

## **Recall Warm UP**

**What are the 7 characteristics of any successful civilization?**

**In a short paragraph, describe our modern-day society using these characteristics. Include specifics.**

# Mesopotamia

- a. Compare and contrast Mesopotamian and Egyptian societies, include: religion, culture, economics, politics, and technology.

## Essential Questions

1. What was the role of the earliest governments?
2. Why did more complex societies develop a need for writing?

# Mesopotamia-Land Between Two Rivers

Sumerian Civilization - Tigris & Euphrates Rivers (Mesopotamia)

City-States in Mesopotamia



# Mesopotamia

## Land Between Two Rivers



Mesopotamia was known as the “Fertile Crescent” because of its crescent shape and availability of fertile or “rich” soil...good for planting. It was also known as the “Cradle of Civilization” because it was the birthplace of civilization. The first major civilization was Sumer.

**Mesopotamia was located between the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers. The country of Iraq is there today.**

# Mesopotamia...the Land



**A dry, hot desert-like climate.**

**The rivers would flood unpredictably every spring, leaving silt behind to help create fertile, rich soil which was great for growing!**

**Sumerians needed to control the river so they could prosper.**

# The Huge Invention...

- Irrigation!
- Sumerians developed a system for controlling the flow and direction of water from the rivers.
- Canals and irrigation ditches were built to redirect the water to the fields.

