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Holy War: Expansion of the Naqada Culture and State-Building in Egypt*

Abstract: Archaeological research would make little substantial progress without transcending on occasion the obvious limits of its 'technical' routine for the greatest common factor: the genuinely interdisciplinary and all-inclusive domain of palaeopolitics. Mortuary consolidation backed by the powerful 'ideology of an afterlife' paved the way for the political consolidation of the Naqada culture. The ever-larger Upper Egyptian proto-state was spearheaded by the ultimate politico-religious leader: the divine king, the god on earth, incarnated Horus, accompanied by an increasing number of followers/believers. Every religion has its respective birthplace, i.e. an absolute geographic location (Nekhen for instance) to which its roots can be traced. The iconography of coercion, along with so-called powerfacts, is firmly established in southern Upper Egypt. Holy war in direct connection with state-building is a well-known narrative, a historical and modern phenomenon.

Keywords: Naqada culture, holy war, state-building, Horus, god-king, palaeopolitics, 4th millennium B.C.

Introduction

Efforts to pinpoint a complex set of components that influenced state formation in protodynastic Egypt (cf. Anđelković 2004, 2008, 2011b) have primarily aimed to track down the relevant processes and to delineate developmental stages, hopefully reflected in the tiny percentage of remaining material evidence, if, by luck, discovered at all. But what about some other contemporary angles of even greater importance such as the intangible cultural heritage, collective

worldviews, charismatic leaders, religious fanaticism,[1] social trends, nonmaterial communal values, etc.?[2] In other words, "a reappraisal of the very concept of the early Egyptian state and how we address it archaeologically is not only timely but necessary" (Stevenson 2016, 453). In archaeology "with our emphasis on the material and measurable, we often ignore the ideological aspects of cultural change" (Hoffman et al. 1982, 145).

Indeed, the archaeological interpretation would hardly make any major progress without transcending the limits of its 'technical' routine for the greatest common factor, interdisciplinary (i.e. "grouping together different things"; Kemp 2000, 232) and all-inclusive domain of palaeopolitics (cf. Anđelković 2011a, 31). The term encompasses an analytical study of the activities associated with the governance of a territory (and more territory) its population and resources, that typically tend to impose 'one ideology to rule them all, and in the state bind them', so to speak. Namely, as a specific amalgam of the archaeological record and political anthropology, palaeopolitics should essentially examine mechanisms of an indisputable prime mover: a desire for domination, the will to power (Anđelković 2006, 599–600, 605–606).

An Equation

In natural and formal sciences an equation is largely a formula stating that two or more entities have the same value. In addition, it seems that a similar principle can be applied to a range of social sciences as well. So, if on the one side of our hypothetical equation stands a set of specific components – an eternal afterlife promised by the god-king (as a divinity on earth and the beyond), continuous territorial expansion, perpetual warfare, and state formation – what could possibly lie upon the other?

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[1] Religious violence (i.e. violence committed in the name of god) was/is quite customary worldwide (but see Bronisch 2015). For instance, when Christianity came to power in the late Roman Empire (the process defined as "the marriage of Christian ideology and Roman imperial power"; Gaddis 2005, 2), the hitherto persecution practiced against Christians simply shifted to the persecution of pagans. To illustrate (cf. Tomorad 2015): an inhabitant of Roman Egypt the exceptionally long-lived Shenoute of Atripe (A.D. 348–465), the charismatic Coptic monk allegedly with prophetic insight – now known as St. Shenouda the Archimandrite (of the so-called White Monastery, *ca.* 5 km to the south-west of Sohag in Upper Egypt) – was famous for his violent anti-pagan (but anti-heretical as well) activities (cf. Emmel 2002, 2008). It is worth mentioning that the goals and motivations of the modern religious activists (often labeled as 'fundamentalists') are "as political as they are religious" (Juergensmeyer 1995, 379).

[2] Including the age-old tales, songs, sayings, superstitions, and folk medicine, present among the dwellers of the Nile Valley.

A religious ideology[3] (that uses unambiguously secular tools)[4] practically induce and accompany political processes and military actions in many instances. The difference between religion (as the belief in a supernatural controlling power) and ideology (as the belief in a doctrinal controlling power) is not as substantial as it might seem at first glance. As Firth (1981, 583) put it: "Both try to secure and maintain power". Moreover, empirical investigations "have shown religion to be active on many sides of political struggles"; in addition, religion "has legitimated regimes, siphoned potential grievances into other-worldly concerns, provided organizational support for social movements, and offered a conception of justice that mobilized participation for change" (Williams 1996, 368). As accurately noted by Wilkinson (2000b, 23) the "achievements of pharaonic Egypt would have been impossible, even unimaginable, without the driving force of ideology; and that ideology centered on the role of the king". According to Bronisch (2015, 36), "in antiquity, there was no separation between religion and politics".[5] And again (Hassan 1992, 317): "The evolutionary dynamics of political power were linked with mythogenetic transformations and ritual practices". In the same vein, "ideological power is based on the ability to present followers with religiously sanctioned narratives for compliance and support" (Earle 2017, 238). In essence, religion acts as an ideology – divine kingship ideology in a given case – manifesting the full power of their interactive and complementary natures.

The Power of Context

Even if initially it seemed that academic interest in state formation in Egypt was gradually intensifying – especially since 1991 (Anđelković 2008, 1039 n. 1; cf. Bard 2017, 2) – it has actually tended to stagnate, being marginalized or blurred by perennial topics such as social complexity, early kingship (cf. Baines 2014), administrative reforms, etc.

What exactly form/type of state structure was ancient Egypt? Was it a theocracy (a deity is recognized as the supreme ruling authority),[6] an autocracy (absolute monarchy: supreme power is concentrated in the hands of one person),

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[3] It should be noted that politics can be a religion on its own: a political religion, "the sacralization of politics" (Gentile 2006).

[4] As stated by Clausewitz (1918, 23): "War is not merely a political act, but also a real political instrument".

[5] Judging from the conflicting claims of the world's religions, it is hard to distinguish between religion and the interests of state even now (cf. Svensson and Nilsson 2018).

[6] As stated by Schmitt (2005, 36): "All significant concepts of the modern theory of the state are secularized theological concepts". However, one should distinguish

some sort of hierocracy (rule by priests/clergy), a personalistic totalitarianism, a totalitarian outline of hydraulic/Oriental despotism (cf. Wittfogel 1967), the religious state, the nation-state, or perhaps a fiscal-military state[7], to mention but a few (cf. Anđelković 2008, 1050–1051)? Furthermore – since the world to come was a reflection of the physical world (judging by the grave goods, the needs were the same) – the hereafter also had a proper state-structure: the god-king ruled over the dead in the Underworld. That is to say, "people can conceptualize the continuation of social roles beyond the life of an individual" (Stevenson 2015, 372).

As in many aspects related to ancient Egyptian civilization, a simple question has a complex answer with more than one layer of meaning. The god-king (the king being a god himself) held supreme authority over both temporal and spiritual affairs. According to Frandsen (2008, 47): "The institution of kingship was crucial to the existence of political and social order and to its integration into the cosmology of the Egyptians". The divine king was the religious, political and military, as well as the 'afterlife' leader of the people. He ruled over the country via the royal court nobility, close relatives, officials and advisers, army commanders, regional nomarchs (who exercised only the powers that the divine king chose to delegate), high priests, bureaucratic/administrative apparatus,[8] etc. Of course, "power will be exercised upon, and violence meted out to, those who oppose the ruler's will" (Baines 2019, 240). In other words, "the social setting was dominated by the ideology of sacred power, fully blended with the concentration of economic, political, and military power"[9] (Anđelković 2011a, 27).[10] As Earle (2017, 238) put it briefly: "No one questions armed muscle". According to Hassan (1992, 319): "The most critical element in a state society is the emergence of a power mystique[11] that binds people from different kinship

"between the sacred inscribed within notions of rule – that is, sacral kingship – from the explicit ascription of divinity to the ruler – that is, divine kingship" (Winter 2008, 75).

[7] State as 'a war machine' that bases its economic model on the sustainment of its armed forces (cf. Harling and Mandler 1993).

[8] The written testimonies from the Thomb U-j (dated to Naqada IIIa2) in Umm el-Qaab – such as approximately 160 tags of bone and ivory with numbers/notations, and approximately 125 clay vessels with ink inscriptions (Dreyer 1998, 2011) – clearly pinpoint the already well developed bureaucratic/administrative apparatus, i.e. elite administrators. The fact that the writing was originally invented for the purpose of social control is beyond question.

