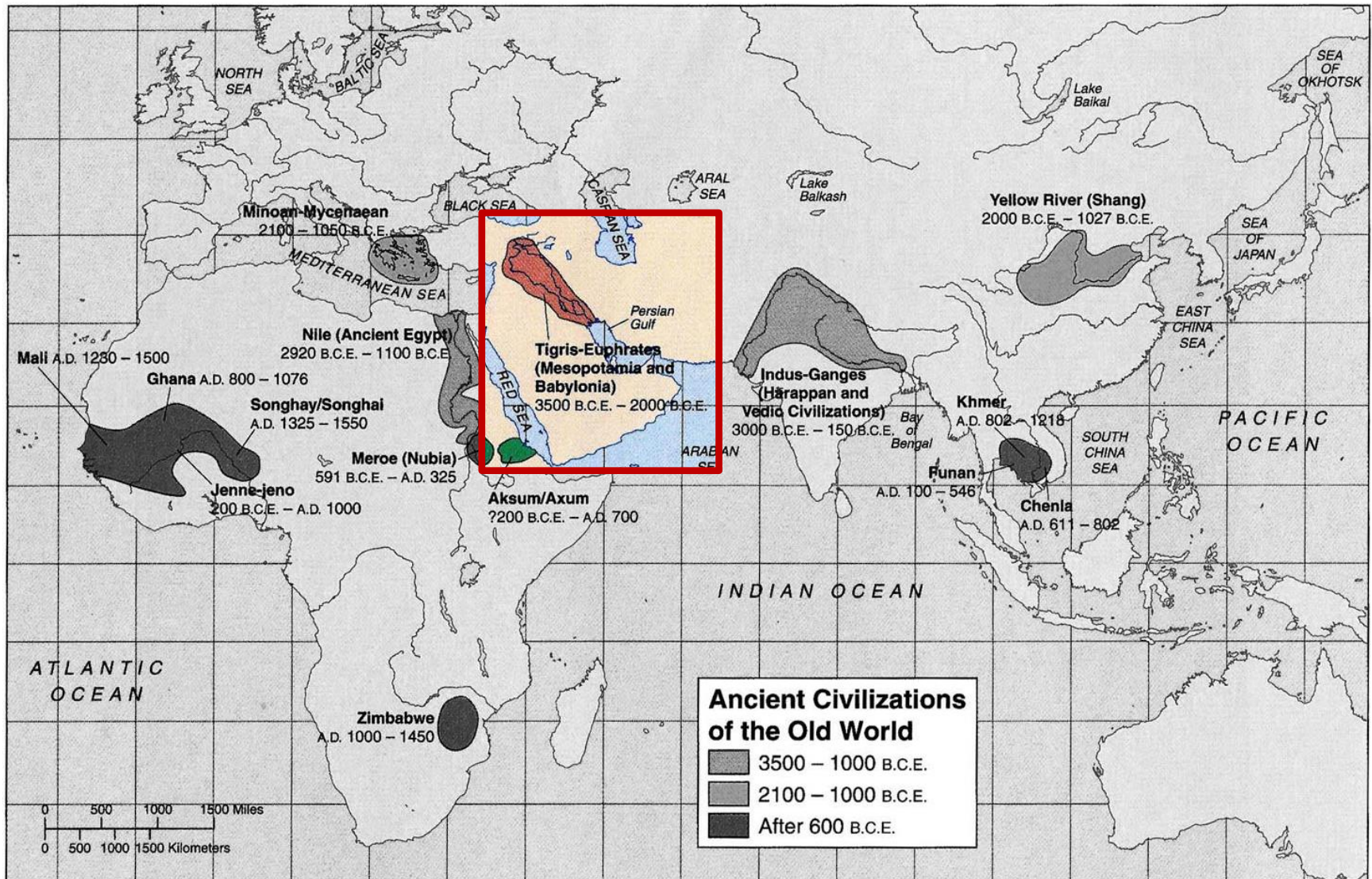


# EXPERIENTIAL ACTIVITY: ANCIENT ARTIFACTS



# DIG SITE: ANCIENT MESOPOTAMIA







Artifact 1--Mesopotamia