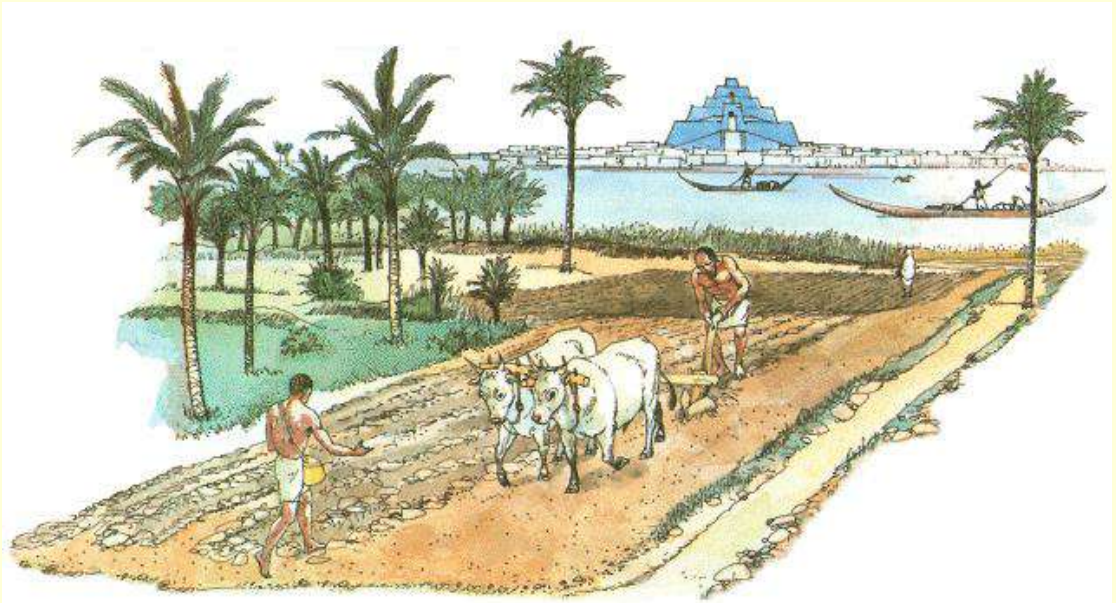


# Irrigation video

- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5RP2KfewiJA>



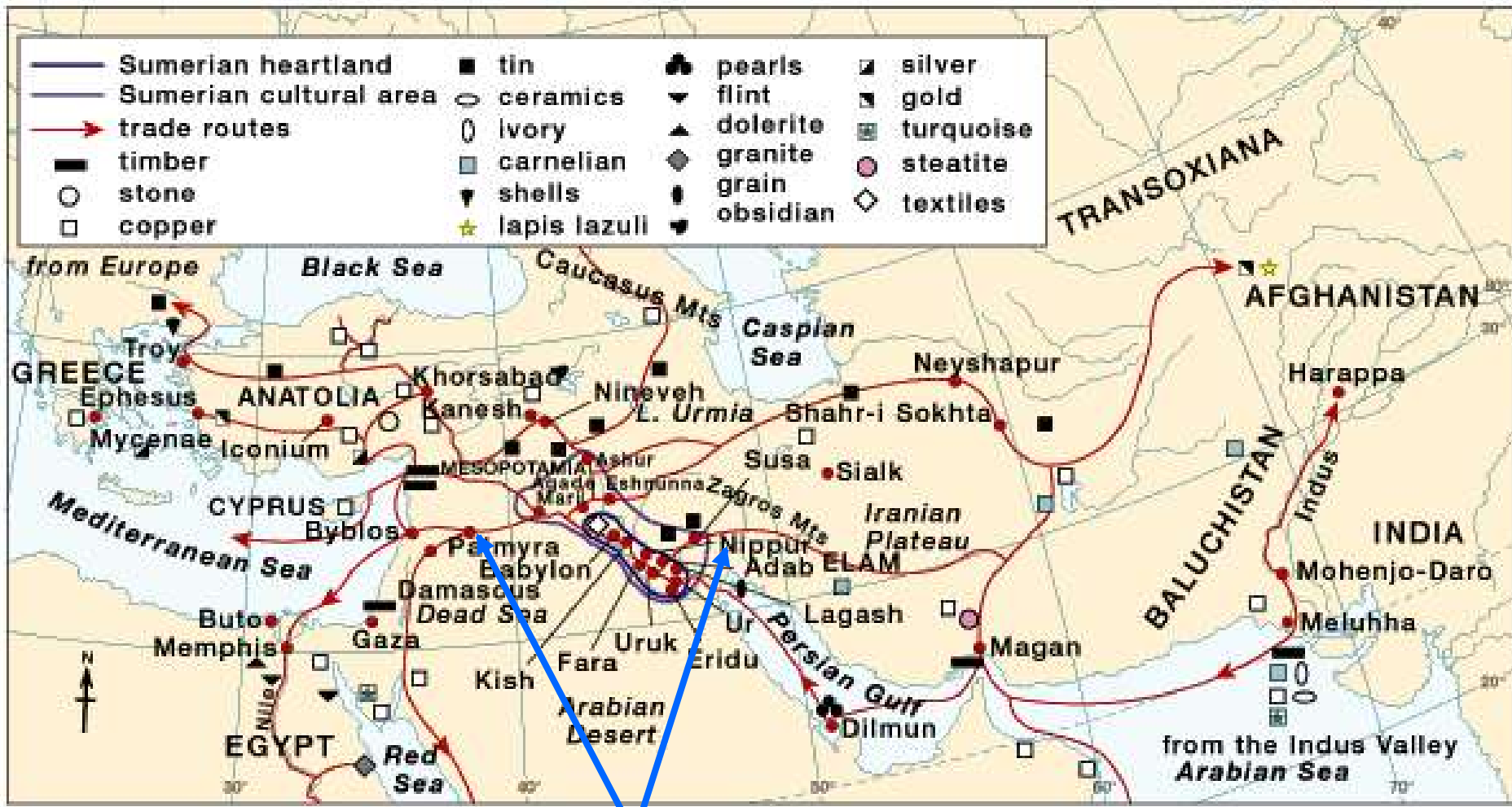
# Development of Agriculture



**Important Inventions: Irrigation systems, the plow, the wheel/cart.**

**These inventions helped crops to grow in the difficult climate which led to a surplus of food. The surplus led to a system of trading. Sumer had limited resources, so needed to barter with other lands.**

