

# Reviews

## New Book Chronicle

Dan Lawrence

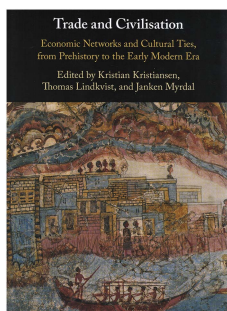
It is a truth universally acknowledged that the same political event should not be used as a hook for New Book Chronicle twice in succession. It was therefore inevitable, I suppose, that the issue after I used an elaborate European Union metaphor to write about empires, the next batch of books would bring a selection on trade, exchange and colonialism ripe for similar treatment. For this NBC, we begin by discussing the deep history of large-scale trade networks in the Old World, move through the Indian Ocean and end in Southeast Asia.

### Trade from prehistory to the present

KRISTIAN KRISTIANSEN, THOMAS LINDKVIST & JANKEN MYRDAL (ed.). 2018. *Trade and civilisation. Economic networks and cultural ties, from prehistory to the early modern era*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; 978-1-10842-541-4 £110.

KRISH SEETAH (ed.). 2018. *Connecting continents: archaeology and history in the Indian Ocean world*. Athens: Ohio University Press; 978-0-8214-2326-4 \$75.

SING C. CHEW. 2018. *The Southeast Asia connection. Trade and politics in the Eurasian world economy, 500 BC–AD 500*. Oxford: Berghahn; 978-1-78533-788-8 £85.



*Trade and civilisation* is an edited volume resulting from three conferences held in the early 2010s, the last of which was in Gothenburg in 2013. It brings together archaeologists and historians in a series of chapters that aim to “tackle the question of the role of trade in the expansion of civilisation” (p. 2) using

both new theory and methods. Kristiansen’s opening chapter sets the scene. He argues that the long-running debate over whether ancient economies should be approached from formalist or substantivist perspectives has been rendered obsolete

by new evidence for market economies dating back to the Bronze Age. Such a position justifies the scope of the volume, which essentially treats the entire span from the Bronze Age to the rise of capitalism in the Early Modern period as broadly comparable. Over this long timespan, however, the scale and level of organisation of trade expanded significantly, facilitated and constrained by technological advances, political and institutional configurations and by socio-cultural traits. This chapter is full of useful insights and asides, and also provides a clear theoretical outline for the rest of the book. Eighteen case-study chapters follow, covering most of the Old World, Polynesia and the Andes. No chapters discuss North America. Chronologically, we move from prehistory to the sixteenth century AD. Although those concerned with prehistory are generally towards the beginning of the book, and the latest historically is the last, the middle chapters are arranged somewhat haphazardly. I do not have space to do justice to all of them here, and will therefore focus on several that caught my eye. Readers should note, however, that almost without exception, the contributions are well written, interesting and theoretically informed, and each merits attention in its own right.

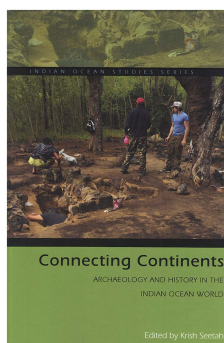
Wilkinson discusses the emergence of the trade system in the greater Near East from the Neolithic to the Bronze Age. He argues that over time, economic activity became increasingly distinct from social interaction, but importantly this varied regionally. Thus, by the fourth millennium, the city-states of southern Mesopotamia were vigorous trading economies, but it was not until the late third millennium that imported textiles from the Uruk world reached surrounding areas such as Anatolia and the Caucasus in sufficient volume to stimulate new modes of consumption. These regions were rich in metal resources, and their entry into the system in turn brought about a step change in economic activity, and facilitated the spread of the city-state political configuration. Warburton takes this story on into the rest of the Bronze Age, showing how silver became the unit of account in a system of pricing that stretched from Egypt to the Indus, and allowed both precious materials and more quotidian commodities to be traded over vast distances. From here we move into prehistoric Europe

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(Kristiansen), Bronze Age Mesopotamia (Barjamovic) and Mycaean Greece (Galaty). In an excellent chapter summarising much recent work on food preparation and trade, Rowlands and Fuller focus on Africa and Southeast Asia to show how areas that did not participate in the Bronze Age city-state 'story' nevertheless exhibit "long-term stable cultural boundaries [...] of cuisine extending over millennia" (p. 181). It may therefore be possible to talk about forms of civilizational complexity that do not fit the city-state model. Philippe Beaujard's short chapter then documents Africa's integration into Old World exchange systems at the beginning of the first millennium AD.