# ARTIFACT 1 (Mesopotamia)--Details (close ups) from artifact:



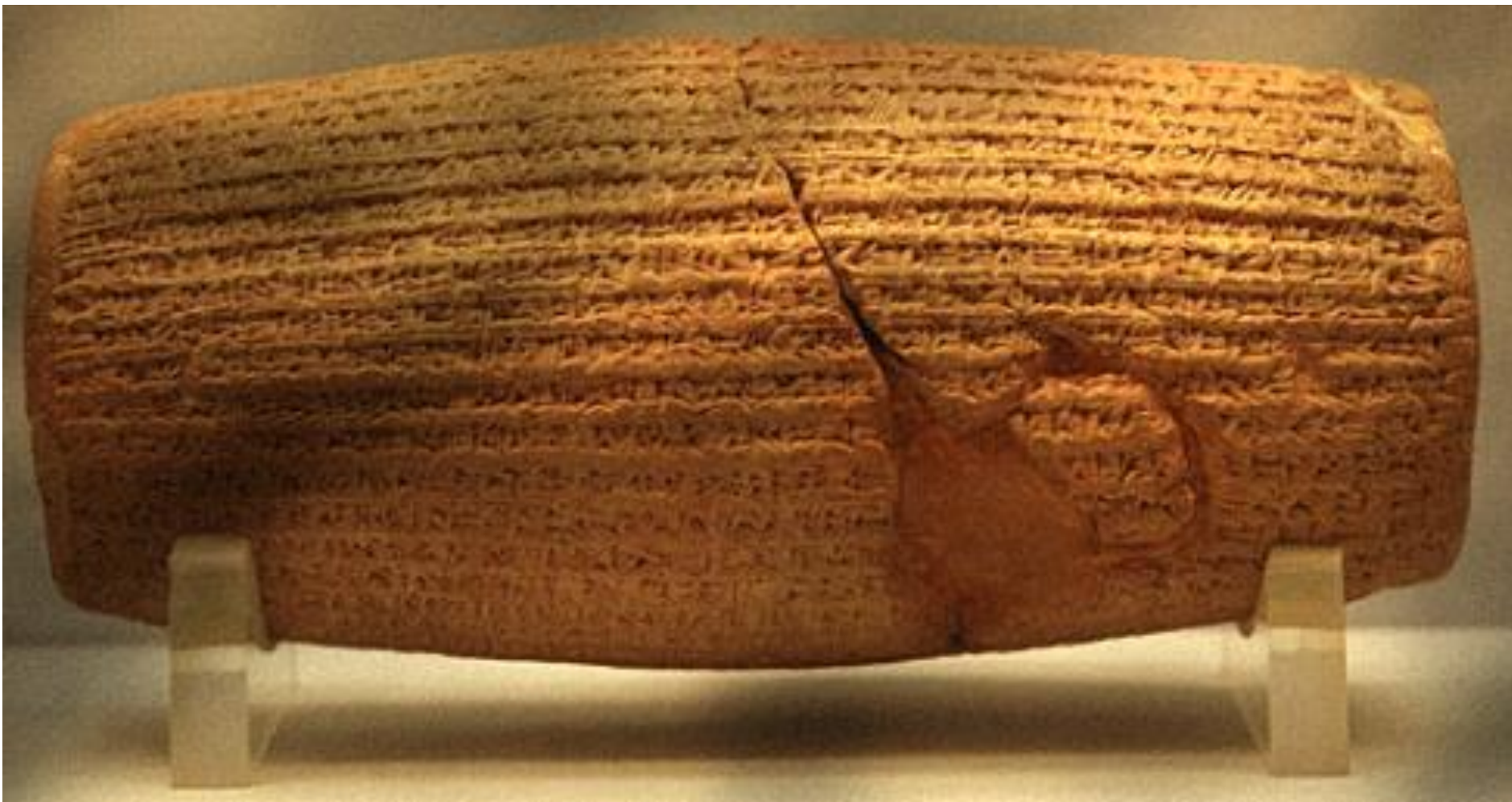




Artifact 2--Mesopotamia



Artifact 3--Mesopotamia



