other objects that link the name of the treasury to a place, meaning that it is not possible to add more information from the provenance of the goods indicated by the labels or seals.

From the data collected on this subject, it is only possible to propose a hypothesis, which is far from being supported by the data. Taking in account the

465 Kaplony 1963, abb. 746, 748.
466 Lacau and Lauer 1965, 75–6 fig. 143, 147a; pl. 32.3, 34.10.
467 Kaplony 1963, abb. 757, 759, 760, 762.
468 Kaplony 1963, abb. 751, 753.
469 Kaplony 1963, abb. 309, 764, 765, 771.
470 Kaplony 1963, abb. 318; Kahl, Kloth, Zimmermann 1995, 86–7.
471 Wilkinson 1999, 127.
472 Helck 1954, 59.

hypothesis of the *pr.w-wr* as an institute to collect taxes, it is plausible to assume that later (between Djet and Den), the 'big house' was flanked with the institution of the *pr.ḥḏ*, which had an area of influence over Upper Egypt. Only with 'Adj-ib was another organisation introduced, namely the *pr.w-dšr*, which was created to facilitate better control over the collection of tributes and goods from the vineyards and other domains in the Delta. Since then, the two 'houses' existed, but not as a replacement for another. It is also likely that under Sekhem-ib and Per-ibsen, who ruled mostly in Upper Egypt, the only institution over which these rulers had power was the 'white house'. It is furthermore possible that the two 'houses' were dedicated to different purposes, collecting different kinds of tribute based on the regional differences between Upper and Lower Egypt. The scarce references that have survived until now fail to paint a complete picture of these organisations, how the tributes were collected, or how the administration of the tributes were organised. Indeed, there are only two titles associated with the treasury: the *ḫri-ˁ pr.w-ḥḏ*[473], an 'official employed at the *pr.ḥḏ*', used during the period of Meret-neith, and the *ḫrp pr.w-dšr*[474], the 'director of the *pr.w-dšr*', used during the period of Qa-'a and Ny-netjer.

The institution of the *pr.w-nsw*

Another department linked with the economic processes is the *pr.w-nsw*[475], which can be translated as 'royal's house'. Graphical representations of this institution led to the supposition that this department was focused on the administration of the goods or lands that belonged directly to the ruler and the royal family. The first reference can be found on a *stele* of Djet; although the information regarding its functions is not clear, the references suggest that the management of the goods seems to be linked to the direct use of the royal family. In the texts, there are often mentions of the *ḫwt*[476], of the *pr.w-dšr*[477], warehouses[478], vineyards[479], and a slaughterhouse[480]. The titles associated with this institution are *ḫrp pr.w-nsw* (a 'director of the royal house'), *smr pr.w-nsw* (translated as 'companion of the royal house'), and *wr pr.w-nsw* (a vague title that translates as 'big one of the royal house').

473 Helck 1954, 61; Kaplony 1963, abb. 106; Jones 2000, nr. 2836.
474 Petrie 1900, pl. XXX; Kaplony 1963, abb. 209, 746; Helck 1987, 228 (b); Jones 2000, nr. 2605.
475 Kahl 2002, 150.
476 Petrie 1900, pl. VIII.12,14; pl.IX.1–4; pl. XXX; Lacau and Lauer 1959, pl. IV.7–11; pl.9.46; Kaplony 1963, abb. 229;
477 Kaplony 1963, abb. 764, 771.
478 Firth, Quibel and Lauer 1936, pl.89.3; Kaplony 1963, abb. 214,318.
479 Kaplony 1963, abb.318,764.
480 Lacau and Lauer 1959, pl.9.46.

These are the kind of titles that would seem to belong to people close to the ruler, indicated as companions. This association with the institution in charge of providing goods to the court has led most scholars to agree that the 'royal house' was under the direct control of the ruler or their close family. It is likely that the *pr.w-nsw* managed the collection of the goods from other domains, warehouses or treasure stores in order to directly support the needs of the royal family, as well as (most probably) the court.

2.3.2.4 Storage, production and redistribution

Introduction

The main purpose of producing and collecting tributes and goods is to create a surplus in order to secure enough resources to maintain all the people under the ruler's dependence, whether members of the court or the specialised workers required for the pottery, metallurgy and other workshops. Furthermore, the creation of luxury goods was necessary to create a bond with the elite class, as well as to maintain the network of alliances and 'commercial partners' outside the borders. Thanks to the labels, vases, seals and other objects found in the cemeteries, it is possible to reconstruct part of the complex apparatus that, during Early Dynastic Egypt, made further steps towards the collection of the goods described in the previous chapters. From the domains, the goods could be sent directly to the warehouse, where they were either stored awaiting redistribution or remained in the storehouse or granaries as reserves; otherwise, if a second level of processing was required, the raw material was sent directly to workshops (such as breweries, bakeries, textile laboratories, etc.), enabling the creation of goods for both redistribution and use in trade networks abroad.

The storage departments – šnwt, vases storages, pr.w-šnꜥ.w, and ỉs

When it comes to the early dynastic period, there is available information regarding four typologies of storehouse, which can be differentiated based on their purpose or the kind of products they stored. Unfortunately, there is scarce evidence regarding some of these goods, which makes it difficult to ascertain their function.

The most ancient inscription referring to a storehouse dates to the regency of Meret-neith, from which time it is possible to find two seals[481] depicting a granary, *šnwt*, and two seals[482] with the representation of a rectangle, possibly a structure

481 Kaplony 1963, abb. 73, 130. The second seal of Meret-neith has a graphical representation that is different from the first one, but it has been interpreted as a silo for cereals (Kaplony 1963, 1110).
482 Kaplony 1963, abb. 110, 180.

or a house, with two sealed vases inside, although the inscription is indecipherable. Information regarding the granaries is limited, with only two other seals mentioning *šnwt* (one of Den[483] and one of Qa-ʿa[484]). After the end of the First Dynasty, the granaries are not mentioned in this form since the advent of the Old Kingdom. The attestations with the name *šnwt* are in direct relation with the *pr.w-nsw* and *ḫnw*[485], also in the Old Kingdom; these are presented as a department under the administration of the treasury.

The other storehouse introduced under Meret-neith is for vessel storage, and is also referenced during Den[486] and ʿAdj-ib[487] for the First Dynasty. During Dynasty 2, only Semer-khet[488], Ra-neb[489], and Per-ibsen[490] have evidence of vessel storage. The titles linked to these two departments have few attributions; under Den, there is a *ḥry-wḏ3 ḫrpw* ('two jars'), and *ḥr-sḫnty-ḏw*[491], translated as 'supervisor of the vessel storage of the *nỉ.wt ḥr-sḫnty-dw*'. The other title, *iry-ḫt*, 'administrator', is found in the Second Dynasty, under Ra-neb.

The period between the end of the First Dynasty and the beginning of the Second witnessed a flourishing of institutions dedicated to storage. During the reign of Qa-ʿa, the first reference[492] to a storehouse *is* appears; this continued during Hetep-Sekhemwy[493] and lasted until Ny-netjer[494]. The only title associated with this warehouse is *ḫrp ỉs*[495], 'director of the *is*'. The last department created for storage is the *pr.w-šnᶜ.w*, referred to only in the Second Dynasty under the reigns of Hetep-skhemwy[496] and Sekhem-ib[497]. It is plausible that this institution is connected with the treasury, possibly a department thereof, and that it is dedicated to storage before the process of redistribution[498]. There are no clear indications regarding the role of this department, as the two inscriptions do not allow us to understand the function of these storehouses or what was inside them. The only information that can be retrieved relates to a department of the treasury, linked directly to the royal house; indeed, the first seal mentions the *s3 nsw*, or 'ruler's

483 Kaplony 1963, abb. 217.
484 Kaplony 1963, abb. 366.
485 Flores 2015, 84.
486 Kaplony 1963, abb. 306a–b.
487 Kaplony 1963, abb. 246.
488 Kaplony 1963, abb. 210, 236, 243.
489 Kaplony 1963, abb. 294, 296.
490 Kaplony 1963, abb. 757.
491 Kaplony 1963, 308a–b; Jones 2000, n. 2209.
492 Kaplony, abb. 258.
493 Emery 1958, pl. 39; Helck 1987, 232.j.
494 Lacau and Lauer 1965, pl. 22.5–6; pl. 27.5–6.
495 Lacau and Lauer 1965, 90 n. 275; Helck 1987, 235.t; Jones 2000, n.2559.
496 Kaplony 1963, abb. 367.
497 Lacau and Lauer 1959, pl. 18.90.
498 Flores 2015, 163.

son', while the second mentions the *pr.w-nsw*. Most likely, the *pr.w-šnᶜ.w* provided a type of stockroom for the goods of the royal house.

The administration of supply – is-ḏf3

During the second half of the Second Dynasty, a new department appeared that was linked with the system of storage and redistribution: the *is-ḏf3*, or 'the supplying office'. The first mention of this department appears on some vases belonging to Ny-netjer[499], after which it remained active until the Old Kingdom. The following rulers also have several references: Sekhem-ib, has one stone vase[500] and three seals, where the *is-ḏf3* is associated with the title *ḫry-tp nsw is-ḏf3*[501] ('royal officer of the supplying office'), with a scribe (*sš is-ḏf3*)[502], and with the *pr.w-ḥḏ*[503]; this is also mentioned in two seals of Per-ibsen[504]. The 'supplying office' flourished under the last ruler of Dynasty 2: there are seven seals with the *is-ḏf3*[505], associated with the title *ḫry-tp nsw is-ḏf3*[506], the *pr.w-nsw*[507], and the vineyards, while for the first two, there is also *pr.w-dšr*[508]. Similar to the latter, there are three seals of Netjery-khet[509].

The information gathered about this department could help to facilitate a better understanding of its role. It is probable that the *is-ḏf3* was associated with the treasury institutions, both *pr.w-ḥḏ* and *pr.w-dšr*, as well as with the *pr.w-nsw* and the production centres. It is plausible to suppose that the 'supplying office' had the functions of collecting food and beverages to sustain the royal family and the court.

The redistribution office – pr-ḥri-wḏb

The institution of the redistribution office, the *pr-ḥri-wḏb*, is mentioned only in a seal of Kha-Sekhemwy[510]. However, it is interesting to note that the *ḥri-wḏb* is a title that has existed since the First Dynasty, and probably already existed under Den[511] and Qa-'a[512]. It is unclear whether or not the title and the later institutions are linked; it is plausible that, at the beginning, there was a person entrusted

499 Kaplony 1963, abb. 862; Lacau and Lauer 1965, 74.194, 75.195.
500 Lacau and Lauer, 1959, pl.V.8.
501 Weil 1908, 85; Kaplony 1963, abb. 267; Helck 1987, 200.9; Jones 2000, n.2877.
502 Kaplony 1963, abb. 268.
503 Kaplony 1963, abb. 751, 753.
504 Kaplony 1963, abb. 757, 760.
505 Kaplony 1963, abb. 785.
506 Kaplony 1963, abb. 769.
507 Kaplony 1963, abb. 214.
508 Kaplony 1963, abb. 309–12.
509 Kaplony 1963, abb. 316–8.
510 Kaplony 1963, abb. 313.
511 Gardiner 1938, 83-89; Helck 1954, 31; Kaplony 1964, abb. 897.
512 Kaplony 1963, abb. 366.

with this task, but that at the end of the Second Dynasty, it was necessary to create a structure specifically dedicated to this purpose. The word *wḏb* has the meaning of allowance, contribution, or (in financial terms) the act of endowing; accordingly, an office or a person dedicated to this purpose is likely to be linked to the redistribution of the goods to the people in the form of an allowance. According to the comparison made by Florès with the Old Kingdom period regarding the same institution[513], it can be seen that the *ḥri-wḏb* or *pr-ḥri-wḏb* redistributed food and other supplies coming from the agricultural facilities, and that the recipients of these supplies were most likely the palace, the dead cult, and the royal ceremonies. Furthermore, it seems that the remuneration of the working groups was not among the tasks of this institution. Unfortunately, there is no further or more precise information available about this institution during the Early Dynastic period.

The production centres

One of the aims of the organisation of this complex network of institutions, domains and collection departments was the elaboration of secondary products. These included both those intended for daily use (such as pottery, processed food or wine) and those luxury goods required both inside the court and for trade with foreign countries in order to create a network of alliances and trade networks[514]. From the Early Dynastic Egyptian texts and archaeological excavations, it is possible to reconstruct a fragmentary, albeit rich, picture of these kind of processing centres.

Some of these have been cited above, such as the vineyards, which are referred to in a seal of ʿAdj-ib[515] in the First Dynasty, and then reappeared on some seals in Dynasty 2 under Ny-netjer[516] and Kha-skhemwy[517]. In the reign of Den, on three seals[518], there is the mention of a winepress in the North-west and North-east districts, as well as one at Neith; it is most likely that, in the Delta, there were both vineyards and a winepress for producing wine. These were products required both in the internal market and externally for the trade networks.

Also mentioned above is the slaughterhouse, *nm.t*[519], referred to on vases of Qa-ʿa[520] and later on a seal of Netjery-khet[521]. Similar in function is the enclosure

513 Flores 2015, 217.
514 Hartung 2001.
515 Kaplony 1963, abb. 213.
516 Kaplony 1963, abb. 747–8.
517 Kaplony 1963, abb. 309–12, 764–5.
518 Kaplony 1963, abb. 238–40.
519 Kahl 2002, 240.
520 Lacau and Lauer 1959, pl. VII.3,4; pl. 9.46, 14.68, 25.142.
521 Kaplony 1963, abb. 293.

for pigs, represented as a square with a pig either inside or outside. This structure is referred to on three seals: one of Meret-neith[522] and two of 'Adj-ib[523].

From the archaeological excavations, several pieces of evidence were obtained regarding areas dedicated to the production of specialised goods. Of interest here are the breweries found in both Upper and Lower Egypt, such as Hierakonpolis and Tell el-Farkha.

Hierakonpolis is believed to represent one of the most interesting examples of production centres, as the HK11C is possibly one of the most important sites regarding the production of consumer goods. Several excavation campaigns have helped to reveal at least two industrial brewing sites[524], which were present since the Early Naqada II period; together, the 'operation A' and 'operation B' sites contained more than 10 kilns and four vats used for the brewing of beer (see Figure 1). Similar is the site of HK24A and B, which contained a similar industrial brewing centre, comprising several kilns and a granary for the storage of barley; in total, they found 16 vats for the production of beer, which can allow for the brewing of 1000 litres of beer simultaneously[525]. Moreover, in the site of Abydos, close to the Osireion, a beer production facility similar to HK24A is present[526]. The production centres of the two sites existed between the Late Pre-Dynastic and the Early Dynastic Period[527]. The food production in Hierakonpolis is still known from the HK11C site, where, nearby to the breweries, other fireplaces and pottery for the production of food, the area called 'operation C' was found[528]; in particular, remains of fish, birds and mammals (mostly cattle, sheep, and goat) were discovered[529]. The same site, HK11C, together with other scattered sites such as HK67, 39, 40, 59 and 59A, were found to contain traces of large quantities of waste material, indicating the production of large quantities of pottery; unfortunately, no kiln for the firing of the vessels has been found[530].

At Tell el-Farkha, in the Western part, a Polish expedition found the remains of a large complex of breweries. Several layers of production centres comprise the facility; some of them are contemporary, such as the W192 and 200, which are dated to the Naqada IIC, or the W201 and W201A, dated to the Naqada IIB phase, while the last phase is present in the structure W47 and dated to Naqada

522 Kaplony 1963, abb. 110.
523 Kaplony 1963, abb. 246, 735.
524 Baba and Friedman 2016, 181–93.
525 Geller 1992, 142–8.
526 Geller 1992, 135–40.
527 Geller 1992, 141–3.
528 Baba, Van Neer and De Cupere 2017.
529 Van Neer and De Cupere 2014; Baba, Van Neer and De Cupere 2017, 23.
530 Baba 2009; https://www.hierakonpolis-online.org/index.php/explore-the-predynastic-settlement/pottery-kilns.

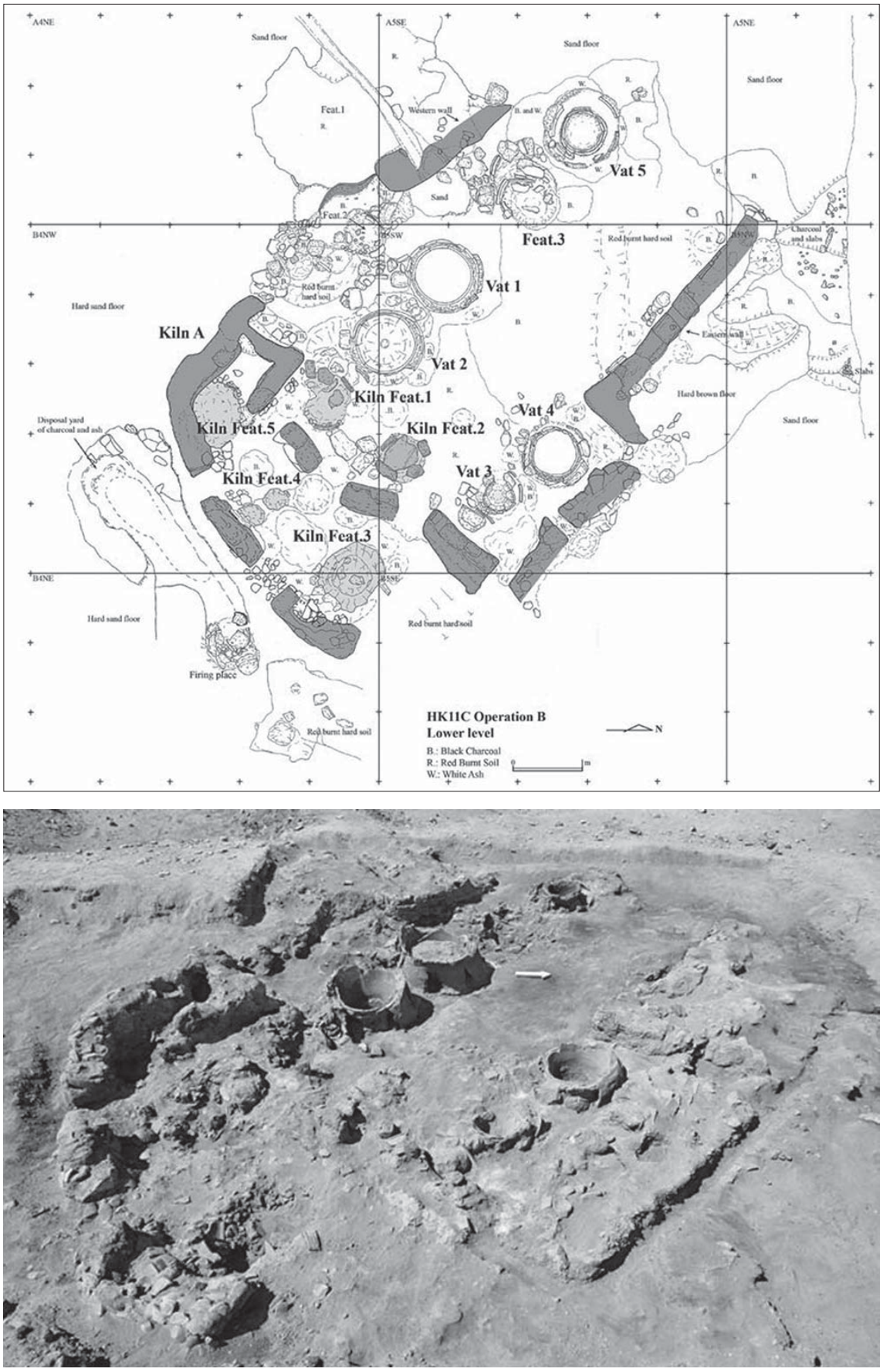


Figure 1. The HK11C site, Operation B: Plan of the lower level. (Baba and Friedman 2016, fig. 4-5).

IID[531]. The complex is similar to the one in Hierakonpolis, both in terms of its structure and chronology.

Egypt was rich in natural resources, particularly in the territories outside of the Nile Valley. Production centres for the initial processing of raw materials were most likely located close to mining locations, as this would result in a more transportable product. One of the regions best known for the quarrying of metals and stones was the Sinai Peninsula, which was known in particular for copper, particularly at Serabit el-Khadim in the southwest and Timna in the Wadi Arabah[532]. Copper was also found in the Eastern Desert; thus, the presence of copper in these regions indicates that this material had been mined since Pre-Dynastic times and that the control of these quarries was strategic[533]. Sinai is also the place from which turquoise was mined, with the only known source being the Wadi Maghara[534], not too far from Serabit el-Khadim[535]. Close to these two sites is probably located the first attestation of the Egyptian exploitation of the Sinai area. At Wadi El-Humur, there are three bas-reliefs, at least two of which attest the name of the ruler Den[536]. One of the bas-reliefs represents the ruler in the act of smiting the enemies and accompanied by a person named *ꜥnḫ-kꜣ*; this person held several titles, among them *ṯt*, the vizier[537]. This official is also associated with the domain *ḥr sḫntj ḏw*[538]. It is possible that the people in charge of that domain could also be responsible for organising expeditions in the region of the Sinai. The institution of titles and offices similar to those used for the domains or estates (such as *im.i rꜥ ḫꜣs.wt*, 'governor of the foreign land', or *ꜥḏ-mr zmit*, 'administrator of the desert') indicated the importance of control being exerted over these areas by the central government, a control that goes back to the First Dynasty. This justified the administration's efforts to create a structure specifically designed to organise the operations conducted in that location.

