

Chalcolithic Period in the Near East

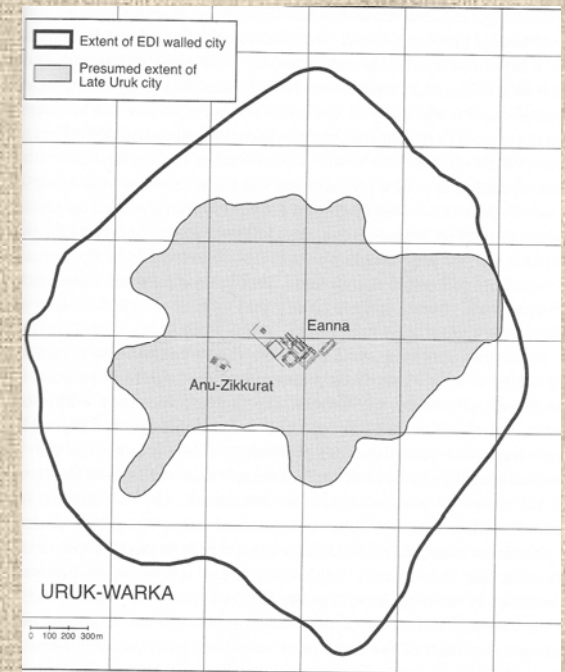
Topic 4

Uruk Period: Culture-historical Overview



History of research

- Period once again named for site of the same name: Uruk (Warka)
- First excavations at Uruk by William Loftus in 1850s
- But main work by German excavators, beginning in 1912-13
 - then continuing in 1928 until 1990 (with break during WW II)
- In this case, Uruk is the largest – and for many, the most important – Uruk-period site
 - approx. 400 ha
 - only *tiny* portion excavated and for the Uruk period entirely concentrated in the central civic / religious area



Uruk and the 'Sumerian Problem'

- Oriental Institute (Chicago) work in the Diyala region in the 1930s
 - excavation of long stratified sequences: Khafajah, Asmar
 - mostly Early Dynastic period (3rd millennium BCE), but some parts extended back to Late Uruk
- Uruk material seemed to mark clear break with Ubaid
- Henri Frankfort (among others) concerned with 'Sumerian problem'
 - one hypothesis was that Sumerians arrived in Uruk times
- Subsequent anthropologically influenced work changed questions to emergence of states and urban societies

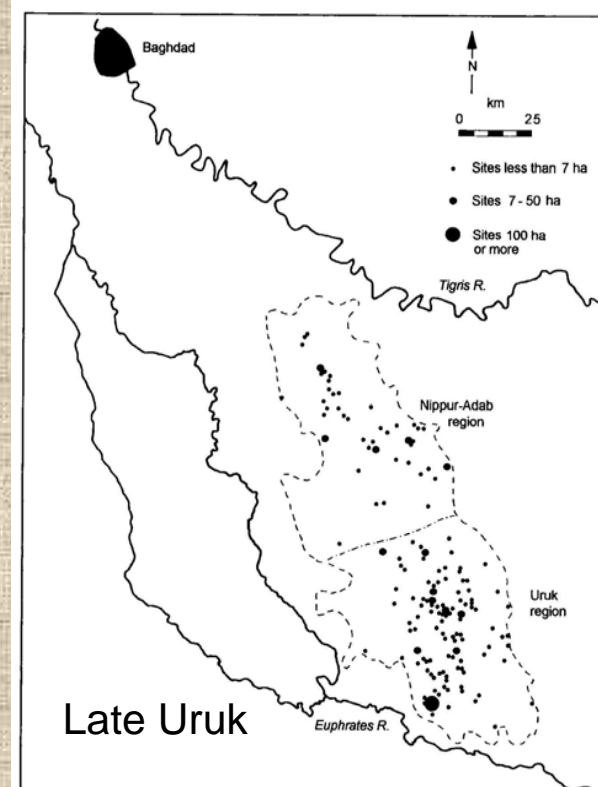
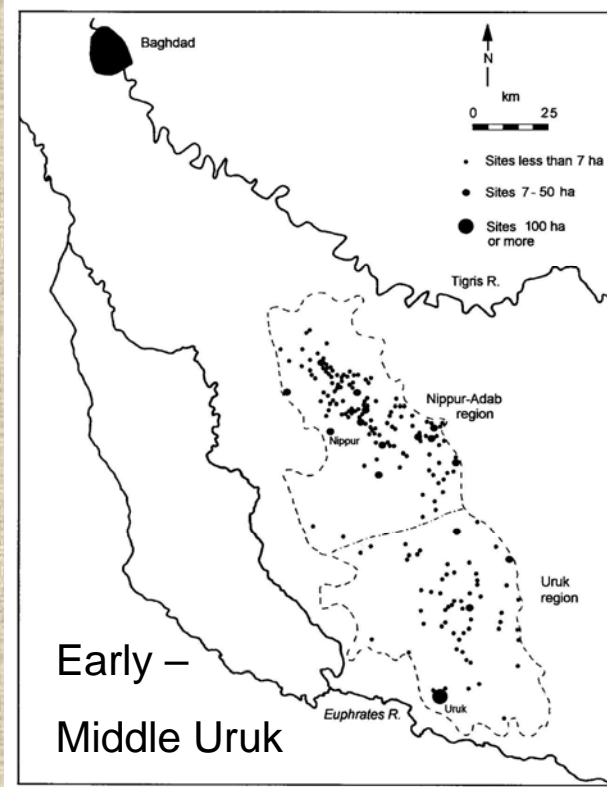
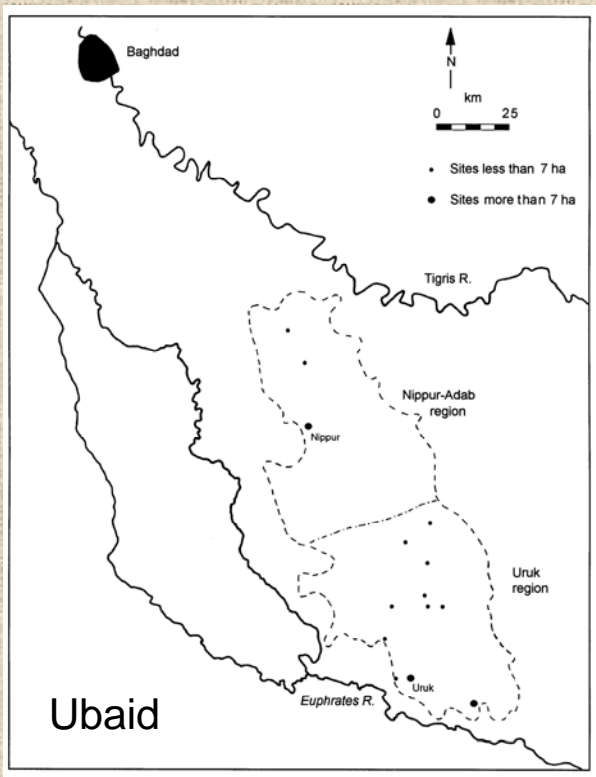
Chronology

