

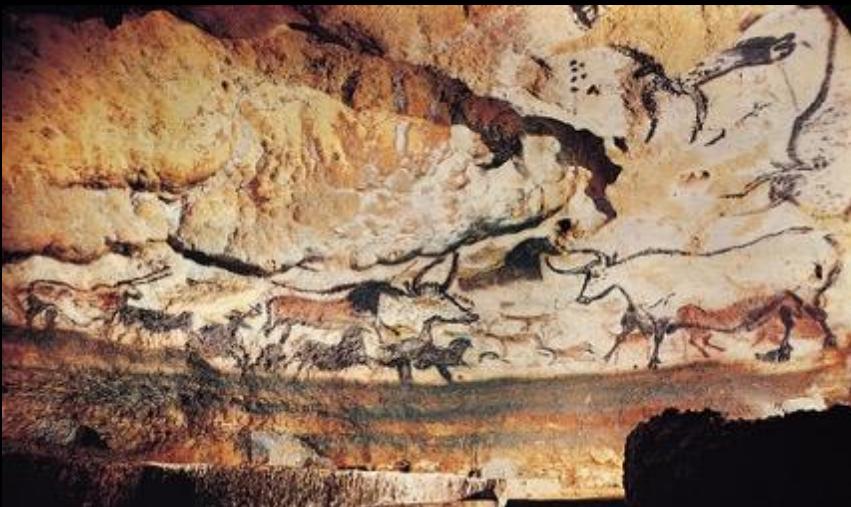
Introduction to Art History

Dr. Sara Benninga

From the Depths of Ancient Caves
into the Dawn of Cities

Lecture 2

Bridging Origins—From Caves to Civilization



Nude woman (Venus of Willendorf),
from Willendorf, Austria, ca. 28,000–
25,000 BCE. Limestone,
Naturhistorisches Museum, Vienna.





Nude woman (Venus of Willendorf),
from Willendorf, Austria, ca. 28,000–
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Naturhistorisches Museum, Vienna.

Prehistoric Europe



- “Venus”
- Paleolithic era – Stone Age, lasting about 2.5 million years, when primitive stone implements were used
- Scale – figurine, c. 11 cm high



Nude woman (Venus of Willendorf), from Willendorf, Austria, ca. 28,000–25,000 BCE. Limestone, Naturhistorisches Museum, Vienna.



Can we call this naturalism?

Naturalism - derived from real life or nature, or imitating it very closely.

