Comparative Studies in Society and History. Article. Article. 9 Ancient Greek sources, for example, strongly suggest that fifth–century Athens was a time and place of enormous generational conflict. Gardner, J. (“Aristophanes and Male Anxiety,” Greece and Rome, 36:1 (1989), 59–61) finds its culmination in the last quarter of the fifth century. 10 Mention should be made of the qualities admired and revealed in the so–called Sumerian schoolboy texts: ambition, competition, and aggressiveness. Relevant too is the conflict in the Sumerian epic, Gilgamesh and Akka, between the elders and the guru (the young citizens). The latter want to fight against the city of Kish, the former do not. The young Gilgamesh rejects the advice of the elders. The history of Mesopotamia describes the history of the area known as Mesopotamia, roughly coinciding with the Tigris–Euphrates basin, from the earliest human occupation in the Lower Palaeolithic period up to the Muslim conquests in the 7th century AD. This history is pieced together from evidence retrieved from archaeological excavations and, after the introduction of writing in the late 4th millennium BC, an increasing amount of historical sources. While in the Paleolithic and early Neolithic writing styles have a bias towards the upper classes of the past. I use this insight to elaborate on new ways of writing that shift the focus to different subjects of history. As a case study, I analyse discourses about evidence from fourth millennium Mesopotamia. Finally, I point out some alternative ways to approach historiography by asking new questions about old topics.

In this article I provide a critique of historiography in Near Eastern archaeology and argue that forms of narrating the past are by necessity always political in nature. Current writing styles have a bias towards the upper classes of the past. I use this insight to elaborate on new ways of writing that shift the focus to different subjects of history. As a case study, I analyse discourses about evidence from fourth millennium Mesopotamia. Finally, I point out some alternative ways to approach historiography by asking new questions about old topics.
Sumerians change the world? Ancient people were familiar with art long before the birth of the Sumerian civilization, and they also practiced agriculture around 8,000 B.C., but the power of Mesopotamia was that Sumerians took many aspects of human culture and transformed them into what we today call civilization. The ancient Sumerians, the “black-headed ones,” emerged upon the flood plain of the lower reaches of the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers about 4000 B.C. in what today is modern Iraq.