- Original division into Early and Late Uruk
 - Middle Uruk added in the early 1970s
 - based principally on pottery but also on seals & seal impressions
- Calendrical dates: 4200/4100 – 3100/3000 BCE
 - Early Uruk: c. 4200/4100 – 3800/3700 BCE
 - Middle Uruk: c. 3800/3700 – 3400 BCE
 - Late Uruk: c. 3400 – 3100/3000 BCE

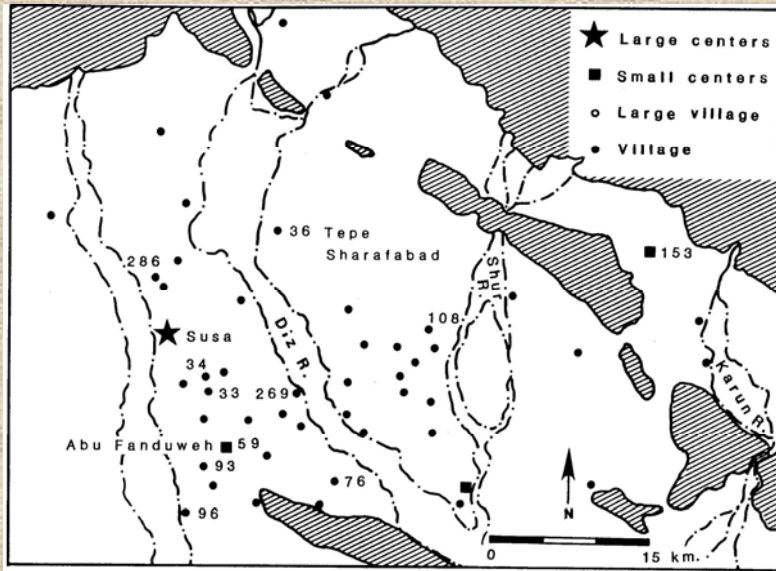
Date B.C.		South	Iran	Syria	Upper Euphrates	Tigris	Southern Mesopotamia							
3000	LC 5	IVA Eanna IVB V	Nippur XV–XVII	Godin V	Early 17 Sus Acropole	Habuba Kabira Jebel Aruda	Sheikh Hassan 4	Brak TW 12	Arslantepe VIA	Hassek Höyük	Mohammad Arab Late Uruk	Nineveh (Gut) Späturuk Ninevite 4	Late Uruk	
	Late	Eanna VI		Late 18 Sus					Arslantepe VII			L: 31–20		
3400	LC 4	Eanna VII	Abu Salabikh Uruk Mound	Nippur XVIII hiatus?	Early 18 Sharafabad	Qraya	Sheikh Hassan 5–7	Brak TW 13	Leilan IV	Hacinebi B2 Hacinebi B1		Norduruk B	Late Middle Uruk	
3600	LC 3	Eanna IX–VIII		Nippur XX–XIX	Susa 19–22			Brak TW 14–17	Leilan V			Tepe Gawra VIII A	Norduruk A	Early Middle Uruk
3800	Late	Eanna XI–X					8–10/13					Tepe Gawra IX–X	L: 45–37	
	LC 2	Eanna XII			hiatus?	Hamman et Turkman VB		Brak TW	hiatus?	Hacinebi A		Tepe Gawra IX–X	Gawra B	Early Uruk
4000	Early			Geoy								Tepe Gawra XI/XA	L: 59–45	
4200	LC 1	Eanna XVI–XIV		Susa Acropolis 23–27		Hamman et Turkman VA Hamman et Turkman IVD			Leilan late VIb			Tepe Gawra XIA/B Tepe Gawra XII	hiatus? L: 60	Ubaid transitional Ubaid 4?
	Term. Ubaid											XIIA– XIII		

Uruk Period: Characteristic Features

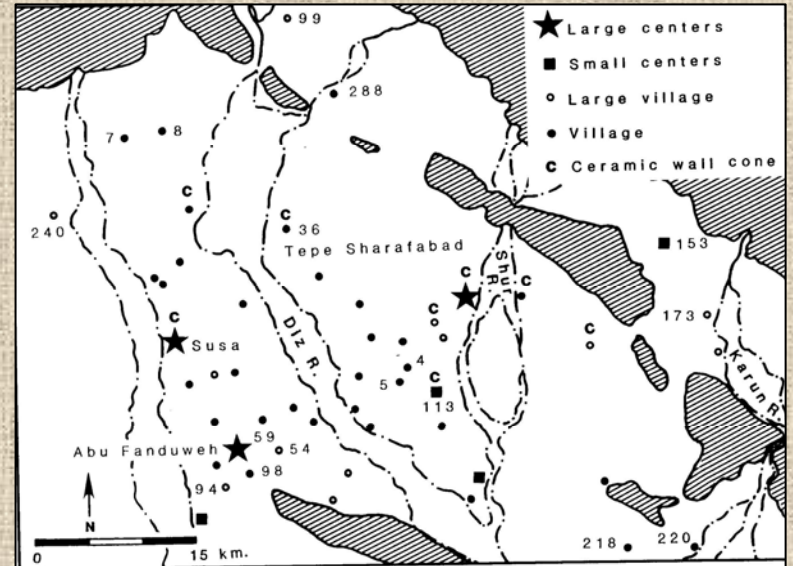
- Marked change in settlement pattern
 - Significant increase in numbers of sites
 - Major growth in size of larger sites