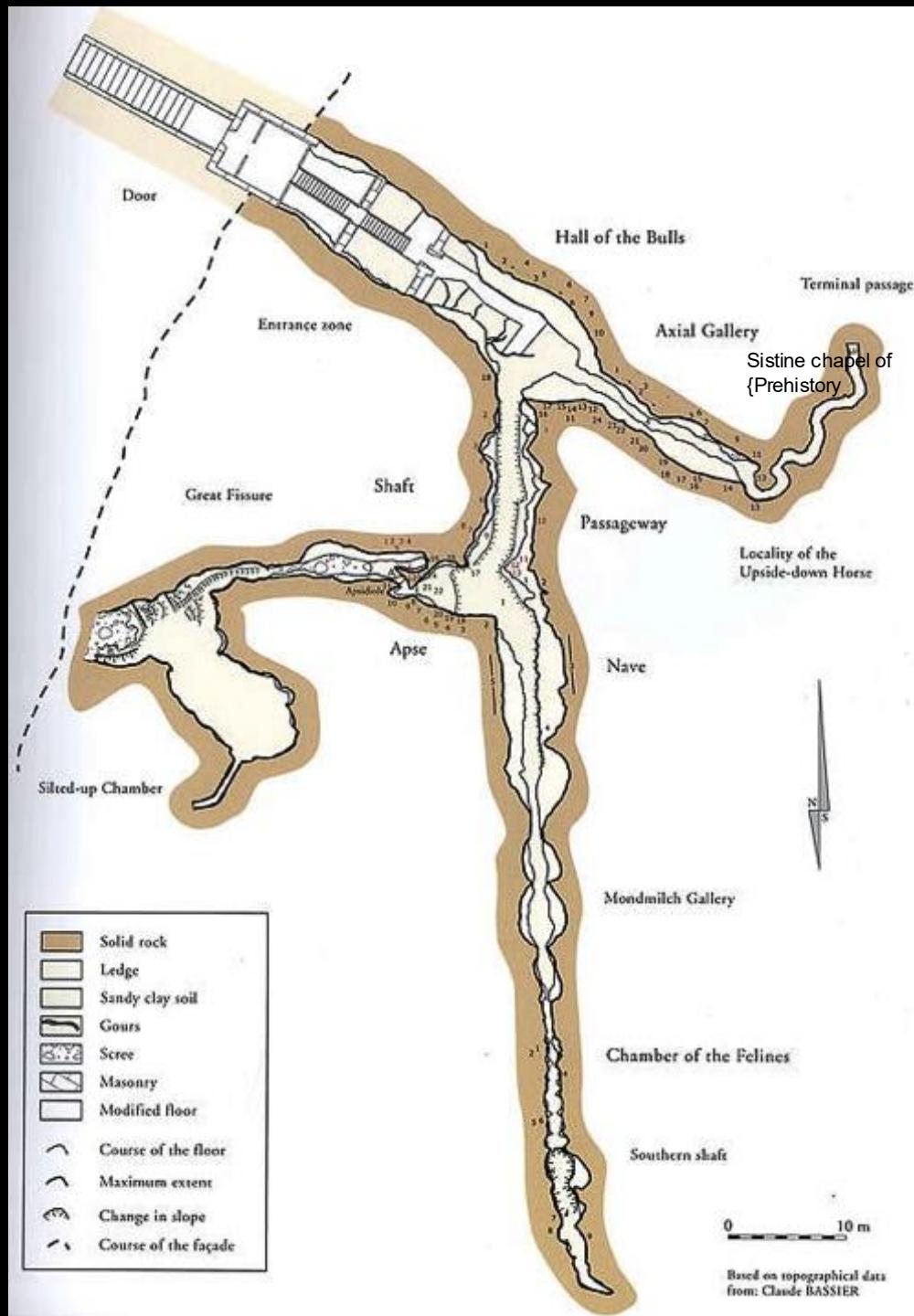


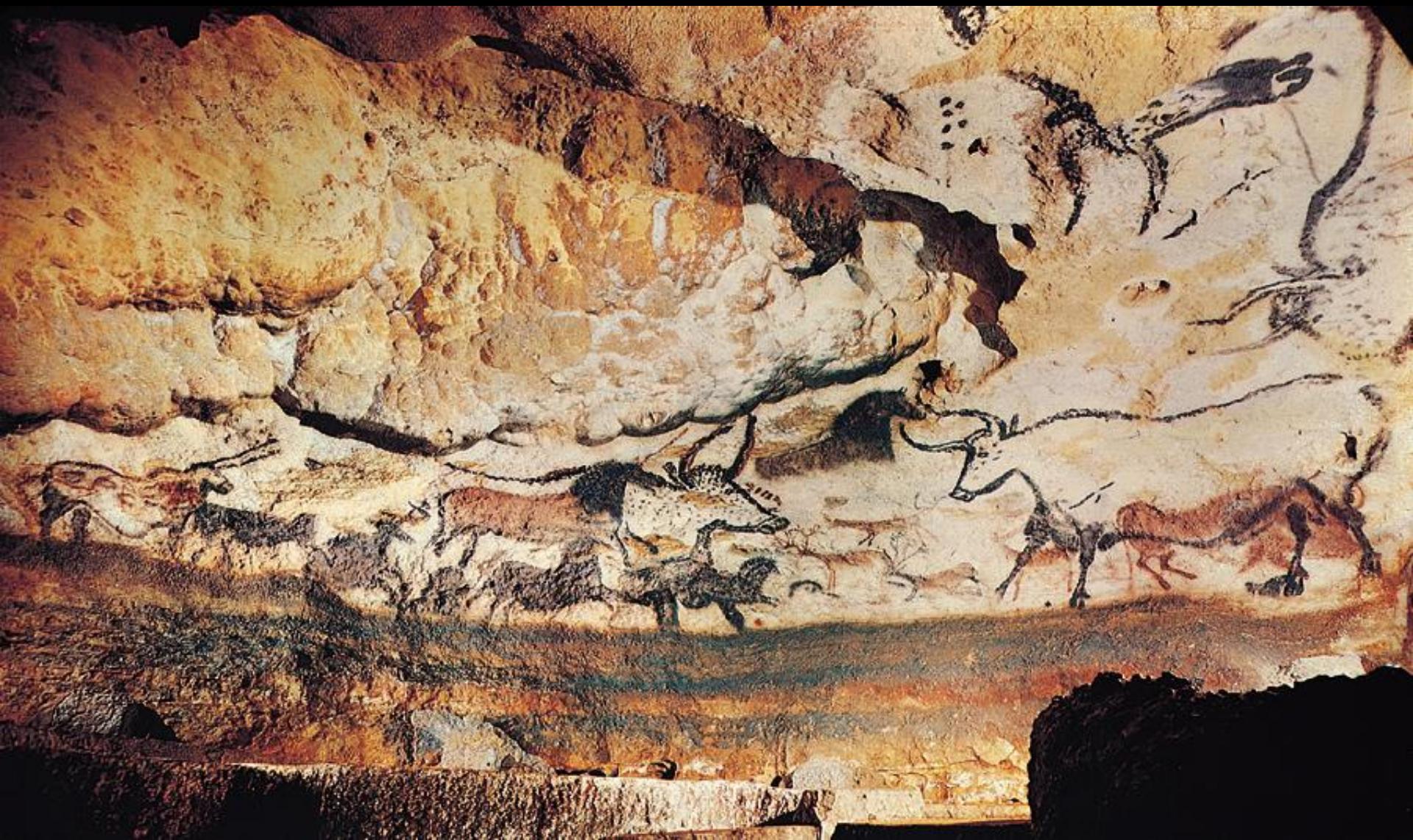
Venus of Dolni
Vestonice,
29,000-25,000
BC



