

Mesopotamian Civilization



Writing & City Life

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Mesopotamian Civilization

- The World's First Civilization
- The Cradle of Civilization.



History of Mesopotamia

(the four sub-civilizations of Mesopotamia)

- Over the centuries, many different people lived in this area creating a collection of independent states
- **Sumerian**- southern part (3500-2000 BCE)
- **Akkadian**- middle part (2340 – 2180 BCE)
- **Babylonian**- these two regions were unified (1830-1500 BCE and 650-500 BCE)
- **Assyrian**- north Empire (1100 -612 BCE)
- From 1400 BCE Aramaic language similar to Hebrew became popular, still spoken in parts of Iraq.

Archaeology in Mesopotamia

- Began in 1840s at Uruk & Mari for decades and discovered monuments, statue, ornaments, graves, tools & seals and Most importantly written documents.
- In 1873, a British Newspaper funded an expedition of the British Museum to search for a tablet narrating the story of flood, mentioned in Bible.
- By the 1960's historians understood that the story of Old Testament were not literally true, so attention was directed to different questions like reconstructing the lives of ordinary people.

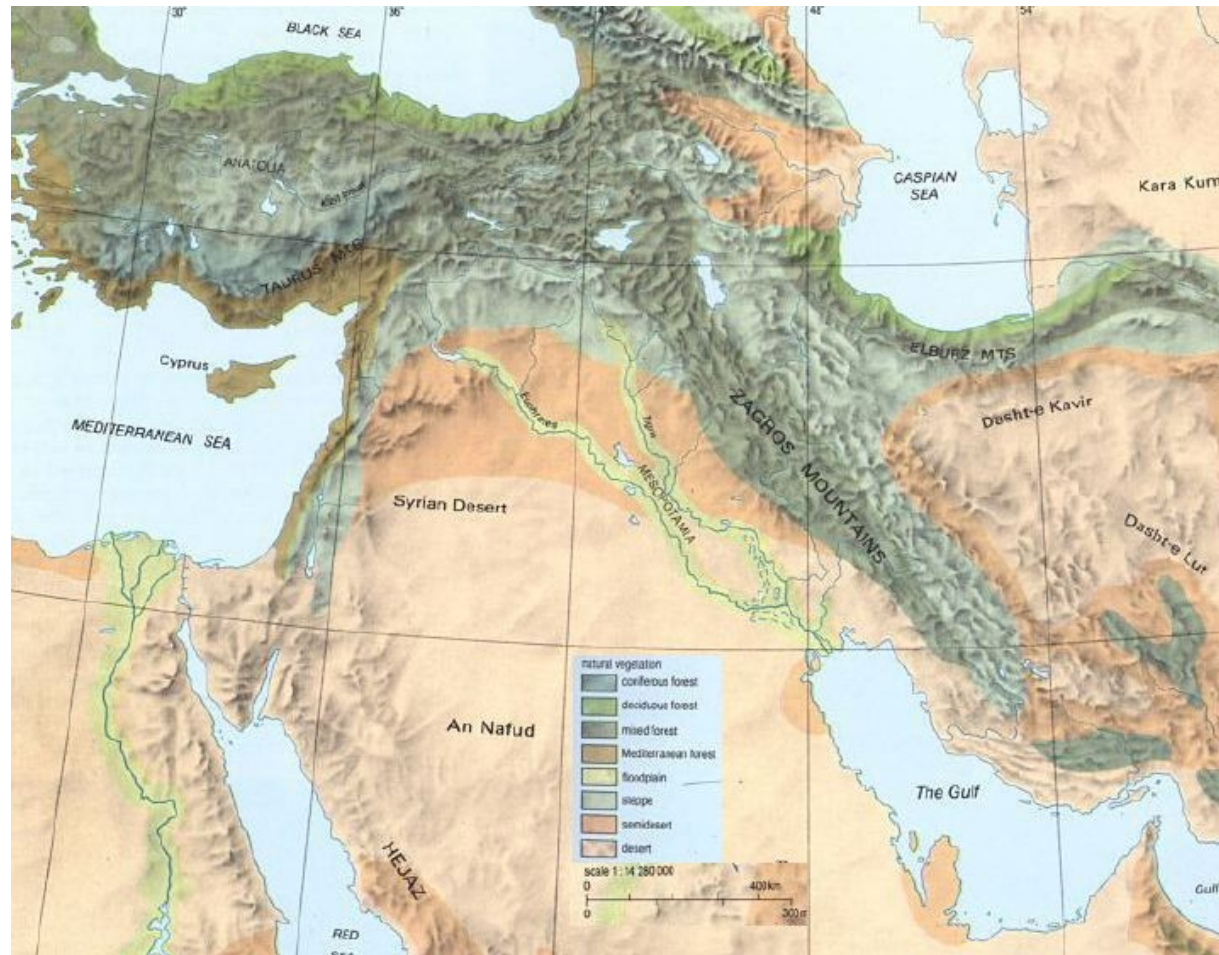
Why Mesopotamia was important to Europeans?

- Because of reference of “Shimar” meaning Sumer as a land of brick-built cities in the “Book of Genesis” of the Old Testament.
- Travellers & Scholars of Europe looked on Mesopotamia as a kind of ancestral land & they tried to prove that literal truth of Old Testament through Excavation.

Mesopotamia & Its Geography

- Diverse Climatic Land.,
- Lush Green plains in North-East region.
- North- Mountainous with Clear streams & wild flowers, Enough rainfall.
- Animal herding in steppes & tigris provided routes to Iran
- South- Little rainfall, dessert but fertile, where Urbanization & Writing started first.
- windstorms leaving muddy river valleys in winter.
- Sheep & goats herding in steppes provided milk meet & wool etc.
- Fishes in rivers & its tributaries.
- Arid soil containing little minerals.
- No stone or timber resources available.

Geographical Map of Mesopotamia

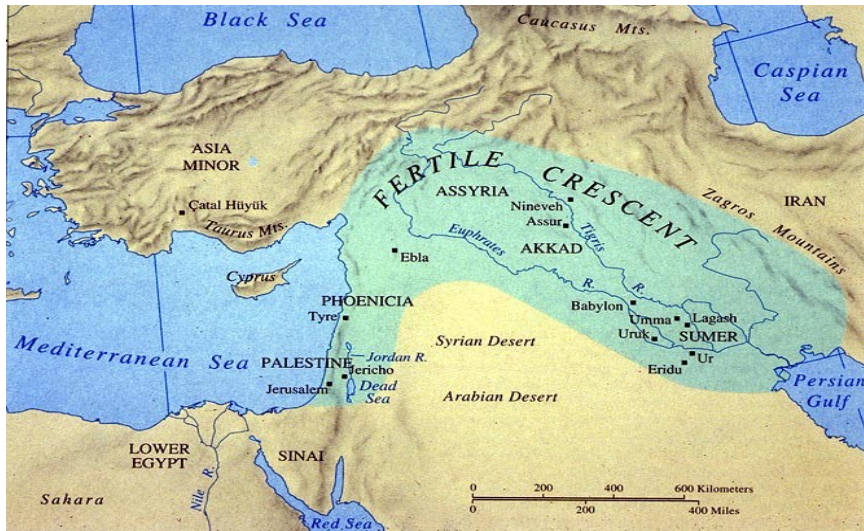


Irrigation System


Mesopotamia's soil was uniquely fertile, which gave humans reason to settle in the region and begin farming.


While **Mesopotamia's** soil was fertile, the region's semiarid climate didn't have much rainfall, with less than ten inches annually but rivers brought silts to south.

- Catastrophic flooding of the rivers in spring often **flooded**, leaving behind **rich soil for farming**. The problem was that the **flooding was very unpredictable**. It might flood one year, but not the next. Every year, farmers worried about their crops.
- Over time, the farmers learned to build **dams** and **channels** to **control** the seasonal **floods**. They also built **walls**, **waterways**, and **ditches** to bring water to their fields.
- One of the prime duties of the king was to maintain these essential waterways.