2.3.2.5 Conclusions

The data gathered on the economic aspects of Early Dynastic Egypt are fundamental to an understanding of how they attempted to combine the necessary control over territory, production, and the exploitation of the resources in different areas. The Delta is probably the clearest example of this; here, the founda-

531 Chichowski 2008.
532 Ogden 2009, 149
533 Hendrickx and Bavay 2002, 60.
534 Kahl, Kloth, Zimmermann 1995, 120–1.
535 Aston, Harrell and Shaw 2009, 62.
536 Ibrahim and Tallet 2009.
537 Ibrahim and Tallet 2009, 182.
538 *Cfr. supra* p. 126.

tions of the domains allowed both for the exploitation of the rich and productive soil and the creation of outposts that ensured better control over that region. The domains, processing centres, and redistribution offices created areas where the administrative apparatus could control the territory. Furthermore, the demand for a workforce created a bond between the area's inhabitants and the newly arrived political entity.

Using the products obtained from the different areas of Egypt, the ruling class was able to create a sufficient surplus of goods to not only pay (through the redistribution office) the workers employed in the domains and production centres, but also to maintain the court and the administration, as well as to create the large exchange networks required to import luxury goods from foreign lands. These, in turn, were necessary for maintaining the upper class' dependence on the ruler, or the ruling family, as only the monarch could donate these luxury gifts, which were indispensable if they were to display their status. This aspect will be debated in the third part.

The Egyptian economy seems to have developed since the Pre-Dynastic period; there were production centres and industrial facilities since Naqada II and the Early Naqada III. From the First Dynasty, along with the probable control of one ruler over most of the Egyptian territory, economic structures began to appear, as estates and domains are referred to since Djer in the early Dynasty 1. Tax collection is known to have occurred from the Early Naqada III period, via the *šmsw ḥr.w*, although in the middle of the First Dynasty (under the rulers Djet or Den), it was substituted, or initially flanked and later replaced, by the *pr.w-ḥḏ* and *pr.w-dšr*. Similarly, other institutions were standardised under Den. Another significant input to the organisation of the Egyptian economic system happened under Ny-netjer, who introduced or normalised the system of storage and redistribution through the *is-ḏf3*, 'the supplying office'. This process lasted until the end of the Second Dynasty and through the beginning of the Third Dynasty.

To summarise this part, evidence can be seen of a growing economy that needed to expand and regulate the institutions required for its functioning. The bases of these institutions date back to the Pre-Dynastic period, but developed throughout the entire Early Dynastic period, with some rulers seeming to have left a more substantial mark on them than others. This process only ended with the advent of the Old Kingdom, at which point most of these institutions were already almost established, with only a few adjustments happening later. While, of course, economic growth never stopped throughout the entirety of Egyptian history, the base systems were fully formed and largely standardised at this time.

Economy		
Estates and domains	4b. the facilities of state-level industries.	I Dyn - Djer (prob. existing since Naqada IIIA-B period)
Collection, Taxation and treasury	2. the centralised decision-making process is both hierarchical and compartmentalised into multiple specialised institutions.	0 Dyn few institutions; I Dyn development and standardisation; II Dyn additional development
Storage, production and redistribution	4b. the facilities of state-level industries.	0 Dyn industrial facilities; I Dyn development; II Dyn standardisation

2.3.3 Administration and delegation of power

2.3.3.1 Introduction

The presence of an administration, as discussed previously in this thesis, is not exclusively a characteristic of a state entity; even chiefdoms or analogues may have a bureaucratic apparatus. The difference lies in its complexity and the necessity of an administration based not only on kin, but that is also open to 'commoners' (or at least to the members of the upper class for the higher titles).

The administration is both necessary to maintain the operations in the country, particularly the economic structure, and dependent on the surplus generated to support itself. Nevertheless, the economy is only one of the aspects that must be managed in a country: there are also bureaucracies in charge of the military, religious rituals, and spreading the ruling ideology in order to legitimise the ruler's control over the territory. This exercise of control and management requires a certain degree of power delegation. The ruler cannot be constantly present in a territory; moreover, as the size of the territory increases, the presence of the ruler's power is easily forgotten, which could result in defection or loss of control over both a territory and its resources or strategic advantage. In order to retain control, the ruler must therefore delegate some power to other people, who understand that were they to defy the ultimate authority, consequences (such a crushing military defeat) would result.

Control over territory is another fundamental aspect of administration. The necessity of dividing the country into smaller areas in order to secure better control is of primary importance and one of the features of a state. In the present work, this topic is examined first, followed by the presentation of the administrative titles and the other titles found in the archaeological records. In the last part, the hierarchies and the levels of the bureaucratic structure will be presented to facilitate an understanding of its complexity and an analysis of the presence of extra-kin members.

2.3.3.2 Territorial subdivision

The division of the territory and the system of the Nomoi

The administrative subdivision of Egypt is known from the Dynastic era as the *nome* system, or *sp3t* in hieroglyphics. The division of districts allowed for a uniform administration of the Egyptian territory; there were twenty-two *nomoi* for Upper Egypt (these numbers remained constant throughout Egyptian history), and up to twenty *nomoi* for Lower Egypt (these numbers grew over time due to land reclamation, as marshes and other swampy areas were converted into cultivated lands). The system is most probably an evolution of pre-existing divisions, the majority of which were already in place, only formalised and later crystallised as *nomoi*.

Unfortunately, there is no evidence regarding the creation of this system and when this occurred. It seems that the system was already implemented at the beginning of the Old Kingdom; thus, it was probably formalised between the end of the Second Dynasty and the beginning of the Third Dynasty. The texts attest to the presence of ten *nomoi* on seals or on vases from the period between Kha-sekhemwy[539] and Netjery-khet[540], with a fragmentary vase of Per-ibsen that depicts the pole and the lower part of a *nome* standard[541]. In addition to these documents, there are indications of certain places already existing under previous rulers; the two seals[542] already mentioned for the winepress are of fundamental importance, as they contain the indication of a North-west and a North-east district, probably an archaic subdivision of the Delta. The importance of these two texts lies in their chronology. The *serekh* represented contain the name of Den. Since the *šms-ḥr* disappeared in their original form during the reign of Den, it is possible that in the following years, a system of more efficient and stable provincial administration was arranged to replace 'the Followers of Horus'. This is also documented on another label, from the tomb U-j of the Naqada IIIA1-2 period, where the sign of the Scorpion standing over the sign of an irrigation canal (N24) could indicate the 'District of the Scorpion'[543]. Absent any other indication of places or *nomoi* until Kha-sekhemwy, the known *nomoi* system may have been implemented between the reign of Den and the end of the Second Dynasty; furthermore, it is also possible that a proto-division of the territory (not the system of *nomoi*) utilising totemic names had been in use since the Naqada III period.

539 Engel 2006a, kat 1–10.
540 Newberry 1909, pl. XXIII, fig. 8; Engel 2006a, kat. 13–4.
541 Petrie 1901, pl. XXI.172; Engel 2006a, kat. 15.
542 Engel 2006a, kat. 17a–b.
543 Kahl 2003, 127–8.

The administrative title *ḥ3ty-ʿ*[544], 'administrator', linked mostly to the domains, seems to have assumed a more general character over time, being used to indicate not only the administrator of a domain but also (most probably) the administrator of a district. This suggests that the title transformed from having a specific meaning to a more general meaning. In addition, the regions controlled by the *ḥ3ty-ʿ* were later transformed into districts, or *nomoi*. The title *ḥ3ty-ʿ mr zmit*[545], 'administrator of the desert', which was already documented at the end of the First Dynasty, likely referred to an office in charge of controlling the commercial or extractive activities of a desert area; in this case, it was also present on a rock inscription from the Wadi Maghara in the Sinai. In the Delta, moreover, the land organisation system of the domains seems to have established the central points for collecting resources, administrating lands and people, and controlling the territory, meaning that it most likely became the easiest starting point from which to form a district. This title later acquired a more general definition and applied to all the areas or districts, becoming the common title for provincial administrators in the Third Dynasty[546]. This concept of the central area – which not only controls the surroundings, but also connects all the territories close to it through a network of goods, services and peoples flowing in and out of the central point towards the fields at the peripheries – is clarified in the next paragraph through the discussion of the 'Zentralort Theorie'.

The settlement hierarchy – 'Zentralort Theorie'

The theory of the *Zentralort* states that central places that offer many functions are referred to as higher-order centres, while places that provide fewer functions are lower-order centres[547]; this, accordingly, creates a hierarchy of centres. Christaller established a catalogue of central institutions to evaluate the supremacy of a central place and to characterise the different hierarchical levels[548]. In his theory, he considered telephone connections, methods of communication, market supplies and other variabilities, although these are scarcely applicable to archaeology. The key importance of the *Zentralort* theory is it determines centrality through an evaluation of factors that include but are not limited to demographics. Christaller stated that central places are at first not settlements, but rather spatial manifestations of central functions[549], as well as the spatial or-

544 *Cfr. supra* p. 127.
545 Emery 1958, pl. 39.
546 Wilkinson 1999, 139–40.
547 Christaller 1968, 26.
548 Christaller 1968, 139–140.
549 Christaller 1968, 25.

ganisation that occurs through the interactions. The work of Denecke[550] helped to define Christaller's theory for historical contexts. Denecke individuated ten categories of functions and institutions that are able to define central places[551]: political and administrative functions and institutions, institutions of law, institutions of security, cultic and spiritual institutions, cultural institutions, institutions of charity, institutions of agricultural economy and administration, institutions of craft, institutions of trade, and institutions of traffic and transport. In a following simplification of the notion of central function, Gringmuth-Dallmer[552] reduced the number of central functions that characterise central places to five: administration, security, craft and industry, trade, and cult. The highest-ranked settlement needs to have all of these functions; moreover, the lower a particular place is ranked in the hierarchy, the fewer of these characteristics it would have. The central places are intended to achieve a relative concentration of interaction. The theory of *Zentralort* had already found an application in the 1990s in the work of Breuer[553] and Franke[554]; this last work, in particular, through a detailed use of the sources, demonstrated that the idea of a city – or, in this case, of a central place – was already in existence during the Old Kingdom, and thus dated back to before the New Kingdom[555].

Applying this theory to the Egyptian case allows us to construct a clear picture of the settlement hierarchy. The *Zentralort* is the settlement with the greatest number of interactions, and that contains institutions of administration, security, craft and industry, trade, and cult, in addition to being the place where the palace of the ruler is located. It is independent from the size of the population, meaning that the central place could vary, changing from Thinis to Memphis, as well as Herakleopolis Magna, Thebes, Amarna, and Pi-Ramesses among others in subsequent years. In these places, all the required institutions, cult places, industries and military facilities were present, in addition to the royal palaces, interaction centres and social networks. The idea of the Zentralort as the apex of the hierarchical settlement structure is also confirmed by the writings of Franke, who states that the central place also includes intellectual goods that can be used to establish consensus and identity within the social group. In particular, central places are based around three ideological and architectural poles: administrative and domicile, temple, and necropolis. Furthermore, the central city has the property of being the target of interactions, as it is the focus and stage of social relation-

550 Denecke 1972.
551 Denecke 1972, 43.
552 Gringmuth-Dallmer 1996, 8.
553 Breuer 1990, 69.
554 Franke 1994.
555 Franke 1994, 31; 44–5.

ships[556]. 'If the location of the Zentralort could change because of the presence of not-physical features, the other three levels are identified by different, and more static, elements.

The second level of settlements are central places containing administrative and cult buildings, craft and industry facilities, as well as local security forces and trade networks with both regional and extra-regional importance; however, the court and the ruler are located elsewhere. While it is possible that these settlements contain buildings that host the court during visits, these are not lived in permanently. During the Early Dynastic period, these places were the oldest and largest settlements (for example, Elephantine, Hierakonpolis, Thinis, Naqada, Buto, Sais, Tell el-Farkha and others), which later became the settlements that were the centres of the *nomoi*. They were the centre of the administrators, *ḫrd-mr*, and later the governors.

The third level of settlements were places where the administrative buildings were limited to places for the local administrators, subordinate to the regional authority, or even buildings where the local authorities would briefly stop by during their visits, albeit not permanently. There were small cult shrines, mostly dedicated to local deities, while the craft and industry facilities were usually only dedicated to the initial processing of the raw materials; moreover, no military facilities were present. Into this category fall all of the small settlements that connected the villages and the fields. The main purpose of these places was to collect the resources coming in from the production centres, fields, mines, quarries, fishing ponds and the like, process them, and direct the flow of resources through the second-level settlements. The estates and domains collocated in this level had administrators, but they were not settlements with services, and nor were they home to large or medium-sized exchange centres.

All production unities – for instance, small villages, fields, permanent mines or quarries, fishing villages, and the like – made up the last level. They had no services, and most likely only a local shrine that was made of perishable material and often dedicated to the ancestors of the family living there. They needed to be sustained by the local central places, the third-level settlements, and all their resources were directed there. No production centres were present, with only sufficient production to meet family requirements. There are no archaeological traces of this level of settlements, which are referred to only as raw material production centres.

556 Franke 1994, 40.

2.3.3.3 The administrative apparatus

All the institutions and different offices of the administrative apparatus required people to manage the various tasks of the Egyptian bureaucracy. The numerous archaeological contexts have provided many titles of administration officers. From this evidence, it is possible to reconstruct several institutions, along with the few personnel employed there; it is also possible to follow their careers, which could even start under one ruler and continue under his successor. It is, however, not possible to reconstruct the entire administrative apparatus, as there are many gaps in the available data, and it is also difficult to understand the hierarchical relations between the titles; furthermore, these titles may or may not have been related to a real duty. Furthermore, it is also important to try to define when there was a 'mere' concession of administrative roles and when there was a proper delegation of power, as this marks an important aspect of the development of the bureaucratic apparatus, as does the point at which the administration started to become hierarchical, structured and open to commoners. In this chapter, the different titles and their hierarchy are presented in an attempt to recreate the clearest possible picture of the Early Dynastic administration. In the interests of clarity, moreover, the following chapters are dedicated to the religious titles, although this is not intended to represent the structure of their division in antiquity; many holders of high rank titles also had religious titles.

2.3.3.4 The titles linked to the Egyptian court

The $iry\text{-}p^{\varsigma}w.t$ *title*

People close to the ruler, most certainly within his close family, probably possessed the higher titles. The most significant title was the $iry\text{-}p^{\varsigma}w.t$[557], 'keeper of the paw.t', which was either the hereditary prince, the eldest man, or the son of the royal family[558]. There is little reference made to this title in the documents, most likely because this person was not directly involved with practical administration; it is highly probably that the title has no specific functions, and only granted a hierarchical position within the court and kin. It seems that this title was subjected only to another title, $s(t)m$, a religious title that will be detailed in the next chapter; the fact that the owner held both titles, and that the $s(t)m$ title was written before $iry\text{-}p^{\varsigma}w.t$, suggests its importance and superiority[559]. One of the most complete references to this title comes in the form of the stele of $Mrj\text{-}k3$[560] during the reign of Qa-'a.

557 Jones 2000, n. 1157; Kahl 2002, 44.
558 Helck 1954, 55; Helck 1987, 216, 233; Baines 1995b, 133.
559 Baines 1995b, 132–3.
560 Emery 1958, pl.39; Helck 1987, 230–6.

The t3ity z3b ṯ3ty title, the vizier

Another of the highest titles was, of course, the vizier, which was subjected to several changes in graphical representation. The first form, already mentioned under Nar-mer in his famous palette and mace-head, is *ṯt* or only *ṯ*; in a seal of 'Aha[561], there is also another mention of a *ṯt*. It is only under Ny-netjer, on a series of vases[562], that the full representation of the title *t3ity z3b ṯ3ty* appears. This formula was standardised throughout Egyptian history until the end of the Middle Kingdom when this title ceased to exist. During the Early Dynastic Period, this title was assigned to the kin of the rulers until at least the Fourth Dynasty; only from the end of the Dynasty 4 was the title was given to persons unrelated to the leader's kin[563]. There are several analyses on the title of *t3ity z3b ṯ3ty*, with particular focus on the composition of three distinct words. Some scholars have attempted to read it with a triple meaning: *t3ity*, which literally means 'he of the curtain', linking the holder to the court; *z3b*, translated as 'noble', identified as the possessor, part of the aristocracy, or the juridical aspect of the office; finally, *ṯ3ty*, which cannot be translated but has been linked to an administrative role[564]. There is no evidence to confirm or reject this thesis, although it is nevertheless important to point out that the holder of this title was originally also part of the ruler's kin, most likely the inner circle. This administrator was thus certainly a member of the elite and part of the court, as well as its administrative functions, even if it is not known which degree of power this title represented during the Early Dynastic period; apparently, until the Third Dynasty, the society lacked a proper delegation of power, and this administrator was most likely a helper of the ruler in the administration of the country.

Other court titles

In addition to this main title, other titles are known from the Early Dynastic Period that are linked to the court or the ruler itself. These titles were usually held by close members of the family at first, later becoming more widespread during the Old Kingdom as they were granted to other people unrelated to the kin of the ruling individual. One example is the title *smr(w)*[565], translated as 'Friend', which most likely indicated the people at the service of the sovereign, who were probably (at least at the beginning) the ruler's son[566]. Other titles, such as the

561 Kaplony 1963, abb. 17.
562 Lacau and Lauer 1965, 1-3 n.1; pl. 1.1–7.
563 Husson and Valbelle 1992, 37.
564 Husson and Valbelle 1992, 36–7.
565 Kaplony 1963, abb. 241.
566 Helck 1987, 215.

ḫrp-nsw ('director of the throne'), *ḥry sst3* ('head of secrets',) *ḫrp-ʿḥ* ('director of the palace'), or *ḫrp-wj3-nswt* ('director of the royal boat')[567], were all linked to the management of the palace or the personal activities of the ruler, but were not essential to the understanding of the administration.

2.3.3.5 Toward a highly structured literate administration

The development of a complex administration

Since Nar-mer, institutions have been referred to, such as the *pr.w-wr*, that were most likely connected to the presence of an officer or someone in charge of organising it in the ruler's stead; however, no titles connected to these administrative entities are known. The only title that can be recognised is *ṯt*, 'vizier'. As mentioned previously, however, before Ny-, the picture of the role and duties of this figure is unclear.

The first records of administrative titles have been available since Djer, when the system of domains and estates first appeared. In addition, there are two religious offices, the *sḫnw-i3ḫ*[568] ('seeker of/he who embraces the spirit') and the *sḳr-k3*[569] ('offerer' or 'offering'), which will be analysed later. The latter is important because, under the same ruler, the title *ḥry sḳr.w-k3* appears, which can be translated as 'the one in charge of the offering' or 'the one in charge of the offerers'. The presence of the title *ḥry*[570] indicates at least a person in charge of a specific duty, or more likely, in charge of the people who perform that task. This is the first reference to a title that indicates the presence of a person with responsibility over the work performed by other people, meaning that this person very likely had a certain degree of power over the work, and was also likely to explain his decisions to the ruler himself. This documents the first step in the creation of a hierarchical structure, where a person is located between the ruler (the supreme power) and other people who perform certain actions for the ruler or the community.

Under the following ruler, Djet, it is possible to observe an increase in the complexity of the administration. Indeed, a seal[571] and a stele[572] respectively report the first titles *ʿḏ-mr*, 'administrator', and *ḫrp*, 'director'. The seal exhibits the inscription *ʿḏ-mr Ḥr-sḫnty-ḏw*; this indicates the administrator of a domain, i.e. a portion of the territory that encompasses persons, lands and activities. This is probably the first documentation of a delegation of power, such that this person was responsible not only for a task, but also for the control of an entire area and

567 Helck 1987, 215–6, 231–5.
568 Kaplony 1963, abb. 111, 118
569 Kaplony 1963, 118.
570 Kahl 2002, 312.
571 Kaplony 1963, abb. 189.
572 Petrie 1900, pl. XXXI.8.

the people living there. This person acted in the ruler's stead to control that territory and was tasked with administrating that area in the ruler's place. The other title, *ḫrp*, is similar to others seen before (such as *ḥry*); in this case, however, its importance lies in its association with the department of the treasury *pr.w-nsw*, suggesting that administration under Djet began to be more complex and hierarchical. Not only were there different institutions, such as the domains or the treasury, but also people in charge of directing and administrating them, with different roles, responsibilities, and subordinates. During his reign, the first figure of importance to possess several titles is documented, suggesting the concentration of a certain amount of power: this was the *sḫm-kꜣ(-sḏ)*[573], who began his career under Djer and only later acquired more functions, even coming to own his own mastaba, the S3504 at Saqqara[574]. He is associated with several *ḥw.t*, was the *ꜥḏ-mr* of a *nỉ.wt*, and was likely involved in other tasks.

The ruler Meret-neith seems to have continued the policies of her predecessor and further extended the administration. As has already been seen in the previous chapter, several new institutions appeared under her governorship: the *pr.w-ḥḏ*, the storehouse of the vessels and the slaughterhouse *nm.t*, together with the new title of *ḥry-ꜥ pr.w-ḥḏ*, the 'official employed at the *pr.ḥḏ*'. Moreover, Meret-neith trusted a particular person and gave him several titles; his name was *sḫꜣ-kꜣ*,[575] and he was part of the royal family, most likely the closest relative of Meret-neith and Den. Indeed, he created the titles of *ỉry-pꜥw.t*, *s(t)m*, and *smr.w*; in addition to these, he was also a *ḥꜣ.tỉ (ꜥ.w)*,[576] which most probably represents the chief of a town. He also had other duties in his curriculum, such as officer at the store of the vessel, at the *nm.t*, *ỉpt*, and at a *ḥw.t*.