Artifact 4--Mesopotamia

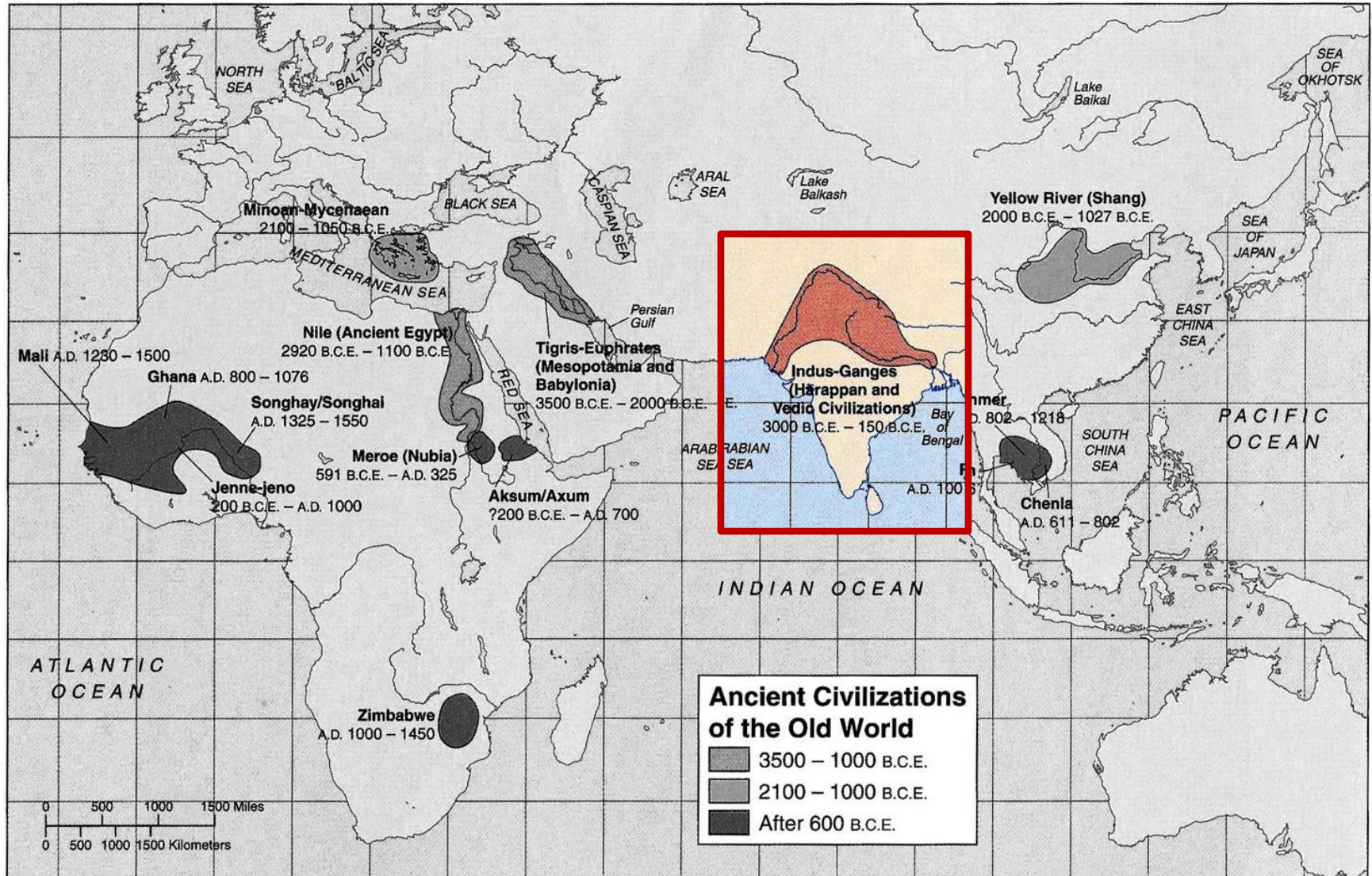




Artifact 5--Mesopotamia



# વૈદ્ય જોડ: ancient india







Artifact6--India





Artifact 7—India



