

# Ubaid Society – Evidence for Economic & Social Differentiation

- Distinctions between houses and temples
- Tell Abada
  - Major differences in artefacts between houses
- Susa (Late Ubaid, 10 ha)
  - 10 m tall platform covering 5000 m<sup>2</sup>, mosaic bands
  - Temple, storerooms, residence of priest atop
  - Nearby cemetery
  - Seals and sealings – simple and complex, differential economic control, ownership
- Temple-run economy?

# Ubaid Society – Evidence for Economic & Social Differentiation

- Tribute economy
  - Mobilize tribute from producer to elite (persuasion) to fund political institutions, sponsor long-distance trade expeditions, acquire exotic goods and prestige, gifts to win supporters
  - Persuasion accomplished through religion – honouring deity

# Ubaid Society

- Economic & social hierarchies
- Religion served as form of ideology that legitimized social differentiation
- Heads of religious institutions had command of labour & products
- Collected stores of food for redistribution, or storage for times of need

# Ubaid Society

- Large temples separated from domestic contexts, built on raised platforms
- Significant addition of decorative elements in temples (architectural & painted)
- Although in the service of a deity –temple personnel undoubtedly enjoyed the material benefits (elevated status in society)

# Ubaid Society – Evidence for Economic & Social Differentiation

- Expansion north and establishment trade connections foreshadows major Uruk expansion
- Greater need for organization
  - 1) Offset any droughts
  - 2) Free people from subsistence for craft production
  - 3) Create a surplus for trade

= Hints of Early State Society??

# The Uruk Period & the Uruk Expansion

3800-3100 BC (uncalibrated)



# The Uruk Period

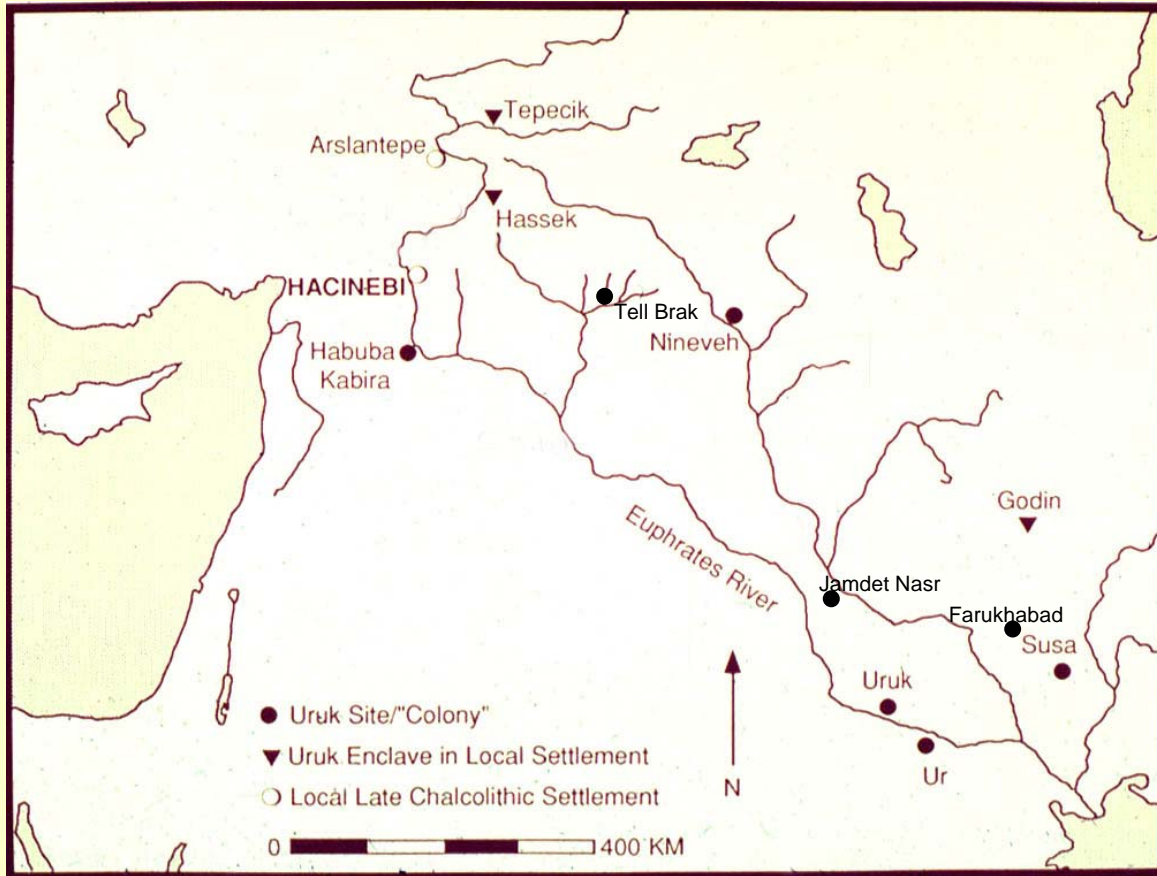
- Readings complimentary
- Late Chalcolithic (ends with Sumer civilizations)
- 3800-3100 BC (**uncalibrated**)
- The issues:
  - Origin of urbanism (competing polities or proto-state – Pollock versus Algaze)
  - Economic centralization
  - Late Uruk Expansion (colonization, Algaze) with major movements of people
  - Institutionalized religion and writing
  - History of survey and excavation

# Chronology

<i>Date B.C., Uncalibrated</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>South</i>	<i>LC</i>
2000	↑ Khabur ware Middle Bronze EB IV Leilan IIa	Old Babylonian Isin Larsa Ur III Akkadian	
3000	↑ Ninevite V ↓ Early Bronze 1	↑ Early Dynastic Jemdet Nasr Late Uruk	LC 5 LC 4
4000	↑ Amuq F ↓ Late Chalcolithic	Middle Uruk Early Uruk	LC 3 LC 2
5000	↑ Ubaid ↓ Late Halaf	Terminal Ubaid Ubaid ↓ Choga Mami transitional	LC 1
6000	Early Halaf Hassuna-Samarra	Sawwan III	



# Uruk Sites to Know



- Uruk/Warka
- Ur
- Susa
- Godin Tepe
- Nineveh
- Habuba Kabira
- Hacinebi
- Tell Brak
- Jamdet Nasr
- Farukhabad

# The Rise of Urbanism

- Organized centres of specialised craft production
- Distinct economic organisation – interdependence within city and between city-dwellers and rural hinterland
- Religious and political ceremonies
- Administrative activities

# The Uruk World

- Regional increase in settlement (influx of people or settling down of semi-nomadic people – Iran)
- Settlement tied to water channels and resource access
- Cities:
  - Walls – defence and symbolic
  - Dense architecture, wide range activities - grow organically, rebuilding and renovation
  - Temples
  - Houses (wealth and size differences)
- Villages and Nomadic Camps – rarely excavated, but mobile aspect of settlement like Levant and based on interdependence

