

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-76443-8 - Mobile Pastoralism and the Formation of Near Eastern Civilizations: Weaving Together Society

Anne Porter

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

MOBILE PASTORALISM AND THE FORMATION OF NEAR EASTERN CIVILIZATIONS

In this book, Anne Porter explores the idea that mobile and sedentary members of the ancient world were integral parts of the same social and political groups in greater Mesopotamia during the period 4000 to 1500 BCE. She draws on a wide range of archaeological and cuneiform sources to show how networks of social structure, political organization, religious ideology, and everyday as well as ritual practice worked to maintain the integrity of those groups when the pursuit of different subsistence activities dispersed them over space. These networks were dynamic, shaping many of the key events and innovations of the time, including the Uruk expansion and the introduction of writing; so-called secondary state formation and the organization and operation of government; the literary production of the Third Dynasty of Ur and the first stories of Gilgamesh; and the emergence of the Amorrites in the second millennium BCE.

Anne Porter was an assistant professor in the School of Religion, Departments of Classics and Anthropology at the University of Southern California. She served as co-director of excavations at the Tell Banat Settlement Complex, Syria. She has been a visiting research Fellow at both the Institute for the Study of the Ancient World at New York University and the Institute for the Transregional Study of the Contemporary Middle East, North Africa, and Central Asia at Princeton University.

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-76443-8 - Mobile Pastoralism and the Formation of Near Eastern Civilizations: Weaving Together Society

Anne Porter

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-76443-8 - Mobile Pastoralism and the Formation of Near Eastern Civilizations: Weaving Together Society

Anne Porter

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

MOBILE PASTORALISM
AND THE FORMATION
OF NEAR EASTERN
CIVILIZATIONS

Weaving Together Society

ANNE PORTER

University of Southern California



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-76443-8 - Mobile Pastoralism and the Formation of Near Eastern Civilizations: Weaving Together Society

Anne Porter

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS
Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town,
Singapore, São Paulo, Delhi, Mexico City

Cambridge University Press
32 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10013-2473, USA

www.cambridge.org

Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9780521764438

© Anne Porter 2012

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements, no reproduction of any part may take place without the written permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 2012

Printed in the United States of America

A catalog record for this publication is available from the British Library.

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication data

Porter, Anne, 1957–

Mobile pastoralism and the formation of Near Eastern civilizations : weaving together society /
Anne Porter.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-0-521-76443-8 (hardback)

1. Iraq – Antiquities. 2. Middle East – Antiquities. 3. Iraq – Civilization – To 634.
4. Middle East – Civilization – To 622. 5. Pastoral systems – Middle East – History – To 1500.
6. Migration, Internal – Middle East – History – To 1500. 7. Sedentary behavior – Middle
East – History – To 1500. 8. Social archaeology – Iraq. 9. Social archaeology – Middle
East. 10. Archaeology – Methodology. I. Title.

DS73.1.P67 2011

939'.4-dc22 2010052225

ISBN 978-0-521-76443-8 Hardback

Cambridge University Press has no responsibility for the persistence or accuracy of URLs for external or third-party Internet Web sites referred to in this publication and does not guarantee that any content on such Web sites is, or will remain, accurate or appropriate.

CONTENTS

<i>List of Figures</i>	page vi
<i>List of Tables</i>	viii
<i>Acknowledgments</i>	ix
Introduction	1
1 The Problem with Pastoralists	8
2 Wool, Writing, and Religion	65
3 From Temple to Tomb	164
4 Tax and Tribulation, or Who Were the Amorrites?	251
Conclusion: Beyond “Tribe” and “State”	326
<i>Appendix</i>	331
<i>Bibliography</i>	333
<i>Index</i>	381

FIGURES

1	Map of the “land of the four riverbanks” with key sites	<i>page</i> 5
2	Map of second millennium sites	30
3	Plan of level VIB2 Arslantepe with village, fortified hilltop, and “royal” tomb	67
4	The “royal” tomb at Arslantepe, with exterior deposition, interior deposition, and sections	68
5	Ceramic elements of the Uruk assemblage	74
6	Early, middle, and late phases of the Uruk expansion	83
7	Map of Uruk-only, Local Late Chalcolithic, and co-located sites	85
8	An alternative mapping of the Uruk expansion	89
9	The location of the wall dividing local and intrusive populations at Hacinebi	94
10	The level 18 Local Late Chalcolithic “feasting hall” at Tell Brak TW with associated level 16 structures	105
11	The level VIA temple complex with “residential” sector and level VII Building XXIX at Arslantepe	108
12	Mass-produced pots from Arslantepe and Tell Brak	111
13	“Hut symbols/spectacle idols” and “eye idols”	113
14	Two wall paintings from Arslantepe with comparable sealings	116
15	Plan of Jebel Aruda showing the distribution of pyrotechnic facilities	126
16	Single-halled buildings from Late Uruk period sites	131
17	Hassek Höyük	135
18	Bulla, tokens, and tablets	147
19	The Sin Temple and environs at Khafajah, with Temple Oval	159
20	Mirrored features of the Arslantepe sacrifices	166