Artifact 8--India



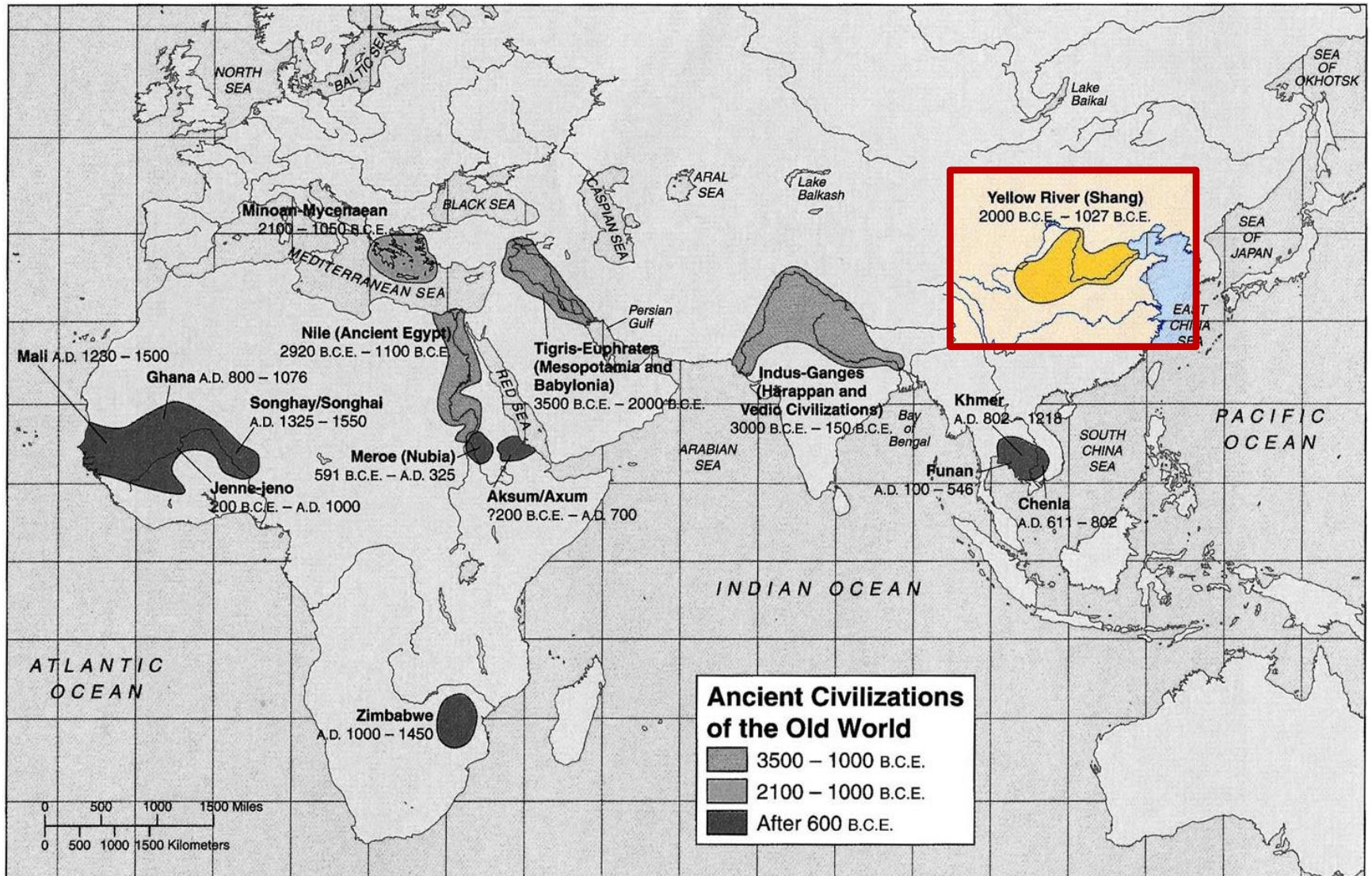




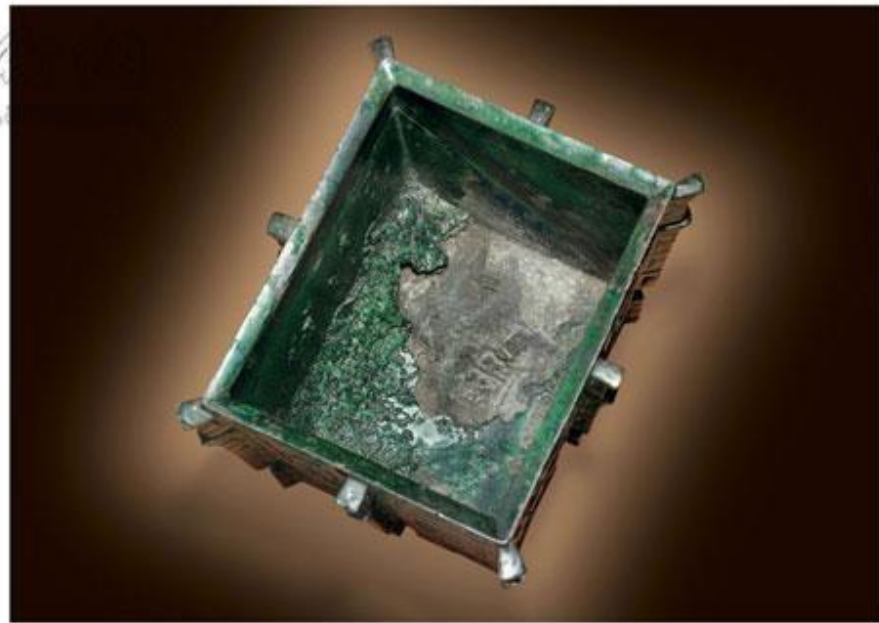
Artifact 10



# Dig site: Ancient China







(other views)