# Mesopotamian Trade

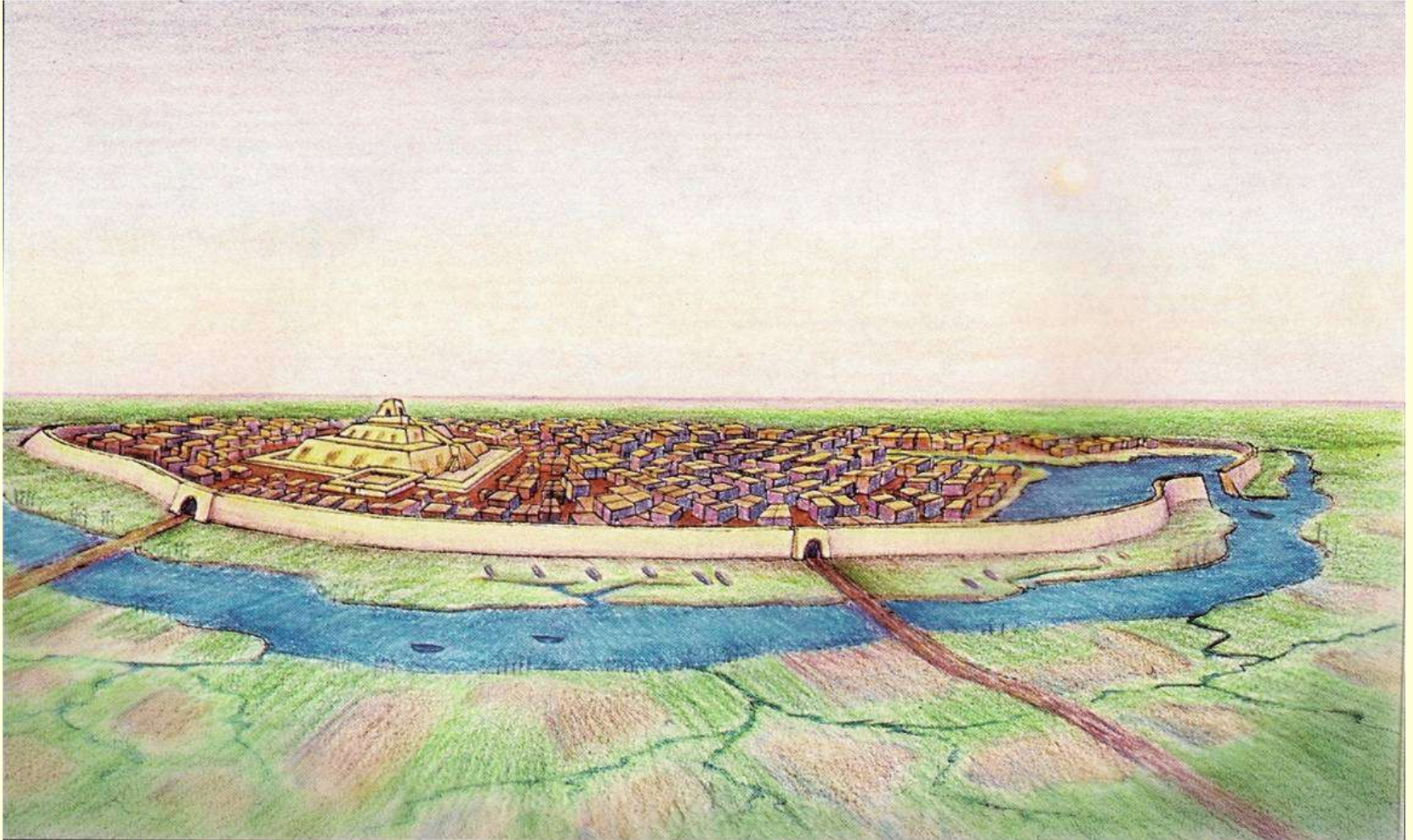


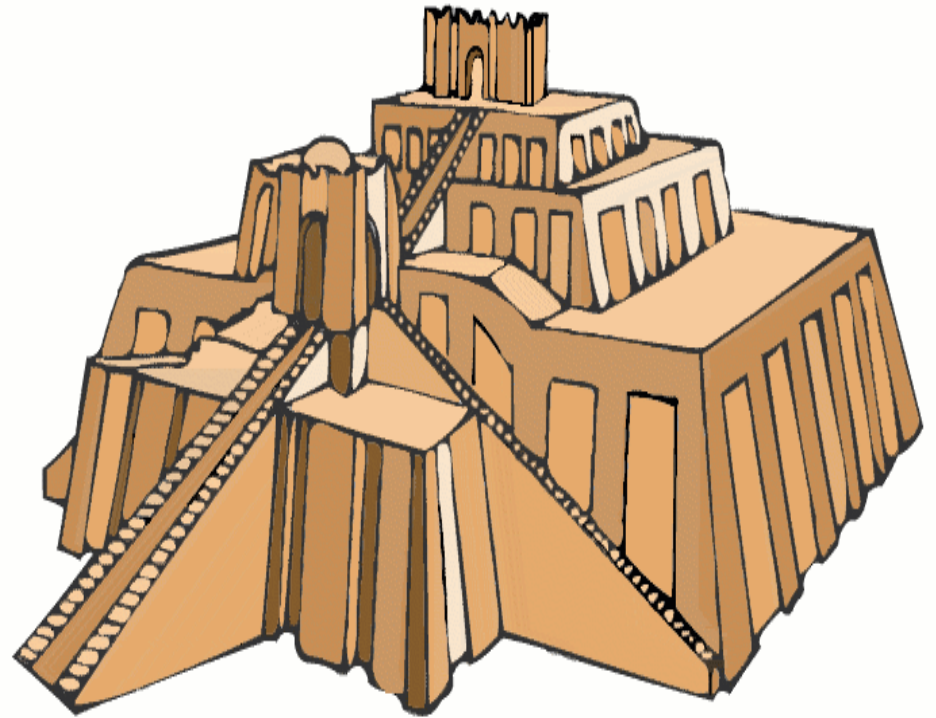
# Mesopotamia – City-States



There were many city-states that developed in Mesopotamia. They were independent of one another. They each had their own god, government and leaders. They would often go to war with each other over resources and land.

# City-States



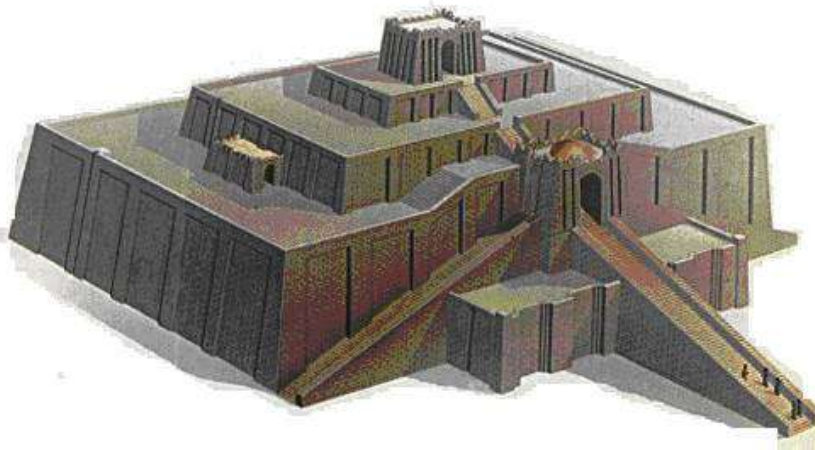


## ZIGGURATS

Located in the center of the city-state.  
Home of the city's God

# Ziggurat at Ur

- Temple-Only priests could enter
- Courtyards surrounded ziggurat so merchants could trade goods
- “Mountain of the Gods”



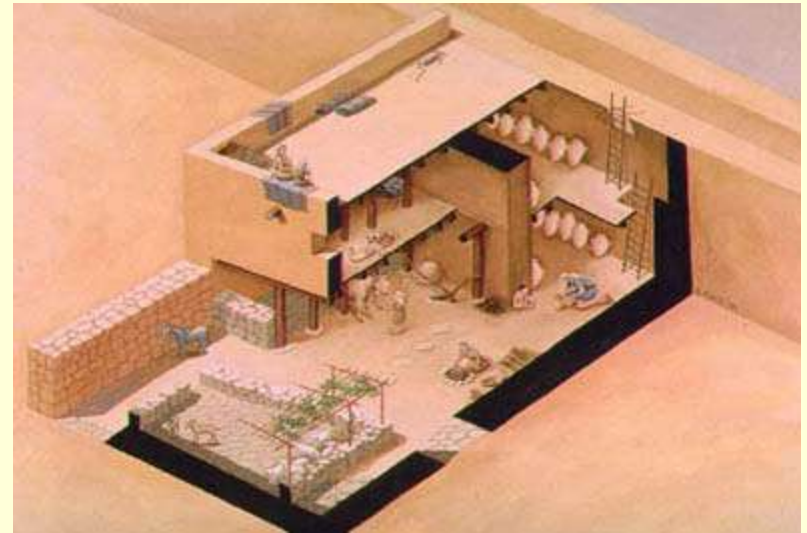
# BABYLONIAN ZIGGURAT



# Sumerian Homes

Homes were usually windowless and made of sun-dried mud bricks because there was little wood or stone available.

Roofs were flat. Roofs provided a fourth living space. People cooked and slept on their roofs, when weather permitted. Some of the fancier roofs were designed with four walls for privacy. Some had grape arbors that provided food, privacy, and shelter from the sun.





# A Sumerian City

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



Courtyard Area

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



Narrow Streets

# Social Classes and Division of Labor

- People started specializing or becoming trained in different jobs. There were farmers, craftsmen, priests, merchants, soldiers, scribes, rulers and slaves. People had different jobs to do and contributed to the society.
- Depending on their wealth and education, people were valued differently and were treated differently by the law. Slaves and peasants were at the bottom of the social pyramid and rulers, priests and the wealthy were at the top. The wealthier you were the closer to the ziggurat you lived!

