

Warfare and Social Change in Non-state Societies of the Predynastic Nile Valley

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[The emergence of leadership and chiefdoms in the Predynastic Nile Valley has been a topic of interest among researchers. Authors who have dealt with the issue tend to focus their research mainly on the economic and administrative aspects, lacking a serious consideration of conflict, and particularly warfare. Nevertheless, archaeological testimonies seem to suggest a close relation between the emergence of socio-political hierarchies and the realm of war in the Predynastic Nile Valley. The aim of this paper is to briefly consider this issue by evaluating the available archaeological evidence.]

Keywords: warfare, chiefdom, Nile Valley, Predynastic period.

1. *The emergence of leadership and chiefdoms in the Nile Valley: consensualist approaches*

The emergence of leadership and socio-political hierarchy among non-State societies of the Predynastic Nile Valley –that is to say, prior to the emergence of the State– has proved to be a topic of much interest among researchers. Authors who have dealt with the issue tend to focus their research mainly on the economic and administrative aspects, seeking to explain in those terms the transformations that led to the emergence of chiefdoms in the Naqada I period (c. 3900-3600 BC), and perhaps even before, in the Badarian period (c. 4500-3900 BC). However important for the study of Predynastic economic life, these analyses lack a serious consideration of conflict, and particularly warfare, which nevertheless is attested in the archaeological record. Indeed, contrary to what material evidence, ethnographic analogies and cross-cultural studies suggest, these interpretations seem to hold onto the perception of non-State societies as inherently peaceful, or as societies in which warfare has no socially significant role. In this way, social transformations related to the emergence of chiefdoms are explained by these authors through purely consensualist approaches¹.

1. Our aim here is not to deal with the problem of the emergence of the State, but rather to discuss the emergence of socio-political hierarchy *prior* to the State. To summarize, archaeological testimonies in the Nile Valley offer evidence of a process of increasing sedentarization probably originated by the Neolithic period (c. 5500-3900 BC), and of the existence of societies with some kind of social differentiation in Upper Egypt by Naqada I period –tombs differentiated by size and grave goods, as well as leadership symbols and representations–, which have been interpreted as chiefdom societies. In this sense, we follow the characterization of chiefdom proposed by Marcelo Campagno, as a society with some kind of social differentiation (an elite with privileged access to the consumption of goods and/or certain leadership positions), some institutionalized form of leadership (the figure of a “chief”) based on prestige and not on the monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force, and the predominance of the logic of kinship as the main axis for the articulation of society. See M. Campagno, “Hacia un uso no-evolucionista del concepto de ‘sociedades de jefatura’”, *Boletín de Antropología Americana* 36, 2000, 137-147; S. Hendrickx, D. Huyge & W.

For instance, Kathryn A. Bard postulated in 1989 the emergence of a “managerial elite” within Upper Egyptian communities of the Naqada I period. This managerial elite would be concerned with the administration of trade and internal production and redistribution, while its emergence is explained as a result of the exchange of raw materials with other, distant communities. According to Bard, the purpose of this trade would be to provide for the local production of crafted goods, i.e. prestige goods for the elite mainly. Indeed, these societies would have been self-sufficient, and exotic goods and raw materials would have been imported in order to highlight the prestige of elite members (since exotic goods owe their value to the fact that they are of difficult access for the common population)². However, the question that arises at this point of the argument is how an elite can emerge *from* the exchange of materials oriented to the production of prestige goods, since these goods only have such meaning when there already exists an elite that demands them to maintain their prestige.

It can be pointed out that in these periods there is no clear evidence of redistributive patterns of agricultural resources, except for scarce and uncertain traces such as the so-called communal granary of Kom K in the Fayum area. On the contrary, the evidence that predominates is that of small domestic silos which suggest the self-sufficiency of domestic units without any intervention of redistributive leaders. As Rodolfo Fattovich pointed out, “The improvement of agriculture [...] probably did not affect the rise of chiefdoms [in Upper Egypt]. In fact the agriculture was likely improved only during the Naqadah II times, when chiefdoms were in existence”³. This fact also calls into question the hypothesis according to which surplus economy –which would have emerged as a result of the vulnerability of communities to periodic productive fluctuations– would lead to the existence of redistributors that would at some point become appropriators of the surplus and finally chiefs⁴.

