

# A History of Knowledge

## **Oldest Knowledge**

**What the Sumerians knew**

**What the Babylonians knew**

**What the Hittites knew**

**What the Persians knew**

**What the Egyptians knew**

**What the Indians knew**

**What the Chinese knew**

**What the Greeks knew**

**What the Phoenicians knew**

**What the Romans knew**

**What the Barbarians knew**

**What the Jews knew**

**What the Christians knew**

**Tang & Sung China**

**What the Japanese knew**

**What the Muslims knew**

**The Middle Ages**

**Ming & Manchu China**

**The Renaissance**

**The Industrial Age**

**The Victorian Age**

**The Modern World**

# What the NearEast knew

**Piero Scaruffi 2004**

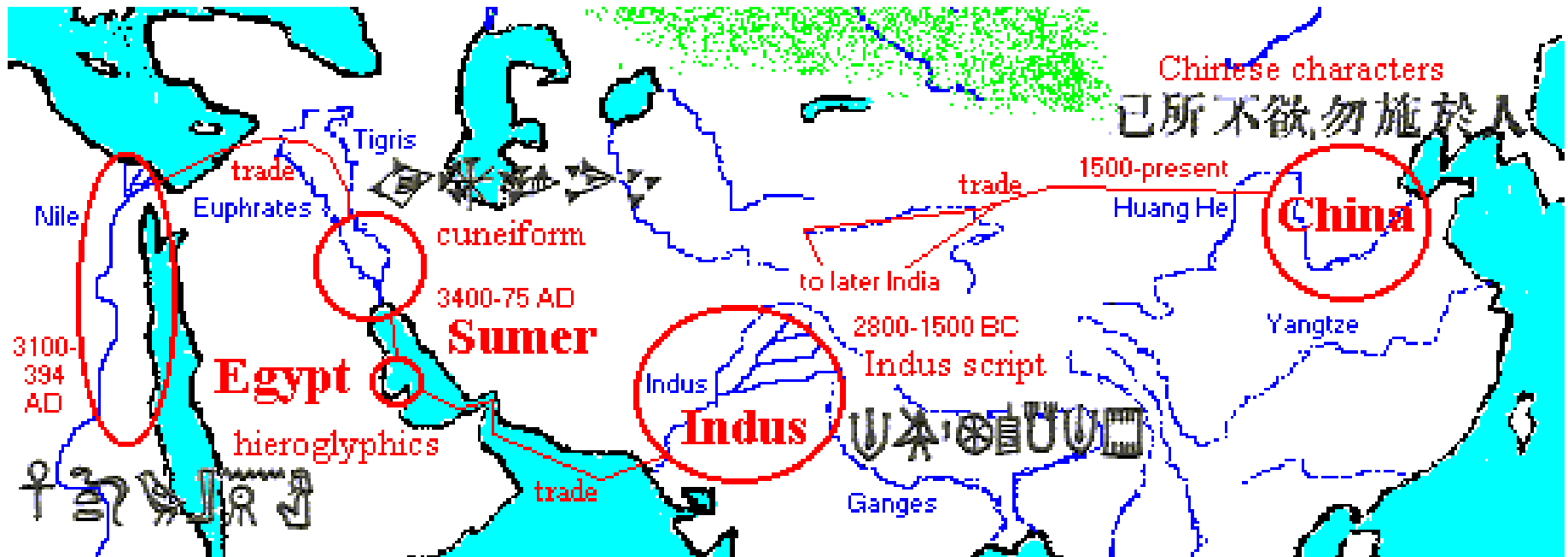
# What the Near-East knew

- **Bibliography**

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- **Arthur Cotterell: Penguin Encyclopedia of Ancient Civilizations (1980)**
- **Michael Roaf: Mesopotamia and the Ancient Near East (1990)**
- **Hans Nissen: The Early History of the Ancient Near East (1988)**
- **Annie Caubet: The Ancient Near East (1997)**
- **Alberto Siliotti: The Dwellings of Eternity (2000)**
- **Trevor Bryce: The kingdom of the Hittites (1998)**
- **Bernard Lewis: Race and Slavery in the Middle East (1992)**