[9] Power, in its fundamental sense, is "the relative ability of a person or group to cause another person or group to obey" (Service 1975, 11). In the same vein, war is "an act of violence intended to compel our opponent to fulfil our will" (Clausewitz 1918, 2).

[10] With apologies for self-citation.

[11] As observed by Baines (1995, 120–121): "The king's presence was surrounded by power and danger (...) A Fifth Dynasty text shows how inadvertent contact with an item

groups (lineages) into a very large society over a vast territory". And again, "the political system was of the so-called 'Oriental Despotism' type (...) highly centralized and headed by a politically effective king enjoying qualified supernatural authority" (O'Connor 1974, 15).

And who better fit for purpose in the long term than a god-king? The Egyptian state could probably be defined as a theocratic[12] monarchy, where the living god rules as the monarch.[13]

Horus-of-Nekhen

Every religion has its respective place of origin, namely an absolute geographic location – such as Nekhen/Hierakonpolis – to which its roots can be traced to, and from which it spreads.

Until now, "perhaps exclusively at Hierakonpolis where they may have been symbols reserved for the utmost elite" a number of beautifully worked stone falcon figurines (or their fragments) have been found (Hendrickx and Friedman 2007, 10). The figurines "come not from the elite tombs, but from the elaborate ritual buildings above and around them" and "can be tentatively dated to Naqada IIA-B, if not earlier" (Hendrickx, Friedman and Eyckerman 2011, 132, 148). It "cannot yet be proven that the very early kings of Hierakonpolis identified themselves with the falcon, but the strong traditions concerning early kingship that surround the site, and its close connection with the falcon god Horus in Dynastic times (...) are all certainly suggestive" (Hendrickx and Friedman 2007, 10). Archaeological excavations in HK6 have shown that "strong and rich rulers were present at Hierakonpolis from early Naqada II times, if not earlier" (Friedman 2010, 75). We tend to think that the 'skydiving' falcon figurines at HK6 may have a different symbolic/spiritual meaning in comparison to figural flints

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of royal insignia was dangerous or life-threatening". For "the terms for fear and awe" shared "by king and god alike" see Frandsen (2008). Along similar lines, Kemp (2000, 225) discusses the "different ways of expressing the same violent aspect of heavenly power".

[12] According to Carneiro (2012, 7–9) there are two main theories of state formation: voluntaristic and coercive; theocratic polities belong to the former because of "the populace's fear of the supernatural". However, as far as holy war is concerned, fear of one warring party's god and priests does not apply to the other warring party which probably has its own god(s) and priests.

[13] Let us remember that – following the very first emperor who was a descendant of the sun goddess Amaterasu-ōmikami (Great-goddess-shining-in-Heaven) – the Emperor of Japan was/is considered by the Japanese to be a living god. In 2019, in an elaborate series of rituals, the 126th Emperor of Japan, the latest in an unbroken line, ascended to the Chrysanthemum Throne.

of ibex, Barbary sheep, donkeys, cattle, dogs, hippopotami, elephants, giraffes, etc. (cf. Friedman and Nagaya 2021, 346 fig. 2, 348–350 tab. 1).

Keeping the entire ancient Egyptian record of the ruler–religion bond in mind, the following is rather obvious: if it is unquestionable that the falcon god Horus carries a divine connotation, his close proximity to a paramount leader at locality HK6 can hardly be anything but confirmation of a divine kingship doctrine. And again, the notion that the king "and falcon are closely associated in the royal cult"[14] is evident throughout the span of Egyptian history (Simpson 1971, 159). A number of some other predynastic falcon figurines, "are similar to falcons that appear on standards of the kings (...) and somewhat resemble images of the mummified falcon god Horus of Nekhen" (Shonkwiler 2014, 11; cf. Hendrickx, Friedman and Eyckerman 2011). Falcon representations used as amulets (e.g. Freed 2013, 183 fig. 13.7.a, 186 fig. 13.10), may reflect faith in the god-king and his protection.

The falcon images at HK6 were related either to the deceased king or the king who succeeded him on the throne – and who played a pivotal role in the funerary rituals for his predecessor – or maybe to both. The fact is that almost 600 small fragments of a near life-size human statue made of imported fine-grained limestone were collected at HK6: "its presence and the scale of the undertaking exhibit the power and wealth of the Hierakonpolis elite" (Friedman 2010, 68). The area from which these statue fragments were discovered is dated to the Naqada IIA–B period, and it is "possible that the statue represented the divine aspects of a ruler rather than the actual individual" (Harrington 2004; cf. Jaeschke 2004).

Such a mortuary context is, in a way, comparable to the well-known seated statue of Khafra (4th Dynasty) found in the valley temple of his pyramid complex. Even though it might seem that the falcon god Horus spreads his wings around the king's head in a gesture of protection, in fact it demonstrates that they are one and the same. The identical 'message' (cf. Bolshakov 1999) – although in reversal artistic composition[15] – is to be seen even two millennia later in a statue of Nectanebo-the-Falcon, i.e. Nectanebo II as divine falcon, 30th Dynasty (Arnold 1995, 44–45).

Furthermore, the Horus name – which apparently identifies the king with Horus – is the oldest used royal title.[16] As correctly observed by Shonkwiler

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[14] With notably rare exceptions such as Seth-Peribsen and Khasekhemwy (cf. Wilkinson 1999, 294–295).

[15] Namely, Horus the falcon god of kingship is shown large whereas Nectanebo II is represented between the bird's legs.

[16] As stated by Baines (2014, 104): "Forerunners of symbols and institutions of kingship can be traced in Naqada II (ca. 3500–3300 BCE) or a little earlier".

(2014, 12): "Both the box above the palace façade,[17] which surrounds the name, and the falcon above it may act as protection of the king's name but the king is as closely identified with the falcon as he is with his name". And again, one single tread runs "throughout them all and that is the relationship between the king as Horus and the walls of the royal palace or city which seem to be representative of the rule of Horus" (Wilkinson 1985, 103).

It is tempting to assume that the Horus-of-Nekhen may actually be the title/titulature of the very first chieftains/rulers of Nekhen (cf. Hornung 1996, 60–61; cf. Frankfort 1978, 90) who, many centuries later, would be collectively mythologized (and in a way misunderstood) as the Followers of Horus.[18] The biannual ritual/festival, known as the Following of Horus, "indicates a tax levied to maintain (...) the Horus king and his court and officials"[19] (Frankfort 1978, 370 n. 7; cf. Darnell 2015; cf. Darnell, Hendrickx and Gatto 2017).[20]

It is noteworthy that "no falcon depictions are known from cemetery U at Abydos, the other elite cemetery during Naqada I–II times. This fact, as well as the numerous representations of falcons at Hierakonpolis in the early Naqada III period, suggests long-standing relationship with the falcon *specifically* [emphasis added] at Hierakonpolis" (Hendrickx, Friedman and Eyckerman 2011, 132). And again, "the idea of kingship in its dynastic form may well have originated at Hierakonpolis as the Narmer Palette first led us to believe – but just five hundreds years earlier than previously imagined" (Friedman 2011, 44).

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[17] Baines (2019, 244–245) suggested that a "royal palace may have been depicted first as a large reed structure" as the one rendered on the Hunters' palette. For an alternative hypothesis about the origin of the serekh see Jiménez-Serrano (2013).

[18] The designation Followers of Horus "was reserved for rulers of the distant past (...) the term referred to earlier kings"; the verb 'to follow' may also mean 'to worship' (Frankfort 1978, 90; cf. Hassan 1992, 311; for "Attendants of Horus" see Baines 1995, 120). Whatever the case may be, one must bear in mind that "the ancient Egyptians' knowledge of their own hoary past, and their efforts to preserve monuments, concepts and customs that were already old even as Egyptian civilization was being formed" (Friedman 2010, 74–75) might equally be of questionable accuracy. For instance, at Umm el-Qaab, the "tomb of Djer, second ruler of the first dynasty, was regarded as the actual sepulchre of Osiris" (Smith 2017, 233, 467).

[19] It is worth noting that no matter where the king had his primary residence, "his rule was affirmed by appropriation of the land and movement through it", and "the king was at home in the palace, while the place where he sat on a portable throne was at that moment a palace" (Baines 2019, 244–245).