Artifact 11—China





Artifact 12--China



Artifact 13--China





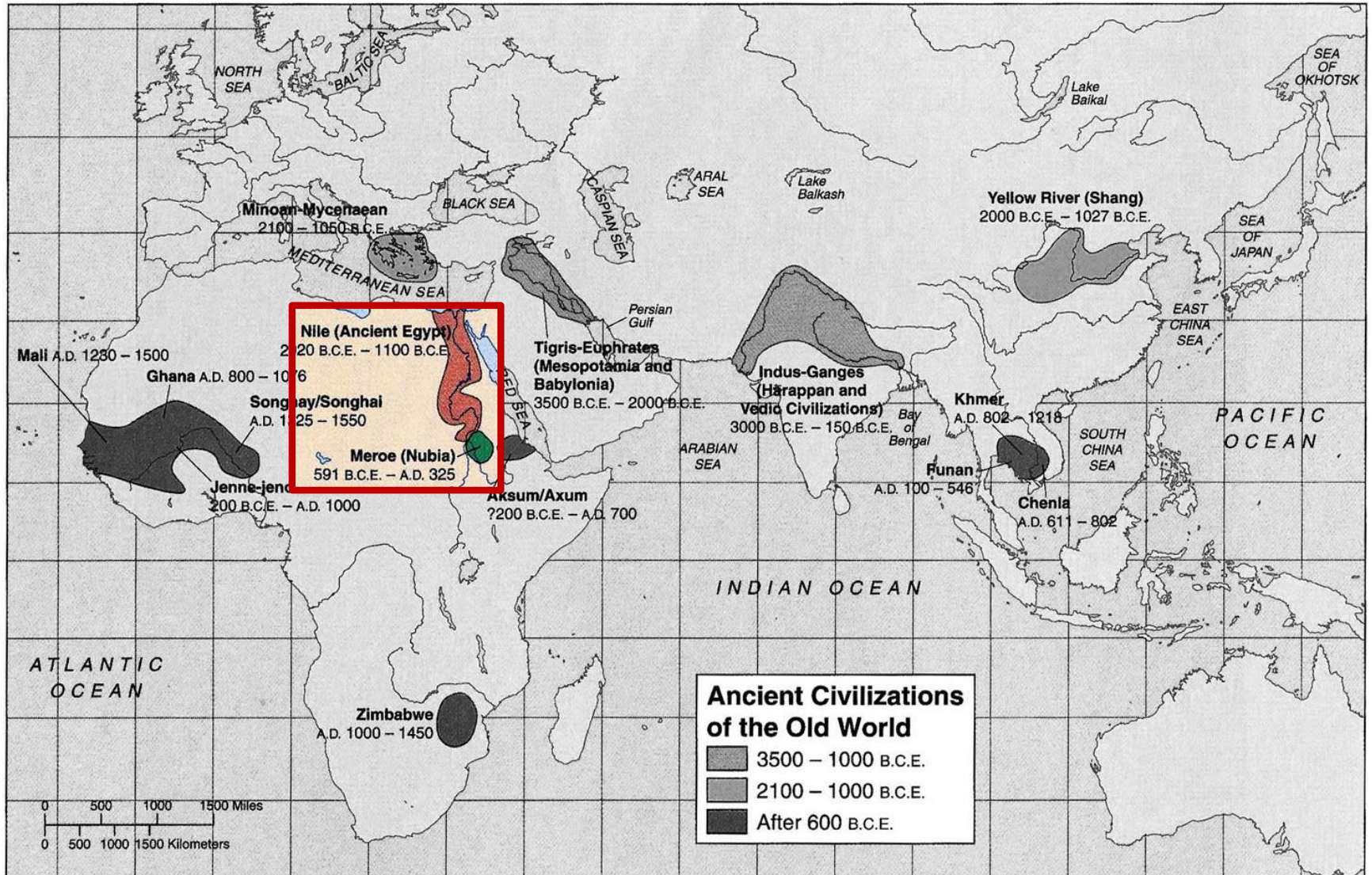
Artifact 14--China



Artifact 15--China



# DIG SITE: ANCIENT EGYPT



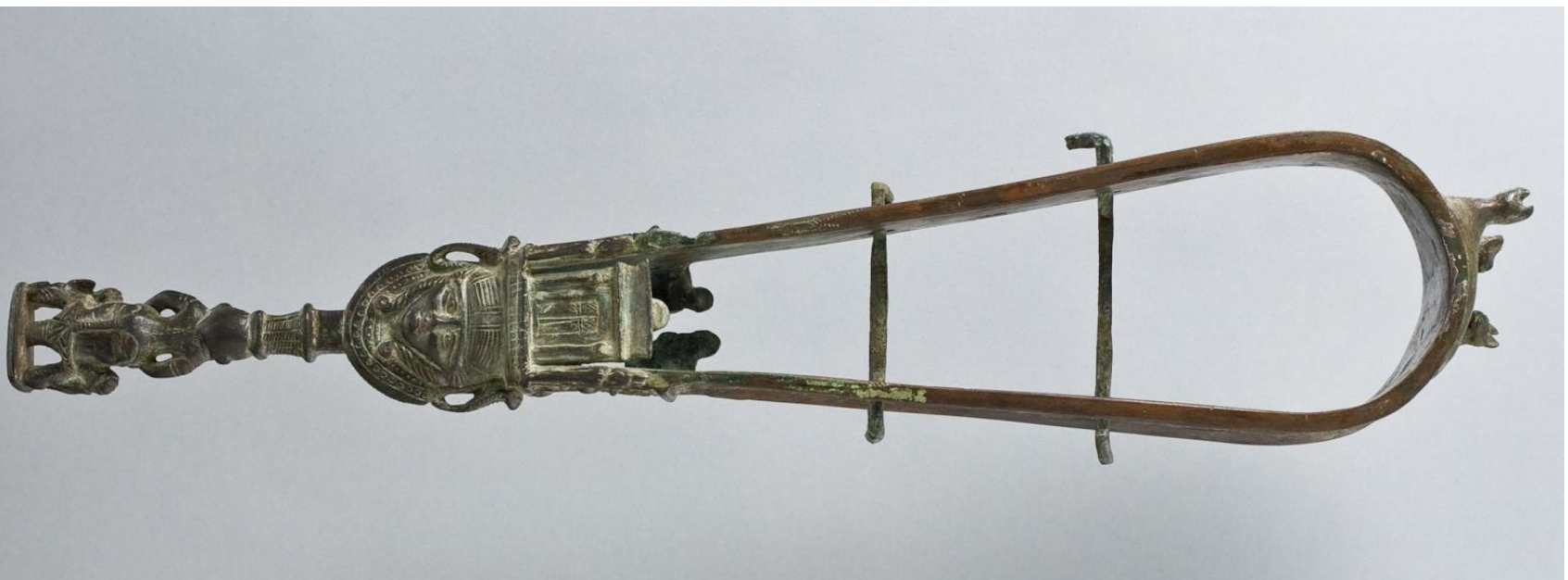


Artifact 16--Egypt





Artifact 17--Egypt



Artifact 18--Egypt





Artifact 19--Egypt



Artifact 20--Egypt



## **Artifact 1—the Standard of Ur**

- The Standard of Ur (a standard is a sort of flag carried in battle) Leonard Woolley, the main archaeologist at the Mesopotamian city of Ur, imagined that it was carried on a pole as a standard, hence its common name. The main panels are known as 'War' and 'Peace'.
- 'War' shows one of the earliest representations of a Sumerian army. Chariots, each pulled by four donkeys, trample enemies; foot soldiers with cloaks carry spears; enemy soldiers are killed with axes, others are paraded naked and presented to the king who holds a spear.
- The 'Peace' panel depicts animals, fish and other goods brought in procession to a banquet. Seated figures, wearing drink to the accompaniment of a musician playing a stringed instrument. Banquet scenes such as this are common on artifacts from this time period.

## **Artifact 2—the Royal Game of Ur**

- This game board is one of several with a similar layout found by Leonard Woolley in the Royal Cemetery at Ur. The board has twenty squares made of shell: Five squares each have flower rosettes, 'eyes', and circled dots. The remaining five squares have various designs of five dots. According to references in ancient documents, two players competed to race their pieces from one end of the board to another. Pieces were allowed on to the board at the beginning only with specific throws of the dice. We also know that rosette spaces were lucky.
- The gaming pieces for this particular board do not survive. However, some sets of gaming pieces shell were excavated at Ur with their boards. The boards appear to have been hollow with the pieces stored inside. Dice, either stick dice or triangular in shape, were also found.
- Examples of this 'Game of Twenty Squares' date from about 3000 BC to the first millennium AD and are found widely from the eastern Mediterranean and Egypt to India. A version of the Mesopotamian game survived within the Jewish community at Cochin, South India until modern times.



### **Artifact 3—Children's Toy**

- Everybody loves a good time, and the Mesopotamians were no exception. Sports, games and entertainment were part of their everyday life. Some games had religious or magical significance, and others were just for fun.
- The lunar month of the Mesopotamian calendar had 29 or 30 days. Six days were designated holidays, three lunar festivals and three more for relaxation. Both the monthly and annual holidays were times for games and entertainment.