Woman holding
a bison horn,
from Laussel,
Dordogne,
France, ca.
25,000–20,000
BCE. Musée
d'Aquitaine,
Bordeaux.

Lascaux Cave Layout





Hall of the Bulls (left wall), Lascaux, Dordogne, France, ca. 15,000–13,000 BCE.

Lascaux
Cave



Lascaux Cave



Lascaux Cave



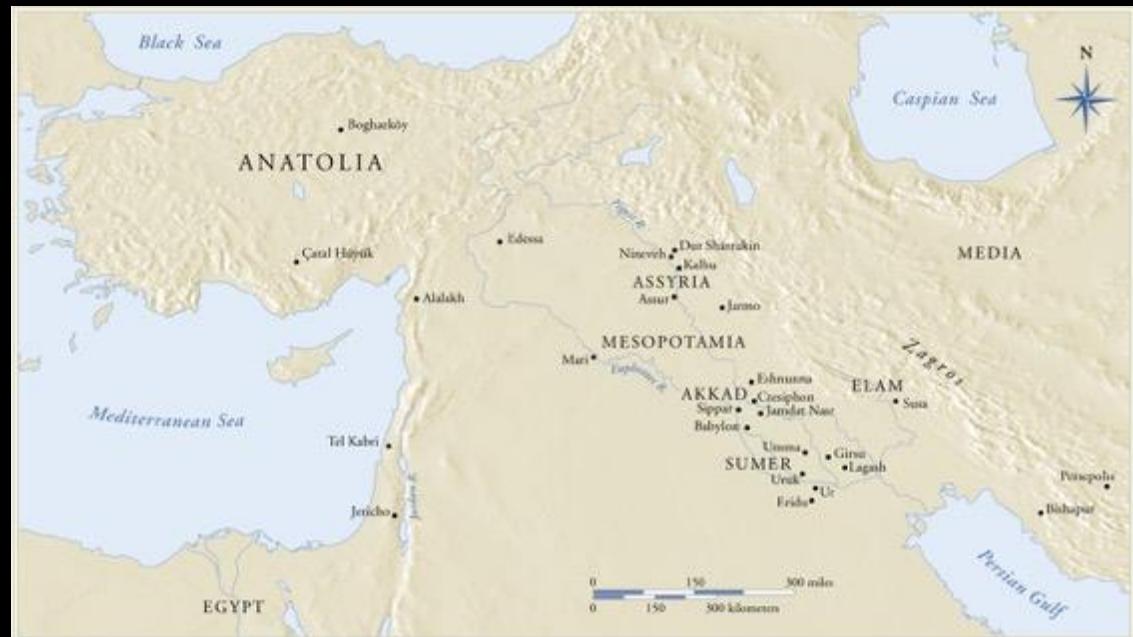
Chauvet Cave, Vallon-Pont-d'Arc, Ardèche,
France, ca. 30,000–28,000 or ca. 15,000–
13,000 BCE



The Ancient Near East

Earliest civilization

Civilization – human society with its well developed social organizations, or the culture and way of life a society or country at a particular period in time (Cambridge dictionary)



The Ancient Near East

Earliest civilization

Circa 5000 years ago
Mesopotamia – between the
two rivers:
Euphrates
Tigris



What makes a civilization?