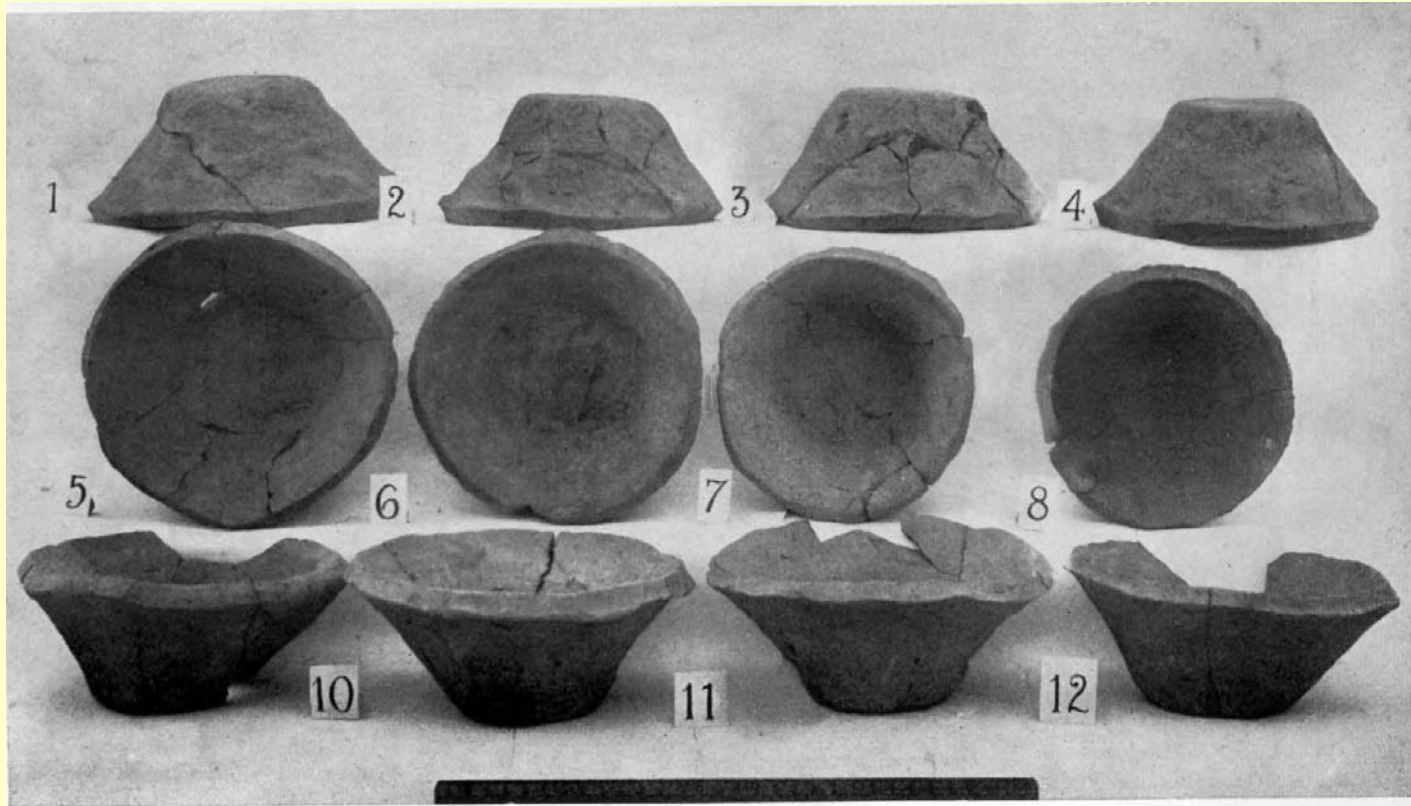
# The Uruk World

- Direct continuity from Ubaid
- Settlement hierarchy
  - Uruk urban centres (Uruk/Warka)
  - Uruk rural villages/nomadic sites
  - Uruk colonies/enclaves (mix)
  - Uruk outposts (trading sites)
- Domestic Architecture (tripartite) and storage buildings
- Temple architecture
- Technology and economy
- Writing, Art and Religion

# The Uruk World – Economy

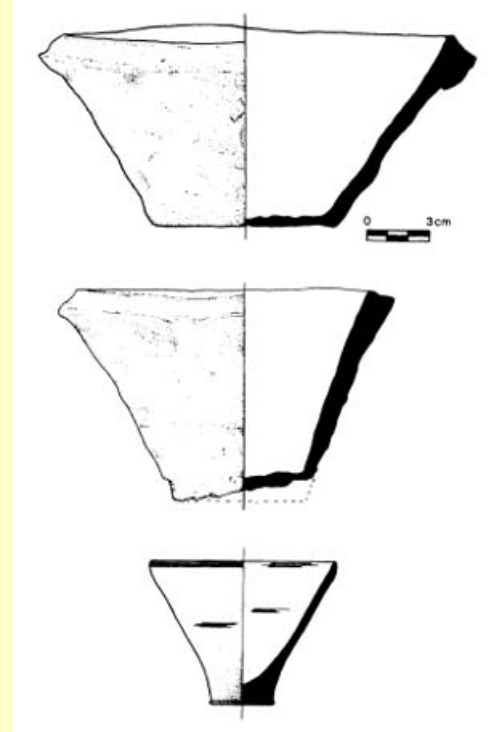
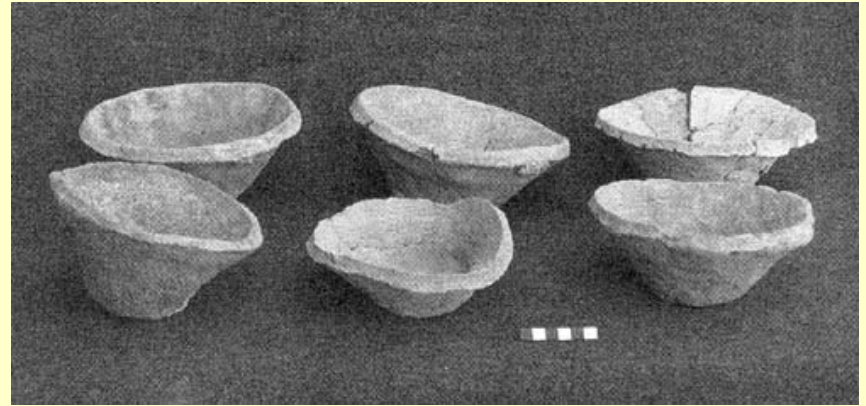
- Increase in non-local resources and overall diversity
- Standardisation – mass-produced beveled-rim bowls
- Major regional differences (north and south)
- Household level production or specialised?
  - Houses with all types of artefacts versus certain activities concentrated on the site
  - Pottery production (wasters, kilns)
  - Textile production (looms, spindle whorls) – culling patterns
  - List of professions
  - Depictions of economic activities and elites only (not daily life)
- Economic centralisation?
  - Control over or facilitation of distribution?
  - Redistribution of goods and labour with administrative regulations
  - Hierarchical political system based on tribute

# Beveled-Rim Bowls

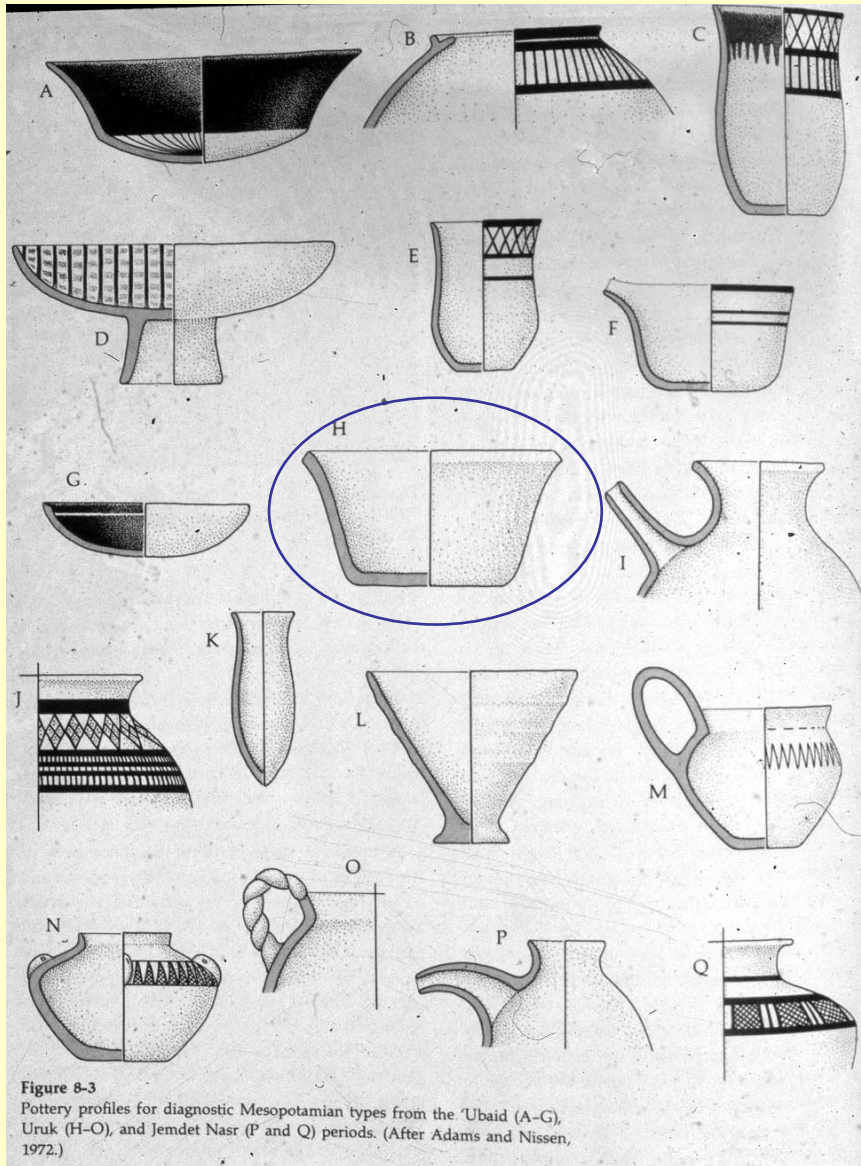


- Mass-produced, mould-made, straw and grit tempered, inside shows potters finger marks, easy-to-produce
- Votive offerings, salt-making, bread making, distribute rations (“to-eat” depicted by head and bowl)
- Spread from production centres in southern Mesopotamia north to colonies in Late Uruk