Fekri Hassan’s interpretation of the process is to some extent similar to that of Bard. He also postulated the rise of a purely managerial elite in the Nile Valley, and in his work he related this elite to the management of production and distribution of agricultural resources –activities supposedly arisen from the attempts “to dampen the effect of agricultural fluctuations”– and to some kind of craft specialization⁵. According to Hassan, the basis for the emergence of a managerial elite was sedentarization and “a fully agricultural life”. The elite, on the other hand, would legitimize itself by means of beliefs and symbolism related to funerary cult and the possession of status goods. However, as we have previously pointed out, the lack of evidence of some sort of agricultural management and, on the contrary, the testimony of small

Wendrich, “Worship without Writing”, in: W. Wendrich (ed.), *Egyptian Archaeology*, Oxford, 2010, 15-35. On warfare both in the context of non-State societies and in relation to the emergence and consolidation of the State in the Nile Valley, see M. Campagno & A. Gayubas, “La guerra en los comienzos del antiguo Egipto: reflexiones a partir de la obra de Pierre Clastres”, forthcoming.

2. K. A. Bard, “The Evolution of Social Complexity in Predynastic Egypt: An Analysis of the Naqada Cemeteries”, *Journal of Mediterranean Archaeology* 2, 1989, 224-225; *From Farmers to Pharaohs. Mortuary Evidence for the Rise of Complex Society in Egypt*, Sheffield, 1994, 107-108. A similar proposition was stated by Michael A. Hoffman (*The Predynastic of Hierakonpolis: An interim report*, Giza-Macomb, 1982, 141-143), who based on the evidence of craft specialization in Hierakonpolis, concluded that it was from craft production and exchange that leaders or chiefs emerged within communities.

3. R. Fattovich, “Remarks on the Dynamics of State Formation in Ancient Egypt”, *Wiener Beiträge zur Ethnologie und Anthropologie* 1, 1984, 52. See S. Savage, “Some Recent Trends in the Archaeology of Predynastic Egypt”, *Journal of Archaeological Research* 9, 2001, 114; D. Wengrow, *The Archaeology of Early Egypt: Social Transformations in North-East Africa, C. 10,000 to 2,650 BC*, Cambridge, 2006, 63-64.

4. K. A. Bard, “Toward an Interpretation of the Role of Ideology in the Evolution of Complex Society in Egypt”, *Journal of Anthropological Archaeology* 11, 1992, 1-24.

5. F. Hassan, “The Predynastic of Egypt”, *Journal of World Prehistory* 2, 1988, 159-163, 165, 170.

domestic silos, prevents us from sustaining the thesis of the existence of an elite characterized by the management of agricultural resources.

What is problematic about this kind of statements is that they rely mainly on the assumptions of a necessary relation between leadership and redistribution—a notion that is close to the hypotheses of Elman Service and other evolutionist authors—, while the evidence doesn't seem to point in that direction. Although in later periods the evidence of craft specialization and long-distance exchange may suggest the existence of some kind of leadership or social differentiation related to it, the truth is that there is no early evidence of a kind of craft production in the Nile Valley that would require the administrative activity of a chief. As Fattovich pointed out in his analysis of early Predynastic times, “The manufacture of domestic tools and other goods was likely individual or restricted to the members of the single households”, a conclusion based not only on specific evidence of archaeological sites (a type of non-specialized craft production, which only at the end of Naqada I would begin to be replaced by what can be considered a kind of specialized production, and by what the author considers “centers specialized in the manufacture of specific items”), but also based on ethnographic analogies⁶.

The starting point of these hypotheses about the Predynastic Nile Valley that undervalue the role of warfare among non-State societies contrasts with a number of anthropological, sociological and archaeological studies on non-State warfare conducted in the last decades⁷. But it also seems to underestimate the available archaeological evidence about war in the Predynastic Nile Valley, and its possible connections with the testimonies of leadership provided by archaeology and iconography.

2. Evidence of war and leadership in the Nile Valley

Before the emergence of the first states in the Nile Valley, we find testimonies that allow us to consider the existence of warlike activities among Predynastic non-State communities⁸. On the one hand, numerous weapons have been found in the archaeological record (maces, arrows, spears, axes). According to Ian Shaw, the “principal weapons in the late Predynastic and Protodynastic Periods were undoubtedly the bow and arrow, spear, axe and mace”⁹. This can also be said in relation to earlier periods. Gregory Gilbert points out that maces, documented from Neolithic to Early Dynastic periods, should be considered as “specialized weapons” (i.e., made primarily for the purpose of fighting or the execution of individuals). In

6. Fattovich, *Wiener Beiträge zur Ethnologie und Anthropologie* 1, 41 and 38, respectively. See R. Friedman, “Hierakonpolis”, in: E. Teeter (ed.), *Before the Pyramids. The Origins of Egyptian Civilization*, Chicago, 2011, 35.