[20] As far as the Souls of Nekhen are concerned, thousands of years later, in the Book of the Dead, Spell 113, the Souls of Nekhen are named and depicted in the vignette as falcon-headed Horus, jackal-headed Duamutef and falcon-headed Qebehsenuef (Faulkner 1997, 108–112; but see Wilson 1955, 236).

Cults of falcon gods were spread throughout the country (Shonkwiler 2014, 7–19). However, the concept of a warrior king[21] as the sky/solar deity Horus could well be the original Nekhen-based religion, i.e. the locally specific belief system with its roots deep in the past. Such a notion probably emerged somehow from the predynastic totemic clans "with protective divinities and animal emblems"; it would be surprising "if predynastic Egypt had no social organization that consisted of groups of people unified by a locality, a common culture, and ties of blood"; so, "it is likely that some of them established themselves early as royal supporters" (Roth 1991, 205–206). According to Wing (2015, 127): "Some forms of totemic beliefs centre upon the idea of being descended from animal spirits, where totem relations are equated to blood relations". As stated by Frazer (1925, 91–92) the "conception of gods as superhuman beings endowed with powers to which man possesses nothing comparable in degree and hardly even in kind, has been slowly evolved in the course of history (...) the idea of a god incarnate in human form, it has nothing very startling for early man, who sees in a man-god or a god-man only a higher degree of the same supernatural powers which he arrogates in perfect good faith to himself (...) the medicine-man or magician tends to blossom out into a full-blown god and king in one".[22] And again, "Egyptian religious systems could have been constructed through the elevation of certain ancestors or rulers to divine status" (Stevenson 2015, 375). A view that "the rulers of Hierakonpolis had already attained enough power to begin to experiment with ways to express it for eternity" (Pieri, Friedman and Dougherty 2020, 497) is a reasonable possibility.[23] According to Hassan (1992, 319), the success in early state-building "was most likely a result of the emergence of leaders, whose power (over others) was legitimated by sacred myth that linked them with supernatural forces".

Some ideas and concepts are more effective than others at spreading throughout society, especially if enhanced by holy war commanded by a god-king. In the endemic conflict (cf. Anđelković 2018, 67) – violence that every now and then erupted between the communities that inhabited the linear and narrow strip of arable land of the Nile Valley which can be compared to a long tube with no buffer zones or lateral dispersion, "that amplified a strong sense[24] of territori-

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[21] As stated by Shonkwiler (2014, 20): "it was probably the falcon's territorial behavior and violent hunting skills that led to its adoption as symbol of the king".

[22] In the same vein: a people of South-eastern Africa "do not adore idols or recognize any god, but instead they venerate and honour their king, whom they regard as a divinity" (Frazer 1925, 97–98).

[23] That "Hierakonpolis is a central place of Egyptian state formation and key for understanding (...) the emergence of sacred kingship in Egypt", is also attested by some much later royal activity (Bussmann 2014, 311–312).

[24] As Clausewitz (1918, 4) correctly observed: "If War is an act of force, it belongs necessarily also to the feelings. If it does not originate in the feelings, it *reacts*, more or

ality" (Anđelković 2008, 1044 n. 11; 2011b, 1221) – it is no wonder that the Egyptians "have been impressed with the falcon's vision and speed of attack and used these aspects to describe the king and gods (...) During the dive of a falcon on prey, called a stoop, the bird pulls its wings close to its body (...) This stoop is clearly portrayed in a falcon figurine found at Hierakonpolis"; in various texts of a later date, the king's troops "are described as being as fast as falcons (...) The violence of the falcon's attack and the rending of its prey fit the bellicose attitude of Egyptians towards their enemies" (Shonkwiler 2014, 8–10).

As time passed, Horus-the-Nekhenite (an epithet or manifestation of the falcon god Horus as the local ruler of Nekhen and a tutelary deity?) lost some old and gained some new roles and epithets while simultaneously keeping the core values of the prototype[25] – the concept of victorious god-king and his bellicose nature – firmly embedded into the religious doctrine of the incipient state. In other words, a "feature of Egyptian state formation was the translation of ritual authority into durable forms of institutional and economic power" (Wengrow 2006, 266). As stated by Hendrickx and Förster (2020, 78) at least 200 maceheads that were found in the Main Deposit at Hierakonpolis "are directly linked to the importance of violence within the political and religious context".[26]

The ever-larger Upper Egyptian proto-state was spearheaded by the ultimate politico-religious leader: the divine king, the god on earth, incarnated Horus, accompanied and served by his followers/believers. It should be highlighted that the ultimate goal of the god-king's holy war was rather for his king 'part' to became a single ruler than for his god 'part' to become a single deity. Accordingly, Horus (cf. Wilkinson 1999, 286–287) became the supreme, central and dominating (but not single) god of the royal ideology, while the king, very conveniently, became a single ruler. The strong spiritual foundation (monolatry?) of the proto-state was inclusive (when possible) rather than exclusive.[27] However, it is noteworthy that at the same time the number of depicted predynastic standards ("carrying poles with sacred objects that are charged with power", Hornung 1996, 37) became drastically smaller (Anđelković 2008, 1045).

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less, upon them" (emphasis in original).

[25] Note that the hieroglyphs show differentiation between the falcon and the archaic image of the falcon (Simpson 1971, 159; cf. Gardiner 1964, 467–469, sign list G 5–10 vs. G 11–13; cf. Shonkwiler 2014, 11).

[26] Even in the modern world a relationship between religion and the armed forces can be manifested by the practice of blessing weapons and troops.

[27] Monolatry is the belief in the existence of many gods, but with the consistent worship of one god as supreme. We should bear in mind the particular protodynastic momentum of Egyptian incipient religious doctrine to avoid its automatic 'mistranslation' into the syncretic religious conglomerate of succeeding eras. Let us say that even monotheism (a term coined in the 17th century) was not an antonym to polytheism but to atheism (MacDonald 2001, 23).

War as an Institution

It is suggested by the continuing iconography of power, present from Naqada I to Naqada III (Bestock 2019, 14–84; Hendrickx and Förster 2020; Gilbert 2004, 116–117; Midant-Reynes and Tristant 2020; cf. flint weapons in Friedman and Nagaya 2021), that military prowess was a major qualification for politico-religious leadership. Invincibility, constant success in battle,[28] can be a crucial 'sign from heaven', i.e. confirmation of a particular person's divine power. As stated by Josephson and Dreyer (2015, 178): "The rise of kingship is a natural consequence of social and territorial dominance by the strongest male member of an expanding society who attains a leadership role by the process we now refer to as the primacy of the 'alpha male'". According to Hassan (1992, 307) the cultural changes needed for the "shift from tribal polities to a nation state" include "emergence of leaders reputed for their sagacity, oratory, military prowes, or ritual power". As Griswold (1992, 252) put it: the "development of ritual and political authority (...) represents the transition of the leader from conqueror to god in Egyptian statecraft". And again: "war leaders do acquire a certain prestige that boosts them to the position of 'big men', chiefs or figures with an outstanding centrality in the community" (Gayubas 2015, 48). Furthermore, while considering the institutionalization of leaders' power, Service (1975, 73) resumes: "The 'strength' of a man may be manifested or proved in various contexts, of which at one time warfare was probably the most important". Hassan (1992, 307) points out the "emergence of warriors and defence pacts among lineages to counteract raids by Libyan or Asiatic nomads". Generally speaking: "Warfare is the fuel – the propellant – that powers political evolution" (Carneiro 2012, 14). The smiting scene and "other pharaonic iconography indicates that violent acts were carried out to punish transgressors against order and enemies of the state" (Pieri, Friedman and Dougherty 2020, 498).

The iconography of coercion, along with the so-called powerfacts/powertools,[29] is firmly established in southern Upper Egypt. An organized violence was, from the outset, much more widespread than the amount revealed by imagery. As suggested by Williams (2011, 83, 91–92, n. 4; cf. Graff 2009, 81, 241–247; cf. Droux 2021): "Naqada I painted vessels show scenes of victory and the punishment of rebels or enemies", and there is "strong evidence of conflict in Upper Egypt at this time".

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[28] A war usually consists of multiple battles. As stated by Hassan (1992, 11): "The rise of the Egyptian state was most likely not the result of a single battle, but the culmination of wars and alliances (...) over a period of at least 250 years (about 10–12 generations)".

[29] For the term 'powertools' – such as maceheads, large palettes, votive and prestigious items, fine flint knives, serekhs, etc. – see Hassan, van Wetering and Tassie (2017, 117). For the term 'powerfacts' cf. Droux (2021, 52).

