A COMPARATIVE STUDY BETWEEN THE CITIES OF ANCIENT SUMER AND EGYPT CIVILIZATIONS WITHIN THE FRAME OF GORDON CHILDE'S TEN CRITERIA

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ABSTRACT

A COMPARATIVE STUDY BETWEEN THE CITIES OF ANCIENT SUMER AND EGYPT CIVILIZATIONS WITHIN THE FRAME OF GORDON CHILDE'S TEN CRITERIA

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Although humans have been wandering on earth for 2.5 million years, the concepts of city and urbanism are relatively very new notions with their approximately 6.000 years of past in our history. Our ancestors lived millions of years as hunter-gatherers within small human groups, and they used natural formations like caves, oases, and forests as shelter. Then, just a few thousand years after they invented agriculture, we come across the two earliest and great civilizations: Ancient Sumer first and then Egypt in the 4th millennia B.C. The purpose of this thesis is to provide an evaluation and comparison between the two earliest societies of human civilization by means of their cities rather than defining what a city is. As a starting point and a frame Gordon Childe's ten traits model from his article "The Urban Revolution" was consulted after its validity was discussed. The sample cities studied were Uruk, Ur, and Nippur from the Sumerian Civilization and Thebes, Akhetaten, and Heit el-Ghurab, which was a worker s site, from the Egypt Civilization. It is important to state that the term "civilization" was used in its etymological root from the Latin "civitas", that is, the person who belongs to the city.

Keywords: Ancient Sumerians, Ancient Egypt, Gordon Childe, First Cities

ÖZ

GORDON CHİLDE'IN 10 KRİTERİ KAPSAMINDA ESKİ SÜMER VE MISIR KENTLERİNİN KARŞILAŞTIRMALI BİR ÇALIŞMASI

Kula, Göktuğ
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Her ne kadar insanlar dünya üzerinde 2.5 milyon yıldır dolaşıyor olsalar da, şehir ve kentleşme kavramları yaklaşık 6.000 yıllık geçmişleriyle tarihimizde görece çok yenidir. Atalarımız milyonlarca yıl boyunca küçük insan toplulukları halinde avcı-toplayıcı olarak yaşadılar, ve mağara, vaha ve orman gibi doğal oluşumları barınak olarak kullandılar. Tarımı uygulamaya başladıktan sadece birkaç bin yıl sonra, M.Ö. 4. Bin yılda, iki en erken ve büyük medeniyetle karşılaşıyoruz: İlk olarak antik Sümer ve sonra Mısır. Bu tezin amacı kent kavramını tanımlamaktan çok, insanoğlunun en eski iki uygarlığını kentleri kapsamında değerlendirip, karşılaştırmaktır. Bir başlangıç noktası ve çerçeve sağlaması açısından, geçerliliği tartışıldıktan sonra, Gordon Childe'ın "Kent Devrimi" adlı makalesinde yayınladığı 10 kriterli modele başvurulmuştur. İncelenen örnek kentler, Sümer Uygarlığından Uruk, Ur ve Nippur; Mısır Uygarlığından Thebes, Akhetaten ve bir işçi kasabası olan Heit el-Ghurab yerleşimleridir. Önemle belirtmek gerekir ki "civilization" kavramı latinceden gelen etimolojik anlamıyla yani "şehre ait olan" anlamında kullanılmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Sümerler, Eski Mısır, Gordon Childe, İlk Kentler

To All Unsolved Mysteries of the Ancient World

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ABBREVIATIONS

AD	: Anno Domini
B.C.	: Before Christ
B.C.E	: Before Current Era
C.E.	: Current Era
c.	: Circa
ca.	: Circa

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Aim of the Study

Although humans have been wandering on earth for 2.5 million years, the concepts of city and urbanism are relatively very new notions with their approximately 6.000 years of past in our history. Our ancestors lived millions of years as hunter-gatherers within small human groups, and they used natural formations like caves, oases, and forests as shelter. While the oldest settlements which could accommodate more than a few hundred people and may be called the first towns of our spicy go back approximately 11.000 years ago, the first true cities, accepted by the majority of scholars at the moment, of human civilization are dated back to c. 3500 B.C., and they arose in Mesopotamia.

At this point, however, some questions may come to mind like to what extent are they accepted as a city? Is there a criterion to define which place is a city and which place is not? How did the first cities flourish and evolve under the administration of different societies and rulers in different geographies and climates? Can their urban formations or plans be followed to this day by means of ancient text and archaeological evidence?

To answer these questions, one should go back to the beginning of civilization or the foundation of the first cities in other words. We come across two early societies at the dawn of civilization. One of them is ancient Sumeria in which almost every system modern humans use to regulate society was invented, and the other is ancient Egypt, seemingly the first state which built a national identity in the world (Wilkinson, 2010), also the first society that established a long-term political steadiness in its realm.

Another issue is whether a criterion can be applied to define a city. In this regard, the studies of one of the most significant archaeologists of the 20th century, V. Gordon Childe were used as a means but not an end. Even though the evidence found in some ancient American and African civilizations in later periods set forth that there can be settlements working as cities without showing some of the ten criteria of Childe, his criterion is still useful to draw a frame for the settlements, and they are broadly accepted by the academic circles.

In this sense, the purpose of this thesis is to provide a comparison between the two earliest societies of human civilization by means of their cities rather than defining what a city is.

1.2 Methodology

The main materials of the study are archaeological evidence and the books, articles, or academic dissertations written by scholars using this evidence. The reason for choosing particularly these two societies, ancient Sumer and Egypt, is their very significant role in the history of human civilization. As far as it is known, the first cities, first writing systems, legislations, and states arose from these societies (Kramer, 1963; Wilkinson, 2010).

This study includes a qualitative method consisting of research, analysis, and synthesis stages. A detailed literature review and scanning resources constitute the research part. Then, the settlements of these two civilizations are analyzed by how much they may be considered as a city using Childe's model, and a comparison between them is made. Finally, the findings of the study are synthesized to reach new results.

1.3 Outline of the Thesis

The study consists of 6 main chapters. The first chapter is the introduction which presents the research aim, methodology, thesis outline, and a brief literature review.

Chapter 2 can be separated into three subtitles. The first is regarding cultural evolution discussions which try to explain how societies developed over time. The situation and ideas before Childe will be also given a place. Second, Gordon Childe's ten criteria from "The Urban Revolution" (1950) used by most scholars to define a settlement regarding whether it may count as a city or not will be given in detail. The third is a discussion regarding how valid these ten criteria are by the aspects of scholars from both parties of the discussion.

Chapter 3 presents core knowledge regarding the Sumerian Civilization in its first part. Their geographical region, climate, brief political history, society, culture, religion, and economy. In the second part, cities that will be studied are introduced. Their main characteristics, urban features, and evolution in time will be discussed. The cities are Uruk, the religious city of Nippur, and Ur.

In Chapter 4, the core knowledge concerning Egyptian Civilization will be given parallel to Chapter 3. First, their region, brief political history, society, economy, culture, and religion will be introduced, then their cities. The cities and towns in this part are Thebes (Waset) or modern-day Luxor, the workers' town of Heit el Ghurab, and Akhetaten, or Tell-Amarna with its better-known name.

The fifth chapter constitutes the synthesis of this study. The chapter consists of two main subtitles which are both of them actually a comparison, while the former deals with the subject in regard to Childe's criteria, the latter focuses on a general comparison, that is, the final comparison between the Sumerian and Egyptian societies and cities will be made and the findings will be discussed.

The last chapter is the conclusion in which the outcomes of the study were summarized.

1.4 Main Source Books

Although there are many more references, providing the basic ones that shape the chapters is considered necessary under this title to give readers convenience and help them in further readings. This title can be seen as a brief literature review and detailed references are given at the end of the study.

"The Urban Revolution", one of the most referenced articles of all time, by V. Gordon Childe was used as the main source to define his ten criteria regarding first cities in the second part of chapter 2. As for the discussions related to the validity of Gordon Childe's model, the articles in "The Ancient City" Edited by Joyce Marcus and Jeremy A. Sabloff were used and this part constitutes the backbone of the chapter. For demonstrating the first settlements "Ancient Cities" book by Charles Gates was taken as the basic reference in the third part of chapter 2.

In chapter 3, the Sumerian Civilization is the main topic, and Samuel Noah Kramers' books "The Sumerians" and "The History Begins in Sumer" are the backbone of the discussion. Another significant resource is the book "The Sumerian World" compiled by Harriet Crawford. This book deals with every aspect of the Sumerian world by means of articles written by the masters of the subject. To introduce the Sumerian cities, their archaeological history, general urban scheme, and main buildings "Mesopotamia: The Invention of the City" by Gwendolyn Leick was used in general. For some detail and pictures, the sources of the "World History Encyclopedia" benefited.

The most significant resource book is "A Companion to Ancient Egypt" edited by Allan B. Lloyd which deals with every aspect of the Egyptian world for chapter 4, besides the visual materials of National Geographic Magazine and Encyclopedia Brittanica, various books about the history and culture of Egypt like "The Rise and Fall of Ancient Egypt" by Toby Wilkinson were mostly benefited. As for Egyptian cities, the main source was "The Archaeology of Urbanism in Ancient Egypt" by Nadine Moeller.

Finally, for the comparison and the results in chapter 5, some assistance was taken from the World History Encyclopedia and Bruce Trigger's "Understanding Early Civilizations". However the main resources are again "The Sumerian World" and "A Companion to Ancient Egypt" and also "Handbook to life in Ancient Mesopotamia" by Stephen Bertman.

CHAPTER 2

THE TEN CRITERIA OF GORDON CHILDE AND THEIR VALIDITY

2.1 Before Childe

The terms of neolithic revolution and urban revolution suggested by Childe are also considered in the field of cultural evolution besides archaeology and anthropology by scholars. The field of cultural evolution or sociocultural evolution examines the development of one or more cultures from simpler to more complex forms (Pauls, 2020). Scholars had two approaches regarding cultural evolution. In the beginning, it was viewed as a unilinear phenomenon that describes the evolution of human behavior as a whole in the 18th and 19th centuries. From the mid-20th century onward, the multilinear approach which defends the evolution of cultures or societies that took place individually is dominant (Pauls, 2020).

2.1.1 Unilinear Theory

With the Age of Discovery starting in the 15th century and accelerating in the 16th century, Europeans encountered many different cultures and societies around the Globe. All those societies were technologically primitive to the Europeans and this situation prompted some European intellectuals to consider the reasons behind the development of societies or how a culture can be accepted as a civilization (Pauls, 2020). For example, Thomas Hobbes described indigenous people as groups that spend their life without art, letters, and society. Similarly, the thoughts of the first intellectuals preoccupying the issue were based on such biased and wrong attitudes (Pauls, 2020).

In the Age of Enlightenment, the philosophers had a notion called the natural order which designs progress of the nature. This view was coming from the ancient Greek philosophers and saw the acts of universe as the interconnected rings of a chain. According to them, the world was a complete, orderly, and susceptible to systematic analysis (Pauls, 2020). Therefore, scholars produced various typologies trying to clarify stages of the cultural evolution.

Majority of the scholars focused on three major stages, but some specified many more categories. Marquis de Condorcet listed 10 stages of cultural evolution in his "Sketch for a Historical Picture of the Progress of the Human Mind" in 1795. However, these early claims were based on speculation rather than firm data (Pauls, 2020). Later, the Danish archaeologist Christian Jürgenson Thomsen managed to have a typology based on firm data in his book "Ledetraad til nordisk Oldkyndighed" (A Guide to Northern Antiquities) in 1836. Thomsen categorized ancient European societies according to the tools they used, calling the developmental stages the Stone, Bronze, and Iron ages (Pauls, 2020).

Later in the 19th century, the book "Origin of Species" (1859) and the evolution theory asserted by Charles Darwin made their mark on all fields of science whose subject is human. Not surprisingly, it enormously affected cultural evolution theories as well. Many social scientists adopted the idea of biological evolution and saw that an attractive solution to their questions regarding the origins and development of social behavior, however, mixing cultural evolution and biological evolution was actually an analogy (Pauls, 2020).

From the evolution point of view, the English philosopher Herbert Spencer studied on a general evolutionary scheme that included human societies. He claimed that human cultures evolved from less-complex societies to more complex ones. According to him, people at first lived in undifferentiated hordes, then developed social hierarchies with priests, kings, scholars, workers, and so forth; and later they developed various sciences thanks to differentiated knowledge coming from

different fields of work. Briefly, Spencer asserted that human societies evolved, by means of division of labor, into complex civilizations (Pauls, 2020).

Cultural stages assertions in human evolution were chiefly made and defended by the anthropologists E.B. Tylor in England and Lewis H. Morgan in the United States. In the late 19th century, there was an attitude in which human groups were categorized into three groups which are savagery, barbarism, and civilization asserted by Lewis Henry Morgan (Smith, 2009, as cited in Morgan, 1878). Morgan's approach gained recognition among the early evolutionists, and they consider that ancient people evolved from savages to barbarians to civilized people. However, there was not too much evidence to support or refute these claims at that time (Smith, 2009).

On the other hand, Tylor and Morgan emphasized the analysis of the culture in general, not that of individual cultures (Pauls, 2020). Morgan summed up the precepts of the unilineal approach like this:

> "Since mankind were one in origin, their career has been essentially one, running in different but uniform channels upon all continents, and very similarly in all the tribes and nations of mankind down to the same status of advancement. It follows that the history and experience of the American Indian tribes represent, more or less nearly, the history and experience of our own remote ancestors when in corresponding conditions" (Morgan, 1878).

2.1.2 Multilinear Theory

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, a widespread reaction against generalizations about culture began in America and later Europe. The unilinear approach became to be criticized as racist. Some social scientists began to follow a new trend that regards all cultures as unique in time and place rather than presuming that some peoples were more evolved than others (Pauls, 2020).

"In the early twentieth century, some anthropologists led by Franz Boas stepped back from such speculation. As non-western societies were examined in more detail, Another group of ideas like particularism which rejected the linear evolution of societies, and defended that every culture had its own evolution scheme came into sight" (Smith, 2009, p. 5). On the other hand, archaeologists began to accumulate more data and information regarding past societies and they began to classify them based on the tools and technology (such as the old stone age, new stone age, bronze age, and iron age) they used. However, there was still not enough consideration of social institutions or social changes.

The student of Boas including A.L. Kroeber, Ruth Benedict, and Margaret Mead preferred concentrating on fieldwork among traditional peoples, harvesting a great variety of facts and artifacts as empirical evidence of cultural processes within existing societies rather than following broad generalizations about culture (Pauls, 2020). By doing so, they began to create encyclopedic lists of cultural traits and differences.

In mid 20th century, a number of American anthropologists, including Leslie A. White, Julian H. Steward, Marshall D. Sahlins, and Elman R. Service conceptualized cultural evolution as "Multilinear" i.e. a process which has a number of forward paths of different styles and lengths. They claimed that there is no specific universal evolution that is same for all societies, but all societies experience development and progress in suitable conditions. Later these scientists suggested that the factor making society more developed and dominant to the environment is technological advancement (Pauls, 2020). According to multilinear evolutionists, the whole of world culture can be viewed as the product of a unitary process only due to technological development.

According to Smith (2009), the most important contribution of Gordon Childe was the concepts of the Neolithic and Urban Revolutions which he asserted and can be summarized as Paleolithic, Neolithic, and Urban. With these notions, Childe was re-conceptualizing the archaeological data in social terms, and identifying two major

social transformations. Although this approach was similar to Morgan's savagery, barbarism, and civilization scheme, it was above all based on actual evidence (Smith, 2009).

2.2 The Ten Criteria

To Continue the discussion, it will be useful to give the required information regarding the "Urban Revolution" and the famous ten criteria of Gordon Childe.

Childe's (1950) ten criteria are as follows:

1. **The size of the settlement and its population concentration**
2. **Full-time specialization of labor**
3. **Concentration of surplus and taxation**
4. **Monumental public buildings**
5. **Class society**
6. **Writing**
7. **Exact and predictive sciences**
8. **Figural art**
9. **Foreign trade**
10. **State organization**

Although Childe's model is more about interrelated social, economic, political, and cultural changes that led to the earliest states and cities, rather than merely regarding urbanism, It has some important assertions for early cities to put forward (Smith,

2009). In order to continue the discussion aforementioned, the ten-point model must be highlighted in detail:

2.2.1 The Size of The Settlement And Its Population Concentration.

According to Childe (1950), although they were considerably smaller than many towns or some villages of today, the first cities must have been more densely populated than any previous settlements.

> 'In point of size, the first cities must have been more extensive and more densely populated than any previous settlements.' (p. 9)

Then he continues by stating that there have been made many intensive archaeological excavations in sample quarters in India and Mesopotamia, and in both of them the first cities demonstrate significant similarities with the less industrialized Oriental cities of today (Childe, 1950).

2.2.2 Full-time Specialization of Labor.

When it comes to the specialization of labor, Childe (1950) claims the necessity of a distinction between the professions of the people. There must have been still many peasants and hunters living in cities. However, all cities must have accommodated additional classes who did not procure their own food through agriculture.

> 'In composition and function, the urban population already differed from that of any village … full-time specialist craftsmen, transport workers, merchants, officials, and priests.' (p. 11)

All these labor groups were supported by the surplus produced by the peasants living in the city and dependent villages.

2.2.3 Concentration of Surplus and Taxation

> ‘Each primary producer paid over the tiny surplus he could wring from the soil with his still very limited technical equipment as tithe or tax to an imaginary deity or a divine king who thus concentrated the surplus.’ (p. 11)

According to Childe (1950), without such a concentration no effective capital would have been available since the low productivity of the rural economy.

2.2.4 Monumental Public Buildings

In terms of monumental public buildings, Childe (1950) explains his views through examples from civilizations all over the world. For instance, he mentions that every Sumerian city had stately temples and a central structure called the ziggurat located on a brick platform raised above the surrounding dwellings and usually connected with an artificial mountain.

> ‘Truly monumental public buildings not only distinguish each known city from any village but also symbolize the concentration of the social surplus.’ (p. 12)

2.2.5 Class Society

On the other hand, all people who were not engaged in food production had to be supported by the surplus accumulated in the temple or royal granaries and they were thus dependent on the temple or court.

> ‘But naturally priests, civil and military leaders, and officials absorbed a major share of the concentrated surplus and thus formed a “ruling class”.’ (pp. 12–13)

2.2.6 Writing

One other important aspect of civilization was its writing system according to Childe (1950). According to him, the first writing and numerical notation systems came out of necessity. “The mere administration of the vast revenues of a Sumerian temple or an Egyptian pharaoh by a perpetual corporation of priests or officials obliged its members to devise conventional methods of recording that should be intelligible to all their colleagues and successors.” (Childe, 1950, p. 14). Unsurprisingly, although writing was a common trait among the first civilizations of the world from Central America to the Indus basin, their writing materials and the characters used were very different.

2.2.7 Exact and Predictive Sciences

> ‘The elaboration of exact and predictive sciences – arithmetic, geometry, and astronomy.’ (p. 14)

The invention of writing caused knowledge to be transferred to future generations therefore some clerks who had leisure time could find the opportunity to develop exact and predictive sciences (Childe, 1950, p.14). Although these “sciences” were under the heel of dogmatic beliefs and seen as the gods’ order, the first implementations of geometry, arithmetic, and astronomy could emerge in the first cities. Childe (1950) claims that the emergence of science was mostly the need for a calendar system to calculate the seasons of the year and regulate successfully the cycle of agricultural operations.

2.2.8 Figural Art

> ‘Conceptualised and sophisticated styles [of art].’ (p. 15)

Childe (1950) continues mentioning the fact that accumulated concentrated social surplus supported other specialists such as artists and musicians, besides state and

temple officials, in order to give a new direction to artistic expression. Next, he draws attention to the differences in artistic tendency between the ages.

> "Savages even in paleolithic times had tried, sometimes with astonishing success, to depict animals and even men as they saw them - concretely and naturalistically. Neolithic peasants never did that; they hardly ever tried to represent natural objects but preferred to symbolize them by abstract geometrical patterns which at most may suggest by a few traits a fantastical man or beast or plant" (Childe, 1950, p.15).

Then he highlighted the essential difference between the above and civilizations.

> "But Egyptian, Sumerian, Indus and Maya artist-craftsmen - full-time sculptors, painters, or seal-engravers - began once more to carve, model, or draw likenesses of persons or things, but no longer with the naive naturalism of the hunter, but according to conceptualized and sophisticated styles which differ in each of the four urban centers" (Childe, 1950, p.15).

2.2.9 Foreign Trade

'Regular "foreign" trade over quite long distances.' (p. 15)

The development of foreign trade was again an outcome of the concentrated social surplus. Early civilizations could pay for the importation of raw materials which they need for nutrition, industry, or religion and which were not available locally. This foreign trade could have occurred quite long distances surprisingly. Mesopotamian trading with the Indus civilization in India can be given as an example.

2.2.10 State Organization

'A State organization based now on residence rather than kinship.' (p. 16)

Emerging of social classes, social stratification, the process of protecting existing surplus, the organization of this surplus, and the need for regulating social order led to emerging of the state structure. According to Childe (1950), especially the need for security played an important role in some people's losing their independency to temples and courts. "Yet in return for security, they became dependent on temple or court and were relegated to the lower classes." (Childe, 1950, p. 16).

2.3 The Criticism and Support for Childe

Since it has been published, "The Urban Revolution" was one of the most cited and referenced articles among scholars from every branch of social sciences (Smith, 2009). Consequently, there are criticisms as much as support for Childe. Although some of the criticisms are based on a sound basis and highly accepted, Childe's ten traits still can not be wholly ignored in academic circles. In this part, first, some of the criticisms directed toward the model of Childe will be addressed, and the views of those defending that the ten traits are still a good frame of reference will be given a place later.

One topic of discussion regarding determining the first civilizations or cities is the writing system that they used. Childe saw writing as an essential aspect of urbanism and gave it a place in his ten criteria. Going Further, Sjöberg (1960, p. 33) claimed that "the use of a writing system is the single firm criterion for distinguishing the city from other types of early settlements." However, there are other views asserting that the concept of a city can be mentioned without a writing system developed by the society living in it. To illustrate, van de Mierop (2004) claims that Uruk in Mesopotamia was a city several hundred years before cuneiform script emerged in ca. 3200 B.C. In addition, it is known that the Inka civilization had very populated settlements while they had no script (Hansen, 2008).

Hansen (2008) continues the discussion by giving examples of some populated Neolithic settlements such as Çatal Höyük in Turkey, Sesklo in Thessaly, and the

forty determined Neolithic cities in China. He states that if writing was a prerequisite for urbanism, we would have to neglect these settlements (Hansen, 2008). On the grounds that no special buildings testifying to a separation of function have been found in Çatal Höyük, Renfrew rejects the view that this place was a city (Hansen, 2008). According to Hansen (2008), however, it is possible that the separation of function and division of labor does not show themselves in the physical remains of Çatal Höyük.

Conversely, Hansen (2008) also states that writing is found in civilizations without cities and he gives the Scandinavian runes which were written on stone, bone, and wood as an example by referring to Knirk (1993). These runes were used for some 700 years before the earliest towns grew up in the southern part of Denmark (Knirk, 1993, p. 545-546).

In terms of monumental public buildings, Hansen (2008) argued that "they are indeed found in many early cities all over the world, from Mesoamerica to Mesopotamia." (p. 69). However, he continues by adding "There are no palaces or temples which have been found in the cities of the Indus civilization." (as cited in Kenoyer, 2007, p. 183), (Marcus & Sabloff, 2008, p. 69). Adding also that many Chinese, some African cities, and some Greek colonies had no monumental building. Therefore, Hansen (2008) claims that "the presence of monumental public buildings is not an essential criterion to be used in a definition of what a city is." (Marcus & Sabloff, 2008, p. 69).

Conversely, some civilizations had monumental architecture but no cities. Early Medieval Ireland had impressive monasteries but no cities until Norwegian Vikings in the early century founded Dublin and the other Viking cities (Hansen, 2008 as cited in Holm, 2000). Stonehenge, similarly, is accepted as monumental architecture, but there is no sign of urbanism in the neighborhood (Hansen, 2008).

Another criterion that became a matter of debate was the relationship between the city and the state structure. "Childe takes it for granted that politically urbanized civilizations were organized as states" (Marcus & Sabloff, 2008, p. 69). According

to Hansen (2008), statehood and urbanism are often combined, but not always. Furthermore, there are cases of civilizations organized as states but without cities, and conversely, urbanized civilizations are not organized as states.

Anglo-Saxon kingdoms in their early period (ca. 500-700) (Arnold, 1997) and most of the Bantu-speaking kingdoms in Uganda such as Ankole are considered early states but they had no cities (Hansen, 2000; Oberg, 1940; Steinhart, 1978). On the other hand, Hansen (2008) mentions examples of cities without state organization such as Yako in Nigeria.