Cuneiform - system of writing used in the ancient Middle East. Wedge-shaped script

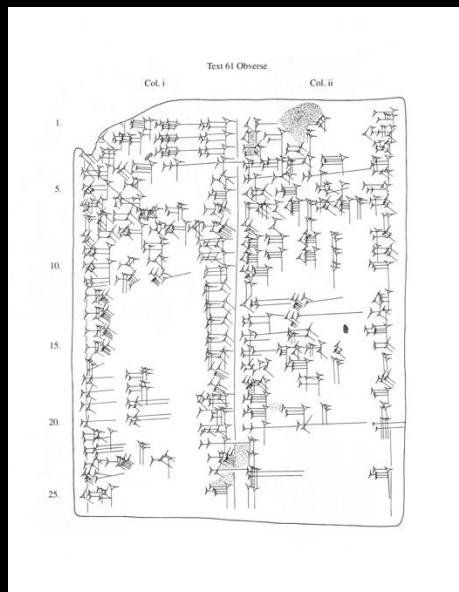


Side view



Proto-Cuneiform tablet, ca. 3100–2900 B.C.,
Metropolitan Museum, New York

Cuneiform tablet: Late Babylonian grammatical text, ca. late 1st millennium B.C., Metropolitan Museum



Early writing was used primarily as a means of recording and storing economic information, for recording administrative acts and commercial transactions

Many tablets document grain distributed by a large temple.

Sumerian Civilization – city state of Sumer

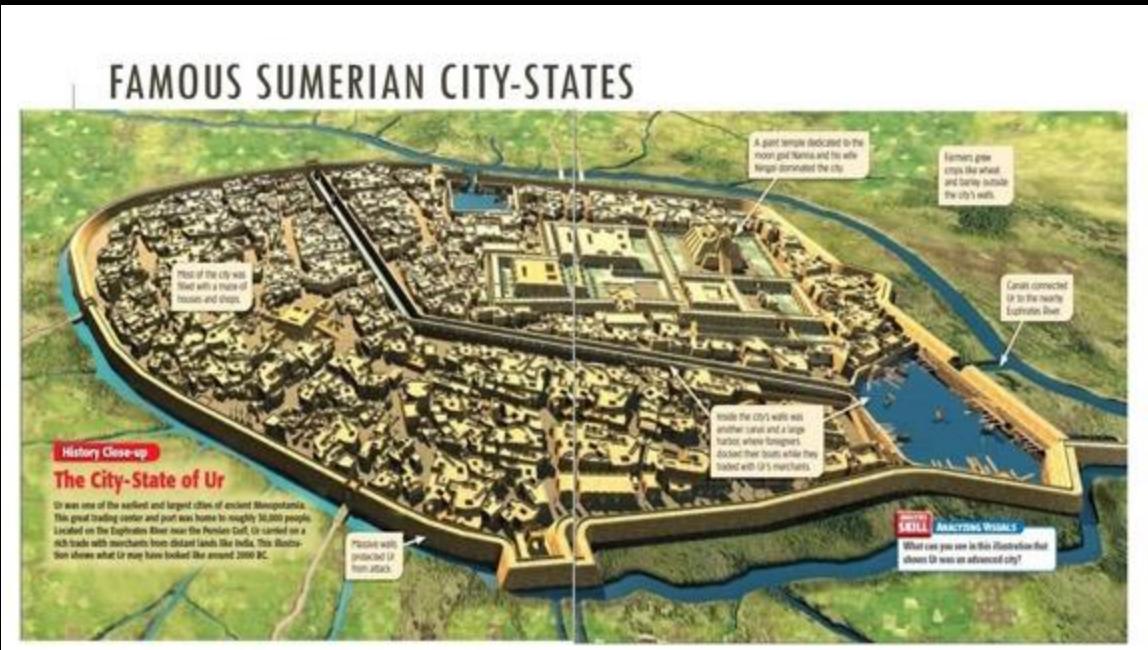
White Temple and ziggurat, Uruk (modern Warka), Iraq, ca. 3200–3000 BCE.