# Mass Produced Pottery: Beveled-Rim Bowls

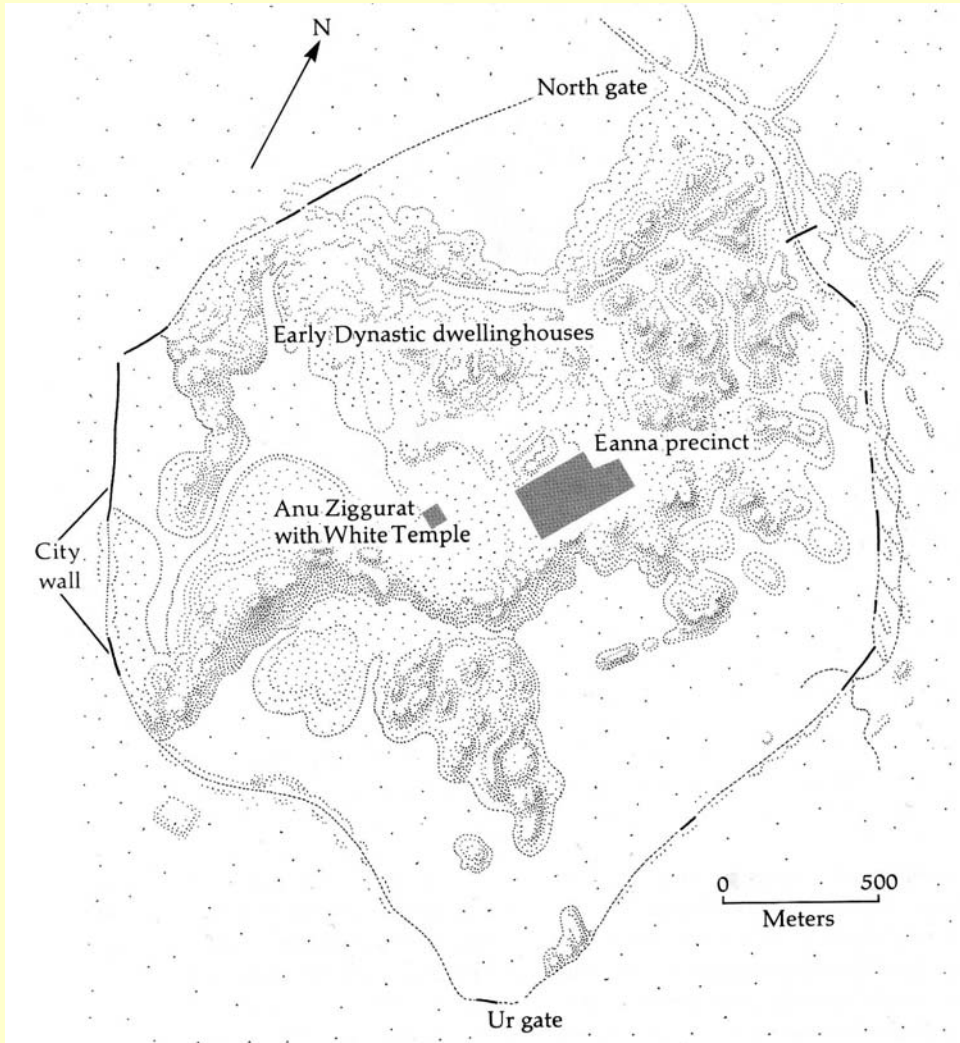


# Typical Uruk and Jemdet Nasr Pottery





# Uruk/ Warka/Erech



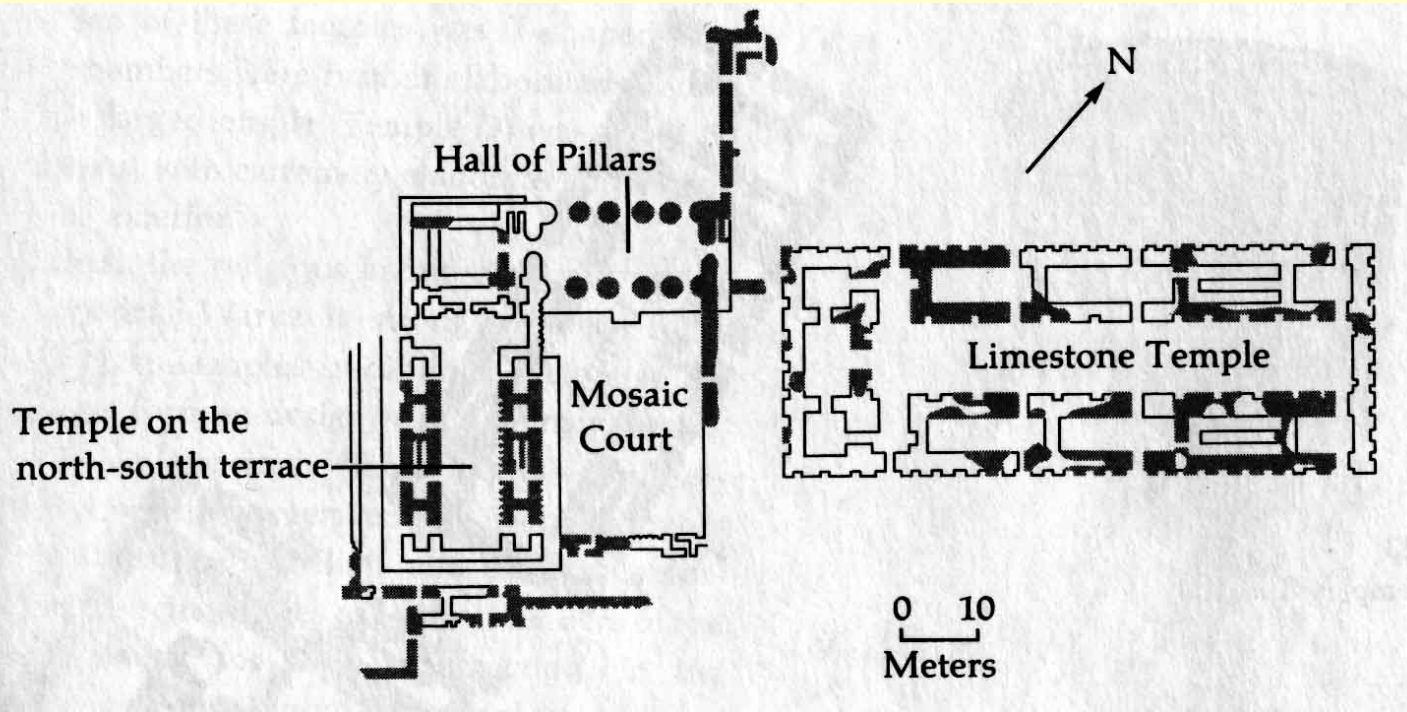
- Dominant centre for Uruk world
- First and largest urban centre (80-450 ha)
- Two original settlements:
  - Kullaba (Anu)
  - Eanna (Ishtar)
- Monumental mud-brick platforms with temples on top (cone mosaics)
- City wall
- Clay tablets 1<sup>st</sup> appear
- Excavation issues

# Eanna Ziggurat

- Several successive temple-structures
- Limestone and Pillar Temples of sanctuary (clay cone mosaic)
- Ziggurat on NW side sanctuary (Ur III)



# Eanna Precinct – Limestone and Pillar Temples



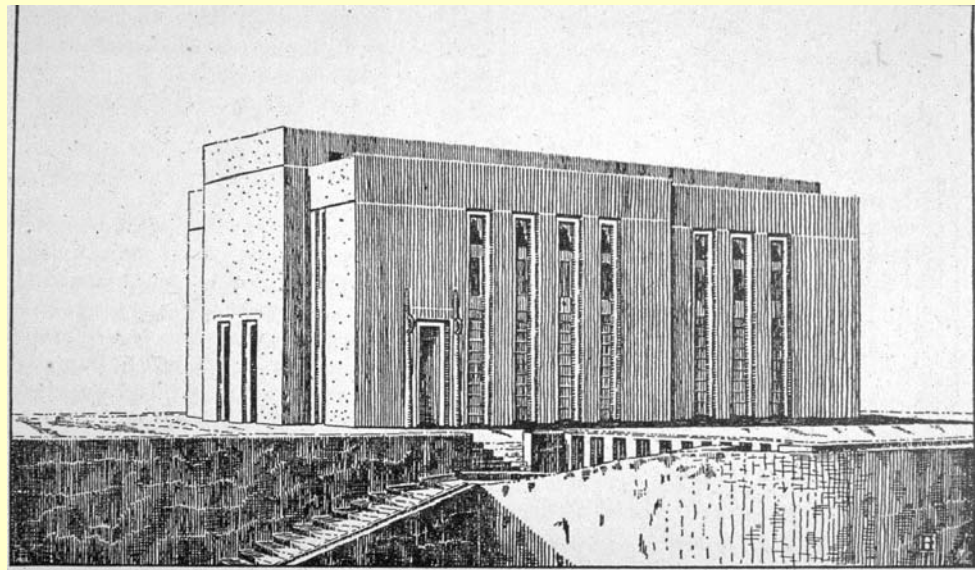
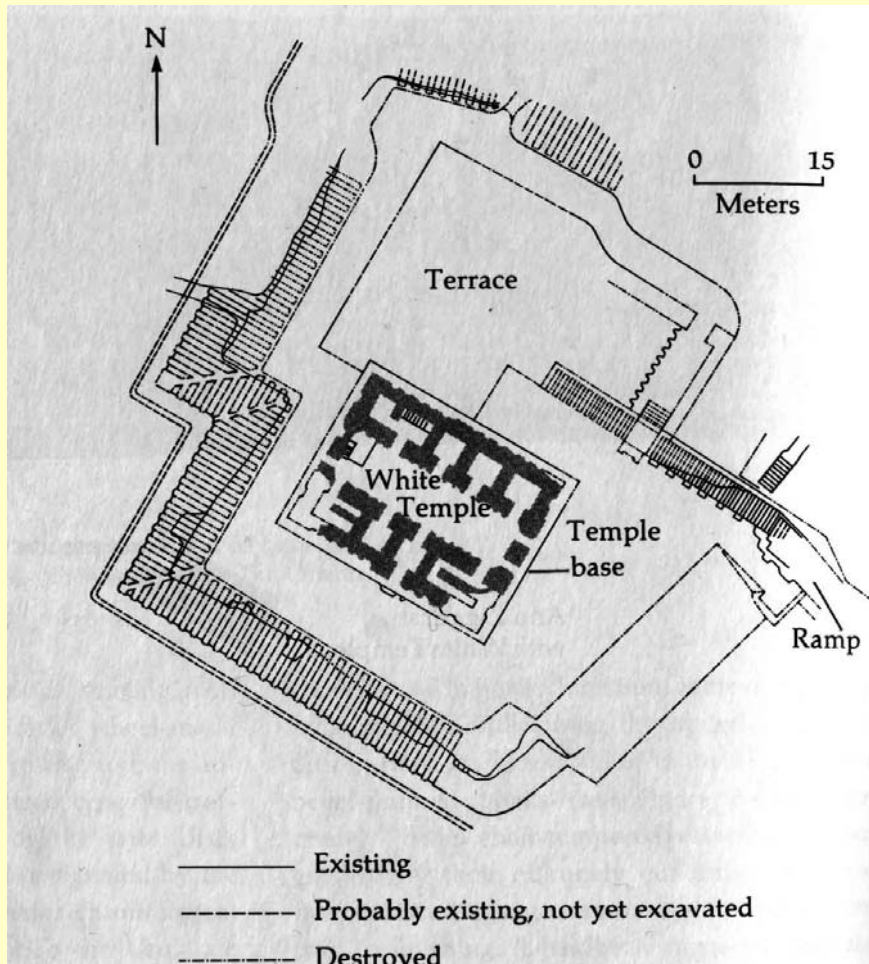
(A) Cone mosaics at Warka