- Both action and domestic toys have been found. Some, like today's toy guns, were miniaturized weapons of the time; these included sling shots, bows and arrows, and boomerangs and throw sticks. Other action toys and games included the spinning top, rattles, jump ropes (sometimes called the Game of Ishtar), puck and mallet, hoop, balls (seals are shown with jugglers and balls), and the buzz or button (a disc or piece of pottery with holes for strings).
- Domestic toys were used by children to play house or 'grown-ups.' For their role-playing, children used miniature furniture such as tables, beds, stools, dolls and a variety of small-sized animals. Model vehicles clearly mirrored the actual vehicles of the time with miniature carts, wagons, chariots and ships for children.

## **Artifact 4—Cyrus Charter of Human Rights Cylinder Seal**

- A cylinder seal was a cylinder engraved with letters, used in ancient times to roll an impression onto a wet clay tablet. They were used as administrative tool in order to make multiple impressions of clay documents. Graves and other sites housing precious items such as gold, silver, beads, and gemstones often included one or two cylinder seals, as honorific grave goods.
- The Cyrus the Great Cylinder is the first known charter of human rights in the world. It is a baked-clay cylinder in carved with cuneiform script. Passages in the text of cylinder have been interpreted as expressing Cyrus' respect for humanity, and as promoting a form of religious tolerance and freedom. As a result of his generous and humane policies, Cyrus gained the overwhelming support of his subjects.
- This cylinder describes how Cyrus the Great conquered the old city of Babylon and how his mighty army in peacefully entered the city. He then replaced the old king and had the Cyrus Cylinder placed under the walls of the city as a part of the foundation of the walls, following a Mesopotamian tradition.



## **Artifact 5—Israeli Oil Lamp**

- In ancient Judaea, tiny oil lamps like this one lit the homes of the common folk. Each home might have dozens of these lamps to provide light for the family who lived there. After lying buried in the soil for 2000 years, this lamp still works and can be lit by filling it with flammable oil and a wick.

## **Artifact 6--Great Bath at Mohenjodaro**

- One of the earliest cities to flourish along the Indus River was Mohenjodaro. One of the most dramatic features of Mohenjodaro was the Great Bath, which was a pool built of waterproofed brick. It was 39 feet long and 8 feet deep. Small dressing rooms circled the pool. One of the rooms contained a well that supplied the bath with water. Dirty water was removed through a drain that ran along one side of the bath.
- It seems certain that the people of Mohenjodaro used the pool to bathe. On a hot, clear day, they probably enjoyed washing themselves in the bath's cooling waters. Some archeologists think the Great Bath was also used for religious rituals. They point out that bathing rituals are important in India's major religion, Hinduism. Ancient Hindu temples often featured bathing pools.