Further chapters concern major trade networks, such as the Silk Road in China (Whitfield) and the Indian Ocean (Oka). Several focus on aspects of trade in the medieval period, including the Hanseatic League (Gaimster), the role of exchange in the rise of Swahili urbanism in East Africa (Kusimba) and maritime connections in the Philippines (Junker). The final two chapters serve as a postscript. In the first of these, Lindkvist and Myrdal describe the breakdown of the sorts of systems discussed in the rest of the volume in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries AD. They challenge Eurocentric assumptions to argue that at this point "Europe did not explore Asia; instead, Europe was more neatly incorporated into an existing trade network" (p. 516). Once integrated, however, the "centralised absolutist states" (p. 527) of Europe were in a position to dominate the emerging global network by the sixteenth century. In a provocative concluding chapter, Friedman sums up the contribution of the volume as demonstrating that civilization itself is fundamentally a consequence of external exchange networks and the social and political organisation needed to facilitate them.



*Connecting continents: archaeology and history in the Indian Ocean world*, edited by Krish Seetah, has a slightly narrower remit than *Trade and civilisation*, but still manages to discuss an area stretching from East Africa to Australia. In contrast to the longue

durée approach of the latter volume, here the emphasis is on historical archaeology, as well as the insights that can be gained from interdisciplinary links

with history and anthropology, in order to examine the development of this vast area over the last millennium or so. Although the canvas is large, the chapters themselves are relatively constrained, with three on East Africa, three on Mauritius, and one on Western Australia. Two further chapters focus on links between Mauritius and Africa, notably Zanzibar (Heise and Mhando) and South Africa (Allen). Although several other island chains are mentioned along the way, there is a notable absence of contributions relating to the northern part of this vast region, including the Persian Gulf, Southeast Asia and India itself. This still, however, leaves plenty to be getting along with. As with the previous volume, the following presents a few highlights rather than a comprehensive summary.

In their chapter on pre-modern island colonisation, Anderson *et al.* make a useful comparison between human migrations in the Indian Ocean and those in the Pacific and Atlantic. Despite relatively similar densities of suitable locations, by 1500 AD only 2.5 per cent of the islands in the Pacific remained unoccupied, compared to 28 per cent in the Indian Ocean. Interestingly, the authors argue that the high level of connectivity in the Indian Ocean visible from the Bronze Age onwards may have made voyages of discovery less probable. In the Pacific, large-scale trade networks were mostly absent, meaning long-distance seafaring was predominantly undertaken under conditions of stress for migratory purposes. Drawing on a wide range of examples, Alpers makes a persuasive argument for interdisciplinary research in the Indian Ocean World, combining history, archaeology and a range of scientific techniques. In the second part of his chapter, however, he also highlights the value of "basic archaeological fieldwork" (p. 101), especially in East Africa where the material record is rich, but sustained scholarly attention has only recently taken hold. Horton, Crowther and Boivin demonstrate this by contrasting archaeological and historical narratives in their chapter on the Swahili Coast, with the archaeological data evidencing a high level of local complexity much earlier than was visible in the historical texts, which were mostly written by and about external groups. The final three chapters all emerge from the Mauritian Archaeology and Cultural Heritage Project, directed by the volume editor from Stanford University. These, unsurprisingly, represent the most coherent section and demonstrate the

strength of the interdisciplinary approach advocated in the Introduction. Although there is no formal concluding chapter, the last of these three clearly illustrates the potential for interdisciplinary work in this region. Drawing on climate science, aDNA studies, historical sources and archaeological data, Seetah investigates the spread of malaria in Mauritius at the turn of the nineteenth century, and shows how the emerging patterns might lead to improved responses to what is still a major issue in the present-day Indian Ocean world.