# Mesopotamian Bulls Eye





# Sumerian Priests



The early city-states were ruled by priests. The job of priests were to

- control irrigation

- settle arguments

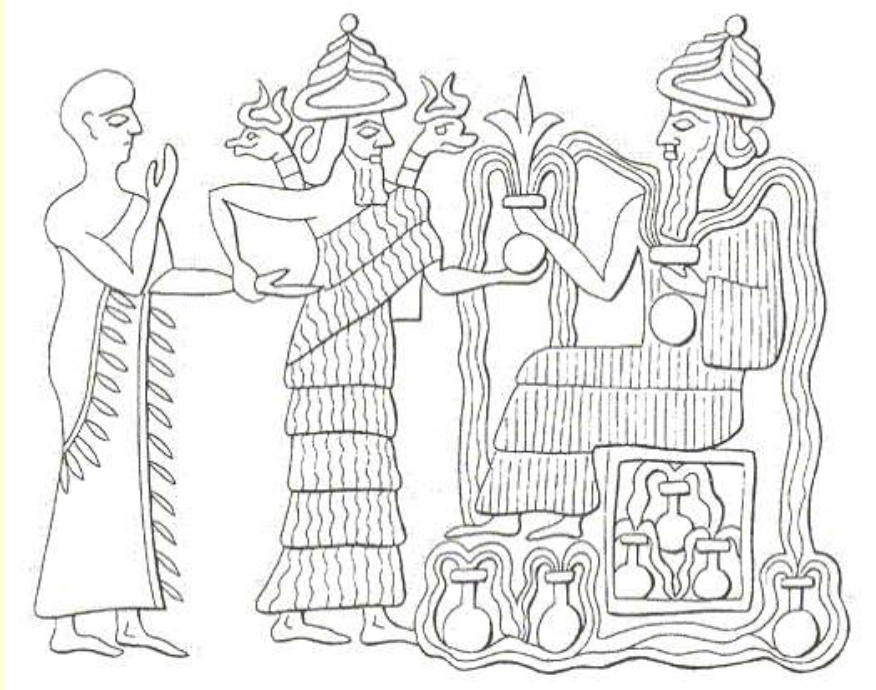
- store and distribute surplus

- collect taxes in the form of goods

- make sacrifices and pray to the unpredictable gods of Mesopotamia



# Sumerian Religion - Polytheistic



Enki



Innana

Anthropomorphic  
Gods

# Religion in Mesopotamia

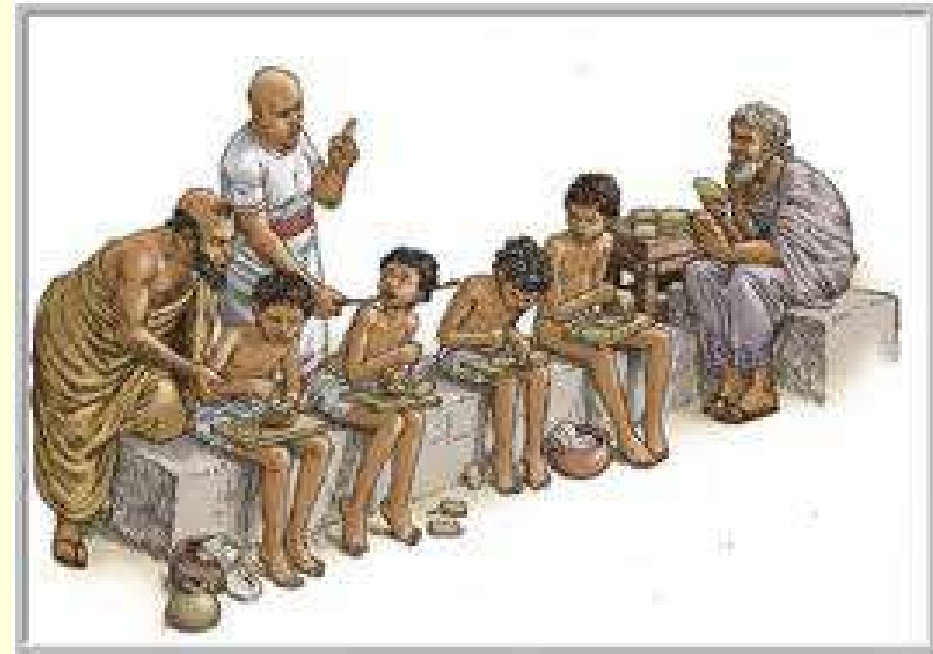
## Belief in many gods - polytheism

4 main gods and around 3,000 lower gods

- Gods had human qualities. They were viewed as often hostile and unpredictable – similar to the natural environment around them.)
- Sumerians believed their purpose on Earth was to serve the gods
- The forces of nature and all the evils were under control of the gods, so Sumerians offered food and animals to please the gods.
- Only the priests of the city-state could speak with the gods. They controlled the city-states.

# Sumerian Schools

- Priests taught wealthy boys to become scribes.
- Long days, harsh punishments and tedious work
- Guaranteed a good life because few could read or write