Gilgamesh,
Khorsabad,
late 8th c. BC



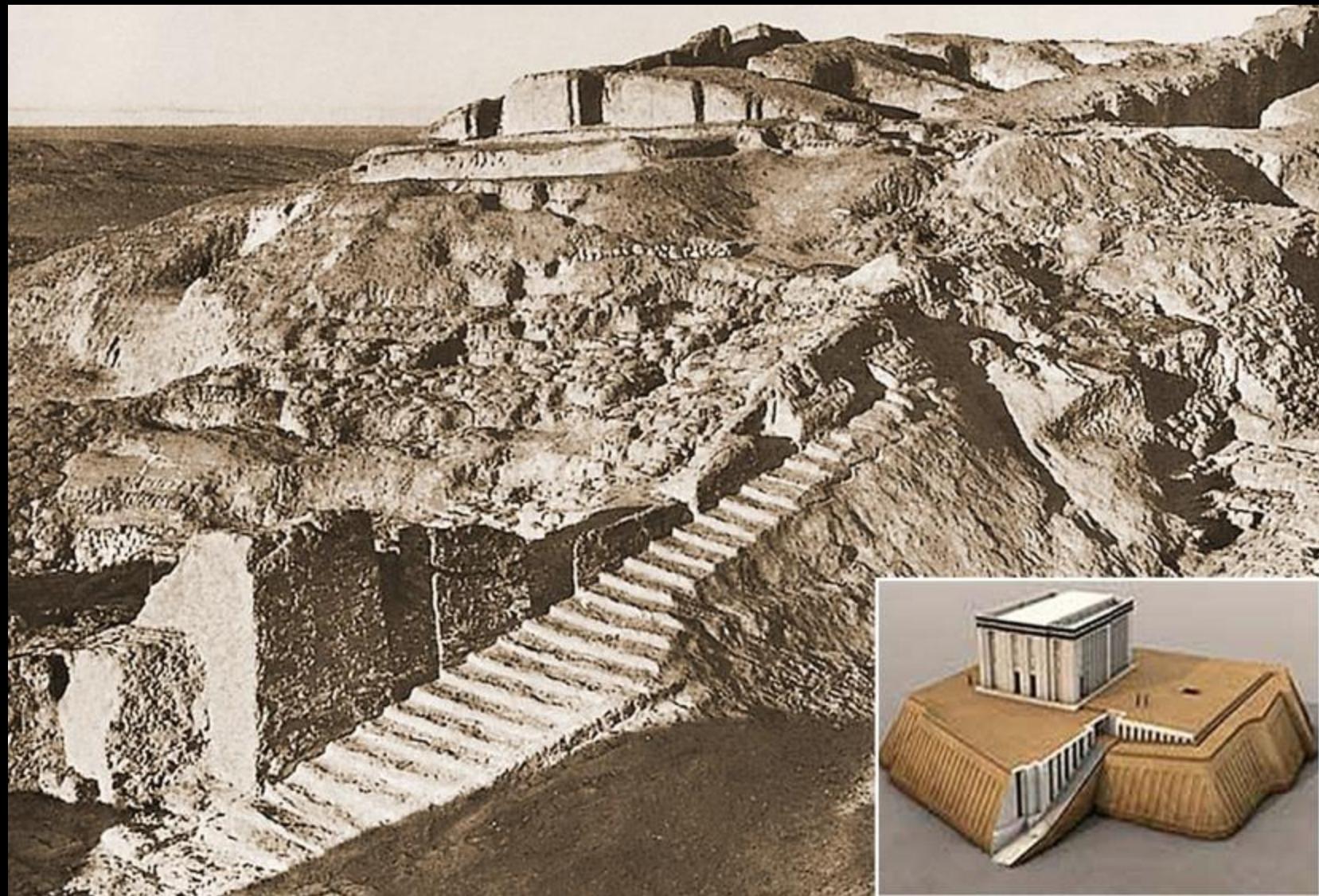
City State



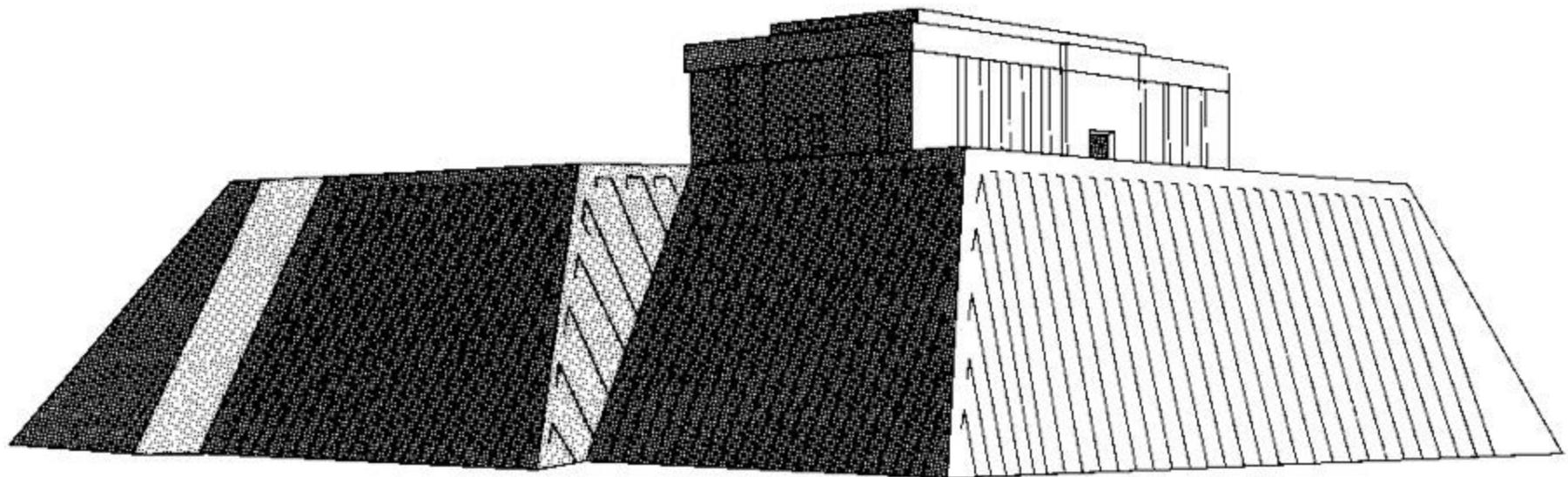
The first city states, city planning, and organized religion are attributed to Sumer