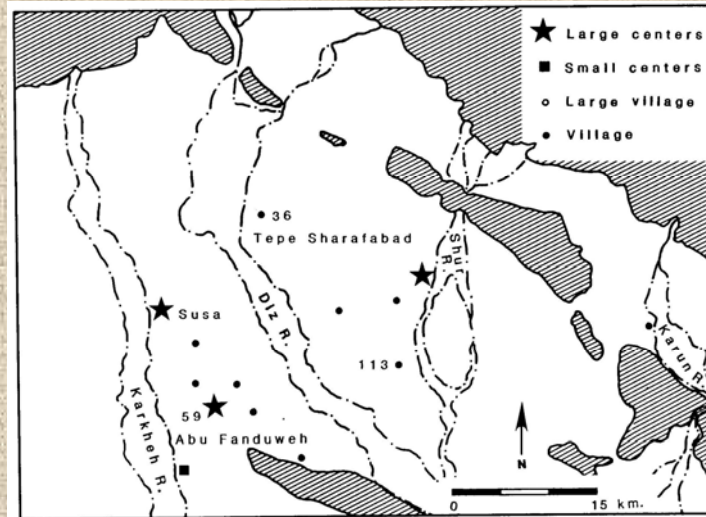
Settlement Patterns: Susiana Plain



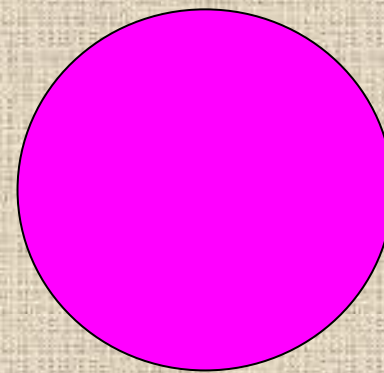
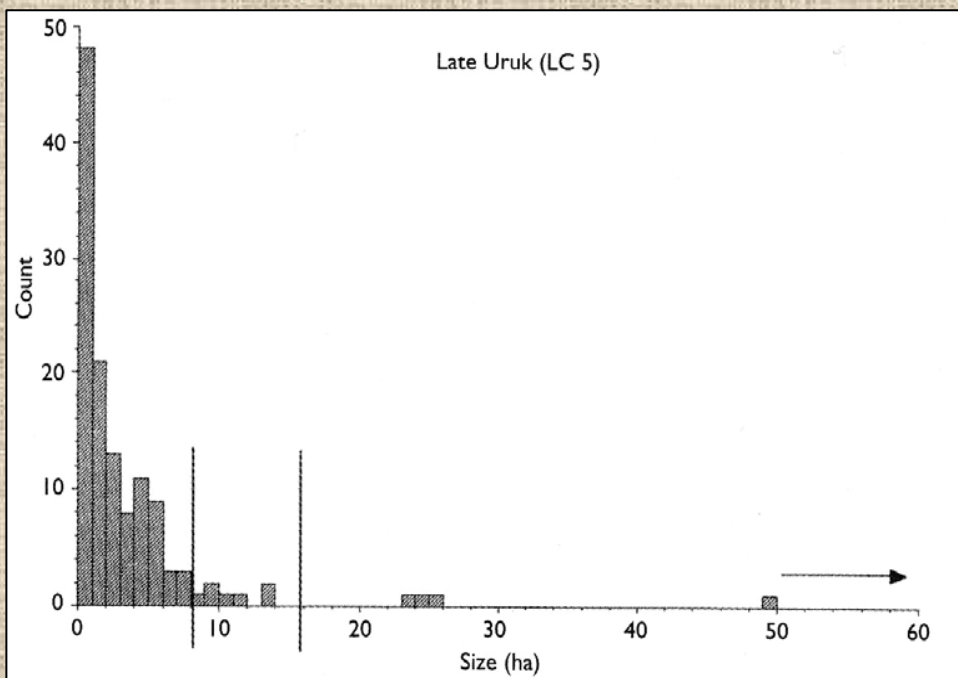
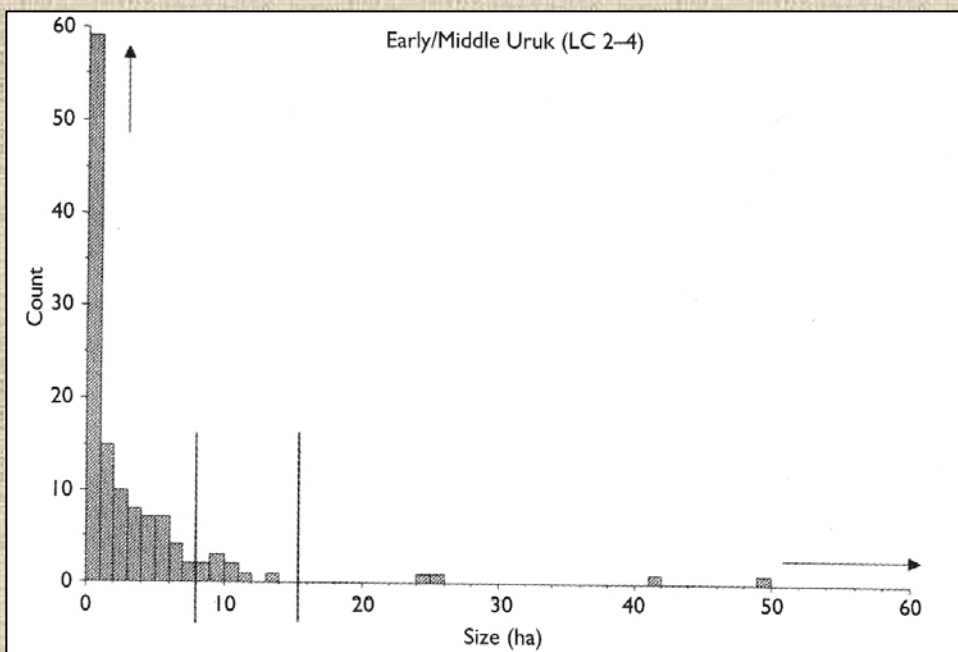
Early Uruk



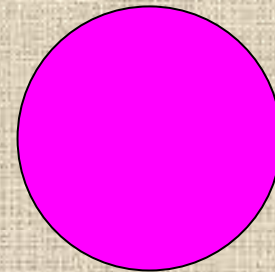
Middle Uruk



Late Uruk



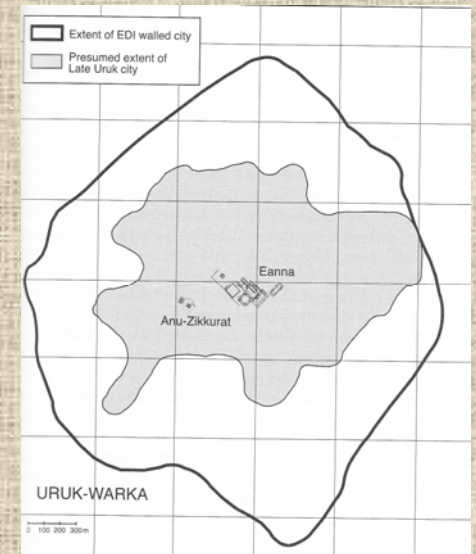
Late Uruk
(230 ha)



Early-Middle
Uruk (100 ha)

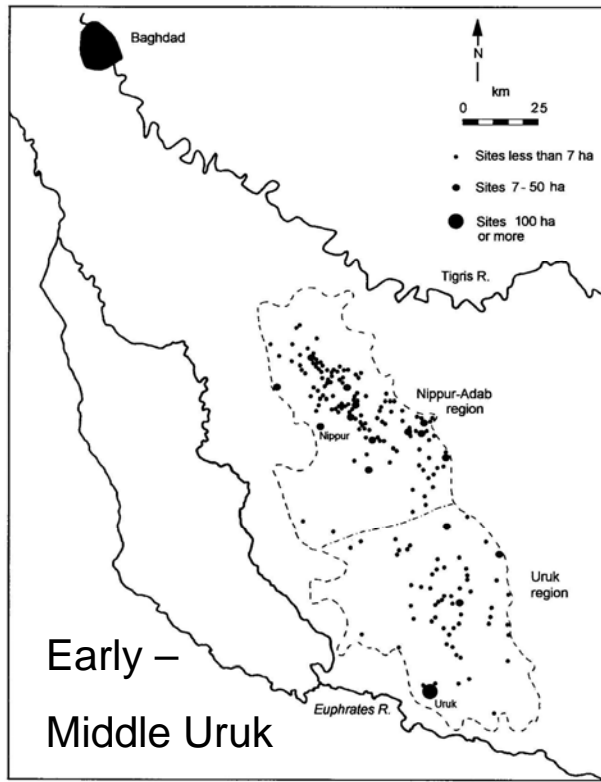


Late Ubaid
(10 ha)