# Ancient Civilizations

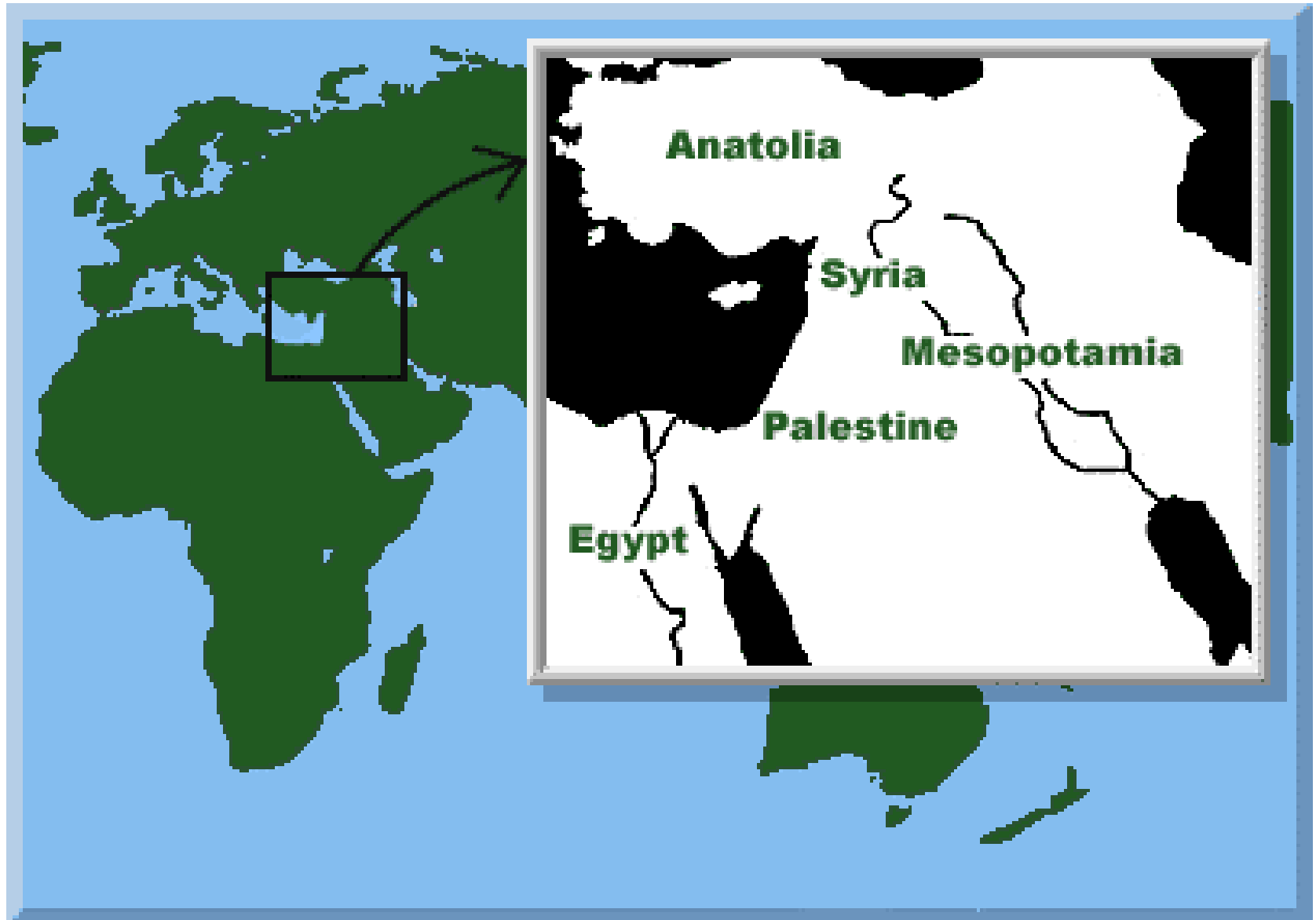
- River valleys



# Ancient Civilizations

- **River valleys**
  - **Water means:**
    - **drinks,**
    - **fishing/agriculture/livestock (food),**
    - **transportation**
    - **energy**

# The Ancient Near East



# Ancient Near East

- **The evolution of knowledge**
  - **End of the ice age**
  - **Climatic changes**
  - **Hunters follow game that moves to new areas (e.g., northern Europe)**
  - **Others turn to farming and hunting new game (cattle, sheep)**
  - **Technology (“what farmers need”)**
    - **Deforestation**
    - **Irrigation**
    - **Pottery**
    - **Copper/bronze**
    - **Wheel**
    - **Yoke/ seeder plow**
    - **Cities**

# Ancient Near East



Mesopotamia seal showing women preparing food  
(Henry Hodges)



# Ancient Near East

**15000 BC: end of the ice age**

**12000 BC: small urban centers develop in Mallaha (Jordan valley) and Mureybet (Syria), houses in pits: Natufian culture**

**9500 BC: agriculture (sowing and harvesting)**

**8500 BC: 700m-long walls of Jericho (Jordan valley), houses on the surface of the ground, built of stone (2-3000 people)**

**8000 BC: domestication of animals, pastoral nomadic life**

**7500 BC: Catal Huyuk (Taurus mountains in eastern Anatolia), a city built on trade (not agriculture) obsidian trade, metalwork, no city streets, terraced roofs, wall paintings, built of mud (5-7000 people)**