# White Temple



# White Temple

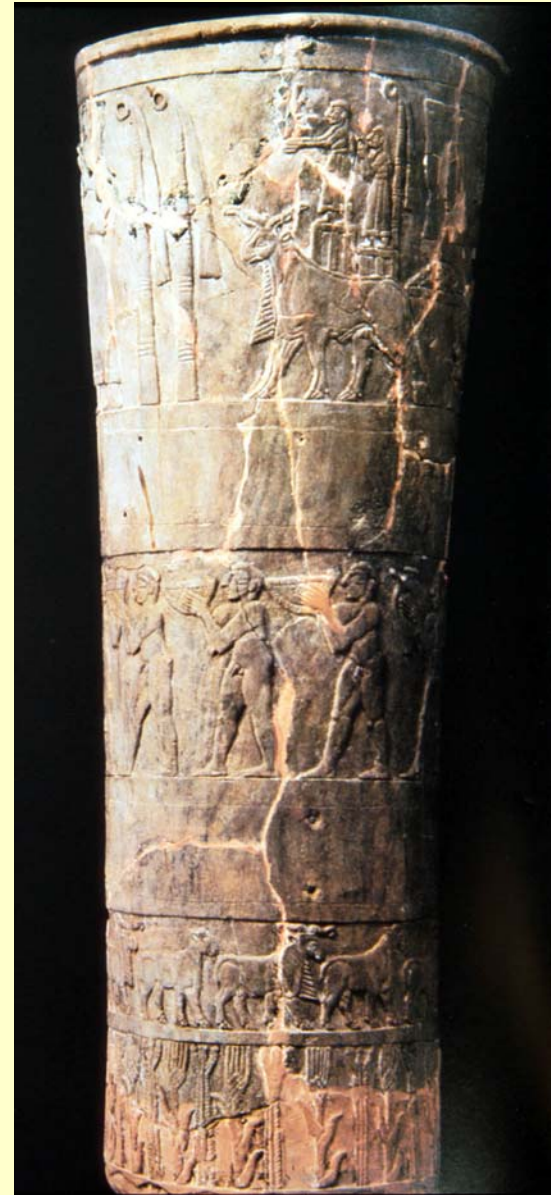


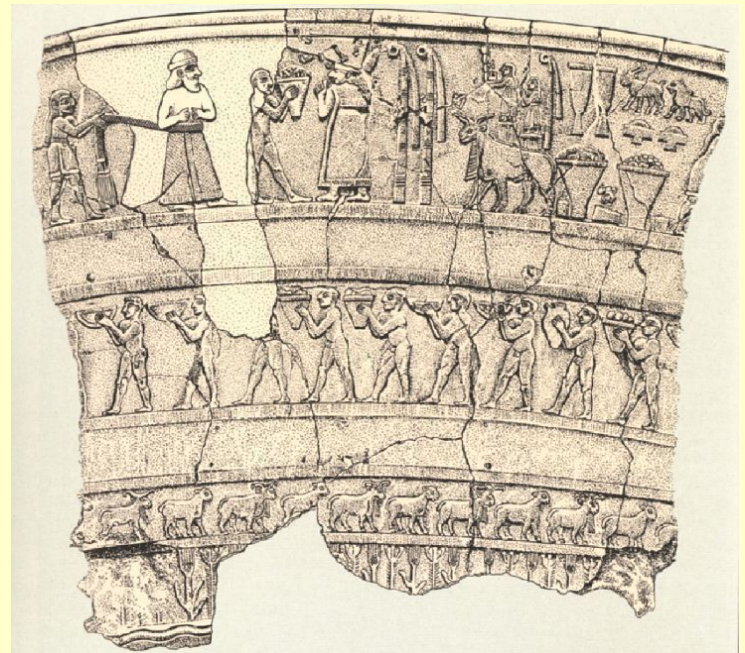
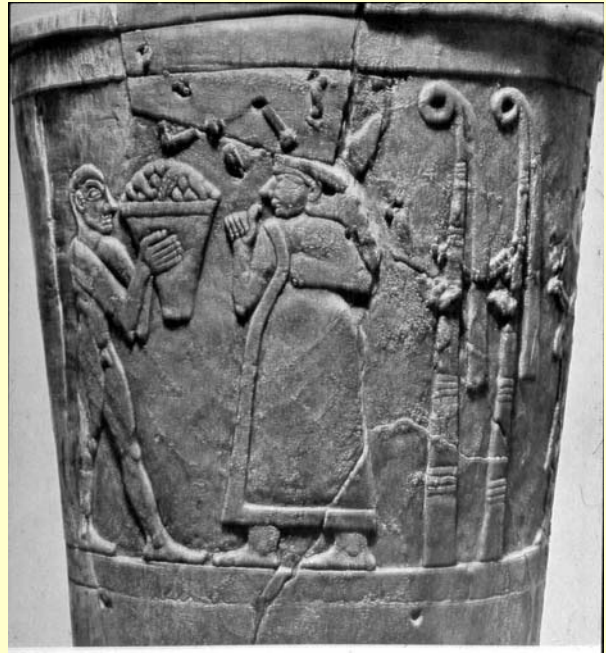
7 Uruk, temple in layer E on the Anu ziggurat.—After E. Heinrich, *UVB VIII*, 1937

# Warka Vase: elite as natural



(A) and (B) Alabaster vase, from Warka



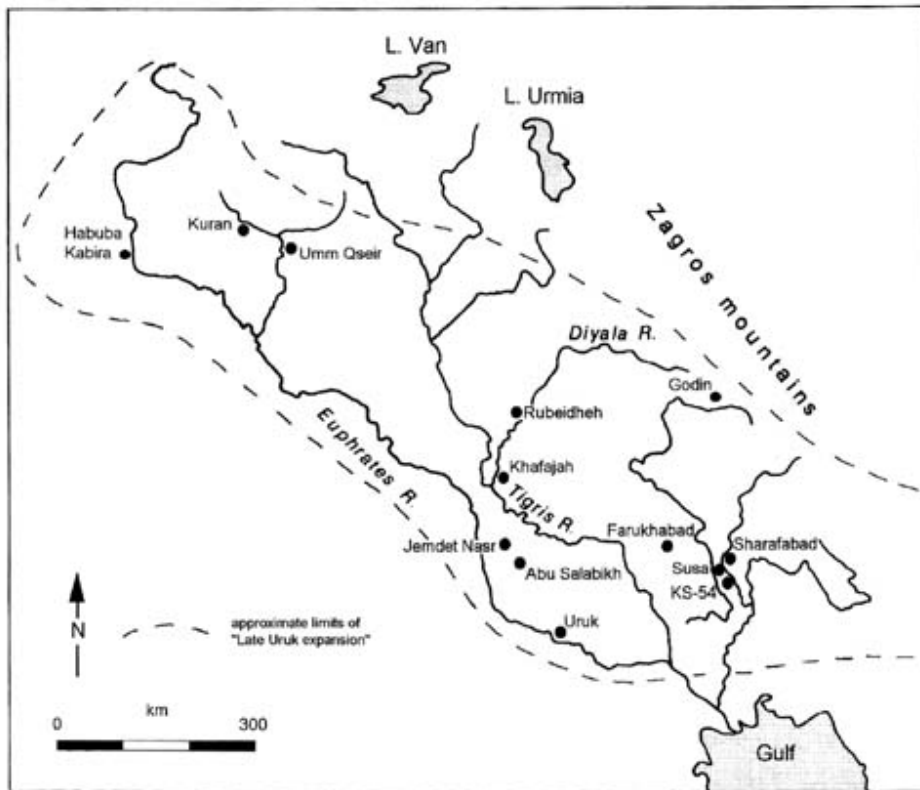


# Lady of Warka





# The Late Uruk Expansion: Competing Polities or Centralised “Proto-State”?



4.12 Uruk- and Jemdet Nasr-period sites mentioned in the text

- Colonial network = far-ranging network of settlements connecting cities of Mesopotamia with resource-rich neighbouring highlands, Zagros, Iran plateau, North Syria, Southeast Anatolia
- Series of outposts and colonies situated along major trade and communication routes
- Began Middle Uruk (ca. 3700 BC uncalib), fullest extent by Late Uruk (ca. 3500 BC) – lasted 600 years with several definable stages

