

East African Pastoralism: Routes, Outcomes, Questions

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Dates for African Livestock

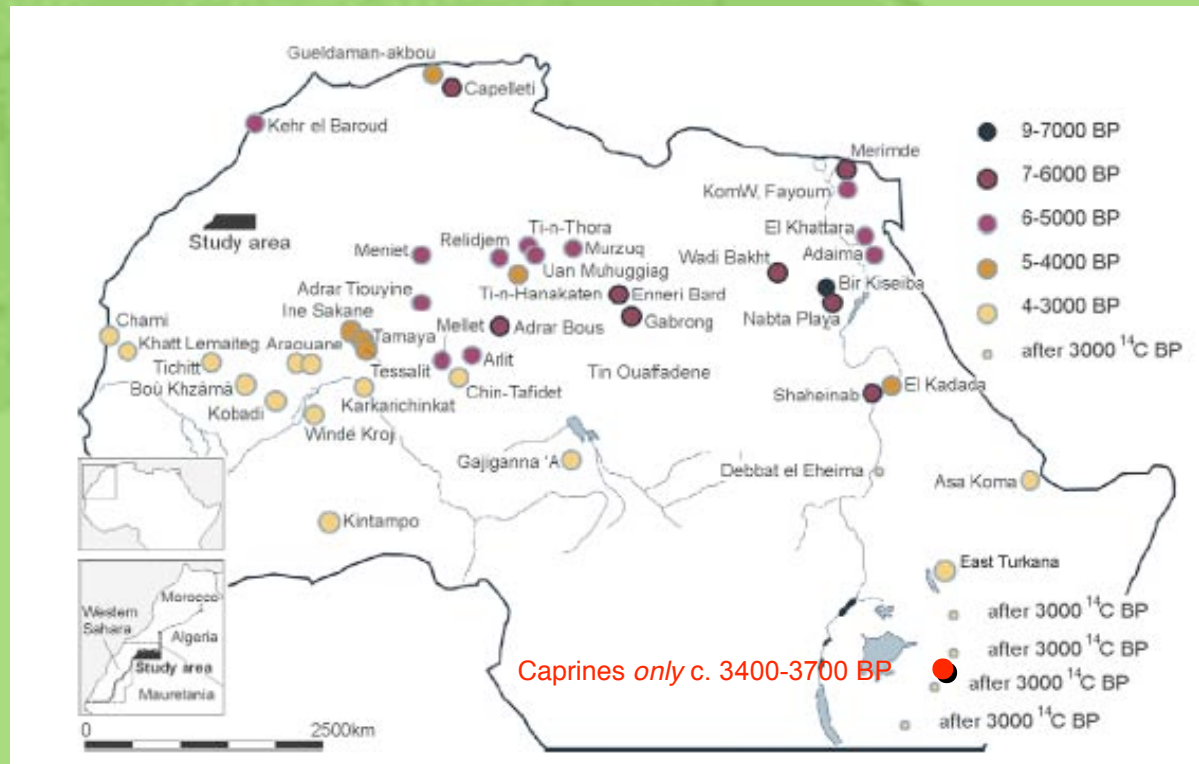


Figure 1 from Brooks, N., J. Clarke, S. Garfi and A. Pirie 2009 The archaeology of Western Sahara: results of environmental and archaeological reconnaissance. *Antiquity* 83:918–934. (after Jousse, H. A new contribution to the history of pastoralism in West Africa. *A new contribution to the history of pastoralism in West Africa* 2:187-201.)