Food in Sumer

 The Sumerians grew several kinds of crops. The most valuable one was wheat, **barley**, peas or lentils, which was used to make flour and bread.

 **Dates** were also very valuable to the Sumerians. They were eaten once ripe or else they were dried for future consumption. Dates also made an excellent wine.

Barley and dates



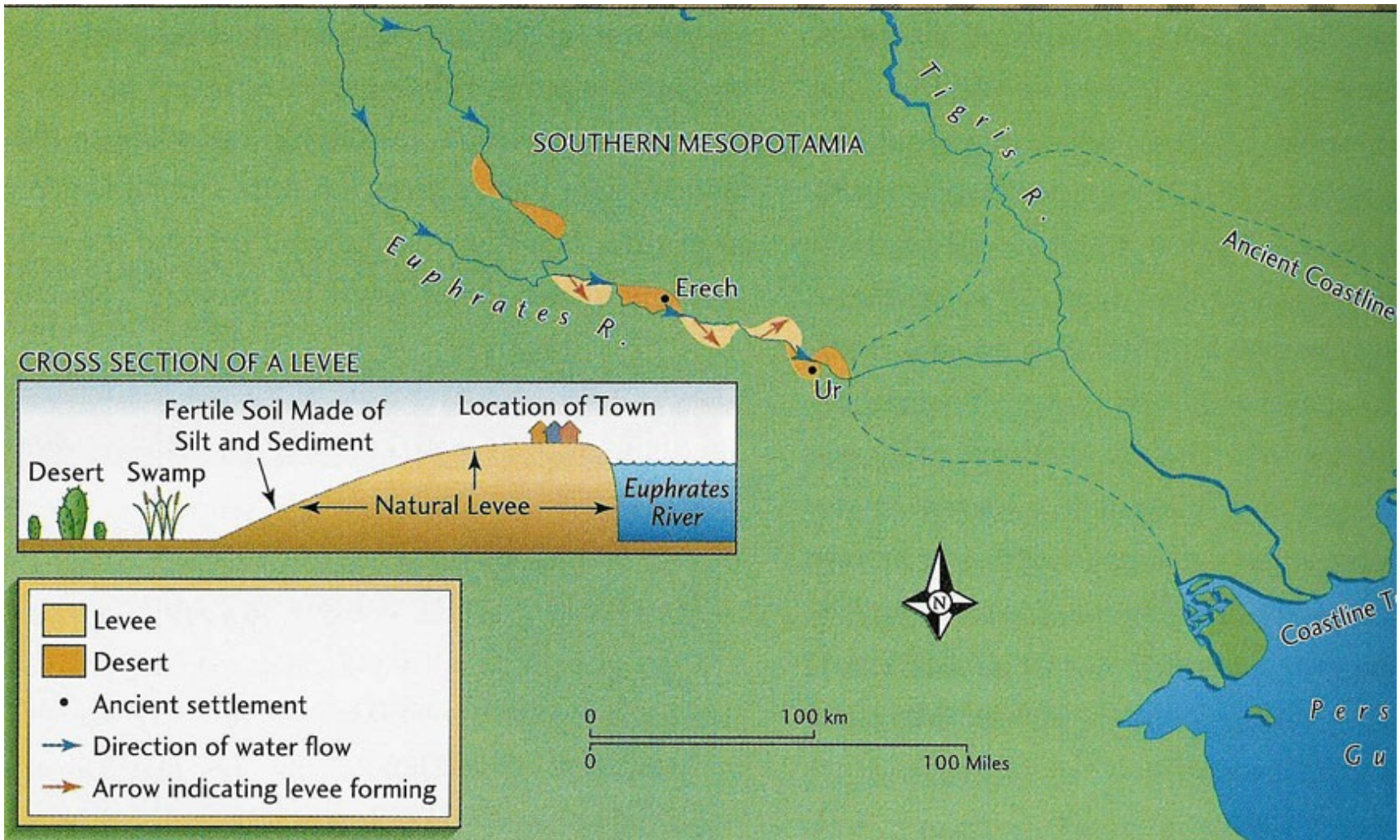
Barley



Why live in Mesopotamia?

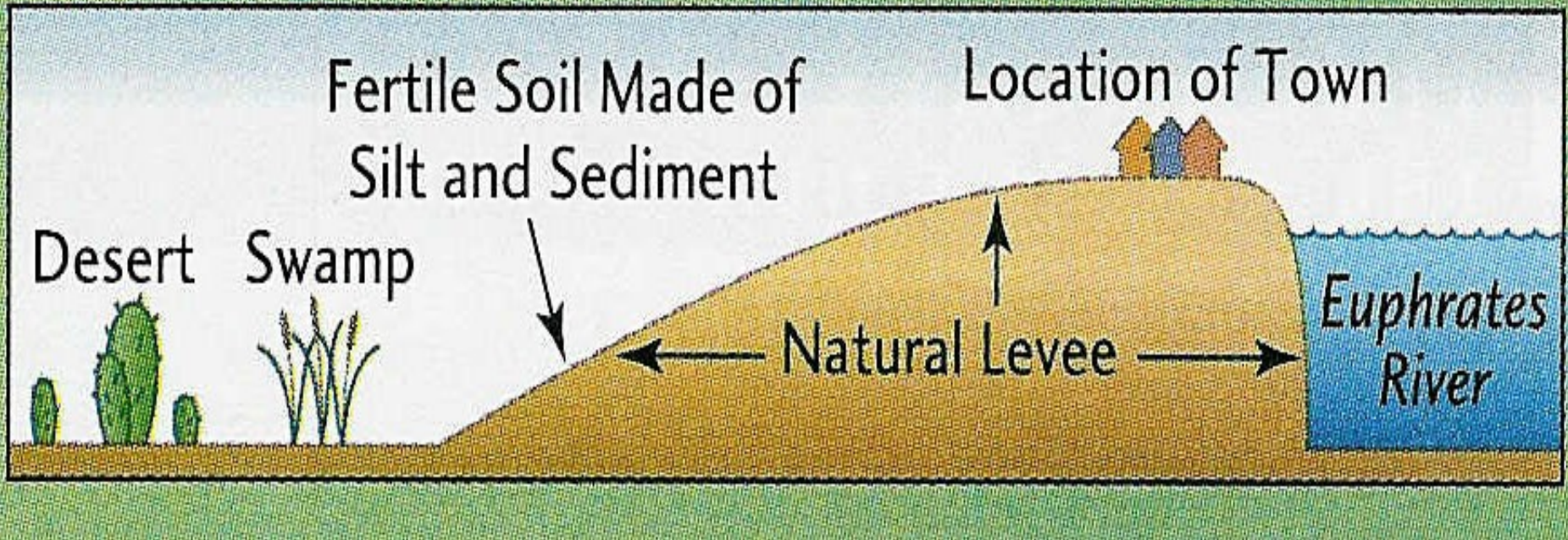
Irrigation System

NATURAL LEVEES: embankments produced by build-up of sediment over thousands of years of flooding



Natural Levee

CROSS SECTION OF A LEVEE



- **create a high and safe flood plain**
- **make irrigation and canal construction easy**
- **provide protection**
- **the surrounding swamps were full of fish & waterfowl**
- **reeds provided food for sheep / goats**
- **reeds also were used as building resources**

Urbanism

- Urbanisation means development of cities in a particular area by different economic activities particularly secondary & tertiary.
- Urbanisation means transformation of villages into towns with help of industries.
- It is not just places with large populations but when an economy develops in spheres other than food production (i.e. trades manufactures & services) then it becomes an advantage for people to cluster in towns.

The significance of Urbanism

- Comprises secondary & tertiary economic activities.
- City-peoples are self-sufficient & depend on the products/services of other people(city or village).
- There is continuous interaction among them.
- Specialisation & division of labour is a mark of urban life.
- There must be a social organisation & political organisation too, where some people give commands & others obey.
- Urban economies often require the keeping of written records.