Edubbas-"Tablet Houses

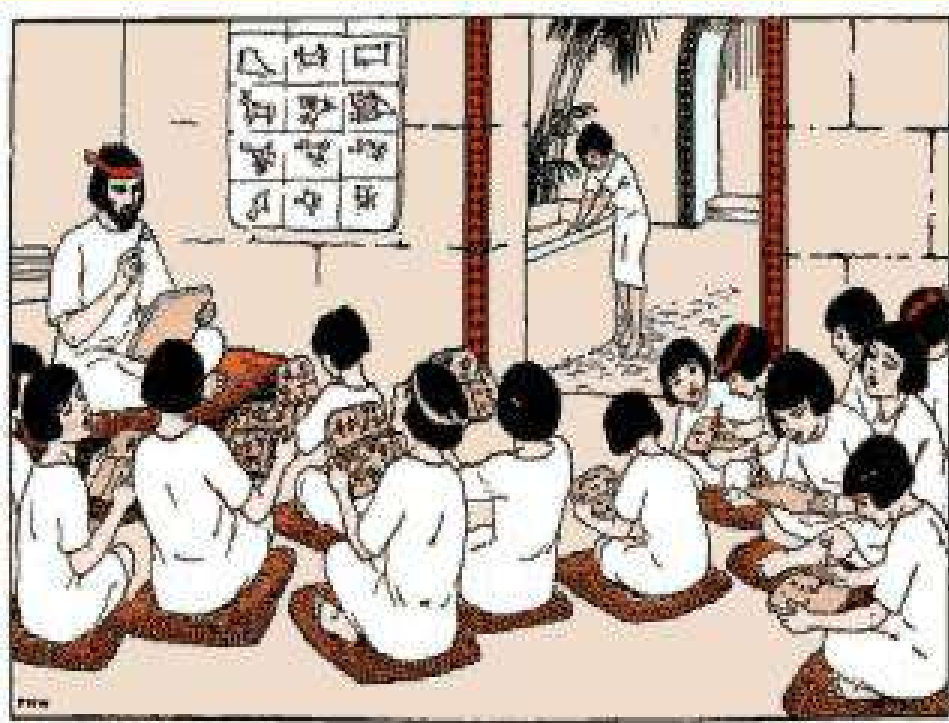


# Bullae

- Started out as pictographs to keep track of trade
- Merchants had a clay container called a bullae to put tokens of trade into
- Started marking on outside of bulla to show contents.



# Sumerian Scribes

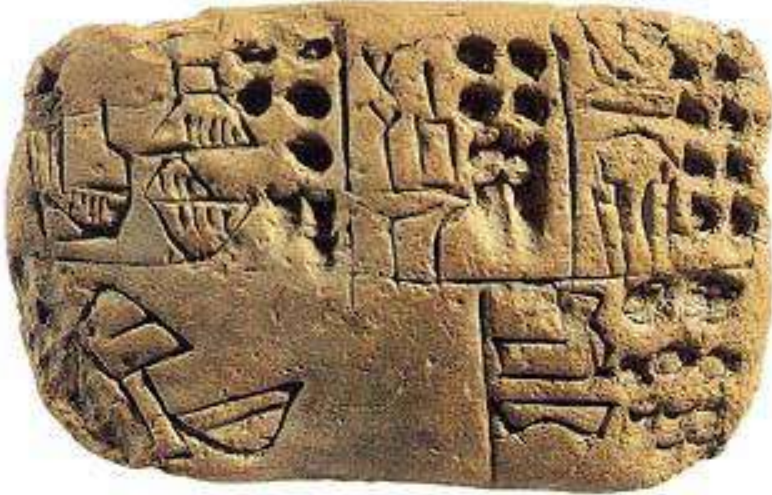


Later the pictographs turned into wedge shaped forms known as **cuneiform**

Symbols were used for sounds



















Reed called a stylus was used to press into soft clay tablets.  
Now records, ideas, treaties and legends could be written down.