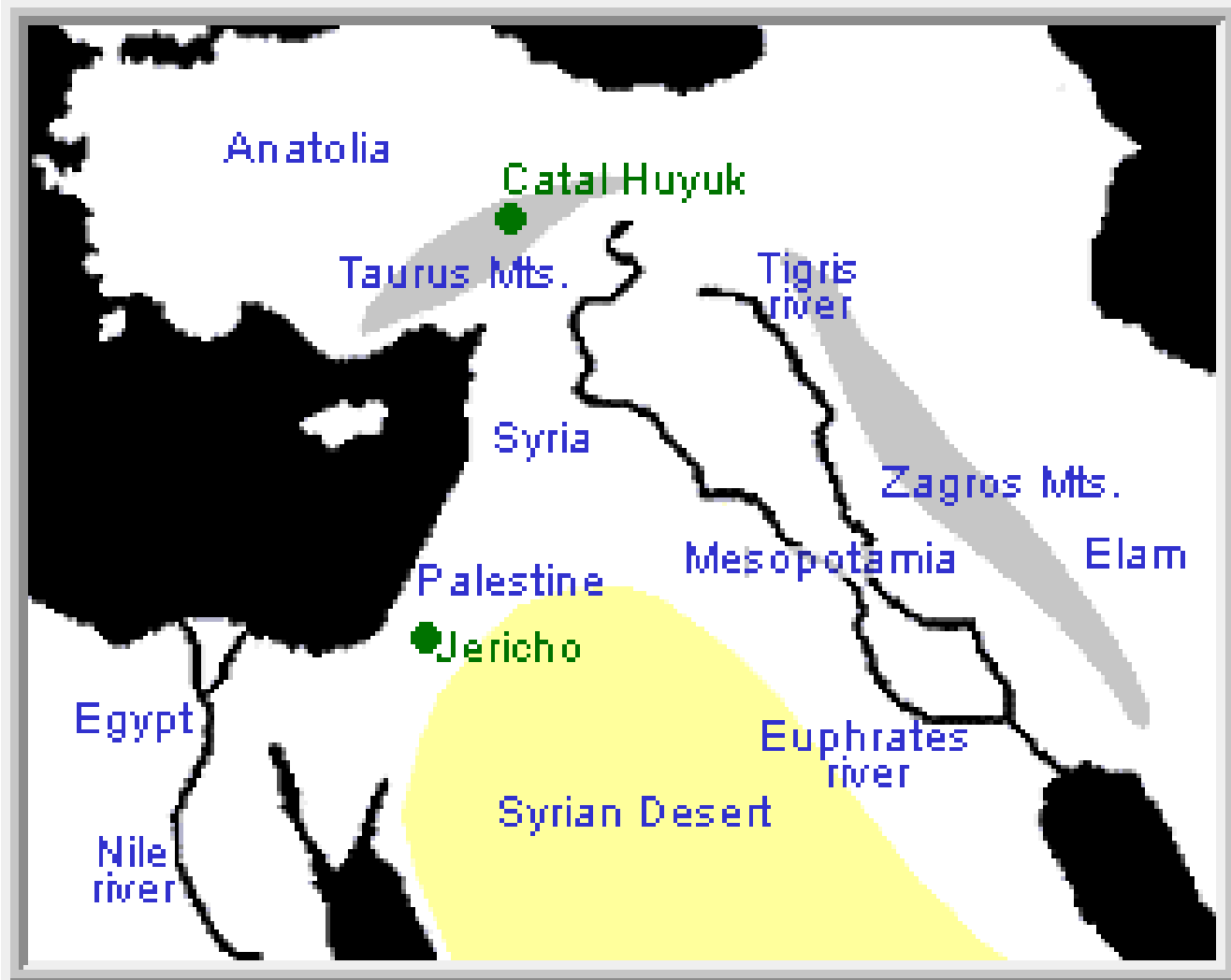
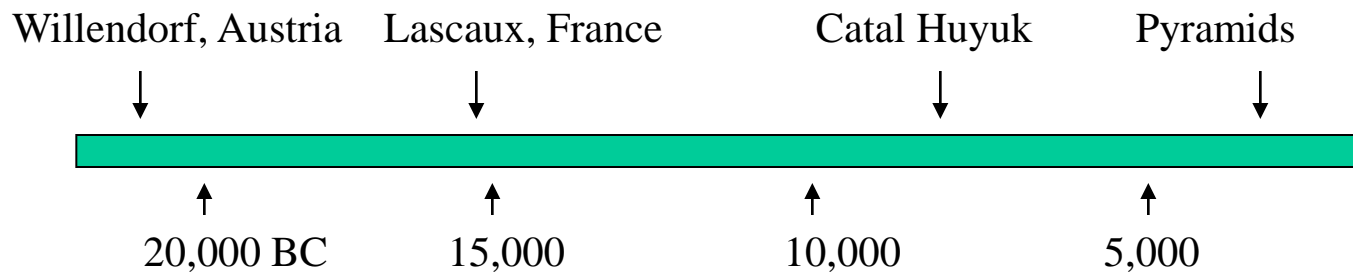
# Ancient Near East