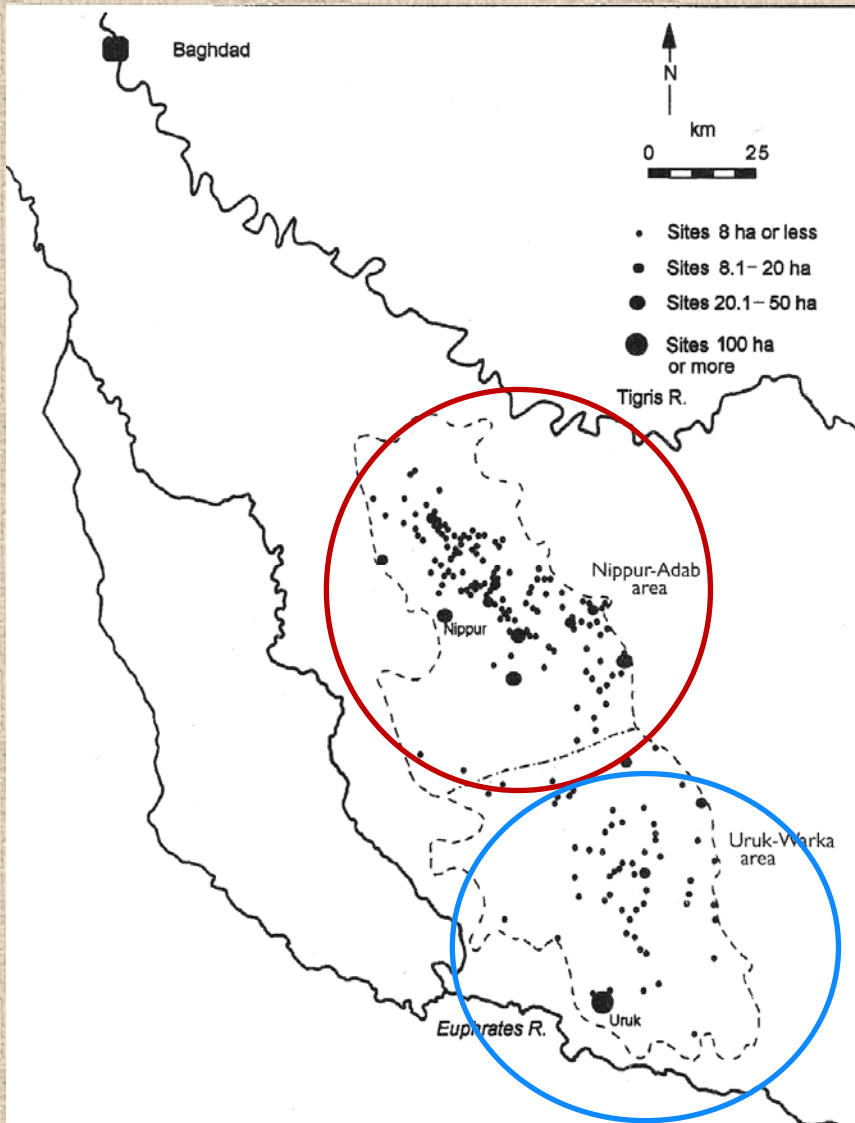


Proportions of population living in large and small sites

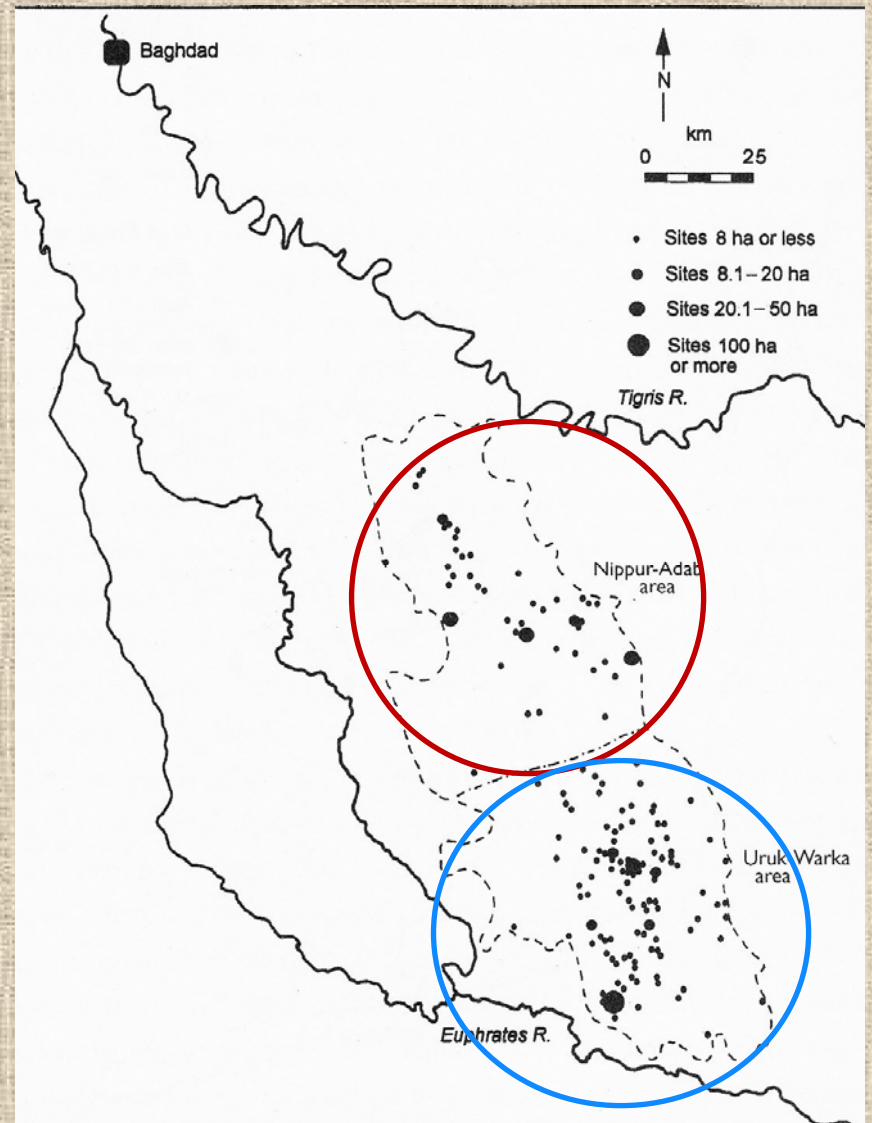
	Uruk region		Nippur-Adab region	
	% population in small sites	% population in large sites	% population in all sites	% population in large sites
Early – Middle Uruk	18 %	82 %	100 %	81 %
Late Uruk	22 %	78 %	100 %	70 %