# Cuneiform: “Wedge-Shaped” Writing

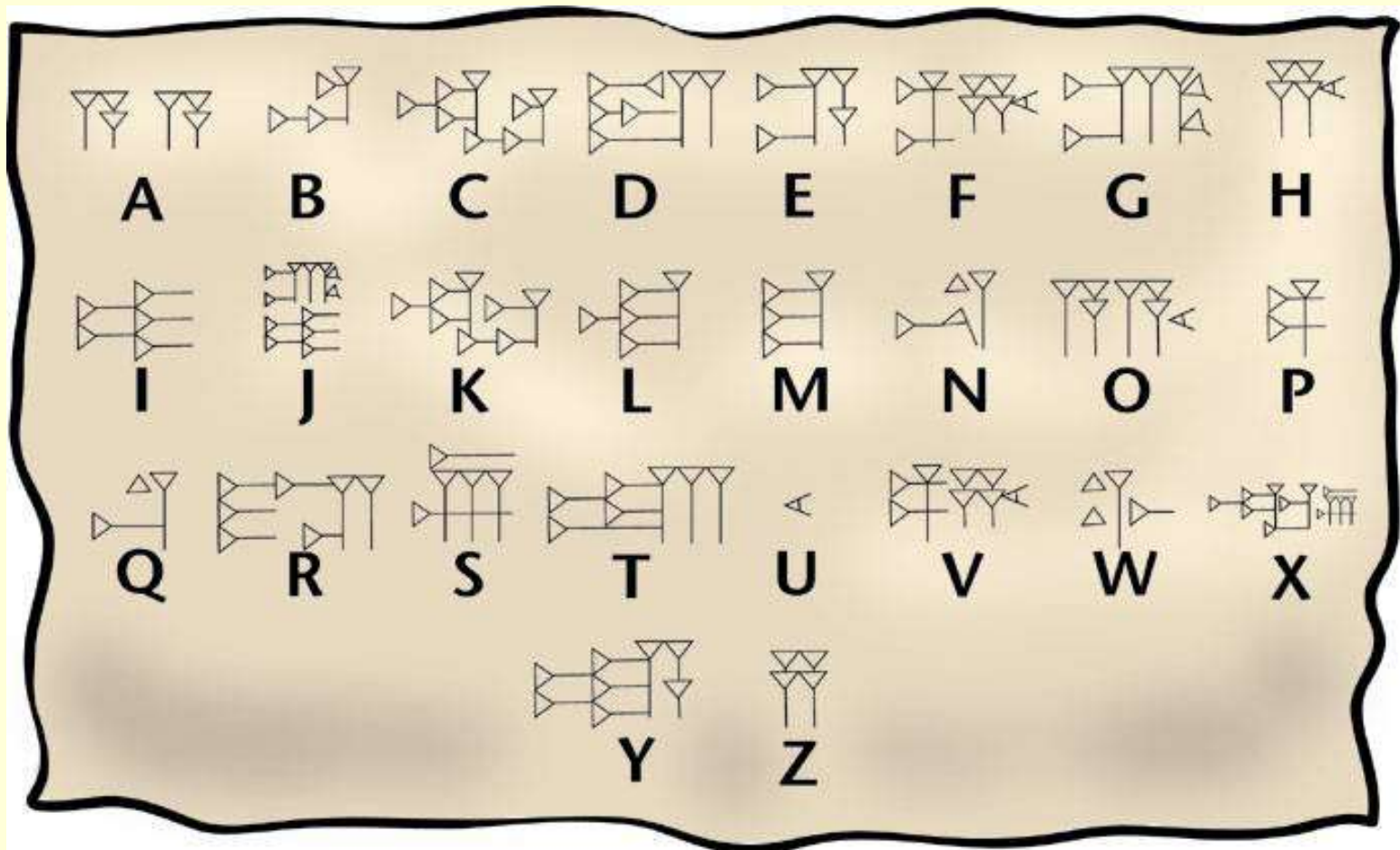


# Cuneiform Writing

## 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.						

# Deciphering Cuneiform





Discovery  
EDUCATION

# Gilgamesh

The first legend written down.

Story is a myth based on a real king.

He is searching for immortality but discovers everyone must die eventually.



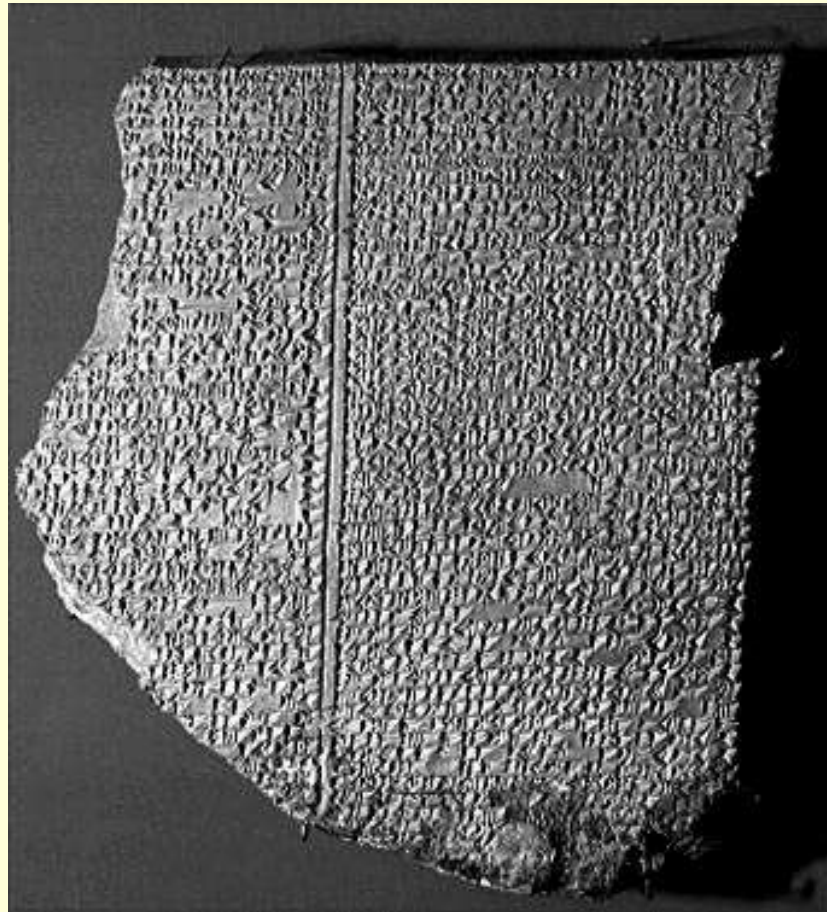
# EPIC OF GILGAMESH



ONE OF THE OLDEST KNOWN WORKS OF LITERATURE, THE EPIC POEM OF GILGAMESH TELLS THE STORY OF GILGAMESH, THE KING OF URUK, AND HIS FRIENDSHIP WITH ENKIDU, A WILDMAN MADE BY THE GODS.