## Spreading of agriculture



# Ancient Near East

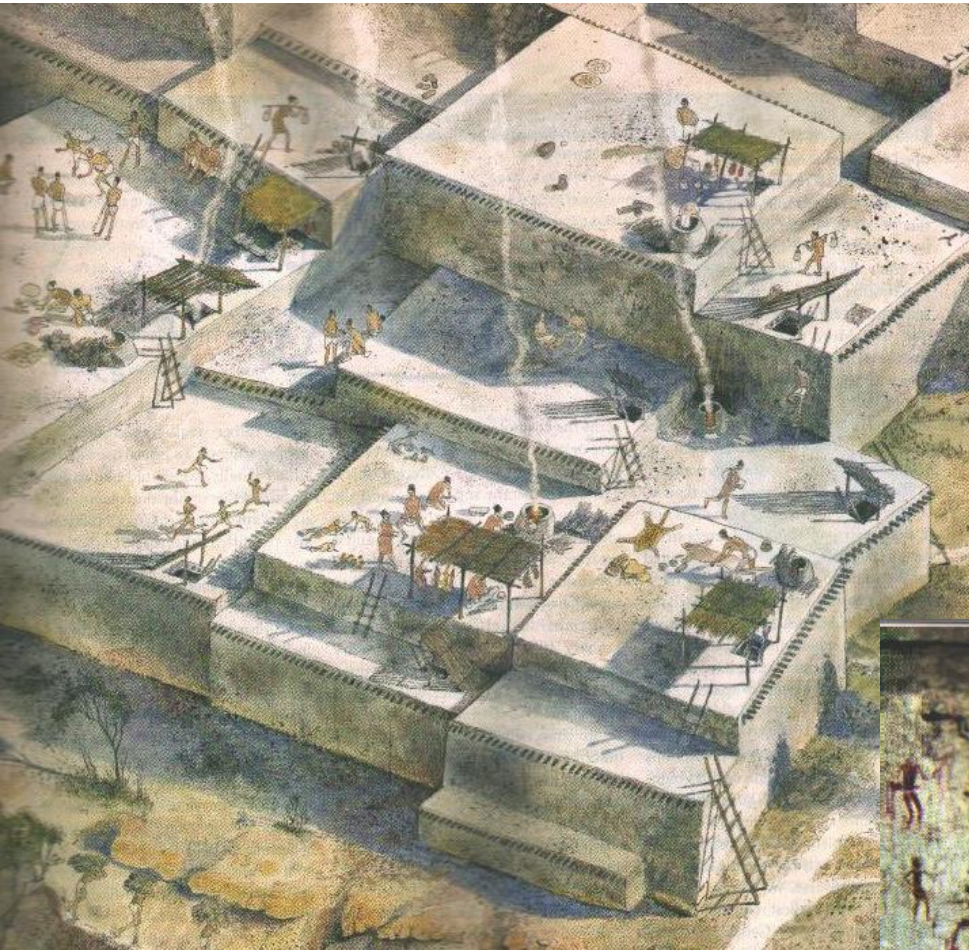
- **Catal Huyuk (Taurus mountains in eastern Anatolia)**
  - a city built on trade (not agriculture)
  - obsidian trade
  - metalwork
  - no city streets
  - terraced roofs
  - wall paintings
  - built of mud
  - 5-7000 people
  - burials under houses
  - murals and figurines



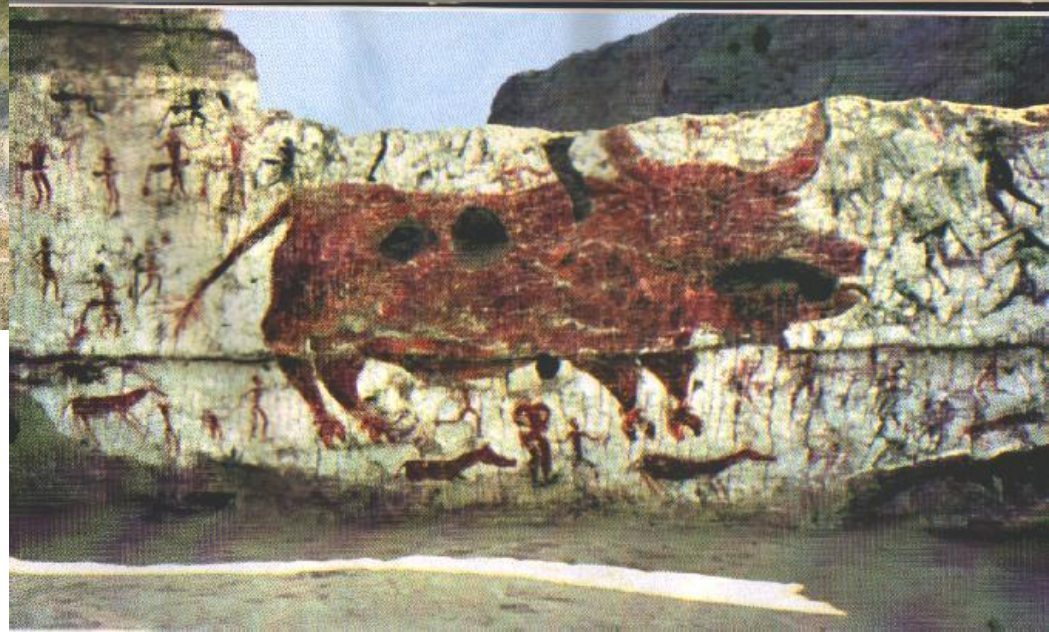
# Catal Huyuk



# Catal Huyuk



Plants include varieties  
from 100s of kms away.



# Catal Huyuk



Female figurines  
Mother goddess

A 12cm figurine of a woman on a throne  
with two leopards on either side of her,  
the head of the baby already visible  
(Catal Huyuk, 5000BC)