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-76443-8 - Mobile Pastoralism and the Formation of Near Eastern Civilizations: Weaving Together Society

Anne Porter

Frontmatter

[More information](#)Figures  vii

21 Pottery from Arslantepe VIB Tomb with comparative material from VIA	171
22 Map of the third millennium indicating the location of the ten temples, key <i>Kranzhügeln</i> , and aboveground mortuary remains	175
23 The ten temples of the Trans-Euphrates	179
24 The White Monument at Tell Banat North	180
25 The sequence of temples at Halawa Tell B	181
26 Two wall paintings from Halawa	182
27 The temple <i>in-antis</i> plan	193
28 The extant plan of Ebla Palace G, with find-spots for tablets	200
29 Enlargement of the main section of Ebla Palace G, with find-spots for selected objects	201
30 Map of the lower Habur River	223
31 Plan of Tell Raqa'i showing the round building of level 4 adjacent to the plan of level 3	224
32 Map of the Ur III expansion	297
33 Map of Yamutbal/Emutbal regions	316

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-76443-8 - Mobile Pastoralism and the Formation of Near Eastern Civilizations: Weaving Together Society

Anne Porter

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

TABLES

1	Chronology 4000–1500 BCE	<i>page</i> 7
2	Isin-Larsa and Old Babylonian King Lists	29
3	Arslantepe Stratigraphy	66
4	Patterning in Arslantepe sacrifice	169
5	Attestations of the label “Mardu” outside literary sources	314

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This book has been a long time coming. The fundamental premise was generated when I was a Visiting Research Fellow at the Institute for the Transregional Study of the Contemporary Middle East, North Africa, and Central Asia in the Center for International Studies at Princeton University in 2002. Interaction with scholars in a very different field, political science, was not only stimulating but brought a different kind of rigor to my work and gave me the courage to take the next steps in breaking free of the paradigms that confine my own field. The final form of the book fell into place when I had the very great honor of being invited by Jean-Marie Durand to give the annual four lectures for Assyriology at the Collège de France in 2007. The completed product is a much expanded version of those lectures. Conversations in Paris with Dominique Charpin, Jean-Marie Durand, Jean-Jacques Glassner, Berthille Lyonnet, and Catherine Marro certainly invigorated too many aspects of this work to list. I am not an Assyriologist, although the last chapter of the book is devoted to matters of text and language, an endeavor much facilitated by the time I spent at the Institute for the Study of the Ancient World, New York University, in 2007–8. Several of the ideas in this book owe their genesis to work on another, related, project funded by the University of Southern California's Zumberge Award. I thank all of these institutions for their generous support.

I would also like to express my gratitude to the anonymous reviewers of the manuscript for their very valuable critiques, which gave definition to the end result, and to Thomas McClellan, Glenn Schwartz, and Dan Fleming for their repeated close readings of parts or the whole. I especially thank Marcella Frangipane for her graciousness in allowing me to reproduce illustrations of so much of her extraordinary work at Arslantepe.

The project would never have come to fruition, however, and I would not have been able to stay in archaeology, if not for the unstinting personal, professional, and especially intellectual support of a number of people over the years.

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-76443-8 - Mobile Pastoralism and the Formation of Near Eastern Civilizations: Weaving Together Society

Anne Porter

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

x  Acknowledgments

I thank them from the bottom of my heart. In alphabetical order they are: Clem Arrison, Marco Bonechi, Daniel Fleming, Thomas McClellan, Ian Morris, Thomas Payne, Glenn Schwartz, and Kathy St. John.

The book is dedicated to Clem Arrison for his truly altruistic support of junior scholars and artists. This isn't the project you funded, Clem; that one is still coming (soon). But this one wouldn't have happened without you nevertheless.