Even though "military violence can have many shapes" (Hendrickx and Förster 2020, 79) the idea of war in early Egypt can hardly be questioned (cf. Anđelković 2018, 31–58; contra Köhler 2020, 43–44 n. 201). No doubt that: "Prehistoric warfare (...) was as independently important in early society as the discovery of agriculture, the development of protourban settlements and the emergence of organized religious systems" (Ferrill 1997, 13). Furthermore, it's been proven that the experience of war increase people's religiosity (Henrich et al. 2019). It is noteworthy that holy war can be perceived as such only by one (i.e. not by all) of the participants involved.[30]

There are numerous narrative, historical and modern[31] examples of 'direct bonding' between holy war and state formation. Let us mention but a few.[32]

Israel's conquest of Canaan is a well-known Old Testament narrative that shows how "holy and total war" (Walzer 1992, 215; cf. Lilley 1993, 171–173; cf. Jones 1975)[33] eventually resulted in state formation. God, king and the chosen people "have a treaty to defeat a common enemy" (Bronisch 2015, 51).[34]

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[30] For example, the Ottoman 1914 ġazā/jihād was declared in the form of a fatwā – a ruling on a point of Islamic law – signed by 29 religious authorities (Aksakal 2011; cf. Darling 2000). Jihād was declared widely, against all enemies of the Ottoman Empire except the Central Powers. It can hardly be that 'all enemies' (mainly British, French and Russian) perceived the Great War (WWI) merely as holy war.

[31] Such as so-called Dāʿish/ISIS (Islamic State of Iraq and Syria) a 'worldwide caliphate' founded in 1999, which "may wither and die as quickly as it has emerged, or it may prove to be the catalyst for major change within the region and beyond" (Barrett 2014, 58; cf. Svensson and Nilsson 2018).

[32] It is also possible to wage war within the same religion (cf. Bronisch 2015, 41 n. 22; cf. Svensson and Nilsson 2018): for example, the wars of the Reformation and Counter-Reformation (Catholics vs. Protestants), the Ottoman–Persian wars (Sunnis vs. Shiites), etc.

[33] As stated by Lilley (1993, 173): "It seems then that Israel, like other contemporary societies, did not recognise any distinction between sacred and secular war". And again, "every war in antiquity had a religious frame and (...) the concept of warfare, from beginning to end, was religiously impregnated" (A. Fürst in: Bronisch 2015, 36). 'Antiquity-only' views demonstrate two issues: (1) how biased we are towards our (pre) historic forefathers (cf. Keeley 1997; LeBlanc 2020); (2) how biased we are towards our own 'rationale' and 'modernity' (cf. Anđelković 2018, 31–58). Given that exposure to death and suffering – of fellow soldiers or beloved ones – is an inherent part of war, notions about god will sooner rather than later appear in any 'modern' war too, no matter 'which side are you on' (see also note 40).

[34] Among the extrabiblical attestations of the "religious doctrine of holy war" (Walzer 1992, 216) is the Mesha Inscription (or Moabite Stone), an inscribed black basalt stele dating to the ninth century B.C. made to be displayed in a temple (similarly to the Narmer Palette?); the "inscription's main theme is the 'holy war' against the

As stated by van Creveld (1991): "Holy war was of two kinds. Either it was waged against peoples especially designated by God as His enemies (...) or else it served to achieve some sacred end, such as possession of the Land of Israel". All in all, some time after the local Canaanite population had been wiped out and territory conquered, a man named Saul rose from a loose confederation of Israelite tribes (meanwhile ruled by 'the judges') to become the first king[35] of the Israelite United Monarchy (cf. Finkelstein 2006).[36] As stated by Toorn (1993, 519): "The founder of a territorial state, Saul put in place an administrative apparatus and a standing military" while simultaneously "Israel made the transition from a tribal society to a state".

The various clans and tribes of the Arabian Peninsula were engaged in "perpetual rivalries and occasional cases of outright warfare"; after the death (in year 632), of the Prophet Muhammad the founder of Islam – who united the population – an influential group of his followers "sought to preserve the teachings which he had left them and to keep the Arabs united"; this "could best be achieved if their energies were directed towards external, non-Arab targets. Moreover, they were on a mission from God"; so they "quickly moved in all directions, creating an empire which only one hundred years later came to include not only all of the Middle East and much of Central Asia, but North Africa and the Iberian Peninsula as well" (Ringmar 2019, 73–74). According to Mohammad (1985, 384): "*Jihad* is frequently confused with the current Western concept of secular war. It is an erroneous identification, for under Islamic doctrine secular war (*Harb*) is morally unacceptable". And again, "many battles during [the] expansionist phase of Islam were offensive in order to eliminate idolatry and spread the word of God" (Bakircioglu 2010, 438).

Much less known is the late 19th century West African (former French Upper Volta, present Burkina Faso) *jihad* of Al-Kari who "had married the ideology of Islamic puritanism to the pragmatic technology of new firearms in an effort to found a theocratic state" (Echenberg 1969, 561). As Firestone (1996, 99) put it: "despite historical, cultural, and geographical differences, scriptural justification for mass slaughter in war first appears for the purpose of defense but steadily evolves into divinely encouraged and even divinely commanded offensive war". Military expansion is "the necessary first step in the state-building process" (Mufti 2009, 397).

Israelites and their god, Yahweh" ordered by Kemosh the national deity of Moab (Tebes 2018). Here we also find a good example of *ḥērem*, the ban by which persons and objects were devoted to the deity, usually by destruction (cf. Lilley 1993).

[35] Anointed by prophet Samuel, the last of 'the judges'.

[36] It should be stressed that the historicity of the Old Testament's narrative falls beyond the scope of this article.

Among the acievements of the Crusades, a series of religious wars launched by the Latin Church – i.e. western European Christian join military expeditions to recover the Holy Land from the Muslims – was the "establishment and maintenance of the crusader states[37] in the littoral of Syria and Palestine and, more briefly, inland beyond the Euphrates" (Barber 2012, 356). Since there were at least eight Crusades from 11th to 13th century it is obvioius that a specific ('holy') task can be carried out in separate campaigns over several centuries/generations, along with an underlying political agenda (cf. Alkopher 2005). In sum, the "balance was upset in the second half of the eleventh century by the arrival of two new forces, Turks and Crusaders, both of which had holy war on their minds"; the invasions "created a new configuration of states in the eastern Mediterranean and renewed the ability of holy war to legitimate their rulers" (Darling 2000, 152). The crusades "emerge as a significant instrument of papal 'statecraft' and as a key element of medieval geopolitical relations" (Latham 2011, 223).

The Ottomans (1299–1922) – one of the small principalities in western Anatolia that expanded into an intercontinental empire – evidently "understood and employed the powerful ideological energies that 'jihad' could mobilize" (Aksakal 2011, 187). Whether or not the Ottoman state (Darling 2000, 134) is to be defined "as a product of contestation among groups with different agendas and different concepts of the relevance and value of *ghazâ* for their own interests and goals"[38] is irrelevant,[39] since two crucial phenomena are more than evident: (1) the driving force; (2) the conquest (territorial expansion).

There are several types of religious motivation: some people are "driven to be religious by a desire to gain external rewards", some are "driven by a desire to find fellowship and to connect to the community", whereas for some "their relationship with God is important to their self-conception" and critical to their well-being (Jennings 2016, 297).

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[37] Also known as Latin States (Barber 2012, 65–97).

[38] The terms ghâzî-warrior and ġazā (Ottoman Turkish) were at first used to define a raid for plunder and a fighter "living for battle and booty, glory and girls", and only later on Islamic holy war and warriors (Darling 2000, 137).

[39] That the term 'holy war' escapes universal definition (but see Bronisch 2015, 47) – let alone the fact that if war started as 'holy' it might not end up as such – is additionally suggested by the following statement: "The heterogeneous nature of Ottoman armies and alliances, mixing Christians with Muslims and often directed against co-religionists, their focus on booty and territorial expansion rather than conversion, and elements of unorthodoxy or even shamanism in Ottoman religious practice argue against literal readings of the portrayal of the early Ottomans as Islamic holy warriors" (Darling 2000, 135).

Since it seems that there is no a generally accepted definition of the term 'holy war'[40] (Bronisch 2015, with references), it should be specified that in early Egypt it was the divine authority, the god-king himself, who ordered a war (which was fought under his direct command), while – along with the mundane benefits to upper eschelon – the 'spiritual reward' to his warriors-followers was 'eternal afterlife', the perpetually renewed state of existence after death.