Once Den came of age and was fit to rule, his mother Meret-neith relinquished her position, passing it onto her son. At this stage, Egypt reached the apex of administrative complexity for the First Dynasty. During Den's governorship, the administration not only had new institutions and new titles, but the quantity of personnel involved also seemed to have grown. Under the three previous rulers, the number of people who held titles were few (less than five); under Den, however, around twenty people bearing an administrative title are recorded, many of whom bore more than one. In addition to the previous offices, Den introduced other offices: the first, which has already been mentioned[577], is the *ḥry-wḏꜣ ḫrpw*[578], who seems to operate in the sphere of storage; in addition, the presence

573 Kaplony 1963, abb. 98, 99, 189, 197. Wilkinson 1999, 146–7.
574 Emery 1954.
575 Kaplony 1963, abb. 105, 110, 115, 190, 191, 241.
576 Jones 2000, n.1858; Kahl 2002, 284.
577 *Cfr. supra* p. 137.
578 Kaplony 1963, abb. 218, 276a–b, 277.

of a *mḏḥ.w mḏḥ.ww nsw*[579] (the 'master of royal carpenters') is also interesting. Another new position created was the *ḫnty-š*[580], probably indicating a landholder or an official dedicated to exerting control over land. Under Den's rule, the title of 'sealer', *ḫtm.w*[581]/(*sḏ3wtj*) makes its first appearance. This title marks the introduction of a new figure inside the administration, someone who is not only not linked to a specific institution or a domain but is also a bureaucrat dedicated to the practice of validating administrative acts. This marked the rise of the bureaucracy and an increase in the complexity of the administrative structure. There are two seals with this title: the first[582] is *ḫtm.w bjt*, 'sealer of the Lower Egypt'; the second[583] title, *ḫtm.w ḥr.it š(i) nb.t*, is more complex, but its meaning is less clear. Like his mother before him, Den relied on the help of certain people who held several titles, although in his case there was more than one: *ꜥnḫ-k3*[584], *ḥm3-k3*[585], and *st-(msn-)k3*[586]. All of them were involved in the administration of domains, while the last two were also *ḫtm.w bjt*.

The reign of 'Adj-ib seems to have been short, or contained few references to officers; under his successor Qa-'a, however, the number of records of people with titles increases again. As for most First Dynasty rulers, there are references to around ten officers with at least one administrative position. Little changes in the administrative hierarchy, but it is important to mention that the first professional scribe[587] is referred to under Qa-'a. As with the introduction of the sealer, moreover, the scribe represented the development of an administrative apparatus that progressed toward the creation of personnel dedicated to bureaucracy and to the recording of all the transactions between the different institutions, production centres, and other bodies. The inscription remains a unique case for this period, as there is no other record of similar titles. Furthermore, there are no titles specified, only the word *sš* ('scribe'). The governorship of Qa-'a testified to one of the most important right-hand men for the ruler, *Mrj-k3*, who were buried in the mastaba S3505 at Saqqara[588] and were honoured by all three main titles of *iry-pꜥw.t*, *s(t)m*, and *sm3.w*. All of these titles come from the *stele* he erected at

579 Petrie 1900, pl. XV.16, XVII.26; Petrie 1901, pl. XII.6. Kahl 2002, 206. Jones 2000, n.1721.
580 Kaplony 1963, abb. 182.
581 Jones 2000, n.2763; Kahl 2002, 365–7.
582 Kaplony 1963, abb. 183.
583 Kaplony 1963, abb. 362.
584 Kaplony 1963, abb. 179, 180, 220, 221, 234, 235, 276, 298, 731.
585 Petrie 1900, pl. XV.16-17; Kaplony 1963, abb. 215, 218, 233, 305, 732, 1079, 1080. Wilkinson 1999, 147.
586 Kaplony 1963, abb. 182–5; Helck 1987, 226–7.
587 Petrie 1901, pl. XXXI.43.
588 Emery 1958.

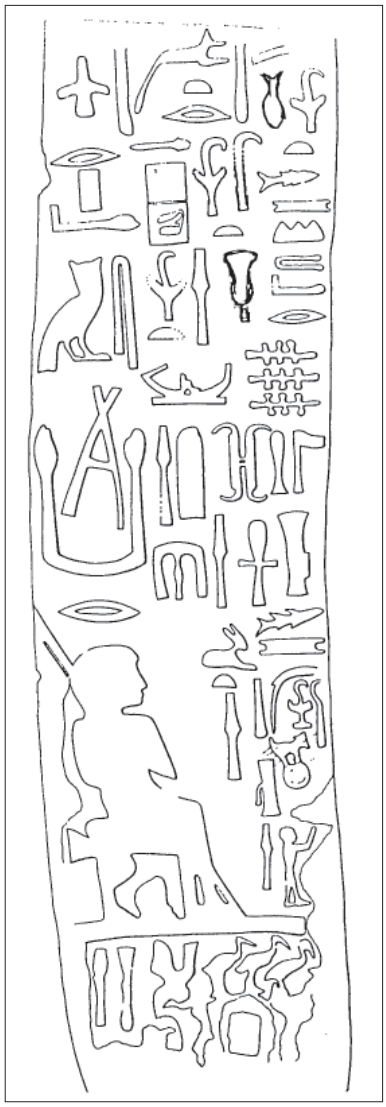


Figure 2. The titles of Mrj-kA (Helck 1987, 230).

his tomb. Essentially, this person gathered every title available[589]. He was director of several institutes, a priest of different gods, an administrator of lands, and a sealer both of the ruler[590], *ḫtm.w bjt*, and of the granaries, *ḫtm.w šnwt n(t) bdt it*; in short, he gathered a large amount of power in his hands (Figure 2).

At the end of the First Dynasty, the administration comprised several departments and offices that supported the economy, the courts, the religious institutions and other aspects of the country's administration. Most of these areas seems to have at least two levels in addition to the ruler: personnel dedicated to operations, as well as a director, administrator or officer who was in charge of the staff and responsible for the activities to do with the ruler. Almost every ruler had one or more people who were entrusted with and granted several titles. It is most likely that these people were part of the royal family, or at least part of the inner circle of kin.

The standardisation of the administrative structure

The period following Qa-'a is marked by uncertainty and a paucity of data. This situation is also reflected in the administration; it is difficult to reconstruct how the country was organised during this period. For the beginning of the Second Dynasty, 'only one reference is found on a sea [591], related to a person called *Pr-nb*, who was a prince, *s3-nswt*, and a *ir iḫ.t spdw*, 'employer of Spdw'[592], along with two other less clear titles, namely *sšr ḏḥ(?) ip3w.t*. The document is usually placed between Hetep-sekhemwy and Ra'-neb, but there is also an official with the same name under Ny-netjer. The overall attribution of this *Pr-nb* remains doubtful.

It is only from the second half of the Second Dynasty, following Ny-netjer's rise to power, that the administrative apparatus (or, at least, the records of it) seems to have been fully restored. In the galleries of the Step Pyramid, many

589 Emery 1958, pl. 39; Helck 1987, 230–5.
590 The term '*bj.tj*' in this concept could be seen to refer not only to Lower Egypt, but also to the ruler himself. *Cfr. infra* p. 173.
591 Kaplony 1963, abb. 367
592 Jones 2000, n.1226; Kahl 2002, 47.

vases have been found, with engravings and ink inscriptions, belonging mostly to Ny-netjer. These findings allowed archaeologists to document several officers with many different titles, and therefore to draft a complex administrative picture. During his reign, more than twenty officers bearing at least one title are mentioned, although most of these had only one assignment and there were no people who accumulated many titles as in the First Dynasty. As mentioned above, the title of 'vizier' in the standard form (*tꜣity zꜣb ṯꜥty*) appears here for the first time; other titles are *wn-ꜥ*[593], translated as 'assistant of *wn*', an officer of the *is-ḏfꜣ*[594], several *ḥm-nsw* ('assistant of the ruler'), as well as *ḥkꜣ-ḥwt*, 'chief of the *ḥw.t*', and *sšm-tꜣ*, 'chief of a land or district'.

During the reigns of Per-ibsen and Kha-sekhemwy, the administration seems to have stabilised, remaining relatively similar to the administrative structure under Ny-netjer. Few titles made their appearance: an officer in charge of the taxation in Lower Egypt, entitled *ḫtm.w in.w-mḥ.w*[595], 'sealer of the products of Lower Egypt', which indicates a specialisation of the treasury of Lower Egypt and an increased administrative complexity, with not only different levels of officers but also different hierarchies of institutions. A second title is first recorded under Kha-sekhemwy, the *im.i rꜥ ḫꜣs.wt*[596], which indicates the governor of a foreign land (literally 'the head of a foreign country'); most likely, this title began to be used for the Sinai and the established Wadi Maghara mines and quarries[597]. In addition, at least two seals[598] with the title *sš* attest again to the presence of professional scribes.

Regarding the Second Dynasty, it is possible to analyse only the second half, from Ny-netjer onward; before him, there is a notable lack of documents, which creates a gap in the knowledge of this period. Even if the historical reconstruction seems to suggest that a crisis or some struggle for the power occurred in the first half of the Dynasty, the fact that Ny-netjer presents a complex and organised administrative structure suggests that the bureaucratic apparatus never declined. Even if some rulers exercised their power over a limited area rather than the entire country, the administrative structure created during the First Dynasty remained. It is also true that, thus far, little data exists on the rulers between Qa-'a and Ny-netjer.

593 Lacau and Lauer 1964, fig. 11, pl. 10.1–3.
594 Kaplony 1963, abb. 862.
595 Petrie 1901, pl. XXII.184, 186.
596 Kaplony 1963, abb. 269.
597 Wilkinson 1999, 144.
598 Kaplony 1963, abb. 347a, 763.

The advent of a hierarchical, structured and 'professional' administration

The successor of Kha-sekhemwy started from a base of a complex and functional administrative structure. Netjery-khet not only maintained this structure, but further expanded it, particularly when it came to the effort required to build the step pyramid, as an even more efficient large administration was needed to manage all the resources and personnel needed for the construction of his funerary monument. The famous 'architect' of the Step Pyramid, *ỉm-ḥtp*, was entrusted with a different function[599]. First, he was probably part of the royal family, being an *ỉry-pʿw.t*; he was also a *wr-mȝ.w*[600] ('the greatest of seers'), *ḫtm.w bjt* ('sealer of the Ruler'), *ḫr.ỉ-tp nsw*[601] ('he who is under the head of the ruler'; a sort of chamberlain), and finally *mḏḥ.w gnw.tjw*[602] (the 'master of the sculptors'). Also of interest are two other officers, who were designated as *sš ḫȝs.t*[603] ('scribe of the foreign land'[604]) and *sš ỉnb.w-ḥḏ.w*[605] ('scribe of Memphis')[606]. These two titles attest to the presence of a hierarchical, structured and 'professional' administration.

2.3.3.6 Conclusions

The administration of Egypt passed through the creation of an administrative apparatus capable of facilitating a better exercise of power over the entire territory. In order to achieve this, it was necessary not only to create a staff of bureaucrats, but also to subdivide both the territory and the power of the ruler. The creation of a territorial partition, along with the sharing of relative power, seems to have happened following the First Dynasty. Even if the *nomoi* system was certain to have been established during the time of Kha-sekhemwy, it is also plausible that it began to be used in a period around the rule of Den and the end of the Second Dynasty, although the first administrators of territories are known to have existed since Djer. While it is unclear whether the delegation of power to the First Dynasty administrators had already been enacted, it is certain that they shared some of the power of the ruler over the specific territory to which they were assigned. It is also probable that a certain degree of power delegation was in place since the First Dynasty, and that it was possible for the ruler to divide his power without the risk of insurrections at this time, particularly to control the most peripheral regions (such as the desert or the mining sites located far away

599 Firth, Quibell and Lauer 1936, pl.58,2; Kahl, Kloth, Zimmermann 1995, 70–1.
600 Jones 2000, n.1428; Kahl 2002, 166.
601 Jones 2000, n.1874; Kahl 2002, 373.
602 Jones 2000, n. 1744; Kahl 2002, 207.
603 Kaplony 1963, abb. 352.
604 Kahl 2002, 343.
605 Kaplony 1963, abb. 327.
606 Kahl 2002, 41.

from the Nile valley). During the First Dynasty, the subdivision of the settlements into four tiers was already fully formed, with the *Zentralort* identified by the presence of the royal palace where the court was located. It is also most probable that an area of the palace was dedicated to housing the ruler's family. Unfortunately, there is no archaeological evidence for this, but the royal palaces are quite invisible archaeologically, even in the following periods. The fact that the court could be moved from Abydos to Memphis, and *vice versa*, further suggests that the idea of the *Zentralort*, or capital, was linked to the presence of the court in a town, elevating its status to that of the main settlement.

The administrative apparatus followed a course of development similar to that of the economic growth, and these two elements most likely supported and enhanced each other. The development of a complex administration has been documented since Nar-mer, when several institutions were documented. The only title recognised is *ṯt* ('vizier'), and there is no clear understanding of his role. The first records of administrative titles and officers who were in charge of and responsible for the work of their subordinates were available since Djer, suggesting a constant development of the societal complexity throughout the entire First Dynasty. Djet and Mer-neith continued this process, while it was under Den that Egypt seems to have reached the apex of the administrative complexity for the First Dynasty, a state that continued similarly until the end of that dynasty. In the following period, it is impossible to say whether or not the administrative apparatus collapsed, but there are certainly far fewer records of it. It is most probable that these institutions survived, but were reduced in their area of competence, mostly geographically. It is only from the second half of the Second Dynasty, under Nynetjer, that the documents provide evidence for a complex administrative apparatus that was restored, if not in terms of its complexity, then in its extension over the entirety of Egypt. The administration remained quite stable and unchanged throughout the reigns of the successors. The advent of a hierarchical, structured and 'professional' administration occurred only under Netjery-khet, who further expanded it, probably thanks to the efforts associated with building the step pyramid.

Administration and delegation of power		
Territorial subdivision	6a. redistribution of power to control the periphery.	Uncertain; probably between Den and the end of the Second Dynasty
	3a. delegation of power and power divisibility without the risk of insurrection.	I Dyn – Djer
	1. Settlement hierarchy of four levels.	Beginning I Dyn
	4c. identification of the 'palace' as the ruler's official residence.	Unknown
The administrative apparatus	7a. reforms and/or gradual modification of the administration and of various aspects of the mode of social life.	I Dyn development; II Dyn complexity and standardisation
The titles linked to the Egyptian court	7b. break from certain traditions linked to kin-based societies.	Old Kingdom (4 Dyn)
Toward a highly structured literate administration	3c. new traits in the system of administration in the early state and a change in the body of administrators; professionals and functionaries administrate the state.	I Dyn development; II Dyn complexity and standardisation. III Dyn conclusion
	3d. an internally specialised administration.	

2.3.4 Ideology and religion

2.3.4.1 Introduction

The analysis of ideology and religion during the Early Dynastic Period is quite difficult due to the paucity of sources (both written and archaeological) to support such analysis. In the study of ideology, it is possible to rely only on some archaeological data, such as the iconography of different forms, and on an even smaller number of written texts. Regarding religion, moreover, some of its aspects can be understood mostly with reference to the titles of the time, particularly those of the priesthood.

Ideology and religion are part of every society, and operate independently from its political organisation. Insofar as changes occur, these concern the degree to which the religion is structured, organised, and complex. Usually, these elements adapt at the same rate as the structural complexity of society: the more a society is complex and accentuates inequality, the more the ideology needs to be structured in order to legitimate the social structure[607]. Religion, similarly, can both anticipate or adapt itself later to the changes of culture, but the organisation of a religion nevertheless reflects the complexity of society, with a more complex

607 Abercrombie, Hill, and Turner 1990.

society requiring a more hierarchical and structured religion. Furthermore, it is also important to keep in mind that the people of the time (including the elite and the ruler), were true believers and dedicated to religion; they believed in the influence of gods on earth, while the ruler was also committed to a certain degree to the belief that his or her power came directly from the gods above[608].

The division between ideology and religion is thin, and both are deeply intertwined with each other. Ideology uses religion as a foundation, and is the platform from which almost every manifestation starts; religion is exalted and greatly promoted through ideology. At the same time, however, there are some fundamental differences between them. Ideology is based on the belief and ethics of the individuals, such that there are as many ideologies as there are people in a culture, although ideology is of course influenced by the culture and reality in which any person exists. Furthermore, people have a certain degree of control over ideology, meaning that they can decide to adjust it slightly and manipulate it to suit their aims[609]. The goal for those people who occupy a ruling position, or those who desire to reach such a position, is to spread their ideology to as many people as possible. Religion, on the other hand, is part of the culture of a collective of people. While people do of course have a certain degree of influence over how they practise and approach a specific religion, religion also has a low level of flexibility; it has dogmas, practices, and traditions that are crystallised over years of development. It is difficult to change a person's religion, but at the same time, religion exerts a much greater leverage over a large group of people. Ideology, by contrast, is much more flexible and easily disseminated, but has a lower driving force.

People who attempt to use ideology to legitimate their actions – such as new leaders, revolutionary leaders, or rulers who have modified the societal structure – begin by imposing their ideological beliefs on others. Through the medium of ideology, religion adapts to the new system, and slowly becomes accepted by the majority of the people[610]. Nevertheless, the question remains as to whether these terms are generally appropriate for ancient Egypt, or whether other terms would be more neutral; for example, the term 'royal theology' implies that there was no separation between state and religion, and that politics was always permeated by God. In the following discussion, the term 'ideology' is intended to connote a neutral meaning and not used in a derogatory manner.

608 Classen 1996.
609 Claessen 1996.
610 DeMarrais 1996, 17.

2.3.4.2 Ideology and legitimisation

The identification of archaeological data that explains ideological processes is a complex task; nevertheless, it is possible to examine the products of ideology, which take the form of the aforementioned materialisation. Thus, it is possible to search for representations and structures indicating the celebration of certain festivals, rituals, and ceremonies, evidence to support the construction of monumental buildings or the modification of landscapes, specific objects, or specific iconographical representations[611].

Ceremonial events are the most basic and simple forms of materialised ideology. These events create common shared experiences through participation in rituals, feasts, or performances. They are powerful media through which to negotiate power relationships at all levels, particularly when they are required for the enculturation of newly conquered populations within the society[612]. Moreover, a kingship requires ceremonies to legitimise its power and to appoint the ruler of its office; for example, contemporary coronations of new rulers continue to represent the most important ritual of a monarchy. Ancient Egypt is no exception.

Public monuments and the modification of landscapes reach a larger audience than any other activity, and can thus spread the ruler's ideology to a wider public; furthermore, they are an effective and enduring means of communication. Generally speaking, the public spaces and ceremonial facilities first appear in regional centres, where they serve as the focus of power and represent the elite monopoly on civic-ceremonial activity.

Iconographical representations are formidable vehicles for disseminating messages. These may take the form of images depicting the might of the ruler, or his or her piety, as well as allegorical representations of the cosmos and its forces in battle. In the same way as the ceremonies and monumental buildings, the ruling iconography also appears since the beginning of the Early Dynastic Period. The recurrent themes appearing on labels, palettes, mace heads and other objects include enemies being defeated by the pharaoh, the presence of the 'chaos vs order' element as a fight among animals, scenes of prisoners with dramatic elements, and offerings[613]. The most representative objects include the Narmer palette and mace head, the animals, battlefields, and cities palettes, and several labelled vessels from the rulers of the 1st and 2nd dynasties.

611 DeMarrais 1996, 15–16.
612 DeMarrais 1996, 17–18.
613 Hendrickx 2010.

Festivals and ceremonies

Ceremonies and festivals are the more immediate media used to diffuse ideology. Not only are they direct and relatively easy to organise, they also create a sense of group cohesion; all people who participate in them feel part of the same group exalting the ruler, or a god who intercedes through the ruler, making them act as a unique body. During the dynastic period, several festivals and ceremonies were known to exist. Of these, however, only a few are recorded in Early Dynastic sources. The first and most important celebration in the life of a ruler was the coronation ceremony[614]; this was a fundamental ritual that marked the end of the chaotic period that followed the death of the previous ruler, as well as the restoration of the cosmic order on Earth brought about by the new monarch. While no evidence of specific coronation ceremonies remains, it is possible that they were associated with other rituals[615]. One of these rituals that can be associated with a coronation is the ceremony of the appearance of the ruler of Upper and Lower Egypt, which first appears during the reign of Den and is recorded on the Palermo stone along with the achievements of his third year of reign[616], *ḫꜥw.wi nsw-bjt*[617]. Under the reign of his predecessor, Djer, the same ritual is also recorded, albeit later in his reign and only as *ḫꜥw nsw* ('appearance of the ruler of Upper Egypt')[618]. It is impossible to understand whether there is a meaningful difference between the three different ways of writing this ritual (*ḫꜥw.wi nsw-bjt*, *ḫꜥw nsw*, and *ḫꜥw bjt*); it is possible that these were different rituals conducted in different locations for different purposes, or conversely, that this was the same ritual with only a few changes in its meaning. It is however clear that this celebration was conducted for the first time in the early years of Den's reign. Thanks to the records of the Palermo stone, it is possible to see that the celebration of the appearance ritual occurred during the reigns of Ny-netjer (at least four times), Kha-sekhemwy and Netjery-khet. The ritual could be repeated in other years during the ruler's life, and was often associated with other rituals.

Together with the appearance ritual, the other two rituals required for the coronation of the new ruler were the *smꜣ šmꜥ tꜣ-mḥw*, and the *pḫr ḥꜣ inb*(*w*)[619]: respectively, the 'uniting of the Upper and Lower Egypt'[620] and the 'run around the White Wall (Memphis)'[621]. These three rituals appeared on the Palermo Stone for

614 Bunson 2009, 87–9.
615 Schott 1950; Barta 1980.
616 Schäfer 1902, pl. 1, Ziele 3, n.3; Hsu 2010, 84.
617 Kahl 2002, 347.
618 Schäfer 1902, pl. 1, Ziele 2, n.9.
619 Wilkinson 1999, 210; Hsu 2010, 84.
620 Kahl 2007b, 13.
621 Schott 1950; Barta 1980.