Movement of goods into cities (Mesopotamian Economy)

- Food resources were abundantly available.
- Mineral (stones for tools, seals and jewels) & wood resources were few (Iraqi date-palm & poplar was not good for carts wheels or boats).
- Mesopotamians traded their textiles crafts & agri-produce for wood, copper, tin, silver, gold, shell & various stones from Turkey & Iran or across the gulf.
- Canals & natural channels of rivers in Mesopotamia provided good waterways for trade & commerce.
- Carts & animal backs were used to carry grains & charcoal into cities.

Urbanisation in Southern Mesopotamia (Role of Temples & Kings)

- From 5000 BCE settlements (centres of trade, imperial cities & temple cities) had begun to develop in southern mesopotamia.
- Early settlers began to build & rebuild temples at selected spots in their villages.
- Earliest temples were small shrine made of unbaked bricks, which became larger over time with several rooms around open courtyards. Temples always had their outer walls going in & out at regular intervals.
- Temples were the residences of various gods (Moon god of Ur, Innana goddess of love & war).
- The deities were the focus of worship, to them people brought grain curd & fish.

Conttd.....

- The god was also the theoretical owner of the agri-fields, fisheries & the herds of local community.
- In time, temples gradually developed its activities & became the main centre of urban institution & economic activities/manufacturing because of their richness & resourcefulness.
- There was continuous warfare over land & water in the region.
- Victorious chiefs began to offer precious booty to the gods & thus beautify the community's temples. They fetch men for fine stones & metals for the benefits of god. This gave the king high status & authority to command the community.

Conttd....

- Leaders encouraged the settlement of villagers close to themselves, to be able to rapidly get an army together.
- Besides, people would be safe living in close proximity to one another.
- War captives & local people were put to work compulsorily for the temple or directly for the ruler & were paid rations.
- Technical advances like bronze tools and potter's wheel helped mesopotamian economy & polity.

Life in the City (Mesopotamian Society)

- A small ruling elite had emerged & had a major share of wealth (buried with enormous riches).
- Nuclear family was the norm of the society, although a married son & his family often resided with his parents.
- The father was the head of the family.
- A mature adult marriage system was in practice. Marriage was done after willingness of both families, then gifts were exchanged. Who ate together & made offerings in a temples. The bride was given her share of inheritance by her father.

Conttd....

- City was densely populated.
- Narrow winding streets indicate that wheeled carts could not reached many of the houses & sacks of grains and firewood were carried on the donkey-back.
- Narrow winding streets & irregular shapes of house plots indicate absence of town-planning.
- There was no street drains we find in contemporary Indus valley.
- House roofs sloped inwards & rainwater was channelled via the drainpipes into sumps in the inner courtyards.
- Roads were excessively slushy during raining season.

Conttd....


- People used to have swept all their household refuse into the streets, this made street levels rise and over time the thresholds of houses had also to be raised to prevent mud flowing inside after rain.
- Lights came into the rooms not from windows but from doorways opening into the courtyards. This would also have given families their privacy.


Superstitions about houses

- A raised threshold brought wealth.
- A front door that did not open towards another house was lucky.
- But, if a the main wooden door of a house opened outwards, the wife would be a torment to her husband.

Social Classes in Sumer

 Upper class - kings, priests, warriors, and government officials.

 Middle class - artisans, merchants, farmers, and fishers. These people made up the largest group.

 Lower class - enslaved people who worked on farms or in the temples.

A Sumerian City

Sumerian city streets were so narrow that you could hardly get a cart through them.



Narrow Streets

Sumerian houses faced away from crowded streets. Instead, they faced onto courtyards where families ate and children played.



Courtyard Area

Sumerian Cities

On hot nights, people slept outdoors on the top of their house's flat roof.

Sumerians had a form of light at night. They burned oil lamps.

Sumerians even had plumbing! Clay pipes that were buried underground carried their waste away. Inventions like plumbing wouldn't come around for another thousand years in other parts of the world!

City-States Formed Along the Rivers



Many city-states formed along the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers in Mesopotamia. They each had their own form of government, and the people worshipped different gods and goddesses. Eventually, they each had their own kings. The region where the two rivers meet was called Sumer. The people who lived in the Sumer region were called Sumerians.

Why Did These Cities Develop?

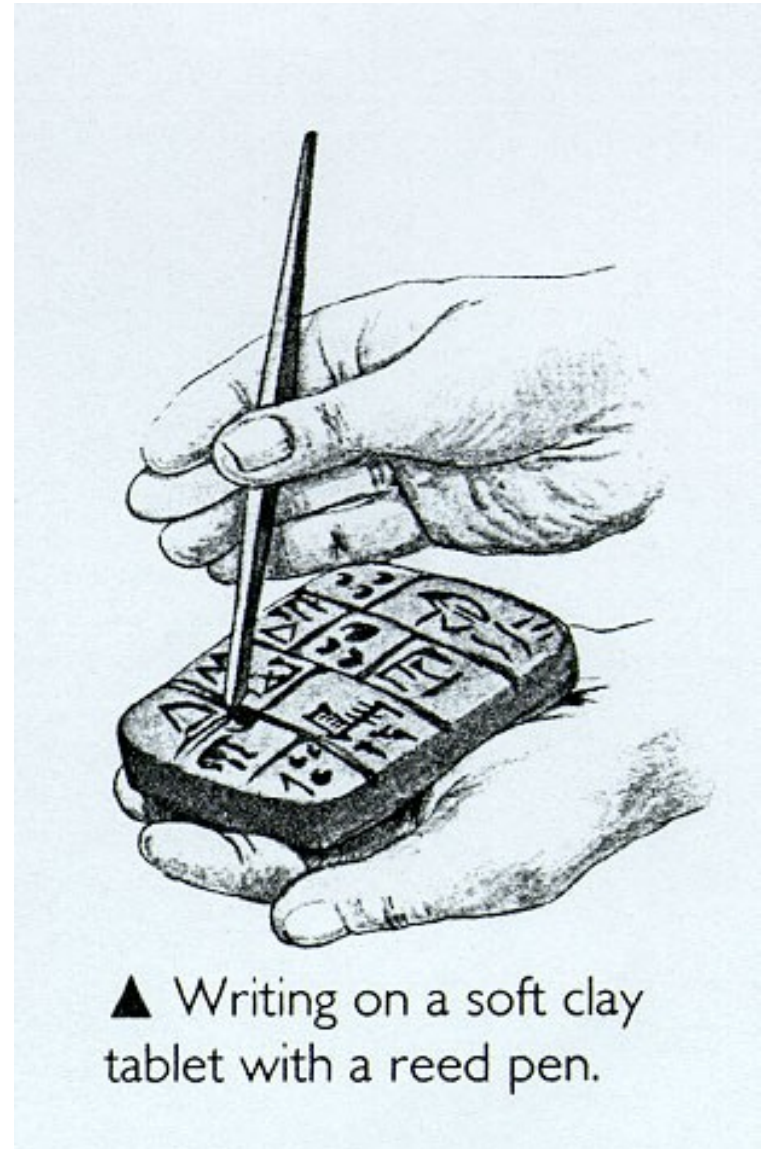
Due to the **fertile** soil in Mesopotamia, farming was very successful. In fact, people were able to create **surpluses** of food. This meant that some people could stop farming and begin doing other things, like building a city.

As cities began to develop, people began to worry about others who might come and **invade** their city. They wanted to protect themselves from enemies, so people in Mesopotamia built walls around their cities.



The Evolution of Writing

- Mesopotamians wrote on tablets of clay.
- They invented the earliest known form of writing called **cuneiform** using a reed pen to make wedge-shaped marks on wet clay tablets.
- ‘Cuneiform’ is derived from the Latin words-‘**cuneus**’ for *wedge* and ‘**forma**’ for *shape*.
- Once the surface dried, signs could not be pressed on it further.
- After transactions, tablets were thrown away & each transactions required a separate clay tablet.
- That’s why we know much more about Mesopotamia than contemporary India.




▲ Writing on a soft clay tablet with a reed pen.