The idea of "one 'people' conquering another one's 'territory'"[41] (Hendrickx and Förster 2020, 80–81) is far and away from being outdated, because "taking control over resources, people and communication" (*ibid*.) is all about territory, i.e. the occupation of new land.[42]

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[40] We tend to think that holy war is neither 'exclusivity' of any particular religion (including paganism, polytheistic traditions, and various heretic/schismatic groups) nor time period (protohistoric, ancient, preindustrial, modern, etc.). Moreover, a political ideology can also be perceived as 'holy' by its followers/believers. And again, any 'interested party', focused on the reconfiguration of nature/space/society can view its fight as holy war (or a 'crusade'). In other words, "the tendency for sacralization is immanent in every war" (F. W. Graf in: Bronisch 2015, 42). However, one can cautiously suggest that holy war, in most cases, is a state of predominantly armed conflict in which at least one of belligerents tends to destroy, expel or force to convert the people of a different religious identity, attitudes, beliefs, practices and institutions (but see note 39; for 'wars of conversion' and the 'confessional wars' see Eberle 2013, 27, 44). Holy war often overlaps with the different cultural and/or ethnic background of the opposing sides. Civil wars (between citizens of the same state) can be religion-based as well. Along with weaponry, there are also other 'pacifying' means, such as for instance fiscal politics: the aftermath of a whole series of unsuccessful armed uprisings (known as the Bashmuric revolts) – against an oppressive caliphal tax regime in 8th–9th century Egypt – resulted in mass conversion of Coptic Christians to Islam, namely "Copts converted to Islam to escape the poll tax" (Gabra 2003, 112; cf. Wissa 2020).

[41] As far as territory is concerned: "Throughout history, humans have shown themselves willing to fight and die to seize or defend territory"; and again: "Territory is central to some of the most vexing cases of conflict" (Johnson and Toft 2014, 7).

[42] As far as the war and the state related 'archaeological visibility' data are concerned: the man who was given the name Temüjin, "united the many feuding clans" which "were in perpetual conflict with each other", and took the title Genghis Khan; once "this feat was accomplished he turned to military conquests abroad"; however, despite the fact that the Mongols (13th–14th century) created "the largest contiguous empire the world has ever known", which "stretched from central Europe to the Pacific Ocean" (Ringmar 2019, 101–102), hardly anything of it is left for archaeologists to discover. In other words, there were many military campaigns, but few traces remain. Furthermore, medical reports from the 19th century American Indian wars and from Papua New Guinea indicate – in reconstructing patterns of projectile violence – that "the most deadly injuries are those to the thorax and abdomen, wounds that often do

Chaos, Force and Order

The Naqada culture[43] of southern Upper Egypt is named "after the original find spot" of thousands of graves (Hoffman 1979, 120), that is to say "after the largest known Predynastic site, Naqada" excavated by Flinders Petrie[44] in 1894/1895 (Bard 2008, 94). And again: "Petrie's early work at the important site of Naqada was considered pivotal for the understanding of prehistoric cultures and their historical sequence, which is why the discovery of the 'Naqada Culture' is obviously attributed to him" (Köhler 2016, 255). However, the man who invented and introduced the very term "Negade-Kultur" as such was Alexander Scharff (1927, 19) not Petrie (contra Freed 2013, 177–178).[45]

The expansion of the Naqada culture was a precise sequence of events. The first phase (of two) was an 'inner' expansion (before Dynasty 0), within southern Upper Egypt (from *ca*. 30 km south of Aswan to the Badari area) where "powerful regional kings contended for dominance of the Nile Valley" (Hoffman 1988, 40, 43). And again, the "early state in Egypt evolved from less complex forms of sociopolitical organization that probably eventually competed with each other" (Bard 2017, 2). Redmond (1994, 51) points out that tribal warfare and (more advanced) chiefly warfare had distinctive features, and concludes that: "The purpose of chiefly warfare is *expansionist*; the seizing of land, resources, and captives" (emphasis added). The ideological/religious differences between regional kings/chieftains on one side, and the charismatic, triumphant god-king

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not involve bone" (Lambert 2014, 92–94), and therefore left no trace to be identified in skeletal remains.

[43] As Hoffman (1988, 33) put it: "Predynastic culture (often called the 'Naqada Culture')".

[44] It seems that Petrie did not consider it a single culture. Eventually, he introduced three entities variously addressed as: (1) "the Amratian age", "Amratian civilisation" or "Amratian period"; (2) "Gerzean age", "the Gerzean style" or "Gerzean period"; (3) "Semainean period", "the last of the ages, the Semainean" that "has no generally distinctive culture", etc. (Petrie 1939, 9, 15, 17, 21, 31, 43, 55, 57). All three are "named after Predynastic cemeteries that he had excavated" (Bard 2008, 95).

[45] According to Wilson (1955, 235): "Hierakonpolis was related to some kind of a structure in which sacred relics might be safe and yet open to view". Taking into consideration the politico-religious importance of Nekhen, with special reference to the early royal cemetery (Friedman 2010), the monumental compound of ritual activity (Friedman 2009), 'Decorated Tomb' (Case and Payne 1962), the 'Main Deposit' (cf. Hoffman 1976, 35), and the early temple mound ("an attempt to create a *gezira* where none had stood naturally", Kemp 2000, 224 fig. 12, 228; *gezira* as the primeval mound?), Predynastic culture may quite rightly – under different circumstances of history of research – to be named Nekhen Culture.

who offers an eternal afterlife,[46] on the other, could be of the utmost importance. The number of warriors was also a matter of significance.[47]

It is tempting to consider some scenes depicted on pradynastic C-ware (Naqada IA–IIB) as the symbolic 'state of mind' reflecting the first phase, i.e. politico-ideological consolidation within southern Upper Egypt: warfare, powerfacts and contol. While subsequent representations on D-ware perhaps demonstrate a change in the social climate and a shift toward the 'reformed' ideological patterns of religious belief.

Of at least eight Upper Egyptian centers in the late Naqada I period – Abydos (Thinis), Abadiya, Naqada, Gebelein, Hierakonpolis, Elkab, Edfu and Elephantine – over a period of several centuries the strongest three prevailed: Abydos, Naqada, and Hierakonpolis (Anđelković 2011a, 28–29; cf. Wilkinson 2000a).[48] As stated by Friedman, Hendrickx and Darnell (2002, 17) "Abydos' exertion of control over Naqada[49] was a major event before the final settlement between Abydos and Hierakonpolis".

In the Nekhen–Thinite (i.e. Hierakonpolis–Abydos) political settlement it was probably Nekhen that provided the doctrine of royal legitimacy[50] (the divine king religious background) since "no state can survive for long solely through its power to coerce, a high degree of authority and legitimacy[51] is also needed"

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[46] Religion itself is a 'weapon' in a holy war: the warriors draw special motivation from the belief that one who has been killed in the conflict is promised a place in paradise (e.g. *shahid*: a witness/martyr who has died in the way of Islam; "Whoever fights in the way of God, be he killed or victorious, to him we shall assuredly give a great reward"; Watt 1976, 144–145). Unflagging Egyptian enthusiasm for combat can be deduced, inter alia, from "the representation of decapitated enemies with their cut penises placed on their heads" on the Narmer Palette (Hendrickx and Förster 2020, 80) as well as numerous subsequent examples of the acquisition of human body parts as war trophies, as "proof of a soldier's bravery" (Stefanović 2003).

[47] It should be noted that women, children, the elderly can also take part in warfare to perform non-combat roles.

[48] As far as "significant regional material differences" (Köhler 2020, 42; cf. 2016, 257–258) are concerned, they are to be found in practically every modern world state as well. However, it does not suggest that such regions automatically belong to a different culture, but are simply spatial (or perhaps temporal when archaeology is concerned) facets of the very same culture, i.e. regional variations.

[49] According to Hassan (1992, 311) not Abydene rulers but: "The kings from Hierakonpolis (later to be known as the Followers of Horus) apparently conquered and annexed the Kingdom of Naqada in Late Predynastic times".

[50] In other words, "kingship may have less to do with the scale of its society than with its symbolic underpinnings" (Baines 2019, 241).

[51] According to Hassan (1992, 311): "The Followers of Horus represent the notion of royal ancestor worship as a *legitimization* of power" (emphasis added).