# Basur Huyuk

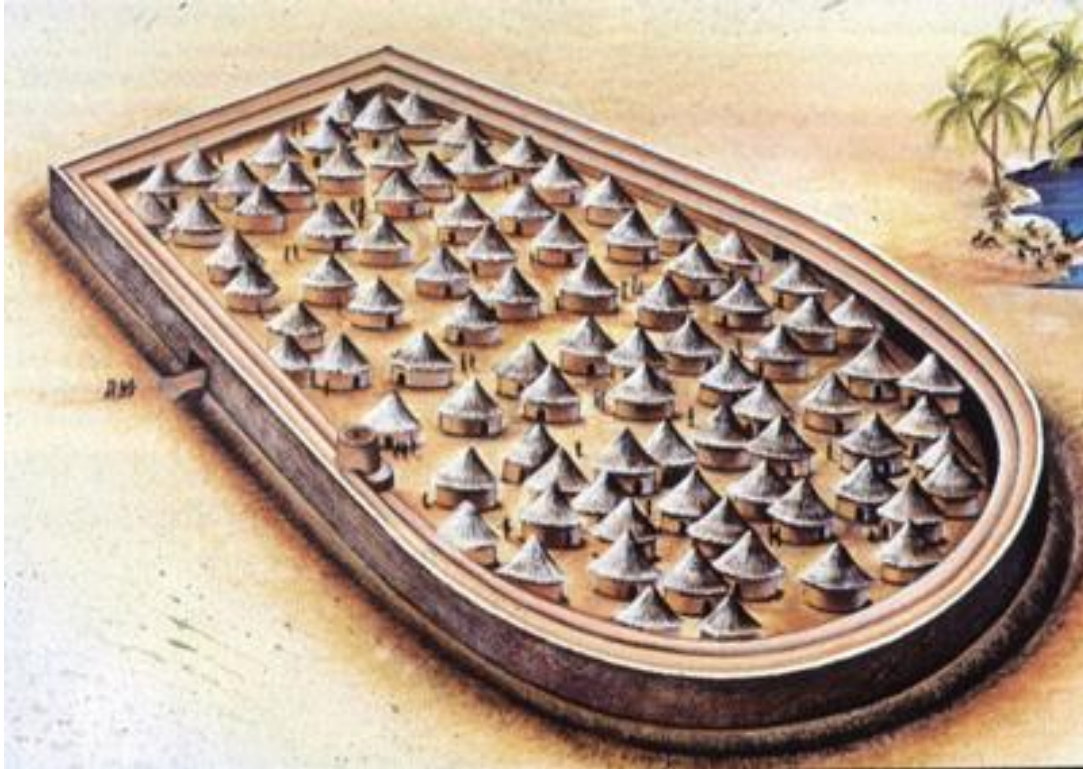


Board game from Başur Höyük  
(3,100–2,900 BC)





# Jericho



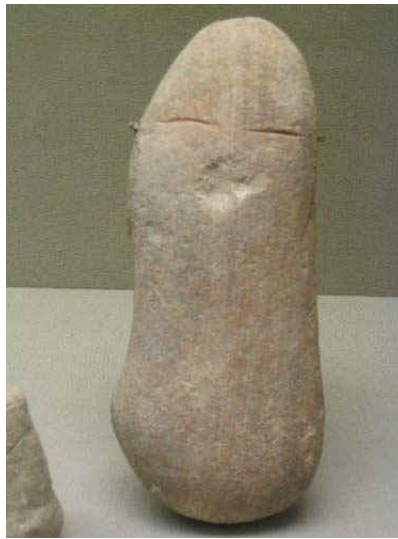
(Reconstruction by UNC)



Plastered skull (6,000BC)

# Sha'ar Hagolan

(Israel, Yarmukian culture, 6-7,000 BC)



(Metropolitan Museum)

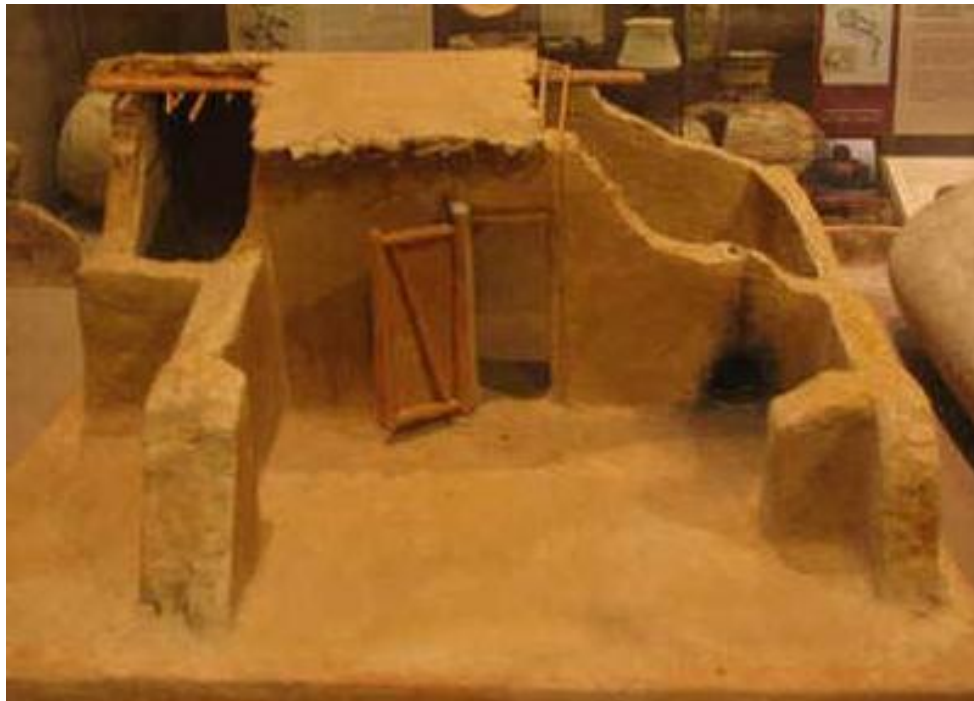
# Cyprus

**Khirokitia (5500 BC): first city street**

- **Wheat**
  - **8,000 BC: Wheat evolves in southern Caspian plains or southeastern Turkey**
  - **7,000 BC: Wheat in Mesopotamia**
  - **Population explosion caused by cultivated grain**
  - **5,000 BC: Wheat in Egypt**
  - **4,000 BC: Wheat in India**
  - **3,000 BC: Bread in Egypt**
  - **3,000 BC: Wheat in continental Europe**
  - **2,500 BC: Wheat in China**
  - **2,000 BC: Wheat in Britain**