Our final volume takes up the story of Indian Ocean trade from the other end of the network. *The Southeast Asia connection* aims to correct a perceived bias in discussions of Eurasian trade in which Southeast Asia “is viewed as a peripheral region that is no more than a set of trade entrepôts” (p. 1) in a highly integrated economy that united the Eurasian continent, from Western Europe to Japan, and also including East Africa, in the early centuries of the first millennium AD. Drawing on world systems theory and global history approaches, the Introduction makes the case for understanding historical developments at this scale, and for treating the Eurasian continent as a single economic entity during the period in question.

A chapter on Southeast Asia in the periods preceding the emergence of this Eurasian world system follows the Introduction. A huge volume of information on the Neolithic and Bronze Age of the region is succinctly summarised, with an emphasis on the twin developments of rice cultivation and bronze manufacturing, which were the corner stones of early political formations. The emergence of local trade is also discussed, and it is clear that by the end of the Bronze Age, a network of centres in Eastern India and Mainland and Island Southeast Asia were participants in the exchange of, among other things, bronze drums of the Dong Son type. Chapter 2 describes how this local network was integrated into the Eurasian world, such that by 200 BC, a single system connected the Roman Empire and China. Although a short section at the start discusses overland routes through Central Asia, the bulk of the chapter concentrates on maritime routes, divided into geographic subregions from east to west (Europe to the Red Sea, the Red Sea to the Gulf and East Africa, the Gulf to the Indian Ocean, the Indian Ocean to the South China Sea, the South China Sea to Korea and Japan). Chapter 3 deals with the materials that were traded on these routes and the

contribution made by Southeast Asia. Spices and aromatic woods represented key commodities, as well as precious metals and beads, some of which made their way to Rome at one end of the Eurasian system and Japan at the other, although the actual exchange was probably mediated through India and China respectively. Chapter 4 examines the political effects of this wider economic integration on the societies in Southeast Asia. Here, as Chew rightly points out, we are hampered by the lack of excavated sites, but it is clear that even in the earliest part of the period, sites such as Angkor Borei in Cambodia and Ban Chiang Han in Thailand can be classed as urban. By the early centuries AD, complex socio-economic systems with writing and monumental architecture were in place across much of Mainland Southeast Asia. Chew argues that these changes resulted from a combination of indigenous developments and exogenous impetus from the new wealth available through trade. A very short ‘Methodological reprise’ serves as a conclusion, arguing against simple Eurocentric and Indocentric narratives of Southeast Asian (pre)history, and reiterating the value of a large-scale approach to history.

This is a slim volume that attempts big things, and I do not think that it quite pulls them off. The theoretical sections are the most successful, articulating a clear vision for how a global historical and archaeological narrative might be constructed. In such a short book there are inevitably under-explored avenues—I was particularly struck by the absence of the Near Eastern empires, especially the Parthians and Sasanians, from the narrative in the later chapters. As Chew himself points out, there are also significant gaps in the archaeological record of Southeast Asia relative to the ‘core’ areas of the Eurasian world system, and these lacunae hamper comparative analyses. A huge amount of information is brought together and nicely synthesised, but the treatment of the archaeological evidence is a little lightweight and often descriptive rather than analytical. This last criticism could be applied to parts of all three volumes to a greater or lesser degree, and illustrates one of the challenges inherent in working across such vast areas. Taken together, however, the three books make a strong case for understanding major cultural changes in the past through the lens of trade and exchange. By taking this approach, we can recognise some of the causal factors behind changes that may be operating at pan-continental scales. It should also be noted, however, that all three volumes show the

complexity of these processes, with local dynamics resulting in a multitude of responses to similar external stimuli. Ultimately, what is needed almost everywhere is more of the 'basic archaeological fieldwork' called for by Alpers, especially in areas of the world that have received comparably little attention. More data will allow us to test some of the models proposed in these three volumes, but it is gratifying to see such ambitious projects attempting to build grand narratives for the human past.

## Books received

This list includes all books received between 1 May 2018 and 30 June 2018. Those featuring at the beginning of New Book Chronicle have, however, not been duplicated in this list. The listing of a book in this chronicle does not preclude its subsequent review in *Antiquity*.

### General

CHRISTIAN HORN & KRISTIAN KRISTIANSEN (ed.). *Warfare in Bronze Age society*. 2018. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; 978-1-10718-556-2 £75.

JEREMY A. SABLOFF & PAULA L.W. SABLOFF (ed.). *The emergence of pre-modern states. New perspectives on the development of complex societies*. 2018. Santa Fe (NM): SFI; 978-1-947864-03-0 \$9.95.