Development of Writing














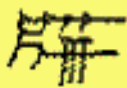




- Development of writing from *pictograms to cuneiform*

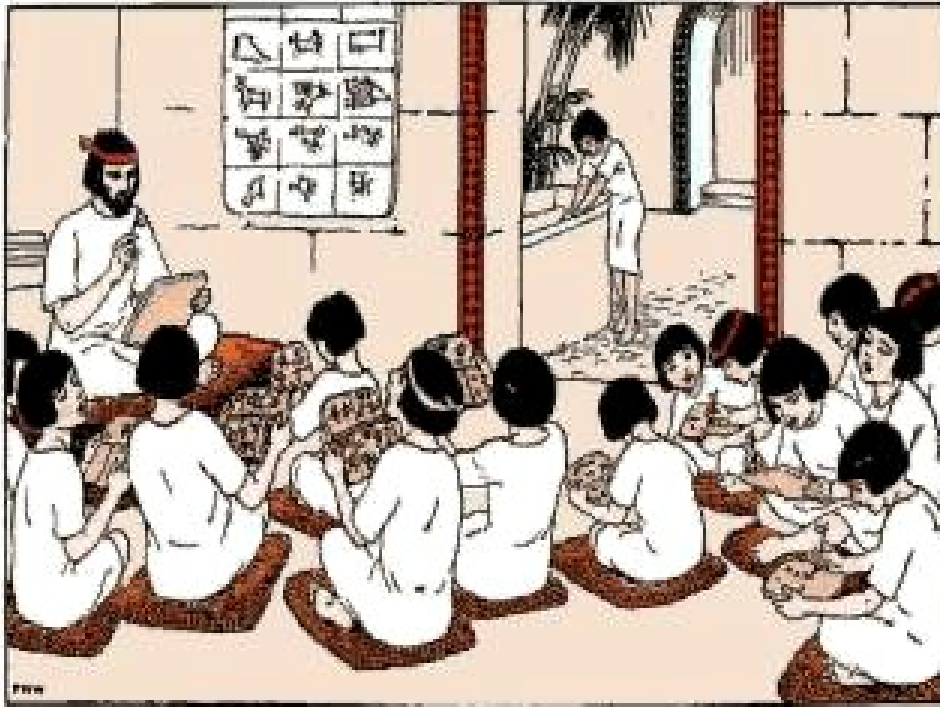


- Pictograms: picture to show meaning .
- Ideograms: signs to represent words / ideas → 
- Phonetics: signs to represent sounds.
- Cuneiform : wedge-shaped writing started by 2600 BCE in Sumerian language which was gradually replaced by Akkadian that continued in use until the first century CE.

*Phonetics are the basis of most writing systems

Development of Cuneiform, 3000 B.C.–600 B.C.

	Meaning of Pictograph					
	Ear of Barley	Head and Body of Man	Fish	Bird	Bowl of Food	Stream of Water
Pictographs c. 3000 B.C.						
Rotated Position Pictographs c. 2800 B.C.						
Cuneiform Signs c. 600 B.C.						



Tablet House



Clay tablets & Stylus

System of Writing & Literacy

- Initially it was a pictographic script.
- The sound that a cuneiform sign represented was not a single consonant or vowel but **syllables** i.e. put, la, in etc.
- Thus, scribes had to learn thousands of symbols.
- Writing was **skilled craft** as it was to be written on a wet tablet before it dried.
- **Literacy was limited** to small section of society. Not only were there hundreds of signs to learn, many of these were complex. If a king could read, he made sure that it should be recorded in inscriptions.
- Sumerian scribes went through years of difficult schooling to acquire their skills.



Sumerian Writings

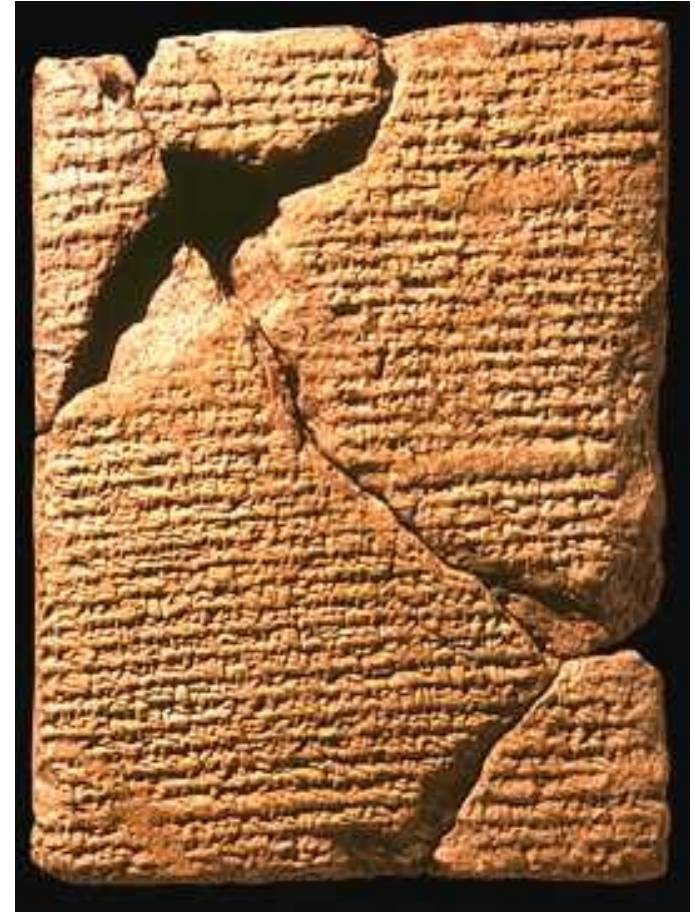


Scribes used a sharp point called a **stylus** to etch words into clay tablets. These tablets have been discovered by **archaeologists** and looked at by **historians**.

Writing first began in Sumerian cities. The first schools were set up in Sumer over 4,000 years ago. Sumerian schools taught boys the new invention of writing. Those who graduated became professional writers called **scribes**. Scribes were the only people who could keep records for the kings and priests. Boys that wanted to be scribes had to attend school from the age of 8 to the age of 20.

Importance of writing

- Keeping records of transactions.
- Making dictionaries.
- Giving legal validity to land transactions.
- Narrating the deeds of kings.
- Announcing the changes a king had made in the customary laws of the land.
- Storing information.
- Sending messages.
- Seen as a sign of superiority of Mesopotamian urban culture.



The uses of writing

- The connection between city life, trade, & writing is brought out in a Sumerian epic poem about Enmerkar, one of the earliest rulers of Uruk.
- Enmerkar is associated with the organisation of the **first trade of Sumer**, when he send a messenger to the chief of Aratta for bringing Lapis-Lazuli & other precious metals for the beautification of City-temple. Messenger got all his message mixed up then Enmerkar formed clay tablet & wrote words on that. Wedge-shaped writing made king of Aratta furious.
- This poem should not be taken as the literal truth, but it prove that trade & writing was organized by Kingship.
- Cuneiform spread to Persia and Egypt and became the vehicle for the growth and spread of civilization and the exchange of ideas among cultures

The legacy of writing

- Greatest legacy of Mesopotamia to the world is its scholarly tradition of **Time Reckoning & Mathematics**.
- The **division of the year into 12 months** according to the revolution of moon around the earth, month into 4 weeks, the day into 24 hours and the hours into 60 minutes has come to us by Mesopotamians. Then it was **transmitted to Roman world**, followed by **world of Islam then to medieval Europe**.
- Dating around 1800 BCE are tablets with **multiplication & division tables, square & square-root tables and tables of compound interest**.
- **Solar & lunar eclipses** were observed and their occurrence was noted according to year, month & day, so there were records about the observed positions of stars & constellations in the night sky.
- None of these above achievements would have been possible without writing & the urban institution of schools.

Babylonian Math



Babylonian Numbers

1		11		21		31		41		51	
2		12		22		32		42		52	
3		13		23		33		43		53	
4		14		24		34		44		54	
5		15		25		35		45		55	
6		16		26		36		46		56	
7		17		27		37		47		57	
8		18		28		38		48		58	
9		19		29		39		49		59	
10		20		30		40		50			

Importance of Cities in Mesopotamian Culture

- Mesopotamians valued city life in which people of many communities and cultures lived side by side.
- After cities were destroyed, they recalled them in poetry. Gilgamesh Epic is an example of it, written in 12 tablets, describing Gilgamesh's love for his city Uruk at the end of Epic.
- Gilgamesh ruled city of Uruk some time after Enmerker.