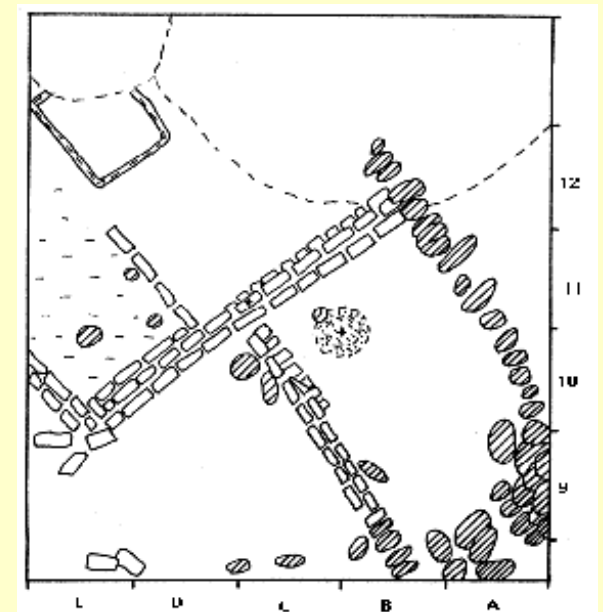
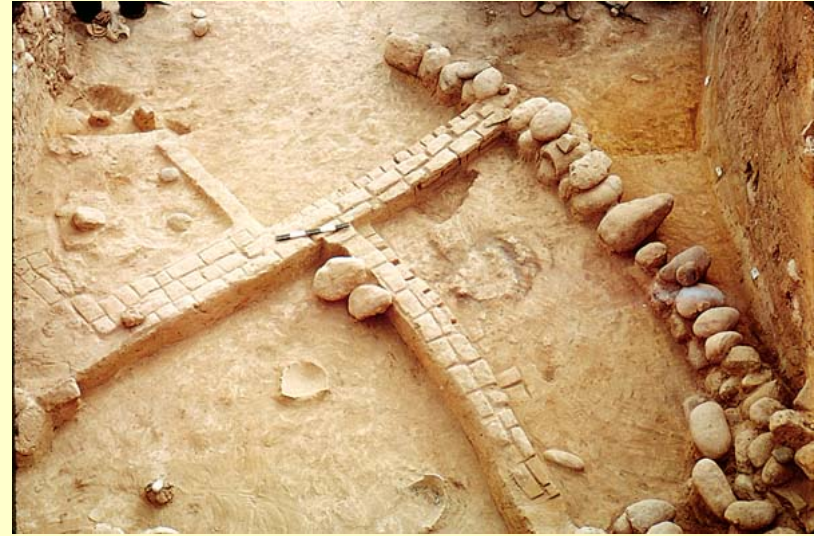
# The Uruk Expansion

- Gradual expansion of Uruk material culture (distinctive artefacts – bowls – and architecture – temple complexes, and tripartite houses with cruciform central area)
- Mix of indigenous Chalcolithic and incoming Uruk people – shift from chaff-tempered to grit-tempered pottery
- Uruk cities grew by absorbing rural populations
- Intrusion occurred after long-term local development of Chalcolithic – imperialism
- Links between settlements were economic, not political – Uruk colonised locations that allowed them to tap into preexisting trade networks controlled by indigenous Chalcolithic communities (in exchange for textiles, etc)

# The Uruk World System

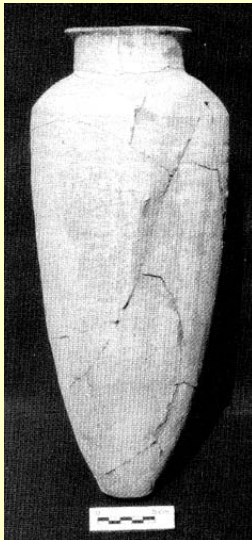
- Institutionalized rulers (seals and vases)
- Central collection and distribution of strategic commodities (storerooms, rations)
- Craft and occupational specialisation (ceramics, Titles and Professions List)
- State control over labour (temples)
- New forms symbolic representations (palaces, writing, monumental artwork)