"The Yako was settled in five towns or cities of 2.000- 11.000 inhabitants each. These cities were governed by a crisscrossing system of patri- and matri-clans, but there was no central authority to enforce a legal order." (Hansen, 2008; as cited in Forde 1964, Hansen 2000a: 26-27). He also continues by giving the example of Mecca and Medina in the age of Mohammed since these cities were situated along the caravan route from Palmyra to Aden, but they did not have a complex state structure (Hansen, 2008).

Hansen's (2008) criticism constitutes a very important one to ten traits of Childe as it carries the discussion around the world rather than Mediterranean Basin.

Although there are ongoing discussions, most academicians accept Childe's ten criteria as a useful starting point and a good frame of reference.

> "Childe's list has been criticized as inadequate to explain the variety of urban formations around the world (see Hansen 2008). But, his criteria are a useful
>
> starting point to explain the rise of urbanism in the Old World." (Gates, 2011, p.3)
>
> "I have tried to show the importance of V. Gordon Childe's ten-point model of the Urban Revolution in two realms:

1) as the first substantial social synthesis of archaeological data on the earliest states and cities, this model marked a major advance in scholarship in the mid-twentieth century; and

2) Childe's model forms the basis for almost all subsequent theorizing on the development and operation of the earliest states and cities." (Smith, 2009, p.22)

"Most of all, perhaps, we will remember him as the man who made order out of archaeological chaos… It hardly matters that some details of Childe's scheme don't fit the current North American data. What matters is that Childe had a vision of evolution at a time when other archaeologists had only chronology charts." (Flannery, 1994, 109–10) (Smith, 2009, p. 4, as cited in Flannery, 1994, p. 109-10).

After all, it is seen that, due to its adaptability and simplicity, there is no drawback to using Childe's model as a frame of reference for this study in the following parts.

Figure 2.1. Gordon Childe (Swan Watson, 1930)

CHAPTER 3

ANCIENT SUMERIAN CIVILIZATION

The Southwest region of the Asia continent witnessed major changes on behalf of the human civilization ca 4000 B.C. in other words, some six thousand years ago. The first civilizations or the first people living in what we may call cities arose in the northeastern section of today's Middle East region. Settlements lying along two very important rivers, which are the Euphrates and the Tigris, became the first cities of human civilization by gradually increasing their size, reaching diverse and complex social stratification, and above all producing classes of people whose professions were other than agriculture. While Cities that may be examples of this were Uruk, Ur, and Nippur, the people who perform this revolution were called the Sumerians.

The civilization owes too much to the Sumerians. They invented and implemented the first known writing system, astronomical calculations, and the first law system. They also developed advanced mathematics, including a base 60 system that created the sixty-second minute, sixty minutes hour, and a 360-degree circular angle (Stearns and others, 2007).

In this chapter, the physical geography and climate, the brief political history of ancient Sumeria, its culture and religion, the basic economic structure, and the social structure, will be briefly introduced to prepare the readers for the following discussions. Later, the evolution of the cities in ancient Sumeria from the Uruk period to the Ur dynasty will be discussed in company with the settlement plans and archaeological evidence.

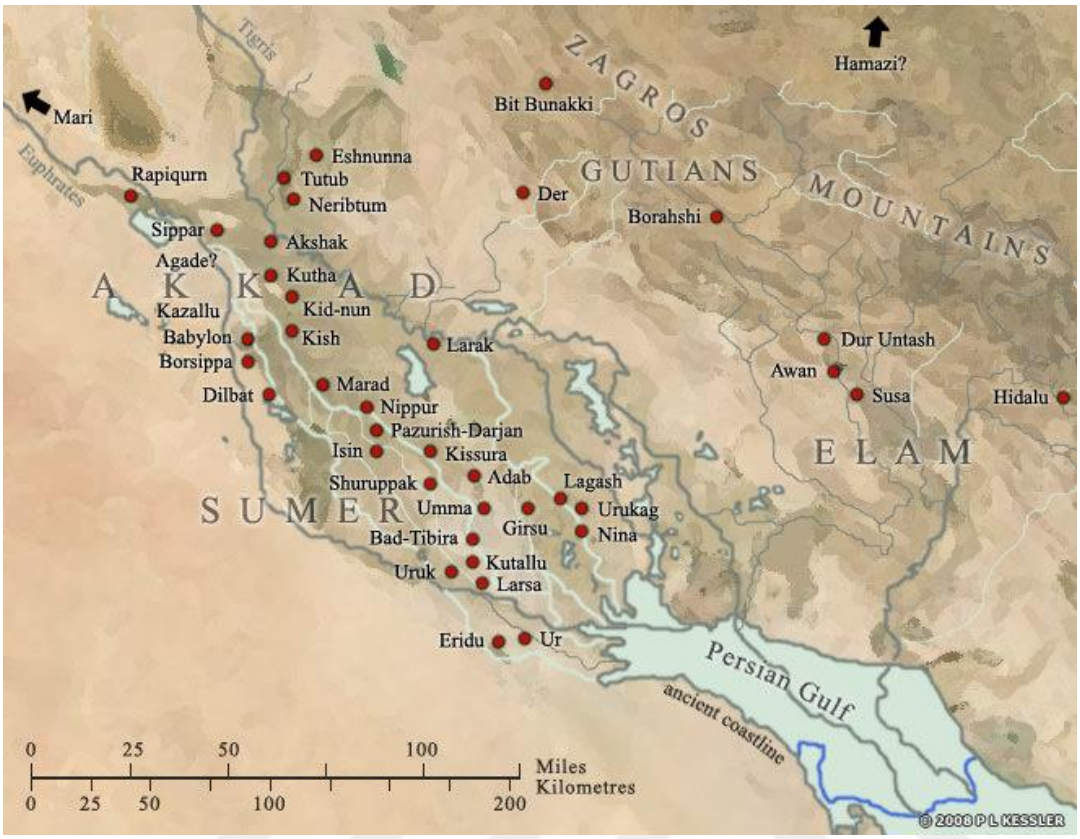


Figure 3.1. Sumerian City-states (Kessler, 2013)

3.1 The General Characteristics of the Sumerian Civilization

3.1.1 The Geography and Climate of Mesopotamia

If it is supposed to examine geography which gave life to the first cities of human civilization in detail, one should start by defining the land called Mesopotamia. The word Mesopotamia is a Greek word and it means the land between the rivers. These rivers are the Tigris and Euphrates which arise from the southeastern region of modern-day Turkey.

While the Euphrates goes across northeast Syria and southwest Iraq, the Tigris flows through northern Iraq and passes through the capital city of Baghdad. After These

two rivers join in the north of Basra, the location called Shatt al-Arab, they flow into the Persian Gulf. In a broad sense, the region called Greater Mesopotamia extends from south of the Taurus Mountains to the Persian Gulf and from the Arabian plateau in the west to the Zagros Mountains in the east. The area covers some parts of the modern states of Turkey, Iran, Syria, and all of modern Iraq and Kuwait. The region is located in Southwest Asia.

As for climate, although there are differences between plains and mountainous terrain, the climate shows a distinguishable characteristic between the seasons. In the plains, while the summer seasons are very hot and dry, winters are warm and rainy. On the other hand, summer heats are lower, and winters are very snowy in the mountainous zones (Widel, as cited in Crawford, 2013).

In general, there are severe sandstorms in July, and there is very little rainfall between May and October. However, the hot and dry wind blowing from the northwest affects the all-region and causes quite hot temperatures to continue during the months (Ana Britannica, 1989).

The precipitation regime is fluxional in Mesopotamia contrary to Egypt. While it is about 400 mm annually in the Tigris-Euphrates basin, it is 100 mm in the Southwest desert and mountains receive approximately 1000 mm of rain annually (Ana Britannica, 1989).

The most important reasons why the cities arose in southern Mesopotamia are, first the alluvial soil deposited here carried by the waters of the Euphrates and Tigris rivers, and second, the freshwater that the same rivers provided.

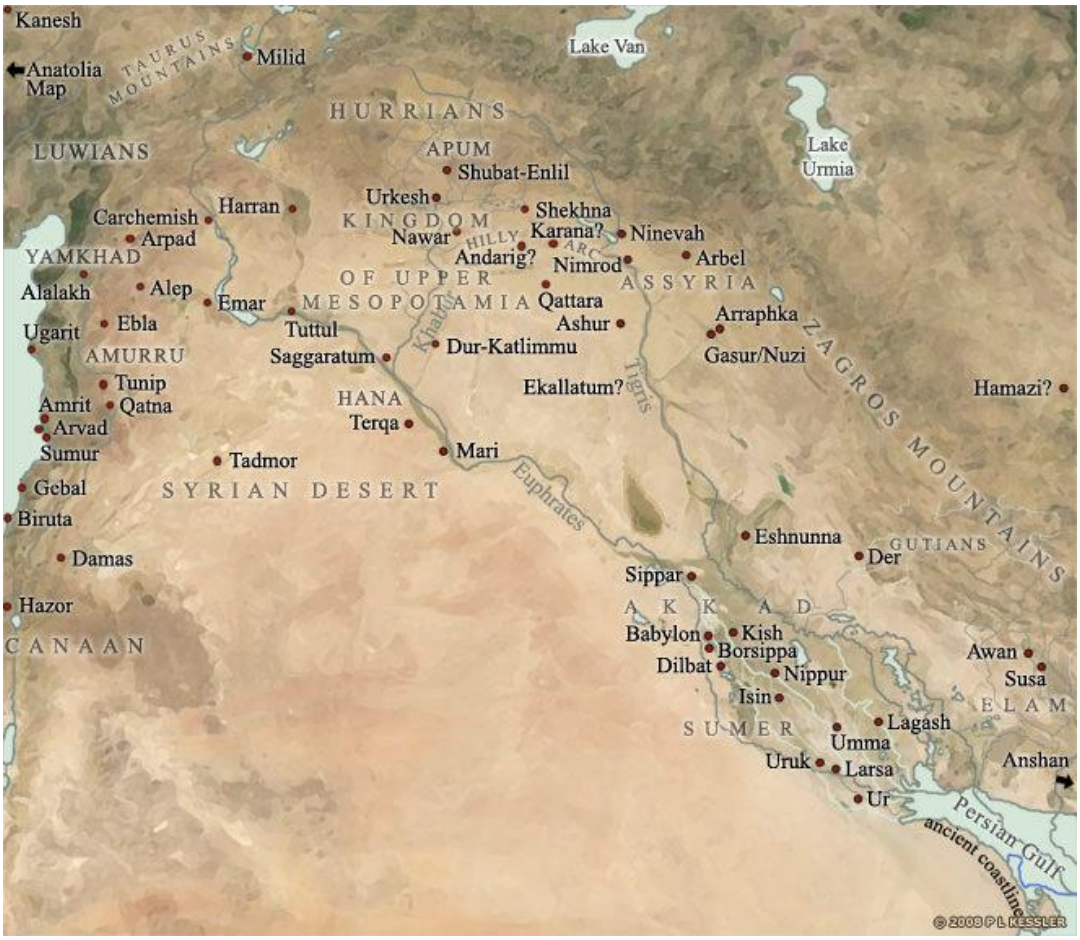


Figure 3.2. Mesopotamia (Kessler, 2012)

3.1.2 The Brief History of Sumerians

Although scholars have some strong and convincing evidence, the resources regarding the history of Sumerians are very hard to discover, insufficient, and devoid of integrity (Kramer, 1963). Contrary to Egypt, where the monuments were constructed out of stone, the material structures were not durable to stand for a very long time, and conditions of the climate were more unpredictable and brutal to protect the cities and monuments as a whole in Mesopotamia. Wars and invasions frequently happened throughout history in the region also would not help their situation. However, as it has been mentioned earlier, there are some reliable sources

for experts to form a scheme of political or daily life, history, and so on in Sumerian Land.

According to Kramer (1963), c. B.C. 2500 the scribes developed a more useful and pratic method of historical recording in which the years were given names by outstanding religious and political events rather than dynasty by dynasty. With this method, the scribes compiled the lists of kings, their reign duration, and succession for modern-day scholars to rearrange.

One of the most valuable documents prepared by the above-mentioned method is the Sumerian King List. In this document, most of the Sumerian rulers and the period of their reign were recorded from the beginning of history according to Sumerians to many kings of the Isin Dynasty, which its reign began in B.C. 1950 (Kramer, 1963). Another important source is what may be termed as 'Royal Correspondence' which consists of the letters written by rulers and their officials. In these letters, actions had been done, the rivalry between the state officials, the plots, and the motives to perform their duties revealed and they constitute a notable record for both history and literature.

Because there were about a dozen city-states, and most of them had their own dynasties, it is very difficult to mention every ruler in this study. Therefore, the ones having the most significance at a particular time will be given a place.

At the head of the estates were priest-kings called patesi or ensi, who claimed to rule the country in the name of Gods (DFT Tarih, 2022). In the early days, however, they were humble rulers who were no more than a peer among peers (Kramer, 1963). In time, they increased their status and gained some divine powers.

Mixed with mythology, the gods gave the task of establishing the first kingdom on earth to the rulers of the city of Eridu before the Great Flood, which was actually a regional disaster (DFT Tarih, 2022). According to the Sumerian King List, The 8 kings of Eridu ruled the Sumer land for thousands of years till the great flood.

After the disaster, king Etana, ruler of the city of Kish and probably a real person, ruled the land peacefully and in abundance around 2900 B.C. However, the first person on the Sumerian King lists whose existence can be proven is Enmebaragesi, the 22nd King of Kish (DFT Tarih, 2022). Enmebaragesi who controlled most of the Sumerian cities followed an expansionist policy, and he defeated Elamites, coming from the east, in the first recorded conflict of history in c. 2700 B.C. However, at similar times, Meshkiangasher, the priest of the Eanna temple in Uruk, and his son Enmerkar rebelled against Enmebaragesi and founded their own dynasty in Uruk (DFT Tarih, 2022). At that time, Uruk and the cities around constituted an alternative to the Kish Dynasty and Sumerians showed a dual political organization.

Uruk Dynasty raised important figures such as Lugalbanda, Dumuzid, and Gilgamesh, who came to power in turn. Especially Gilgamesh is one of the well-known characters in Sumerian history and mythology (DFT Tarih, 2022). During the reign of Gilgamesh, Kish's sovereignty over the country was broken. Following this, the three dynasties of Kish, Uruk, and the Ur dynasty founded by Mesannepada fought for years to gain superiority over each other.

Figure 3.3. Gilgamesh Wrestling with Two Bulls (Amin, 2019)

These conflicts between the three kingdoms weakened the Sumerian land and made them vulnerable targets for the invaders. Elamites and the Hamazi Kingdom in the east took advantage of this situation, and they achieved dominance over the Sumer land for a short period. Although the kings of Uruk expelled the Elamites and other foreign forces, they could not establish an ultimate union among the city-states and the conflicts continued (DFT Tarih, 2022).

The sources mention Lugal Annemundu, the king of Adab, as the new founder of the Sumerian Land for this period. Lugal Annemundu managed to defeat 13 other Ensi and established order all over the Sumerian cities. However, his success was a short-term victory. After his death, the cities declared their independence one by one. The Sumerian land lost its political unity one more time.

While the long-term ongoing wars and conflicts did not allow Sumerians to establish a durable political union and central authority, they also cause their political history to become very difficult to record. However, among the city-states, the city of Lagash

attracts attention since its political history can be followed relatively without interruption. By means of the documents found in Lagash, historians can make coherent comments for the city regarding the period between 2450 and 2350 B.C.

In 2450 B.C. a man called Ur-Nanshe took over the power and declared himself the king of Lagash. Ur-Nanshe could make his kingdom dominant over some small states located around the Persian Gulf. After Ur-Nanshe, his son Akurgal and later his son Eannatum took the throne. His military conquests made Eannatum the most powerful person of his age. He could conquer important cities and parts of the Elamite Kingdom and south Sumeria. He especially entered into a relentless struggle with the neighboring city Umma, and humiliatingly defeated them. After he died, his brother Eannatum the second became king and Lagashians quelled the revolt of Umma at his time.

In the forthcoming years, the rulers of Lagash became to lose their charisms in the eye of the public. Whilst the social order was damaged, bribery and despotism became very common. Furthermore, the kings who were liable to solve the problems became wealthier and more neglectful day by day. In such an environment, Urukagina, accepted as the first revolutionist in history, came into prominence with his ideas among the public. By taking public support, he succeeded to overthrow Lugalanda and sat on the Lagash throne. Urukagina is well-known for his legal reforms rather than his wars. Nevertheless, his end would not be a happy one.

While there was a revolutionary atmosphere in Lagash, there were also significant changes in its arch-rival city of Umma. Similar to Lagash, a man named Lugal Zagesi raised among the public and took over control of Umma. However, there were his military abilities rather than egalitarian ideas behind his success and charism. After coming to power, Lugal Zagesi captured the cities around him. In the 7th year of his reign, he conquered the important city of Uruk (DFT Tarih, 2022). Finally, he and his army triumphed over Urukagina, the first revolutionary in history, and Lagash city where its people once defeated and humiliated them. Thus, Lugal Zagesi took over control of south Sumeria. Since his expansion was well-planned and Umma-

centered, this period of Sumerians could be considered a centralized kingdom (DFT Tarih, 2022).

Lugal Zagesi, who unified the South, directed his way to the northern ‘Sumerian’ cities. However, at that time it began to be difficult to call northern cities Sumerian because these areas were now demographically differentiated. The reason of this was Akkadians. Akkadians, thought to be of Semitic origin, came to the desert region to the west of the Euphrates between 3000-2850 and became neighbors with the Sumerian society. As these foreign immigrants increased in numbers, they became the majority in the northern parts of Southern Mesopotamia. Akkadians gained power in time by taking advantage of internal disturbances and finally became rulers in old Sumerian cities. Although they had adopted some aspects of Sumerian city culture, they continued to speak the Semitic Akkad language.

Lugalzagesi managed to take over some northern cities, however, he was defeated by Sargon, who was the commander of the army of the city of Kish. This defeat was so formidable that Sargon followed his headless opponent alongside the Sumeria rather than stay on the defense, and conquered all Sumerian cities one by one. According to ancient tablets, he and his soldiers washed their swords in the water of Basra.

Sargon, who completely conquered the country of South Sumer, broke his loyalty to his master Ur Zababa, the king of Kish, and he declared his kingdom in the lands he took in 2334 B.C. (DFT Tarih, 2022). Later, Sargon expanded his territory alongside Mesopotamia and his successors conquered the region of the Levant. In a few decades, the Akkadian zone of influence reached a huge area from Egypt to the Caspian Sea. Due to all these military successes and the size of his country, Sargon is accepted as the first emperor in history by historians.

Figure 3.4. Sargon of Akkad

The Sumerians revolted against the rule of Akkad many times, however, each was unsuccessful. In the time of Naramsin, the grandson of Sargon, Akkadians saw both their peak and destruction. Naramsin had declared himself a God and he ordered to be demolished of the sacred temple of Nippur in which there were statues of sacred deities of the Sumerians.

Finally, Akaddians began to lose their powers most probably due to short-term climate changes, scarcity, and natural disasters. The Sumerians and Gutis, from the Zagros Mountains, saw this as an opportunity. While Guties occupied many cities, Sumerians rebelled against Akkad and they managed to gain their independence. However, there was a Gutian dominance over them in this period. A few decades later, the Sumerians managed to expel the Gutis from their country under the leadership of Utu Hengal. Utu Hengal merged the country again, however, his leadership would not be a long one.

In the seventh year of Utu-hengal's reign in B.C. 2112, Ur Nammu, the ensi of Ur, also took Lagash and rebelled against his king. He arrived in Uruk and took the throne by force. With this attempt, Ur Nammu became the sovereign power of Sumer and established the 3rd Dynasty of Ur, he enacted the Laws of Ur-Nammu, the oldest extant written example of law.

Approximately a hundred years-long period of the Dynasty of Ur III. was a stage when the land of Sumer, which had been devastated by wars, was prospering again. Under the leadership of the Kings of Ur, temples, waterways, walls, roads, shelters, palaces, and many more were rebuilt. Thus, the Sumerian culture regained its bright days. For this reason, this period was called the "Sumerian Renaissance Period" and the newly established structure was called the "New Sumerian State" (DFT Tarih, 2022). Many of the literary documents were rewritten and reached to this day from this period.

The New Sumerian State reached its peak in the time of king Shulgi, who ascended the throne after Ur Nammu and manage to dominate Mesopotamia and Elamite land. After a few decades, however, the raids of Amorites from the west and Elamites from the southeast weakened the family's authority.

After the Dynasty of Ur III, the superiority of the city of Isin was seen in Sumer Land for 200 years. Then the city of Larsa, under the leadership of king Rim Sin defeated Isin after a long conflict and took over the country in c. 1790 B.C. Unfortunately, like many of times it was seen in Sumer history, Rim Sin too could not possess the throne for a long time. A leader of Amuri origin named Hammurabi, who previously ruled Babylon, one of the non-important northern cities, came to the fore. Finally, they became enemies and Hammurabi gave an end to the archaic Sumerian state in c. 1760 B.C. (DFT Tarih, 2022).

When Hammurabi conquered the Sumerians the demographical structure of Mesopotamia already became very complex and Sumerian traditions merged with other peoples'. However, Babylon Kingdom followed and maintained the Sumerian Culture and took them as an example for many aspects.

3.1.3 Religion of Ancient Sumerians

All city-states, consequently the cities had a protector god or goddess in ancient Mesopotamia and a temple devoted to that deity. Creation myths play an important role in the Sumerian religion as in every other civilization and culture. Contrary to Egypt, the Sumerians perceived their deities as cruel entities who could suddenly and arbitrarily bring floods and other disasters (Stearns and others, 2007). Furthermore, belief in the afterworld was also described as a cold and dark place for the dead. The reader will see in the following paragraphs that there are many common things between the ancient Sumerian religion and the beliefs of today.

The main source of the Sumerian creation myth is the prologue of a Sumerian poet called *Gilgamesh, Enkidu, and the Land of the Dead* by Samuel Noah Kramer and published by Hugo Radau in 1910 (Kramer, 1972).

In the beginning, there was an eternal primeval sea that surrounded every side. Then, the primeval sea created the cosmic mountain which consists of earth and heaven banded together. Later, the gods were personified, and An (heaven) was masculine while Ki (Earth) was Feminine. The god of air Enlil was born by intercourse between An and Ki. After Enlil was born he separated the earth and the heaven. Then, Enlil joined Ki, and from this union, all the plant and animal life on earth is produced. According to Kramer (1972), Goddess Ki transformed into mother Goddess Ninhursag in time. Enlil then created the moon god Nanna, who created the sun god Utu. Enlil and Ki, air and earth joined to produce Enki the god of water vegetation, and wisdom. Enki gathered together a part of the primordial sea and squeezed it into the rivers Tigris and Euphrates.

According to Kramer (1963), Although there were hundreds of gods and deities, the most important ones were these four: **An**, the god of the sky, **Enlil**, the god of air, **Enki**, the god of water, and mother goddess **Ninhursag** (Ki). As seconder importance, There were also three great gods: Moon goddess **Nanna** (Sin), her son sun god **Utu**, and her daughter **Inanna** (Ishtar) goddess of love.

Figure 3.5. Sumerian Gods and Goddesses (Papazian, 2015)

3.1.4 Social and Political Organization

The basic unit of the political organization was the city-states in which an urban king, who claimed great authority, ruled the city and its agricultural hinterland in Sumeria. There were also local councils advising the king in some cities. (Stearns and others, 2007). All states have defined boundaries, courts for justice, and a distinctive army. The city-states also regulated religion. King and priests had control of vast amounts of land. Slaves, who had been conquered in wars with nearby tribes, worked this land (Stearns and others, 2007, p.29).

However, it is necessary to state that the kings' and temples' situation was not always so dominant. The Sumerians were a more equal society in the beginning. Kramer (1963) states that "In early days political power lay in the hands of free citizens and a city governor known as *ensi*, who was no more than a peer among peers. In case of decisions vital to the city as a whole, these free citizens met in a bicameral assembly consisting of an upper house of 'elders' and a lower house of 'men'."

(p.74). In those days temples possessed a modest quantity of the land, and other parts of the land belonged to other citizens in different ratios (Kramer, 1963).

Wars very often occurred between the Sumerian city-states because of the lack of natural barriers and rivalry between them. When the pressure made by barbarians living east and west of the Sumerian country increased, military leadership became a necessity, and an authority, a king, came one step forward among those peers. (Kramer, 1963). According to Kramer (1963) again, "at first, he was probably selected and appointed by the assembly at a critical moment for a specific military task. But gradually kingship with all its privileges and prerogatives became a hereditary institution and was considered the very hallmark of civilization." (p.74)

Nevertheless, Priests, aristocrats, and soldiers constituted a very small part of Sumerian society. The majority were farmers, animal breeders, fishermen, traders, craftsmen, doctors, architects so on and so forth (Kramer, 1963). Among them, there were many families which had wealth and large territories. However, the essential point is even poor people could have farms, land, houses, and animals in Sumer society.