A Trading Town in a Pastoral Zone : Mari

(Good example of an urban center prospering on trade)

- After 2000 BCE Royal capital of Mari Flourished. It stands not on the productive southern plain but much further **upstream on the Euphrates** which carried agriculture & animal rearing close to each other in the region.
- **Herders need to exchange** young animals, cheese , leather & meat and manure also in return of grain, metal tools etc.
- **Conflict between herdsman and farmers** can be seen when shepherd may take his flock to water across sown field. Sometimes being mobile they raided agricultural villages & seize their stored goods. Settled groups denied pastoralists access to river & canal water.
- **Nomadic communities of western desert filtered** into the prosperous agricultural heartland. Such groups came in as **herders, harvest laborers or hired soldiers**, occasionally became prosperous & settled. A few established their rule. These included the **Akkadians, Amorites, Assyrians & Aramaeans**.
- The king of Mari was Amorites who **dressed differently** than original inhabitants & respected not only the gods of Mesopotamia but also raised a temple at Mari for Dagan, god of the steppe.

Mari: Trade City (Port)



Continued..

- Mesopotamian **society & culture were open** to different people & cultures perhaps due to intermixture population.
- The **king of Mari had to be very vigilant** as herders of various tribes were allowed to move in the kingdom but they were watched & spies were reporting about them to kings.
- Mari was **located on the Euphrates in a prime location** for trade- in wood, copper, tin, oil, stones, wine & other goods carried in boats between the south & mineral-rich uplands of Turkey, Syria & Lebanon.
- **Officers at Mari were inspected cargo & levy** a charge of about 10% the value of goods carried before allowing boats to continue downstream. As bronze was the main industrial material for tools & weapons this trade was of great importance.
- Thus, although the kingdom of Mari was not militarily strong. It was exceptionally prosperous.

An Early Library

- Great Assyrian King Assurbanipal (668-627 BCE) founded one of the first libraries at **Nineveh**.
- He ordered his scribes to collect cuneiform tablets on history, epics, omen, literature, astrology, hymns & poems from all over the Fertile Crescent.
- The library at Nineveh contained the Epic of Gilgamesh, one of the oldest works of literature.
- Assyria fell in 612 B.C. due to a civil war and foreign invaders.



An Early Archaeologist !

- **Nabonidus** : last king of the Neo-Babylonian Empire 556–539 BC (17 years).
- He angered the priests and commoners of Babylon by neglecting the city's chief god, Marduk, and elevating the moon god Ur, to the highest status.
- He wanted to appoint his daughter in the office of High Priestess but the characteristic features were nowhere indicated, so he decided to search image of priestess & observe clothing and jewellery that was depicted.
- Nabonidus's men brought a broken statue inscribed with the name of **Sargon, King of Akkad (2370 BCE)** and got the statue repaired due to his respect for gods & kingship.
- Nabonidus **left the capital** for ten years to build and restore temples – mostly to Ur – leaving his son as in- charge. He initiated the world's first known archaeological work-Excavation & restoration /conservation.



Code of Hammurabi (c. 1792 BCE to 1750 BCE)

- To enforce his rule, Babylonian king Hammurabi collected all the laws of Babylon in a code that would apply everywhere in the land.
- Most extensive law code from the ancient world (c. 1754 BCE)
- Code of **282 laws** inscribed on a **stone pillar** placed in the public hall for all to see.
- Set of divinely inspired laws; as well as societal laws to administer Mesopotamian society.
- Hammurabi Stone depicts **Hammurabi** as **receiving his authority from god Shamash (Sun)**.
- Punishments were designed to fit the crimes as people must be responsible for own actions
- Hammurabi Code was an origin to the concept of **“eye for an eye...”** ie. If a son struck his father, the son’s hand would be cut off
- Consequences for crimes depended on rank in society i.e. only fines for nobility.



Hammurabi's [r. 1792-1750 B. C. E.] Code



Hammurabi, the Judge



Gilgamesh



- Gilgamesh is an ancient story or epic written in Mesopotamia more than 4000 thousand years ago
- Gilgamesh is the first known work of great literature and epic poem
- Epic mentions a **great flood**
- Gilgamesh parallels **the Nippur Tablet**, a six-columned tablet telling the story of the creation of humans and animals, the cities and their rulers, and the great flood.

ANALYSIS

- Gilgamesh and the Nippur tablet both parallel the story of **Noah and the Ark** (great flood) in the **Old Testament** of the Jewish and Christian holy books
- Modern science argues an increase in the sea levels about 6,000 years ago (end of ice age)
- the melting ice drained to the oceans causing the sea level to rise more than ten feet in one century

Gilgamesh Epic Tablet: Flood Story



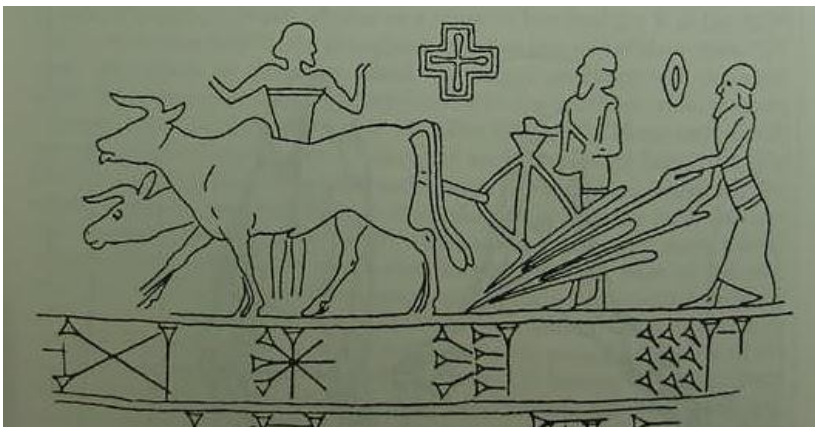
Features: Interesting Facts!

- Sumer was the first Urban Civilization & Uruk was the largest city in the world.
- Sargon of Akkad built first Great Empire in Mesopotamia.
- First known language of the land was Sumerian & Writing (Cuneiform) was started in Sumeria.
- Mesopotamia, specifically Babylon used a mathematical system based on sixty as all their numbers were expressed as parts of or multiples of sixty
- Some parts of the 'base-sixty' system still remain today: 360 degrees in a circle, 60 seconds in a minute and 60 minutes in 1 hour
- Devised a calendar base on cycles of the moon (number of days between the appearance of two new moons was set as a month; 12 cycles made up a year
- Prosperous living based on large scale agriculture

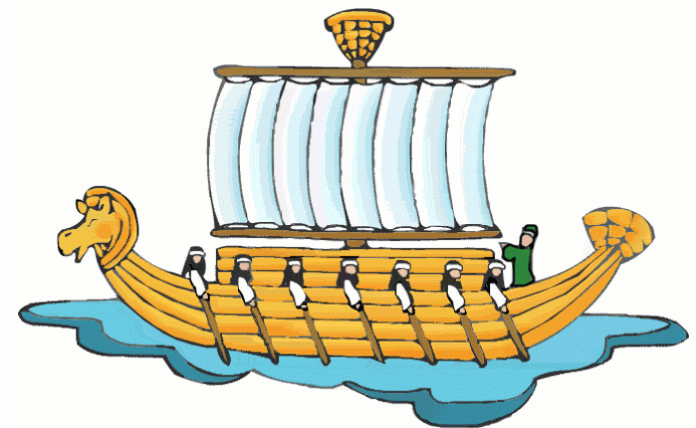
- **Innovations-**
Codified laws,
Ziggurats,
Irrigation system,
Metallurgy,
International Trade &
transportation,
Sailboat,
Wagon wheel,
Plough,
Geometry etc.



wagon wheel



plow



sailboat

Sumerian Religion

Sumerians worshipped many gods, not just one. This belief in many gods is called **polytheism**. “Poly” means many and “Theism” means gods.