## **Artifact 7—Harappan Weights**

- The other main city of the earliest Indus River Valley civilization was Harappa, where these cubical weights in graduated sizes were found.
- These weights conform to the standard weight system that was used in all of the Indus Valley settlements. The smallest weight in this series is 0.856 grams and the most common weight is approximately 13.7 grams, which is in the 16th ratio. In the large weights the system become a decimal increase where the largest weight is 100 times the weight of the 16th ratio in the binary system.
- These weights were found in recent excavations at Harappa and may have been used for controlling trade and possibly for collecting taxes.

## **Artifact 8—Harappan Graves**

- The body in the top picture is that of a man. He may have been wrapped in a shroud, and was then placed inside a wooden coffin, which was entombed in a rectangular pit surrounded with burial offerings in pottery vessels. The man was buried wearing a long necklace of 350 beads. Some of the beads were made of copper, gold, natural stone, and turquoise.
- In the grave shown in the bottom picture are the bodies of a mother and child. This burial was disturbed in antiquity, possibly by grave robbers. Archaeologists have determined this because the body is flipped, the pottery is disturbed, the woman's arm is broken, and the bracelets that would normally be found on the left arm are missing. The infant was buried in a small pit beneath the legs of the mother.



## **Artifact 9—Collection of Stamps and Tablets**

- This picture shows collection of stamps and tablets from a single house along the main street leading to the southern gateway of Mound E at Harappa. The association of these different types of objects together in one house show that some people, possibly merchants, were using a wide variety of inscribed objects.

## **Artifact 10—Harappan Drain**

- This Harappan drain was part of the extensive sewage system that existed in the city. Drainage systems were located in every street. At the end of each drain was a wooden screen. Wastewater would pass through the screen and enter brick-lined cesspools or be tunneled to the local river for discharge.
- Homes had both rooms for bathing and latrines that were connected to sewers in streets. Rooms for bathing and latrines were often located next to each other inside each home. The bathing room being located next to the latrine indicates that people understood the importance of cleanliness. Water was used for flushing.



## **Artifact 11—Bronze Wine Container**

- Some of the oldest works of art from China are bronze containers. These containers included cooking pots, wine jars and water vessels that were used to offer food and drink to spirits, gods and deceased ancestors in ceremonies and rituals.
- Bronze containers symbolized rank and often contained references to ancient culture and music. The containers often bore inscriptions that said “This container has been made to commemorate so-and-so” and were often given as presents to officials from leaders as rewards.
- Bronze containers and figures were generally made by making a wax cast of the item, then pouring in the molten metal.

## **Artifact 12—Dragon-shaped Grave Ornament**

- This grave ornament was excavated from a tomb of a high-ranking noble in the palace area of Erlitou. Many Chinese scholars believe that Erlitou is the site of the capital of the Xia Dynasty (2,100 BC-1,600 BC), China's first dynasty. The turquoise dragon was found between the shoulder and the hipbone of the owner of the tomb. The dragon ornament, 70.2 cm long, is made up of more than 2,000 pieces of turquoise.
- The archaeologist who discovered the tomb inferred that the ornament may have been embedded in a special ceremonial club used in sacrificial rites. (The club would have rotted away, while the ornament remained.) The corpse in the tomb might have belonged to an official in charge of the rites. "The owner of the tomb must have been put in an important position by the king of the Xia Dynasty, since he was buried in the palace area and allowed to take the ceremonial club to the other world after he died," said Du.



### **Artifact 13—City Walls and Moat at Erlitou**

- A city wall and moats enclosed Erlitou, the city that many archaeologists believe was the capital of the Xia Dynasty. The two moats from the Xia time period ran parallel to each other. All the relics uncovered were found inside the city wall and moats.
- "The remains of the city wall were composed of several different layers of earth, showing that the wall had been renewed or restored again and again in antiquity," said team leader, Wang Wenhua.
- Remains of foundations, tombs, ash pits and ash ditches together with many other relics were discovered inside the city site.
- Another moat that was found at the site was built during the Shang Dynasty. Unlike the moats of Xia Dynasty, the Shang moat was shaped like a trumpet in cross-section, 13-15 meters wide at the mouth and just 1.5 meters wide at the bottom. An abundance of Early Shang Dynasty remains was discovered inside the ring moat, showing that the city site had survived as an important residential settlement to that time.

## **Artifact 14—Coins from Zhou Dynasty**

- More than one hundred thousand coins, as well as the molds used to make them were unearthed from the remains of a workshop at Luoyang, a city from the Zhou period. These coins are said to have squared 'shoulders' and spade-shaped, and have narrow tops and wide bottoms with two 'legs.'
- During the Warring States period (Zhou Dynasty) coins became prevalent. Appropriately, almost all of the coins were shaped like spades, knives, or clubs.
- In this way, a new type of currency exchange system was fully established. The fact that so many coins were being minted during the Zhou period shows that a money economy (rather than a barter economy based on direct trade) was beginning to develop.