## Mesopotamia

**9000 BC: Jarmo culture (eastern Iraq/western Iran):  
the world's first farmers, no pottery yet**



Pre-pottery house of Jarmo  
(9-7,000 BC)  
(Oriental Institute, Chicago)

# Mesopotamia 7000 BC-5000 BC



## Syria

**6000 BC-5200 BC: Halafian culture (circular domed buildings, fine pottery with geometric motifs)**

## Mesopotamia

**7000 BC: Hassuna culture (north Iraq): ceramic pottery, **geometric** motifs**

**6200 BC: Samarra culture (north Iraq): **symbolic** motifs on pottery, planned settlements, **egalitarian** society, **funerary** objects**

**6000 BC: Ubaid culture (south Iraq): irrigation, riverside settlements**

**5300 BC: Eridu culture (south Iraq): **hierarchical** social organization, **monumental** buildings (first ziggurats) , copper casting, river sailboats**

# Hassuna



Hassuna pottery (6,200 BC)  
(Oriental Institute, Chicago)



Hassuna house (5,700 BC)  
(Oriental Institute, Chicago)



# Ubaid



Ubaid 2-4 pottery (5,200-4,900 BC)  
(Oriental Institute, Chicago)



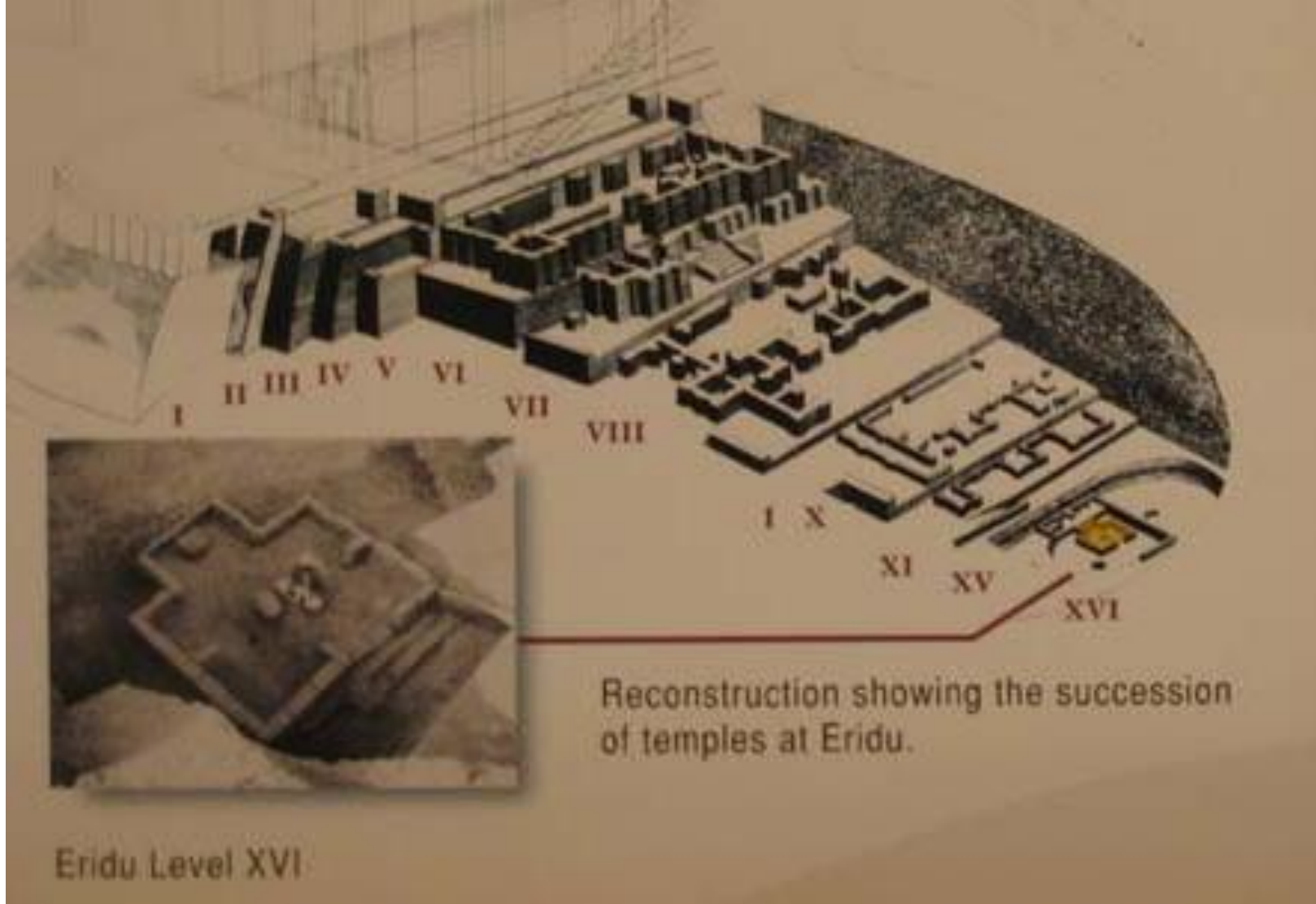
Oeili (Ubaid-1 culture, 5,800-5,200 BC)  
(Oriental Institute, Chicago)