Figure 3. The ivory label of Den, in the top left register is the representation of a Sed-festival (British Museum: EA32650) (Petrie 1900, pl. 11.14).

the first time in the first record of the reign of Djer[622]. Later, Netjery-khet recorded the same combination of events for his first year of reign[623]. With these three rituals, the ruler confirmed his authority and power over the entire country. It is probable that this was the most powerful and clear manifestation of his right to rule, and that everyone was required to spectate. These ceremonies were most likely staged in the most spectacular and official ways possible.

Another important and well-documented ceremony is the Sed-festival[624]. The meaning of this ritual is complex and rooted in both religion and ideology[625]. It is usually summarised as a rejuvenation ceremony, whereby the ruler celebrated the regeneration of all his power (physical, supernatural, and religious)[626]. The first representations of the *ḥ3b-sḏ*[627] appear on an ivory label of Den, on which a platform and twin staircases are engraved (Figure 3). In the courtyard of the Step Pyramid complex, where Netjery-khet celebrated his Sed-festival, these elements were built in stone; thus, there is a direct comparison between the written source

622 Schäfer 1902, pl. 1, Ziele 2, n.3; Hsu 2010, 84.
623 Schäfer 1902, pl. 1, Ziele 5, n.7.
624 For an analysis on the origin of the name: Gohary 1992, 1–2.
625 Hornung and Staehelin 2006.
626 Martin 1984.
627 Kahl 2002, 287.

and the archaeological data[628]. In the label of Den[629], the ruler is depicted both as seated on the throne under a canopy on a platform with a staircase, running between territorial markers. This representation could represent either the *ḥ3b-sḏ* or the *ḫʿw.wi nsw-bjt*. The ceremony seems to have also been celebrated under ʻAdj-ib[630], Qa-ʻa[631], Ny-nether[632], and of course Netjery-khet, when the ceremony was standardised and began to be celebrated in the thirtieth regal year[633]. It has also been hypothesised that the fort of Kha-sekhemwy served as the location for the celebration of the Sed-festival[634].

In addition to the appearance ceremony, the Palermo stone documents another celebration called ʻthe running of the Apis bull'. The first reference to this celebration is found in writing on a stone vessel of Aha: *sp tp.i pḥrr ḥip.w*[635], ʻthe first time of the running of Apis'. The same entry also appeared for Den in the Palermo stone[636], as well as on a label of the same ruler[637], as well as for Qa-ʻa[638], Ny-netjer[639] and Kha-sekhemwy[640]. While the ritual had already started under Aha, it is probable that it dates further back to Pre-Dynastic times[641]. Initially, it likely represented a fertility rite; only later, probably in the first half of the First Dynasty, did it appear to develop a link to royal celebrations. While different records indicate a strong link between Apis and Memphis, it is impossible to determine the extent to which this link between the sacred bull and the Memphite area stretched back before the Early Dynastic Period.

In another animal-related ritual, the Palermo stone records for Den a *stt ḫ3b*[642], a ʻspearing of hippopotamus'. The same scene is also present on two seals from the tombs K 6500 and K 6501 of Abydos[643]. The hunting of this animal has always been associated with the fight between order, as embodied by the ruler, and the forces of chaos. The hippopotamus, or so-called Nile Horse is an embodiment of danger: it is unpredictable, can easily overturn boats and kill men, and since Naqada[644] was linked to disorder. The hunt is thus a display of force and of victory over the wilderness and chaos.

628 Arnold 1977, 5.
629 Petrie 1900, pl. XI.14, XV.16.
630 Lacau and Lauer 1959, pl.III.4, 6–7.
631 Petrie 1900, pl.VIII.7–8; Lacau and Lauer 1959, pl.IV.4–5, pl.8.41.
632 Lacau and Lauer 1965, 6–7.
633 Godron 1990, 183–4.
634 Alexanian 1998, 16–7.
635 Simpson 1957, 140, fig.2.
636 Schäfer 1902, pl. 1, Ziele 3, n.12; Kahl 2002, 291.
637 Kaplony 1963, abb. 211.
638 Engel 2017, abb. 224.1–2.
639 Lacau and Lauer 1965, pl.34.3.
640 Kaplony 1963, abb. 326.
641 Simpson 1957, 140-2.
642 Schäfer 1902, pl. 1, Ziele 3, n.8.
643 Müller 2008.
644 Ayrton and Loat 1911, pl. XXVII.13; Galassi 1955, 10.

During the reigns of Djer, Den and later Ny-netjer, another religious festival was recorded, namely the *ḥ3b-skr*[645] ('the fest of the boats', or 'the fest of Sokar'). It is not possible to determine whether the festival refers to the boat or to the god; nevertheless, it was most likely a ceremony conducted on the Nile involving a procession of boats or the celebration of a sacred boat, probably with the statue of a god on it.

There are two other festivals that have been documented thanks to the Palermo stone, but their significance is almost unknown. For the reign of Djer, there are both the *ḥ3b dšr*[646] and the *ḥ3b ḏt*[647]. For the former, the festival *dšr*, the word *dšr* (meaning red) is represented with a boat, suggesting that it was most likely celebrated on the water. Moreover, the festival of *ḏt* could be connected with *(w3) ḏt*, the cobra goddess, although there are no further indications to confirm or deny this[648]; the festival of *ḏt* was also celebrated during the reign of Den and Ny-netjer.

The modification of landscapes and the erection of new buildings

Large monuments and landscape modifications are visible to vast populations across broad geographical areas, making them ideal for indoctrination, population control, and the dissemination of royal theology. Monuments are permanent expressions of ideology that link a group to its territory. The erection of monumental buildings, as well as the modification of the territory, is a well-documented practice in Ancient Egypt, and the Early Dynastic period is no exception.

One interesting object that links a ceremony and the monumental modification of the landscape is the so-called Scorpion's mace head (Figure 4), on which is represented a scene in which the ruler seems to officiate the ritual of the opening of the canal[649]. From the Palermo stone, in addition to the 'spearing of hippopotamus' and also occurring during the reign of Den, the *wp š(i)* or 'opening of the canal' ritual is also documented; in this case, it is connected to a *ḥw.t* named *swt-nṯrw*. The 'opening of the canal' has the double meaning of a ruler who controls nature and one who grants an abundant inundation and an equal redistribution of this fertility. Regarding this, Helck believes that it does not refer to the opening of a canal, but rather to the opening of the foundation pits[650].

The *ḥw.t swt-nṯrw*, the building mentioned along with the opening of the canal, is also documented on two other previous boxes and is always related to Den.

645 Schäfer 1902, pl. 1, Ziele 2, n.7; Ziele 3, n.6; Ziele 4, n.5,11.
646 Schäfer 1902, pl. 1, Ziele 2, n.4.
647 Schäfer 1902, pl. 1, Ziele 2, n.10 (Djer); Ziele 3, n.5 (Den); Ziele 4, n.13 (Ny-netjer).
648 Hsu 2010, 85.
649 Gautier and Midant-Reynes 1993.
650 Helck 1987, 158 (Jahr 35).

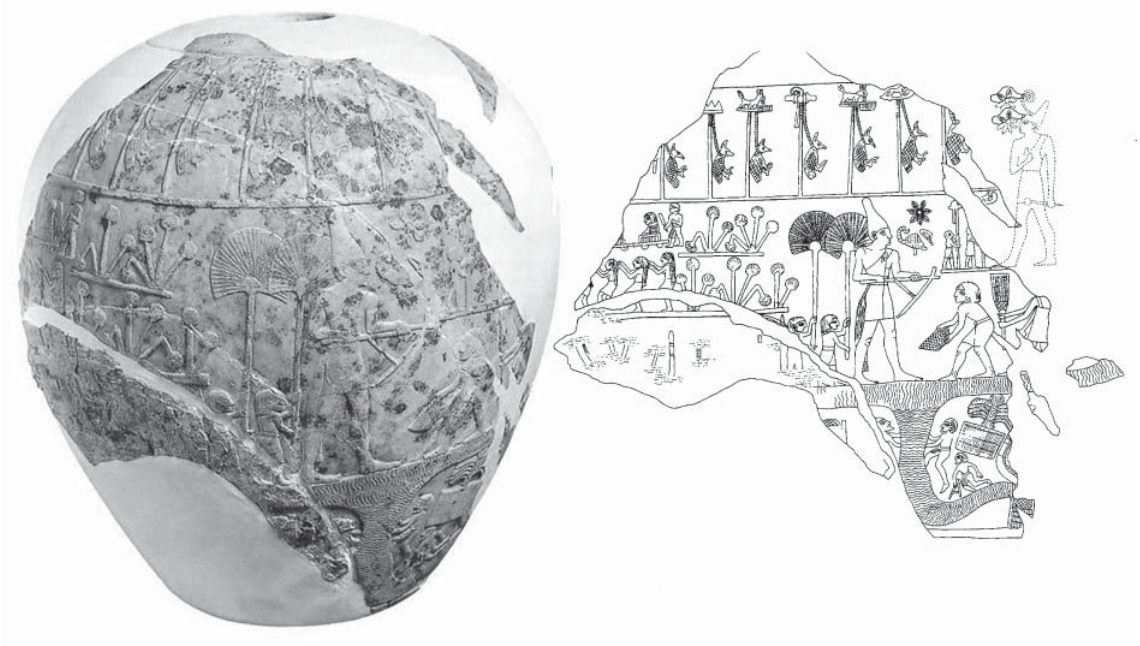


Figure 4. The Scorpion's mace head with the representation of the opening canal ritual (Oxford, Ashmolean Museum AN1896.1908.E.3632) (Cialowicz 1987, 32-38, fig.3, pl. 7).

Heck has interpreted this as the recording of three different phases of the construction of this monument. In the first[651], he translated *ḥw.t swt-nṯrw ḥ3 h3b-skr* as 'the design of the *ḥw.t swt-nṯrw*, festival of the boat[652]'; the following box contains the text *pḏ-sš ḥm-sš3t ʿ3 wr ḥw.t swt-nṯrw* [653], translated by Heck as 'stretching the cord by the Seshat serve and planning the *ḥw.t swt-nṯrw*[654]. The two translations of *ḥ3*, 'planning', and *pḏ -sš* 'Stretching the cord', indicate the design and the beginning of construction for this building[655]. The planning and stretching of the cord are also mentioned in other documents: the Palermo stone records for Djer the planning of a building called *smr nṯr.w*[656], while there are two entries for the stretching of the cord ritual, one for Ny-netjer[657] and one for Netjery-khet[658].

Few buildings or landscape modifications are represented on labels, seals, palettes, mace-heads and other such decorated media. Most buildings so depicted are those that could have been used for religious purposes, such as shrines. One of these is surely the *pr.w-wr*, which is the representation of the typical Upper Egypt shrine. Archaeological work has uncovered a probable example of this monument type in Hierakonpolis, where the HK29A building was discovered,

651 Schäfer 1902, pl. 1, Ziele 3, n.6.
652 Helck 1987, 157.
653 Schäfer 1902, pl. 1, Ziele 3, n.7.
654 Helck 1987, 158.
655 Hsu 2010, 82
656 Schäfer 1902, pl. 1, Ziele 2, n.7.
657 Schäfer 1902, pl. 1, Ziele 4, n.1.
658 Schäfer 1902, pl. 1, Ziele 5, n.10.

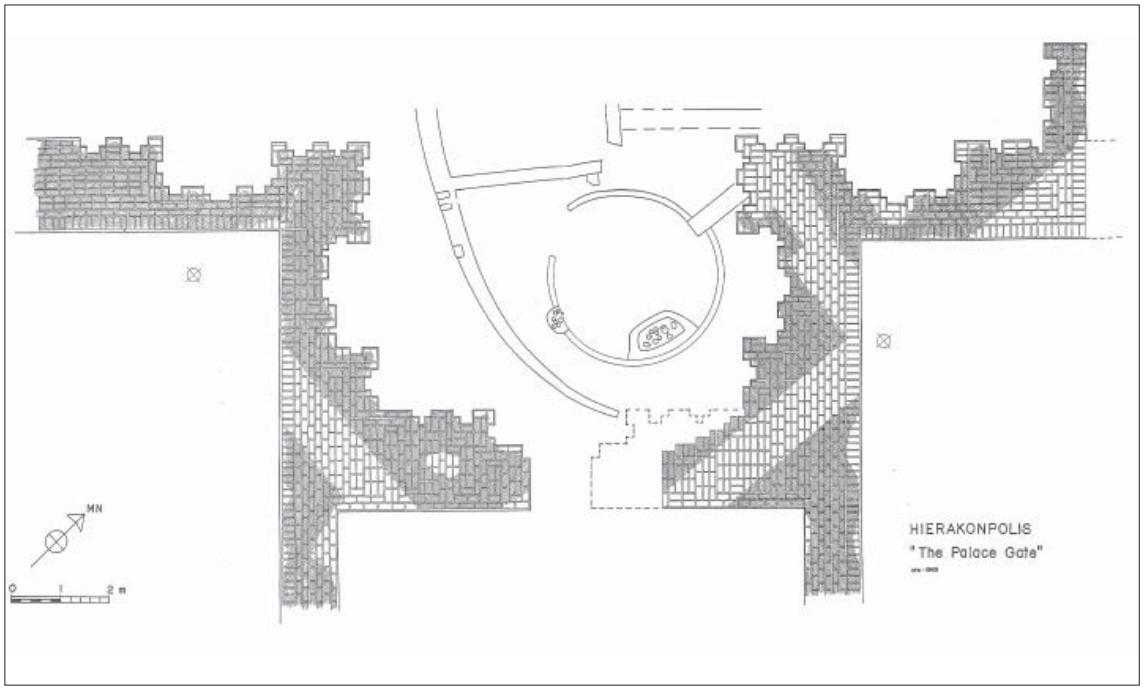
although there is insufficient archaeological evidence to elaborate on this[659]. On the other hand, funerary architecture is of course part of this agenda of monumental constructions. The visual effects of both the environment of places such as Abydos, Saqqara or the fort of Hierakonpolis[660], and the superstructure erected, would certainly have impressed any visitor. These structures were in place for decades, or even centuries, reminding everyone of the magnificence of their ancestors and the requirement that a ruler should be able to govern chaos and establish order on earth. These monuments were a permanent testament of the ruling ideology, as well as the legitimisation of future rulers. These topics (religious and funerary architecture) are further analysed in the following chapter.

For most of Egyptian history, 'secular' architecture is underrepresented; for example, very few palaces have survived, mostly because these were built with perishable materials. The material used for these buildings was mudbrick, which began to be used during the end of the Pre-Dynastic Period[661]; this situation was of course replicated during the Early Dynastic Period. There are only two references of this Early Dynastic architecture outside the religious and funerary context: the *palace-façade* motif and the (plausible) royal palace of Hierakonpolis. The latter is a monumental complex found at Nekhen and published for the first time in 1971 by Kent R. Weeks[662].

The first part to be excavated was a large gate, decorated with niches and built with mudbricks. The walls were covered with a coat of plaster and bear traces of red and white pigment. The niches were quite complex and not uniform, indicating that the wall cannot be interpreted as defensive and is instead most likely the wall of a palace. In 1981, Fairservis[663] enlarged the excavated area behind the monumental gate, finding an area with Early Dynastic features, including several areas that could be interpreted as rooms, storehouses, corridors, service spaces, and the like (Figure 5).

The spaces east of the main entrance, named as C1, C2 and D, are probably rooms with specific functions; moreover, area (F), located in front of these rooms, seems to be raised above ground level and accessible via staircase. In an area to the south-west, from H1 to H11, the archaeologists found small rooms containing evidence of hearths, potshards, flint splinters and animal bones, suggesting a residential area. Moreover, area A (A3,4, and 6), located directly in front of the gate, was most likely a storage area due to the presence of vessels and large pottery containers. Room A5 and A5a are of more importance due to the

659 *Cfr. supra* p. 132; *Cfr. infra* p. 182-3.
660 Alexanian 1998, 14–7.
661 Frankfort 1941, 338; Kemp 1975, 103; Wilkinson 1999, 225.
662 Weeks 1971.
663 Fairservis 1986.



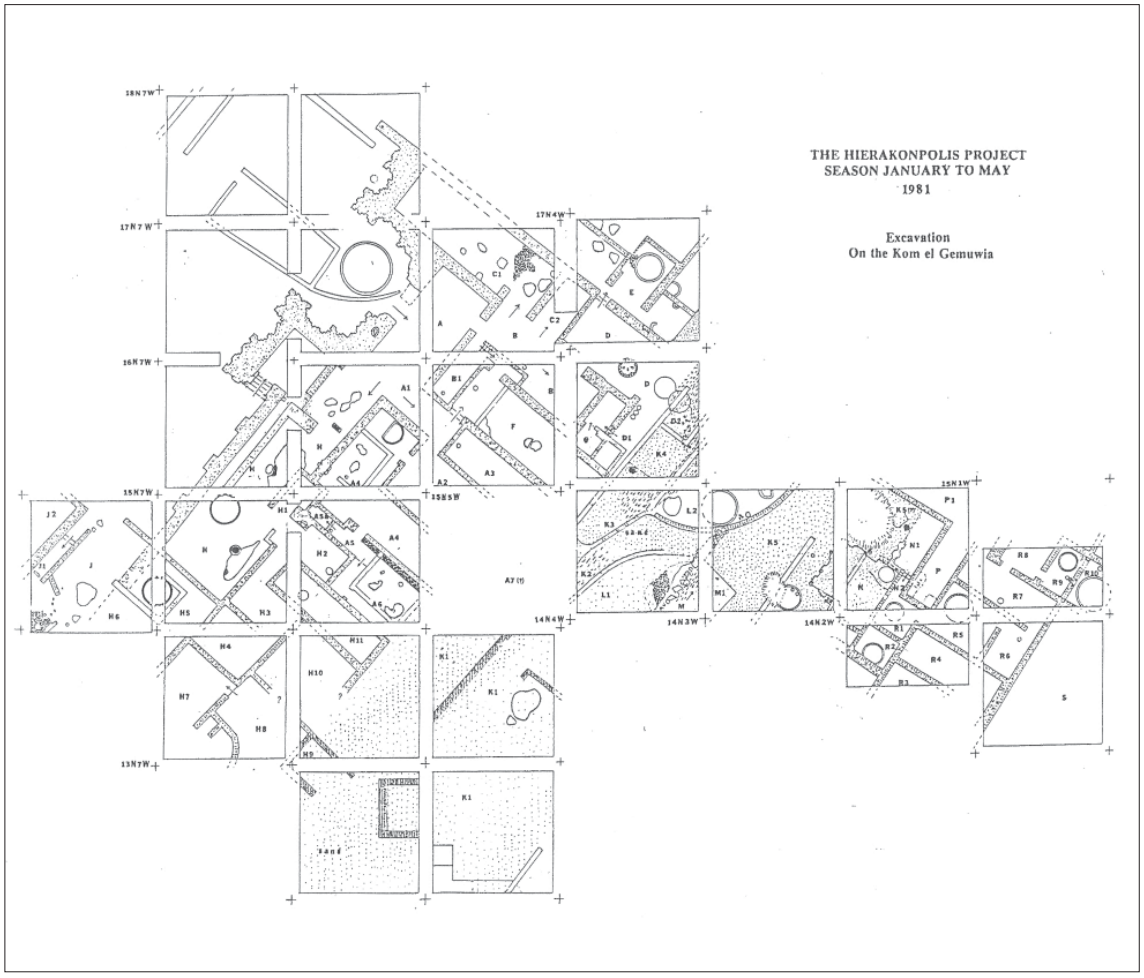


Figure 5. (A) Plan of the monumental gate (Weeks 1971, p. 29) and (B) general plan of the archaic palace (Fairservis 1986).

discovery of offerings, specifically animal parts left on plates, with a bucrane also among them. In room A5a, a copper staff was found with a flat base to keep it standing upright, probably accompanying a small shrine. Additionally, an area of much interest is in the far south-east, which starts with the structures N and the entrance N1 and continues with the rooms from R1 to R10. The N structure is a platform surrounded by walls decorated with niches and holes in the surface, where poles would likely have been inserted. The rooms from R1 to R10 are all similar and most likely represent a storehouse with several spaces. Between the entrance N1 and the storage rooms, there is a passage with a room (P), where an opening (likely a window) was found that looks directly toward the passage. The archaeologists have explained this as a platform (N) where the goods were received; from there, through N1, they were taken towards the warehouse (R1-10), passing in front of P, where the products were registered.

Iconography and the kingship ideology

The visual representation of ideology is achieved through iconography that takes different forms. Since Naqada I, there are certain themes and recurrent topics that have characterised art and iconography in Ancient Egypt. Some of these survived, or their ideas have been maintained while the way they are represented has changed; still others were lost and did not reach the Old Kingdom, or were introduced later. The oldest and most important iconographical representation, present since the beginning of the Naqada period, is the theme of violence and conflict, or more specifically, of the fight and consequent victory of order over chaos. The oldest representation of these scenes can be found on the White Cross-lined wares (C-ware) dated to Naqada I. They represent both scenes containing human figures, with their arms raised in a sign of victory or a dance[664], and scenes of hunting, such as the hippopotamus hunting scene from a Decorated vessel[665] (Figure 6).