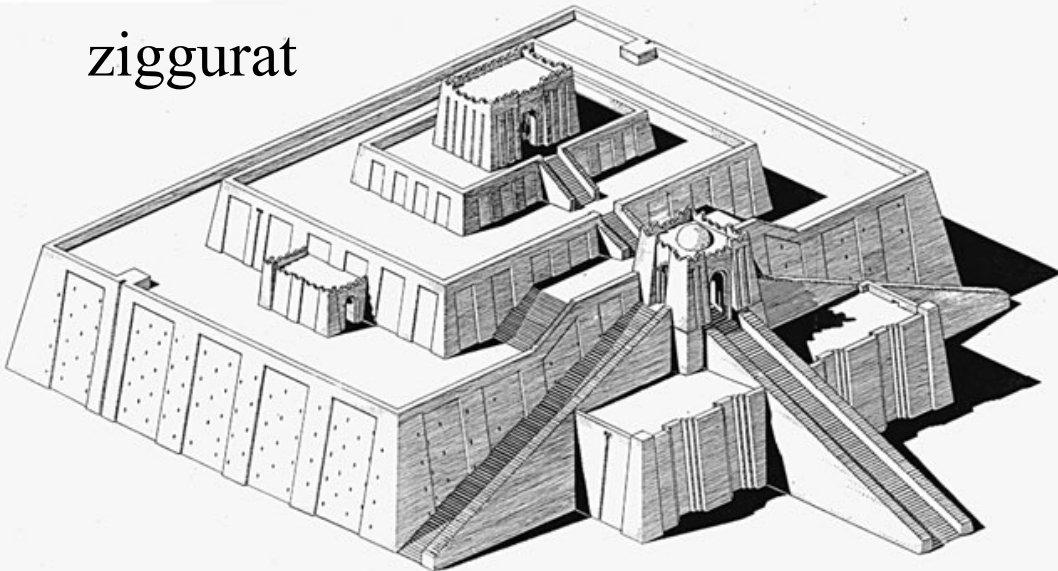


The picture above shows a **ziggurat**. Ziggurats were the main temples used to worship the gods of a city. Ziggurats were built in the center of the city. They had steps and ramps, and it was believed that the gods descended to the Earth using the ziggurat as a ladder.

Sumerian Mythology

Sumerian **myths**, or stories, explained people's beliefs. Sumerians believed that a person must keep the gods happy by going to the ziggurat and praying to them. They believed that the gods would reward them for good service. They also believed that the gods would punish the people who made them angry.

ziggurat



Gods



Religion



gods were worshipped at huge temples called ziggurats



➤ Polytheistic religion consisting of 3600 gods and demigods

Prominent Mesopotamian gods

- Enlil (supreme god & god of air)
- Ishtar (goddess of fertility & life)
- An (god of heaven)
- Enki (god of water & underworld)
- Shamash (god of sun and giver of law)

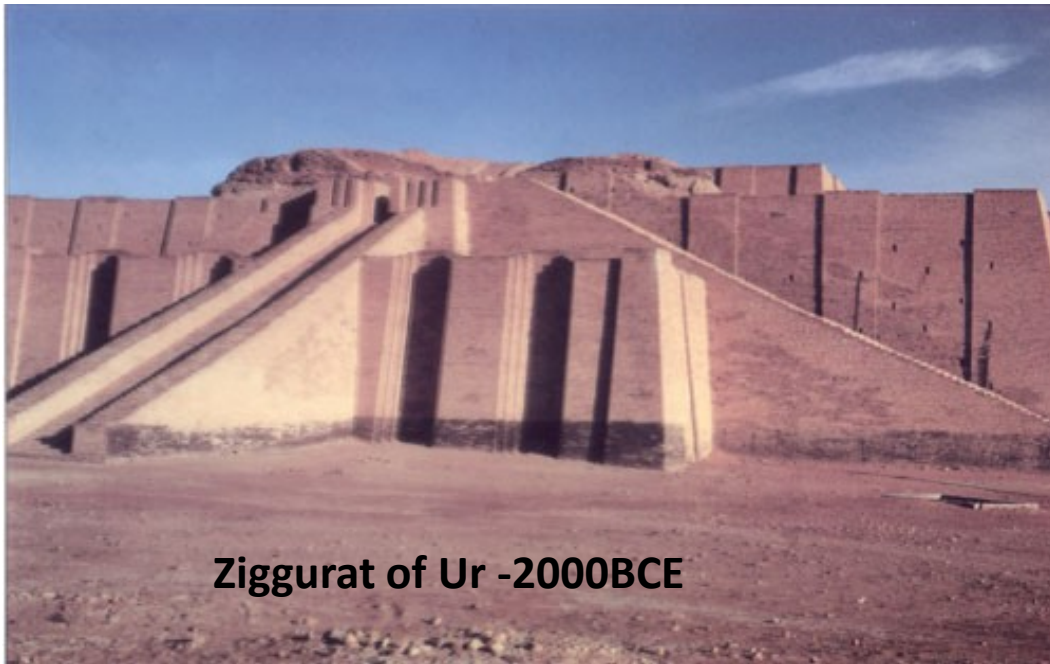
- Position of King was enhanced supported by religion
- Kingship believed to be created by gods and the king's power was divinely ordained

Belief that gods lived on the distant mountaintops

Each god had control of certain things and each city was ruled by a different god

- Kings and priests acted as interpreters as they told the people what the god wanted them to do (ie. by examining the liver or lungs of a slain sheep)

Ziggurats



Ziggurat of Ur -2000BCE



- Large temples dedicated to the god of the city
- Made of layer upon layer of mud bricks in the shape of a pyramid in many tiers (due to constant flooding and from belief that gods resided on mountaintops)
- Temple on top served as the god's home and was beautifully decorated
- Inside was a room for offerings of food and goods
- Temples evolved to **ziggurats**- a stack of 1-7 platforms decreasing in size from bottom to top
- Famous ziggurat was **Tower of Babel** (over 100m above ground and 91m base)

Religion and Afterlife

- Sumerians practiced polytheistic and their gods were thought to control every aspect of life.
- Each city built a ziggurat, a pyramid-temple that soared toward the heavens. At the top was a shrine to the chief god or goddess of the city.