7. See L. H. Keeley, *War before Civilization: The Myth of the Peaceful Savage*, Oxford-New York, 1996; J. Guilaine & J. Zammit, *Le sentier de la guerre. Visages de la violence préhistorique*, Paris, 2001; K. F. Otterbein, *How War Began*, College Station, 2004.

8. It should be noted that there is evidence of warfare in the Nile Valley prior to the Neolithic and Predynastic periods. In Wadi Kubbaniya, south of Egypt, the skeleton of an adult male dated to about 20,000 years ago was found with stone projectile points in the abdominal region and another projectile point embedded in its left humerus. Even more significant is the evidence from the Late Paleolithic Qadan culture cemetery 117 at Jebel Sahaba, in the Sudanese Nile Valley (c. 12,000-10,000 BC), containing 59 skeletons of which 40% had stone projectile points, whether embedded in the bones or intimately associated with them, indicating that those individuals died violently. Researchers perceive this cemetery as a full documentary record testifying the existence of warfare among the semi-nomadic hunter-gatherers and fishermen of the Qadan culture that inhabited this area of the Nile Valley. See F. Wendorf, “Site 117: A Nubian Final Palaeolithic Graveyard near Jebel Sahaba, Sudan”, in: F. Wendorf (ed.), *The Prehistory of Nubia*, vol. 2, Dallas, 1968, 954-995; F. Wendorf & R. Schild, *The Wadi Kubbaniya Skeleton: A Late Paleolithic Burial from Southern Egypt*, Dallas, 1986; B. Midant-Reynes, *Préhistoire de l’Égypte. Des premiers hommes aux premiers Pharaons*, Paris, 1992, 68-70.

9. I. Shaw, *Egyptian Warfare and Weapons*, Buckinghamshire, 1991, 31.

regard to the other weapons mentioned by Shaw, also present throughout the periods considered, Gilbert classifies them as “weapon-tools”, since they can be used in other activities, apart from military ones¹⁰. However, as Campagno argues, it remains the fact that “in pharaonic times, bows and arrows, spears, axes and maces were common weapons of the armies”, besides which, early representations of human figures wielding such objects in probably military scenes were found¹¹.

On the other hand, Neolithic and Predynastic human remains with injuries that could have been provoked by violent episodes in a warlike context have been found: specifically, skulls with lesions that could be caused by the impact of certain weapons of war (maces or axes), found in sites such as Merimde Beni-Salame, Mostagedda, el-Omari and Hierakonpolis, and probable evidence of “parry fractures” –i.e. lesions on the forearms that would be the result of a defensive use of the upper limbs– documented in a series of graves in Mostagedda, Maadi and Adāima¹². However scarce this evidence may seem, it should be taken into account that the conditions of survival of the evidence make it difficult to infer patterns of violence from the osteological record. For instance, injuries in the soft tissue are not visible in the bones, despite them constituting one of the most common signs of interpersonal aggression¹³. The few testimonies collected should therefore not be underestimated. An additional difficulty is the actual interpretation of the existing evidence, although the apparent use of certain weapons to cause the injuries of the considered remains seems to suggest a warlike scenario.

Another set of testimonies of war found in the Nile Valley consists of fortifications and defensive settlement patterns. Neolithic compounds “located in naturally defensible sites, often on slightly higher ground at the end of spurs along the desert edge”, suggest a warlike environment in which “settlement compounds may have acted as refuges using the natural advantages of the terrain”¹⁴. In reference to ethnographic analogies, it can be assumed that palisades made of perishable materials (such as wood) were used, leaving no archaeological traces. With respect to fortifications, in Abadiya, a clay model dated to Naqada I period has been found, representing two individuals (identified by some authors as warriors or sentinels) standing behind a crenellated, probably defensive wall. In Naqada South Town, the remains of a mudbrick wall two meters thick were documented, usually dated to the Naqada II period, that is to say, in the context of the end of pre-State period and the emergence of the State. This evidence has been considered indicative of the early existence of defensive walls in the Nile Valley¹⁵.