It is important to clarify that the hippopotamus hunt, as well as the desert animal hunt, were not of direct economic importance; they were not hunted for meat, but rather had a symbolic meaning. Hippopotamuses were dangerous for the people living along the river, as well as for the crops. A victorious hippopotamus hunt embodied the triumph over the forces of evil and danger. Moreover, desert expeditions to find gazelles, antelopes and other wild animals – usually chased by dogs, rather than human figures as with the hippos – could have represented the prestige of the game, as well as the ruler's capacity to organise and

664 Garfinkel 2001.
665 Dreyer *et al* 1998, 111–4.

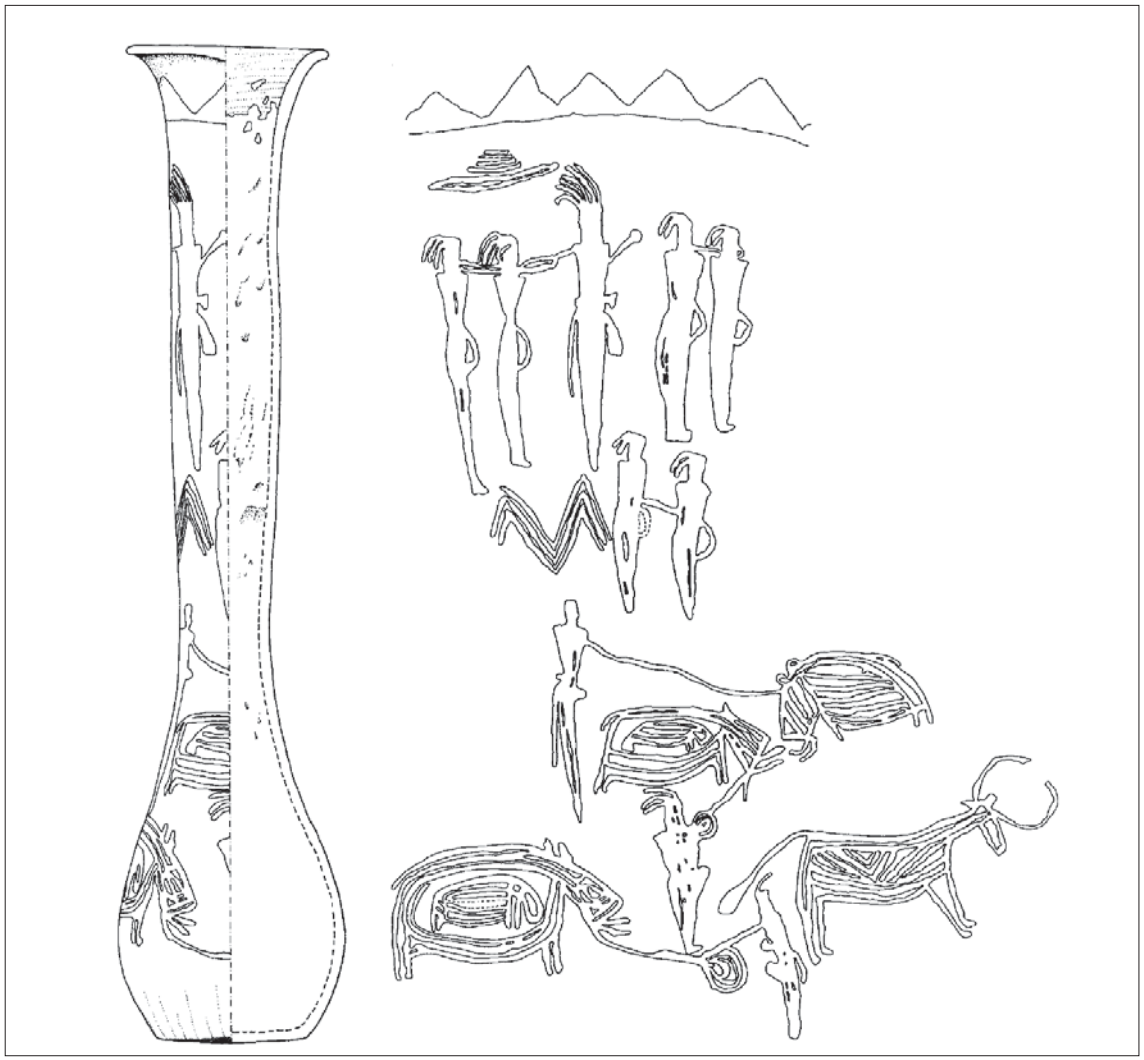


Figure 6. U-tomb 415/1, Abydos, decorated vessel. (Abydos SCA storeroom) (Dreyer et al. 2003, 81, Abb. 5; Hendrickx and Förster 2010, fig. 37.2).

sustain such journeys into the desert[666]. This theme of the hunt and the victory of the ruler over dangerous or powerful animals would last for the entirety of Egyptian history, with some modifications and iconographical evolutions. For example, the hippopotamus hunt remained more or less unaltered, but the desert hunt with dogs disappeared, substituted by images of the ruler hunting lions or other more dangerous animals. In this case, during the Pre-Dynastic period, the dog (a *Lycaon pictus*) frequently appeared, such as on the 'Hunters palette' or the 'Hierakonpolis palette', or in depictions of row of animals. From the beginning of the Early Dynastic period, however, this animal disappears. The reasons behind these developments are unknown[667]. A similar development seems to also have occurred regarding the symbol of the 'rosette', known mostly thanks to the Narmer palette, the mace-head and the Scorpion mace-head. Despite the debate on what is truly

666 Linseele and Van Neer 2009, 54–64.
667 Hendrickx and Förster 2010, 830.

Figure 7. The first standardized serekh of Djet. Abydos, tomb of Djet. Stela of Djet (Louvre E.11007 © Musée du Louvre/C. Décamps) (Hendrickx and Förster 2010, fig. 37.17).

represented by that symbol (for example, whether it is a rosette or a palm tree seen from above)[668], all scholars agree that this symbol represents the ruler. After Nar-mer, however, this feature disappears.

On the other hand, there are also themes or motifs that first appeared during the Early Dynastic period: for example, the cases of the dimensions of the ruler in comparison to the scene. For the first time, on the Scorpion mace-head, the ruler appears clearly represented on a larger scale, a feature that would become characteristic of Egyptian art. Although the true chronology of the Scorpion mace-head is not clear – as has already been stated, the figure of the Scorpion is doubtful[669] – it appears from the stylistic analysis to be similar, even if antecedent, to the Narmer mace-head and palette; it is also possible to date it to the Early Naqada III period. The representation of the falcon as a royal symbol also appears during this period. Statuettes or other objects representing falcons are documented from Naqada II[670], but it was only with the ruler Sekhen/Ka that the falcon began to be associated with the *serekh* and the name of the ruler, around Naqada IIIA2/B[671]. In these initial representations, the falcon is not standing vertically over the palace façade, but the body is almost horizontal; this style of representation remained until 'Aha. Under Djet, there are still a few 'old style' *serekh*. The vertically erect falcon appeared around this time also, in the centre of the *serekh* with its tail going over the edge[672] (Figure 7). The meaning behind the iconography of the falcon on the top of the *serekh* of the second dynasty has nevertheless been debated. At the end of this dynasty, Per-ibsen adopted Seth as a protective deity and, on his *serekh*, the Seth animal replaced the falcon (Figure 8 a). His successor Kha-sekhemwy, however, introduced a further

668 Williams 1988a, 34–5; Schneider 1997.
669 *Cfr. supra* p. 118-9.
670 *Cfr. infra* p. 188-9.
671 Hendrickx, Friedman and Eyckerman 2011, 141.
672 Hendrickx and Förster 2010, 849–50.

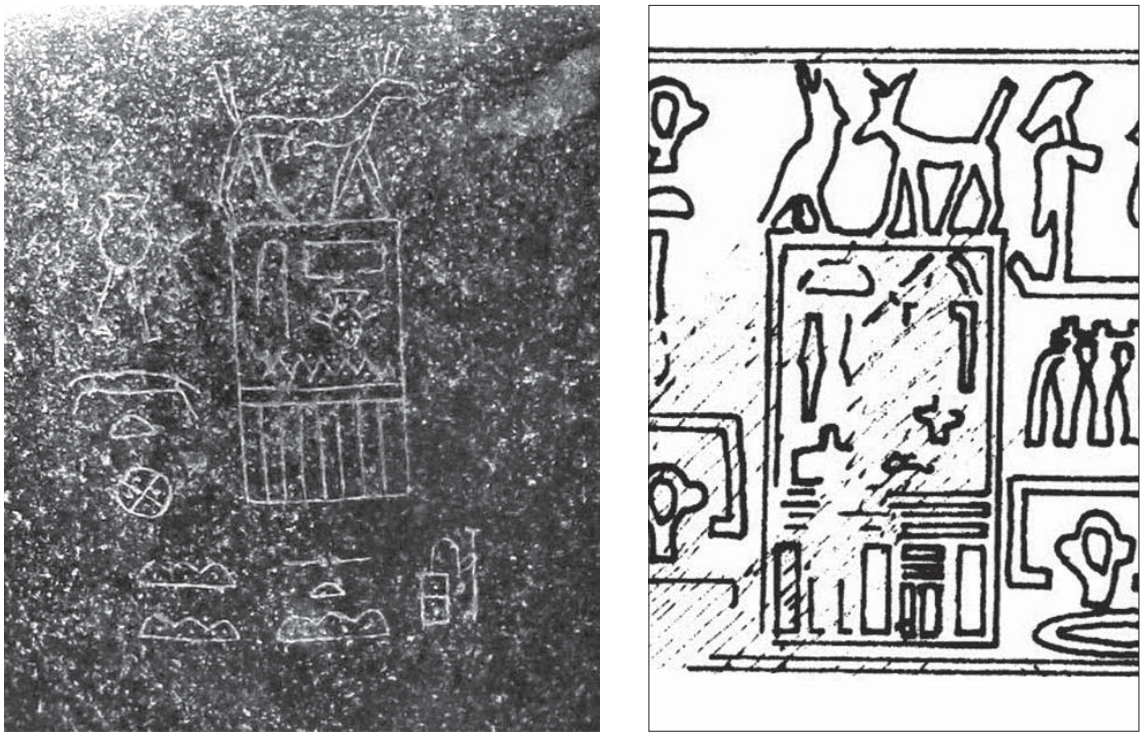


Figure 8. On the left a stela of Peribsen with the Seth animal on the top of the royal name (St Germain en Laye, Musee des Antiquites Nationales MAN89174) (Kaplony 1968, n.18, pl.23); on the right the serekh of Khasekhemwy with both the Horus falcon and the Seth animal (Petrie 1901, pl. 23).

change by placing both Horus and Seth on the top of his *serekh*[673] (Figure 8 b). While several theories have been formulated to explain this phenomenon, it is possible to interpret it as an attempt to change the royal ideology; otherwise, it could be suggested that Per-ibsen was from a different dynastic family or region of which Seth was more representative[674]. Although it is impossible to determine the reasons behind this shift, it is still important to observe that during the Second Dynasty, the religion and the religious aspects of the kingship were still in development and had not yet been standardised.

A similar course can also be observed for the hieroglyphic writing, which dates back to the Naqada IIIA1. During this time, at Umm el-Qaab, the tombs began to be equipped with pottery that featured the first signs of the future hieroglyphic writing[675]. In a relatively short period, this system of signs grew and became widely used in the administration and by the elite. In the first half of the First Dynasty, a system of signs was already being used to designate titles, contents, places, and other administrative and political indications, although it was only with the advent of the Third Dynasty that the hieroglyphic writing system became formalised. The writing followed the development of the political entity,

673 Alexanian 1998, 5–11.
674 Hoffman 1980, 351.
675 Dreyer 1998; Kahl 2003.

both in its administrative uses and for ideological reasons[676].

Another important topic represented since the First Dynasty, with Nar-mer, is the notion of the subordination of the ruler to the gods. In one seal, Nar-mer is represented as a catfish holding a stick and a falcon (probably Horus, the symbol of life)[677]. If this is connected with the fact that, since the period of the Scorpion mace-head, the ruler is represented as bigger than the rest of humankind, it becomes clear that the ruler is considered subordinate to the gods but superior to the rest of the humans, becoming the connection between these two groups[678]. The representation of the ruler, or a chief, as bigger than the people subordinated to him should crucially be compared with a vessel dated to the Naqada I period, which features a representation of figures with headgear and decorated dresses who are handling an object (similar to a mace) and portrayed as bigger than the other figures close to them[679].

Figure 9. The ivory comb of Djet with the falcon represented in its three forms (Cairo Antiquities Museum JE 47176).

The most powerful ideological statement is the association between the ruler and Horus. While it seems that the falcon was worshipped as an important deity in different regions, the reasons behind the falcon's importance to the kingship and the ruler could be explained in several ways. Firstly, it could be linked with the importance in the first phases of the Pre-Dynastic Period of Hierakonpolis, an area where the falcon Horus was worshipped. The falcon, otherwise, could have been chosen due to what it symbolised: it was commonly observed high in the sky, holding the possibility of controlling everything that happened on the earth, while at the same time it was remote; moreover, it could enfold the entire cosmos within its wings[680]. It was under the ruler Djet that the bird became associated with a deity on an ivory comb of Djet (Figure 9). In the first row, Horus is represented

676 For more detailed analysis, see the works of Jochem Kahl and Ilona Regulski on the writing system: Kahl 1994 and Kahl 2003; Regulski 2008; Regulski 2009; Regulski 2010; Regulski 2016.
677 Kaplony 1963, abb.5.
678 Baines 1995a, 11.
679 Dreyer et al 1998, 113-4, abb. 13.
680 Quirke 1990, 21; Wilkinson 1999, 201.

as a solar deity in the form of the Falcon on the celestial boat; on the row below, it is illustrated as a celestial falcon, spreading out its wings and embracing the cosmos; in the last row, the Falcon embodies the ruler on the top of the *serekh*. This masterpiece was intended to represent the god Horus as the supreme god, lord of the heavens, guardian of the cosmos and protector of the king[681].

Since the First Dynasty, the connection between kingship and duality[682] became commonplace, while the idea of Egypt as a union of two halves allowed the ruler to make himself the guarantor of the order in Egypt, as he was the only one able to keep the two lands, the 'two ladies' and even the two crowns together. Without the monarch, chaos would have prevailed. This concept of duality[683] is present already in the name of the queen Neith-Hotep, wife of 'Aha. A shrine to the goddesses Nekhbet and Wadjet is also represented[684] on an annual tablet, also from the reign of 'Aha, with the same representation close to the ruler name[685]. While these labels do not attest the use of the title 'the two ladies', they clearly connect the ruler with the cult of these two deities, who are already seen to be grouped together and linked with kingship. The first reference to this duality in a royal name was under Den[686], when the title *nsw-bjt* ('the one of the sedge and bee')[687] – or, as it is commonly known, 'King of the Upper and Lower Egypt'[688] – appears for the first time on the Palermo stone[689]. The true meaning of this formulation is probably closer to the 'dual king' translation provided by Quirke[690]. By analysing the titles, moreover, it is also possible to understand the dual significance of the two terms, which are linked not only to Upper and Lower Egypt, but also to the two different features of kingship[691]. *nswt* is the word used to refer to the ruler, in its more superior designation[692]; on the other hand, there is the term *bjt*, which is present in administrative titles such as *ḫtm.w bjt* ('treasurer of the king'). Accordingly, Baines[693] suggested that the title *nsw-bjt* means the union of these two roles of the ruler: the supreme ruler and living incarnation of the gods, and (in his more pragmatic representation) the head of the country. Under the successors of Den, the title *nbty* began to appear, but was usually associated

681 Quirke 1992, 21–2.
682 Kahl 2007b, 3–7.
683 Kahl 2007b, 15; 22–3.
684 Emery 1961, 50.
685 Kahl 2001a, 12, abb. 10.
686 Kahl 2008, 313–4.
687 Kahl 2007b, 18–9.
688 Kahl 2008.
689 Schäfer 1902, pl. 1. Ziele 3, n.3.
690 Quirke 1990, 11.
691 Wilkinson 1999, 205–6.
692 Quirke 1990, 11.
693 Baines 1995, 127.

Figure 10. The ruler smites his enemy. A) Narmer palette (Cairo, Egyptian Museum CG 14716); B) tomb 100 at Hirakonpolis; C) Den label from Abydos (British Museum EA 55586); D) Ramses III at Medinet Habu.

with the *nsw-bjt*; only in a few cases was the name of the 'two ladies' indicated separately by the *nsw-bjt*[694].

Another feature that is always present is the representation of human figures engaging in acts of victory or violence. Although these representations have evolved over the centuries, they have remained a strong iconographic symbol since Naqada II, or already in Naqada I if it considered as a scene of violence the one present on the vessel[695]. It was during this period that Tomb 100 of Hierakonpolis was constructed[696]: here, there are two scenes in which a human figure holds a weapon in a raised hand and is represented in the act of hitting an animal and three tied human figures (probably captives) respectively. This representa-

694 Dreyer *et al* 1996, 74, pl. 14.e.
695 *Cfr. supra* p. 172.
696 Case and Payne 1962.

tion reached its apex in the Early Naqada III with the Narmer palette, where the ruler is represented in the act of smiting an enemy. This iconography of the ruler standing in a dynamic pose, with one raised arm holding a weapon and the other hand holding the enemy, remained a standardised representation until the end of ancient Egyptian history[697]. The ruler is the one who can maintain or restore order; through the monarch, chaos is contained and all enemies of the established order are defeated, crushed by the mighty sovereign who is also the direct agent of the gods (Figure 10).

2.3.4.3 Religion

Unfortunately, the details of the religion of the Pre- and Early Dynastic periods are mostly unknown. At the time of writing, it is impossible to reconstruct the variety and multiplicity of local and regional religious aspects, both in the public and (even more so) the private spheres. There are gods, belonging to the classic pantheon, that were already worshipped in the formative period, as well as gods who occupied prominent roles since the beginning of the Early Dynastic Period. On the other hand, there was little or no evidence regarding many of the most important gods, such as Amon, Osiris, Ra, and many others[698], before the Old Kingdom. During this period, the gods had a zoomorphic representation, but they could also be represented as idols, in the shape of idols on poles, and, perhaps, also as humans (for example, the Coptos colossi[699]). Due to the absence of extensive written sources or sacred texts during Pre- and Early Dynastic Egypt, however, it is not possible to develop a clear idea of the gods worshipped either locally or at a state level, nor of the theological apparatus of dogma and religious instruction.

The gods and the system of beliefs

The few deities present in the archaeological record since the beginning of the Early Dynastic Period include Bat, Horus, Min, Neith, and probably Seth and the Crocodile God Sobek. All these deities are mentioned on monuments or objects of the Late Pre-Dynastic period, before the First Dynasty. The goddess Bat (Figure 11), represented witha bovine head[700], is first represented on the Gizra palette (dated to between the end of Naqada II and the beginning of Naqada III)[701], and then on an ostracon from the site of Hierakonpolis HK29A, whose

697 For a detailed study, refer to the work of Emma Swan Hall: Hall 1986.
698 Kahl 2007a.
699 Kemp 2000b.
700 Rashed 2009.
701 Hornung 1983, 103.

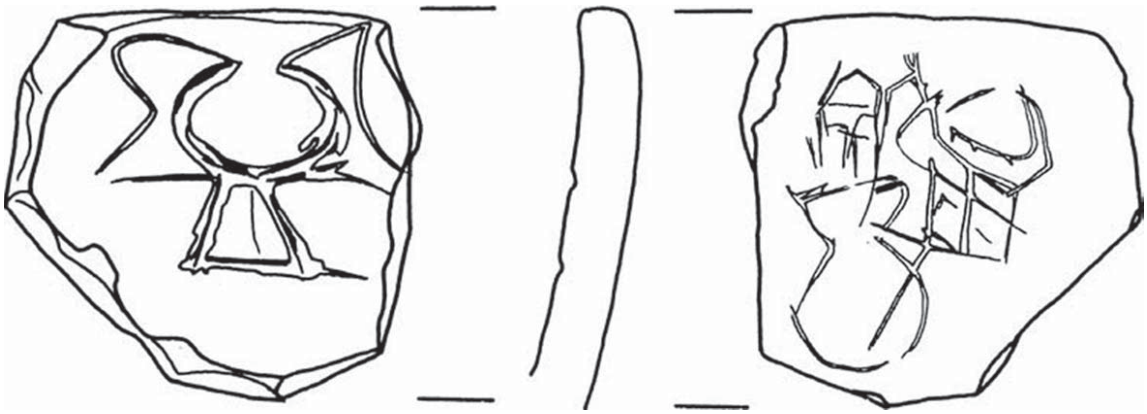


Figure 11. The representation of the goddess Bat on (A) an 'ostracon' from HK29A (Hendrickx and Förster 2010, fig. 37.5) and (B) on the 'Gerza palette' (Cairo, Egyptian Museum JE 34173) (Hendrickx and Förster 2010, fig. 37.6).

interior is marked with the Bat emblem[702]. Earlier in the First Dynasty, a diorite bowl from Hierakonpolis emblazoned with the representation of the goddess was also found[703]. The falcon Horus, moreover, had probably been worshipped since the Pre-Dynastic period; at Hierakonpolis, there are clues to suggest that the cult existed since Naqada II, taking the form of representations of falcons as pendants, statuettes[704], and later as vessels[705]. As seen before with Djer, the first clear identification of Horus as king was identified[706], although on the palette of Nar-mer, the link between these two entities is clear; unfortunately, it is not pos-

702 Hendrickx 2002, 310.
703 Burges and Arkell 1958.
704 Hendrickx and Friedman 2007.
705 Quibell 1900, 11, pl. XXXIV; Quibell and Green 1902, 43; Adams 1974, 44, pl. 33.
706 *Cfr. supra* p. 172.

sible to determine when and how the falcon became associated with kingship and the ruler. The god Min is known thanks to the famous 'colossi' of Coptos, found by Petrie[707]. The three sandstone statues have an estimated height of 4.1 metres. The preserved part, extending from the torso to the knees, is 1.9 metres high; together with the body of the statue, a bearded head has also been found that likely belonged to one of these or to a similar statue. The statues seem have held a wooden stick in their right hand and their erect penis in the other (these were removable and probably also fashioned in wood, but are now lost). On the right side of the statue, the standards with the Min sign of the thunderbolt are engraved[708]. The colossi date to a period that precedes the First Dynasty, probably around Naqada IIIA, and contemporary to the Tomb U-j[709]. The goddess Neith is represented by the symbol of crossed arrows over a shield, probably linked to her status as a fighting deity[710]. She was known since the beginning of the Naqada period; in Naqada I, there is a potmark representing two complex bound bows with arrows placed in the middle[711], while from Naqada II, another two potmarks representing the emblem of Neith over a standard were also identified[712]. The name Neith was used also in theophorous names, such as the wife of Nar-mer, queen Neith-hotep, and the regent Mer-neith[713]. The goddess Neith has her cult in Sais and seems to be strictly linked with kingship and the royal court more generally[714]. Regarding Seth and Sobek, there is little confirmed evidence of these deities during Naqada II, but they were known to be present during Dynasty 0. Seth is known to be the local god of Naqada, and was represented for the first time on the Scorpion mace-head found at Hierakonpolis; it is present as standard in the first register[715]. There is further evidence that the animal could be represented as figurine in a tomb of Naqada, which Petrie dated to Naqada II[716]. Baumgartel, however, suggested that it dated to the Early Dynastic period[717], where four small statuettes were found, one of which is a Seth-like animal. It is quite probable that Seth was already a significant deity by the time it appeared on the mace-head, at least in the area of Naqada and maybe Upper Egypt. Nevertheless, its first appearance can be confirmed around the end of Naqada IIIB. Similarly, in the chronology, Sobek, the crocodile god, is represented in Fayum and most prob-

707 Petrie 1896.
708 Kemp 2000b.
709 Dreyer 1995, 56.
710 Schott 1969.
711 Brunton 1948, pl. XXII.4.
712 Petrie 1920, pl. XXIII, 7–8.
713 Wilkinson 1999, 291.
714 Hornung 1983, 71.
715 Velde 1967, 12.
716 Petrie 1896a, pl. LX.13.
717 Baumgartel 1960, 75; pl. VI.6–8.

ably also in Tarkhan, where there are two seals representing a crocodile. In tomb 414, a seal of Nar-mer features the representation of a crocodile on a standard, probably indicating Sobek or an emblem of the region associated with the god[718]. In tombs 315 and 1549, moreover, two vessels with an identical *serekh* featuring the crocodile have been identified[719]; this is the name of a ruler of Tarkhan, suggesting the importance of the animal and likely also of the god linked to it. The first reference to the god is made the Naqada IIIB period.