Most of the information known regarding Sumerian economic and social life was based on rigorous analysis and studies of Russian academist I. M. Diakanoff in 1959. (Kramer, 1963).

According to them, Sumerian society was consisting of four social classes. These were the nobility, ordinary citizens, clients, and slaves. The nobility owned a vast amount of territory both in person and inherited from their family. They were also inspecting and monitoring temples' land and properties. In time, power struggles took place inevitably between clergymen and rulers but it seems that this struggle resulted on behalf of the nobility. (Kramer, 1963).

Ordinary citizens or common people i.e. had also plots of land, but as a member of a family rather than as an individual. These people constituted the lower house of the assembly. (Kramer, 1963).

The clients consisted of three classes. The first was the temple executives or high priests, and skilled craftsmen. They were well-situated people. The second was temple officers who took care of daily business in temples. Finally, the manservants of the noble people. The first two groups owned small lands in temple territory providing that they were temporal property (Kramer, 1963).

The fourth class was the slaves. Like every other ancient civilization, Sumerians had also slaves. Most of the slaves were prisoners of war, but they did not have to be from foreign races. A Sumerian from another city, if captivated in a battle, could be enslaved. Furthermore, free people could be enslaved in exchange for their debt for a while. A slave is the property of his or her master. He could be punished severely, however, the Sumerians would not mostly prefer to put these penalties in action. In general, the slaves were treated well and they had some rights like establishing business connections, and above all purchasing their freedom (Kramer, 1963).

Like every other society, the family had a special significance in Sumeria. The family was the basic unit, and its members had responsibilities to each other. Marriage was organized by the parents, and engagement was valid at the moment from a gift presented to the family of the bride by the groom. This engagement was completed with a contract written on a cuneiform tablet. The Sumerian legislation used to give women important rights. They could own properties, make some business, and act as a witness in the courts. However, the men were one step ahead in social life (Kramer, 1963).

When it comes to written law, it was undoubtedly very important and regulatory in Sumer society since they had developed social and economic organization. There are written documents of selling transactions of commodities such as houses, lands, and slaves, and they were subject to some legislation. Again, one known earliest law reform was made by Urukagina in Sumer land in c. 2350 B.C. (Kramer, 1963).

Figure 3.6. Code of Ur-Nammu (Amin, 2014)

Shortly before the reign of Urukagina, there was a chaotic and despotical situation in the city of Lagash. Rulers coming to power with the promise of ending wars and securing justice just increased their wealth and created corrupt bands consisting of bureaucrats and clergymen. While ongoing wars became violent, the people were crushed by the heavy burden of increased taxes. Bribery and favoritism became very common. Then, according to a historian of the time, Urukagina was chosen by Ningirsu, the patron god of the city, to restore order. He listened to God and made

the law what he said. Then, he caused them to write what is known today as Urukagina Reform Text (Kramer, 1963).

With this text, Urukagina reduced the taxes, forbade the officials to seize people's properties, and regulated the bureaucracy again (Kramer, 1963).

Since the Sumerian political and social organization was very long-lasting, it created traditions. However, these traditions encountered some alteration in an acrimonious way in later periods. After the Sumerians, legislation became more oppressive and towards controlling the social life of the society in Mesopotamia. For example, Hammurabi, the king of Babylon, enacted a series of laws described as an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth in other words, prone to violence contrary to the Sumerians. In parallel to this, the role of women in social life dramatically decreased after the Sumerians.

3.1.5 Economy in Ancient Sumeria

Thanks to political stability and the use of writing, the Sumerians managed to create economic prosperity in their region on their terms. The farmers were skillful people who quickly learned how to cultivate date trees, onions, and garlic (Stearns and others, 2007).

People were making agriculture and obtaining surplus production before the Sumerians. However, this surplus production reached a sustainable and large amount in the time of the Sumerians for the first time in Human History, and it began to be taxed by the government. With the accumulation of this surplus product, the farmers began to deposit their production to temples and priests. Religious officials began to loan these deposits to people who needed them on the condition that they must return their debt with a fair amount exceed. In other words, they invented the system of banking and interest. In this sense, the first banks were the temples, and the first bankers were the religious officials (Eğilmez, 2018).

On the other hand, Lower Mesopotamia can be easily considered a land of scarcity in terms of raw materials. Although, agricultural and animal materials could be obtained by means of fertile land and they were relatively abundant, basic raw materials such as tin, copper, bitumen, valuable stones, and timber were inadequate. Therefore, they needed to be traded (Çevik, 2005, p.41). Archaeological evidence shows that raw materials were imported from Iran in the east, Syria in the west, and Anatolia in the north (Çevik, 2005).

There was a free market economy to some extent in Sumer city-states. Artisans and craftsmen could sell their products in allocated places in the city, and they were taking their payment by swapping other goods or they could take metal (mostly silver) discs or sticks of different weights (Kramer,1963). In other words, a kind of coin, however, there was no standardization in the modern sense, and these metals were not coined by the state.

Plenty of documents have been excavated that demonstrate real estate sales between people having private property in Fara and Bismaya from the date of c. 2500 B.C. One of these documents shows that even the king himself could not seize property, and he must pay its price. This evidence was confirmed in the Urukagina reform text expressing that poor and low-class people could own properties like houses, gardens, and fishery ponds (Kramer, 1963).

3.1.6 Sumerian Culture

“The Sumerians stand alone in human history in many respects. Their language has no known relatives, and their architecture and artifacts do not indicate ethnic ties with the cultures of other regions.” (Gates, 2011, p.31). However, there is a continuity of the material remains in their cities between neolithic cultures and them. Therefore, scholars predict that the Sumerians came to the region at the end of the 6^{th} Millennia B.C. which time is well before their invention of writing. (Gates, 2011).

(Stearns and others, 2007, p.29) claim that, writing was the most important invention between the advent of agriculture and the age of the steam engine. There are different claims with its exact date. However, most of the resources assert that cuneiform was invented in Sumeria in 3200 B.C.

“Sumerian writers used a wedge-shaped stick to impress the symbols on clay tablets. The resulting writing is called cuneiform, meaning wedge-shaped, and it was used for several thousand years in the Middle East for many different languages.” (Stearns and others, 2007, p.29). Since Cuneiform writing was not easy for everyone, and it took time to excel at, the class of scribes who monopolized it emerged and gained power in time.

The first known epic of Human Civilization was written down by the Sumerians circa 2000 B.C. It was told orally since the 7th Millennium among generations. Its Name was the Epic of Gilgamesh. He was probably a real person whose story was legendised later, and the king of Uruk. This story was describing the great flood. According to the story, Gilgamesh sought immortality, however, he couldn’t change his and other people’s destiny controlled by the gods. (Stearns and others, 2007).

Figure 3.7. A Part of the Epic of Gilgamesh (Amin, 2014)

3.2 The Sumerian Cities

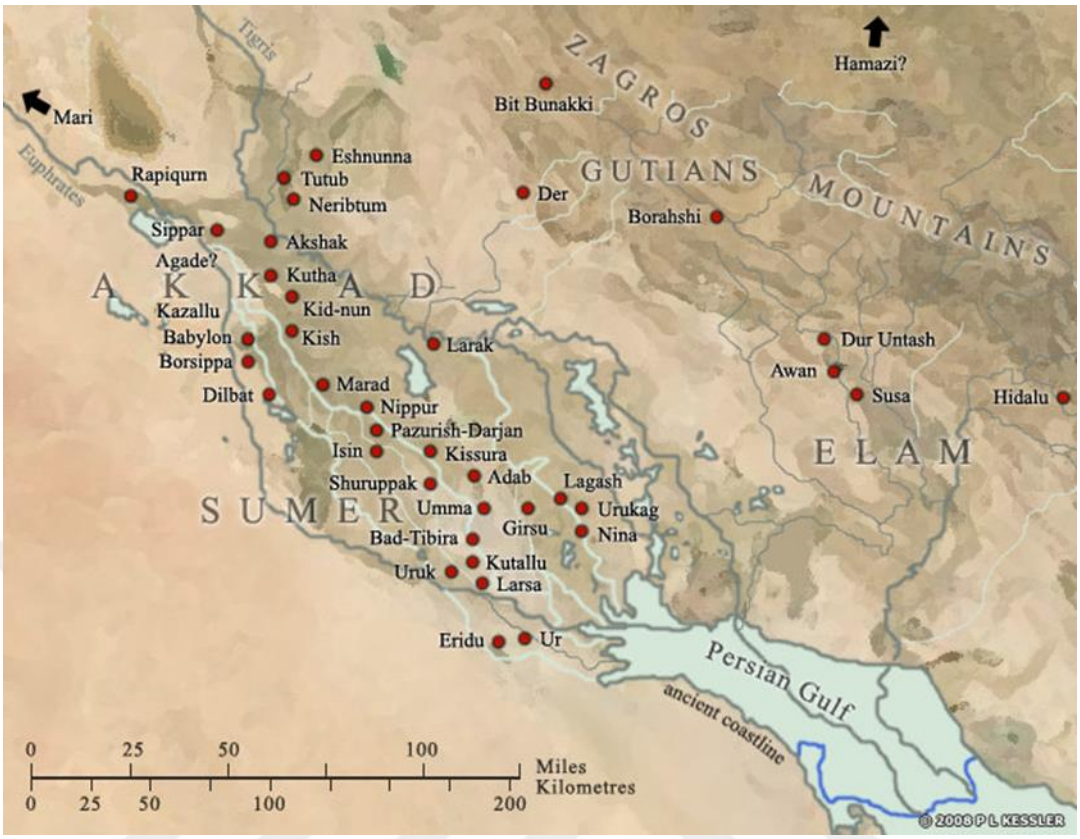
The Sumerian settlements in the late 4th Millenia B.C. are accepted as the first cities of human civilization by scholars. As Gates (2011) also asserts: “The socio-economic development of the Sumerian towns and villages is marked by the gradual appearance of the ten criteria proposed by Childe as a mark of the true city. All ten factors finally emerge in Sumer during the later fourth millennium BC.” (p.30).

The Sumerian Civilization had an urban character, although its economy was based on agriculture. The Sumerian Land consisted of roughly one dozen city-states which were surrounded by grand city walls and each of them had a hinterland in the third millennia B.C. (Kramer, 1963). The most typical characteristic of all cities was a primary temple which was built on a high hill. These temples became ziggurats by gradually developing in later periods, and they are a very significant contribution to religious architecture by the Sumerians (Kramer, 1963).

This contribution is also mentioned by Gates (2011). “One of the significant differences between Sumer cities and the other neolithic ones was the prominence given to the monumental religious building.” It is very deducible since the temples of the patron god or goddess are located in a central place in the cities, though they gave their places to kings’ properties such as palaces in later periods.

The division of neighborhoods by streets, walls, and water channels gave the Sumerian city a distinctive character, especially the third one since these channels were part of the larger regional system of watercourses (Gates, 2011).

Some Sumerian cities and towns will be put under the scope in this part.



3.8. The Sumerian City-States (Kessler, 2013)

3.2.1 Uruk

In 1856, discovery of a ruin site was made in the region called present-day Warka located near the Euphrates River in Southern Iraq. This discovery drew Henry Rawlinson's and the members of the Royal Asiatic Society's attention. Henry Rawlinson, one of the orientalists deciphering the cuneiform, thought that this settlement could be the famous biblical city of Erech. As a matter of fact, this place was really the Sumerian city of Uruk (Leick, 2002).

The systematic excavations began in Warka by a German research team in 1912 shortly before World War I. By that time, archaeology had made progress as a science, and its methodology had improved rather than being treasure hunting (Leick, 2002).

Sumer Kingship List actually put the settlement of Eridu forward as their first city rather than Uruk as Gates (2011) also stated "According to the Sumerian myth, the kingship was descended from heaven for the first time in Eridu. The institution was later copied and spread to other towns." (p.31). However, Uruk was the dominant city in the 4th millennium B.C. the period called protoliterate or the Uruk Period.

Ubaid period:	ca. 5000–3500 BC
Protoliterate (Uruk) period:	ca. 3500–2900 BC
Early Dynastic period:	ca. 2900–2350 BC

3.9. Early Sumer Periods (Gates, 2011)

The Uruk period is started by some scholars in 3800 B.C. (Podany, 2022) and by 4100 B.C. by others (Mark, 2011) and it constitutes one of the most important stages of Sumerian history as many inventions like writing and the wheel had occurred in this period. In the book "The Sumerian World" by Harriet Crawford (2013), Guillermo Algaze implies that this fertile era in Sumer land was the result of certain climate changes that occurred both at the beginning and end of the era.

> "At the same time, recent paleoclimatic data suggests, in turn, that the climate of the Mesopotamian alluvium through the Uruk period was also somewhat different from that which prevailed in historic times, and, further, that it changed dramatically during the course of the fourth millennium" (Bar-Matthews and Ayalon 2011; Brooks 2006; Staubwasser and Weiss 2006; as cited in Crawford, 2013, p.70).

According to Algaze (2017), the first climate shift occurred at the beginning of the fourth millennium B.C. and this caused Mesopotamian land to receive more rain yearly (especially in the summertime) than normal thus the Sumerian land became more fertile in this period. The second climate change took place in the third quarter

of the fourth millennium and lasted for two hundred years. At this time rains decreased far below normal, and the land became arid. Interestingly, This period most probably coincides with the Sumerian colonization that occurred northern part of Mesopotamia, Syria, and western Iran (Crawford, 2013).

When it comes to estimated city size, Gates (2011) asserts that "The archaeological survey conducted notably by Robert Adams and Hans Nissen in the 1960s and 1970s has revealed that Uruk was by far the largest settlement of the region in the Protoliterate period." (p.32) Its area was estimated as 435 ha as the surrounded land should be measured by the city walls. (Gates, 2011). According to another estimation, the area that the city covered was 250 ha while the public buildings covered 20 ha of it, the rest was allocated to inhabiting or residential areas in the late Uruk period, in other words, the end of the 4th Millenium B.C. (Çevik, 2005). It is roughly calculated that between 25.000 - 50.000 people were living in the city center in that period (Çevik, 2005). Furthermore, the fields covered by the city would increase to approximately 600 ha after a few centuries.

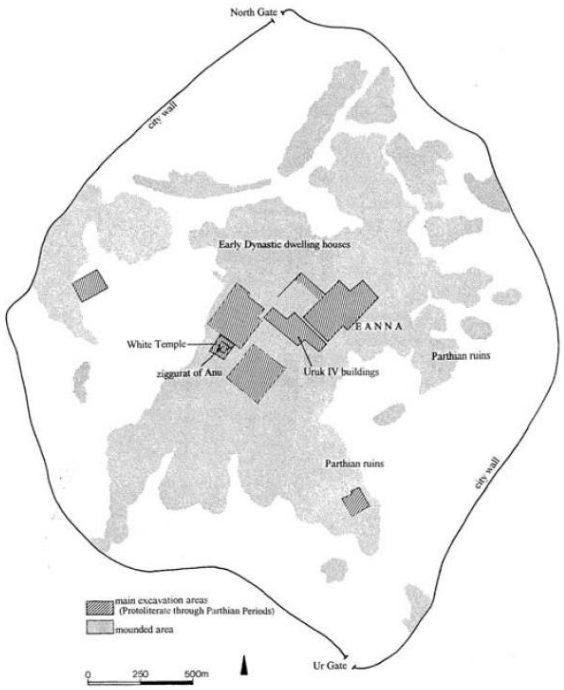


Figure 3.10. Uruk Plan (Gates, 2011)

If we compare those dimensions with other well-known cities of the ancient world, the results are quite striking since Jerusalem was 120 ha in the time of Herodotus, Athens about 210 ha in the time of Themistocles, and Rome was 360 ha in its political zenith which was the time of Augustus (Çevik, 2005).

After the Uruk Period, it draws attention that the settlement system cannot be clarified by the central place theory in Southern Mesopotamia. Firstly, there is no very hierarchical order organized as getting populated hamlets, villages, towns, and cities in order. On the contrary, there is a dominance of cities. Second, since communication and trade were carried out through water channels, suitable locations developed as major centers rather than following a gradual area organization. (Çevik, 2005 ; Adams, 1972).

The lands out of the hinterland of the cities both constituted a tampon region between fighting cities and they were good areas for gathering and sheltering for nomadic step people (Çevik, 2005).

The earliest public places in cities of ancient Mesopotamia were the temples (Çevik, 2005). Particularly the temple of An or its well-known name the White Temple is significant for its history manages to be traced through documents. In that sense, the white temple was first constructed on a thirteen-meter platform and improved over the next 3000 years. This building constituted one of the antecedents of the ziggurats. (Çevik, 2005).

While the White Temple was the focal point of worshipping in 3000 B.C., later the Eanna District dedicated to goddess Eanna took its place in c. 2000 B.C. “In contrast to An’s area, none of the temples of the Eanna precinct stood high on artificial platforms. All are “ground-level” temples, although built, rebuilt, and replaced many times.” (Gates, 2011, p. 36). There is also superiority in terms of the number of temples in the Eanna District. Two of the oldest temples from Eanna are the mosaic temple and the limestone temple upon it. Notwithstanding, the temples of C and D seem to gain dominance in the final phase of the Uruk period (Crawford, 1991).

The primary economic means of living of temples were the lands they possessed. In this regard, the temples were the origins of the first political, economic, and social organization. This structure was formed and maintained by priests, and the priests were seen as the representative of the gods. (Çevik, 2005, p.35).

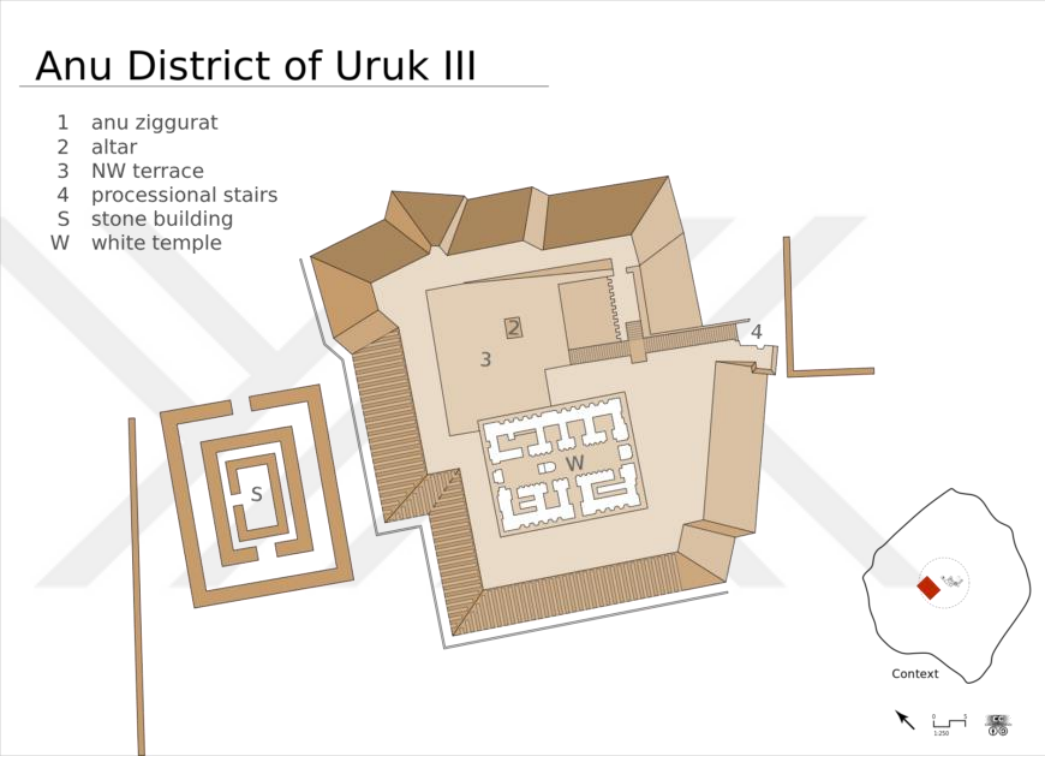


Figure 3.11. Anu District of Uruk (Lamassu design, 2008)

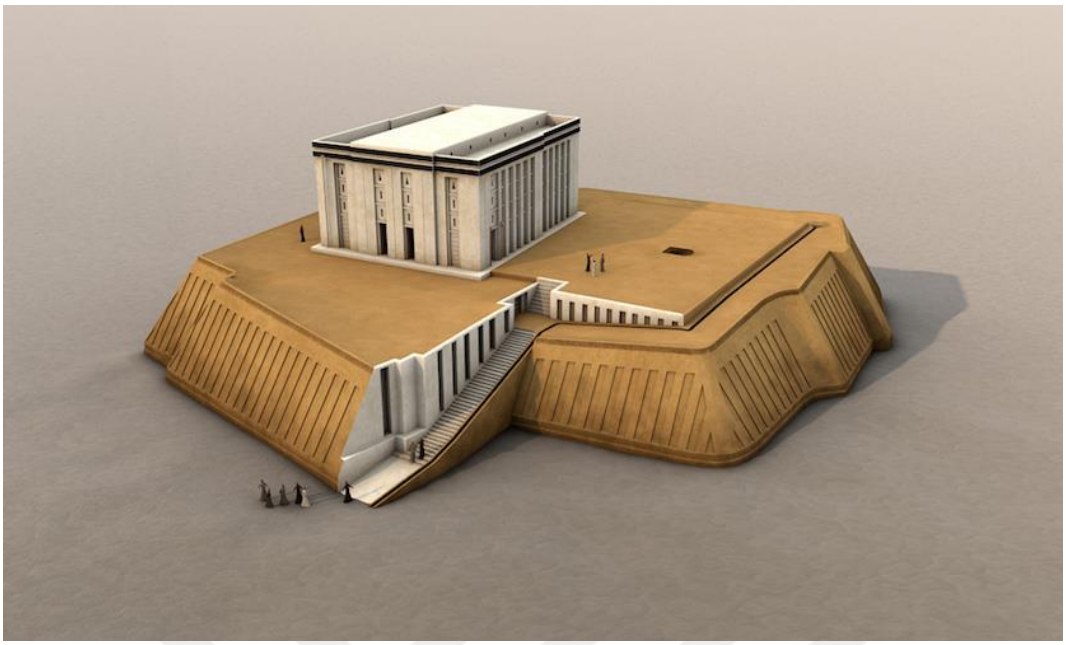


Figure 3.12. White Temple of Uruk (Khan academy)

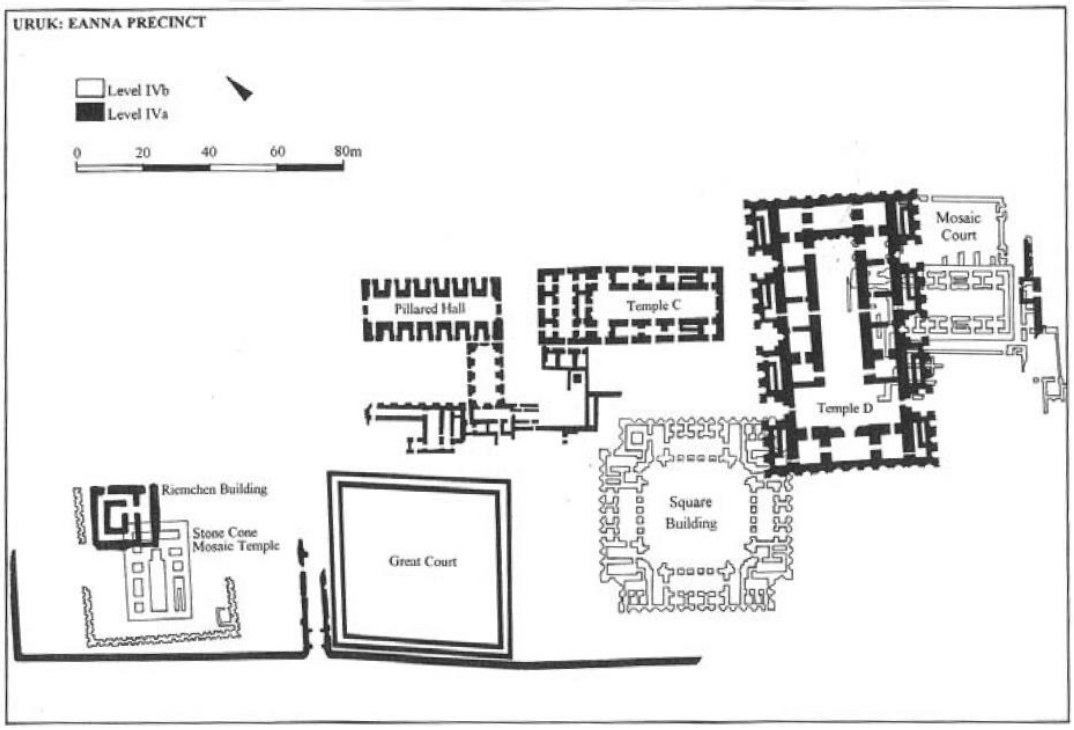


Figure 3.13. The Eanna Precinct (Gates, 2011, p. 35)

3.2.2 Nippur

The remains of the ancient Nippur lies near the modern city Diwaniyah along the old Shatt el-Nil river bed, which was a manmade branch of the Euphrates, in the middle of the Babylonian plain, or, within the borders of today's province of Al-Qadisiyah (Leick, 2002). In Mesopotamian times, the city was near the Euphrates River, and it was possible to make a voyage to the Sippar in the north, Kish downstream, and Shuruppak and Uruk in the South through canals. According to Leick (2002), Nippur's position in the geographical center of Babylonia was an important factor in its development (p.141).

