

## GLOBALIZATION IN PREHISTORY

### CONTACT, EXCHANGE, AND THE "PEOPLE WITHOUT HISTORY"

*Globalization in Prehistory* challenges traditional historical and archaeological discourse about the drivers of social and cultural connectivity in the ancient world. It presents archaeological case studies of emerging globalization from around the world, from the Mesolithic period, through the Bronze and Iron Ages, to more recent historical times. The volume focuses on those societies and communities that history has bypassed – nomads, pastoralists, fishers, foragers, pirates, and traders, among others. It aims for a more complex understanding of the webs of connectivity that shaped communities living outside and beyond the urban, agrarian states that are the mainstay of books and courses on ancient civilizations and trade. Written by a team of international experts, the rich and variable case studies demonstrate the important role played by societies that were mobile and dispersed in the making of a more connected world long before the modern era.

Nicole Boivin is Director of the Department of Archaeology at the Max Planck Institute for the Science of Human History in Jena, Germany. Her archaeological research incorporates field and laboratory techniques to explore a range of issues, from anthropogenic landscape change to processes of dispersal, migration, and trade in human societies. She is the author of *Material Cultures, Material Minds: The Role of Things in Human Thought, Society, and Evolution* and co-editor of *Human Dispersal and Species Movement: From Prehistory to the Present*.

Michael D. Frachetti is Professor of Anthropology at Washington University in St. Louis. His work addresses how economic and political strategies served to shape interregional networks across Asia as early as 3000 BC (the Early Bronze Age), and how those networks laid the foundation for the later Silk Roads. He conducts archaeological field research in Eastern Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan. He is the author of *Pastoralist Landscapes and Social Interaction in Bronze Age Eurasia* and a forthcoming book entitled *Ancient Inner Asia*.

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**CAMBRIDGE**  
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge University Press  
978-1-108-42980-1 — Globalization in Prehistory  
Edited by Nicole Boivin, Michael D. Frachetti  
Frontmatter  
[More Information](#)

## CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

University Printing House, Cambridge CB2 8BS, United Kingdom

One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA

477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia

314–321, 3rd Floor, Plot 3, Splendor Forum, Jasola District Centre, New Delhi – 110025, India

103 Penang Road, #05–06/07, Visioncrest Commercial, Singapore 238467

Cambridge University Press is part of the University of Cambridge.

It furthers the University's mission by disseminating knowledge in the pursuit of education, learning and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

[www.cambridge.org](http://www.cambridge.org)

Information on this title: [www.cambridge.org/9781108429801](http://www.cambridge.org/9781108429801)

DOI: 10.1017/9781108573276

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First published 2018

*A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library*

*Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication data*

Names: Boivin, Nicole, 1970– editor. | Frachetti, Michael D., editor.

Title: Globalization in prehistory : Contact, Exchange, and the “People Without History” / edited by Nicole Boivin, Michael D. Frachetti.

Description: Cambridge, United Kingdom; New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2018. | Includes bibliographical references and index.

Identifiers: LCCN 2018013741 | ISBN 9781108429801 (hardback)

Subjects: LCSH: Prehistoric commerce. | Culture diffusion. | Local exchange trading systems. | BISAC: SOCIAL SCIENCE / Archaeology.

Classification: LCC GN799.C45 G56 2018 | DDC 306.3–dc23

LC record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2018013741>

ISBN 978-1-108-42980-1 Hardback

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## CONTENTS

|  |          |
|--|----------|
| <i>List of Figures</i>   | page vii |
| <i>List of Tables</i>  | xi       |
| <i>Notes on Contributors</i>   | xiii     |
| <i>Preface</i>   | xvii     |
| INTRODUCTION: ARCHAEOLOGY AND THE 'PEOPLE WITHOUT HISTORY'   | I        |
| <i>Nicole Boivin and Michael D. Frachetti</i>  |          |
| 1 WHAT'S THE POINT?: GLOBALIZATION AND THE EMERGENCE OF CERAMIC-USING HUNTER-GATHERERS IN NORTHERN EURASIA | 15       |
| <i>Peter Hommel</i>  |          |
| 2 GLOBALISING INTERACTIONS IN THE ARABIAN NEOLITHIC AND THE 'UBAID   | 43       |
| <i>Robert Carter</i>   |          |
| 3 DOMESTICATE DISPERSAL, HUMAN AGENCY AND CONNECTIVITY IN ISLAND SOUTHEAST ASIA DURING THE HOLOCENE        | 80       |
| <i>Tim Denham</i>  |          |
| 4 BRONZE AGE PARTICIPATION IN A "GLOBAL" ECUMENE: MORTUARY PRACTICE AND IDEOLOGY ACROSS INNER ASIA         | 102      |
| <i>Michael D. Frachetti and Elissa Bullion</i>   |          |
| 5 PREHISTORIC GLOBALIZING PROCESSES IN THE TAO RIVER VALLEY, GANSU, CHINA?                                 | 131      |
| <i>Yitzchak Jaffe and Rowan Flad</i>   |          |
| 6 GLOBAL NETWORKS AND LOCAL AGENTS IN THE IRON AGE EURASIAN STEPPE   | 162      |
| <i>Ursula Brosseder and Bryan K. Miller</i>  |          |