# Farukhabad: Uruk Enclave

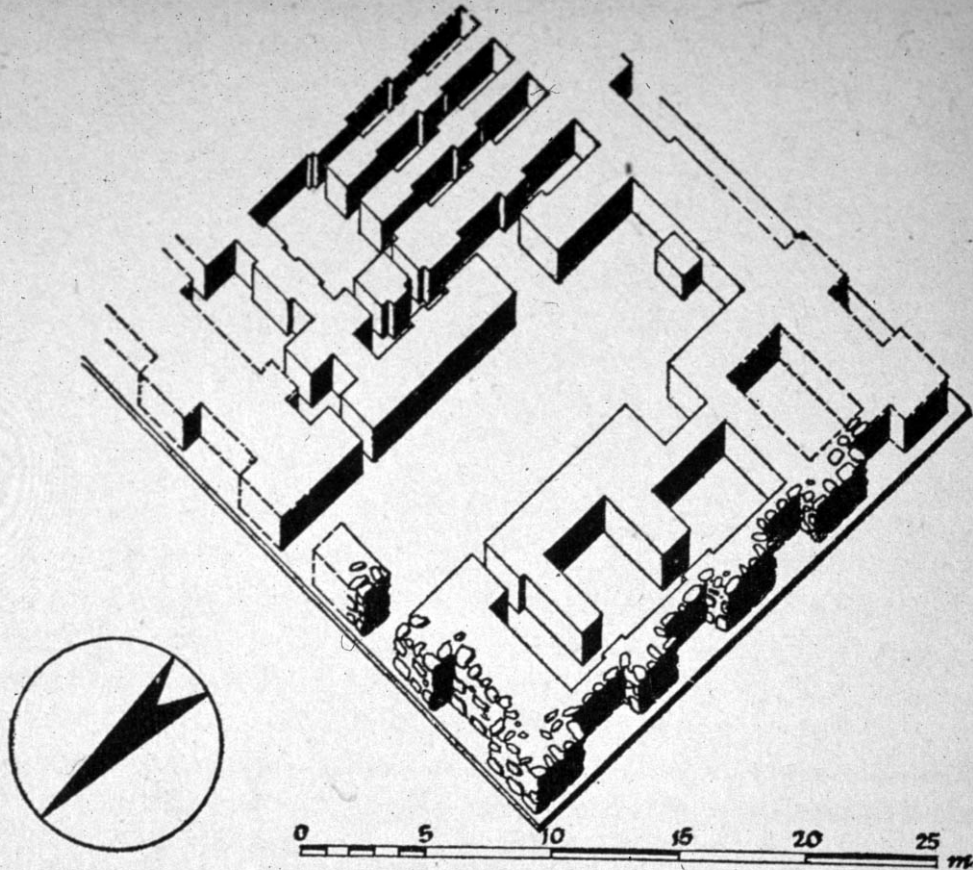


# Tell Brak: A Trading Outpost?

Situated astride prehistoric trade routes – waterways



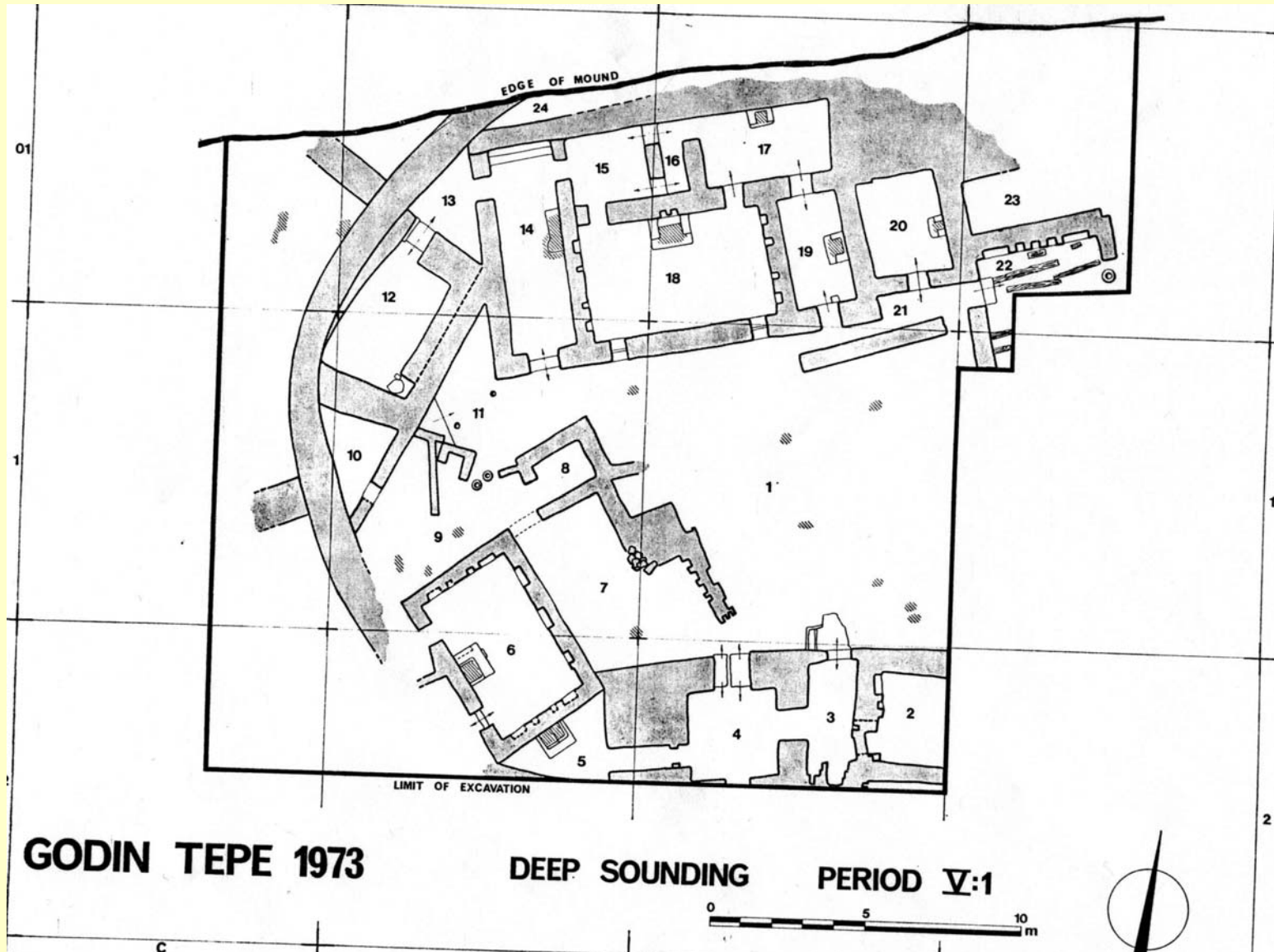
# Tell Brak – Eye Temple



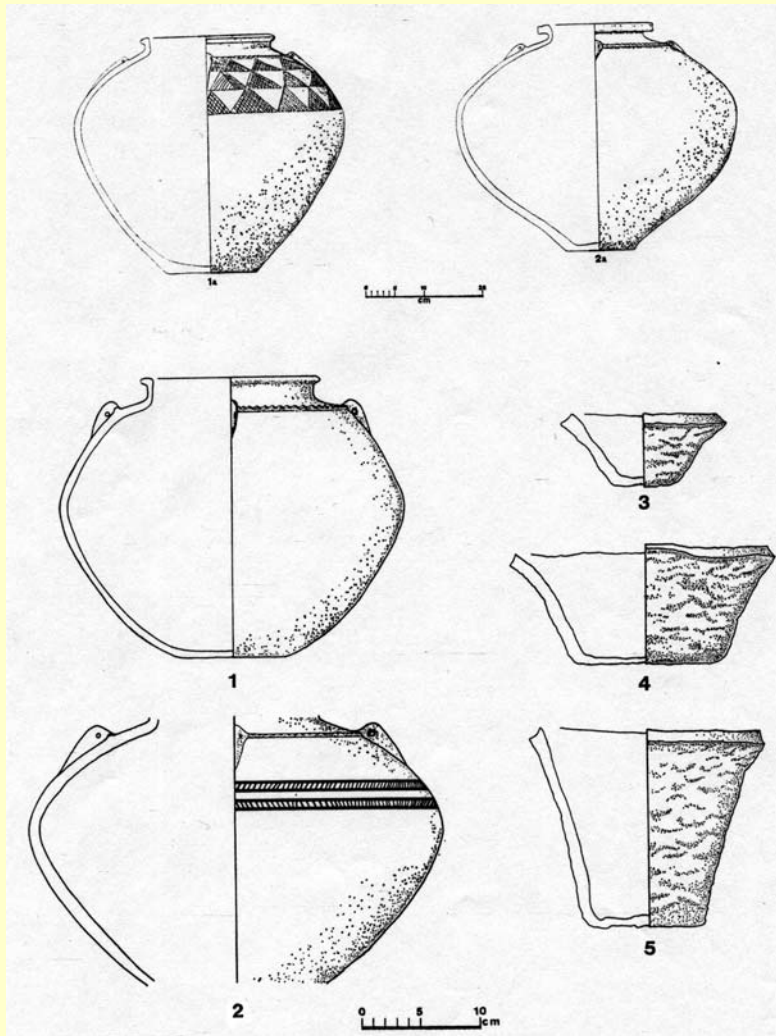
*The Eye Temple at Brak, showing the cruciform nave, with the podium or altar at the far end. (fig.7)*



# Godin Tepe: An Uruk Outpost



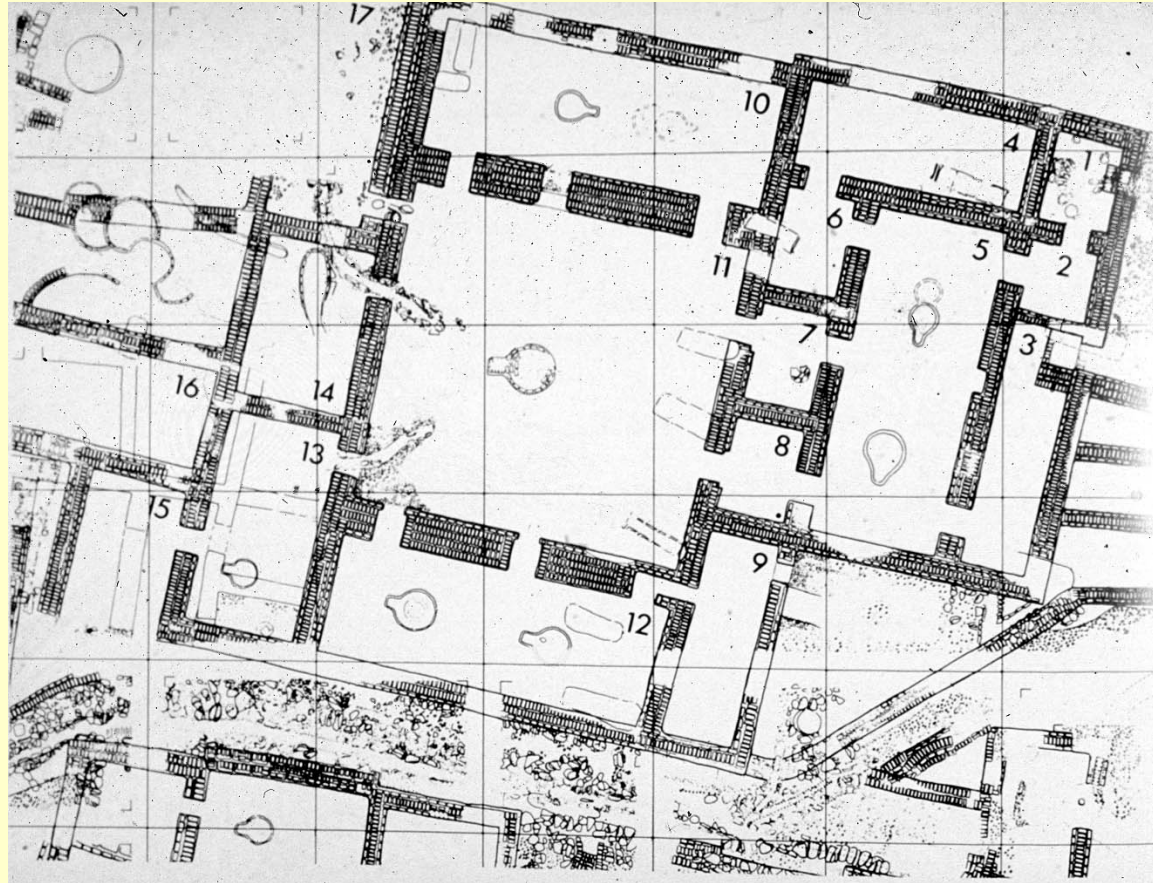
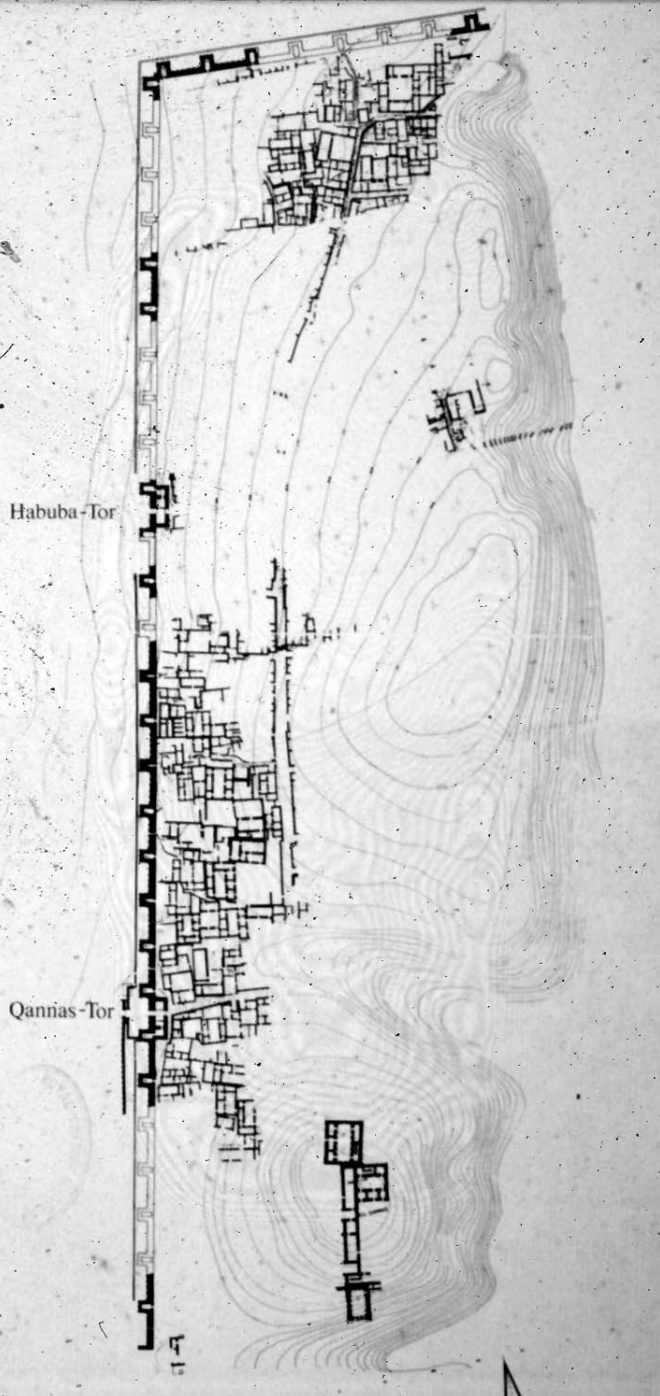
# Godin Tepe: typical Uruk pottery