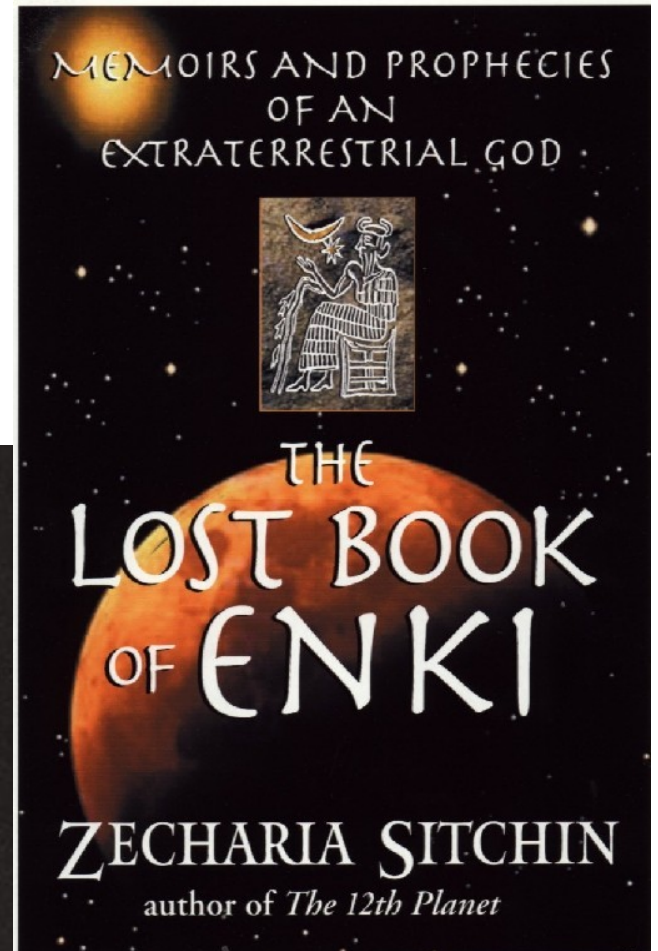
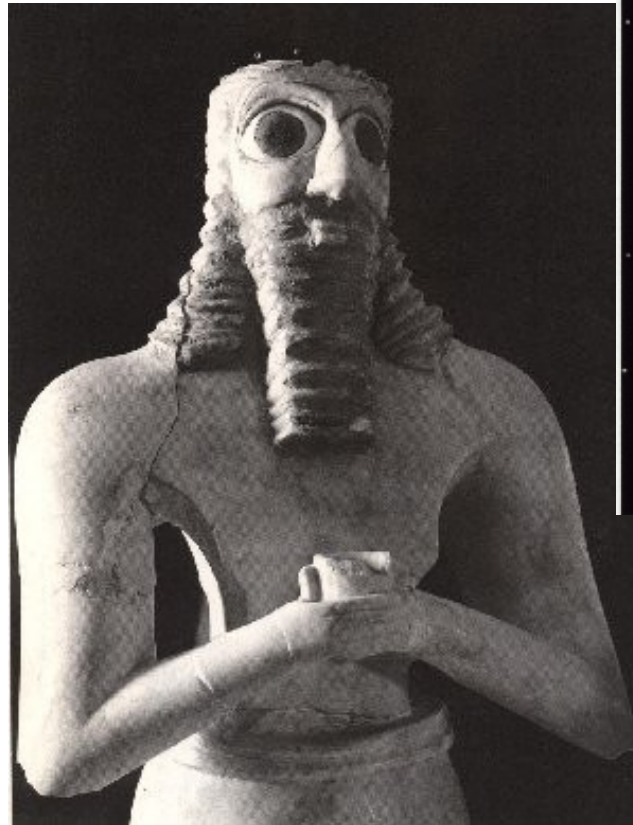


Religion

- The Sumerians believed in an afterlife, but thought the underworld was a grim place of no-release. They buried food and tools with their dead.
- Unlike the Egyptians, they did not imagine the afterlife in detail.
- They did not believe in rewards and punishments.

Gods

- An, lord of heaven
- Enlil, god of air and storms
- Enki, god of water and wisdom



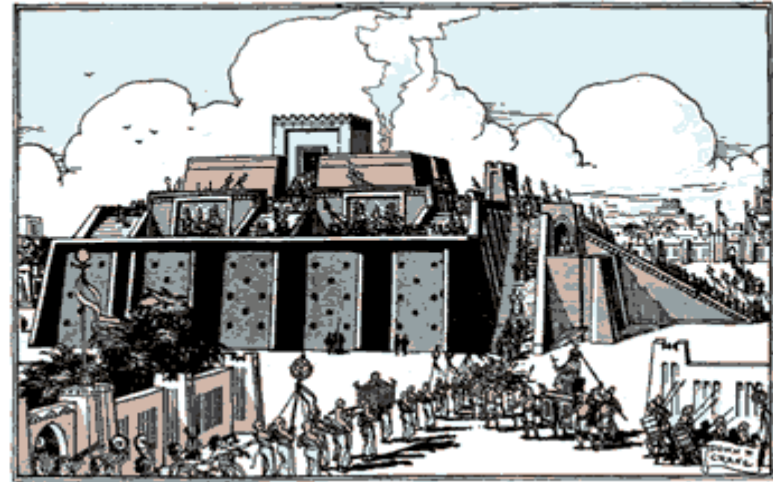
Government

- Political structure an early form of democracy
- Frequent wars led to the emergence of warriors as leaders
- Eventually rise of monarchical system
- co-operation was the basis of government
- Followed leadership of god of the city which was interpreted by a council of leading citizens > or > priests > or leader of the city (ie. king)



Sumerians

- social, economic and intellectual basis
- Irrigated fields and produced 3 main crops (barley, dates and sesame seeds)
- built canals, dikes, dams and drainage systems
- develop cuneiform writing
- invented the wheel
- Abundance of food led to steady increase of population (farm, towns, cities)
- first city of the world
- Developed a trade system with bartering: mainly barley but also wool and cloth for stone, metals, timber, copper, pearls and ivory
- Individuals could only rent land from priests (who controlled land on behalf of gods); most of profits of trade went to temple
- However, the Sumerians were not successful in uniting lower Mesopotamia



Akkadians

- Leader: Sargon the Great
- Sargon unified lower Mesopotamia (after conquering Sumerians in 2331 BCE)
- Established capital at Akkad
- Spread Mesopotamian culture
- However, short-lived dynasty as Akkadians were conquered by the invading barbarians by 2200 BCE



Akkadians

- Sargon, King of Akkad, conquered the city-states (2300 B.C.) and built an empire.
- After his death, other invaders swept into the wide valley tumbling his empire into ruin
- Akkad were Semitic people, like the Hebrews



The Babylonians

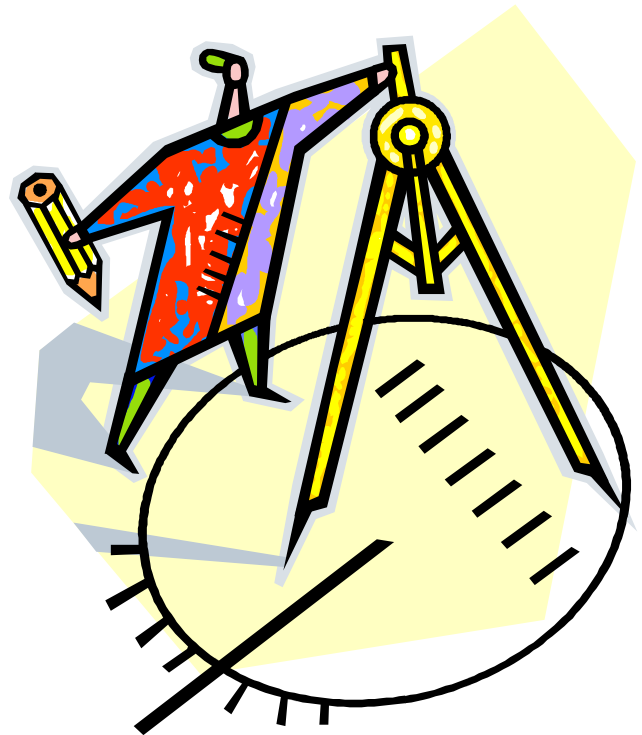
- A Semitic people who spoke Akkadian, conquered Mesopotamia in about 2000 B.C. Its capital, Babylon, was on the Euphrates River
- About 1790, the king of Babylon, Hammurabi, brought the empire (much of Mesopotamia) under his control and established the first written laws, criminal and civil.

Hammurabi's Code

- Hammurabi was not the author of the code. Most of the laws had been around since Sumerian Times, but Hammurabi wanted everyone in his empire to know the legal principles his government would follow.
- He had artisans carve nearly 300 laws on a stone pillar for all to see.
- This was the first time a ruler attempted to solidify all of the laws that would govern a state.

The Babylonians

- Invented the idea of a circle containing 360 degrees and the hour containing sixty minutes



Babylon Revived

- Nebuchadnezzar revived the power of Babylon, rebuilt the canals, temples, walls and palaces of Babylon.
- Also called the Chaldeans
- Nebuchadnezzar built the Hanging Gardens of Babylon for his homesick wife
- In 587 B.C., he destroyed Jerusalem, sending the tribes of Judah into exile.
- Mentioned in the Book of Daniel

Babylonians



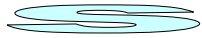
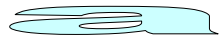
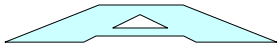
- Babylonians reunited Mesopotamia in 1830 BCE

- central location dominated trade and secured control

- YET AGAIN, Mesopotamia was not unified for long...