|    |   |     |
|----|---|-----|
| 7  | NOMADS AND CARAVAN TRADE IN THE SYRIAN DESERT<br><i>Eivind Heldaas Seland</i>   | 184 |
| 8  | INVISIBLE AGENTS OF EASTERN TRADE:<br>FOREGROUNDING ISLAND SOUTHEAST ASIAN<br>AGENCY IN PRE-MODERN GLOBALISATION<br><i>Tom Hoogervorst and Nicole Boivin</i>            | 205 |
| 9  | FROM RURAL COLLECTABLES TO GLOBAL<br>COMMODITIES: COPPER FROM OMAN AND<br>OBSIDIAN FROM ETHIOPIA<br><i>Ioana A. Dumitru and Michael J. Harrower</i>                     | 232 |
| 10 | THE TSODILO HILLS AND THE INDIAN OCEAN:<br>SMALL-SCALE WEALTH AND EMERGENT POWER<br>IN EIGHTH TO ELEVENTH-CENTURY<br>CENTRAL-SOUTHERN AFRICA<br><i>Edwin N. Wilmsen</i> | 263 |
| 11 | CHRISTIANS AND SPICES: HIDDEN FOUNDATIONS<br>AND MISRECOGNITIONS IN EUROPEAN COLONIAL<br>EXPANSION TO SOUTH ASIA<br><i>Kathleen D. Morrison</i>                         | 283 |
| 12 | SUBSISTENCE MIDDLEMEN TRADERS AND<br>PRE-COLONIAL GLOBALIZATION IN MELANESIA<br><i>Ian Lilley</i>   | 308 |
|    | <i>Index</i>  | 335 |

## FIGURES

|     |   |                |
|-----|---|----------------|
| 1.1 | Ngram showing the usage of ‘globalization’, or equivalent terms, in the global literature (English, French, Spanish, Russian) | <i>page</i> 17 |
| 1.2 | Hunter-gatherer pottery in eastern Eurasia  | 21             |
| 1.3 | Distribution of pottery among hunter-gatherer communities around the world before 1,500 BC                                    | 22             |
| 1.4 | Hunter-gatherer pottery in western Eurasia  | 23             |
| 1.5 | Early ceramic vessels from Ust’-Karenga XII, Layer 7  | 28             |
| 2.1 | Sites with ‘Ubaid material in the Persian Gulf, with ‘Ubaid sites in southern Iraq  | 48             |
| 2.2 | Boat-related finds from H3, As-Sabiyah, Kuwait  | 49             |
| 2.3 | Examples of ‘Ubaid pottery from H3, with chart of functional profile  | 50             |
| 2.4 | Some examples of symbolic objects from H3   | 60             |
| 2.5 | Stone-built Arabian Neolithic architecture from Marawah (UAE), Wadi Thayyilah 3 (Yemen), Shagra (Qatar) and H3 (Kuwait)       | 64             |
| 2.6 | Architecture of Bahra 1 (Kuwait)  | 65             |
| 2.7 | ‘Ubaid-period boat models   | 69             |
| 2.8 | Map of distribution of ‘Ubaid-period boat models  | 70             |
| 3.1 | Map depicting the likely routes of dispersal of different pottery traditions into Island Southeast Asia                       | 92             |
| 3.2 | Map depicting the likely routes of dispersal of animal and plant domesticates to Island Southeast Asia                        | 93             |
| 4.1 | Map of Eurasia, with sites discussed in the text  | 103            |
| 4.2 | Burial plans from each of the regions addressed in this chapter   | 110            |
| 4.3 | Ceramic vessels recovered from Bronze Age Eurasian burials in regions discussed in this chapter                               | 111            |
| 4.4 | Bronze objects recovered from Bronze Age Eurasian burials in regions discussed in this chapter                                | 111            |
| 4.5 | Human figurines and depictions of humans from each of the four regions discussed in this chapter                              | 112            |
| 5.1 | The course of the Tao River with county boundaries and sites mentioned in the text  | 142            |
| 5.2 | Approximate distributions of select archaeological cultures in northwest China and approximate date ranges                    | 144            |