10. G. P. Gilbert, *Weapons, Warriors and Warfare in Early Egypt*, Oxford, 2004, 3, 33-34.

11. M. Campagno, “In the beginning was the War. Conflict and the emergence of the Egyptian State”, in: S. Hendrickx, R. F. Friedman, K. M. Ciałowicz & M. Chłodnicki (eds.), *Egypt at its origins. Studies in Memory of Barbara Adams. Proceedings of the International Conference “Origin of the State. Predynastic and Early Dynastic Egypt”*, Leuven, 2004, 689, n. 1.

12. Gilbert, *Weapons*, 73-80. In Merimde Beni-Salame, the presence of young children and adult women burials, and the almost lack of adult male burials, could suggest that “men were buried in the actual location where they died –for instance, on the occasion of hunting parties or battles–”, although it is also possible that “the main cemetery of Merimde still remains to be discovered” (S. Hendrickx & D. Huyge, “Neolithic and Predynastic Egypt”, in: C. Renfrew & P. Bahn (eds.), *The Cambridge World Prehistory*, vol. 1, Cambridge, 2014, 246).

13. See Gilbert, *Weapons*, 79-80. On the strengths and weaknesses of this kind of evidence, see the analysis of Margaret Judd on human remains in Bronze Age Kerma: M. Judd, “Palaeotrauma: a profile of personal injury during the Kerma period”, *Sudan & Nubia* 5, 2001, 21-28.

14. Gilbert, *Weapons*, 100-101.

15. Campagno, “In the beginning”, 689-690. On the Abadiya clay model, see M. A. Hoffman, *Egypt Before the Pharaohs*, New York, 1979, 148; Midant-Reynes, *Préhistoire*, 192. On the Naqada South Town wall, see Gilbert, *Weapons*, 102-103. We should not rule out the possibility of fortified structures being built either to protect against wild animals or as a means of symbolizing status or demarcate boundaries. However, later iconographic representations depicting fortified enclosures being attacked by symbolic figures, as well as associated to the image of defeated foes, strongly suggest an early defensive use of fortifications within a context of armed conflict. See Shaw, *Egyptian Warfare*, 15; B. B. Williams, “Security and the Problem of

Finally, there is evidence of warlike activities in iconographic representations. This kind of evidence is of particular relevance, because it provides information on both the existence of war and how it may have been perceived by the society. The very fact of the graphic expression of a warlike activity implies an importance attached to this practice by the society that represents it, either in social and political terms or in symbolic and religious ones, most likely both.

In the Nile Valley, the earliest known scenes related to war, corresponding to the Naqada Ic period, are few but significant, particularly if they are considered in the light of later evidence. Summarizing, these scenes seem to evoke what appears to be a context of warlike conflicts, where some figures that can be interpreted as prisoners appear to be subdued by larger figures who seem to wield some sort of prestige, or a social or military leadership (e.g., arms raised, wearing a headdress and an animal tail, holding a mace)¹⁶. Some hunting scenes are also significant, since they seem to symbolize “the concept of control over chaos”¹⁷. This is particularly evident in a decorated vessel found in tomb U-415 from the Cemetery U at Abydos, in which a smiting scene is represented right above a hunting of the hippopotamus scene, in a manner that reminds a seal impression of the First Dynasty in which the king Den is represented hunting a hippopotamus next to at least two decapitated captives¹⁸. Thus, since “wild animals, hunting and subjugation, i.e. warfare, are ideologically connected”, it can be argued that iconographic representations of the periods considered seem to relate early prestige figures to both “the cosmic principle of order and chaos” and the “subjugation of potential enemies”¹⁹.

3. Concluding remarks

The evidence considered up to this point allows us to propose that warlike activities, and the condition of warrior leader, would have had a prominent social role in Predynastic Nile Valley societies. Particularly in the context of chiefdom societies (Naqada I-IIab), the ways of representing prestige figures seem to emphasize military attitudes, allowing us to suggest the existence of a close link between social leadership and war.

the City in the Naqada Period”, in: D. P. Silverman (ed.), *For His Ka: Essays in Memory of Klaus Baer*, Chicago, 1994, 271-283; N. Moeller, “Evidence for Urban Walling in the Third Millennium BC”, *Cambridge Archaeological Journal* 14 (2), 2004, 261-265; F. Monnier, “Une iconographie égyptienne de l’architecture défensive”, *ENiM* 7, 2014, 173-219.