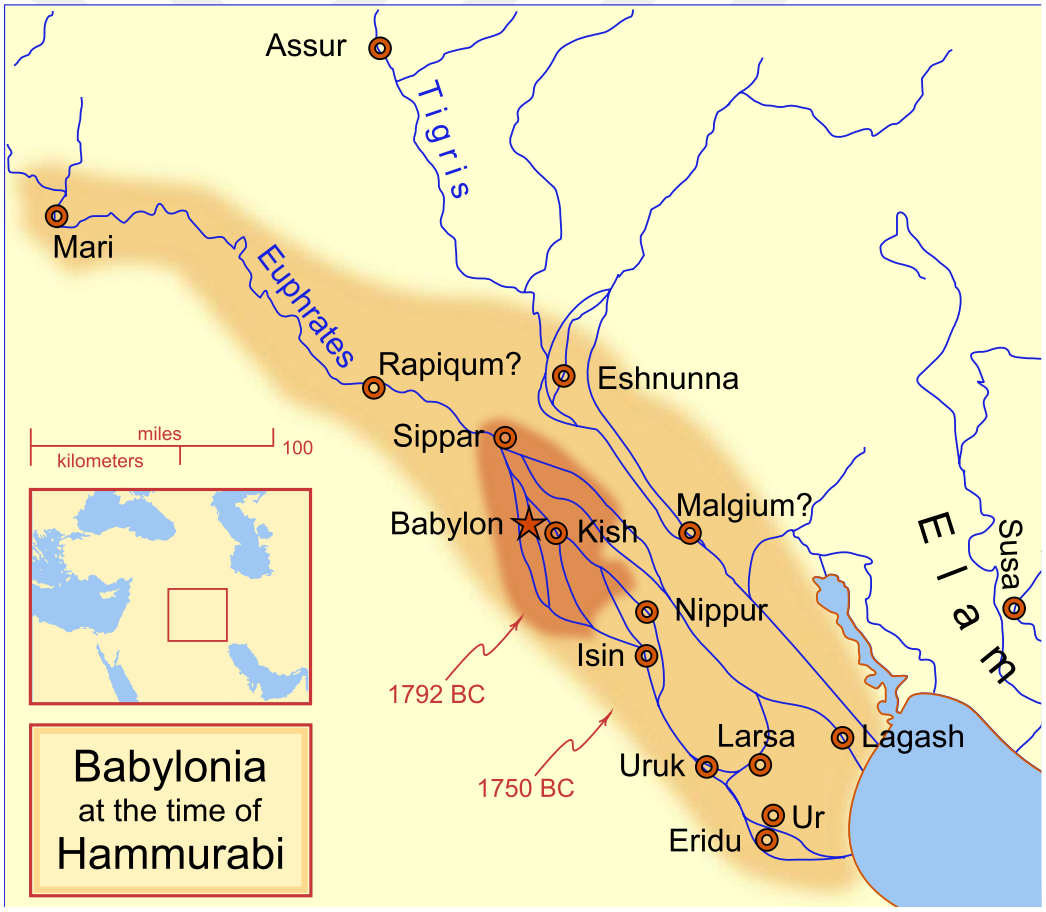


Figure 3.14. Babylonia at the Time of Hammurabi (Map Master, 2012)

“From the earliest recorded times, Nippur was a sacred city, not a political capital. It was this holy character which allowed Nippur to survive numerous wars and the fall of dynasties that brought destruction to other cities (Gibson, 1992). However, its sacred role does not mean that it was a city behind the curtain politically. Many kings who ascended the throne, especially the kings of Kish, Ur, and Isin, sought recognition at Ekur temple before the chief god Enlil. In exchange for such legitimization, the kings lavished gifts of land, precious metals and stones, and other commodities on the temples and on the city as a whole. At the end of successful wars, rulers would present booty, including captives, to Enlil and the other gods at Nippur.” (Gibson, 1992).

Figure 3.15. The Ziggurat and Temple in Nippur (Stanley, 2017)

Unlike other cities in Sumer land, Nippur managed to preserve its political neutrality and it had no ruling dynasty of its own because of its religious importance for all other states. “Nippur enjoyed this preeminence because it served as the site of the most important temple of the god Enlil, regarded from the third millennium B.C.E. as the head of the Sumerian pantheon.” (Bertman, 2005, p. 40). “The strength of Mesopotamian religious tradition, which gave Nippur its longevity, can be illustrated best by evidence from the excavation of the temple of Inanna, goddess of love and war.” (Gibson, 1992).

Like every religious center at that time and today, Nippur was also a very significant economic center in Sumerian Land. Besides the economic benefits derived from gifts and ongoing maintenance presented by kings and rich individuals, there was probably a continuing income from pilgrims. Nippur was the center of an agricultural district, with much of the land in the possession of temples. The temples produced manufactured goods, predominantly textiles, and finished items, some of which were meant for export (Gibson, 1992, as cited in Maekawa, 1987). Nevertheless, according to Maekawa (1987), the temples were only part of the economic picture (Gibson, 1992). Even though it was more dominated by religion than other towns, Nippur, like them, had a mixed economy, with governmental, religious, and private spheres. Steadily accumulating evidence indicates that the public spheres were closely integrated, with final control in the hands of government officials.

When it comes to its physical characteristics, the site of Nippur measures about 1.5 km in length and 700 m in width. A prominent feature of the layout of ancient Nippur was the Midtown Canal, which flowed through the middle of the city, and was maybe the original course of the Euphrates. The canal divided Nippur into clearly-defined eastern and western sectors (Unesco, 2017). There are mounds and temples on both sides of the canal. However, the eastern side has the largest public buildings, and this area was called 'the bond of heaven and earth'. The abovementioned buildings were erected for the honor and worship of the major divine powers venerated at ancient Nippur (Unesco, 2017).

Nippur contains several layers of superimposed urban settlement extending from c. 5000 BCE to about 800 CE. Excavations and surveys have revealed the remains of the following structures or buildings:

- A massive city wall with six gates, protected by a moat, and enclosing an area of about 135 hectares;
- The Midtown Canal, a substantial watercourse more than 50 meters across in places;
- The Ekur, or temple to Enlil, the supreme god of the Sumerian pantheon, and its 25-meter-high ziggurat (which is the most important single structure of the site);
- Several other Sumerian temples (the Inanna temple, a North temple);
- A scribal quarter and a residential quarter;
- An Akkadian tomb and a large temple to Gula, the Mesopotamian goddess of healing;
- A large Parthian fortress;
- And an early Islamic mound (Unesco, 2017).

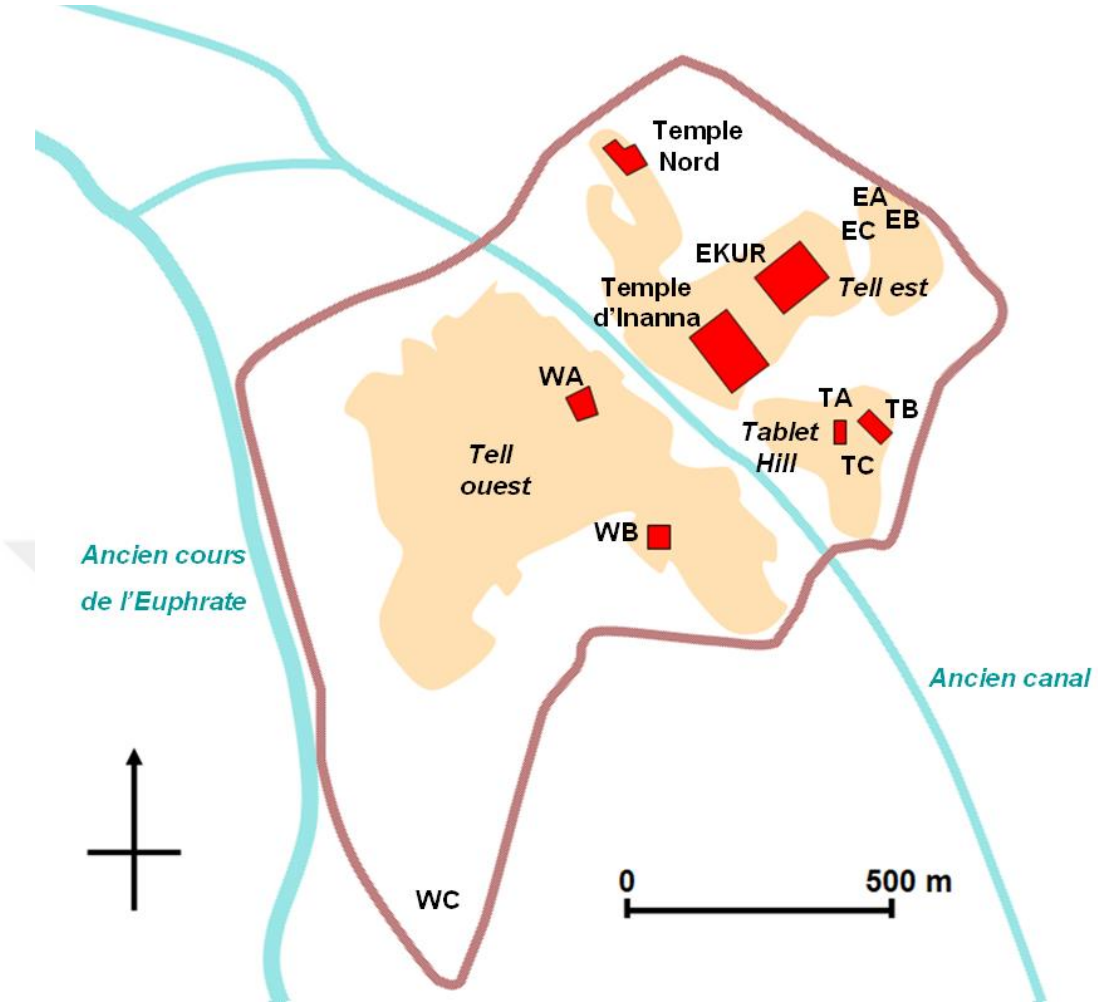


Figure 3.16. The Plan of Nippur and Shatt el-Nil (Zunkir, 2010)

Nippur reached its greatest size during the Ur III period, expanding to approximately 135 hectares, and reaching a population of maybe forty thousand (Unesco, 2017).

Nippur's ruins cover more than a square mile of land, with the highest point reaching 25 meters above ground (Leick, 2002, p. 141). Comprehensive excavations led by Americans started in Nippur in the 1880s. The expedition was organized by the University of Pennsylvania and conducted by J.P. Peters. At the end of the second year, some 17.000 tablets found were sent to Philadelphia (Leick, 2002). In 1948, the Chicago Oriental Institute, in temporary collaboration with Pennsylvania, resumed work and began with systematic excavations from 1948 to 1990. One of the

biggest results of the excavation was that The temple of Inanna was found to have a very long history, from the Early Dynastic period in the third millennium until the Parthian occupation in the third century B.C. (Leick, 2002).

Figure 3.17. The Ancient Map of Nippur (Harrsch, 2021)

3.2.3 Ur

The city of Ur, like Uruk and Eridu, had its origins in the Ubaid period, the very beginning of permanent settlements in southern Mesopotamia. It was also a major ceremonial and religious center, and it housed the shrine of the moon god, called Nannar in Sumerian and Sin in Akkadian. In the third millennium B.C., the city

enjoyed significant political power, first as an independent city, then as the capital of the centralized state during the Third Dynasty of Ur (Leick, 2002).

The city was located on the west side of the Euphrates River, some 50 km south of Uruk and 10 km north of Eridu, in southern Mesopotamia.

“The city of Ur reached its apogee in the late third and early second millennia BC, first as the seat of the kingdom of Ur-Nammu and his successors. After the demise of the Ur III kingdom, following an invasion of Elamites, the city rebounded during the succeeding Isin-Larsa period, enjoying economic prosperity and continuing as a prestigious religious center.” (Gates, 2011, p.56). At its greatest extent during the Isin-Larsa period, the city measured ca. 60ha, with additional settlement outside its walls (Gates, 2011, p.56).

The extant city walls were built in the sixth century B.C. by Neo-Babylonian monarchs. Because any brick stamped with the name of Ur-Nammu was not found in the walls, Leonard Woolley, the British archaeologist making excavations, assumed that the Ur III fortifications were deliberately dismantled by the Elamite conquerors. However, the impressive Neo-Babylonian walls may well have resembled the Ur III fortifications in both location and appearance (Gates, 2011).

The best-known building of the temenos is the ziggurat, the best-preserved example in Mesopotamia. Erected under Ur-Nammu and his son Shulgi, the ziggurat was restored by successive generations of kings in Mesopotamia for 1500 years after its initial construction, and again in modern times by the Iraqi government.

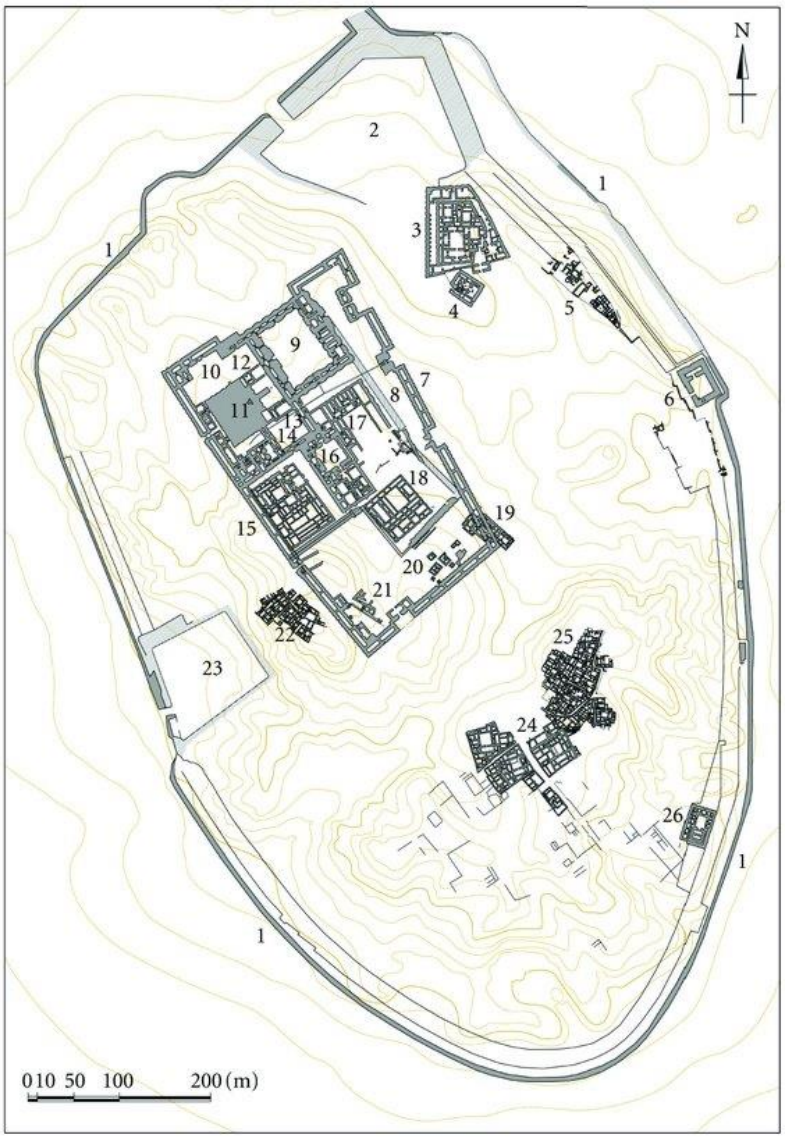


Figure 3.18. The new general plan of Ur (drawn up by F. Ghio): 1: City Wall; 2: North Harbour; 3: Palace of Ennigaldi-Nanna; 4: Harbour Temple; 5: Houses on City Wall; 6: Kassite Fort; 7: enclosure of the Sacred Area in the neo-Babylonian period; 8: enclosure of the Sacred Area during the 3rd Dynasty; 9: Nanna Court; 10: Etemenniguru; 11: Ziggurat; 12: Nanna Temple; 13: Boat Shrine; 14: Ningal Temple; 15: Giparku; 16: Edublamakh; 17: Ganunmakh; 18: Ekhursag; 19: Mausolea of the 3rd Dynasty; 20: Royal Graves; 21: Nimintabba Temple; 22: Houses (EM District); 23: West Harbour; 24: Houses (AH District); 25: neo-Babylonian Houses; 26: Enki Temple. (Giacomo, Giacomo & Scardozzi, Giuseppe, 2012).

The tablets found from the period of Ur III enlighted many questions regarding ancient Sumeria and their lifestyle. For example, one tablet describes how the provinces paid their taxes to the government. According to this tablet, every province must have paid its annual tax in a specific month of the year. Therefore, the government could be paid throughout the year since there are many provinces and each had to pay in another month (Podany, 2022).

Ur III period also witnessed new building techniques. there were standardized types and sizes of bricks and innovations in the construction of public buildings. The builders started baking bricks for the exterior walls instead of just drying them in the Sun and they added strategic holes in the structures to allow the interior bricks which were sun-dried to continue to dry out even after the building was constructed. the Kings sponsored the construction of ziggurats. Each ziggurat was a solid mass of brick built in four or five Giant Steps probably with a small Shrine on the top. They were built on a scale that had never been seen before in Mesopotamia. The ziggurat at the capital city of Ur was particularly magnificent. It was maybe 30 meters tall and its base measured 64 meters by 45 meters (Podany, 2022).

Woolley excavated several residential neighborhoods within the city. The best examples found southeast of the temenos, date to the Isin-Larsa period, in the twentieth century BC. There was no attempt to place straight, wide streets at regular intervals. The paths granting access to pedestrians and pack animals never received much consideration from homeowners or municipal authorities, and their courses must have weaved back and forth as the buildings that lined them were demolished and rebuilt (Gates, 2011). Further, trash would be randomly discarded into the streets. In the ancient city, as indeed in the Middle East today, the interior of the home, one's private space, was the focus of respect and attention, not the public streets outside.

Simpler house plans also exist. These evidently belonged to shops, distributed throughout the residential quarters with heavier concentrations in the southern part of the city. In addition to houses and shops, the city plan also contained small shrines, located at street crossings.

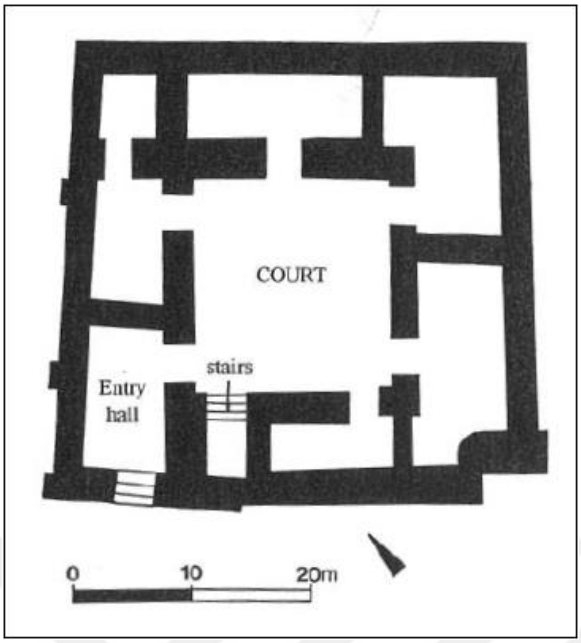


Figure 3.19. A House Plan in Ur (Gates, 2011)

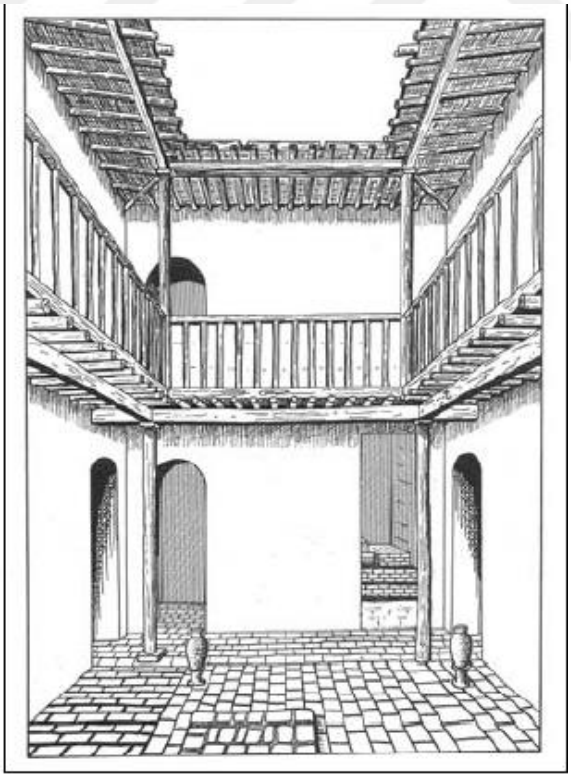


Figure 3.20. A House Construction in Ur (Gates, 2011)

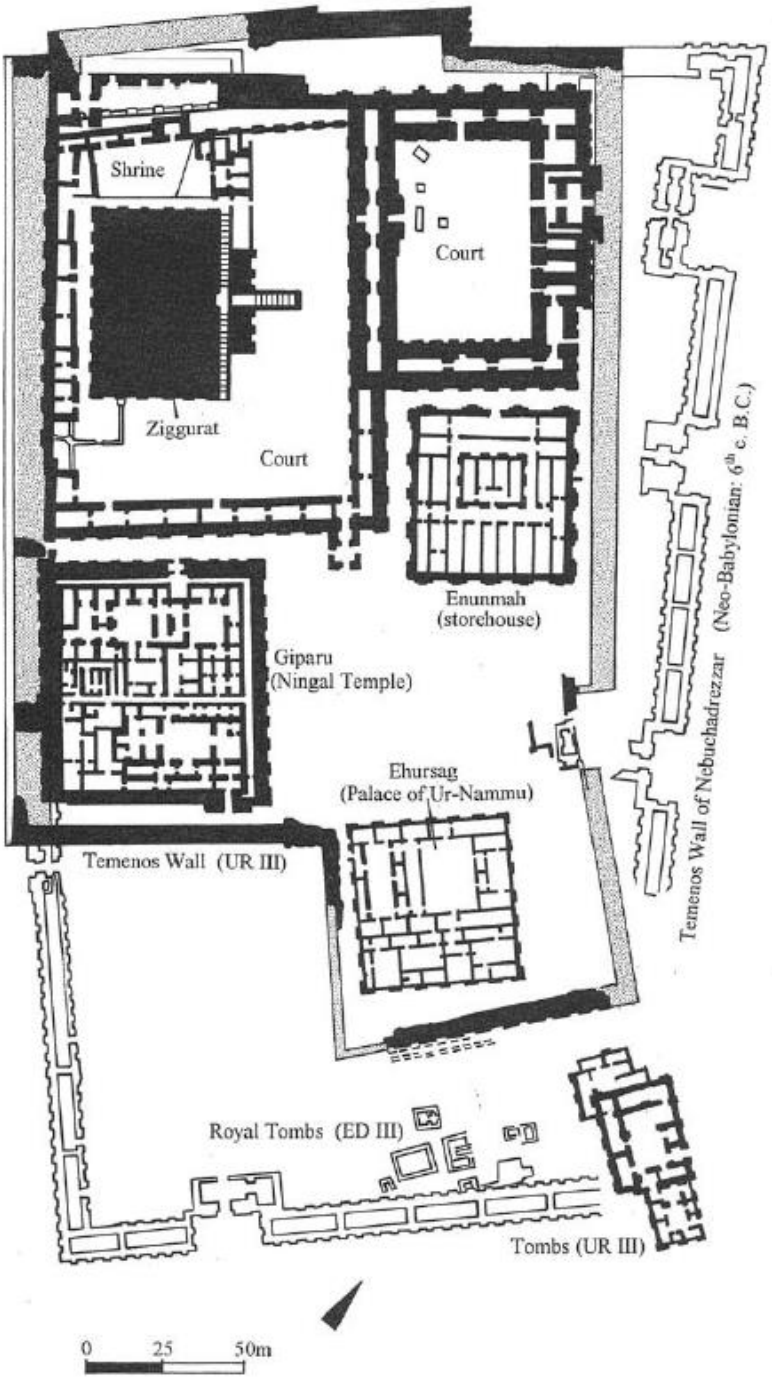


Figure 3.21. Sacred Region of Ur (Gates, 2011)

CHAPTER 4

ANCIENT EGYPTIAN CIVILIZATION

The Ancient Egyptian civilization lasted over three thousand years and became one of the most powerful and iconic civilizations in history. At its height, ancient Egypt's empire stretched as far north as modern-day Syria and as far south as modern-day Sudan (Wilkinson, 2010). According to the majority of scholars, the unification of ancient Egypt took place circa 3100 B.C., and the era of pharaohs continued until 30 B.C. In this period, Egypt was ruled by 30 dynasties according to historian Manetho.