In summary, these are the gods that appear before the First Dynasty. This does not however mean that these are the only deities; it is plausible that others were worshipped, albeit most likely at a local level, but there are no mentions of them in the sources. In terms of the gods present in documents from the First Dynasty, one is Anubis, who is present at least from the First Dynasty under the ruler ʻAha, who fashioned a statue in its honour[720]. The god Api seems to be have been venerated by the first Dynasty; the first mention of it has already been discussed, specifically the festival of the ʻrunning of Apiʼ[721]. Api could also be linked to the reign of ʻAha if the representation of a bull in an enclosure on the second register of a label of ʻAha could be interpreted as a depiction of the god.[722] Moreover, the goddesses Nekhbet and Wadjet (the vulture and the cobra) are firstly referred to under ʻAha, more precisely on an ebony label from the tomb of the queen Neith-Hotep[723], who was probably ʻAha's mother, at Naqada; their worship centres were located in Hierakonpolis and Buto respectively. Moreover, on an annual tablet from the reign of ʻAha, both deities are represented as two lords in a shrine associated with the name of the king; this is likely the first mention of the title of the ʻtwo ladiesʼ[724].

The successor of ʻAha, Djer, recorded for the first time the name of several gods: Khnum, on a private *stele* from Abydos[725]; Thoth, referred to with this ruler by means of a statue dedicated on the Palermo stone[726]; and the jackal Wapwawet, presented for the first time on a seal from Abydos[727]. Later in the First Dynasty, under Den, other gods were mentioned for the first time: for example, Khentimentiu, on a seal from Abydos[728]; Mafdet, represented as a feline

718 Petrie, Wainwright and Gardiner 1913, pl. II.4.
719 Dreyer 1992, 259–63.
720 Schäfer 1902, pl. 1, Ziele 2, n.1.
721 Schäfer 1902, pl. 1, Ziele 3, n.12; Kahl 2002, 291. Cfr. *supra* p. 163.
722 Petrie 1901, IIIA.5.
723 Werbrouck 1940.
724 Kahl 2001a, 12, abb. 10.
725 Petrie 1901, pl. XXVI.62.
726 Cfr. *infra* p. 179.
727 Petrie 1901, pl. XV.108–9.
728 Dreyer 1987.

on a stone vessel from Abydos[729]; Ptah, depicted on a bowl from tomb 231 of Tarkhan[730]; and Seshat, the goddess of writing and science, usually linked with the building of temples (mentioned previously)[731]. At the end of Dynasty 1, under the ruler Semer-khet, the first sure reference appears on an ivory label for *ḥḏ-wr*, the great white baboon[732].

Finally, during the Second Dynasty, other gods found their way into the document record, such as Bastet, linked to the site of Bubastis in the Delta and depicted on vessels from the beginning of Dynasty 2, probably under the ruler Hetep-sekhemwy or Ra'-neb[733]. The first references to the god Hedjet, the white crown, in the form of an inscription on a stone vessel indicating a building dedicated to it, can be found under the same rulers[734]. It is highly probable that this deity has roots in Hierakonpolis, with which Horus is closely associated. The other two deities mentioned during this period are *w3š* sceptre[735] and Cherti[736], under Per-ibsen and Kha-sekhemwy respectively. More problematic is the question of Ra: the most likely indication of the first reference to this god is the ruler Ra'-neb himself, who had a theophorous name translating as 'Ra is my Lord'[737]. On a seal of Per-ibsen[738], there is a representation of the throne and the *t* sign, the symbol of the goddess Isis[739]; unfortunately, there are no further indications of this deity until the Fifth Dynasty.

The pantheon of the Egyptian gods evolved over the entirety of Egyptian history, but became more or less standardised only in the Fifth Dynasty, when the other gods of the Ennead (like Isis and Osiris) made their appearance.

The representations of the deities

Another important aspect of the religion is the creation of divine images. Several *ms(i)* NN ('creation[s] of the statue of the god NN') have been documented since 'Aha. The first documented evidence of this kind is the construction of the statues of Anubis and a god called *Ỉmi-wt*: *ms(i) Ỉnpw* and *ms(i) Ỉmi-wt*[740]. The creation of an Anubis statue is recorded on the Palermo stone. The creation of statues of different gods are referred to for rulers mostly of the First Dynasty, as

729 Petrie 1901, pl. VII.7.
730 Petrie, Wainwright and Gardiner 1913, pl. III.1; XXXVII.
731 Cfr *supra* p. 165.
732 Petrie 1900, pl. XII.1.
733 Lacau and Lauer 1959, pl. 11.57–8; pl. 13.63–6.
734 Lacau and Lauer 1959, pl. 16.78.
735 Kaplony 1963, abb. 283, 286, 291, 303; Kahl 2003, 161–2.
736 Kaplony 1963, abb. 782; Kahl 2003, 161.
737 Kahl 2007a.
738 Kaplony 1963, abb. 302.
739 Kahl 2003, 161.
740 Schäfer 1902, pl. 1, Ziele 2, n.1.

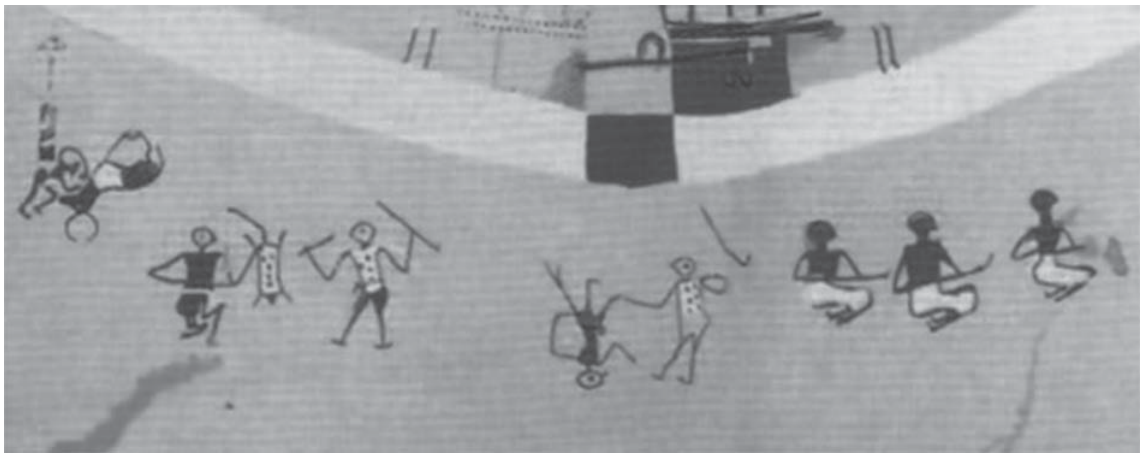


Figure 12. Particular of the Tomb 100 of Hierakonpolis, people wearing animal-skin garments (Case 1962, 5).

well as for Hetep-sekhemwy, Ny-netjer and Netjery-khet. The gods documented are *sšt*[741], *mnw*[742], *ỉnpw*[743], *ḏḥwtj*[744], *mɜfdt*[745], *sd*[746], *bɜs.tt*[747], and *nỉ.t*[748]. The consecration of a deity's statue followed a ritual process and was a moment of celebration, during which the power of the ruler was glorified and his connection with the gods affirmed.

2.3.4.4 Priesthood

Following the history of the priesthood is somewhat easier, thanks to the many titles present on different forms of evidence; once again, however, the most ancient phases are the most difficult to follow. Since the end of the Pre-Dynastic Period, no evidence exists of titles related to the priesthood or religious services. It is however possible to compare some earlier iconography with later representations. The clearest example is the presence, in some Pre-Dynastic scenes (such as Tomb 100 at Hierakonpolis; Figure 12)[749] of people wearing animal-skin garments, the same type of skin worn by the priests on Early Dynastic (and Dynastic) forms of evidence, e.g. the well-known representations of priests wearing leopard-skins.

From the First Dynasty onward, it is possible to observe the appearance of a few religious titles. In particular, it is interesting to mention the *s(t)m* or *smɜ*

741 Schäfer 1902, pl. 1, Ziele 2, n.8, Ziele 3, n.13.
742 Schäfer 1902, pl. 1, Ziele 2, n.9; Ziele 5, n.9.
743 Schäfer 1902, pl. 1, Ziele 2, n.10.
744 Petrie 1900, pl.XIV.12; Emery 1954, 102.
745 Schäfer 1902, pl. 1, Ziele 3, n.13.
746 Schäfer 1902, pl. 1, Ziele 3, n.11.
747 Lacau and Lauer 1959, pl. 11.57–8.
748 Lacau and Lauer 1959, pl. 16.77.
749 Case 1962, 5.

priest[750]; this figure was already present during the reign of Aha, at the beginning of Dynasty 1[751]. The bearer of this title wore a leopard-skin garment, which is most probably a tradition preserved from the previous periods. He was most likely employed during the royal rituals, with the title being held by the eldest son or a close member of the royal family. In the First Dynasty, two additional titles appear. The first is the *sḫnw-(i)ꜣḫ* priest, referred to from the reign of Djer[752]. This role seemed to involve the maintenance of the mortuary cult of the king, and perhaps also that of the other members of the ruling family; moreover, he could also be in charge of the statue cult[753]. The second title is that of the *ḥm-nṯr* priest[754], which was a common title in Dynastic Egypt, as it indicated a general priest. In this case, the title appears under the reign of Qaa[755]. Nevertheless, there are few references of this kind during the Early Dynastic Period; it became a common title only from the Fourth Dynasty onward. In addition to these titles, there are other offices directly linked to funerary services or other actions related to the person of the rulers, although these were not proper religious titles.

During the 2nd Dynasty, two more such entries appear. The first is the *ḫrỉ-ḥbt*[756], which denotes a lector-priest, and appeared for the first time during the period of Ny-netjer. Forshaw states that once the necessity arose of writing the formulas down to make them 'physically permanent', some of the tasks of the *smꜣ* priest were passed to a new priest class[757], that of the lector priest. This was a role that could be linked to the formulation of ritual texts, a person involved in the rituals during cult celebration, or a person in charge of keeping the ritual texts. From later evidence, the lector priest seems to have played a role linked to the daily function of the temple[758], the foundation of temples[759], funerary rituals[760], healing[761], the Opening of the Mouth Ceremony[762], and the royal court, particularly the Sed-festival[763]. The second title, *wr-mꜣ(w)*[764], first appeared during the reign of

750 Schmitz 1984.
751 Petrie 1900, pl. 30; 1901, pl. 10.2; Emery 1958, 31; Kaplony 1963, abb. 191, 280, 324, 369; Schmitz 1984, 834, Jones 2000, n. 3241 and 3250
752 Petrie 1900, 43 n.12; pls. 20.20, 31.20,24,26,39; pl. 32.14,15,23–31; Kaplony 1963, abb. 102–3; Jones 2000, n. 3036.
753 Geisen 2018, 233–4.
754 Kahl 2002, 305.
755 Emery 1958, 31, pl. 37.9; Kaplony 336, 401, 810, 814, 986; Jones 2000, n. 1885 ff, for Early Dynastic cfr. n. 1889, 1891, 1907, 1973
756 Amélineau 1902, 144, pl. 22.8; Lacau and Lauer 1959, pl. 14.70; Jones 2000, n. 2848.
757 Forshaw 2014, 9–10.
758 Forshaw 2014, 53–5.
759 Forshaw 2014, 55–7.
760 Forshaw 2014, 104.
761 Forshaw 2014, 122.
762 Forshaw 2014, 113–4.
763 Forshaw 2014, 65, 81.
764 Kahl 2002, 120.

Khasekhemwy[765]; the first reference to the title appeared in the form of *m33-wr*, 'the one who sees the Great One', and only later became *wr-m3(w)*, 'greatest of seers'. This title is important because it is the first indication of a specialised priesthood for state cults, i.e. one that was not linked to the person of the ruler and in his exclusive service, but was most probably related to astronomical observation.

Throughout the Old Kingdom period, the priesthood continued its development. Indeed, since the Third Dynasty, the local cults had 'part-time' priests[766], namely common people who provided some religious services within their community. Most probably, these priests took care of individual religious enquiries and celebrated collective ceremonies during specific periods; however, these were not 'proper' priests, and likely held a role that was primarily or maybe administrative. Only from the Fifth Dynasty onward does initial evidence appear of a professional priesthood for local cults[767], which indicates the conclusion of the basic priesthood development.

2.3.4.5 The places of cults - temples and shrines

The evolution of temples is more difficult to follow, as the first shrines and temples were built with perishable materials (such as woods, reeds, textiles, and sometimes bricks). Furthermore, the process of temple architecture standardisation was slow and continued beyond the Middle Kingdom[768]. Several shrines of the Pre- and Early Dynastic Period are known thanks to excavations, but in most cases, only an outline of a structure below the Old Kingdom temples remain. The few sites in which the plan of the building is recognisable indicates that their dimensions could also have been significant, such as the site HK29A and B[769] in Hierakonpolis, although there are further examples in Elephantine, Koptos, Tell el-Farkha, and other sites. It seems that there was no common temple plan during this period. Furthermore, due to the likely use of perishable materials to build the (hypothetical) residential quarters, no evidence remains to enable anything more than mere hypotheses to be formulated on this topic.

The Hierakonpolis site of HK29A has been excavated in different phases. Hoffman and Halran were the first to investigate the site in 1985[770]. In total, five excavation projects were conducted at the sites, namely in 1985-1986[771], 1989[772],

765 Amélineau 1902, 144, pl. 22.8 Emery 1958, pl. 83.13–14; Lacau and Lauer 1959, pl.23.123–6; Jones 2000, n. 1428.
766 Brunton 1927, pl. 18; Seidlmayer 1996, 118.
767 Hornung 1983, 226.
768 Kemp 2000a, 68.
769 Friedman 2009.
770 Hoffman 1987.
771 *Op. Cit.*
772 Friedman 1996, 16–35.

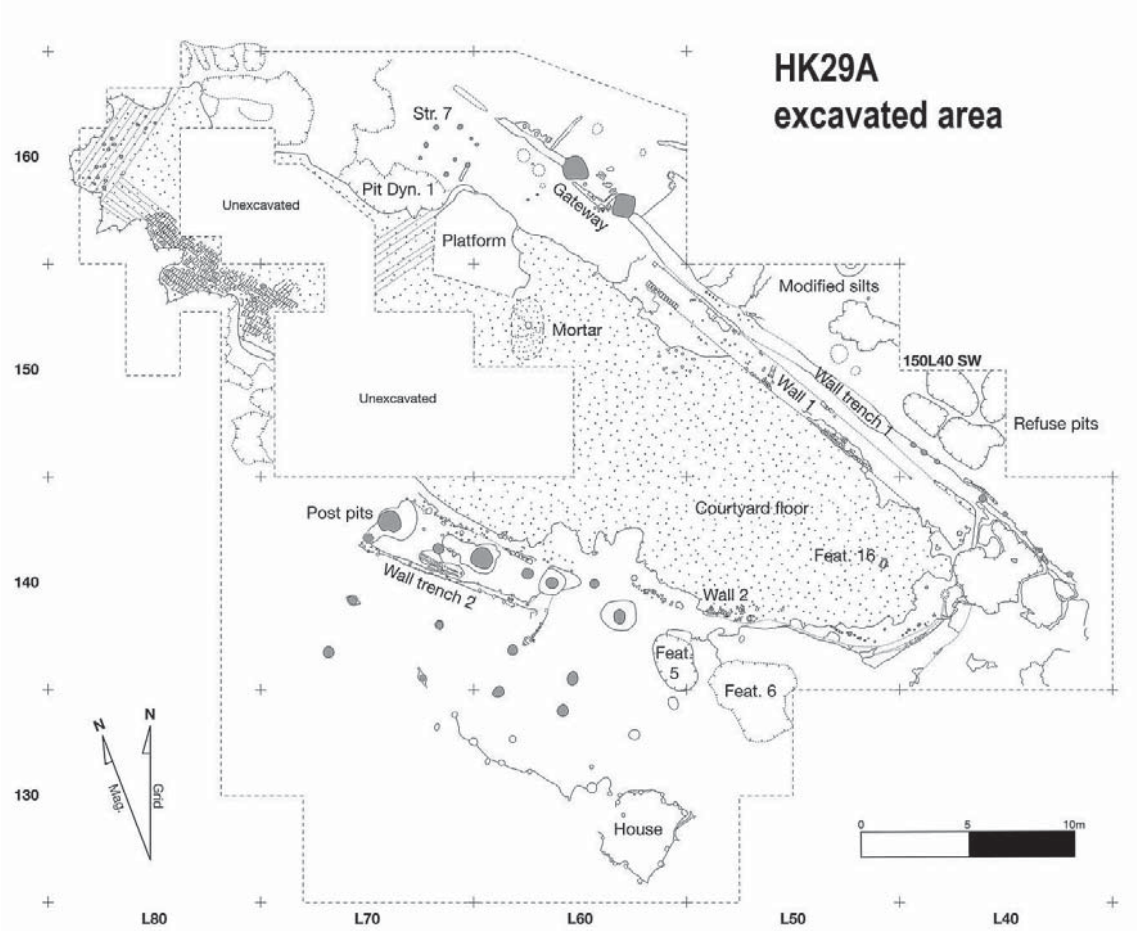


Figure 13. The HK29A plan (Friedman 2009).

2002-2003[773], and 2008[774]. Since the beginning, the sites exhibited features indicating that they were not simple houses, but rather something more monumental. The extension covers over 700 m^2, while the presence of a large enclosure and the paving of the ground with plastered mud were elements not seen in other structures of Hierakonpolis (Figure 13).

The paving covered most of the site surface and was surrounded by two sets of walls: 'wall 1', built of mudbricks, and 'wall 2', built by mudbricks and stones. There are also some other important characteristics: one is the presence of a large hole in the eastern part of the floor, the 'feature 16', 80 cm deep, while another is the two stones, most likely used to hold up a single erected high pole, interpreted by most as being intended for a standard or banner. Archaeologists also found some pits, north of the Wall in Trench 1, containing the bones of several wild animals and fishes, which were probably butchered and consumed dur-

773 Friedman 2003, 4–5.
774 Friedman and McNamara, 2008, 6–7.

ing the festivals celebrated there[775]. The dimensions of the mudbricks are in line with the standards used during the Pre-Dynastic and Early Dynastic Periods[776], while the presence of a pottery sherd in the lowest layer of the floor that dated to the Naqada IID provided a *terminus post quem* for the building. The pottery found in several parts of the site is of the finest quality and usually imported, such as Nubian Pottery, calcite-tempered pottery from Palestina, and shale-tempered pottery from Lower Egypt. Interestingly, a sherd of a red polished Nile silt bowl used as an *ostrakon* was found, with a carved symbol of the goddess Bat on the interior that resembles the one found on the Gerza palette[777]. On the outside of the fragment, there is a less clear representation; however, it is possible to identify a human figure on the left, without arms, and on the right a bull-head on a pole, which is an element found on other vases from Abydos or on the rock art of Gebel Tjauti. Regarding the chronology of the site, in addition to the Naqada IID pottery (which constituted phase 1)[778], archaeologists discovered a phase 2 dated to Naqada IID2-IIIA, thanks to the pottery and objects found in the pits and floor of HK29A and in the Tomb U-j ad Abydos[779]. Pottery and fine stone vessels were also found in a pit dating to the third and last phase of Dynasty 1, probably between 'Aha and Djer; the pottery from the Delta also belongs to this phase, as it dates to the EBII Palestine and the Second Dynasty[780]. It is plausible that this site was in use up until Kha-sekhemwy, when it was intentionally deconstructed, meaning that all wood elements were removed and the holes filled in with sand[781]. While there are many hypotheses concerning the history of this site, most of them agree on some points, including the possibility that it was a sacral place, likely an important shrine, with a large pole in the courtyard that was probably surmounted by an insignia. On the side of the gate, outside of the mudbrick wall, there were some wooden structures; inside, in the courtyard and on the opposite side to the large pole, there was probably a large structure similar to a *pr.w-wr*[782].