White Temple and ziggurat, Uruk (modern Warka), Iraq, ca. 3200–3000 BCE.

Dedicated to Anu – god of the sky

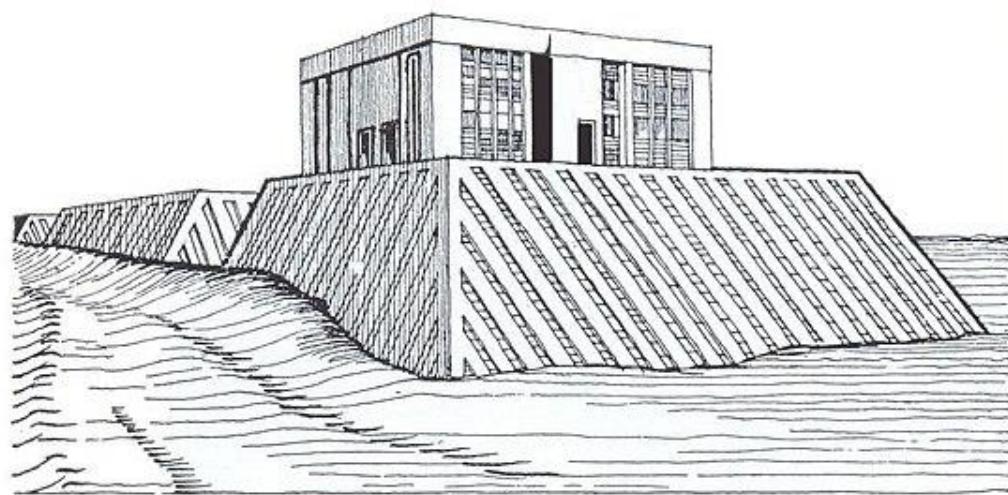


Ziggurat = a high stepped platform, made of mud bricks. Ascent was by means of a winding stairway and a ramp that ended at the summit of the platform.



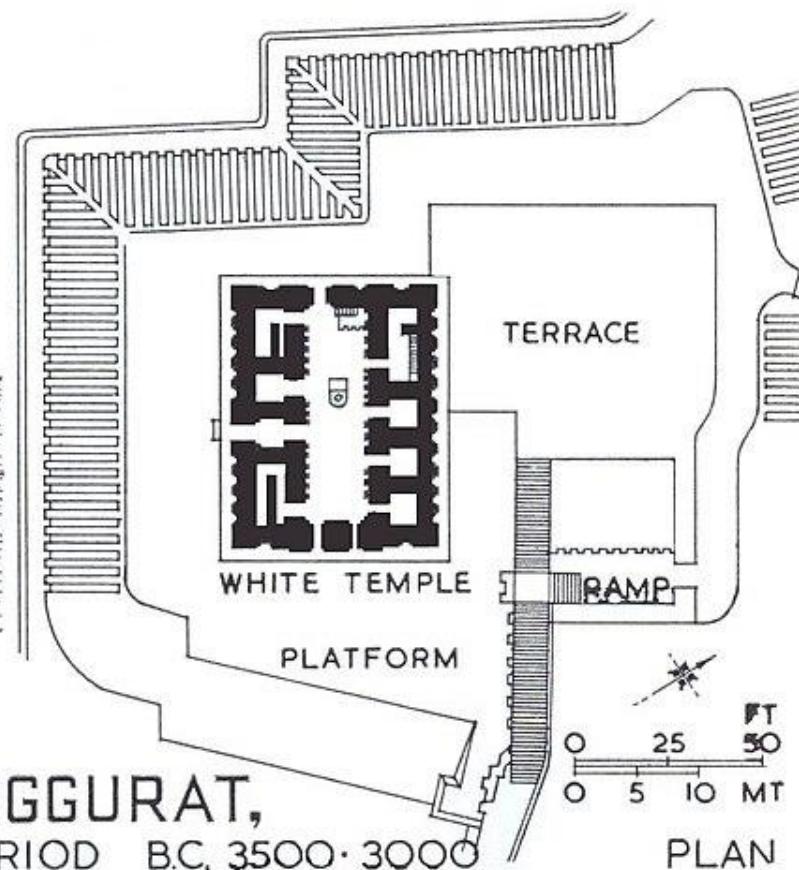
Reconstruction drawing of the White Temple and ziggurat, Uruk (modern Warka), Iraq, ca. 3200–3000 BCE (after S. E. Piggott).