(Anđelković 2008, 1048);[52] Abydos provided the power[53] and probably a kind of religious upgrade[54] (a view that a late god-king starts anew all earthly life from the Underworld),[55] whereas Naqada was the one that unwillingly provided financial resources,[56] namely its gold could be the main reason for "a military operation carried out by an Abydene ruler" (Friedman, Hendrickx and Darnell

[52] As Service (1975, 11–12) put it: "The power of authority ideally rests solely on an hierarchical relationship between the persons or groups, so that the obedience is not compelled by some kind of forceful bullying dominance but rather by custom, habit, ideas of property, benefits, or other considerations that effectively reinforce and legitimize the power and make it acceptable". On the other hand, the "transition from small agrarian societies to larger political entities was a process in which increasingly more people cooperated, either voluntarily or *otherwise*" (Bard 2017, 4) (emphasis added).

[53] The insights into the pragmatic nature of that power (a large number of men/warriors?) perhaps still lie buried in Thinis/This, the capital city of the Thinite region, probably situated "in the vicinity of the modern village of Girga", several kilometers to the north of the Abydos cemeteries (cf. Shaw and Nicholson 1996, 288). According to Wilson (1955, 215), the Girga area "is highly productive, well above the national average in barley and wheat" with a very high density of population; in addition, Sohag (*ca*. 30 km to the north) "is the most densely populated markaz of Upper Egypt" (data from 1937). As noted by Bestock (2009, 2): "There is enough continuity from the tombs of Cemetery U through those of Cemetery B and finally to those of the First Dynasty kings to speak of a continuous development of early royal burial at Abydos".

[54] Let us remember that deities related to the dead – such as Khentiamentiu (Sed, Wepwawet, Anubis?; cf. Wilkinson 2003, 186–192) eventually to be absorbed by, or syncretised with Osiris – were worshipped at Abydos. As suggested by Wilkinson (1999, 288) "the first temple at Abydos, founded in the late Predynastic period, was dedicated to Khentiamentiu (perhaps already an epithet used as a euphemism for Osiris)". According to Baines (1995, 120) a jackal "was one of the principal gods of kingship, with a much more important role for royalty than jackals had in later periods".

[55] Nekhenite immortality, so to speak, was *theological immortality*, whereas Thinite/Abydene immortality was *natural immortality* (cf. Stevenson 2015, 372). Their hybrid laid a strong ideolodical foundation for the Naqada culture (soon-to-become Dynastic culture).

[56] The considerable wealth of Naqada is suggested both by town's historical name Nubt (meaning Gold) as well as its location. Namely, via the Wadi Hammamat and other nearby wadis the inhabitants "would have been able to exploit the precious minerals of the Eastern Desert" (Shaw and Nicholson 1996, 195–196). Furthermore, "unfinished resources from the Eastern Desert were turned into finished goods in the workshops of the palace compound of Nubt", and "the ruling elite (with the ruler as its head) controlled the flow of certain goods within the community and the territory of the proto-state, to enhance its status and to display its power" (Hassan, van Wetering and Tassie 2017, 119–122).

2002, 17; cf. Hendrickx and Friedman 2003). According to Josephson and Dreyer (2015, 166) Abydos and Hierakonpolis "were initially rivals, but must have come under one ruler by a war waged shortly before Dynasty 0, with Abydos the victor".

Whichever was the case (war, submission or settlement), an 'inner expansion' was completed and initially Nekhenite doctrinal values – deeply interwoven with the Naqada culture social fabric – instilled within southern Upper Egypt. And again, "unity arose from a single driving force from the Nile Valley that came to dominate a number of polities" (Baines 1999, 7). No wonder the high-ranking Naqada IID individuals, the owners of prestige items, "were deeply concerned with rebirth, a prosperous afterlife and eternal remembrance" (Huyge 2004, 833–834). As we have said, the unbeatable reward which, in his doctrinal duality, a god-king can provide – aside from the mundane world's high-ranking position, prestige items, spoils of war, etc. – was 'afterlife immortality'.

After the Naqadian proto-state formation has been finalised, a power game[57] went to the next level (second phase): an outer expansion. Namely "the spread, and eventual predominance, of Upper Egyptian social practices and ideology across Egypt" (Stevenson 2009, 2). The expansion of Naqada culture[58] included Lower (northern) Nubia,[59] Eastern Desert oases (cf. Hope and Pettman 2013), Lower Egypt, and finally the southern Levant (Anđelković 2012). As stated by Spencer (2010, 7125) "the emergence of each primary state was concurrent with the expansion of its political-economic control to areas that lay well beyond the home region".

Although war, as well as religion, perhaps surprisingly, is not static but is constantly being reconfigured, we tend to think that the impulses of holy war as

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[57] If we "take a look at the *subjective nature* of War (...) it will appear to us still more like a game" (Clausewitz 1918, 20; emphasis in original).

[58] No less important is the fact that to spread religion is to spread influence. In a similar vein, spreading one culture products (such as Naqada culture) in fact *is* spreading one ideology/politics (contra Köhler 2020, 35).

[59] As Baines (1999, 6) put it: "To the south, Egyptian material culture had overlaid that of the Nubian A-Group in the Aswan area probably before by the end of Naqada II (...) the elimination of the A-Group, which was surely due to Egyptian military activity, created a power vacuum to the south of Egypt, rather like a vastly extended frontier zone". Moreover, it would be tempting to see Egyptian finds (such as so-called Horus/Qustul Incense Burner, Cemetery L, Tomb 24, or Sayala Mace, Cemetery 137, Grave 1) as possible traces of a (failed?) proselytizing effort to impose the Naqadian royal ideology into Lower Nubia (but see Williams 1980, 1987, 2011; cf. Adams 1985). According to Darnell (2009, 103), together with the Qustul Incense Burner "Nubian rock art groups are evidence for the early spread of Naqada II and Dynasty 0 royal and ritual iconography into Nubia".

the foundation and driving force of state-building were present in both phases of Naqadian expansion, unequivocally stimulated by an increase in elite power and wealth (territory, manpower, various resources, taxes, etc.). At the same time, the display of booty became "part of the decoration of royal temples that celebrated the assertion of order and prosperity over disorder" (Baines 1999, 2). As Köhler (2002, 511) put it: "the ideology of warfare developed along the same lines and in the same context as hunting and the concept of the wild" (cf. Anđelković 2018, 31–58).

In regard to "the subjugation of Lower Egypt" (Friedman, Hendrickx and Darnell 2002, 17), it is "unlikely that a valid material culture like that of Maʿadi would have been eliminated completely peaceably" (Baines 1999, 5). As noted by Bard (2008, 99): "Burial symbolism and forms of burial reflect a society's ideologies, especially concerning death and an afterlife, which are culture specific". The burial practices (that include religious beliefs) of Maadi, as well as other cultural entities from the Delta, were different from Naqada culture,[60] as manifested, among other things, by Maadian simple pit graves and little or no grave goods.[61] Therefore, one can speak of "at least two different concepts, which can contribute to the identification of two distinct cultural entities" (Buchez and Midant-Reynes 2011, 845).

It appears that Naqadians considered the inhabitants of the Delta to be foreigners, 'others', enemies (for "Victory over the papyrus people" see Jiménez-Serrano 2002, 82; cf. de Wit 2015, 650–651). The populous settlement of Maadi (but es-Saff and probably a few other too), came to an end at the beginning of Naqada IIC period (what happened to its population?).[62] As noted by Hartung (2013, 180): "it is striking that the end of Maadi took place only shortly before the first graves with typical Upper Egyptian Naqada equipment (indicating the arrival of the Naqada culture in northern Egypt) appeared in Lower Egypt". Eventually, "the Abydene rulers gained control of the Nile Valley and Delta" (de Wit 2008, 23).

There is a suggestion that Horus was the name of one of the earliest rulers – or even the first king – of Dynasty 0 and that he was also "the first of seven upper Egyptian kings who invaded, and eventually conquered, Lower Egypt, with Scorpion II as the ultimate victor"; the King Scorpion (II) macehead "shows a row of standards which have *rḫyt* birds hanging from them, indicating that it

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[60] For possible early attestations of the *b3*-concept see Janák (2011; but cf. van Sittert 2020, 17–47).

[61] In other words (Stevenson 2015, 379): "the treatment of the body can allow insight into beliefs concerning the nature of the soul".