- Small enclaves of Uruk intruders existing within larger preexisting centres with consent of local population – mutual benefit

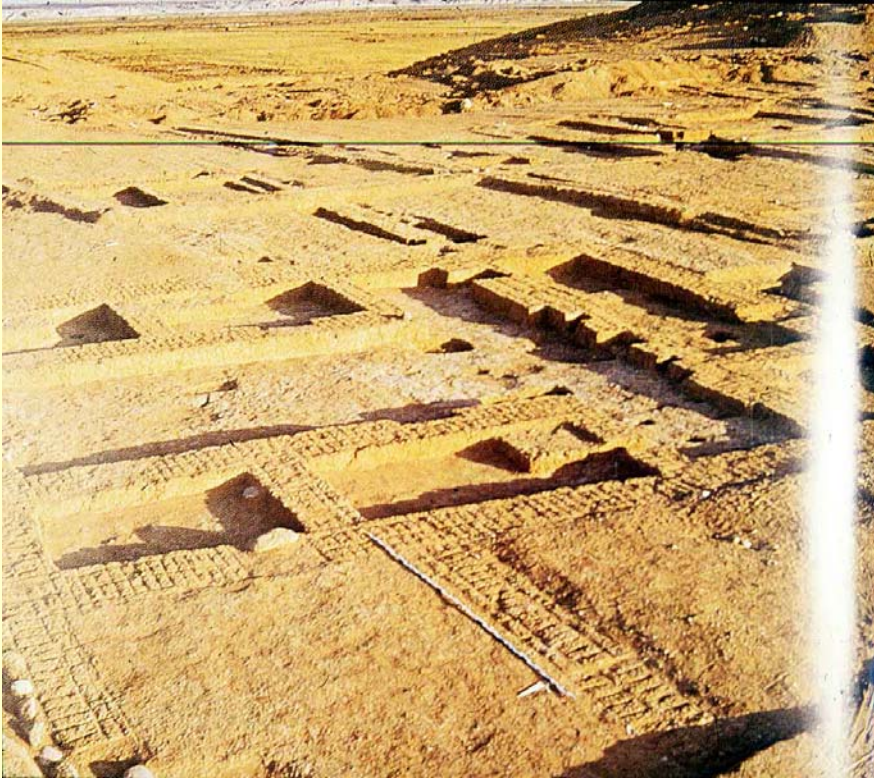


# Habuba Kabira: An Uruk Colony

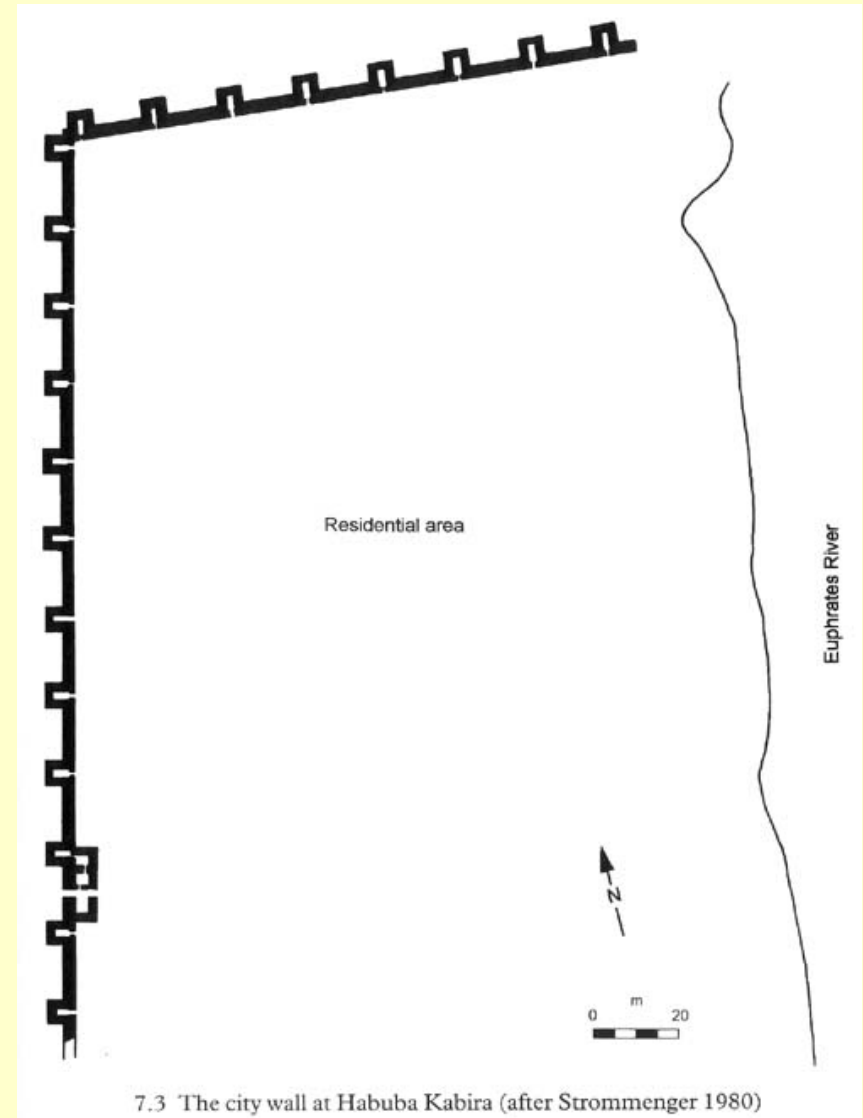


Secular site focussed on resource procurement for trade – large population movements

# Habuba Kabira



- Largest of the southern-occupied urban settlement (20 000 m<sup>2</sup>)
- Occupied only during Uruk
- Fortified town with distinct residential, industrial, and administrative quarters

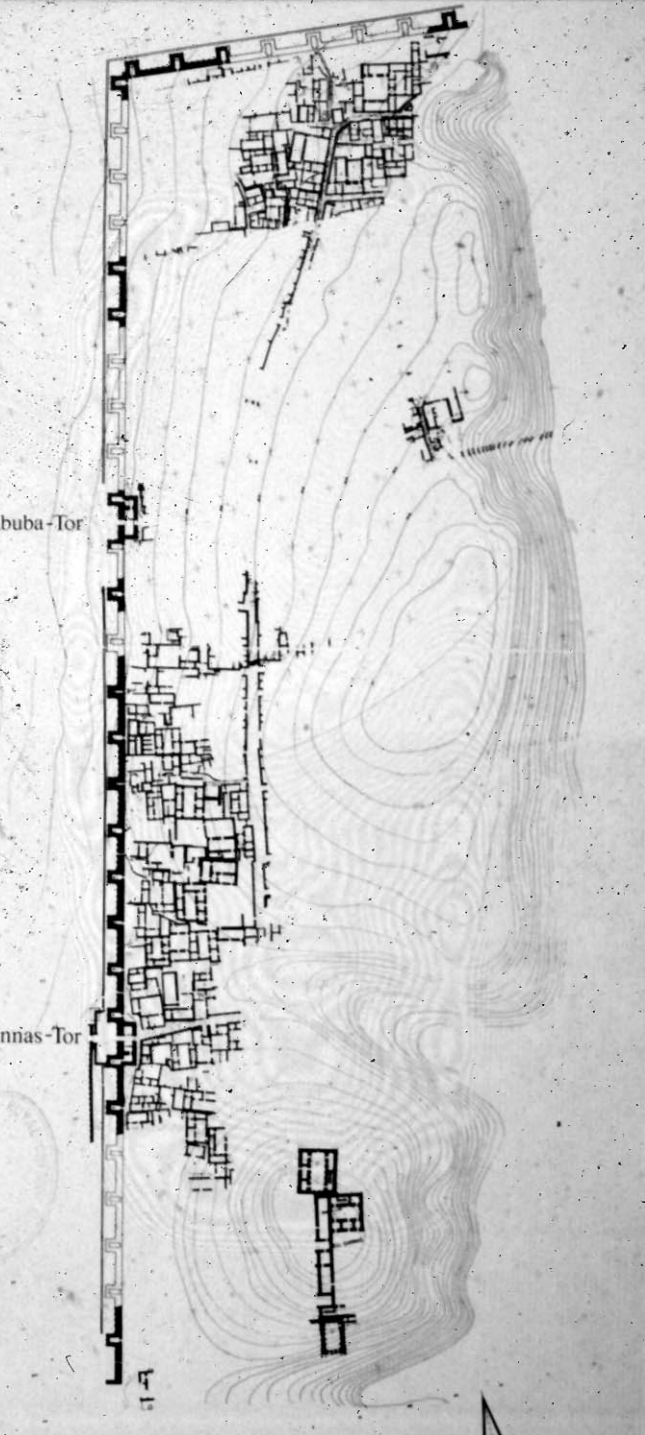


7.3 The city wall at Habuba Kabira (after Strommenger 1980)

# Habuba Kabira



# Habuba Kabira



# Hacinebi: Local Chalcolithic Outpost



Direct interaction (commercial and cultural contact) between indigenous Chalcolithic groups and influx of Uruk colonists