KING HAMMURABI'S BABYLON

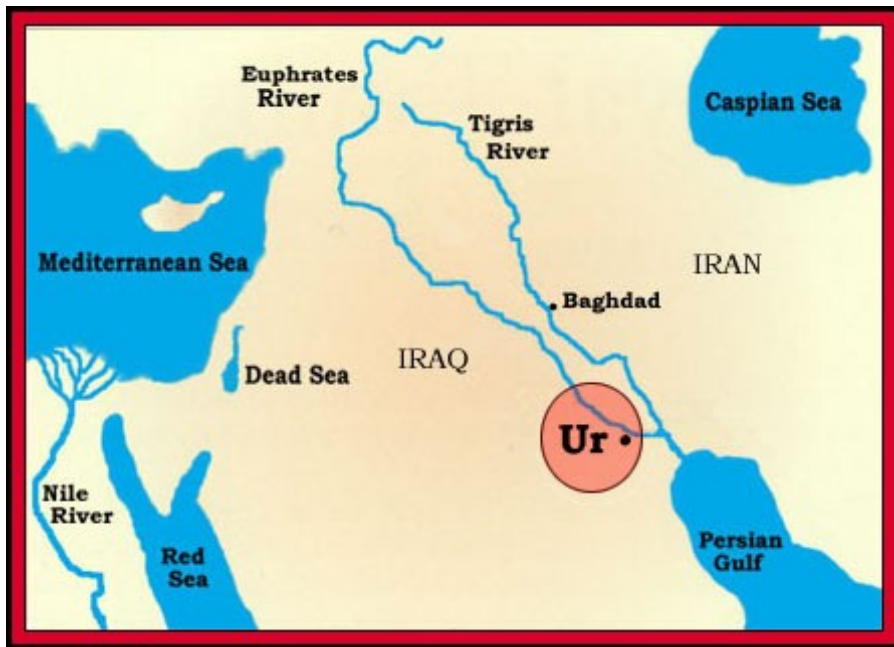
- (6th Amorite king) who conquered Akkad and Assyria (north and south)
- He build new walls to protect the city and new canals and dikes to improve crops
- Economy based on agriculture and wool / cloth
- individuals could own land around cities
- Artisans and merchants could keep most profits and even formed guilds / associations
- Grain used as the medium of exchange > emergence of measurement of currency: shekel = 180 grains of barley; mina = 60 shekels
- Mina was eventually represented by metals which was one of first uses of money (but it was still based on grain)
- Hammurabi's Legacy: *law code*



- 10th century BCE, Assyria emerged as dominant force in the north
- City of **Assur**- became important trading and political centre
- After Hammurabi's death, Babylon fell apart and kings of Assur controlled more of surrounding area and came to dominate
- Made conquered lands pay **taxes** (food, animals, metals or timber)
- Rule by fear as kings were first to have a **permanent** army made up of professional soldiers (estimated 200 000 men)
- Made superior weapons of bronze and **iron**
- iron changed lifestyles in Mesopotamia in weapons and in daily life ie. replaced wooden wheels and applied to horse drawn chariots



- **Assyrian reunited Mesopotamia and established the first true empire**
- **However, states began to revolt and ONCE AGAIN, Assyrian Empire collapsed by late 7th century BCE**
- **By 539 BCE, Mesopotamia part of the vast Persian Empire (led by Cyrus the Great)**
- **Persian Empire dominated for 800 years until Alexander the Great**



Royal Tombs of Ur



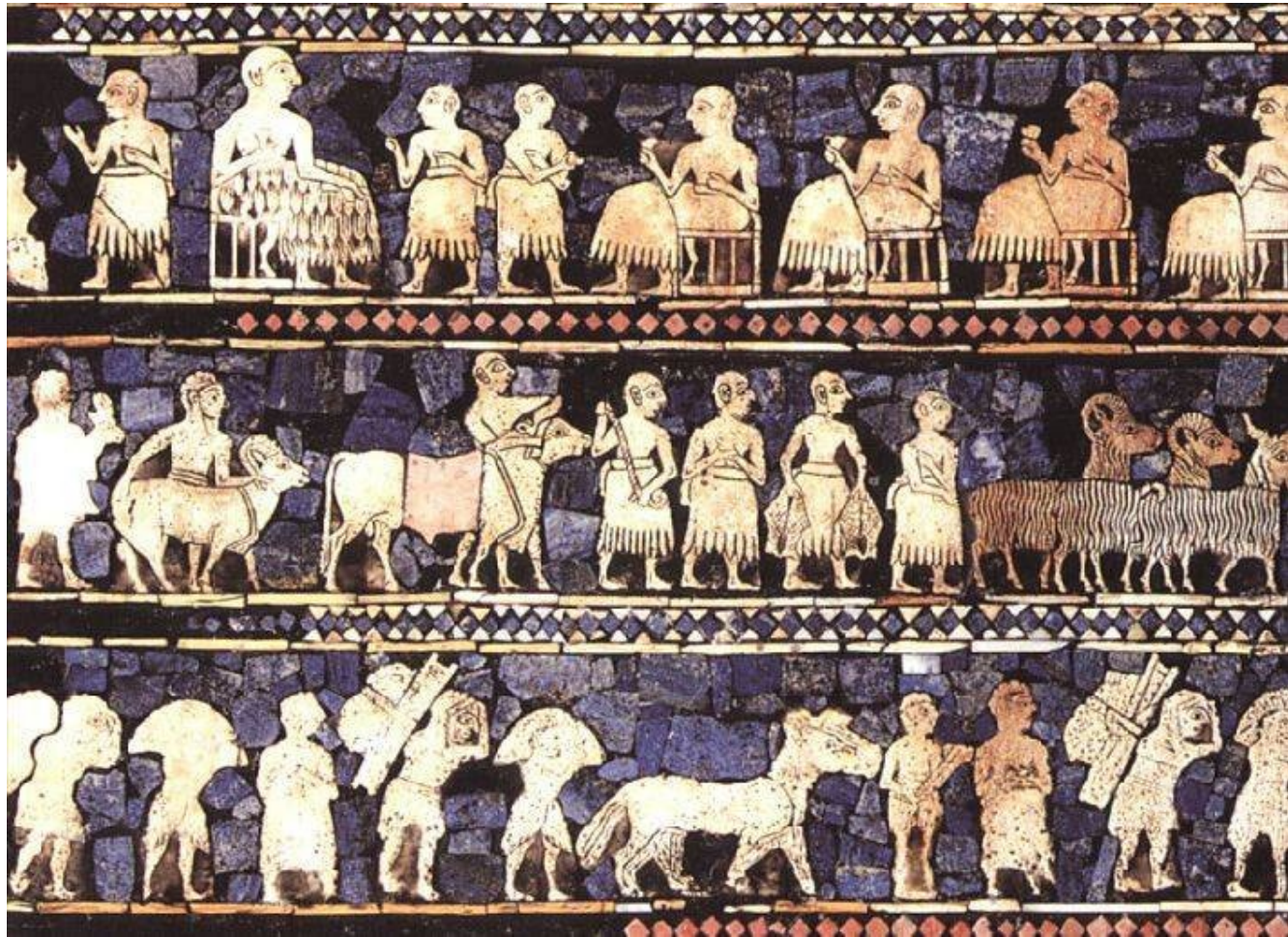
- From 1922 to 1934, excavation of the ancient Sumerian city of Ur
- City famed in Bible as the home of patriarch Abraham
- discoveries such as extravagant jewelry of gold, cups of gold and silver, bowls of alabaster, and extraordinary objects of art and culture
- opened the world's eyes to the full glory of ancient Sumerian culture

Great Death Pit

- mass grave containing the bodies of 6 guards and 68 servants
- grave was a great funeral procession
- drank poison, choosing to accompany the kings and queens in the afterlife



The Royal Standard of Ur



Sumerian Inventions

 wagon wheel

 plow

 sailboat

 number system based on 60

 geometry

 12 month calendar

**Thank You for having
patience**

**Ambrish Kumar Gupta
Principal
Kendriya Vidyalaya Rajkot**