~ 800-year delay in spread of cattle south from Lake Turkana after 1st caprines

Four Ceramic/Lithic Traditions in Holocene East Africa

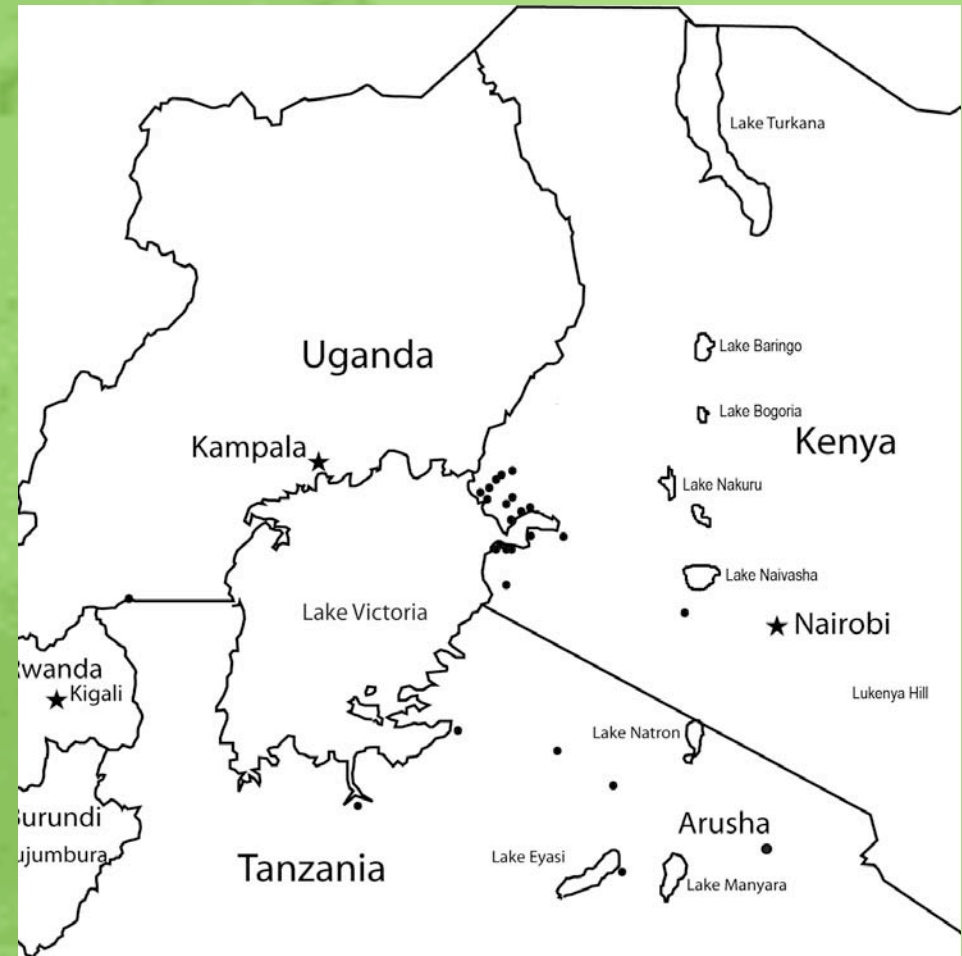
- **Kansyore 8000-3000 BP**
 - Lake Victoria and tributaries, S. Sudan, sparsely in Rift Valley, Serengeti/Eyasi Basin
- **Nderit 4500-3000 BP**
 - Lake Turkana (monumental), Kenyan Rift, Athi Plains, Serengeti Plains
- **Elmenteitan 3300-1300 BP**
 - Southwestern Kenyan plains, Mau Escarpment, overlies Kansyore
- **Savanna Pastoral Neolithic (SPN) 3300-1300 BP**
 - Narosura, Akira, Maringishu ceramics
 - Kenya Rift Valley, Athi Plains, Serengeti Plains, adjacent highlands

Impeding Assumptions: 1960s-1990s

- Pottery = food producers
- Innovations always expand, by their nature as “improvements”
 - domestication, cultivation, metallurgy
- Persistence of culture-historical perspectives
 - Kansyore ceramics = “Kansyore people,” vs “Kansyore-using people” (Dale & Ashley 2010)
- Few technological approaches to ceramics, lithics
- “Anthropological naïveté”
 - lack of appreciation of complexity of East African ethnic and economic mosaics, underlying processes

Present Knowledge: Kansyore 8000-3000 BP

- **Early Kansyore: exclusively wild fauna**
 - ceramics have Nilotic affinities, appears during waning Nile high stand
 - bone points, aquatic species
 - Lake Victoria Kansyore: immigrants from Nilotic north?
 - inland Kansyore: potters and pottery integrated with local foragers?
- **Late Kansyore: caprines present (source unclear)**
- **Sometimes overlain by Elmenteitan**
 - Karega-Mūnene, Ashley, Dale, Prendergast