Overall changes in numbers of sites

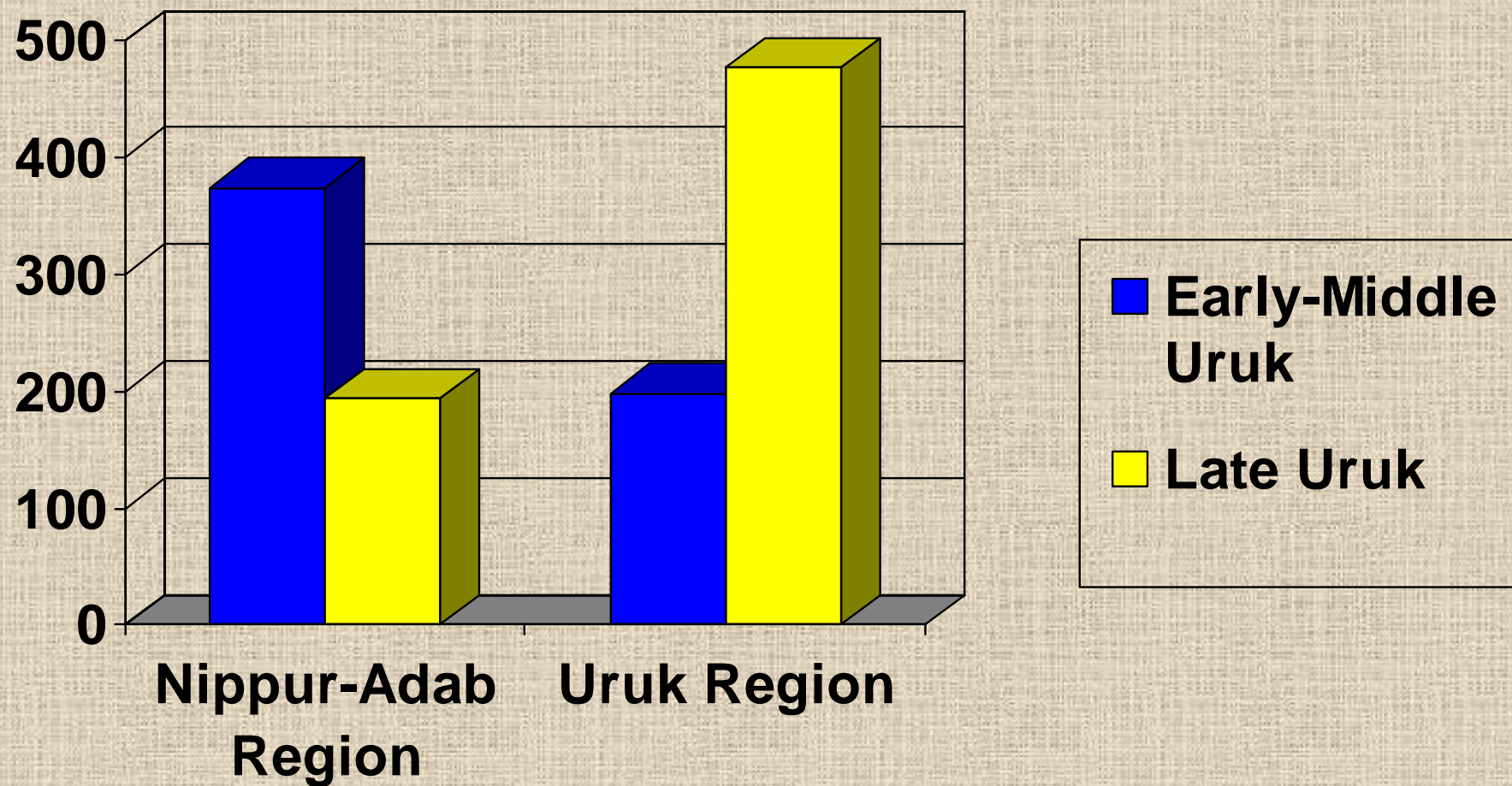


Early-Middle Uruk



Late Uruk

Total hectares settled

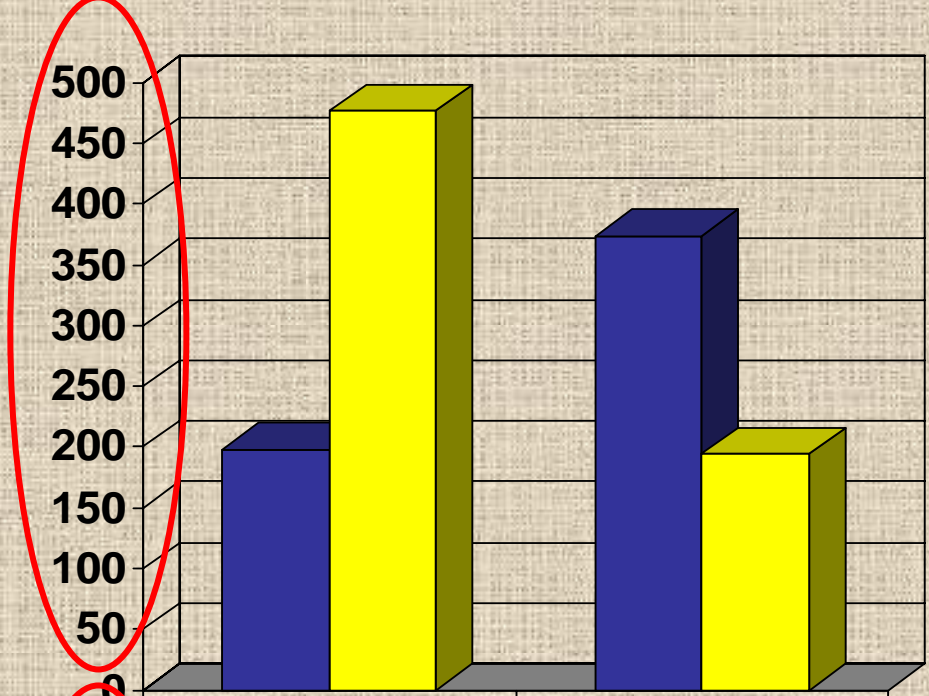


Contemporaneity Problem

Dewar's Model

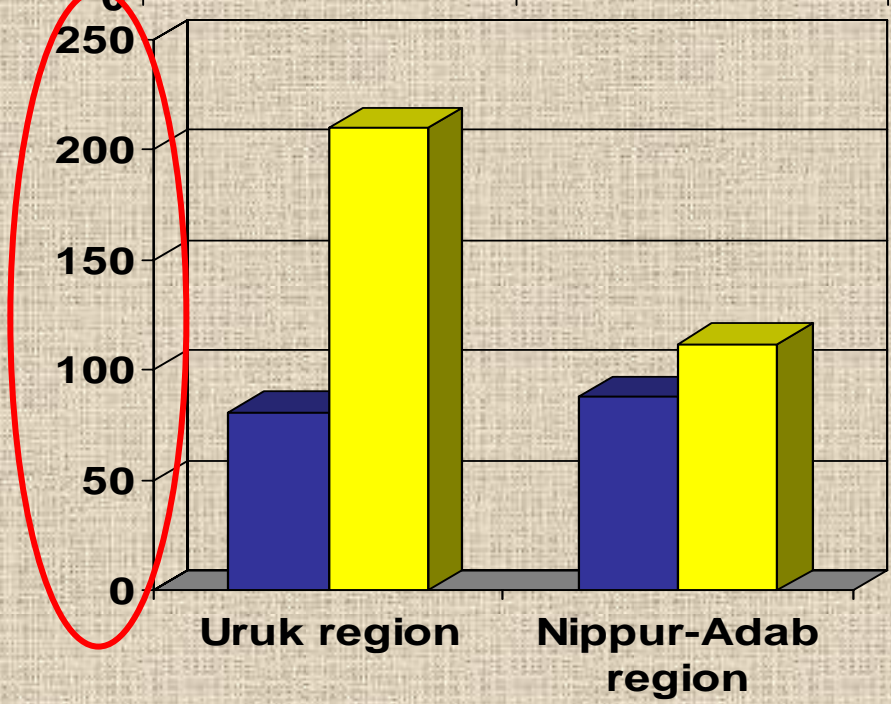
	Period P	Period Q	Period R
Site A	XXXXXX		