# Gilgamesh Epic Tablet: Flood Story



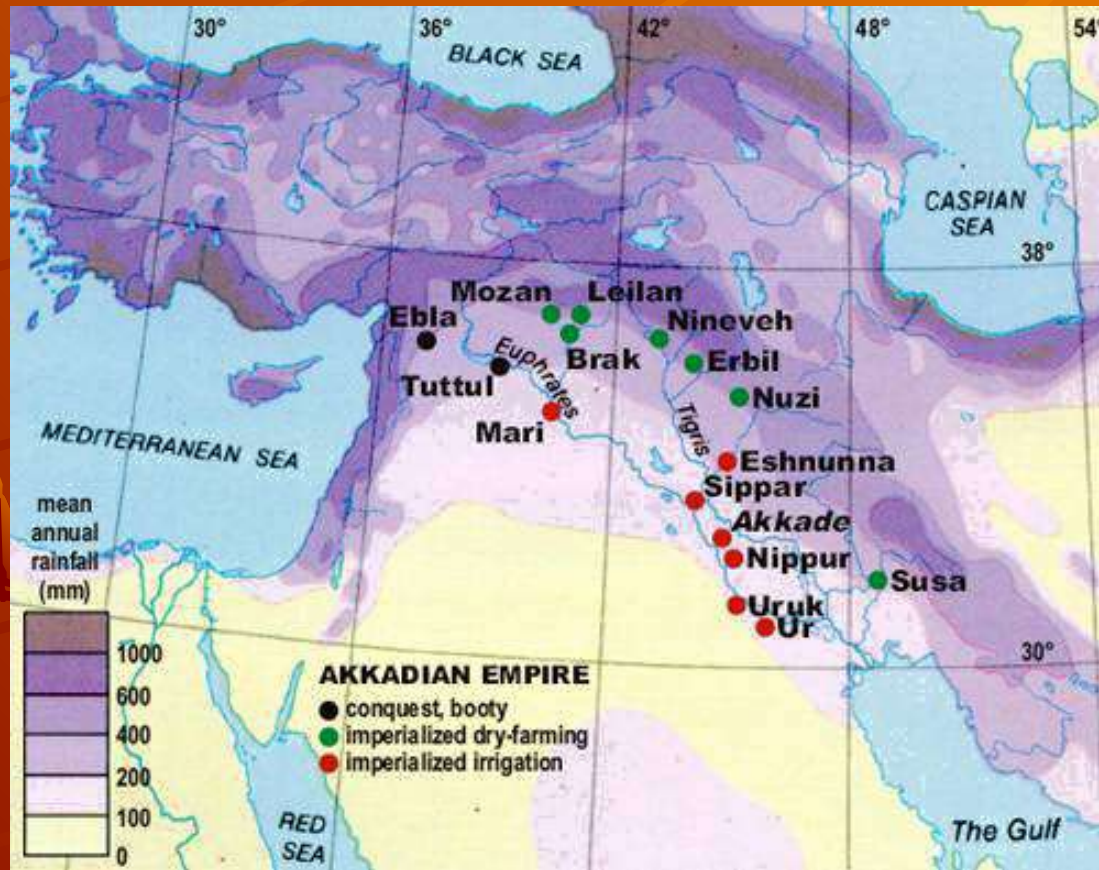
Similar to the story of Noah



# Later Mesopotamia

- Constant battles between city-states
- Priest spent too much time handling conflicts so he would consult an assembly
- Assembly elects a temporary king to lead battles until no longer needed
- However, they were at war so often that the priest and king shared power.

# Sargon of Akkad: “True King”



# The First Empire

Each city-state remained independent until King Sargon started invading and controlling them.

Since he controlled all, Mesopotamia was now an empire



Sargon was a cruel and harsh  
king. The city-states were  
constantly rebelling and  
struggling for independence.

# Babylon conquers Akkad in 2000 B.C.



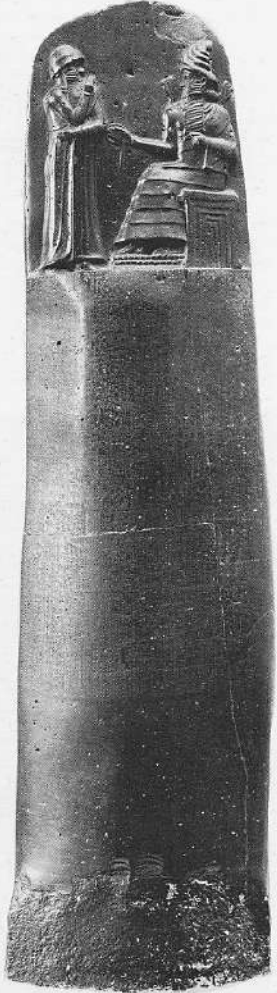
# Hammurabi's

[r. 1792-1750 B. C. E.]

# Code



# Development of Laws – The Code of Hammurabi



A civilization needs laws. The first set of written laws that we know a lot about is called the “Code of Hammurabi.” King Hammurabi came up with a set of laws for his people to follow. The rules had very strict and harsh consequences. The laws became known as the “Eye for an Eye” laws because the consequence would often fit the crime.



# Babylonian Reign of Hammurabi

## Famous Code of Law

He wisely took all the laws of the region's city-states and unified them into one code. This helped unify the region.

Engraved in stone, erected all over the empire.

Strict in nature –

“the punishment fits the crime” / “eye for an eye”

Such laws were adopted by neighbors – many similar found in Hebrew scriptures (Old Testament)

His act set an important *precedent* – idea that the government was responsible for what occurred in society.

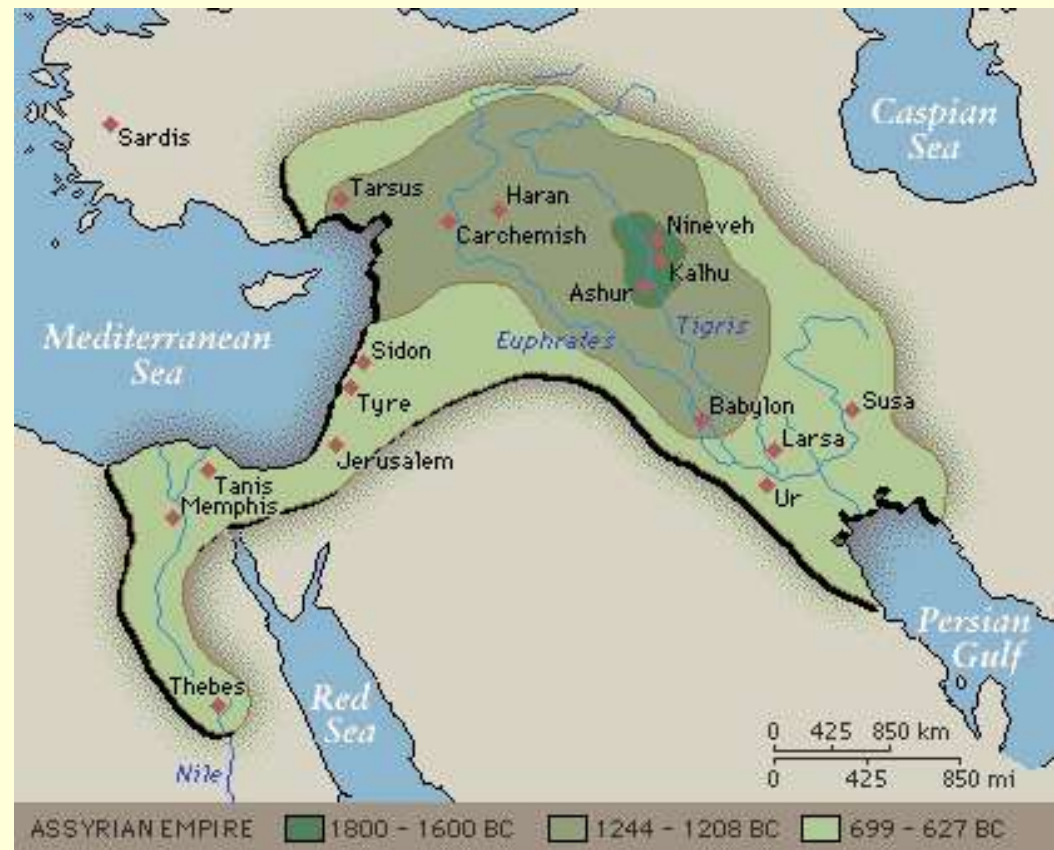


A total of 282 laws are etched on this 7 ft. 5 in. tall black basalt pillar (stele). The top portion, shown here, depicts Hammurabi with Shamash, the sun god. Shamash is presenting to Hammurabi a staff and ring, which symbolize the power to administer the law. Although Hammurabi's Code is not the first code of laws (the first records date four centuries earlier), it is the best-preserved legal document reflecting the social structure of Babylon during Hammurabi's rule.