### Method

CHRIS CAREY, ANDY J. HOWARD, DAVID KNIGHT, JANE CORCORAN & JEN HEATHCOTE (ed.). *Deposit modelling and archaeology*. 2018. Brighton: University of Brighton; 978-1-5272-2244-1.

### European pre- and protohistory

JENS-HENRIK BECH, BERIT VALENTIN ERIKSEN & KRISTIAN KRISTIANSEN (ed.). *Bronze Age settlement and land-use in Thy, northwest Denmark, volumes 1 & 2* (Jysk Arkæologisk Selskabs Skrifter 102). 2018. Højbjerg: Jutland Archaeological Society; 978-87-93423-22-0 500kr.

LAURENCE MANOLAKAKIS, NATHAN SCHLANGER & ANICK COUDART (ed.). *European archaeology: identities & migrations*. 2017. Leiden: Sidestone; 978-90-8890-520-9 €49.95.

HARALD MELLER, JUDITH M. GRÜNBERG, BERNHARD GRAMSCH, LARS LARSSON & JÖRG ORSCHIEDT (ed.). *Mesolithic burials—rites, symbols and social organisation of early postglacial communities. International Conference Halle (Saale), Germany, 19<sup>th</sup>–21<sup>st</sup> September 2013* (Tagungen des Landesmuseum für Vorgeschichte Halle (Saale), Band 13/1 und 13/11.). 2017. Halle (Saale): Landesamt für Denkmalpflege und Archäologie Sachsen-Anhalt; 978-3-944507-43-9 €81.

KRISTIN ARMSTRONG OMA. *The sheep people. The ontology of making lives, building homes and forging herds in Early Bronze Age Norway*. 2018. Sheffield: Equinox; 978-1-78179-251-3 £75.

STEPHEN SHENNAN. *The first farmers of Europe. An evolutionary perspective*. 2018. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; 978-1-11084-2292-5 £24.99.

HELLE VANDKILDE. *The metal hoard from Pile in Scania, Sweden. Place, things, time, metals, and worlds around 2000 BCE* (The Swedish History Museum Studies 29). 2017. Aarhus: Aarhus University Press; 978-87-7184-143-5 299 95kr.

ALASDAIR WHITTLE. *The times of their lives: hunting history in the archaeology of Neolithic Europe*. 2018. Oxford: Oxbow; 978-1-78570-668-4 £40.

### Mediterranean archaeology

MICHAEL L. GALATY. *Memory and nation building. From ancient times to the Islamic State*. 2018. Lanham (MD): Rowman & Littlefield; 978-0-759-12260-4 \$75.

ROBERTO MALVEZZI. *The archetype of wisdom: a phenomenological research on the Greek temple*. 2018. Hythe: Mimesis International; 978-8-86977-150-7 £10.

### The Roman world

MICHAEL A. ANDERSON & DAMIAN ROBINSON. *House of the Surgeon, Pompeii: excavations in the Casa del Chirurgo (VI 1, 9–10.23)*. 2018. Oxford: Oxbow; 978-1-78570-728-5 £70.

BONNIE EFFROS. *Incidental archaeologists. French officers and the rediscovery of Roman North Africa*. 2018. Ithaca (NY): Cornell University Press; 978-1-50170-210-5 \$49.95.

PETER HEATHER. *Rome resurgent. War and empire in the age of Justinian*. 2018. New York: Oxford University Press; 978-0-19-936274-5 £22.99.

RICHARD HINGLEY. *Londinium: a biography. Roman London from its origins to the fifth century*. 2018. London: Bloomsbury Academic; 978-1-3500-4729-7 £27.

### Anatolia, Levant, Middle East

JENNIFER A. BAIRD. *Dura-Europos*. 2018. London: Bloomsbury Academic; 978-1-4725-3087-5 £19.99.

IAN HODDER (ed.). *Religion, history, and place in the origin of settled life*. 2018. Boulder: University Press of Colorado; 978-1-60732-736-3 \$75.

EMANUELE E. INTAGLIATA. *Palmyra after Zenobia AD 273–750: an archaeological and historical reappraisal*. 2018. Oxford: Oxbow; 978-1-78570-942-5 £50.