Modern human society owes too much to ancient Egyptians as much as to Sumerians. Egyptians developed a new measurement system called "cubit" which is the length of the arm to the fingertips. They established the 24-hour division to the day and created a solar calendar, the first dating system in history to feature 365 days in one year. Script-type hieroglyph is another invention by Egyptians to describe the world around them (National Geographic, 2017). Some scholars also argue that ancient Egypt was the first nation-state in the world (Wilkinson, 2010).

In this chapter, the physical geography and climate, the brief political history of ancient Egypt, its culture and religion, the basic economic structure, and the social structure, will be briefly introduced to prepare the readers for the following discussions. Later, the arguments about whether ancient Egypt was an urbanized society or not will be discussed in company with the settlement plans and archaeological evidence.

4.1 The General Characteristics of the Egyptian Civilization

4.1.1 The Physical Geography and Climate of Ancient Egypt

Egypt has very specific environmental conditions for any scholar who claims to study its ancient urbanism processes since the Nile Valley and the Delta had a major impact on the location and development of settlement sites (Moeller, 2016). For this reason, it is significant to examine the primary geographical features of Egypt.

Today's Egypt is located between the 22nd and 31st Northern Latitudes and the 25th and 35th southern longitudes in Northeast Africa. The territory of Egypt can be roughly divided into four parts: the Nile Valley, the Nile Delta, the Western Desert, and the Eastern Desert. The Nile River which gives life to Egypt is undoubtedly the most important element of its geography from past to present. The river goes across the country from the south to the north by dividing it into two pieces of land and flows into the Mediterranean Sea by forming a river delta (Ana Britannica, 1989).

Lake Victoria in central Africa and Lake Tana in Ethiopia are the two sources from which the Nile arises. The former branch is called the White Nile and the latter Blue Nile. They join at Khartoum, the capital of Sudan, and continue another ca. 3,000 km until emptying into the Mediterranean Sea (Gates, 2011). There are six cataracts on the way of the river between Khartoum and Aswan. These cataracts are numbered from north to south, in reverse order to the direction of the river's flow (Gates, 2011). The first cataract, located at Aswan, marked the southern border of ancient Egypt most of the time in history, and it is approximately 950 kilometers far from the Mediterranean Sea.

On the west side of the river Nile, there is the Western Desert which covers a larger area than other parts of the country. The desert is a low plateau area in view and does not contain seasonal stream beds. (Ana Britannica, 1989). However, it is known that the situation was rather different in the neolithic and first kingdom periods. According to Vercoutter (2003), the Saharan Desert was not large that much in past,

and the west side of the river Nile had some steppes and forests that helped to facilitate neolithic people's lives by providing their animals' pastures, and life sources for humans. Undoubtedly, this is an important cause of how Egypt could reach welfare to create chiefdoms and small kingdoms at such an early date.

When it comes to the Eastern Desert, as can be seen from its name it covers the region that remains on the east side of the Nile River. The desert's structure consists of rough terrain and mountains, and it is fragmented with valleys in the southeast. The Sinai Desert located in the northeast of the region shows a similar structure. The desert comprises limestone and sandstone (Ana Britannica, 1989).

The mountainsides cover the southwest edge of the Western Desert, they also cover coastal lines lying along the Red Sea, and the south of the Sinai Desert. The highest mountain in the country, Catherine Mountain (2.642m), is in the Sinai Desert (Britannica, 1989).

The climate of Egypt is intrinsic to the Sahara Desert apart from its coastlines. The amount of rainfall is very low (annual average of 33 mm^3). Moreover, the winds are quite dry except for the northern wind and the most notable characteristic of daily temperature is the difference between daytime and nighttime temperature. However, the climate in Egypt was not always that much dry. From the Neolithic age to the age of pyramids (c. B.C. 5000 – 2350), the climate involved more rainfall and moisture. Furthermore, there were savannahs, which made it easier to transform from hunter-gatherer to a neolithic lifestyle, in some parts of deserts (Vercoutter, 2003, p.21).

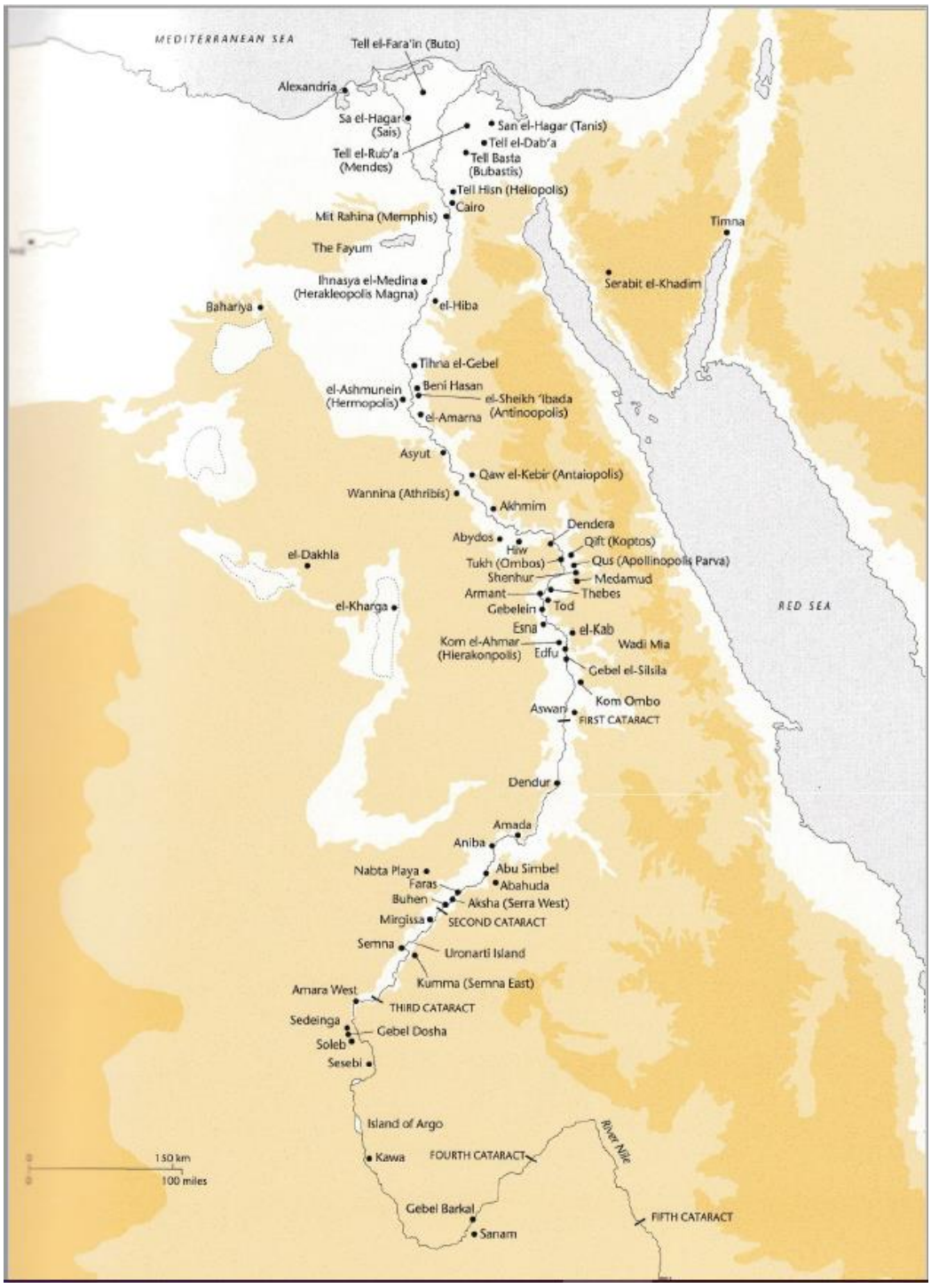


Figure 4.1. Physical Geography of Egypt (Wilkinson, 2003, p. 9)

Although rainfall is not sufficient, Egypt has quite rich and variable vegetation. Tamarisks, locust trees, and various kinds of thorn trees and savory herbs can grow up in precipitation areas of the Eastern Desert (Ana Britannica, 1989). While Lotus plants, bamboo, and other kinds of reeds grow in the river Nile, various kinds of palm trees can be seen throughout the Nile Valley and the delta. In the past, one could come across papyruses frequently, however, they are mostly grown in botanical gardens now (Ana Britannica, 1989). Juniperus Phoenicia or the Phoenician juniper is the only domestic coniferous tree in the country (Ana Britannica, 1989).

Animal existence dramatically decreased today, whereas it is known that there were a wider variety of wild animals in the ancient era. For example, alligators seen in every city of the country in the past are seen only in the south of the Aswan Dam today. Desert animals like gazelles, desert foxes, mountain goats, and various kinds of rabbits, birds, and snakes consist of the majority of the fauna (Parcak, 2010).

4.1.2 A Brief Political History of Ancient Egypt

The history of dynastic Egypt begins with the event of the unification of Upper and Lower Egypt by the first king or pharaoh Narmer ca. 3100 B.C. This period is called the Archaic or Early period (c. 3100 B.C. – c. 2686 B.C.), In this era occupied by the first and second dynasties, the basic principles, structure, and customs of the state were constituted. The unification of Egypt also constitutes a transition from the Neolithic to the Bronze Age for them (Gates, 2011). As far as is known, other unification attempts also existed before Narmer, however, none of them lasted long terms. With this unification, Egypt became the first known territorial nation-state in world history (Wilkinson, 2010).

The next Periods in ancient Egypt's history are named after how unified the country was i.e., how centralized the power was and how the governments were powerful and competent. Therefore, there are three durable kingdom periods in which Egypt

was relatively prosperous, and the central authority was well established. These are the Old Kingdom (c. 2686 B.C. – c. 2181 B.C.), the Middle Kingdom (c. 2055 B.C. – c.1650 B.C.), and the New Kingdom (c. 1550 B.C. – c. 1069 B.C.). There are also intermediate periods in which the central authority weakened, and local chiefdoms or foreign intruders took advantage of this situation. Turbulence moreover anarchy prevailed, between these eras. To illustrate, After the New Kingdom lost its sovereignty, the third intermediate period ongoing (c. 1069 B.C. – c. 664 B.C.) can be given. In this era, Egypt is ruled by many local chiefdoms who fought for domination over the country.

By 664, the late period in which the last native Egyptian dynasty reigned, Assyrian sack and Persian occupation took place begins. This era comes to an end with the conquest of Egypt by Alexander the Great in 332 B.C. After this conquest, the Hellenistic Period of ancient Egypt starts and lasts till the suicide of Cleopatra the VII. In 30 B.C. As of this date, Egypt lost its sovereignty and became a province of the Roman Republic later the Roman Empire.

Extending these periods to some degree would be proper to understand further discussions. However, it must be stated that the periods given in detail in this study will only reach the beginning of the Third Intermediate Period since the cities consisting of the scope of this study belong to the Old, Middle, and New Kingdoms of Egypt. In other words, from 3100 B.C. to 1069 B.C.

a) Predynastic Period

Inevitably, Narmer's achievement laid the foundation of the first dynasty. The city of Memphis was founded, and Egypt extended to the Nubia Kingdom and the Sinai desert in this period. It was also the time when the first usage of papyrus as writing material (Van de Mierop, 2011). In 2890 B.C., the second dynasty was established. The advancements above-mentioned were tried to sustain and the governors were appointed to the provinces to solidify central authority. Later, the second dynasty

was weakened by internal conflicts and gave place to the third dynasty which would establish the Old Kingdom of Egypt.

Figure 4.2. Narmer Palette (Unknown artist, 2016)

The Archaic Period represented by the first and second dynasties has significance since the basis of the Egyptian state and the way of governance was constructed.

b) Old Kingdom

The year 2686 B.C. is accepted by scholars as the foundation of the third dynasty and the Old Kingdom. Djoser, the second king of the dynasty, ordered his grand vizier Imhotep to be constructed the first pyramid of Egypt, known as the Step Pyramid of Djoser. Egyptians had to be acquainted with well-degree of geometry and mathematics to build such a huge monument. They also needed to master

craftsmanship and capable officers to manage mass crowded worker groups (Wilkinson, 2010).

Djoser's step pyramid started a new era in the architecture of Egypt, the age of pyramids. Djoser and his vizier Imhotep were worshipped as gods in the following periods so long as the Ptolemaic dynasty thanks to their other successes in state governance (Hornung, 2004).

Figure 4.3. Step Pyramid of Djoser (xiquinhosilva, 2016)

Pyramid constructions would be continued by the next generations. Consequently, the reign of the fourth dynasty (B.C. 2613 – 2494) was depending on the exploitation of the labor of the villagers and workers. State revenues were spent on the construction of temples and pyramids. Scholars accepted this era as the golden age

of pyramids at the same time (Wilkinson, 2010). The most known monuments of ancient Egypt like the Giza pyramid complex (Great Pyramid of Khufu, Pyramids of Khafra, and Menkaure) were built at that time. The reign of Khafra also witnessed a theological change since Khaf-Ra declared himself as the son of Sun God Ra.

Figure 4.4. The Pyramids of Giza

At the time of the fifth dynasty (B.C. 2494 – 2345), worshipping Ra was at its height. Gorgeous pyramids began to leave their place for sun temples and smaller pyramids (Wilkinson, 2010). It was also the period in which the cult of Osiris arose, and the pharaohs and Osiris became integrated. (Hornung, 2004) Foreign trade reaching Anatolia and Middle Africa also continued to increase. Another important development in this era was the weakening of the supervision of Pharaohs over bureaucracy which began to develop an institutional identity (Hornung, 2004).

The transition from giant monuments to smaller but ornamented ones created a more liberal environment for artisans and enabled them to manipulate reality in a way that they fantasized about or what their customers asked. In other words, to describe something or someone as they wanted them to be. The ornamented perceptive of art began to transform traditional Egyptian art in this period (Wilkinson, 2010).

Mentioned weakening of authority above continued by increasing its effects in the sixth dynasty period. (B.C. 2345 – 2181). Tendency to independence among the high officials, and provinces' bull-headed actions caused some local chiefs to arise and to call themselves kings. They also began to leave their official position and titles as a legacy to their children. Pepi II, (reign B.C. 2278 – 2216 or 2184) was the fifth pharaoh of the sixth dynasty. He ascended the throne at the age of six, and to some sources, he reigned for 94 years (Hornung, 2004). This time interval was so long that he could not retain control of the country in the last decade of his reign. Even worse, most of his heirs also became too old or already dead when Pepi the second died (Wilkinson, 2010). Therefore, a period of turbulence came after him, and seventeen kings took over the throne in a time interval of 20 years. These events also put an end to the Old Kingdom of ancient Egypt (Wilkinson, 2010).

Although the pharaohs of the Eight Dynasty (B.C. 2181 – 2160 B.C.) ruled over the whole country, (Hornung, 2004) because of the confusion in this era, it is more sensible to add this dynasty to the intermediate period. Therefore, the period from the seventh dynasty to Mentuhotep the second of the eleventh dynasty is called the first intermediate period (c. 2181 B.C. – c. 2055 B.C.) of Egypt's history (Wilkinson, 2010). In this era, political unity dissolved, law and order were suspended or violated, and public security was injured seriously. This era was so catastrophic for the Egyptians that it deeply affected their literature afterward. One of the most known examples is the Papyrus of Ipuwer which narrates the events of the Intermediate Period and claimed to influence other religious texts such as the Old Testament (Wilkinson, 2010).

In the first intermediate period, various local chiefdoms gained dominance all around Egypt. However, this situation is quite different from the feudalism of the medieval ages. These chiefdoms had been never given land or authority by the pharaohs. They had taken over what they had by bullying and illegal ways (Vercoutter, 2003).

There is also overlapping between the duration of reigns of the 7th and 11th dynasties since the rulers controlled any parts of the country simultaneously rather than ruling one after another. Therefore, the dates can show some differences from one source to another.

A substantial part of the first intermediate period witnessed the struggle between the 9th Dynasty who controlled lower Egypt or Northern Egypt and the 11th Dynasty who controlled Upper Egypt. In time, commanders of the 11th dynasty took over the middle parts of the country and gained an important advantage. One of the kings of the 11th house, Intef II B.C. (2112 – 2063), began to use the title of the king of upper and lower Egypt (Van de Mierop, 2011). However, there was still time.

c) Middle Kingdom

According to ancient Egyptian theology, since there is one Sun in the sky, there must be one true king who rules Egypt. Finally, Mentuhotep II, the grandson of Intef II, unified the country for the second time after king Narmer, in 2040 B.C. and brought peace to his realm during his reign (B.C. 2055 – B.C. 2004). He endeavored to assign the most qualified and capable officials for suitable positions. Amon became the most significant deity, and the city of Thebes gained significance as much as Memphis and Heliopolis.

Furthermore, the pyramid texts which have the royal prerogative and consist of religious, magical words and wise sayings to guide the soul of the dead person were allowed ordinary people to put them on the cover of their caskets when they die, in this era. This was an important development because these coffin texts also involve a biography of the dead person and historical facts of the era (Wilkinson, 2010).

After Mentuhotep II, Mentuhotep the Third ascended the throne and he followed the successful policy of his father for 12 years. Then, his son Mentuhotep the Fourth (B.C. 1997 – 1991) strengthened the central authority and organized expeditions of discovery to the edges of his kingdom. One of his viziers Amenemhet came into prominence and gained a charism in those expeditions.

The biggest contribution of the eleventh dynasty after reunifying the country was strengthening the central authority and laying the foundations of the Middle Kingdom.

After Mentuhotep IV died, the former vizier Amenemhet took over the throne by eliminating his rivals and founded the Twelfth Dynasty of ancient Egypt. This dynasty would bring up another set of mighty pharaohs of Egypt, and the country would enter its second golden era.

One of the first actions of Amenemhet I (B.C. 1985 – 1956) was to order to be constructed a capital whose name was Itj-tawy 30 km south of Memphis. (Hornung, 2004). Then he made expeditions to the country of Nubia and conquered the fortress Buhen one of the most strategic fortresses of lower Nubia near the second cataract of the river Nile.

One more important action which Amenemhet I performed is that he made his son a partner on the throne, and by doing so he demotivated the possible rebels against his power. Because Amenemhet had guaranteed the future of the throne on behalf of his son. Unfortunately, Amenemhet I's actions ended up with a tragedy since he was assassinated during an inspection of an area prepared for his 30. Anniversary of reign. (Hornung, 2004).

d) New Kingdom

The New Kingdom of Egypt B.C. (1550-1069) begins with the 18th Dynasty B.C. (1550-1292). The Eighteenth Dynasty included some of Egypt's most famous kings, including Ahmose I, Hatshepsut, Thutmose III, Amenhotep III, Akhenaten, and

Tutankhamun. Ahmose I expelled the Hyksosses to Palestine and re-controlled Nubia. His son Amenhotep I extended the borders of Egypt to the third cataract of the Nile (Baud, 2010).

Another important ruler of the 18th Dynasty was Hatshepsut because she was a woman. She repaired the major temples in the country and re-established the trade network with other countries. His stepson Tuthmose III is considered the most successful military leader of ancient Egypt.

Amenhotep III, the grand grandson of Tuthmose III, was one of the most powerful pharaohs of ancient Egypt, and he reigned for 38 years. His son Amenhotep IV was one of the most interesting personalities of the ancient ages, furthermore he was a revolutionary. Amenhotep IV changed his name to Akhenaten and moved his capital from Thebes to the newly founded city of Akhetaten ("Horizon of the Sun-disc"), located halfway between Thebes and Memphis in the fifth year of his reign. Akhetaten served for more than one decade, however, when Akhenaten died, his son Tutankhamun restored the old belief under the affection of priests and politicians. Then he moved the capital to Thebes again.

"Tutankhamun died before he could finish these reforms, and they were carried on by his successor, the former vizier Ay, and then by Horemheb. Horemheb had been a general under Akhenaten and served him faithfully but disagreed vehemently with his religious reforms. When Horemheb came to the throne, Akhetaten was still standing but it would not remain intact for long. He ordered the city razed and its remains dumped as fill for his own projects." (Mark, 2017).

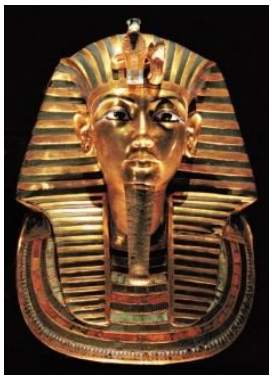


Figure 4.5. The Funeral Mask of Tutankhamun (The Egyptian Museum)

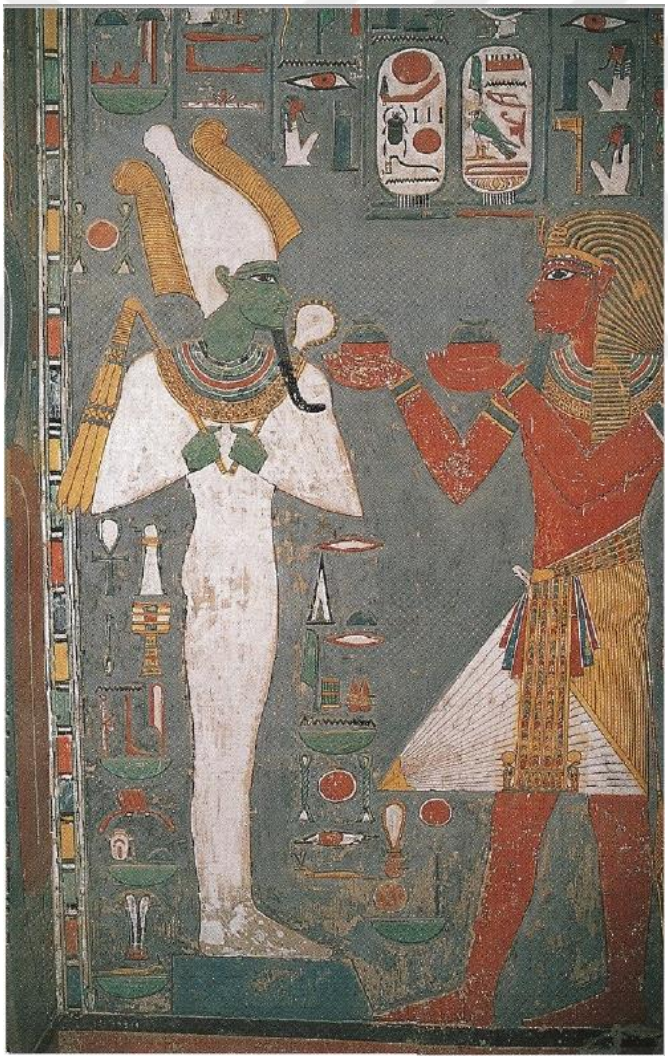


Figure 4.6. Horemheb Before Osiris (Wilkinson, 2003, p. 121)

4.1.3 Religion of Ancient Egypt

The subject of religion is important because ancient people devoted their cities to their gods in both Egypt and Mesopotamia. In Mesopotamia, this devotion is more obvious. Besides this, it cannot be overestimated that religions are also very effective institutions in societies even today. As could be seen in ancient scripts and hieroglyphs, the situation was not very different in ancient times. For this reason, looking at the religion of ancient civilizations in more detail is a necessity.