Hierakonpolis was the location of another sacred site, the so-called 'revetted mound', first excavated by Quibell and Green[783]. This structure was placed in the cultivated area where the ancient site of Nekhen had once been located. The archaeologists found a New Kingdom temple and, in the middle, a circular revet-

775 Linseele, Van Neer and Friedman 2009.
776 Spencer 1979, 5.
777 Petrie 1953, pl. B.5.
778 Friedman 2009, 91–3.
779 Friedman 2009, 93–8.
780 Friedman 2009, 98–101.
781 Friedman 1996, 30.
782 Friedman 1996, 28; *cfr. supra* p. 132, 165.
783 Quibell and Green 1902.

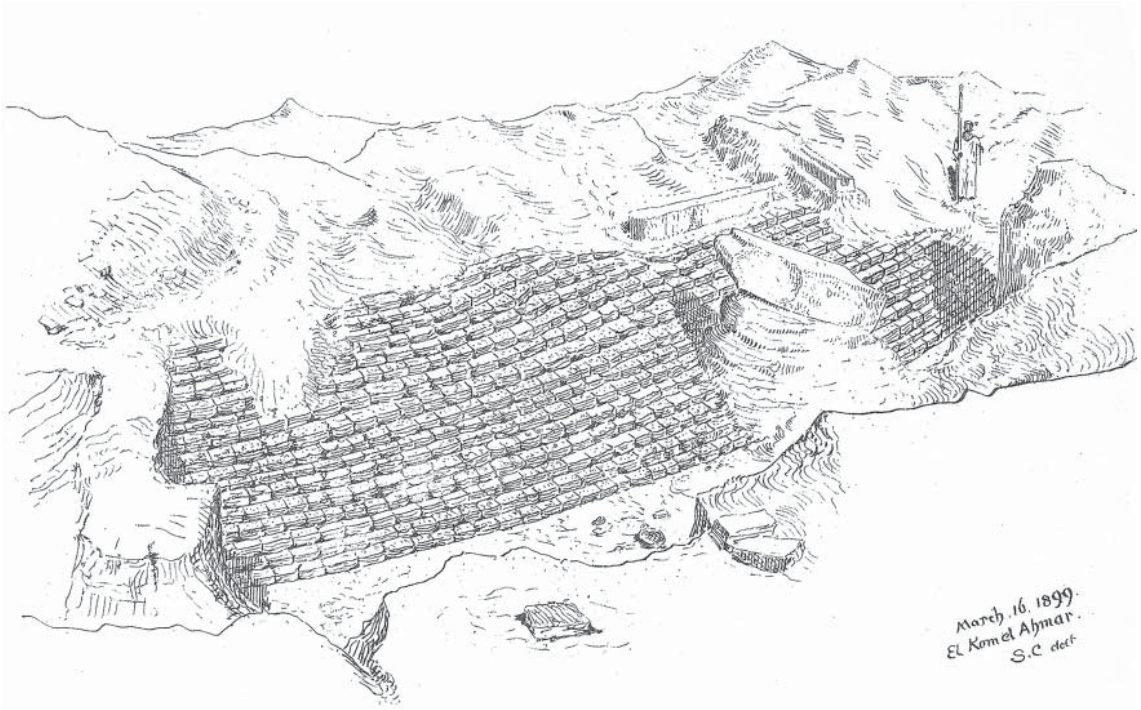


Figure 14. The revetted mound (Quibell and Green 1902, pl. LXV).

ment (Figure 14)[784]; this was built from roughly squared blocks of sandstone, aligned in a single course, with each line shifted by around 8 cm to form an artificial mound filled with desert sand; the stones formed an incomplete oval.

To the east of this structure, in the same year, the two researchers discovered a deposit of objects[785] that turned out to be among the most important documents of the Pre- and Early Dynastic periods. Among these were the Narmer palette and mace-head, the scorpion mace-head, the two-dog palette, two limestone statues of Kha-sekhemwy, and other objects belonging chronologically to the same period[786]. The Main Deposit is a complicated matter; indeed, while all the objects are similar in style, they were gathered and buried there at a later point in time, most likely by the people who erected the buildings of the following periods. The debate on the function of the revetted mound is still an open one, and many related hypotheses have been formulated; nevertheless, without precise data on which to rely, these remain conjectures. When Green excavated the site, he believed that the mound was a platform upon which a shrine or an early temple was built. This theory was supported by Quibell, who believed that the limestone fragment that was found belonged to this hypothetical building. The majority of scholars have accepted this interpretation, with the sole difference concerning the form of the temple at the top[787]; nevertheless, there is little

784 Quibell and Green 1902, 3, pl. LXXII.
785 Bussmann 2010, 54–8.
786 McNamara 2008, 909.
787 Hoffman 1979, fig. 7; Williams 1988b, 52–8; Adams 1995, 68-77; Kemp 2000a, 77–80, fig. 29.

actual evidence of an Early Dynastic temple. The only possible indications that this building existed are the fragments of two decorated door-jambs, two granite blocks and two *stelae*. All of these belonged to Kha-Sekhemwy, who is also the owner of the enclosure wall (called the Fort), the function of which is still debated. It has already been pointed out that this could have been a place for the celebration of festivals, such as the Sed-fest[788]. For his part, David O'Connor developed an interesting theory[789]: namely, that the New Kingdom temple was placed over a corresponding enclosure wall, erected during the First Dynasty[790], in order to create a space arranged similarly to the Saqqara Step Pyramid Sed-fest courtyard.

The small temple of Elephantine[791], which represents a unique example of a small local shrine[792], differs from the HK29A structure in terms of its dimensions, as well as (most likely) its purposes. Usually, Early Dynastic shrines were obliterated or severely damaged by the buildings of the following periods. This shrine was probably built in a period between the Pre-Dynastic and the Early Dynastic periods[793]. The construction was a simple niche of mudbricks, erected in a space between three big granite boulders; this protected the shrine from the subsequent reorganisation of the buildings, which simply avoided and ignored it[794]. The sanctuary probably took the form of a hut or a tent. The construction was not the only feature that was 'simple': the votive offerings found in the courtyard in front of the structure were rough and modest, unlike the objects found in more formal or elite contexts. The faith being practised was thus probably a mirror of a religion, or more likely, a local faith, performed by people who were not used to the 'sophisticated culture' of the royal court[795].

Other shrines or cult buildings are known to have been present on other sites. For example, two limestone blocks found in Gebelein[796] indicate that a shrine was present there since the end of the Second Dynasty[797] or the beginning of the Third[798]. Moreover, the two colossal statues of Coptos, together with other large-scale sculptures, testify to the existence of a cult centre located there since the Late Pre-Dynastic period. While, unfortunately it is not possible to date them more accurately, the presence of shells could link this place with the Red-

788 Alexanian 1998, 16–7.
789 O'Connor 1992.
790 O'Connor 1992, 84.
791 Dreyer 1986, 13, Abb. 1.
792 Bussmann 2010, 15–19.
793 Kemp 2000a, 72.
794 Seidlmayer 1996, 118.
795 Kemp 2000a, 74–5, fig. 28.
796 Morenz 1994.
797 Bussmann 2010, 58–9.
798 Wilkinson 1999, 311–2.

sea route through the Wadi Hammamat[799]. Petrie's excavations at Abydos[800] also uncovered deposits of votive material[801] that can be dated to the Early Dynastic period[802]. As for the Main Deposit of Hierakonpolis, these objects were moved out of their context in ancient times, probably during the construction of the later buildings. These objects have been found both under the temple of Khenti-amentiu and in two other, separate deposits; furthermore, there are scattered traces of walls under the Old Kingdom temple that could date back to the First Dynasty, probably to 'Aha[803], whose *serekh* was found on a vase decoration in one of the votive assembly areas. Brunton described a mudbrick shrine at Badari, of the Early Dynastic period, as follows: 'On Spur 3, Badari (see map pl. vii), were various layers of constructions, mostly of brick, which eventually proved to be the foundations and floors of two successive temples built over a thin layer of Protodynastic potsherds, which again overlay the deep remains of a Pre-Dynastic settlement'[804]. He also discovered objects from the same layer similar to the ones found in Hierakonpolis, dated between the First and Second Dynasty[805].

In the Delta, archaeologists have found only three sites with Early Dynastic evidence of religious buildings: Tell el-Fara'in (Buto)[806], Tell el Farkha[807], and Tell Ibrahim Awad. Excavation work at the shrine in Buto was conducted in the 1980s, with excavations published by Thomas von der Way, who interpreted a small rectangular building dated to the Early Dynastic period (more precisely, to the beginning of the First Dynasty) as a small shrine[808]. The written sources, a label from tomb U-j[809], the Narmer mace-head, and two other labels of 'Aha[810] corroborate the presence of a shrine in Buto; indeed, they all feature the representation of a heron on the top of a shrine, the *ḏbꜥwt*. At Tell el Farkha, moreover, the Polish team found a structure in the Western Kom, probably dated to the beginning of the Early Dynastic period, which resembles a shrine and is similar in form (albeit larger) than the one found in Elephantine[811]. Furthermore, two votive deposits were discovered containing figurines, rattles, miniature models of different objects, and vessels of faience, pottery and stone; of particular interest are the

799 Petrie 1896.
800 Petrie 1903.
801 Bussmann 2010, 85–6.
802 Petrie 1903, 23–9.
803 Petrie 1903, pl. IV.
804 Brunton 1927, 18.
805 Brunton 1927, 17.
806 Bussmann 2010, 112.
807 Bussmann 2010, 111.
808 Von der Way 1989, 295.
809 Dreyer 1993, pl. 14.j.
810 Petrie 1901, pl. III.12; Emery 1961, fig. 12.
811 Ciałowicz 2006, 926.

faience figurines of baboons and a prostrate man[812]. The two hundred or more votive offerings found in Tell Ibrahim Awad share similarities with the Elephantine shrine objects, including the palette, glaze items and figurines[813]. Unfortunately, the only structure found under the Middle Kingdom temple is almost impossible to date, making it infeasible to determine whether it is an Early Dynastic shrine or a later building.

In general, the places at which cult practices took place in Early Dynastic Egypt are almost unknown, while the few examples that have survived until now shed some light on the practices and rituals that were undertaken in that period[814]. The first data with relevant information comes only from the Old Kingdom onwards, although this is not due to the absence of shrines before it. The examples outlined above indicate that shrines and other cultic spaces were present since Pre-Dynastic times[815]; however, there are too few archaeological remains to build a solid theory on the matter.

2.3.4.6 Funerary architecture

The mortuary costumes are better known than the cultic practices. In particular, the architecture of the burial complexes provide interesting information regarding the changes in funerary beliefs and the theology connected to kingship. While there are several Early Dynastic cemeteries scattered throughout the Nile Valley, the most important to the analysis of ideology are the following three examples: the necropolis of HK6 in Hierakonpolis, Abydos, and Saqqara, including the Third Dynasty step pyramid complex. These three sites reveal the development of the ideology linked to the ruler from the Pre-Dynastic period to the beginning of the Old Kingdom. This should not be interpreted as an evolutionary path with an apex, or finish line, at the Step pyramid; indeed, the mortuary ideology continued to develop throughout the entirety of ancient Egyptian history. Instead, the history should be seen as a series of changes that transformed the ideology in order to adapt it to the new framework of the kingship and the necessity of implementing a different legitimisation of the ruler.

The elite cemetery of Hierakonpolis contains numerous tombs, clearly belonging to the upper classes of society, if not directly to the ruler of Hierakonpolis during the Pre-Dynastic period. The majority of the tombs in HK6 have a chronological horizon between the Naqada IC-IIA and the Naqada IIB, with few other

812 Ciałowicz 2009, 88–9.
813 Van Haarlem 1995, 46.
814 Bussmann 2010, 115–9.
815 Bussmann 2010, 460–7.

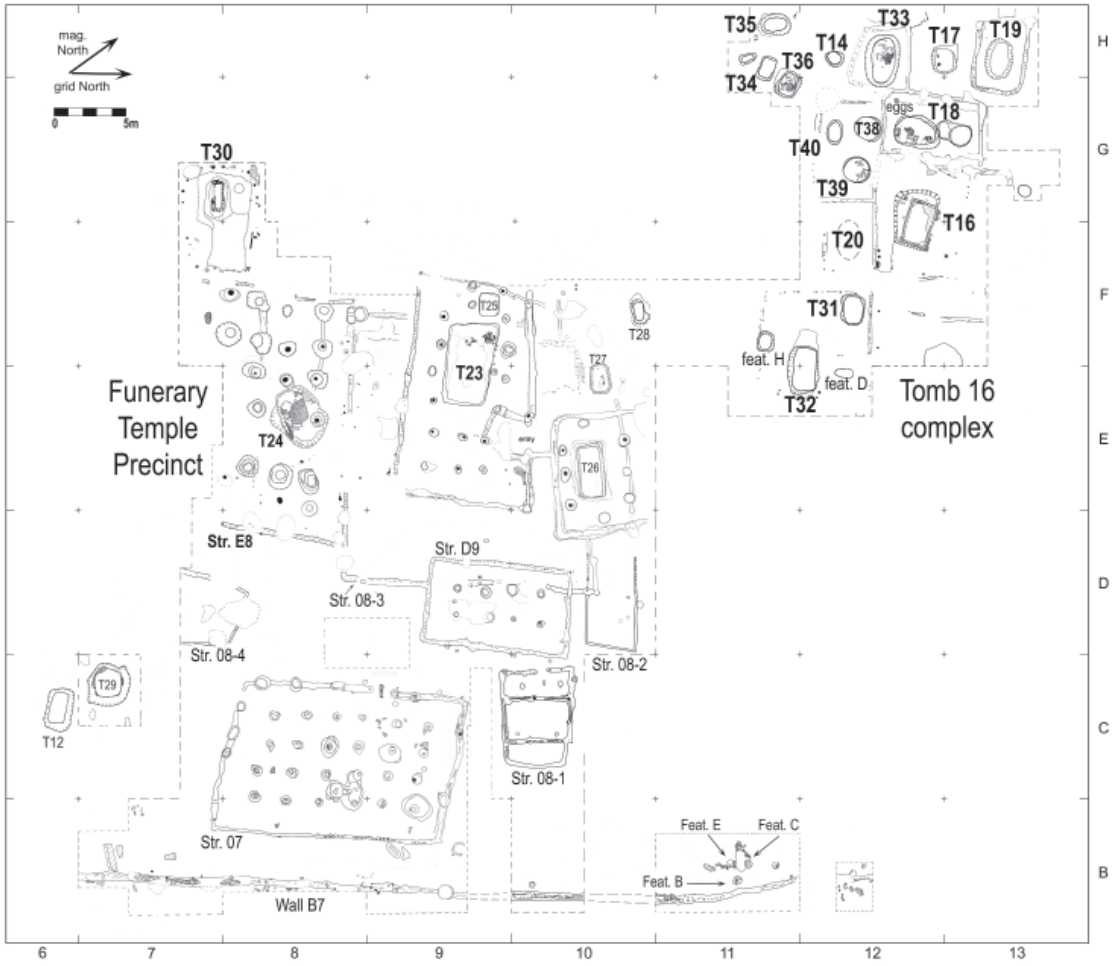


Figure 15. Tomb 16 and 23 complex (Friedman, Van Neer, Linseele 2011, 158).

tombs from the early Naqada III period[816]. This cemetery provides important information regarding the ideology of the Pre-Dynastic period. This was a time when the Ancient Egyptian polities were at the level of local entities and organised in a chiefdom structure. The central part of the site contains at least three main complexes of tombs, 16, 23 and 26 (Figure 15). These tombs are characterised by the presence of superstructures and animal burials. The investigation at tomb 16 revealed a number of wooden posts, indicating the presence of a superstructure, and a small offering chapel similar to those of Tomb 23 and 26, which are also characterised by the presence of a wooden pillar hall above the tombs. In these latter two, the funerary chapel is located on the east side and features a dedicated columned area. A wood-post fence surrounds tomb 16 and its auxiliary tombs, as well as Tomb 23 and 26. From these tombs come two of the best-preserved ceramic masks, which were also the first found in Egypt.

In the tomb 16 complex, the auxiliary tombs in which the animals were buried created an external circle, while the graves dedicated to human remains were

816 Friedman 2008, 12.

placed in the core of the complex. Close to the main burial chamber is the grave of a dwarf, in tomb 47; this suggests that dwarves were already highly valued companions in the Pre-Dynastic period. The other tombs contained a total of 52 animals buried around the main tomb, including an African elephant, an aurochs, a pregnant hartebeest, a young hippopotamus, a crocodile, two large goats, two baboons, 15 domestic cattle, and 28 dogs. Tomb 23, however, features the burial place of a single adult elephant, placed at the centre of the pillared hall, structure E8[817].

At Abydos, the royal cemetery comprises three main areas: Cemetery U, which includes the tombs of the early Dynasty 0 rulers; cemetery B, in which the rulers of the last part of the Dynasty 0 are buried, as well as those from the beginning of Dynasty 1 until ʻAha; and the Umm el-Qaab cemetery, where rests the ruler of the First Dynasty, as well as Per-ibsen and Kha-sekhemwy of the late Second Dynasty. Cemetery U comprises around 400 graves and hundreds of additional small empty offering pits, and was in use for a long period. It was only in the last phase, since Nagada IID2, that the cemetery developed the characteristics of an elite cemetery, with large tombs that probably contained the chiefs and his family. In Naqada III, the burial sites became multiple-chamber or single-chamber, and were also of large dimensions. The designs in cemetery U were similar to those of the tombs of Cemetery B. The oldest tombs of B burials belonged to rulers who shared much with their predecessors. Indeed, the tombs are highly similar to those in cemetery U, which contained the largest and latest tombs; the only difference is that the latter feature double chambers. Tombs B1 and 2, belonging to Iry-Hor, and B7 and B9, belonging to Sekhem Ka, consist in a simple rectangular pit, with mudbrick chamber walls, while the two pits are separate and distinct[818]. Nar-mer's rise to power marked the first transformation in the structure of the burial area: the two chambers B17 and B18 are now contiguous, separated only by a mudbrick wall[819]. Nar-mer's successor, ʻAha, further developed the concept of multiple burial sites and created a large burial complex. Tombs B10, B15 and B19 also have traces of wooden shrines, while the complex of retainer burials in B16 are close among them, although they are all distinct from each other[820]; these are precursors of the large complex of multi-chamber burial areas such as those in the tomb of Djer and the other rulers of Dynasty 1. The last area is the Umm el-Qaab cemetery, which contains seven tomb complexes belonging to Djer, Djet, Den, Queen Meret-neith, ʻAdj-ib, Semer-khet and Qa-'a. All of these complexes are planned along similar lines, consisting of a large burial chamber

817 Friedman 2011, 175–88.
818 Kaiser and Dreyer 1982, pl. 55b; pl. 56b.
819 Kaiser and Dreyer 1982, pl. 56c.
820 Dreyer 1990.

surrounded by storerooms and a multi-chamber subsidiary burial area for servants and dogs. Moreover, the tombs of Djer and Djet have a layout similar to that of ʻAha, with the subsidiary tombs placed mostly on the right side, although the burial chambers are adjacent to one another. With Den, the burial customs begin to change. His burial chamber was originally paved with slabs of red and black granite; furthermore, there is always a staircase leading into this chamber facing east, while the ground plan is also transformed so that the subsidiary burial chambers surround the main tomb[821]. The burial chambers of the successors remain quite similar until Qa-ʻa, who changed the direction of the access staircase from east to north. This was a change that would be replicated by the following dynasties and was probably developed due to a change in the ideology and religious framework. One feature associated with all of the tombs in Abydos is the absence of a superstructure. The only one with traces of it is the tomb of Djet, which features a containing mudbrick wall that retained a tumulus of sandy earth covering the whole tomb. The last two tombs present at Umm el-Qaab are those of Per-ibsen and Kha-sekhemwy; their burial chambers are large, without auxiliary tombs, that instead feature an interior comprising multiple chambers. The tomb of Kha-sekhemwy resembles the gallery tombs of the Second Dynasty at Saqqara, with an increased number of storerooms, and faces north, much like the Qa-ʻa burial chamber and the Saqqara tombs.