## Late Ubaid culture



Spreading of Ubaid culture  
(Oriental Institute, Chicago)

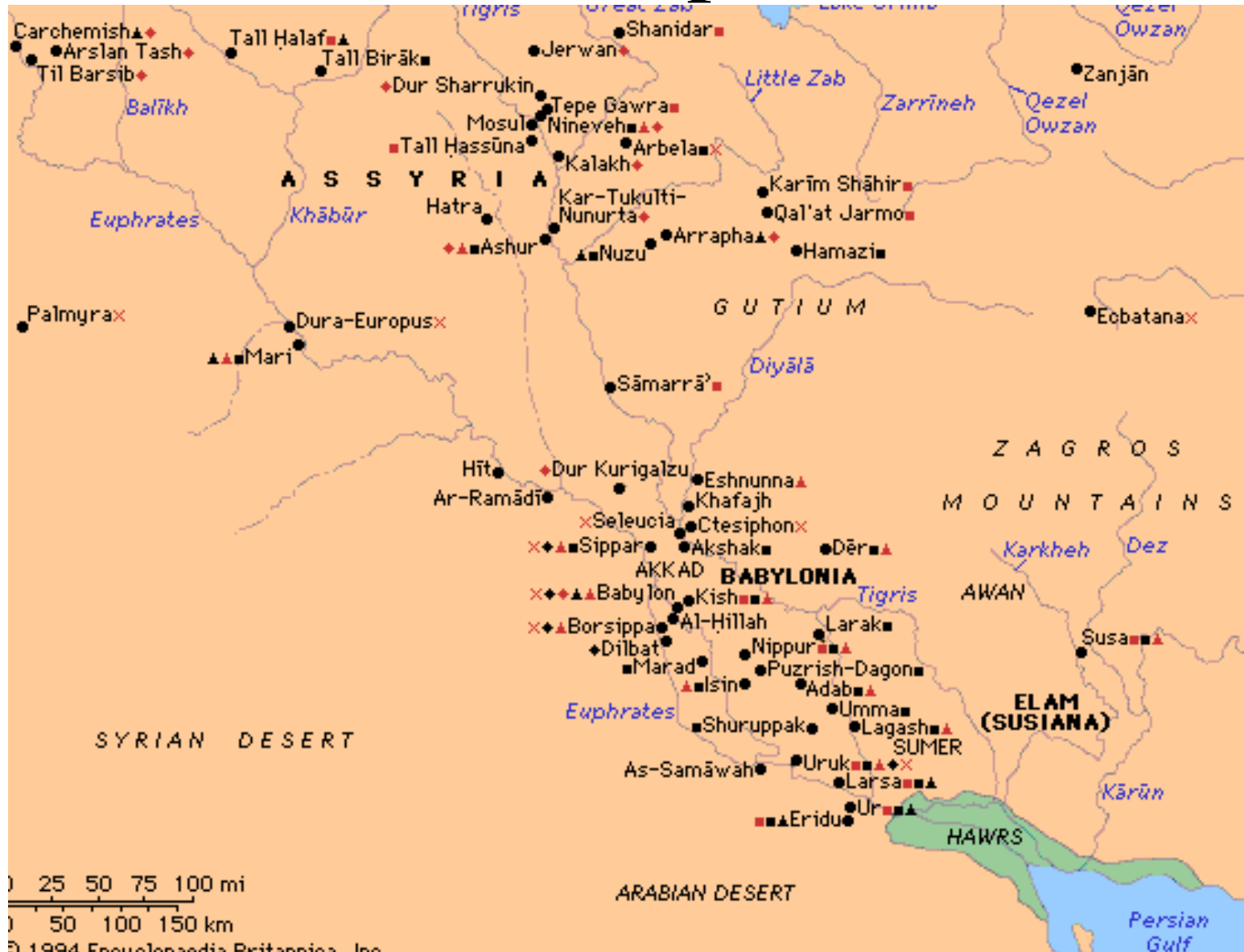
# Eridu



Succession of Eridu temples over 5,000 years  
(Oriental Institute, Chicago)

- 3500 BC: Sumerians control city-states between the lower Euphrates and Tigris rivers: Eridu, Ur, Uruk, Lagash, Umma, Nippur**
- 3300 BC: Sumerians of Uruk invent pictographic writing on clay tablets**
- 3200 BC: Sumerians invent the wheel**
- 3100 BC: Sumerians of Uruk invent cuneiform writing**
- 3000 BC: Sumerians employ mathematics on base 60 (360 degrees in a circle, 60 minutes in an hour)**
- 2900 BC: Uruk has 40,000 people and is divided in an administrative city and a residential city, while agriculture is delegated to the subjects outside the city**

# Cities of Mesopotamia



**2340 BC: Sargon I of Kish** builds a new capital, Agade (Akkad, later Babylon), adopts the Semitic language Akkadian instead of Sumerian, conquers the Sumerian cities (the first “emperor” in history)