Site B	XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX		

Only those sites occupied in Periods P, Q, and R can be considered to have been occupied *throughout* Period Q



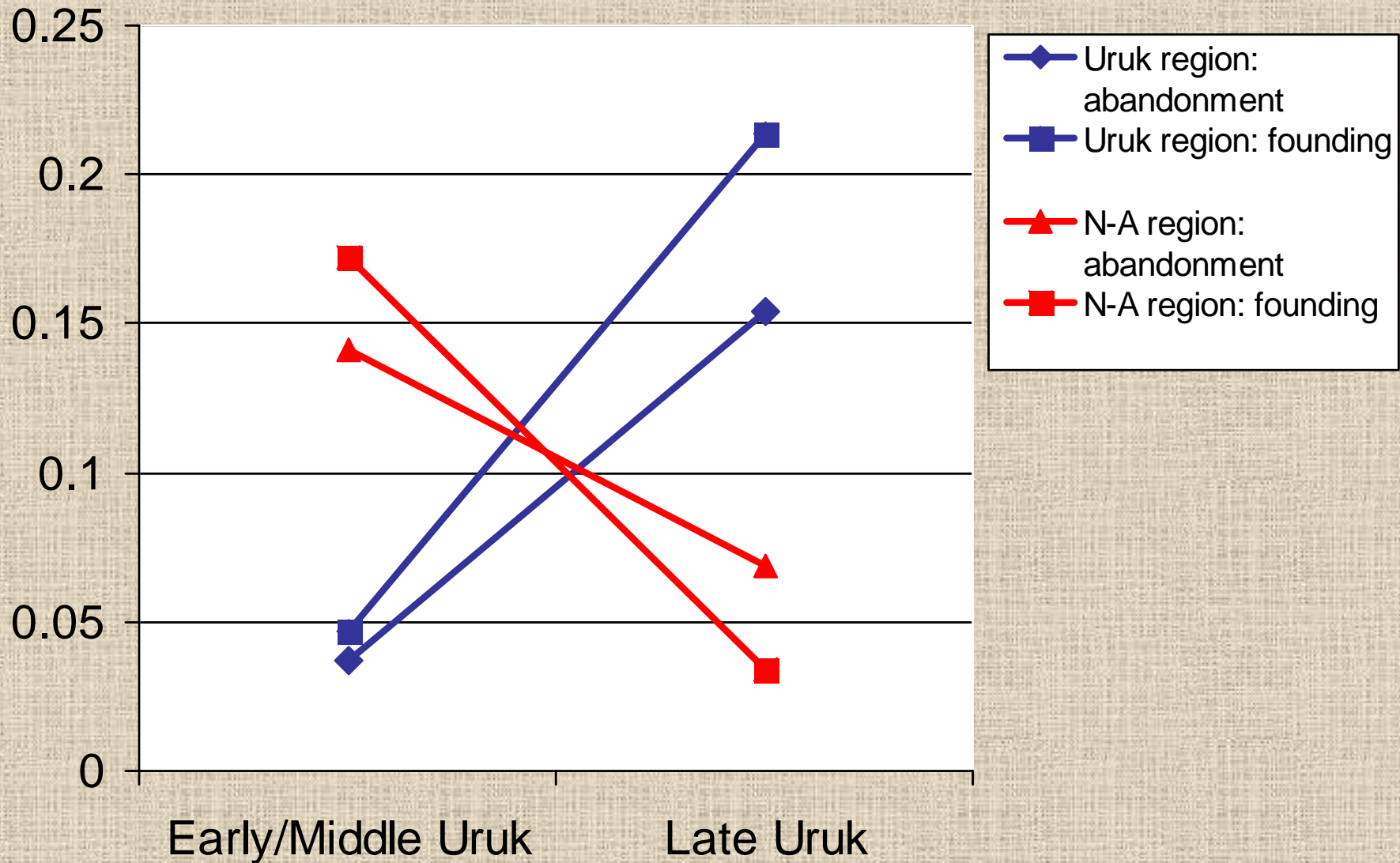
■ E-M Uruk
■ L Uruk

Total hectares of settlement: "uncorrected"



Total hectares of settlement: "corrected"