[62] See note 34 for the practice of *ḥērem* (as one possible interpretation of the evidence).

had been made after Lower Egypt had been defeated"; and again, "the lengthy war with Lower Egypt lasting perhaps 100 to 150 years and, as indicated on the City Palette, was ended by Scorpion II" (Dreyer and Josephson 2020; but see note 28).[63] However, it was probably Horus Narmer (Scorpion II's successor?) who finally 'pacified' (obviously by the use of military force) all of Egypt (cf. Heagy 2014). The historicity[64] of the Narmer Palette[65] "is confirmed by the hieroglyphic identification of the enemy", and the scene on the Narmer macehead – including the figures of captives and booty – "seems to have taken place in Buto" (Hendrickx and Förster 2020, 80).

We certainly should not "ignore the discontinuities in the archaeological record, and it is these that are most revealing" (Stevenson 2015, 375). Yet, one ought to be careful not to mistake a detail for the big picture. There were lot of discontinuities[66] in the long-lasting civilization of Ancient Egypt, but its 'common denominator', namely the essential principles, always remained the same.[67]

As far as the terminology is concerned: while addressing the Protodynastic and Early Dynastic period (Dynasties 0–2),[68] the very same Naqada cul-

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[63] Heagy (2020, 97) proposed that: "Scorpion II was the last of his line as King of Hierakonpolis, but acted as a client king to the Abydene polity. After an initial period during which Abydos and Hierakonpolis were allies, the relationship evolved into one of political dominance by Abydos, with a client king left to rule in Hierakonpolis". According to Kemp (2000, 234) "the star/rosette can be read as giving the key sound values of the royal god Horus". And again, the stars or rosettes are "features used on Mesopotamian seals to indicate gods" (Josephson and Dreyer 2015, 175).

[64] It should be stressed that "the Narmer Palette is visually highly symbolic but must also refer to historical facts because the same event is also mentioned on two largely identical year labels and possibly also on two boxes, all found at Umm el-Qaab" (Hendrickx and Förster 2020, 80). It seems obvious that the very same symbolic–historical pattern was employed in both prior and later smiting scenes too (cf. Anđelković 2011a, 27, fig. 3.2; cf. Pieri, Friedman and Dougherty 2020, 498–499). The smiting scene even "develops in another form in Helenistic and Roman art" (Hall 1983).

[65] We tend to think that the Horus falcon shown above the Delta marshland on the reverse of the Narmer Palette is the ruler himself (god-king Narmer) depicted in complementary – to the ritual execution of the enemies' leader – yet chronologically slightly separate scene (cf. Jiménez-Serrano 2002, 83). In this complex reading, the depicted Horus falcon, in a way, complete the serekh with Narmer's name at the top.

[66] For example, "the burial practices seem to change, at least in several instances, from the late Naqada II period onwards, and especially during Naqada III" (Hendrickx and Förster 2020, 78).

[67] As Murray (1956, 94) put it: "From the Gerzean period till the Roman conquest Egyptian civilization shows development and even decadence, but not drastic change".

[68] According to Dreyer and Josephson (2020) the Archaic Period lasted from Dynasty 0 through Dynasty 2.

ture terminologically 'metamorphose' into Dynastic culture (cf. Anđelković 2011a, 30). However, "the Dynastic culture evolved without interruption from the Naqada culture" (Hendrickx 1995, 8); and "the Naqada culture, as archaeologically defined, includes the First and Second Dynasties" (Hendrickx and Bavay 2002, 58; cf. Anđelković 2004, 541).[69] As Hoffman (1988, 41) put it: by "the Gerzean period, there is no doubt that chiefdoms and, eventually, regional kingdoms emerged that directly foreshadowed Pharaonic civilization". All in all, Naqada culture is a single socio-political entity from which ancient Egypt emerged. Accordingly, we should not talk of an imaginary 'unified' Egypt but of the real Unitary Egypt (cf. Baines 2019, 240).[70] As stated by Eberle (2013, 28): "A political community that wages a war for *religious hegemony* uses military violence to bring about the political, cultural and social domination of a given religion" (emphasis added). Such cultural domination can euphemistically be viewed as 'acculturation' or 'internal development', but it was exactly what happened to 'the Nile Delta in transition'.[71] A certain south to north movement of a number of people (overseers, settlers, craftsman; voluntarily?) was present, and it perhaps occurred in multiple waves, but it was far from a 'massive' migration. Needless to say, the "territorial expansionist model helps explain where and when this state first emerged" (Bard 2017, 1).

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[69] Comparative absolute and relative chronology (Stevenson 2015, 373 tab. 22.1) for early Egypt is: (1) Amratian, Naqada IA–IIB, Early Predynastic, *ca*. [4000?]/3750–3450 cal. BC; (2) Gerzean, Naqada IIC–D, Middle Predynastic, *ca*. 3450–3325 cal. BC; (3) [Semainean], Naqada IIIA–B, Late Predynastic, *ca*. 3325–3085 cal. BC; (4) Naqada IIIC–D, First Dynasty/Early Dynastic period *ca*. 3085–2867 cal. BC.

[70] As we have said elsewhere (Anđelković 2011a, 25) "the outdated mantra of the unification of Upper and Lower Egypt (...) still echoes in many publications". We agree with Köhler (2016, 258) to the extent that "the 'Buto/Maadi Culture', was a convenient intellectual construct that assisted in explaining the Pharaonic concept of the 'Two Lands'". See also McCoskey (2022).

[71] It is important to stress that the Nile Delta was not compact, either environmentally/topographically (cf. Butzer 1976, 24 fig. 4) or culturally, let alone a centralized political entity. It still retained much of the Neolithic outlook and practice (cf. Anđelković 2011a, 30), in part because it was occasionally affected/reset by destructive extremes of flooding which would sweep away villages, drown farm animals, and ruin crops. On the whole, power-hungry Naqada culture and the politically disorganized communities of the Delta were 'asymmetrical' by all means (so was their warfare); some of Naqadian cultural products and habits were desired by the Delta people, wheres some state-related obligations and duties were forced upon them; process eventually "ends by assimilation" (Midant-Reynes and Buchez 2019, 149).

Discussion

The state-building in Egypt had several stages[72] and it was an ever-larger repetitive venture.[73] It primarily involved military (conquest, subjugation, territorial expansion),[74] politico-religious (victory rituals,[75] royal festivals,[76] sacrifical rites, ceremonial practices), and economic (taxation, corvée, resource exploitation, monopoly power) activities. All of the named aspects may have the same spiritual and religious foundations through which Egypt developed from a poly- to a mono-centric society. The mortuary consolidation evident since the Naqada I period,[77] backed by the powerful ideology of an afterlife – i.e. "Pre-

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[72] The development of early Egypt can be organized into six stages: (1) Pre-nomes; (2) Upper Egyptian Proto-nomes; (3) Nome pre-states, still at the ranked chiefdom level (but see Bard 2017, 2); (4) The Upper Egyptian proto-state; (5) All-Egyptian early state (or Dynasty 0, with Horus Narmer as its last king; cf. Josephson and Dreyer 2015, 165); (6) Egyptian empire, i.e. established state starting with the First Dynasty, with Horus Aha as its first king (Anđelković 2008, 1051–1052; 2011a, 28–32 n. 2; cf. Hassan 1992, 307). The difference in comparison to our previous five-stage model (Anđelković 2004) is that it lacks Pre-nomes as autonomous local villages about the beginning of Naqada IA. As for the distinction between Dynasty 0 and Dynasty 1, it "was rather quantitative since the underlying contents and attached symbolism were practically the same" (Anđelković 2008, 1048–1049). In other words: "the overgrown volume, complexity and extent of the entire social, economic and political organisation, which significantly exceeded the parameters of the Naqada culture as such" (Anđelković 2004, 541) makes a dividing line between Dynasty 0 and Dynasty 1 necessary.

[73] Namely, every "subsequent political entity, from Upper Egyptian proto-nomes to the all-Egyptian early state (...) encompassed a larger territory in comparison to its precursor" (Anđelković 2006, 600).

[74] For an alternative approach, or rather some sort of idealized 'archaeological pacifism' see Köhler (2020, 43–44 n. 201). This view is hardly in accordance with the fact that: "All of the empires, kingdoms, and states of the Mediterranean world and the ancient Near East possessed gods of war, which rulers always invoked before going into battle" (Manning 2017, 106). According to Cohen (1984, 344): "the survival of an early state (...) cannot be separated from its warmaking capability"; furthermore "at the earliest phases of state building, prestate forms of organized violence are utilized to create military capability for an emerging centralized government". Even today: "Africa and Asia stand out as the regions of the world in which most religious issue conflicts have occurred" (Svensson and Nilsson 2018, 1136).