The last royal cemetery of the Early Dynastic period is the necropolis of North Saqqara, which was active since the reign of Horus ʻAha (S3357)[822]; each of the following rulers until Qa-ʼa built at least one or more mastaba in the area[823]. These mastabas were probably the tombs of officials or persons of the royal court (but not dummy tombs) of the ruler of the First Dynasty. With the advent of Hetep-sekhemwy, the first ruler of the Second Dynasty, the royal tombs were moved to Saqqara. The characteristics of the largest mastabas were significantly enlarged structures with an increased degree of complexity. Only two tombs of rulers have been found south of the Step Pyramid complex: the tombs of Hetep-sekhemwy (tomb A)[824], which may also be that of Ra-neb[825], and Ny-netjer[826] (tomb B). The remaining part of the Second Dynasty has left few traces at Saqqara; this obviously reflected the difficult period the country was undergoing at the time. Moreover, there seems to have been an important reprise of building activity in the reign of Khasekhemwy. The two tombs have a structure with a north-facing

821 Dreyer 1991; Dreyer et al 1996; Dreyer et al 1998; Dreyer et al 2000; Kühn 2008.
822 Emery 1939.
823 Emery 1949; Emery 1954; Emery 1958.
824 Barsanti 1901; Barsanti 1902; Fischer 1961.
825 Maspero 1902.
826 Hassan 1938.

entrance and a corridor that leads to the inner chamber, flanked by many other chambers. The superstructures could have been a mastaba with either sloping or niched walls. Unfortunately, the construction of the Step pyramid complex and the pyramid of Unas were destroyed.

In addition to these three cemeteries, it is worth mentioning the funerary enclosure of Abydos. This enclosure was erected close to the cultivations and contains no burials, but the walls have a niched pattern[827], similar to the one found in the palaces, in the mastabas or in the iconography, and most importantly, similar to the one in the Step pyramid complex. Furthermore, they all have at least two access points: one in the east corner and one in the north corner. In addition, Per-ibsen had a third entrance, while Kha-sekhemwy had four (one in each wall)[828]. Inside the enclosures, structures such as shrines or similar buildings have been identified, along with the remains of offerings, mostly placed close to the eastern gate[829]. In the Kha-sekhemwy enclosure, at the north-western edge, archaeologists found the remains of mounds of sand and gravel, paved with mud-brick layers[830]. It is also interesting to note that the rulers always respected the space of the previous funerary enclosures, indicating that these structures were held in great esteem by later rulers. All of these features, along with their similarities to the later Step Pyramid complex, suggest that they were probably funerary palaces, used for the mortuary cult or the display of the ruling power, making them a place of legitimisation[831]. Regardless, it is important to point out that the only similarity between the enclosures and the mastaba superstructures lies in their form, while the functions of the two buildings are clearly different: the enclosures are created to define and delimit an open space, while the mastabas are closed tombs[832]. This open space created by the enclosures could have been used for ritual activities and/or the presentation of offerings[833]. The importance of these structures becomes clear when it is noted that all rulers with a tomb in Umm el-Qaab also built an enclosure[834]. One peculiar feature of the Aha funerary building program is the presence of three enclosures (one large and two smaller). A comparison of these enclosures with the other structures in the area suggests that the large building is similar to the enclosures of the other rulers, and had thus probably been erected for Aha[835]. The two small buildings are subsidiary to

827 O'Connor 1989, 82.
828 Bestock 2009, 43.
829 O'Connor 1989, 67–9; Bestock 2009, 43–4.
830 O'Connor 1989, 82–3.
831 Kemp 1966; Kaiser 1969.
832 Bestock 2009, 44.
833 Bestock 2009, 44.
834 For Djer, Djet, Meret-neith, and Kha-sekhemwy see O'Connor 1989. Bestock 2009, 57–8.
835 Bestock 2009, 88–9.

the large one, and can be interpreted in one of two ways. The first hypothesis is that the three enclosures reflect the three burials of the ruler, such that all three belong to him (possibly as part of an evolving funerary tradition), or that they reflect three different aspects of the kingship[836]. The second hypothesis is that the large enclosure is for the ruler, while the two subsidiary enclosures are for other individuals[837]. Another feature worth mentioning is that archaeologists found twelve boats aligned with and buried adjacent to Kha-sekhemwy's enclosure[838].

The analysis of all these elements allows us to follow the development of the ideology linked to kingship. Nevertheless, these considerations are circumscribed mostly to Upper Egypt owing to the absence of data from extensive elite cemeteries before the Naqada IIIA-B. The site of Hierakonpolis reveals a society with an ideology that is strongly linked to the concept of the ruler, in this case the chief, who dominated chaos through the control of the animals. As already seen on palettes and vessels, the concept of the hunt is of extreme importance in the Pre-Dynastic period. Being buried with animals, such as elephants and hippopotamuses, requires great organisation in order to catch and transport them, meaning that it is an exhibition of power that underscores the importance of the ruler to maintaining order. It is plausible that the Hierakonpoleitan society and kinship required an ideology that was mostly linked to the power of the ruler on Earth, even without a strong connection to a celestial conception of the afterlife. Nevertheless, this does not exclude the presence of an idea of the afterlife for the chief, although this is of secondary importance compared to the order vs chaos ideology. The burial chambers of Abydos, with their three cemeteries, reconnect to this earthly ideology, but develop it up until the construction of the tomb of Qa-ʿa. The main characteristics of the Abydos necropolis are the model of the mound over the burial site and the funerary enclosures. The mound is most likely intended to draw a clear connection with the primeval hill that emerged from the water at the beginning of creation, which is is an important symbol of rebirth[839]. This feature unites all the tombs of Abydos. However, if this was enough for Cemetery U and early B, since ʿAha, the ideology changed due to the necessity of re-creating the palace and the retinues after the death of the ruler. The ruler introduced the idea of burying his entourage with him so that the same staff who served him in life could serve him in the afterlife. This was the first step towards a celestial idea of kingship. His successor, Djer, also built the first funerary enclosure, most likely to make an area available for the recreation and repeated per-

836 Bestock 2009, 98–9.
837 Bestock 2009, 99–100.
838 O'Connor 1995.
839 Wilkinson 1999, 256.

formance of the rituals required for the ruler to maintain power. Another element was added by Qa-ʿa to further transform the mortuary and kingship ideology: namely, the staircase used to access and exit the tomb points north, rather than east, where Den's staircase was directed. This feature was maintained (or was already present) in the Saqqara royal tombs[840], suggesting that the ruler wished to be directly pointed in the direction that he or she should travel to reach the afterlife[841]. This tendency toward a celestial ideology is further emphasised by Kha-sekhemwy[842] when he was buried close to his funerary enclosure with funerary boats; these were vessels that the ruler required to accomplish his celestial journey. At Saqqara[843], the other great difference is the superstructure, which is not present in Abydos. This can be read as a mudbrick replica of the primeval mound, which was later transformed into the Step pyramid; while this resemblance is quite likely in Abydos, it is more difficult to conduct a comparison with Saqqara[844]. Moreover, the presence of mastabas in Lower Egypt is quite common. In Tell el-Farkha, the oldest high-status tombs (from Naqada IIIB-C2) were small mastabas[845]. Since the First Dynasty, the mudbrick superstructure element was recurrent, particularly at Saqqara[846]; it is also possible to suppose that this was a funerary custom of this area that was later adopted by the ruling classes. All of these elements are presented together, somewhat like a 'manifesto' of the new royal ideology, at the Step pyramid complex of Netjery-khet[847]: the mastaba, the mound transformed into a pyramid that the ruler could use to ascend, the northward-facing direction, and the entire complex as a whole was built to host everything necessary to reproduce not only the rituals that the ruler required on Earth, but also all the ceremonies necessary to ascend and achieve the afterlife.

2.3.4.7 Conclusions

Many of the ideological and legitimisation-related aspects – the standard iconography, buildings, and ceremonies of the later periods – have their roots in the previous periods, and it is possible to trace them as a continuum from the Pre-Dynastic period onwards. The main celebration seems to have been developed mostly since the reign of Djer and Den, with the three ceremonies linked to the

840 Engel 2003, 43–4.
841 Edward 1978, 283–5.
842 Stadelmann 1985, 298–9.
843 The discussion regarding the owners of the Saqqara tombs is still ongoing, particularly as concerns where the rulers were buried (Abydos or Saqqara) and whether the other structures were cenotaphs or secondary tombs. For a more detailed discussion cfr. Engel 2003.
844 Engel 2003, 46.
845 Dębowska 2008, 1109–11.
846 Stadelmann 1985, 296–8.
847 Baud 2002, 136–67.

coronation emerging firstly with Djer, while the *ḥ3b-sḏ* fest emerged under Den. It was around this time that the earliest evidence of the erection of temples appeared with the 'stretching the cord by the Seshat serve and planning'. Of course, this is only the first written record of such events, meaning that it is possible that monumental shrines were built before Djer. The Scorpion mace-head proves that the 'opening of the canal' ritual and the presence of shrines at Nar-mer were already known at this time.

Iconography is probably the most fluid of the elements, and its analysis facilitates an understanding of many of the ideological aspects. Some of these aspects, such as violence, were already present in the Pre-Dynastic period, but many first appeared during the Early First Dynasty. These concepts, present at least since Djet, were the elements of the two pillars of kingship[848]. The first of these is the notion that Egypt and Egyptians were necessary to maintaining order in the cosmos, and that the ruler was key to achieving it; the second is that the ruler was the one able to maintain said order, being the first ritualist, the mighty and supreme commander of the army, and the chief of the country and administration. These two characteristics of the ruler – being the head of the country and the interconnection between gods and humans – made the monarch necessary and legitimised his rule. It was under Den and his successor that the other aspects of kingship, such as the *nsw-bjt* and *nbty* titles, also appeared.

While the religious aspects are more difficult to track, it is possible to notice that during the Early Dynastic period, religion seemed to follow the course of political events and reflect the needs of the group in command. This characteristic, of course, would remain throughout ancient Egyptian history; it is sufficient to consider the popularity of Ra worship in the Fifth dynasty, or the attempt to control the power of the Amon priesthood in Dynasty 18, along with other similar cases. Despite this, however, it is clear that religion can trace its roots back into the Pre-Dynastic period, and that the rulers tried to use the force of religion to advance their aims, bestowing certain roles upon different gods in order to validate their power and legitimise the kingship's right to exist.

Moreover, when compared to ideology and iconography, the development of the priesthood charted a slower path. The earliest priest titles were mainly linked to the royal and mortuary cults, particularly the maintenance of funerary services or actions linked with the person of the rulers; however, these were not proper religious titles, and were also mostly given to members of the royal family. A fully developed state priesthood began to emerge in the Second Dynasty and appears to have reached a certain degree of complexity between the Third and

848 O'Connor and Silverman 1995, XVIII–XX.

Fifth dynasties. In fact, local priesthoods became standardised only from the fifth Dynasty onwards.

The places of cult worship develop according to a path that is a synthesis of the religious and priesthood developments. While the styles and concepts of the shrines date back to the Pre-Dynastic period, the main data for temples comes from the Old Kingdom, when it seems that the temples had already become standardised and started to feature attached quarters for the temple priests.

The funerary architecture seems to have a direct link with the development of ideology, in that the rulers used their funerary monuments to make important ideological statements. In the early First Dynasty, it was ʻAha who developed the concept of multiple burials, creating a large burial complex; this idea was later imitated by Djer and Djet, who developed complexes with subsidiary burial chambers that were adjacent to one other. With Den, the burial customs begin to change, resulting in the introduction of a staircase facing east and subsidiary burial chambers surrounding the main tomb. With Qa-ʻa, moreover, the direction of the access staircase changed from east to north; this approach was also maintained in the Saqqara royal tombs, most likely related to a change in ideology, such that the ruler's chamber now pointed in the direction that the ruler should travel in to reach the afterlife. This celestial emphasis within the ideology was developed further by Kha-sekhemwy, who buried his funerary boats. The end of this evolution was reached with the Step pyramid complex of Netjery-khet, who organised all of these ideological elements into one single structure.

Ideology and religion		
Ideology and legitimisation	5. a fundamental change in the ideology of stratification and descent, such that rulers were given a sacred supernatural origin (establishing their divine right to rule).	I Dyn – Djet
	6b. sufficient potential of the supreme power to introduce essential changes.	I Dyn – Djer and Den
	6c. completeness of the function of supreme power.	I Dyn – Djer and Den
Religion	5. A fundamental change in the ideology of stratification and descent.	Entire Early Dynastic Period. End in the Old Kingdom

Priesthood	3b. separation of the performance of functions from the bearer of functions.	I Dyn development of base priesthood. II Dyn development of complex priesthood Old Kingdom fully development of priesthood.
The places of cult	4a. standardised temples and the associated quarters of temple priests.	Old Kingdom
Funerary architecture	5. a fundamental change in the ideology of stratification and descent.	Entire early Dynastic Period.

PART 3
Conclusions

Conclusions

Following the above analysis of the theoretical framework and the archaeological evidence presented, it is now possible to list the criteria that can be used to identify the presence of a state. These criteria are then matched with the field data to determine whether these elements were present in ancient Egypt.

1. Settlement hierarchy of four levels.	Territorial subdivision	Beginning I Dyn
2. The centralised decision-making process is both hierarchical and compartmentalised into multiple specialised institutions.	Collection, taxation and treasury	0 Dyn few institutions I Dyn development and standardisation II Dyn further developments
3a. Delegation of power and power divisibility without the risk of insurrection.	Territorial subdivision	I Dyn – Djer
3b. Separation of the performance of functions from the bearer of functions.	Priesthood	I Dyn development of base priesthood II Dyn development of complex priesthood Old Kingdom full development of priesthood
3c. New traits in the system of administration in the early state and the change in the body of administrators: professionals and functionaries administer the state.	Toward a highly structured literate administration	I Dyn development II Dyn complexity and standardisation III Dyn conclusion of the process
3d. An internally specialised administration.		
4a. Standardised temples and the associated quarters of temple priests.	The places of cult	Old Kingdom
4b. The facilities of state-level industries.	Estates and domains	I Dyn – Djer
	Storage, production and redistribution	0 Dyn industrial facilities I Dyn development II Dyn standardisation
4c. Identification of the 'palace' as the ruler's official residence.	Territorial subdivision	Unknown

5. A fundamental change in the ideology of stratification and descent, such that rulers were given a sacred supernatural origin (establishing their divine right to rule).	Ideology and legitimisation	I Dyn – Djet
	Religion	Entire Early Dynastic Period Ended in the Old Kingdom
	Funerary architecture	Entire Early Dynastic Period
6a. Redistribution of power to control the periphery.	Territorial subdivision	Uncertain, probably between Den and the end of II Dyn
6b. Sufficient potential of the supreme power to introduce essential changes.	Ideology and legitimisation	I Dyn – Djer and Den
6c. Completeness of the function of supreme power.	Ideology and legitimisation	I Dyn – Djer and Den
7a. Reforms and/or gradual modification of the administration and of various aspects of the mode of social life.	The administrative apparatus	I Dyn development II Dyn further development and standardisation
7b. Break from certain tradition linked to kin-based societies.	The titles linked to the Egyptian court	Old Kingdom (4 Dyn)

Pre-Dynastic period

During the Pre-Dynastic period, and specifically during the so-called Dynasty 0, two of these criteria (or at least the seeds of their existence) were already present. Indeed, there were elements of a centralised decision-making process, specifically some specialised institutions, along with industrial facilities for the production of specialised goods. A few institutions designed around collection, taxation, treasury storage, production, and redistribution also appeared to already be present in the Late Pre-Dynastic period. Moreover, religion and a few characteristics of iconography were already in place, while others were discharged and did not become part of the kingship ideology.

Dynasty 1

The First Dynasty represents one of the most formative periods of ancient Egypt. In this period, many of the above criteria were met and the society increased in complexity. In addition to the above criteria already presented, all the facilities of state-level industries began to manifest: not only the specialised production centres, but also estates, domains and storage facilities. Territorial

subdivision seemed to be mostly achieved, even if the process reached its conclusion at the end of the Second Dynasty. However, even in the first Dynasty, it was possible to observe the presence of the four-level settlement hierarchy, the delegation of power and power divisibility without the risk of insurrection, the probable identification of the 'palace' as the ruler's official residence, and the redistribution of power to control the periphery.

The administrative apparatus arose at the beginning of the First Dynasty, and ended only with the advent of the Third Dynasty and the Old Kingdom. However, it is possible to identify the new traits in the system of administration, such as the introduction of professionals and functionaries who administrate the state, as well as an internally specialised administration. Of course, this bureaucratic apparatus reformed and was gradually modified during the Early Dynasty period, along with several aspects of the mode of social life.

Religion and ideology never ceased to develop. While rooted in the Pre-Dynastic period and culture, they transformed throughout the entire Early Dynastic period as a result of the changes in society. Not only were they tools used by the elite to legitimise their power and right to rule, they also reflected and accompanied the transformation of culture and society. This period began with a fundamental change in the ideology of stratification and descent, such that rulers were ascribed a sacred supernatural origin that established their divine right to rule, allowing them to achieve sufficient potential and supreme power to introduce essential changes into almost every aspect of society. Moreover, the nature of the connection between gods and humankind required a separation of the performance of functions from the bearer of functions. As the ruler could not perform all the rituals and ceremonies required, the titles of priests to whom these tasks were delegated began to appear. Most of these modifications occurred during the period between Djer and Den, and later under Per-ibsen and Kha-sekhemwy. The process reached homogeneity only under Netjery-khet during the Third Dynasty.

Dynasty 2

The Second Dynasty, particularly the second half, testified to the further development and standardisation of the centralised decision-making process, reaching a certain level of hierarchical and compartmentalised specialised institutions, and similarly increasing the complexity of the administration to a state-like level. The same was true for the development of the priesthood; if, in the First Dynasty, the base titles of the priests were mostly dedicated to functions accompanying funerary rituals or the ruler's religious duties, the priesthood became more complex during Dynasty 2, with a hierarchy, dedicated cults and personnel. Correspondingly, the ideology and the legitimisation of the rulers became more complex and new elements were added.

Third Dynasty – Old Kingdom

The last criteria can be found in the Old Kingdom, when the ideology reached its development and become a structure in which all the elements could find a place. In parallel, the ruler was finally able to break certain traditions linked to kin-based societies, including the court titles that were previously assigned to kin. The last element to complete its development was the standardisation of the temples and the creation of a professional staff of priests, who were quartered in the temple.

Conclusions

First of all, it is clear that unmistakable evidence exists attesting that only chiefdoms were present before the Early Dynastic period; indeed, as only a few of the statehood criteria could be observed during the Pre-Dynastic period, it is most probable that the societies of the time were organised in the form of chiefdoms or complex chiefdoms. Moreover, during the so-called Dynasty 0, it is highly improbable that a state entity was present in Egypt (again, this was most probably a large complex chiefdom). During the First Dynasty, the rulers were able to gather enough power and develop an ideology strong enough to legitimise their desire to introduce new institutions and to develop the social and administrative complexity of a territorially unified Egypt. Under Djer, Djet and Den, control over the Egyptian territory became more systematic, with the creation of domains and estates undergoing a clear development into a more complex administrative form; the first titles and delegations of power occurred within these institutions. In addition, an ideology developed that portrayed the ruler as the only power capable of securing victory for the forces of order over the forces of chaos. The leaders worked to spread this ideology through the buildings of monuments, the celebration of ceremonies and festivals, and the iconographic apparatus. Unfortunately, due to the paucity of data from the first half of the Second Dynasty, it is unclear whether there was a subsequent collapse, or whether, as is more likely, some internal conflict arose that reduced the influence of the rulers. Nevertheless, the evidence is clear regarding the second half of Dynasty 2: during this period, there is evidence to support the further development of the institutions already present, the creation of additional offices, and a general standardisation of the administrative and economic apparatus. It was during the Second Dynasty that the administration appeared to become a complex structure similar to a state apparatus. In particular, it appears that a strong impulse existed to develop the ideological apparatus and the construction of a priesthood. While this process began at the start of the First Dynasty, it developed further during this period to achieve higher complexity, close to the paradigm of a state. Only from the Third

Dynasty onwards did ancient Egypt became a state in its own right, characterised by most of the traits that would be present during the following centuries.

Regarding the reasons for the evolution of Egyptian society into a state, it is not yet possible to affirm with certainty which elements played a significant part in this process; moreover, it is not possible to identify a single cause for this development. It is most likely that this process occurred due to a confluence of elements, agencies, and opportunities. It is further possible to speculate that three chiefs in Upper Egypt, specifically those with the power over the regions of Abydos, Naqada, and Hierakonpolis, struggled for control over important resources and trade routes. Many factors, encompassing everything from brilliant tactics to improvised strokes of luck, are likely responsible for the initial advantage secured by one of these chiefdoms over the others, which ended with the creation of a complex chiefdom that wielded power over the entirety of Upper Egypt. Although there is no indication as to precisely how this happened, it is possible that factors including military activities (maybe against Naqada) and diplomatic actions (probably a pacifying union following a political marriage between the enlarged chiefdoms of Abydos and Hierakonpolis) brought about the creation of this complex chiefdom. Later, in some way, whether violently or otherwise, this entity became powerful enough to extend its control over Lower Egypt; it is most probable that this escalation occurred gradually, rather than being a master plan for the unification of Egypt. The different chiefs and rulers probably exploited their temporary advantage to gain the edge over a neighbour or a kin competitor, and only then found themselves in the position to claim another piece of land, control another trade route, or monopolise an important resource. This game continued until a ruler saw the possibility of securing hegemony over the entire Nile valley and was able to achieve it. Similarly, at the beginning, the development of the economy and administrative capacity was a response to direct requirements for improved organisation, the creation of a surplus, supplies for the army, logistics and safety for the trade networks or mining areas, and other factors (while also, of course, taking the variability of the agent into account). The rulers influenced the speed of these transformations, with some rulers – such as Djer, Den, and Ny-netjer – being more careful and more devoted to the development of the administrative and economic apparatus than others. The development of the ideology also supported the rulers' ability to exploit the tools provided by religion for their own benefit.

The formation of the Egyptian state was, almost certainly, neither the dream of a great man (such as the famous Menes) that became reality, nor the result of the 'natural' evolution of society. Instead, it most likely occurred due to the combined influence of several actors and factors that allowed a certain faction to acquire more power, lands, and control until the society reached a degree of complexity and a structure that was in fact a state.

PART 4
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Abbreviations

MDAIK = *Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts. Abteilung Kairo*

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