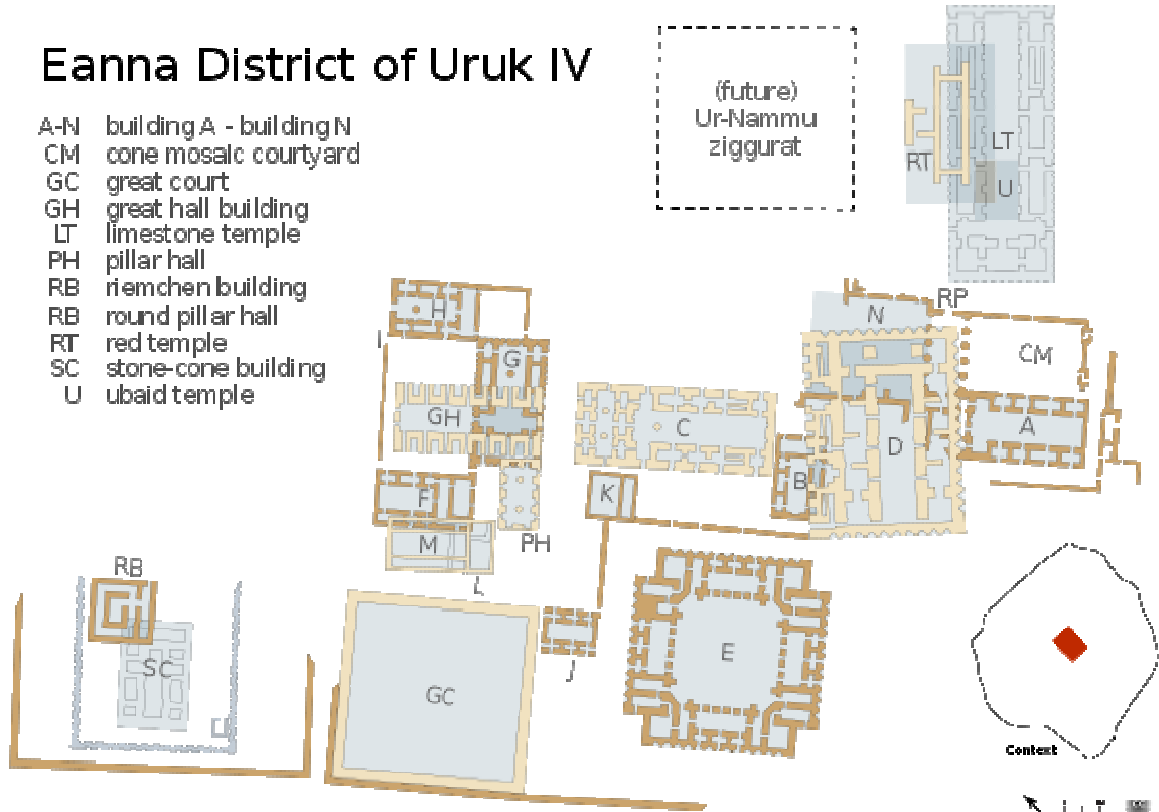
Settlement abandonment and founding rates



Eanna District of Uruk IV

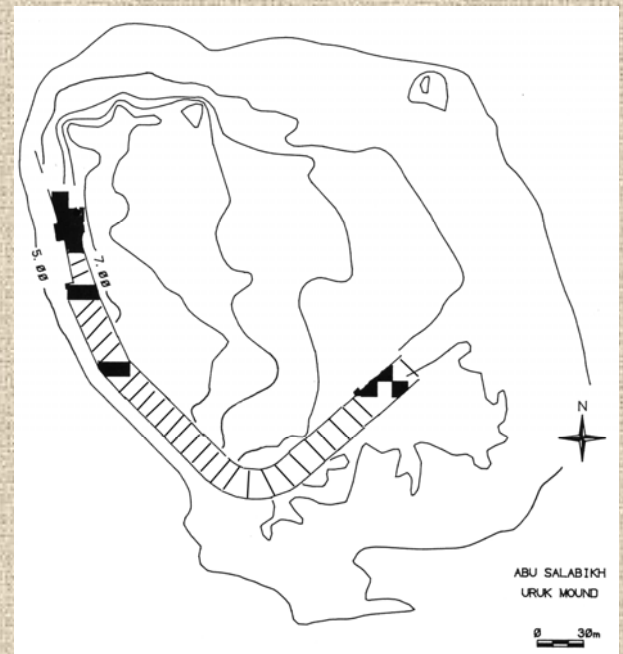
- A-N building A - building N
- CM cone mosaic courtyard
- GC great court
- GH great hall building
- LT limestone temple
- PH pillar hall
- RB riemchen building
- RB round pillar hall
- RT red temple
- SC stone-cone building
- U ubaid temple

(future)
Ur-Nammu
ziggurat



scale: GH is approx. 20 m long

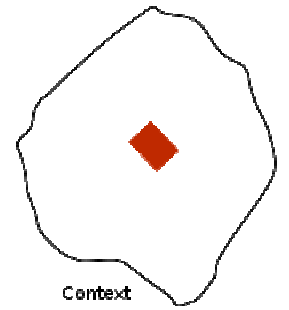
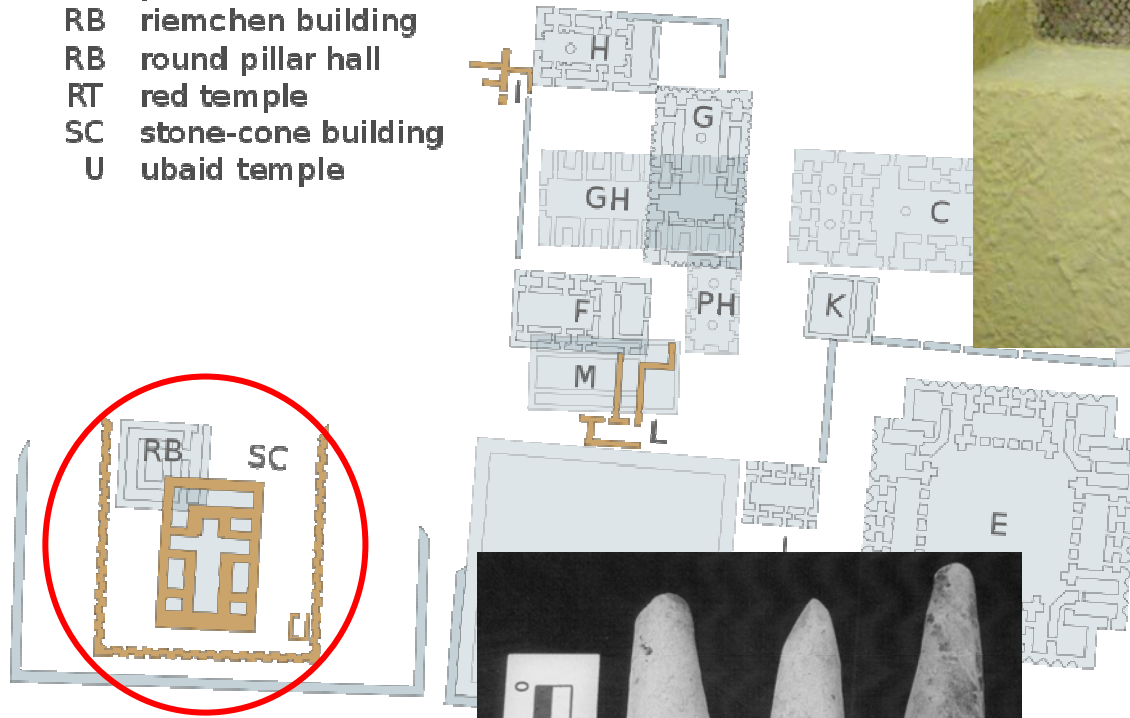
Monumental constructions