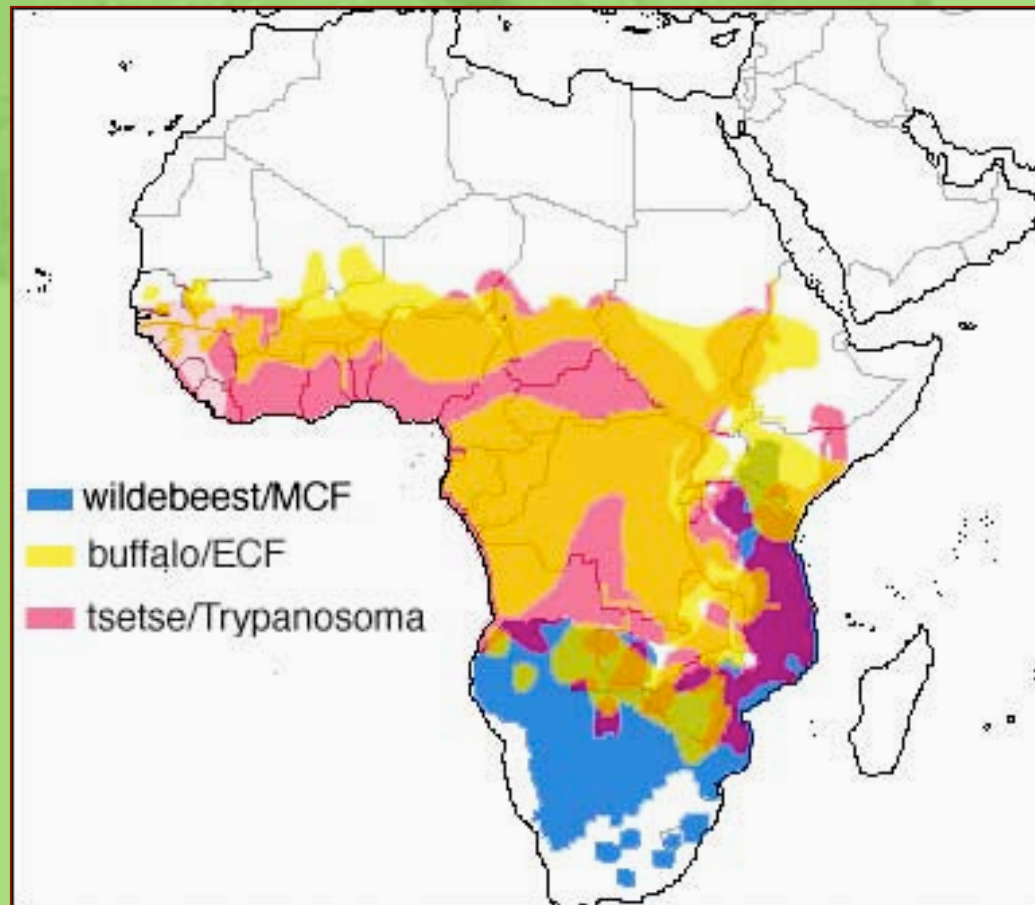


Present Knowledge: Nderit 4500-3000 BP

- **Appears first with cattle and caprines in Lake Turkana**
 - Nderit ceramics, funerary monuments, exotic materials
- **Coeval Nderit ceramics farther south, in or near Kenya Central Rift**
 - sparse caprines only or wild species only
 - cf Gifford-Gonzalez 2000: “Animal disease challenges...”