"Waiting Room"



VIEW FROM WEST
RESTORED

THE WHITE TEMPLE & ZIGGURAT,
AT WARKA ARCHAIC PERIOD BC 3500-3000





Statuettes of worshipers, from the Square Temple at Eshnunna (modern Tell Asmar), Iraq, ca. 2700 BCE. Gypsum inlaid with shell and black limestone, tallest figure approx. 80 cm, Iraq Museum, Baghdad.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DKMW
S9qJ_1U&feature=youtu.be&ab_channel=
Smarthistory](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DKMW
S9qJ_1U&feature=youtu.be&ab_channel=
Smarthistory)

Standing male worshiper ca. 2900–2600
B.C. Metropolitan Museum, New York.



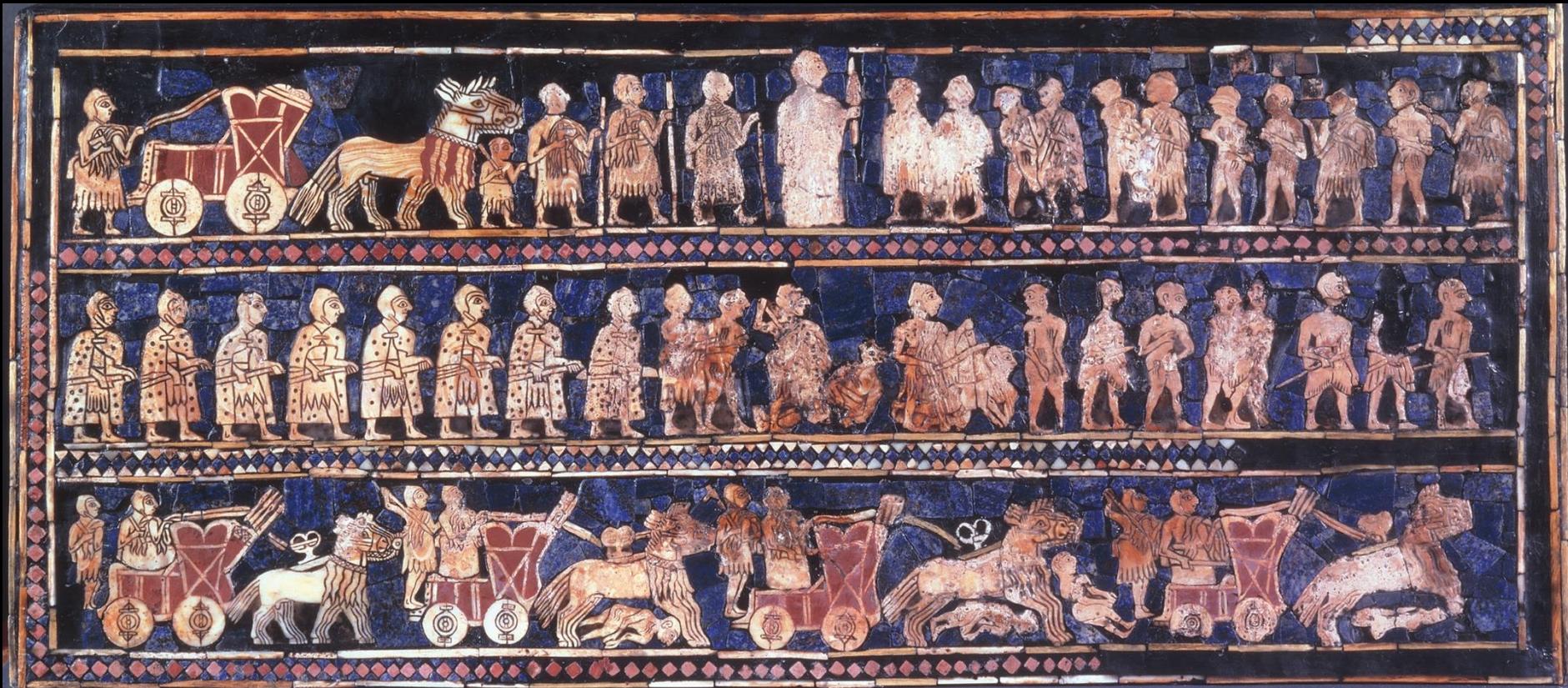
Detail from a
different sculpture
of male worshiper



the Standard of Ur, from Tomb 779, Royal Cemetery, Ur (modern Tell Muqayyar), Iraq,
ca. 2600 BCE.