This amazing find was discovered in 1901 and today is in the famous Louvre Museum in Paris, France.

# Assyria

- **Conquered Babylon in 850 B.C.**
- **Highly organized military**
- **Ruthless and hated**
- **Largest of the Mesopotamian empires**



# Neo-Babylon

- Defeat Assyrians in 600 B.C.
- King Nebuchadnezzar
- Hanging gardens
- Conquered by the Persians



# Sophisticated Metallurgy Skills



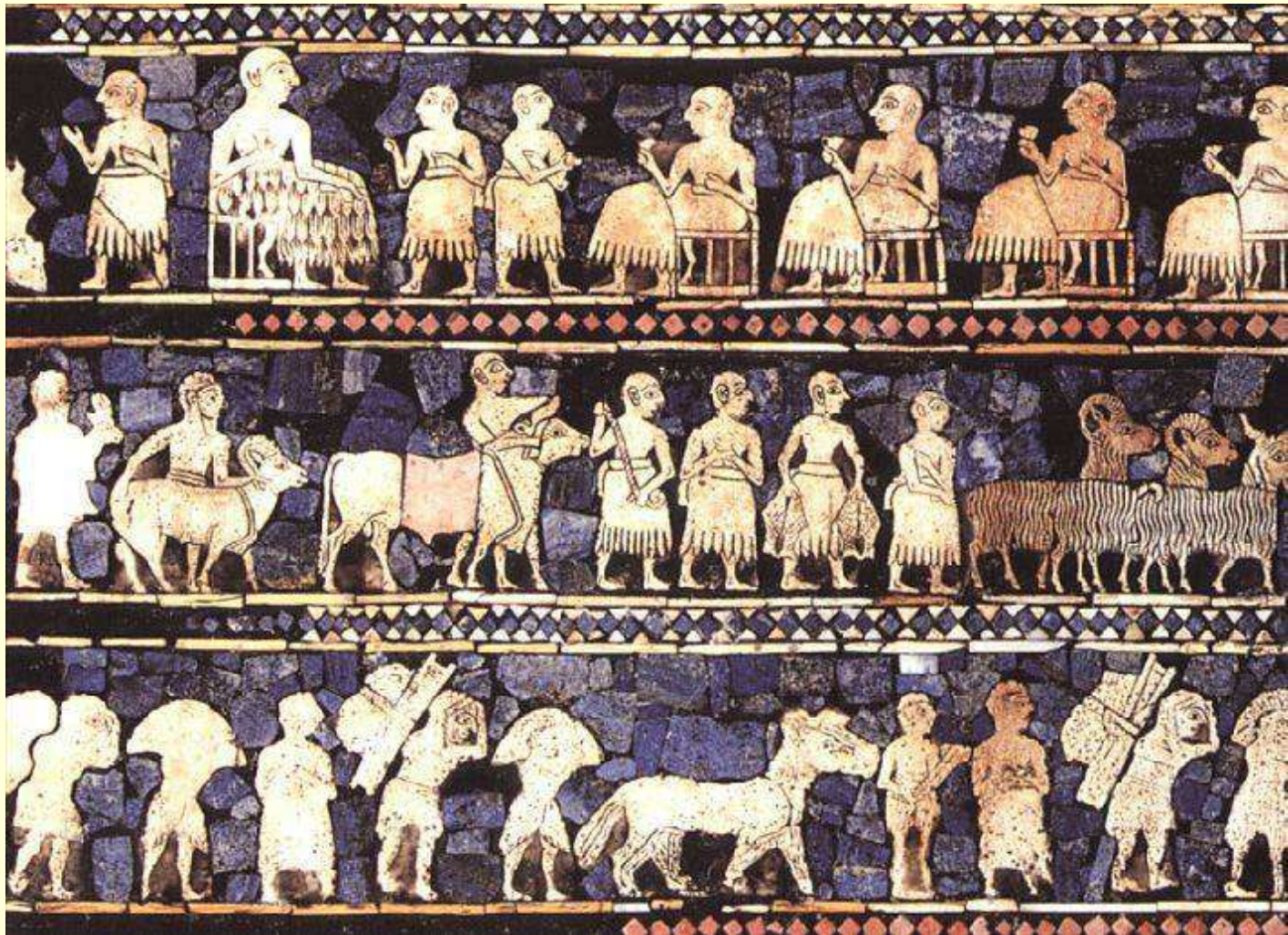
# Board Game From Ur



# Mesopotamian Harp



# The Royal Standard of Ur



# Contributions of Mesopotamia

12-month calendar  
irrigation, canals, dams  
legal system / laws  
mathematics based on base 60  
measuring and surveying  
instruments  
metal working  
plows  
the sailboat  
wheel / wheeled carts  
writing (cuneiform)





The top portion of the image features a stylized city skyline against a yellow background with a diagonal hatched pattern. The skyline consists of several green, rectangular buildings of varying heights. Interspersed among these buildings are four stylized human figures. From left to right, the figures are: a woman in a purple dress, a man in a green tunic, a woman in a purple dress, and a man in a green tunic. The overall aesthetic is modern and graphic.

# ANCIENT MESOPOTAMIA