When it comes to Egypt, there were plenty of animals and human gods in ancient Egyptian belief. The reason for this diversity was, there had been many local cult centers alongside the River Nile Valley before the establishment of the political unity in the country (Ana Britannica, 1989). After the central authority was established, the pharaoh also became to be worshipped as the son of gods alongside other deities countrywide. The pharaoh was described as Horus who has a falcon head. On the other hand, the most important concept and also a deity was the *Maat* who resembles the Gods-given order, law, and truthfulness in her identity. Maat was a kind of unwritten constitution (Wilkinson, 2010).

One another aspect of ancient Egyptian Religion was the continuity of life. Life on earth was just one side of human existence. Death could not erase the person, but it was turning him or her into one other sight of the universe. Therefore, death and the afterlife were given enormous importance by the kings and were made great monumental preparations especially. In the Old Kingdom period, only the pharaoh could come into this spiritual afterworld. However, common people became to have that right by passing various rituals in later periods (Ana Britannica, 1989).

Because they are linked with cities and regions, it will be appropriate to examine some of the most important gods and goddesses of the Egyptian Pantheon. However, it is to be said that the history of Egypt's deities spans a time interval of more than five thousand years, and it consists of over 2000 deities. Therefore, while some of the gods lost their power, like Anubis, in time some of them changed their missions or gained new powers. Furthermore, it is normal that the powers or abilities of some

gods and goddesses were merged like Amun and Ra, and they may show a difference from one location to another location. However, there is an accuracy among authorities regarding the functions of the main gods and goddesses. In this study, the most accepted work, 'the complete gods and goddesses of ancient Egypt', by Richard H. Wilkinson is taken as the main reference.

According to Egyptian creation myth, at the beginning of time, there was only **Nun** which is the primeval waters of chaos. Then in a great flood, the Sun God **Atum** rose from the water and created himself using his thoughts and the real force of his will. Atum had one all-seeing eye that he could roam the universe. In the beginning, Atum was alone on earth. By joining his shadow, he produced his son **Shu** and spat him out of his mouth. Shu became the god of the air. Then, Atum gave birth to his daughter by vomiting her. He named her **Tefnut** and made her the goddess of mist and moisture. Shu and Tefnut were the first divine pair of the pantheon. They first produced the **Maat** which is harmony or order in the universe. Later, they produced **Geb** the earth and **Nut** the Sky. Although they wanted to stay together, Shu left Nut from Geb and placed her on top of the earth. To protect the Maat, Nut and Geb would never come together again. Nut produced rain for Geb, and Geb made things grow on earth. They had four children later whose names were **Isis** the queen of goddesses, **Osiris**, **Nephthys**, and **Seth.**

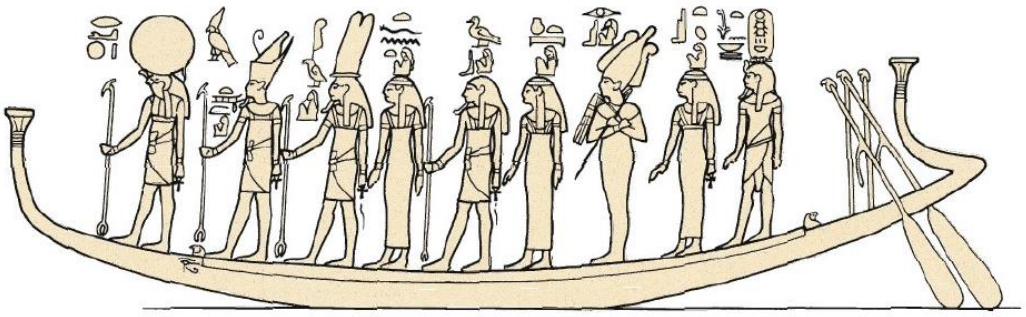


Figure 4.7. Nine Gods and Goddesses of Egypt (Wilkinson, 2003)

According to the rest of the legend, Isis and Osiris got married and they ruled over Egypt during plenty of unprecedented times when Egypt had been the land of milk and honey. Then, Seth the evil brother of them was jealous of Osiris and murdered him before dismembering his body and scattering parts across the desert. Isis began to search for her husband and with the help of their sister Nephthys, she found it. They pieced the body together under the guidance of **Thot** the god of wisdom, and they created the first mummy. After Osiris was resurrected, he impregnated Isis. Even though he was alive, he was very weak to remain in the world. Therefore, Osiris traveled to the land of the Dead and he became the lord of them.

Seth had taken over the throne, and he deported Isis out of the realm. Isis gave birth to her child in hiding. The child was **Horus**. Isis raised Horus until he was an adult and able to challenge his uncle Seth for the throne. After a contest, the case was settled under the league of nine main gods, and Horus was given the throne of his father. Following this belief, the pharaohs of Egypt resemble Horus while their dead fathers resemble Osiris. Moreover, a ceremony used to be arranged for the pharaohs who reached the thirtieth anniversary, if they could, of their reign, and they became representatives of Osiris rather than Horus when they were alive (Wilkinson, 2003).

Figure 4.8. A Part of Anu Papyrus (Wilkinson, 2003)

4.1.4 The Economy in Ancient Egypt

Like everything other in Egypt, the rules of its economy were also determined by its geography, especially by the river Nile. The river gave them food, drinkable water, and the opportunity for irrigation. Because of all these, ancient Egypt was an agrarian society, and Egyptian people were living off mostly agriculture and husbandry. most of the food grown in ancient Egypt were grains such as barley and wheat, however, they also grew vegetables such as onions, leeks, cabbages, beans, cucumbers, and lettuce (Ana Britannica, 1989).

Egypt's territory was fertile regarding precious stones at the same time. Gold, silver, lapis lazuli, and other valuable stones could be found without difficulty in ancient times (Wilkinson, 2010).

Ancient Egypt had a command economy that was controlled by the pharaoh with help from government workers. All land's property belonged to the pharaohs, however, people could cultivate the soil, build houses, and earn a livelihood providing that they paid their taxes in return.

Their economy was also based on the barter system in which the prices of goods and services were paid with other goods and services. While grains were often used for barter, currency or money was not used. For measurement, they had a unit system called "deben".

Trade was another important aspect of Egypt's economy as in every other country. Kinds of Pottery, papyrus, linen clothes, and gold jewelry were the most demanded trade goods by other countries. Ancient Egyptians traded with peoples in Africa, the Mediterranean regions such as Greece and Rome and as far east as Asia they often traded with other regions for raw materials such as cedar wood, precious stones, oil, etc. Trade was made via caravans in land or sailors in the sea.

4.1.5 Culture of Ancient Egypt

Obviously, it is impossible to give even briefly the cultural norms of a civilization lasting three thousand years on one page. However, the basic ones left from them may be mentioned.

According to Stearns and others (2007), “Egyptian culture separated itself from Mesopotamia in several ways other than politics and monument building. The Egyptians did not adopt the Sumerian cuneiform alphabet, developing a hieroglyphic alphabet instead.” (p. 37). They also used papyruses to write rather than clay tablets.

The pillar of Egyptian culture was not science but religion. Furthermore, these beliefs, and especially mortuary culture constituted a basis in daily life and became an obsession for ancient Egyptians. As for science, Egyptian achievements in astronomy were less advanced than those of Mesopotamia. However, it should not be forgotten that the Egyptians were the first people to calculate the length of the solar year, and they divided a year into 12 months, each with three 10-day weeks. Yet again, these discoveries had an aim for daily usage and religious purposes rather than a passion for science in both societies (Stearns and others, 2007).

Egyptians made contributions to human society in nearly every field of life from architecture to games, from religion to politics. Due to its strong and deep-rooted culture, Egypt took part in even every holy book written in the Mediterranean or Middle East regions. Their biggest contribution to the history of architecture of course the pyramids, and their stonemasonry which is observable in temples all around the country still draws attention.

Ancient Egyptians also left behind two valuable literary works regarding succession to the throne. One of them is a story called Sinuhe which is an autobiography narrated by a harem official named Sinuhe. The significance of this story is to give detailed information concerning the fights for the throne and succession rituals. (Hornung, 2003). The Other work is a kind of doctrine written by a scribe named Keti for the pharaoh Senusret I. Its name is “The Teaching of the King Amenemhet I”. In this

work of art, the murdered king instructs his son to find the truth regarding his murder. This story is very interesting in that carrying notable similarities with Shakespeare's Hamlet. (Wilkinson, 2010).

Figure 4.9. The Advice of Amenemhet (Kriveart90)

Figure 4.10. Egyptian Women Making Music and Dancing (Van der Crabben, 2014)

4.2 Urbanism in Ancient Egypt

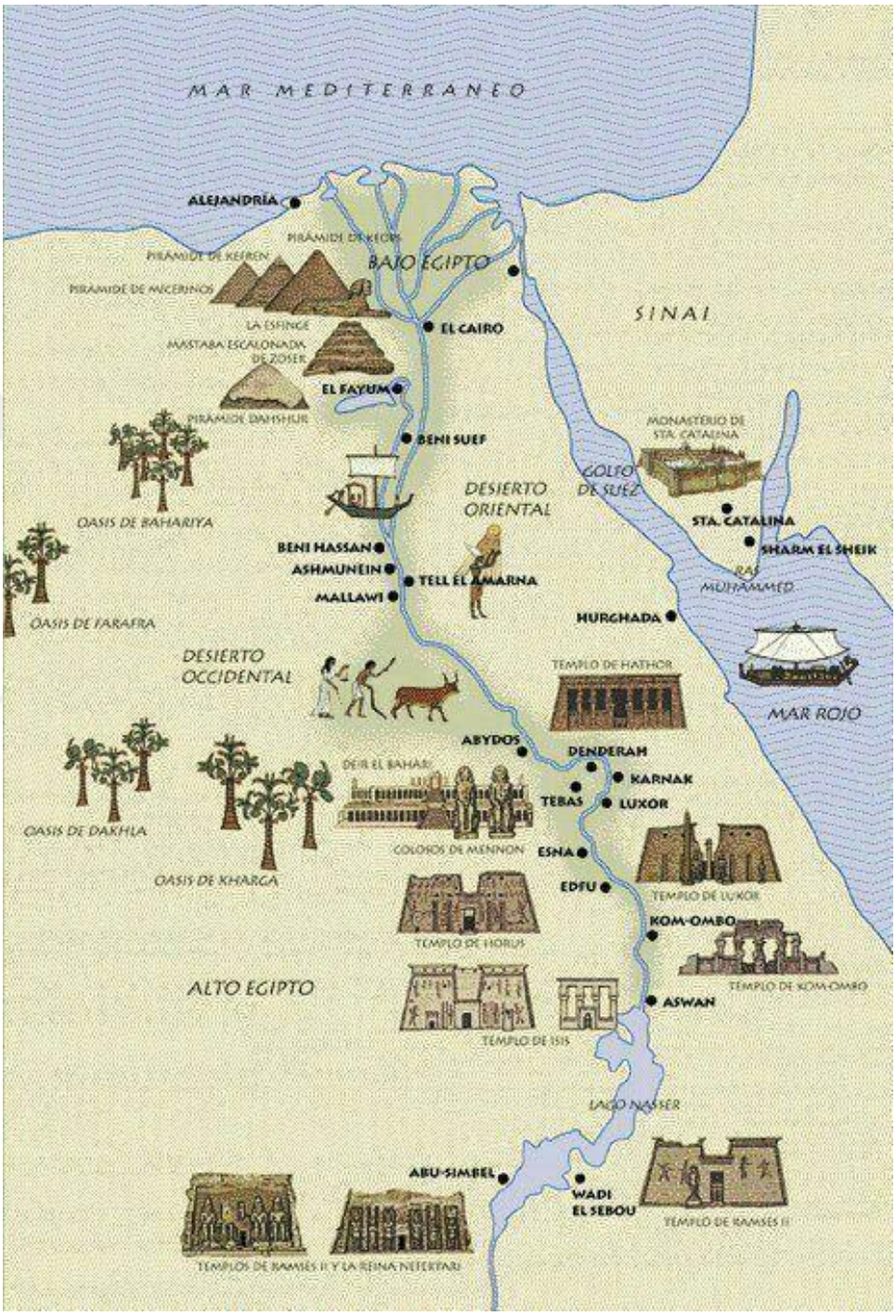


Figure 4.11. Egypt Cities (Unknown Artist)

4.2.1 Thebes

Thebes, Waset, or Wo'se with its ancient names was one of the most important cities of the Bronze Age World. This significance of Thebes came from being one of the capitals of ancient Egypt during a period in the Middle and New Kingdom eras (Dorman, 2021). However, the history of Thebes goes very back to i.e., before the unification of ancient Egypt. In this part, mostly the New Kingdom period will be focused on because of the abundance of archaeological and written materials. However, its earlier periods which can be followed like the beginning of the second millennia will also be involved.

Thebes is located on either side of the Nile River at approximately 26° N latitude. It is on the doorstep of modern-day Luxor town, and it is 675 km south of Cairo (Dorman, 2021). Thebes covered an area of approximately 93 square km. While the main part of the city was situated along the Nile's east bank. Along the west bank was dedicated more to the afterlife, monumental buildings, royal buildings, and of course houses of the officers who served in them. The Valley of the Kings, the Valley of the Queens, and the Karnak Temple are the other important structures that were situated around the city of Thebes (Dorman, 2021).

According to ancient Egyptian beliefs, the city was created at the hands of Amun-Ra, who raised it from the Nile's waters. While Thebes was a point of trade and mining once, during the First Intermediate Period in the 21st century B.C. the city gained importance. At the end of the period, Theban King Mentuhotep the Second defeated Lower Egypt, reunited the country, and made Thebes the new capital of Egypt in 2055 B.C. Thebes reached its golden age during the 18th Dynasty and the New Kingdom Era (History of Thebes, 2022).

When it comes to its urban plan, the layout of Thebes gives many characteristics of urban design in ancient Egypt. The most remarkable fact is the division between the west side and the east side of the city. This division was formed by the river Nile and as mentioned above, the west side was allocated the afterlife while daily life and other businesses were carried out in the populated east side. The city was also

surrounded by large and fertile agricultural land which provided enough food for its residents (History of Thebes, 2022).

If we put under the scope the main city located in the east, the first thing that attracts attention is two larger temple complexes.

First was the temple of Amun-Ra located in the north of the city. Its core was built by Senusret I in c. 2000 B.C., and this temple was the head of the entire Egyptian pantheon in the time of the New Kingdom. It is known as the Karnak Temple complex today. Karnak covered an area of 80 ha and consisted of three main parts. The largest one was the precinct of Amun featuring the Great Hypostyle Hall, Obelisks, a sacred lake, and over twenty temples and shrines. To the right of Amun's section, there was the precinct of Mut. It consisted of six temples and another sacred lake. Goddess Mut was the wife of Amun, and alongside Khonsu they made up the Theban Triad. To the left of the precinct of Amun, there was the precinct of Montu, the God of War. The section's area was covering 2 ha, and it owned three temples and a sacred lake. The Karnak temple was a very important destination for pilgrimage. There were 80.000 priests at the service of this temple at the end of the New Kingdom.

Figure 4.12. Thebes Plan (Sick, 2022)

Figure 4.13. The Temple of Amun-Ra (Sick, 2022)

The second temple complex was the Luxor Temple in its modern name. its construction was started by Amenhotep III and completed in the reign of Tutankhamun in the 14th century B.C. Later, Ramesses the Great made additions to the building. The temple was composed of a series of courts and colonnades following each other. The most sacred part of the temple, accessible only to high priests and pharaohs, began with two small rooms: the Hall of Offerings, and the Hall of the Sanctuary of the Barque. At the end of these rooms, another sanctuary, sanctum sanctorum, decorated with divine representations existed (History of Thebes, 2022).

One other important notion in the city of Thebes was the concept of the avenue. The paved road known as the avenue of the sphinxes today was connecting above mentioned Karnak and Luxor Temples to each other. The road had a length of 3 kilometers, and there were hundreds of human-headed sphinxes on both sides. This road was called ‘the path of the gods’ by ancient Egyptians. Every year, at the beginning of the flooding season, a ritual journey of the Theban Triad from the shrines of Karnak to Luxor Temple would be undertaken, where the statues of Mut,

Amun, and Khonsu were carried by foot along the avenue of the sphinxes. This avenue can be counted as the urban spine of the city.

Surrounding areas of that avenue were residential areas in which both poor and rich people had accommodation, mostly wall-to-wall. The main materials used in the construction of houses were dried bricks of clay and mud from the Nile's riverbank. The more modest houses comprised one room used for storage and resting. The flat roof was covered with reed canopies and served as a living area and as a bedroom, especially during hot summers. The open courtyard at the back served as a kitchen, garden, and enclosure for animals.

On the other hand, middle-class and upper-middle-class people's houses could have three or five rooms aligned on a straight axis, with a place for an altar, niches for the cultic figures, and false doors. The houses had also separate bedrooms and workrooms. The name of the resident was written at the entrance of the houses.

The members of the upper class lived in Mansions. These mansions had beautiful gardens including anemone flowers, palm trees, sycamores, and so on. They had often a pond with fish and lotus flowers in these gardens. Some wealthiest Egyptians had also well with drinkable water in their courtyard. Mansions are often situated along the Nile. They were two-storied, made of two or even three layers of mudbrick, and painted white outside. Locked gateways, high walls, and barred windows protected the premises against wild animals and intruders. Each residence had a living room, warm in winter and cold in summer, at its center. The walls were decorated with artistic paintings and figures. Finally, some of the mansions had bathrooms, but no running water. The water for cooking, cleaning, and drinking was being fetched by slaves and children.

The west side of the Nile was allocated for mostly royal uses. The royal palaces not only served as a pharaoh's and his entourage's private apartments, but also as an administrative headquarters, a space for religious activities, and barracks during military campaigns if it was needed.

The largest of these was the Malkata palace complex, which was built by Amenhotep III. While the complex was covering an area of about 35 ha. in total, the columned audience hall with a small throne room at its end was the center of the complex. This center was surrounded by royal apartments, bathrooms, bedrooms, a dressing room, and a private audience chamber. The main wife of the pharaoh lived in a separate palace complex situated across the main palace. This palace had temples, storerooms, kitchens, workshops, and houses for servants and staff. On the west side of the complex, there were administrative buildings called "West Villas" as well as vast courtyards for religious festivals and jubilees.

All the complex was connected with a T shaped harbor whose dimensions were 2 x 1 km, by means of gardens, and the harbor was opening to the river Nile.

As the east side of the city represented life, its god was Amun, on the other hand, the dominant gods were Hathor-Amenet and Osiris, god of the land of the dead, on the west side. There was a grand capital necropolis dedicated to them. The West Bank of Thebes was called Imenti en Waset or Ta Jeser meaning Distant land or holy land by the Egyptians.

Since the faith of the Egyptians was obsessive regarding the afterlife, they gave tremendous significance to their tombs and graveyards. Therefore, many of the graves were made of stone which is durable but expensive at the same time. This is an important reason why so many tombs they left while their houses could not reach our day at the same ratio.

The famous Valley of the Kings and Queens are also located in Thebes. The Valley of the Kings features more than 60 underground tombs of the Egyptian elite: pharaohs, queens, priests, and high-ranking servants. All were carved in the rock between the 16th and 11th century BCE. The main reason behind the pharaohs' place choice was the desire to rest in peace without being robbed by grave robbers. The golden age pharaohs who reigned during the 18^{th}, 19^{th}, and 20^{th} Dynasties were buried in the Valley of the Kings.

In order to ensure that the location of the royal tombs stayed secret, the people who built them were made to live in isolated villages in ancient Egypt. In Thebes's case, this village was Deir el-Medina. Surrounded by cliffs and mountains, Deir el-Medina was situated a few kilometers away from the Valley of the Kings and Queens. There is also a newly discovered site called "Golden City", and it includes residential and administered buildings.

4.2.2 Heit el-Ghurab

The second settlement that will be discussed in this part is actually a site. This site is considered by archaeologists as a living space for the workers and officers who worked in the construction of the famous pyramids of Khafre and Menkaure. Although it cannot be counted as a city, its urban traces can be followed since the site consists of many features of a town like administration buildings, bakeries, other kinds of stores, and residential buildings both for the working class and elites, moreover, according to some scholars, it may be a part of a more complex city even may be part of a capital (Tavares, 2011).

"The archaeological data such as the clay sealings indicates the presence of a varied and complex society at Heit el-Ghurab, which seems to have clustered in different parts of the settlement" (Moeller, 2016, p.126).

Heit el-Ghurab is located southeast of the pyramid complex. In other words, the limestone wall called the wall of the crow which is 400 meters south of the Great Sphinx is its beginning line in the north. This wall, which gives its name to the area, is approximately 200 meters long and 10 meters tall (Lehner, 2015). There is also a wall that surrounds the western and southern sides of the settlement.

There are three distinct urban areas constructed and maintained by the workers under the command of pharaohs of the 4th dynasty (B.C. 2613 – 2494) in Heit el-Ghurab. They are Galleries, the Eastern Town, and the Western Town (Tavares, 2011). It is proper to state that these names are given by the archaeologists to designate the area,

and they may not indicate places' real functions. According to Tavares (and Lehner) (2011), "the distinctness of these urban areas is reflected in the urban layout, size,

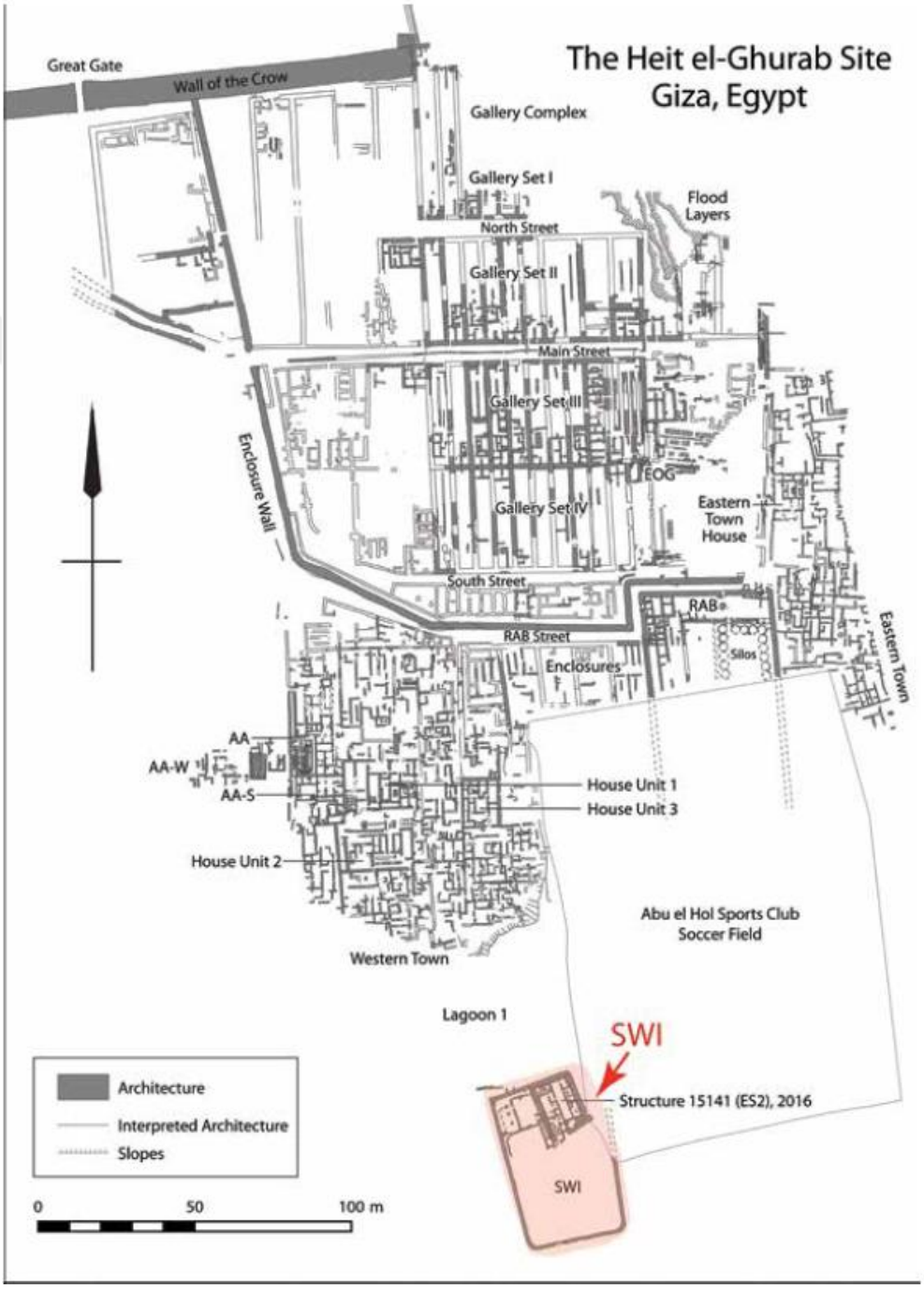


Figure 4.14. Heit el-Ghurab Site (Lehner, 2016)

design of structures, and by the patterns emerging in the distributions of faunal, botanical, lithic, and ceramic material." (p. 270). "These distinct urban areas are linked by streets, gates, and enclosure walls." (p. 270). In the center, Galleries exist and there is a royal administrative building in the south of the site. Moeller (2016) states that "its current exposure covers an area of 5.25 ha, but its actual limits have not yet been reached." (p.126)

If the structures which consist of the site are examined closely, it is estimated by Lehner (2015) that the central sections of the settlement named galleries were occupied by warrior guards as well as workers.