MARC LEBEAU (ed.). *Arcane interregional. Artefacts (ARCANE-IR 2)*. 2018. Turnhout: Brepols; 978-2-503-54988-0 €90.

SCHAM SANDRA. *Extremism, ancient and modern. Insurgency, terror and empire in the Middle East*. 2018. Abingdon: Routledge; 978-0-415-78839-7 £29.99.

### Asia

DAVID C. THOMAS. *The ebb and flow of the Ghurid Empire*. 2018. Sydney: Sydney University Press; 978-1-7433-2541-4 A\$85.

### Africa and Egypt

JOANNE CLARKE & NICK BROOKS (ed.). *The archaeology of Western Sahara: a synthesis of fieldwork, 2002 to 2009*. 2018. Oxford: Oxbow; 978-1-78297-172-6 £55.

ZAHI HAWASS & SANDRO VANNINI. *Tutankhamun: the treasures of the tomb*. 2018. London: Thames & Hudson; 978-0-50029-390-4 £29.95.

D. HUYGE & F. VAN NOTEN (ed.). *What ever happened to the people? Humans and anthropomorphs in the rock art of Northern Africa*. 2018. Brussels: Royal Academy for Overseas Sciences; 978-90-756-5260-4 €45.

### Americas

SONIA ALCONINI & R. ALAN COVEY (ed.). *The Oxford handbook of the Incas*. 2018. New York: Oxford University Press; 978-0-19021-935-2 £115.

JENNIFER ALEXANDER & JOHN ALEXANDER. *The Maya gods of time* [self-published]. 2018. 978-1-911195-82-5 £30.

RICHARD M. HUTCHINGS. *Maritime heritage in crisis. Indigenous landscapes and global ecological breakdown*. 2017. Abingdon: Routledge; 978-1-62958-348-8 £31.99.

MICHAEL SHOTT. *Pottery ethnoarchaeology in the Michoacán Sierra*. 2018. Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press; 978-1-607-81622-5 \$45.

### Britain and Ireland

PAM J. CRABTREE. *Early medieval Britain. The rebirth of towns in the post-Roman west*. 2018. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; 978-0-521-71370-2 £24.99.

BRUCE EAGLES. *From Roman civitas to Anglo-Saxon shire: topographical studies on the formation of Wessex*. 2018. Oxford: Oxbow; 978-1-78570-984-5 £34.99.

MIKE PARKER PEARSON, MARK BRENNAND, JACQUI MULVILLE & HELEN SMITH. *Cille Pheadair: a Norse farmstead and Pictish burial cairn in South Uist*. 2018. Oxford: Oxbow; 978-1-78570-851-0 £49.99.

### Other

PENNY BICKLE & EMILE SIBBESSON (ed.). *Neolithic bodies* (Neolithic Studies Group Seminar Papers 15). 2018. Oxford: Oxbow; 978-1-78570-901-2 £40.

ROBIN DERRICOURT. *Unearthing childhood. Young lives in prehistory*. 2018. Manchester: Manchester University Press; 978-1-5261-2808-9 £20.

ELEANOR HARRISON-BUCK & JULIA A. HENDON (ed.). *Relational identities and other-than-human agency in archaeology*. 2018. Louisville: University Press of Colorado; 978-1-60732-746-2 \$73.

MALIN HOLST & MICHELLE ALEXANDER (ed.). *Trends in biological anthropology. Volume 2*. 2018. Haverton (PA) & Oxford: Oxbow; 978-1-78570-620-2 \$80.

HARALD MELLER, FALKO DAIM, JOHANNES KRAUSE & ROBERTO RISCH (ed.). *Migration und Integration von der Urgeschichte bis zum Mittelalter* (Tagungen des Landesmuseums für Vorgeschichte Halle (Saale), Band 17). 2017. Halle (Saale): Landesamt für Denkmalpflege und Archäologie Sachsen-Anhalt; 978-3-944507-61-3 €49.

ANDREW REINHARD. *Archaeogaming. An introduction to archaeology in and of video games*. 2018. New York: Berghahn; 978-1-78533-873-1 \$27.95.

AMARA THORNTON. *Archaeologists in print. Publishing for the people*. 2018. London: University College London Press; 978-1-78735-258-2 £20.