16. Decorated vessels found in tombs U-239 and U-415 from the Cemetery U at Abydos (G. Dreyer *et al.*, “Umm el-Qaab. Nachuntersuchungen im frühzeitlichen Königsfriedhof. 9./10. Vorbericht”, *Mittlungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts abteilung Kairo* 54, 1998, 84, 111-115; “Umm el-Qaab. Nachuntersuchungen im frühzeitlichen Königsfriedhof. 13./14./15. Vorbericht”, *Mittlungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts abteilung Kairo* 59, 2003, 80), and Brussels E3002 and London UC15339 vessels (W. M. F. Petrie, *Prehistoric Egypt*, London, 1920, pl. XVIII; J. Vandier, *Manuel d’Archéologie Égyptienne. I. Les époques de formation. I. La préhistoire*, Paris, 1952, 287). These motifs bring to mind the Pharaonic scenes of the king smiting his enemies. According to Hendrickx, Huyge and Wendrich, arms raised “are to be considered a symbol of power, referencing bull horns” (Hendrickx, Huyge & Wendrich, “Worship without Writing”, 27). Also a clay statuette of a figure with arms crossed on his back, found in Naqada, has been interpreted as an early representation of a prisoner (Vandier, *Manuel d’Archéologie*, 433 and fig. 291).

17. S. Hendrickx, “The emergence of the Egyptian state”, in: C. Renfrew & P. Bahn (eds.), *The Cambridge World Prehistory*, vol. 1, Cambridge, 2014, 269.

18. See Dreyer *et al.*, *Mittlungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts abteilung Kairo* 59, 80; V. Müller, “Nilpferdjagd und geköpfte Feinde – zu zwei Ikonen des Feindvernichtungsrituals”, in: E.-M. Engel, V. Müller & U. Hartung (eds.), *Zeichen aus dem Sand. Streiflichter aus Ägyptens Geschichte zu Ehren von Günter Dreyer*, Wiesbaden, 2008, 477-493; Hendrickx, “The emergence”, 269.

19. E. C. Köhler, “History or Ideology? New Reflections on the Narmer Palette and the Nature of Foreign Relations in Pre- and Early Dynastic Egypt”, in: E. C. M. van den Brink & T. E. Levy (eds.), *Egypt and the Levant. Interrelations from the 4th through the early 3rd Millennium BCE*, London, 2002, 508 and 510, respectively.

We have already established the limitations of consensual/administrative approaches when it comes to explaining the emergence of socio-political hierarchies (leaders or chiefs) among Predynastic non-State societies. The emphasis on redistribution (a practice not clearly attested in these early periods) or in craft production management and prestige goods exchange (which would have required the pre-existence of a chief or elite that demanded them), lacks a study of the forms of representing leaders in the Naqada I-II periods. As we have noted above, leaders are represented as involved in scenes of warlike violence and hunting activities (a practice with strong military symbolism). In effect, the evidence just considered seems to eloquently link the constitution of leaderships to the realm of war.

Regarding this issue, Gilbert assessed the archaeological and iconographical evidence of the valley using relevant ethnographical analogies. Thus, he determined that in the Nile Valley “during the Late Neolithic period a local war leader may have become a ‘big man’”, influencing in some way the establishment of a chiefdom leadership in Predynastic Nile Valley societies²⁰. This proposition finds support in certain ethnographical observations according to which not only warfare can create the conditions favorable to the emergence of leaders, but in some historical contexts 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 in times exceeding the ambit of war episodes²¹. This brings us to the question about the conditions that must have been present in the Nile Valley for a war leader to acquire a position of a wider social prestige in the community, or for a chief to be depicted in scenes and wearing costumes related to war.

Certain archaeological and anthropological studies of other (historical and social) situations suggest that although in non-State contexts warlike activities can be considered usual, the social consequences of war may vary depending on the level of intensity, frequency and unpredictability of warlike episodes. According to Elsa Redmond, “as acts of warlike violence become more frequent and unpredictable, the consensus-based authority of tribesmen will reach its breaking point and will give way to the development of permanent, centralized leadership”²².