|      |   |     |
|------|---|-----|
| 5.3  | Known prehistoric sites along the Tao River from the Third National Cultural Relic Survey   | 145 |
| 5.4  | Mogou cemetery tomb layout and burial offerings   | 147 |
| 5.5  | Metal artifacts of the Qijia Culture  | 148 |
| 6.1  | Eurasia at the beginning of the first century CE  | 167 |
| 6.2  | Remains from the Mongolian Altai  | 169 |
| 6.3  | Remains from the Middle Irtysh  | 171 |
| 6.4  | Remains from the Lower Don  | 173 |
| 6.5  | Distribution of Chinese mirrors in Eurasia indicating diverse connectivities  | 175 |
| 7.1  | Main routes between the Persian Gulf and the Mediterranean  | 187 |
| 7.2  | Geography and precipitation in the Syrian Desert  | 188 |
| 7.3  | Hydrology between Palmyra and the Euphrates   | 190 |
| 7.4  | Distribution of Roman-period inscriptions and early twentieth-century tribal areas and seasonal migrations of camel pastoralists                                    | 191 |
| 7.5  | Traditional goats'-hair tent, south of Palmyra  | 194 |
| 8.1  | Map of Maritime Southeast Asia  | 207 |
| 8.2  | Reconstruction of a Southeast Asian ship used in long-distance navigation around the tenth century CE   | 218 |
| 9.1  | Oman and the Persian Gulf with some of the most important sites mentioned in the text   | 233 |
| 9.2  | Ethiopia and the Red Sea with some of the most important sites (dots) and obsidian sources (triangles) mentioned in the text  | 234 |
| 9.3  | Malachite signature showing reflectance/absorption of malachite in response to different wavelengths of visible and infra-red light from 0.3 to 2.5 micrometres     | 241 |
| 9.4  | Map of Hyperion hyperspectral imagery target detection results for copper around the Iron Age metal working site of Muaydin discovered by the ArWHO Project in 2015 | 241 |
| 10.1 | Map of central-southern Africa showing sites mentioned in the text  | 264 |
| 10.2 | Map of the Female Hill and northern half of the Male Hill at Tsodilo showing the location of sites discussed in the text  | 265 |
| 10.3 | The Nqoma plateau on the Female Hill with the Male Hill in the middle distance at the left and the Kalahari dune fields stretching to the horizon                   | 277 |
| 10.4 | Routes from clay sources discussed in the text to Tsodilo and related sites determined by optical petrography   | 278 |
| 11.1 | Weight of goods shipped from the Portuguese port of Cochin, 1502–1525   | 294 |
| 11.2 | Harvesting pepper in the Malabar region   | 297 |
| 12.1 | New Guinea coastal trading systems  | 310 |
| 12.2 | Allen's model of change in Melanesian coastal trading systems   | 315 |

|      |   |     |
|------|---|-----|
| 12.3 | The wider Vitiaz Strait region showing major trade networks             | 316 |
| 12.4 | Idealised trading network showing nested links between inland and coast | 317 |
| 12.5 | The emergence of the Siassi trading network                             | 320 |
| 12.6 | Friedman's model of change in the Mediterranean                         | 325 |



## TABLES

|      |   |                |
|------|---|----------------|
| 2.1  | Tokens and symbolic objects   | <i>page</i> 56 |
| 2.2  | Boat models   | 67             |
| 5.1  | Jennings' eight hallmarks of global culture   | 138            |
| 5.2  | Approximate chronological ranges of cultures represented<br>in the Tao River valley | 142            |
| 11.1 | Weight of goods shipped from the Portuguese port of Cochin,<br>1502–1525            | 295            |

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## PREFACE

The chapters in this volume emerged from presentations made in a session entitled “Globalisation and the People Without History” at the 2013 SAA conference in Honolulu, HI. In that session, a host of world-class researchers tackled issues of ancient globalization as it is expressed through the archaeology of diverse regions of the world at different times in (pre)history. The result of that exercise is a comparative volume that demands we reconsider the temporal and geographic scales of globalization as a process, and that we reimagine the social and institutional forces that bring that process into formation.

The chapters here represent a selection of the authors present at the conference, which was a starting point for many to enter into dialogue about the issues of globalization in comparative perspective. Over the period that this volume has evolved into its final form, each author has managed to refine the ideas first presented in their conference papers through dialogue and rounds of feedback and revision, both from other conference participants and also from outside reviewers. We would like to express our gratitude to this large team of anonymous outside chapter reviewers, as well as to the two anonymous referees who took the time to read through the entire volume and provide useful comments that have helped to further improve the book. We are also grateful to our editors at Cambridge University Press, Asya Graf and Beatrice Rehl, as well as the broader editorial team, for their advice, support, and important role in bringing the book to press. We have aspired to offer a fresh perspective on the idea of globalization in the past and hope that the chapters in this book can serve to widen the landscape of discussion about the nature of human connectivity, interaction, and participation from ancient times to the present day.

We dedicate this volume to the late Professor Gregory Possehl. As early as the 1970s, Gregory Possehl was thinking about globalization. While the first publication of the term would not come until the early 1980s, scholars and thinkers from a range of social sciences were interrogating the economy and institutional diffusions of the modern world through a new lens. Possehl was among this avante-garde in archaeology. As early as 1977 he had begun to imagine the expansion and integration of regional civilizations – which we can take as a key process of globalization – as the result of the activities of smaller,

less integrated communities such as nomads. Possehl wrote “... the presence of pastoral nomads [in the Indus Valley] makes very good sense if we see them as the mobile population which bridged the gap between settlements as the carriers of information, as the transporters of goods, as the population through which Harappan Civilization achieved its remarkable degree of integration” (1979, 12). By the 1980s he applied this theoretical stance more widely to consider its impact on both the Near East and Central Asia, and championed the idea of the Middle Asian Interaction Sphere (or MAIS), which is nothing less than a regionalized case study for ancient globalization (Possehl 2005). It is in the spirit of his multi-scalar investigation of local processes in a global context that we offer this collection of papers.

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