One other important structure is the one thought to be served as a Royal Administrative Building. This large building is separated from its environment with thick and taller walls. It was probably the supply center for the more official parts of the town such as the Gallery Complex. Production buildings like bakeries located just north of it solidify this idea (Moeller, 2016).

The inside of the Royal Administrative Building consists of many spaces like open courtyards, magazines, storage areas, and a large silo court, with many round granaries that were sunk into the ground (Moeller, 2016).

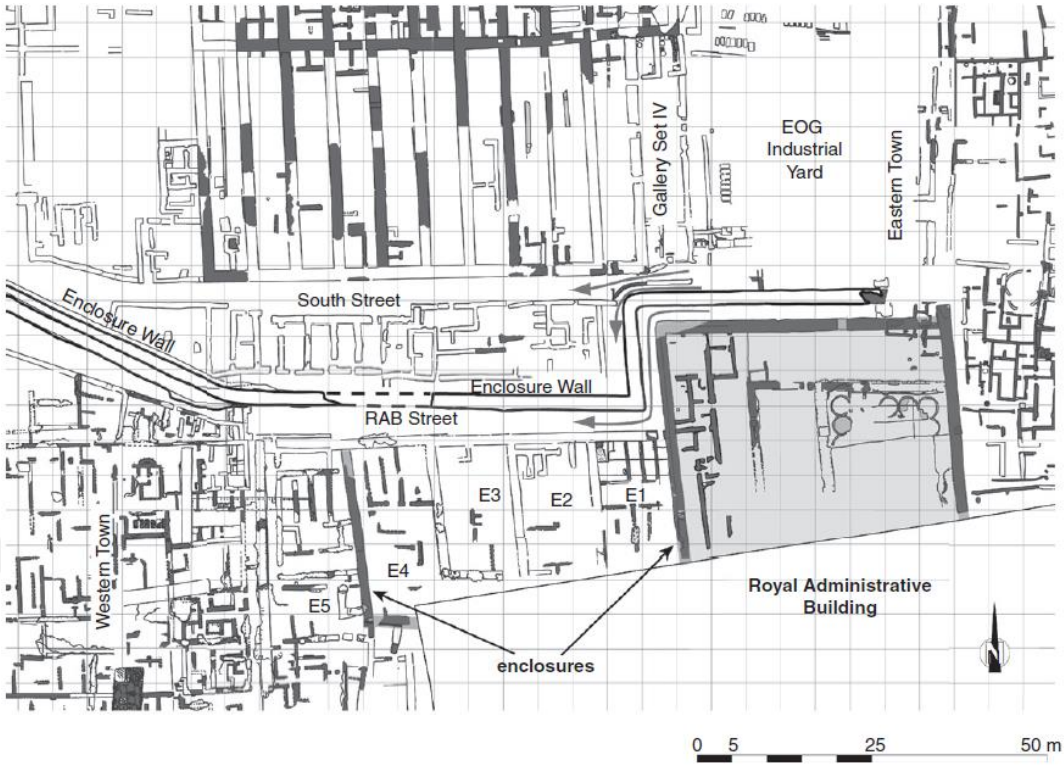


Figure 4.15. Plan of the Royal Administrative Building (RAB) and surrounding areas at Heit el-Ghurab. After M. Lehner, A. Tavares, "Walls, Ways and Stratigraphy: Signs of Social Control in an Urban Footprint at Giza," in M. Bietak et al., Cities and Urbanism in Ancient Egypt, Vienna 2010, 205, fig. 24. © AERA, prepared by W. Wetterstrom and P. Sanders.

Tavares (2011) states that "the Eastern Town shows a more self-organized urban pattern, with small courts and chambers comprising houses that are smaller than those in the Western Town." (p. 271). Therefore, scholars consider the settlement as a village rather than a town. The settlement's economic characteristics are also more like a village economy except for its population was a little bit denser than a village. It is thought that pig raising was an important means of living in this place (Tavares, 2011).

When it comes to Western Town, this area comprises larger houses and production units. Some of the areas of the houses reach 400 m^2 and they hold 21 rooms as much as is recorded (Tavares, 2011). Houses include bakeries and painted walls. These

features indicate that Western Town had houses for the higher class of people like scribers or state officials.

4.2.3 Tell el-Amarna (Akhetaten)

To better understand the vision leading Egyptians to found a new capital, the founder and the period in which he ruled are needed to be summarized.

In ancient Egypt, the gods associated with kingship and creation were the most significant deities. One of them was the god Amun whose name means “the hidden one”. He was the patron god of the royal household and emerged in the Middle Kingdom. The cult of Amun centered in Thebes was the most powerful one by the time of Amenhotep IV’s reign or his better-known name Akhenaten (Stevens, 2020). Amenhotep IV was uncomfortable with the gradually increasing power of the priests of the traditional religion of Egypt in the capital city of Thebes. He desired to initiate a reform movement to simplify the traditional religion of Egypt to gain more control over his subjects. By changing his name to Akhenaten, the pharaoh accepted only one Sun God as a deity, and he was the messenger of this deity.

This was the ideological situation in the capital city when Amenhotep IV ascended to the throne. As discussed above, the third kingdom was the brightest golden age of Egypt among all other periods. In addition, the father of Amenhotep IV, Amenhotep III was one of the most powerful pharaohs of ancient Egypt, and he reigned for 38 years. This powerful state structure and accumulated wealth inherited by his father gave Akhenaten the necessary resources to realize the reform movement in his mind. However, Thebes was a dangerous city to maintain new reformist religion thus Akhenaten ordered his officials and architects to construct a new city far from Thebes.

Akhenaten moved his capital from Thebes to the newly founded city of Akhetaten (“Horizon of the Sun-disc”), located halfway between Thebes and Memphis in the fifth year of his reign. Akhetaten is commonly known as Tell el-Amarna, or Amarna,

the modern name derived from two local villages, Et-Till and El-Amran (Gates, 2011, p. 109).

According to Gates (2011), the ruins of Amarna are the best and fullest resources in order to understand an Egyptian city in the Third Kingdom Period. There are three reasons for this approach according to him, first, the location of Amarna gave it the chance of protection from the floods of the river Nile and prevented it from staying under the clay. Second, the city was occupied only during the final eleven years of Akhenaten's reign and a few years after. Probably, as an effect of political events, the city was then abandoned, and only a Roman fort in much later periods occupied a small section of the site. And third, there are many objects and evidence extracted under the excavations conducted by the Egypt Exploration Society under the direction of British archaeologist Barry Kemp.

If the plan of the city is supposed to be introduced, ancient Amarna or Akhetaten was laid out over six miles on the east bank of the Nile between the shore and the cliffs above Assiut. Modern-day scholars divide the city into four districts and name them North City, Central City, Southern Suburbs, and Outskirts (Mark, 2017).

The North City was located around the Northern Palace where guests were received, and Aten was worshiped. There were apartments in which the royal family dwelled at the backside of the palace. The walls of the palace were painted with scenes depicting the fertility of the Delta region, and interestingly the building had no roof for saluting the Sun or Aten (Mark, 2017). According to Stevens (2020), Akhenaten was believed to spend most of his time in the North Palace away from the bustle of the Central City. He preferred to use his golden royal chariot or royal caique when he desired to head for the Central City.

The bureaucratic center of the city was the Central City. This center was designed around the Great Temple of Aten and the Small Temple of Aten. The Administrators worked and lived here (Mark, 2017). The Central City was the most intact or well-preserved city center left from ancient Egypt (Stevens, 2020). The Great Palace located at the riverbank was the bureaucratic center of the state. Akhenaten

conducted government businesses here and negotiated international trade and diplomacy.

While the Southern Suburbs was the residential district for the wealthy elite who owned estates, In the outskirts, peasant farmers who worked the fields and on the tombs of the necropolis lived (Mark, 2017).

The desert altars located in the desert, east of the northern city, and north suburb were included in the outskirts of the city. There are also some royal tombs scattered around the desert parallel to the city's settlement (stevens, 2020).

The city had its moments during Akhenaten's reign. After Akhenaten died, his son Tutankhamun moved the capital back to Memphis and then to Thebes. Tutankhamun initiated the measures to reverse his father's policies and return Egypt to the former beliefs and practices which had maintained the culture and helped it develop for almost 2,000 years. Temples were reopened, and the businesses which depended upon them were renewed (Mark, 2017).

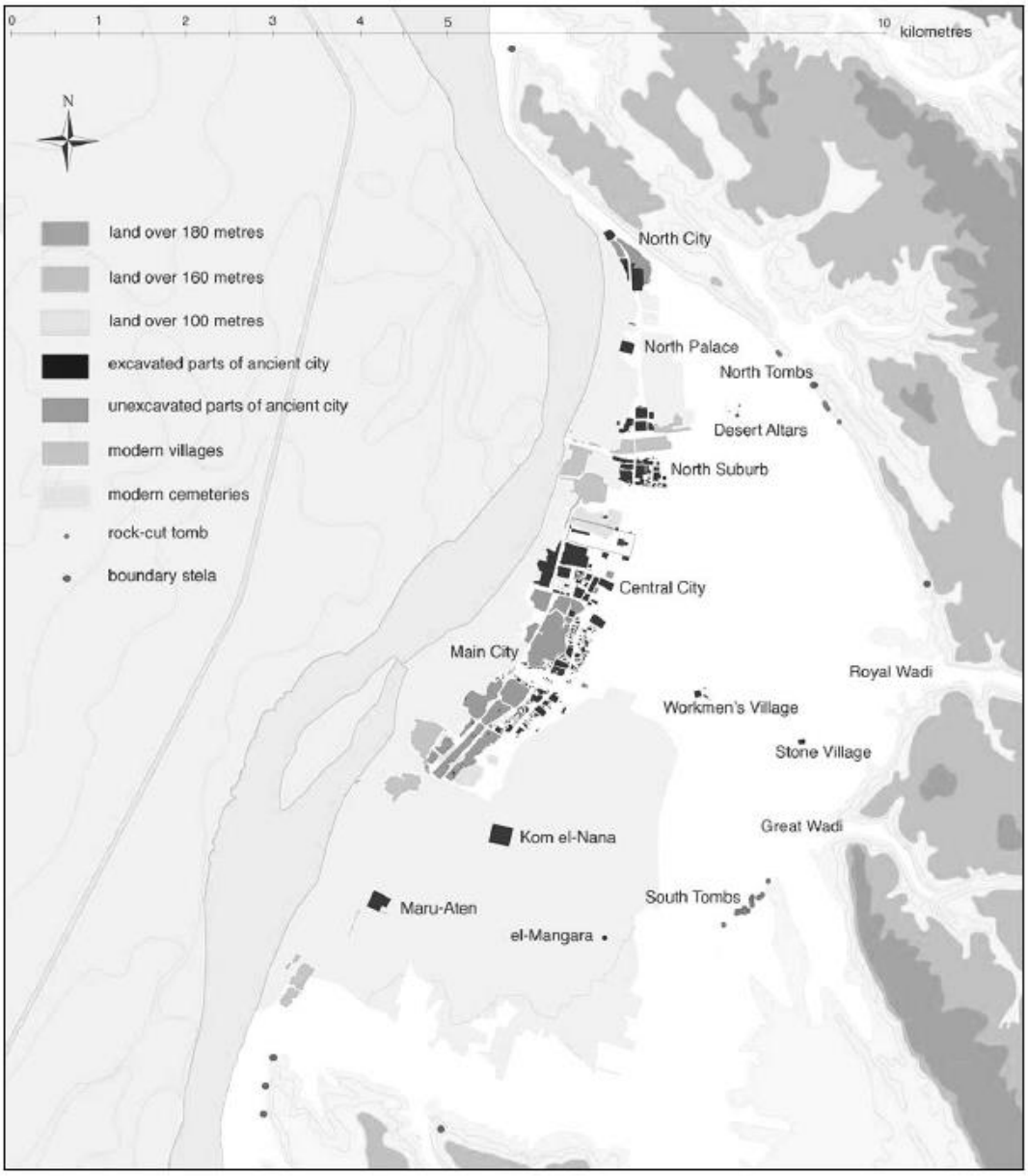


Figure 4.16. Akheteten Plan (Stevens, 2020)

Figure 4.17. The Center of Amarna (Mark, 2017)

CHAPTER 5

A COMPARISON BETWEEN TWO CIVILIZATIONS WITH REFERENCE TO THEIR CITIES

5.1 Ten Criteria and Sample Settlements

Before making a comparison between the two civilizations, it must be stated that all six settlements i.e., towns or cities focused on in this study almost correspond to the ten criteria of Gordon Childe. It can be deducible from not only the remains of the settlements but written documents that shed light on these periods. If we enlarge upon the subject:

If we recall the ten criteria of Childe, the first cities must have been more extensive and more densely populated than any previous settlements. This article is a very debated one, however, in this study, all settlements correspond to this argument except maybe Heit el-Ghurab, which was designed as a town, a workers' site, still its population easily outnumbers an average town. Except this, the cities of Uruk, Nippur, Ur, Thebes, and Akhetaten all correspond to this article with both their size and population varying between 20.000 and 50.000 or 80.000 people to some sources. C.L. Wolley made an estimation of 360.000 people for the city of Ur in c. 2000 B.C., during which the period of the third Dynasty of Ur, in his article "The Urbanization of Society" (Kramer, 1963; as cited in Journal of World History, 1957).

The second criterion is the full-time specialization of labor. In this sense, it can be confidentially stated that all six settlements of the two civilizations were in accordance with this article since they all had priests, traders, workers, state officials, etc. For illustration, historical recordings show that ziggurats situated in every Sumerian city functioned for multi-purpose besides being temples, they were also used as schools and observatories (Kramer, 1963). The specialization of labor is also

seen in Egypt civilization. There are many hieroglyphs exhibiting the daily lives of state officials, physicians, artisans, etc.

Figure 5.1. The Great Ziggurat of Ur (Games, 2016)

When it comes to the third criterion of Childe that is, the concentration of surplus and taxation, it is a well-known fact that both of these two civilizations had fertile soils and husbandry which could provide surplus and running taxation systems as well. Producers, especially farmers, had to present one portion of their production to the state as an indicator of their gratitude to gods and goddesses. While the Sumerians stored their production surplus in Ziggurats, Egyptians used storerooms for this procedure.

If we enlarge the subject, “nominally, all the lands and waters of a Mesopotamian city-state belonged to its gods and were managed by their surrogates, the rulers and priests. Individuals who used the lands and waters and derived economic benefit from them were, in turn, subject to taxation.” (Bertman, 2005, p. 67). Taxes were paid in the form of goods and services since the coinage system had not been invented yet. Working in the construction of temples as a worker or making military

service as the payment of tax were not strange implementations to people in the ancient world (Bertman, 2005). Mesopotamian kings often sold the right for collecting taxes to the highest private bidders. The most feared man in ancient Mesopotamia was the tax collector according to an ancient proverb (Bertman, 2005).

The fourth criterion was the monumental public buildings. In this regard, the ziggurats in Sumeria and the pyramids, though they were not public, in Egypt can be given as examples besides spectacular temple complexes situated in two societies. However, there is an important point here that it is the persistence of temples and other monumental buildings related to the materials used. Since Egyptians used stone rather than mudbrick, their temples became much more persistent than the Sumerians'. The temples of Karnak, Abu Simbel, and Amun-Ra can be given as examples.

Figure 5.2. The Temple of Abu Simbel (Jarvis, 2013)

The fifth was the class society. The social structures of the two civilizations were discussed before related parts in this study. However, it needs to summarize them for the sake of clarity. Sumerian society was consisting of four social classes. These were the nobility, ordinary citizens, clients, and slaves (Kramer, 1963). the social structure of ancient Egypt was incredibly strict and social mobility was not encouraged. This was because of the belief that the gods had decreed the most perfect order for society to keep harmony and balance which was the central value of their culture and was known as ma'at. The social hierarchy in Egypt had a more triangle structure. It was established with the king at the top and then his viziers, the members of his court, priests and scribes, regional governors the generals of the military, artists, craftspeople, farmers, and finally slaves (World History Encyclopedia, 2021).

One thing in common between the two regions was their reliance on slave labor to do jobs such as manual labor managing homes tending to horses and tutoring young children.

The writing was one of the major symbols of the two civilizations. While the Sumerians invented cuneiform as the writing system in c. 3200 B.C., Egyptians invented sui generis hieroglyph in c. 3100 B.C. Both writing systems developed in time, and they were used to create not just tangible calculations but performing arts.

> "literacy was highly prized. Egyptian literary texts routinely encourage young men to become scribes, both as a necessary prerequisite to higher office and as a profession valued in itself:
>
> You should give your mind only to writing,
>
> and you will see what will save you from labor . . .
>
> Recite from the end of the Compilation
>
> and you will find this sentence in it:
>
> ''As for the scribe in any place of the capital,
>
> he cannot become poor in it.''

He makes wisdom for another,

and there is no one more content than him . . .

I will make you love writing more than your mother,

I will bring its perfection to your attention.

Moreover, it is greater than any office:

There is nothing like it on Earth. (Khety Iia–IIId; James P. Allen's translation) (Lloyd, 2010, p.661)

HIEROGLYPH	REPRESENTS	VALUE	HIEROGLYPH	REPRESENTS	VALUE
	vulture	*3*		?	*ḫ*
	reed-leaf	*j*		animal's belly	*ḥ*
	two reed-leaves	*y*		door-bolt	*z*
	arm and hand	*ʿ*		fold of cloth	*s*
	quail-chick	*w*		basin	*š*
	leg and foot	*b*		hill	*q*
	stool	*p*		basket	*k*
	horned viper	*f*		jar-stand	*g*
	owl	*m*		bread-loaf	*t*
	water	*n*		hobble	*ṯ*
	mouth	*r*		hand	*d*
	building plan	*h*		cobra	*ḏ*
	coil of rope	*ḥ*			

Figure 5.3. Uniliteral Hieroglyphe Signs (Lloyd, 2010, p. 656)

Meaning	Pictogram (ca. 3500–3000 B.C.E.)	Early Cuneiform (ca. 2400–1800 B.C.E.)	Later Cuneiform (ca. 700 B.C.E.)	Phonetic Equivalent (in Sumerian)
heaven				an
sun, day				ud
earth				ki
water, stream				a
mountain				kur
plough				apin
grain				she
orchard				shar
ox				gud
cow				ab
pig				sha
donkey				anshe
fish				ku(a)
bird				mushen
bowl, food				ninda
eat ("mouth and food")				ku
drink ("mouth and water")				nag

Figure 5.4. Some Sumerian Signs (Bertman, 2005)

Although the term what we call science first began in ancient Greece, its seeds again spread in Sumer and Egypt. If looking at Childe's definition, he mentions arithmetic, astronomy, and geometry, these practices were implemented by both societies to calculate the seasons, solve land conflicts, observe the universe, etc. The difference between the Greeks was philosophical. While Greeks used these practices to understand nature, the Sumerians and Egyptians used them just to regulate their life. The findings were nothing but the gods' law for them.

Both regions had flourishing artistic styles which reflected the values of their civilizations. Egyptians were more often portrayed as scantily clad and healthy in scenes of daily life. Mesopotamians, however, were often depicted as thick muscled heavily armored warriors. Their preferences for how they depicted themselves reflected what was important to each of the different cultures. Egyptians were happy being who they were and thought everyone else was just out of luck for not being born Egyptian while the cultures of Mesopotamia frequently engaged in warfare and were looking to defend expand conquer and impose their respective culture (World History Encyclopedia, 2021).

“A state is a politically organized society that is regarded by those who live in it as sovereign or politically independent and has leaders who control its social, political, legal, economic, and cultural activities.” (Trigger, 2003, p.92). When the two societies were examined, it is obviously seen that both had the structure of a state. The Sumerian political organization was formed as city-states most of the time. There was a dual assembly that restricted the authority of the kings and was formed by aristocrats and commoners (Kramer, 1963). Egypt was a territorial state, on the other hand, in which the pharaohs rule the country with their viziers and assigned governors to the other provinces.

5.2 Comparison

5.2.1 Geographical Characteristics

If we began to compare the two civilizations from geography that they flourished. It is obvious that both owed their first advancement to the rivers they had. While these rivers were Euphrates and Tigris for Mesopotamia, it is the Nile for Egypt. However, there was an important difference between the regime of these rivers as it is discussed before in this study. While the regime of the Nile was regular which enabled Egyptians to estimate and make preparation for its seasonal changes, the Tigris and the Euphrates rivers were far less reliable than the Nile. They flooded randomly and

could often be violent and destructive. All the rivers mentioned left very fertile soils, which were needed for fruitful agriculture after they flooded (World History Encyclopedia, 2021).

Cataracts along the way of the Nile also formed natural barriers for invaders and made Egypt safeguarded country. However, there was not any chance like this for Mesopotamians. This is one of the reasons why the Egyptians established a unified country way before, while the Sumerians had to fight with each other and invaders frequently. This relative comfort and usage of stone in construction led Egyptian culture to preserve itself for a longer time than Mesopotamians.

Another difference, coming from the same natural barriers reason, between the cities of the two civilizations was the walls. In Sumer cities, there were great walls to protect them against invaders from every direction. As for Egyptian cities, this task belonged to the deserts. A foreign army that dreamed to conquer Egypt had to cross the harsh deserts first. Domestic ones, on the other hand, did not damage the cities too much generally since they were part of the same national identity.

Trigger (2003) states that the water channels that hold a major place in the Sumerian city had not similar importance in Egypt. One of the reasons for this was channels' usage as also barriers besides their service for agriculture, drinking water, and transportation in Sumeria, while the Egyptians used them just for agriculture, potable water, and transportation. While Egyptian cities had a few channels for the most important buildings, the channel system surrounded every side of an average Sumer city (Trigger, 2003).

5.2.2 Economy

Although many prominent social scientists like Childe (1928), Witfogel (1938), and Steward (1949) thought that early civilizations originated in river valleys located in arid or semiarid regions where the societies could create surplus production using needed irrigation tools that provide them productive agriculture, primary

civilizations evolved in many different kinds of environments: " from the river valleys in warm, arid regions (Egypt, Mesopotamia), to tropical forests and tropical forest-savanna borderlands (Maya, Yoruba), or mountainous valleys of different sizes, shapes, and elevations (Peru, Valley of Mexico), and temperate rainfall zones (Shang China)" (Trigger, 2003, p.279).

When it comes to trade, most of the goods that people used in everyday life were produced and sold locally in early civilizations (Trigger, 2003). There were important differences, on the other hand, between the territorial states and city-states in terms of long-distance trade. Like it is seen in ancient Greece, in Sumer also the absence of a central authority encouraged the trade between city-states. The wars frequently occurred between city-states helped the development of trade in Sumer Land. In territorial states, on the other hand, long-distance trade was under the control of governments, and it enabled rulers important source of power (Trigger, 2003).

Trigger (2003) makes a very significant detection of the effects of agriculture and fertility of the lands on why some societies developed more centralized governments and others did not. In our case, the Egyptian government was a much more centralized institution than the Sumerians'. "While the special vulnerability to salination of fields in southern Mesopotamia may to some extent have inhibited the local development of more centralized forms of government, it appears that in all other city-state systems, land ownership became more important and people were more easily coerced by governments as population densities increased" (Trigger, 2003, p.309). A very important reason behind this situation according to Trigger (2003) was the central authority's power of confiscating property. In civilizations that produce high amounts of food, the rulers could confiscate the soil of landholders as a punishment, and doing so they also used to consolidate the central authority.

5.2.3 City Planning and Architecture

As the sign of similarity between Sumerian and Egyptian architecture, Trigger (2003) draws attention to the distinction between the function of temples, palaces, and royal tombs in ancient Egypt and Sumer contrary to the rest of the world. "Temples, palaces, and royal tombs appear to have been clearly distinguished from one another only in Egypt and Mesopotamia" (Trigger, 2003, p.565). As it can be deduced, it is not possible to say that there was a certain distinction between the usage of palaces, temples, or royal tombs in other early civilizations around the world. Aztec and Maya temples were often used as the burial places of rulers at the same time. Yoruba palaces in West Africa contained important public shrines, and Inka palaces were used as the tombs of the dead kings (Trigger, 2003).