[75] According to LeBlanc (2015, 229) "the ritual zoomorphic transformation of the king into a wide variety of fierce and fearsome animals is most clearly seen in depictions of military victory rituals".

[76] As stated by LeBlanc (2011): "Upper Egyptian rulers celebrated a version of the Sed Festival as early as Naqada I".

[77] It "seems likely that 'mortuary kits' of pottery, slate palettes, maceheads, ivory pins and other jewelry were exported up and down the Nile from major centers like

dynastic death cult" perhaps developed from Badarian roots (Hoffman 1988, 40) – paved the way for the political consolidation under a succession of bellicose Horus-god-king(s) who originated in Nekhen: the real ancestral home in the beginning, and site of ceremonial, ritualistic and symbolic importance afterwards. The basic antagonistic principle – that can be simplified as 'good vs. evil' – was mythologized in the Egyptian conceptual tradition as 'order vs. chaos'. So, "the symbolic contrast of order and chaos (...) became integrated in early Egyptian state ideology" (Köhler 2002, 511).[78] The (armed) 'forces of good' were, of course, led by a contemporary god-king. The very same ideology – that involved both the physical world and the beyond – lasted for the nearly four millennia. As we have seen, there is abundant evidence on the link between faith-based violence and state-building. Perhaps the set of the pre- and protodynastic state formation factors is not so complex at all. It could well be that what lies after the equals sign of our equation is — Holy War.

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Hierakonpolis" (Hoffman 1988, 40). Probably along with a divine kingship doctrine (see note 58).

[78] As far as the origin of prehistoric Egypt is concerned we consider the Nile Valley (of Egypt and Sudan) as the great 'melting pot' in which various cultural elements were melted together (including a local component). For instance, due to rapid climate deterioration, pastoral populations located deep in the Western Desert moved towards the oases and the Nile Valley (Bárta 2014, 2015; cf. Josephson and Dreyer 2015, 173–174; Riemer and Kindermann 2008). Ever-changing and never-ending archaeological maps of the Nile Valley, with arrows indicating cultural movements and contact patterns (e.g. Hendrickx 2020, 577 fig. 27.1) will still be needed in the future, as they were needed in the past (cf. Köhler 2020, 36 fig. 3).

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*Sveti rat: ekspanzija Nakada kulture
i nastanak države u Egiptu*

Savremena arheološka proučavanja nalažu povremeni iskorak iz ustaljene prakse ka interdisciplinarnom i sveobuhvatnom domenu paleopolitike, shvaćene kao analitička studija drevnih društvenih koncepata i aktivnosti usmerenih ka vladanju nad teritorijom, populacijom i resursima. Paleopolitika se može sagledati i kao specifičan kompozit arheološkog zapisa i političke antropologije. Fenomen tzv. svetog rata, čijoj kompleksnoj definiciji doprinosi više elemenata, poznat je u narativnom, istorijskom i savremenom kontekstu, a posebno se dovodi u vezu sa procesom formiranja država. Kroz diskurs organizovanog nasilja, u sinergiji sa teritorijalnom ekspanzijom koju predvodi bog-kralj (oboženi vladar), može se potražiti objašnjenje za nastanak države u protodinastičkom periodu Egipta i formirati održivi eksplanatorni model. Prema dosadašnjim saznanjima, prateći hronološku progresiju faza Nakada kulture, brojni lokalni

organizacioni entiteti južnog Gornjeg Egipta bivaju svedeni na tri dominantna centra: Nekhen (sa kultom boga-kralja Horusa i doktrinom vladarskog legitimiteta), Nakadu (sa pristupom raznovrsnim mineralnim resursima Istočne pustinje) i Tinis/Abidos (sa znatnim demografskim potencijalom i kultom zagrobnog božanstva koje zanavlja ovozemaljske prirodne cikluse). Vojnim sukobom (čiji epilog ilustruje i tablo-petroglif iz Gebel Čautija), verovatno između Abidosa i Nekhena protiv Nakade, formira se – pod vođstvom pobednika – sociopolitička celina južnog Gornjeg Egipta sa integrisanom religijsko-ideološkom doktrinom boga-kralja koji, u svojoj dualnoj formi, vlada i ovozemaljskim i zagrobnim životom (večnom privilegijom njegovih sledbenika). Ekspanziju Nakada kulture, nazvane po nizu nekropola otkrivenih u nakadskoj oblasti, odlikovale su dve etape: prva, posvećena homogenizaciji i centralizaciji sociopolitičkih entiteta unutar sopstvene kulturne sfere, i druga, usmerena ka donjoj Nubiji, oazama Zapadnje pustinje, Delti Nila i južnom Levantu. Predstave 'dominacije' na C-klasi keramike mogu se vezati za početak prve ekspanzione etape, dok drugačiji repertoar motiva datih na D-klasi keramike verovatno ukazuje na promenu društvene klime, tj. na reformisane ideološke i religijske obrasce. Religijski sistemi imaju svoja geografska polazišta, te je tako i poštovanje boga-sokola Horusa – sa kojim se u Egiptu identifikuju i kraljevi Nulte dinastije, o čemu nedvosmisleno svedoči vladarsko Horus ime – imalo svoj centar u Nekhenu (antički Hijerakonpolis) na jugu Gornjeg Egipta. Razlike u funerarnim običajima između gornjoegipatske Nakada kulture, te Maadi i srodnih kultura iz Delte prezentuju korenitu distinkciju u verovanjima. Odatle, uz ostalo, potiče i percepcija severnjačke populacije kao 'drugih'. Antagonistički principi 'reda nasuprot haosu' integrisani su u mitološko-ideološki temelj nastajuće egipatske države. Tokom nakadske ekspanzije, koja je izgleda trajala više generacija, te nestanka/asimilacije donjoegipatskih kultura, uspostavlja se centralizovana vladavina boga-kralja nad osvojenim teritorijama. Time se, verujemo, i na primeru protodinastičkog Egipta uočava međuveza tzv. svetog rata i formiranja države.

Ključne reči: Nakada kultura, sveti rat, formiranje države, Horus, bog-kralj, paleopolitika, 4. milenijum p. n. e.

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*La guerre sacrée : expansion de la culture Naqada
et émergence de l'État en Égypte*

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Les études archéologiques modernes nécessitent de sortir parfois de la pratique établie et de se diriger vers le domaine interdisciplinaire et global de la paléo-politique comprise comme l'étude analytique des concepts sociaux anciens et des activités visant à régner sur le territoire, la population et les ressources. Le phénomène de la guerre dite sacrée, dont plusieurs éléments apportent à sa définition complexe, est connu dans le contexte narratif, historique et contemporain

et il est surtout lié au processus de formation des États. À travers le discours de la violence organisée, en synergie avec l'expansion territoriale menée par le dieu-roi (souverain déifié), on peut chercher une explication de la formation d'État pendant la période protodynastique en Égypte et constituer un modèle explicatif. Les systèmes religieux ont leurs points de départ géographiques et ainsi le respect pour le dieu-faucon Horus – avec qui les rois de la dynastie zéro sont identifiés en Égypte comme en témoigne sans équivoque le nom du souverain Horus – avait son centre à Nekhen (ancienne Hiérakonpolis) au sud de la Haute-Égypte. L'expansion de la culture Naqada était marquée par deux étapes : la première, vouée à l'homogénéisation et à la centralisation des entités socio-politiques dans sa propre sphère culturelle et la seconde, dirigée vers la Basse Nubie, des oasis du Désert Occidental, le delta du Nil et le Levant Sud. Certaines représentations sur les céramiques de la classe C peuvent être liées au début de la première étape d'expansion tandis que le répertoire des motifs sur les céramiques de la classe D indique probablement un changement du climat social et une évolution vers les modèles idéologiques et religieux réformés. Les différences des coutumes funéraires entre la culture Naqada de la Haute-Égypte et Maadi ou les cultures similaires du Delta présentent une distinction fonda-mentale dans les croyances. C'est là, entre autres, que prend naissance la per-ception de la population nordique comme « autre ». Les principes antagonistes de « l'ordre contre le chaos » sont intégrés dans les fondements mythologiques et idéologiques de l'État émergent. Après la fin de l'expansion naqadienne et de la disparition/de l'assimilation des cultures de la Basse-Égypte, le règne du dieu-roi sur l'ensemble du territoire de l'Égypte s'établit.