## **Artifact 15—Oracle Bones**

- Oracle bones are a type of artifact found in archaeological sites from the Shang Dynasty in China. The site of Anyang had over 10,000 of these objects, primarily ox shoulder blades and turtle shells carved with archaic forms of Chinese characters.
- Oracle bones were used to practice of a form of divination, or fortune-telling. Seers told the future based on the cracks in an animal bone or turtle shell after they had been heated in a fire. The cracks were then used to determine the future.
- Of most interest to historians are the scratchings discovered on the surface of Shang dynasty oracle bones, which have been identified as early versions of Chinese characters.



## **Artifact 16--Mummification tools**


(brain hooks, oil jar, funnel, and embalmer's knife)

- Egyptians believed that all people had souls, which they referred to as 'ka.' The ka was a person's double, sort of an invisible twin, which supposedly lived in the body until death. It was necessary to prevent the dead body from decaying because the ka still needed it! This is why the Egyptians wanted to preserve the dead in as life-like a state as possible. Mummification was the guarantee of eternal life.
- The entire process of mummification took 70 days to complete. Several well-respected embalmers conducted the task. The chief embalmer wore a jackal mask to represent Anubis, the god of mummification. Assistants bandaged the body and carried out other tasks of the embalming process.
- After being delivered to the embalming place, the deceased was placed upon a slanted table. The first task that needed to be done was to remove the soft, moist body parts that would cause decay. As these parts were removed, blood and other bodily fluids trickled out and flowed down the table into a collecting bowl.
- The first part to be removed from a mummy was the brain. The bone that separates the nasal cavity from the brain cavity was broken open by ramming a sharp instrument up the nose. Then, a long hook was used to stir up the brain until it was liquefied. By turning the body face down, the brain would spill out the nostrils. The Egyptians were so rough on the brain because they didn't realize its importance. They thought its purpose was just to produce snot!

## **Artifact 17—Canopic Jars**

- After the brains had been removed from the potential mummy, the next step was to remove some of the major organs. One of the embalmers would use a blade made of sharpened stone to make an incision in the left side of the abdomen.
- Although cutting into the corpse's side was entirely necessary to remove the organs, the embalmers didn't like it because it was considered sinful to "injure" a corpse. In mock ceremony, the other embalmers present would curse and throw stones at the man who made the cut. They didn't really try to hurt him, it was all just part of the ceremony.
- The stomach, intestines, liver, and lungs were removed and preserved by drying them in a special salt called natron. After drying, each of the organs would be put in a canopic jar. The stoppers of canopic jars were shaped like the heads of the four sons of the god Horus. Each son protected the organ placed inside his respective jar. These jars would be placed inside the tomb upon the burial of the mummy.

## Artifact 18—Sistrum

- A sistrum was basically a rattle made up of an arch with a handle attached. The arch had a number of cross pieces onto which were threaded metal discs. When the sistrum was shaken, the discs rattled. The top of the handle was often decorated with the head of the god of music, Hathor.
- This instrument, which is shown being carried by figures in tomb and temple scenes, indicated devotion to Hathor. The sistrum had a shape very similar to an Egyptian symbol called the *ankh* () , which symbolized eternal life. As a result of this similarity, the sistrum also began to represent eternal life.
- The sistrum was used in Egyptian festivals and was often played by temple songstresses. It was believed that the sound of rattling also drove off malign forces, preventing them from spoiling the festival.



## **Artifact 19—Crocodile Skin Armor and Helmet**

- In ancient Egypt the crocodile was seen as sacred and divine, and worshipped as a god, so this suit might have been worn by priests of the crocodile sect who by wearing such a garment would take on the spirit of the deity. In many parts of Africa the crocodile is seen as a fearsome and invincible creature and so, by wearing crocodile armor and a headpiece like this, a warrior might be transformed in some magical way and take on the attributes of the animal.
- This imposing armor is made from the skin of a crocodile. It is made up of a helmet and cuirass (body armor) and would have been used in military-style ceremonies of the regional crocodile cult.

## **Artifact 20—Egyptian ‘Pillow’**

- This folding headrest is modeled on the folding stools that were popular among the wealthy of the time. A rivet through the center of the legs allowed it to fold shut, while the neck piece of the headrest secured it in the open position. The wooden runners made the headrest stable when it was in use. Egyptians would have used this headrest in much the same way that modern Americans use soft pillows.
- The lower ends of the legs are carved in the shape of ducks, a motif often used in furniture items. On this headrest, heads of the god Bes are carved onto the neckpiece. Bes, the god of the home, frequently appeared on household items. Night was a time when people felt that they were vulnerable to evil forces; demons could cause illness and nightmares, attacking while the unsuspecting person slept. Figures or heads of Bes were sometimes placed on headrests to ward off these chaotic forces.