**2330 BC: Sargon's daughter Enheduanna** is a poetess

**2180 BC: the Akkadian empire disintegrates**

**2112 BC: Neo-Sumerian renaissance** (but ruled by Semitic kings)

**2018 BC: the Sumerian empire disintegrates**

**1900 BC: Assur and Nineveh** form an Assyrian kingdom

**1800 BC: the Hittites** discover iron and build the first weapons made of iron

**1800 BC: the Babylonians** employ a duodecimal system (a system based on 12 and 6) to measure time

# The Hittites



**1792 BC: Hammurabi is crowned king of Babylon**

**1595 BC: the Hittites raid Babylon**

**1500 BC: a caravan trader, Abraham, leads nomads (Hebrews) from Sumer to Canaan and then on to Egypt**

**1350 BC: Ugarit (in Syria) employs an alphabet of 32 letters**

**1250 BC: the Hebrews return from Egypt and establish a kingdom in Palestine**

**1250 BC: the Assyrian army employs iron weapons**

**1000 BC: the Phoenicians control trade in the Mediterranean**

**612 BC: Babylonia and Media destroy the Assyrian empire**



# Babylonia and Assyria



<http://victorian.fortunecity.com/kensington/207/mideast2.html>

**600 BC: Zarathustra founds a new religion in Persia**

**600 BC: Aramaic (a Semitic language) is the "lingua franca" of Syria and Palestine**

**550 BC: Cyrus Achaemenian seizes power in Media and founds the Persian empire**

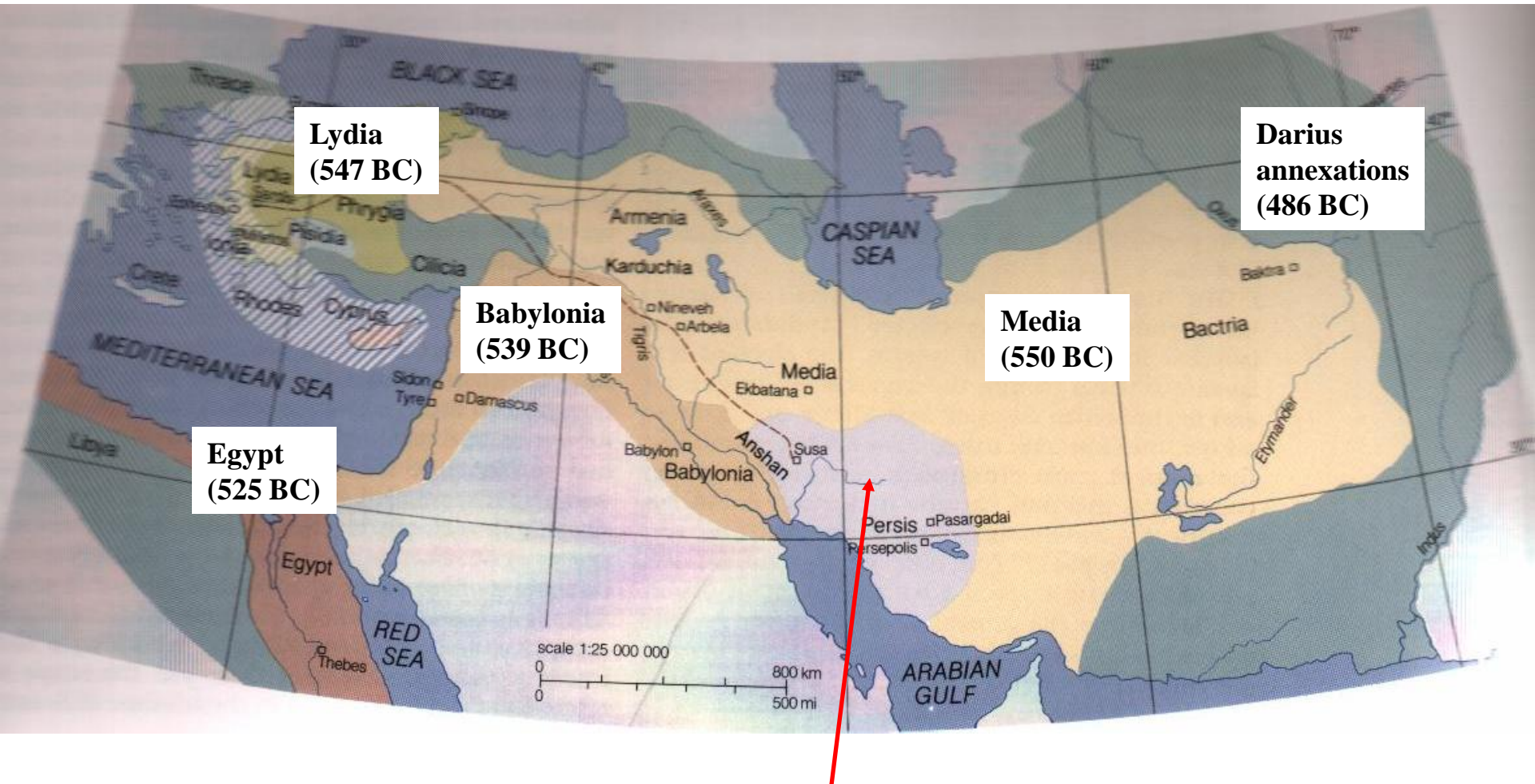
**521 BC: Darius expands the Persian empire beyond the Indus River**

**500 BC: Darius makes Aramaic the official language of the Persian empire**

**490 BC: Darius of Persia attacks mainland Greece**

**333 BC: Alexander invades the Persian empire**

# The Persian Empire



**Lydia**  
(547 BC)

**Darius annexations**  
(486 BC)

**Babylonia**  
(539 BC)

**Media**  
(550 BC)

**Egypt**  
(525 BC)

**Persian Homeland**

# Hellenistic empires



# What the Near East knew

- See nearsum.ppt