Ancient societies had a tendency of seeing temples, palaces, or tombs as the houses of respectively the gods, kings, and the dead. This tendency had been reflected in Egyptian and Sumerian languages. For instance, the Sumerian word for temple, *édingir*, signified the house of a god, while the Egyptian term, *pr ntr*, meant the same. Similarly, while a Sumerian palace was called, *élugal*, which means house of a king, the related term was, *pr nsw*, in Egypt (Trigger, 2003).

a) A Comparison of City Plans

- Location of the Center

When the attention directs toward the city plans of two civilizations, the first thing that catches the eye is the location of the cities. While the Sumerian cities were founded above the hill, Egyptians preferred plain banks of the river Nile. In the Thebes sample, we can see that ancient Egyptians considered the hills more suitable as burial sites since the famous Valley of the Kings was located above the hills west bank of the river Nile. These location choices naturally came from the concern of pillaging and looting. While Sumerians were afraid of foreign intruders for themselves, Egyptians were afraid of domestic grave robbers for their dead.

-Usage of the Channel system

The channel system was another important aspect of city life in Mesopotamia. “Water has a range of practical roles or functions and in southern Mesopotamia, these can be summarized as follows (Wilkinson, 2017; as cited in Hunt, 1988: 189–190):

• Irrigated agriculture

• Transportation

• Drinking water

• Waste removal

• Water for manufacturing.” (Wilkinson, 2017).

We can add security to this list as the channels made the protection of the city easier against the invaders. Like the city of Ur in Nippur also the channel system was passing through the heart of the city.

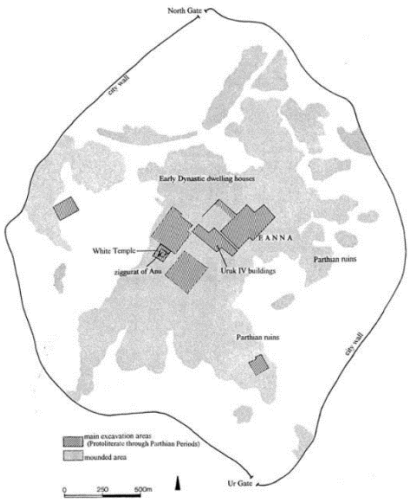
-Location of the Graveyards

The space allocated for cemeteries is another remarkable difference between the cities. While all the sample cities in Sumer, especially in Ur, we can run into graveyards in the city center, for example, royal tombs located in the religious center of Ur. On the other hand, the dead were decidedly buried out of the cities in Egypt.

-The City Walls (see p. 102)

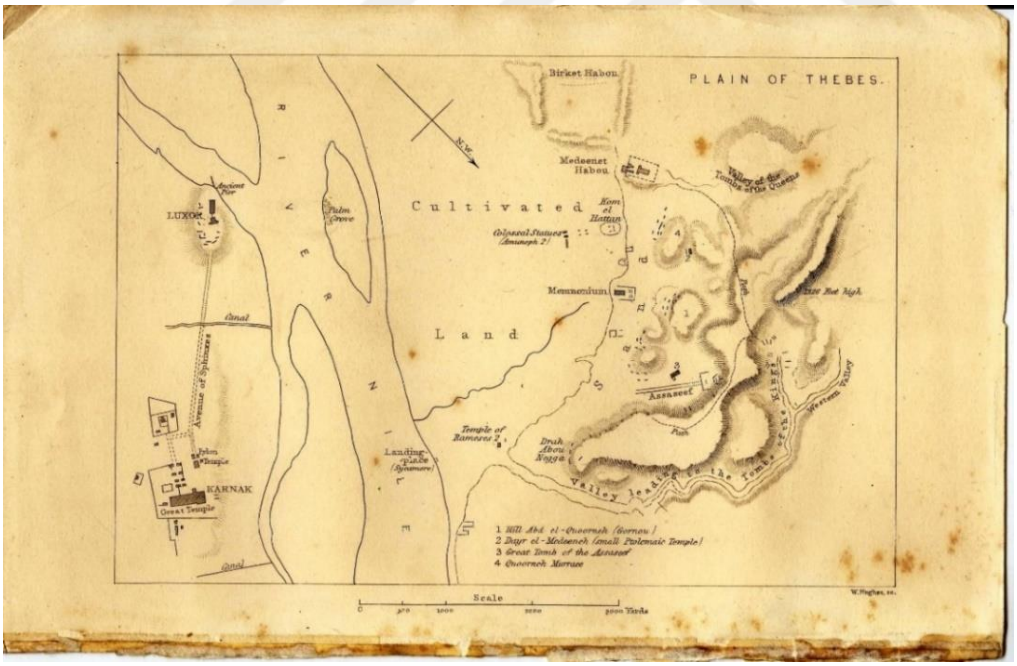
-The Number of Temples

This is a similarity between the two societies. In all sample cities, except Akhetaten, a large number of temples in proportion to land draws attention. Certainly, the reason for this is the polytheistic religion of both societies. Since Akhetaten was built by the order of the pharaoh (Akhenaton) and was designed according to the reformist monotheistic religion, there was only one major Aton (Sun) temple at the center of it.

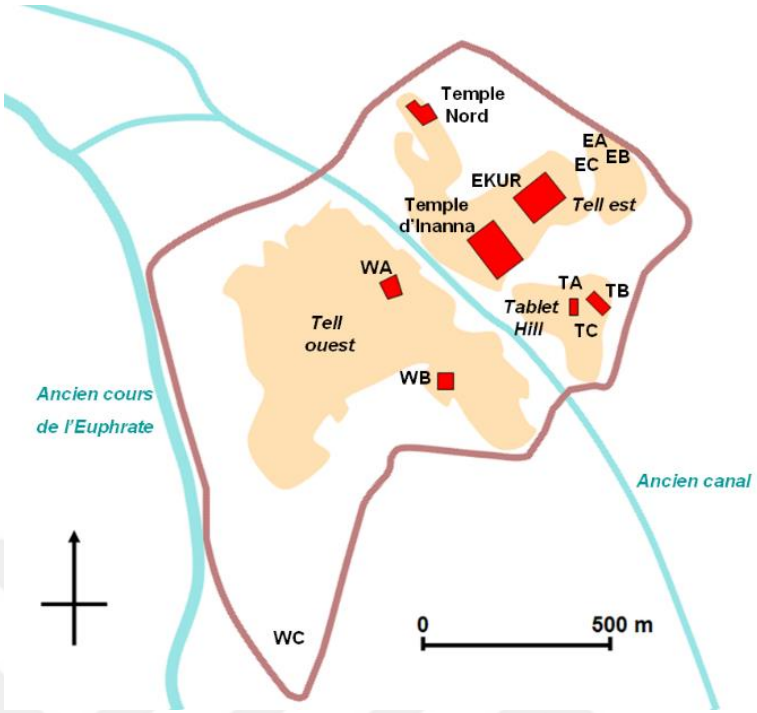


5.5. Uruk

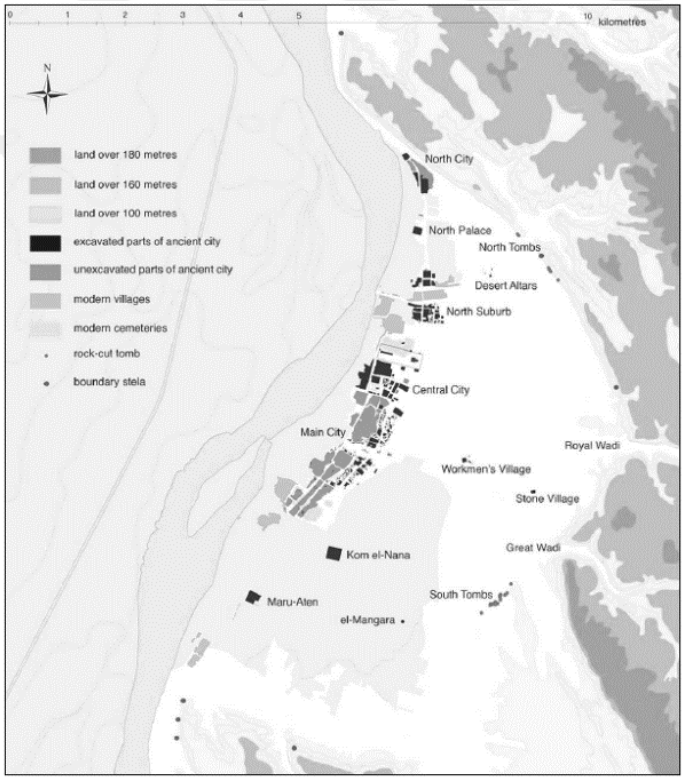
5.6. Ur



5.7. Thebes



5.8. Nippur



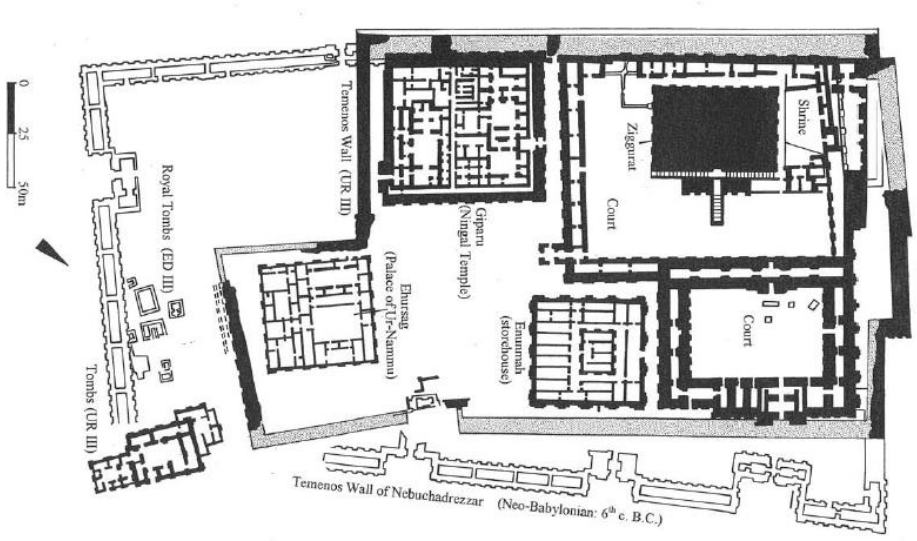
5.9. Akhetaten

b) A Comparison Between the Temple Complex of the Cities of Ur and Thebes

If we would like to understand better the relationship between religion and city planning or architecture, it would be a good way to compare temple complexes or sacred regions of these two religious societies. First, the religious center of Ur, then Karnak and Luxor Temple complexes of Thebes.

The temenos or sacred area of Ur was devoted to the cult of Nanna who was the moon god and patron deity of the city. This sacred area lay in the north-west axis of the city. Traditionally, important buildings were constructed on the northwest axis in Sumer cities as the wind coming from that direction was believed to carry fresh air (Gates, 2011). The temenos measured approximately 400m x 200m, and it contains temples, courtyards, rooms to house the religious personnel, stores, and especially the ziggurat which is the most well-preserved one left from the Sumerians (Gates, 2011). “In ground plan, the area looks quite forbidding, with its many thick and reduplicated walls protecting courts and labyrinthine buildings such as the Giparu, a complex of shrines dedicated principally to Ningal, the goddess of marshes and wife of Nanna, and a residence for high priestesses.” (Gates, 2011, p. 57).

The best-known building of the temenos is the ziggurat, the best-preserved example in Mesopotamia. Erected under Ur-Nammu and his son Shulgi, the ziggurat was restored by successive generations of kings in Mesopotamia for 1500 years after its initial construction, and again in modern times by the Iraqi government (Gates, 2011).



5.10. Ur Sacred Region (Gates, 2011)

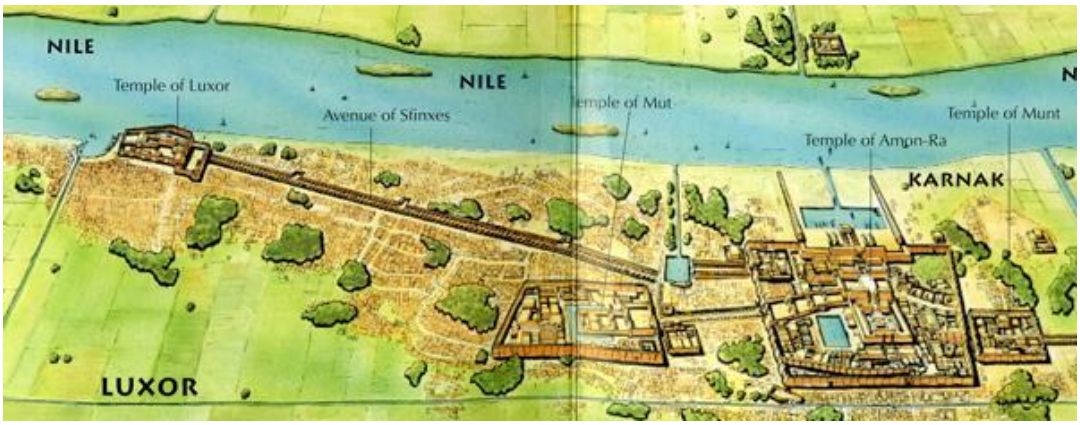
On the other hand, Karnak temple covered an area of 80 ha and consisted of three main parts. The largest one was the precinct of Amun featuring the Great Hypostyle Hall, Obelisks, a sacred lake, and over twenty temples and shrines. To the right of Amun's section, there was the precinct of Mut. It consisted of six temples and another sacred lake. Goddess Mut was the wife of Amun, and alongside Khonsu they made up the Theban Triad. To the left of the precinct of Amun, there was the precinct of Montu, the God of War. The section's area was covering 2 ha, and it owned three temples and a sacred lake. The Karnak temple was a very important destination for pilgrimage.

The second temple complex was the Luxor Temple in its modern name. Its construction was started by Amenhotep III and completed in the reign of Tutankhamun in the 14th century B.C. Later, Ramesses the Great made additions to the building. The temple was composed of a series of courts and colonnades following each other. The most sacred part of the temple, accessible only to high priests and pharaohs, began with two small rooms: the Hall of Offerings, and the

Hall of the Sanctuary of the Barque. At the end of these rooms, another sanctuary, sanctum sanctorum, decorated with divine representations existed.

One other important notion in the city of Thebes was the concept of the avenue. The paved road known as the avenue of the sphinxes today was connecting above mentioned Karnak and Luxor Temples to each other. The road had a length of 3 kilometers, and there were hundreds of human-headed sphinxes on both sides. This road was called ‘the path of the gods’ by ancient Egyptians. Every year, at the beginning of the flooding season, a ritual journey of the Theban Triad from the shrines of Karnak to Luxor Temple would be undertaken, where the statues of Mut, Amun, and Khonsu were carried by foot along the avenue of the sphinxes. This avenue can be counted as the urban spine of the city.

5.11. The Avenue of Sphinx (Lloyd, 2010)



5.12. Main Buildings of Thebes (Unknown artist)

At first glance, the tendency of concentration of the temple structure within one region in Sumer while they were scattered around in Egyptian city draws attention. In Sumer City, the temples were located around the governmental buildings and also ziggurats. On the other hand, there is a remarkable amount of dimension between temple complexes and the palace in Egypt City. For instance, while the Karnak and Luxor temples were on the east bank of the river Nile, the palace of the pharaoh was on the west side. Akhetaten again had an exception. The palace complex of Akhenaton was in the center of the city, and the Aton temple was located next to it in the northeast.

5.2.4 Trade

Geography also affected the materials used in the building and economies of the two societies. Egypt was a fertile country in terms of the kinds of stones and mines except for silver. There were various kinds of stones such as granite, lapis lazuli, and limestone. They had also copper and gold mines, especially in Upper Egypt, and they had some forests for timber, however, the most qualified timber of the time was produced and imported by Lebanon people at that time. Egyptians were deprived of

the silver mine. For this reason, silver needed to be traded and it was more important than gold in Egypt's economy and culture.

Sumeria, on the other hand, was a country of scarcity in terms of mines and valuable stones although it had rich and productive soil for agriculture and husbandry at that time. Besides, there was not much forestland. Therefore, valuable stones like lapis lazuli, and kind of timbers needed to be traded with surrounding people in return for grains and animals. Of course, this process needed to be recorded, and it is thought that trade transactions were the basic reason behind the invention of the Sumerian script.

5.2.5 State Organization

The geographical situation abovementioned also indirectly shaped their political organization so that Sumerians developed a less strictly stratified society, in the beginning, that did not allow someone to gather great power. Anyone could own land to cultivate. On the other hand, Pharaohs owed the ownership of all land in the country, and they were the worshipped gods besides being rulers. People were just tenants who were obliged to pay taxes to the king in return for accommodation and food in Egypt. Yet it is known that the Sumerians had assemblies whose members were farmers and the common people right along with priests and aristocrats. Ziggurats are thought of as the place of these assemblies.

Both states were ruled by kings. The difference, however, as it can be deduced from the paragraph above, is the status of the king in Sumer was one step further from other nobilities. The kingship was mostly hereditary and regularly passed from father to son. "Nevertheless, the succession had to be sanctioned by a city's patron deity, whose will was determined by oracles and divination." (Trigger, 2003, p.76). To illustrate, Urukagina of Lagash, who did not inherit from a royal family, boasted that he was chosen as the king by the patron deity of his city. On the other hand, kingship

was strictly hereditary in Egypt. The pharaohs were seen as the living gods, and they could not even marry anyone outside of the royal family (Trigger, 2003).

One reflection of the cultural difference between the two civilizations in cities is the location of cemeteries. While the cemeteries could be located in living arrangements or out in the Sumerian city, Egyptians prepared allocated burial sites for their dead out of the city (Trigger, 2003).

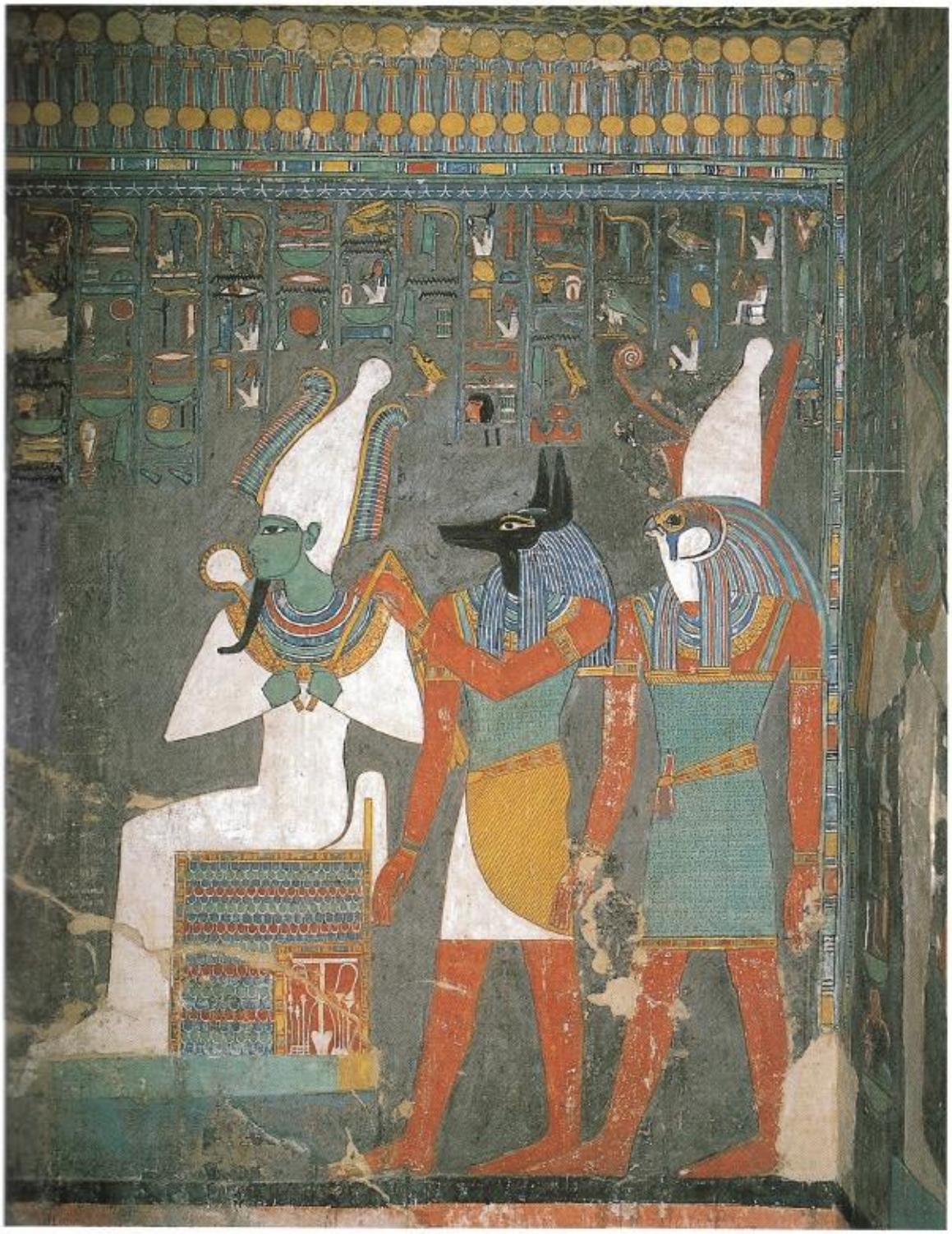


Figure 5.13. Osiris, Anubis, and Horus in the Tomb of Horemheb (Wilkinson, 2003)

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

This chapter provides a general summary and conclusion for the thesis. This thesis study consists of six chapters. After an introductory first chapter, the discussions begin in the second chapter.

The second chapter was divided into three subtitles. Firstly, the development of the concept of cultural evolution over time was tried to explain. According to this, there are mainly two theories that try to explain how societies evolved. These are the unilinear theory which claims that all human groups show a similar evolution circle from savagery to civilization in time and the multilinear theory which defends that every human culture shows a different and multilinear development as they lived in different geography and time. Later, the famous article “The Urban Revolution” by Gordon Childe and his ten criteria regarding first cities were summarized in detail.

If it is necessary to recall them:

1. The size of the settlement and its population concentration
2. Full-time specialization of labor
3. Concentration of surplus and taxation
4. Monumental public buildings
5. Class society
6. Writing
7. Exact and predictive sciences
8. Figural art
9. Foreign trade
10. State organization

Third, the criticism and support directed at Childe were discussed finally in chapter two. Some of the criticisms were about the writing systems, monumental public architecture, and state structure that defends there were also societies that managed to found big cities without using script or state structure. However, the supporters claim that Childe's criteria give implicit answers to these allegations, and they are a useful starting point and a good generalization.

The third and fourth chapters are considered to give general information regarding ancient Egypt and Sumer to the reader rather than being a part of the discussion.

In the third chapter, The Sumerian civilization was tried to explain within the context of their geography, history, religion, economy, and culture in its first title. Then some sample cities were focused on. These cities were Uruk, Ur, and Nippur. The same was made for the fourth chapter but this time for Egypt. The sample cities from Egypt were Thebes, Heit el-Ghurab, and Akhetaten.

The fifth chapter was designed as the synthesis phase of the study. Written documents and archaeological evidence indicate that the settlements of both societies bear characteristics with Childe's ten criteria. A detailed discussion can be seen in Chapter 5. However, if it needs to be summarized, it is shown that all the sample settlements except Heit el-Ghurab, which was designed as a workers' site, can be counted as cities according to Childe's criteria. They all had state authority, social stratification, developed foreign trade, writing, etc. Only this should not be forgotten that in the ancient world religion, science, and art were interwoven, and they were not as separate disciplines as they are today.

In my personal belief, the concept of entertainment can be added to this list of Childe. The number of entertainment places in a city such as arenas and playgrounds can show us how civilized a city is. These entertainment venues are urbanized concepts, not rural ones. Of course, people living in rural have entertainment, but they do not have many locations or buildings which specialized in it as well as towns.

It is obviously seen that there are important differences reflected between the cities of the two civilizations caused by geographical, administrative, social, and cultural differences.

If it needs to summarize them:

- The city walls
- The canal systems
- Materials used in construction
- Differences in the monumental public buildings
- Beliefs in the afterlife
- Governance

There are also similarities between the two societies like their relative dependence on the slave workforce and their polytheistic religion. Especially the latter affected the city plans of these civilizations in regard to the variety and number of temples.

To conclude, ancient Sumer and ancient Egypt are the two societies from the dawn of human civilization. Understanding them well is not just a necessity for social sciences, it is also a key to modern societies since the human subject did not change much from their period. It should not be forgotten that these two cultures could sustain their identity for thousands of years which is more than all modern societies, and their mysteries left deserve to come into sight to inspire future generations.

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A photograph taken of the noted archaeologist and socialist V. Gordon Childe, circa 1930s.

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