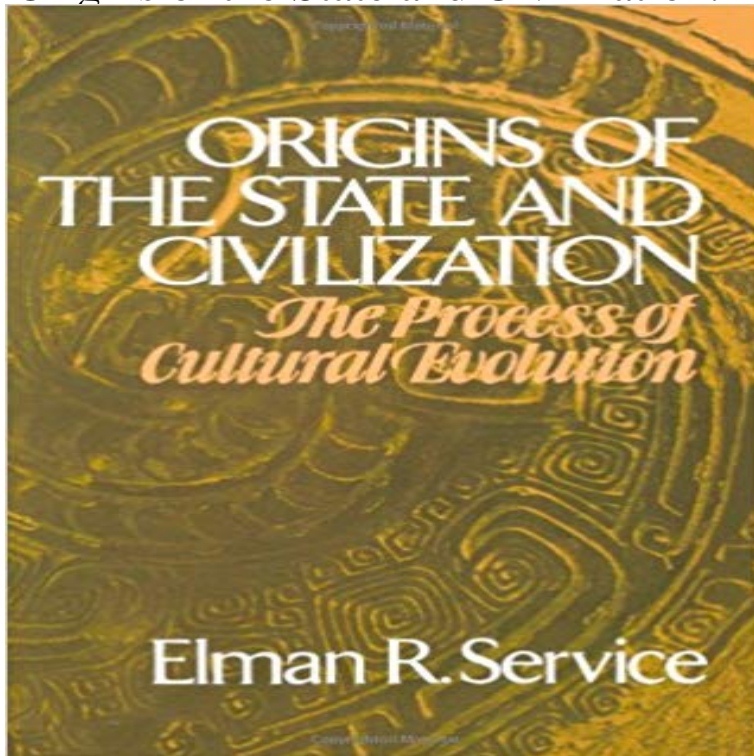


Origins of the State and Civilization: The Process of Cultural Evolution



How did civilized life begin? How did government arise? These questions have intrigued philosophers and historians since ancient times. In this volume, Elman R. Service, an anthropologist widely known for his studies of evolution and social organization, uses a unique mix of ethnology, history, and archaeology in exploring the origins and early development of political organization. In Part I, *The Origins of Government*, Service outlines the basic patterns of power and authority that structure even the most primitive societies, showing how these patterns become elaborated as simple egalitarian societies evolve into more complex hierarchical forms. He also discusses classic theories of government from the Enlightenment through Marx and Engels to the modern social scientist. Part II, *The Modern Primitive States*, illustrates the development of institutionalized government; among the societies discussed are the Zulu and the Ashanti in Africa, the Cherokee in North America, and Hawaii in Oceania. Part III, *The Archaic Civilizations*, looks at the six primary ancient civilizations... in Mesoamerica, Peru, Mesopotamia, Egypt, the Indus River Valley, and China... in light of the historical and ethnographical data. We should not expect to find, Service argues, that primitive cultures mirror the basic structures of modern society. In particular, he takes a critical look at the theory that the state... defined by the presence of repressive, formal-legal social controls based on physical force... is a necessary element in the development of civilization.

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