Mix of local and Uruk material culture (latter imports)

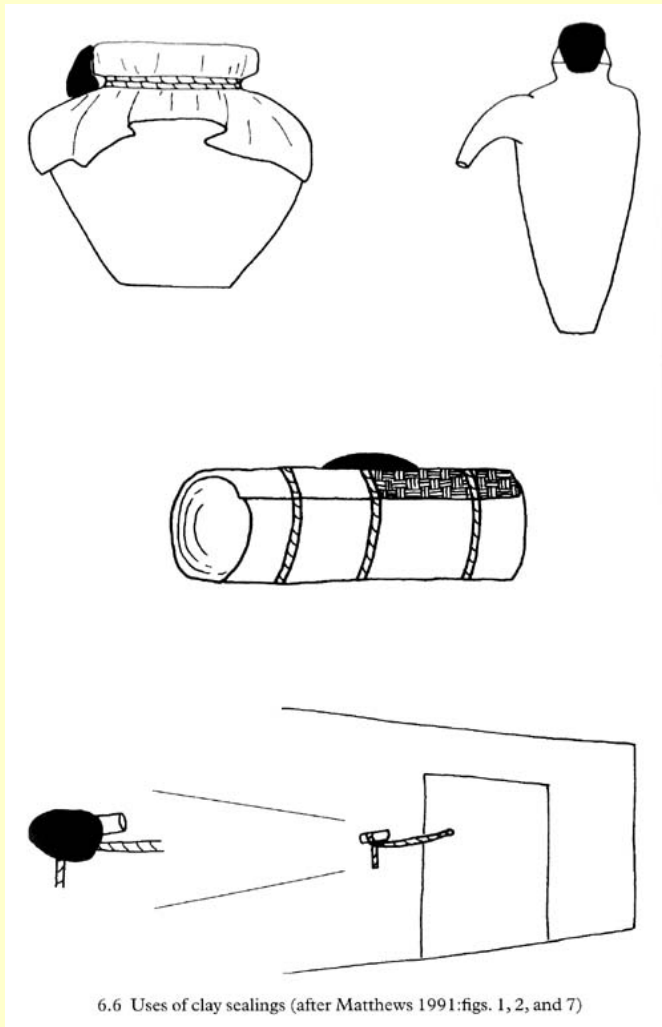
Situated at major river ford of Euphrates – key access point for resource and people movements

Tell 9 m deep on prominent spur

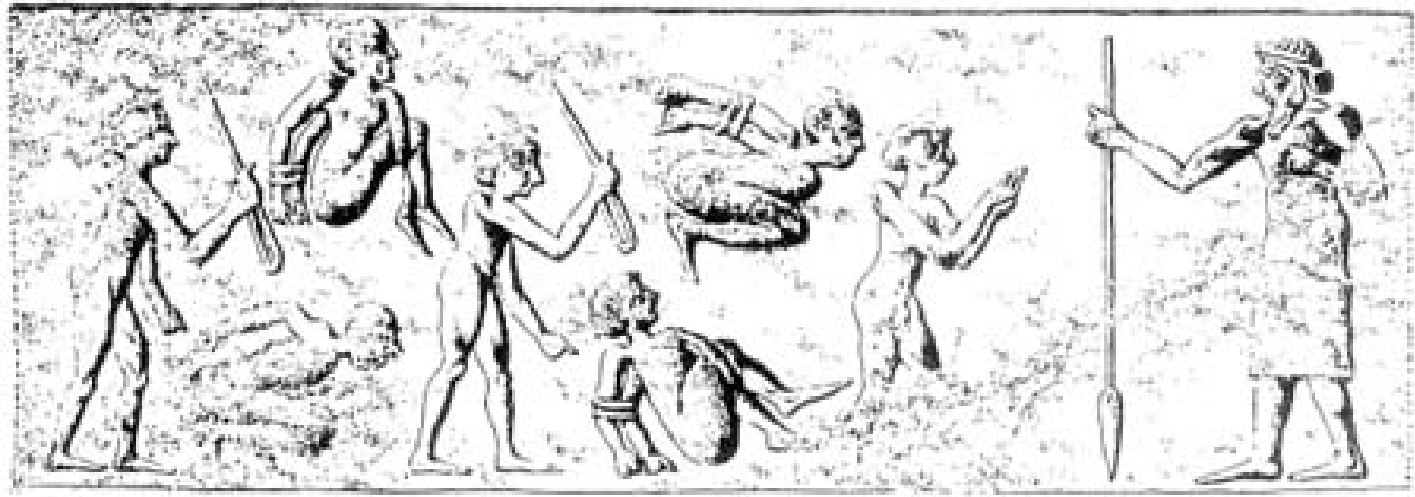


# Use of Clay Seals and Sealings

- Track the abundance and movement of goods, authorize transactions (witness account, seal containers)

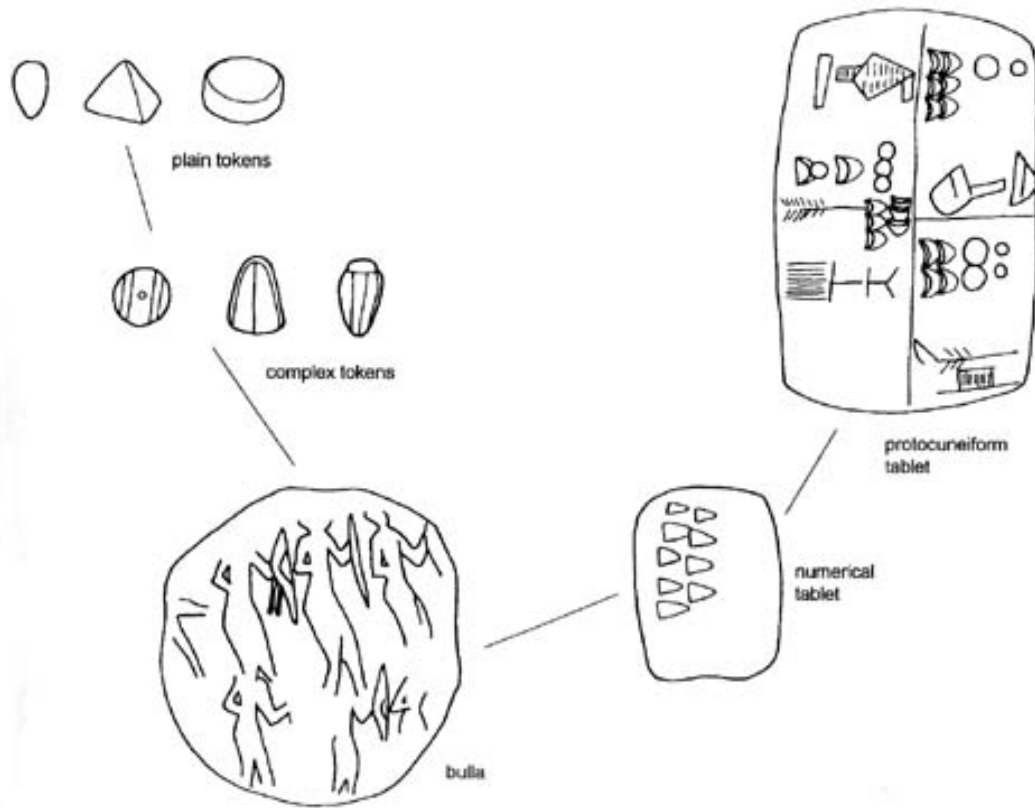


# Uruk conflict – colonialism?



- Dramatic change in mortuary practices
  - Burials disappear, except occasional interments children (Susa with circles of pots)
  - Loss of community ties in favour of link with “Uruk world”

# Clay Tokens and Writing



6.2 Schmandt-Besserat's proposal for the evolution of writing (not to scale) (after Schmandt-Besserat 1992:figs. 6, 7, 12, 68, and 77; Nissen et al. 1990:22 Kat. Nr. 4.24)



# Cuneiform Precursor



# Jemdet Nasr Period



- Uruk collapse – environmental and social factors
- After Uruk in southern Mesopotamia (3100-2900 BC uncalibrated)
- Painted ware: red and black designs on buff background
- Increasing populations
- Extensive irrigation systems
- Towns dominated by temples
- Increased use of writing and seals
- Increased trade and craft specialisation (bronze)
- Direct precursor of Sumerian civilization (Early Dynastic Period)