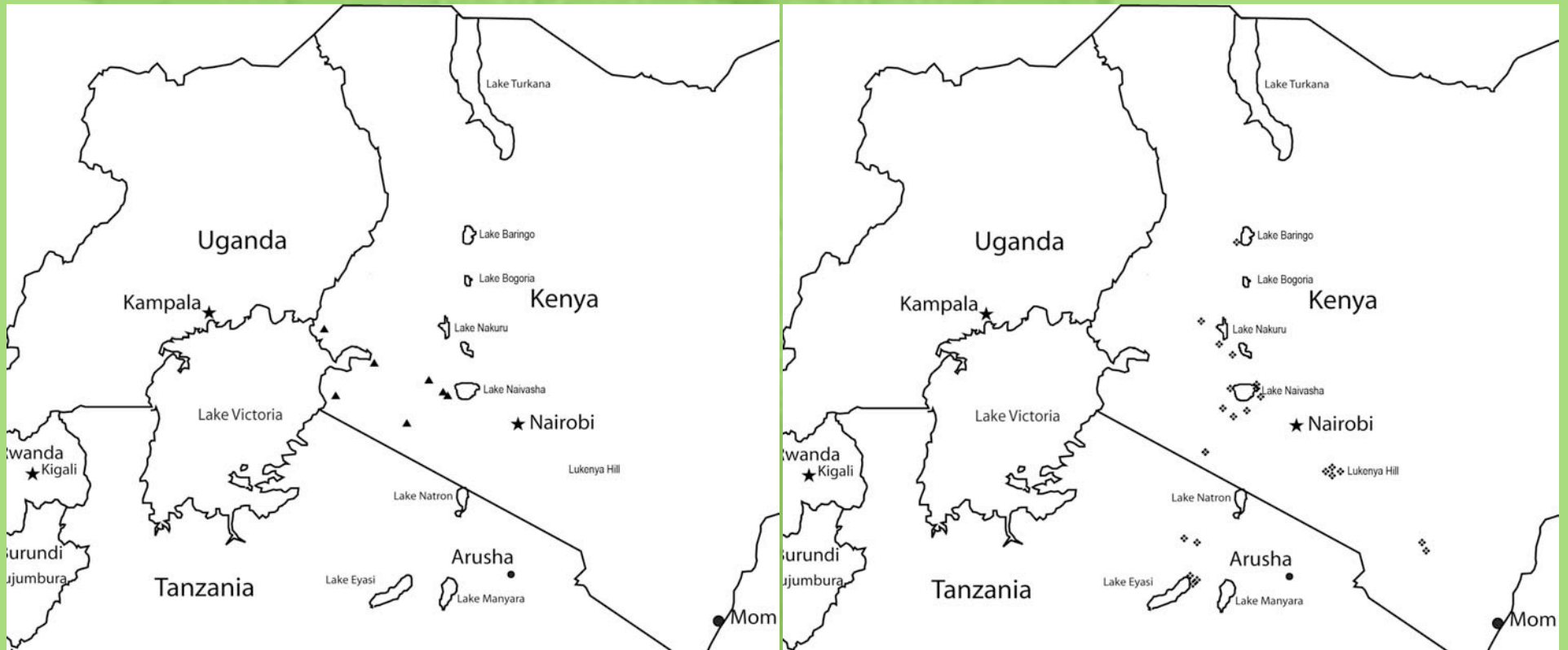


Novel Disease Challenges to Cattle in Sub-Saharan Africa



Elmenteitan 3300-1300 BP

Savanna Pastoral Neolithic 3300-1300 BP



Present Knowledge: Elmenteitan & SPN

- **Contemporaneous traditions**
 - differing in lithic, ceramic technology,
 - different obsidian sources/distributions
- **Mutually exclusive territories**
 - Elmenteitan: SW Kenya, W highlands
 - SPN: Kenyan Rift Valley to Serengeti
- **Most sites dominated by domesticates**
 - cattle dominant @ all plains sites
 - caprines in highland sites
- **Some highland and Tanzanian sites dominated by wild species**
 - foragers with pots? cf M. Prendergast talk

Directions for Further Research

- Apply Prendergast & Mutundu 2010 criteria for distinguishing forager from pastoral deposits
 - add bone grease manufacture index (vs dairying)
- Better describe ceramic and lithic ‘technological styles’ (cf. H. Lechtman 1984, et al.)
- Remember that ceramic technique is complex *chaîne opératoire*
 - pots in quantity = potters present = potters moving between economic groups
- *‘Bones are not enough...’*