We believe that a comparable situation can be proposed for the Nile Valley in regard to the population movements that occurred during Neolithic. Indeed, it has been suggested that by the VI-V millennia BC, the intensification of aridization that was transforming the savannas surrounding the Nile Valley into what are now the eastern and western deserts of Egypt, may have promoted a series of movements of hunter-gatherer (and perhaps incipient herder?) populations from the surrounding regions to the Nile Valley,

20. Gilbert, *Weapons*, 29.

21. See E. M. Redmond, *Tribal and Chiefly Warfare in South America*, Ann Arbor, 1994, 124ss. Back in the 1980s, Bard and Carneiro had proposed a link between war and the emergence of chiefdom societies in the Nile Valley, but understood it as an evolutionary process of aggregation and conquest of villages determined by a context of environmental circumscription and population pressure (K. A. Bard & R. L. Carneiro, “Patterns of Predynastic Settlement Location, Social Evolution, and the Circumscription Theory”, *Cahiers de Recherches de l’Institut de Papirologie et d’Égyptologie de Lille* 11, 1989, 15-23). While the importance given to the military factor is interesting, the circumscription hypothesis was put into question by several authors (and was abandoned by Bard in the early 1990s) since, as Campagno (“In the beginning”, 693) summarized, “the circumscribed condition of the Nile Valley does not seem to be verifiable”. More recently, Branislav Anđelković (“Political Organization of Egypt in the Predynastic Period”, in: E. Teeter (ed.), *Before the Pyramids. The Origins of Egyptian Civilization*, Chicago, 2011, 28) stressed the importance of conflict in relation to the emergence of sociopolitical hierarchies in the Nile Valley, though largely recovering Carneiro’s assumptions about circumscription.

22. Redmond, *Tribal and Chiefly Warfare*, 129.

where they would come into contact with each other and with the presumably hunter-gatherer and fisher populations of the valley²³.

These movements would have created a context of unpredictability and intensification of contacts that may have taken the form of violent conflict, especially if we consider the fact that human remains attesting injuries probably owed to warfare, defensive settlement patterns in some regions of the valley, and the first war maces, have been found for this period. These conflicts would have been motivated less by a struggle for resources (in a context of wide availability of land and resources) than by a communal perception of the “spatial unity of the habitat”, i.e. the territory as a space for the exercise of community, kin rights, and of exclusion of non-kin; in short, a political struggle for the defense of the integrity of the community as an autonomous entity²⁴. In any case, what is interesting is that this situation could have enhanced the skills of a war leader to recruit, forge alliances and eventually manage resources, all of them being activities that could have been articulated in some way with other socio-political functions that Predynastic chiefs may have assumed.

This would explain the significant fact that, in the context of sedentarization and the permanent population increase that is attested in Upper Egypt population centers by early Predynastic times, the distinctive aspect of the chief, whatever their specific spheres of action, will be that of a warrior, his ability to give and take life (something that will be present, in fact, in the cosmological set figure of pharaoh in State times)²⁵.

In conclusion, we believe that we have significant evidence to suggest that war in the Nile Valley may have contributed to the emergence of institutionalized leadership and the emergence of chiefdom societies by early Predynastic period²⁶.

23. Hassan, *Journal of World Prehistory* 2, 144; Bard, *From Farmers to Pharaohs*, 24-25; Hendrickx & Huyge, “Neolithic”, 243-244.

24. A. Gayubas, “Guerra, parentesco y cambio social en las sociedades sin Estado del valle del Nilo prehistórico”, in: M. Campagno (ed.), *Estudios sobre parentesco y Estado en el antiguo Egipto*, Buenos Aires, 2006, 51-73; “Pierre Clastres y la guerra en el valle del Nilo preestatal”, in: M. Campagno (ed.), *Pierre Clastres y las sociedades antiguas*, Buenos Aires, 2014, 143-162. See P. Clastres, “Archéologie de la violence: La guerre dans les sociétés primitives”, *Libre 77-1*, 1977, 137-173.

25. As Alfred Adler (“La Guerre et l’état primitif”, in: M. Abensour (ed.), *L’Esprit des lois sauvages. Pierre Clastres ou une nouvelle anthropologie politique*, Paris, 1987, 95-114) notes in relation to certain African chiefdoms, the creative and fertilizing power does not exist without its opposite. This, in turn, warns us not to overlook certain sacred condition of leadership that could support the perception of the physical force of the leader or chief in connection with cosmic power and a privileged relationship with nature.

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