War side of the Standard of Ur, from Tomb 779, Royal Cemetery, Ur (modern Tell Muqayyar), Iraq, ca. 2600 BCE. Wood inlaid with shell, lapis lazuli, and red limestone, 21.59 x 49.5 x 12 cm, British Museum, London.



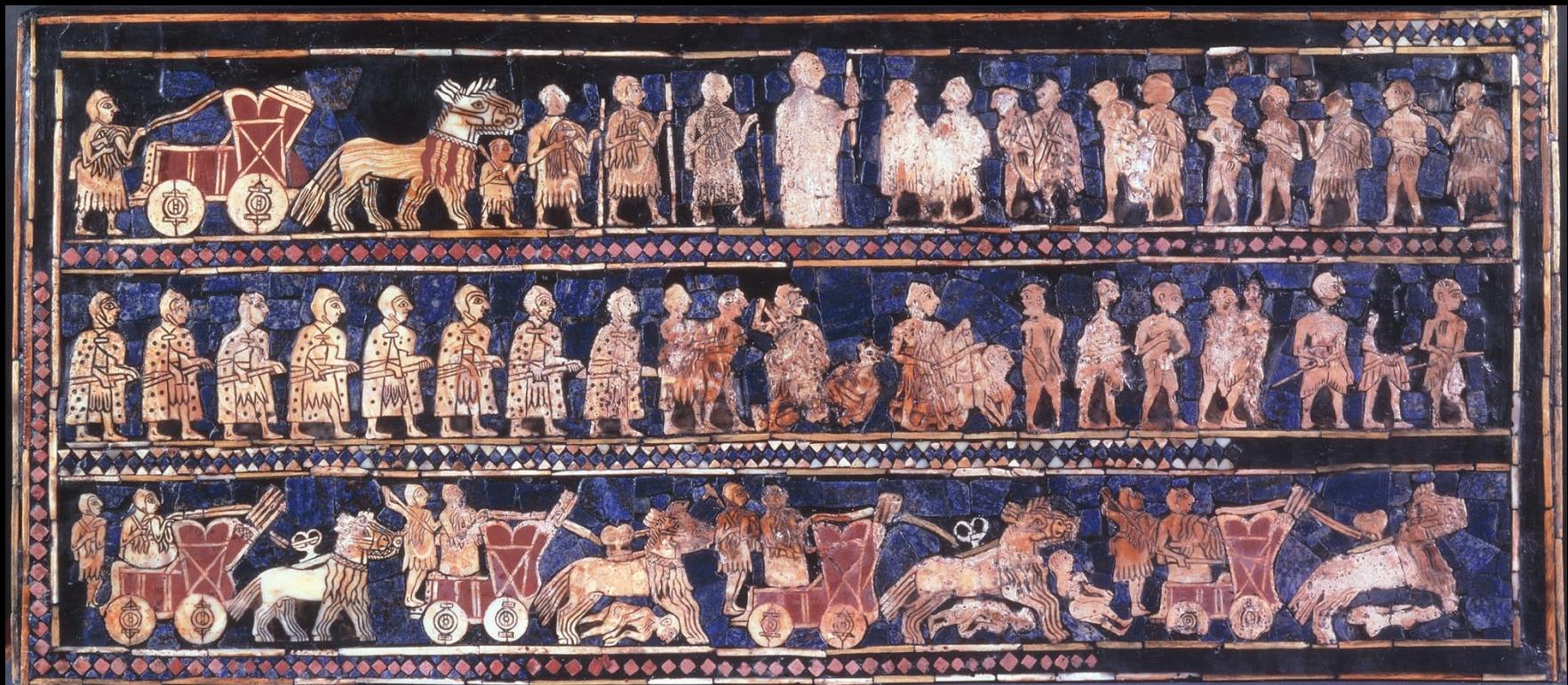
Registers = horizontal bands dividing a flat space





Hierarchical Size

War side of the Standard of Ur, from Tomb 779, Royal Cemetery, Ur (modern Tell Muqayyar), Iraq, ca. 2600 BCE. Wood inlaid with shell, lapis lazuli, and red limestone, 21.59 x 49.5 x 12 cm, British Museum, London.



Peace side of the Standard of Ur, from Tomb 779, Royal Cemetery, Ur (modern Tell Muqayyar), Iraq, ca. 2600 BCE. Wood inlaid with shell, lapis lazuli, and red limestone, 21.59 x 49.5 x 12 cm British Museum, London.