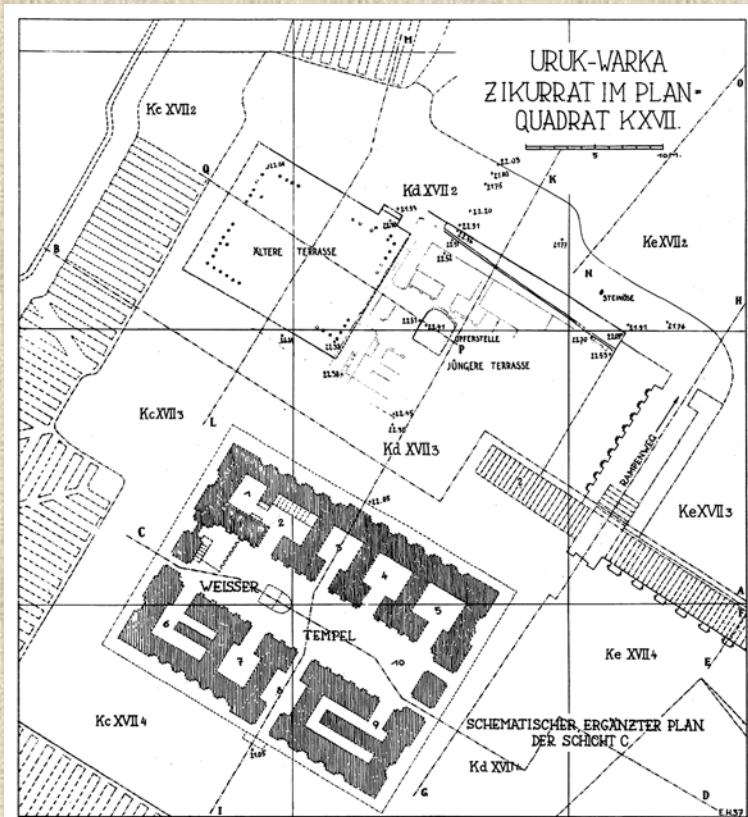
Uruk Mound Abu Salabikh:
town wall

Eanna District of Uruk VI-V

- A-N building A - building N
- CM cone mosaic courtyard
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- LT limestone temple
- PH pillar hall
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- RB round pillar hall
- RT red temple
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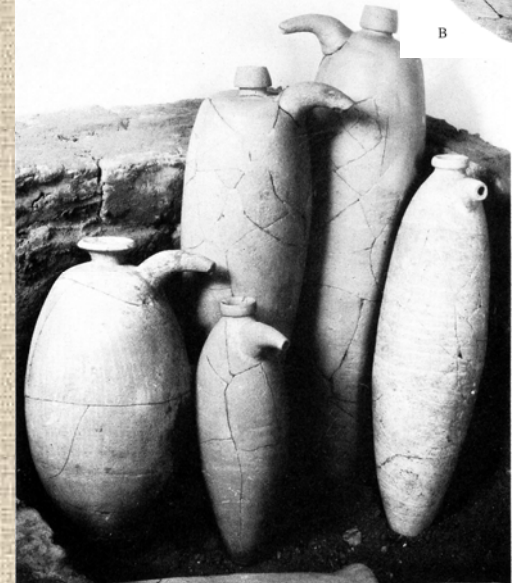
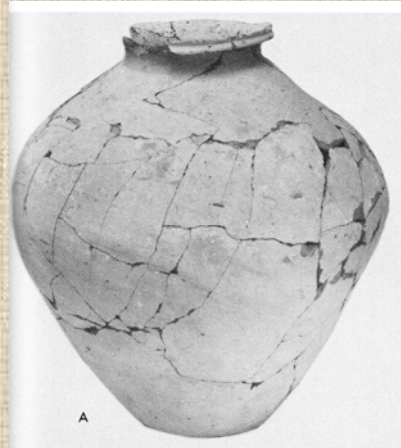


Uruk: Area of Anu Ziggurat

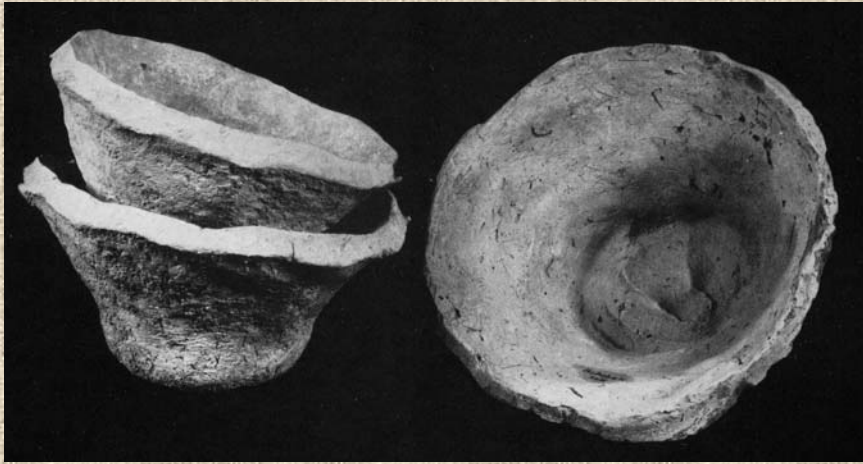


Uruk Pottery

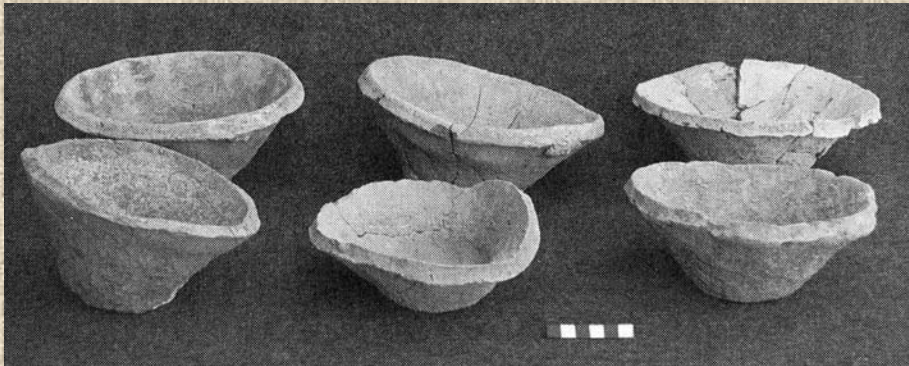
- Disappearance of painted decoration
- Explosion of forms
- Widespread use of tournette; introduction of fast wheel in later Uruk
- Mould-made, mass produced vessels



Beveled rim bowls

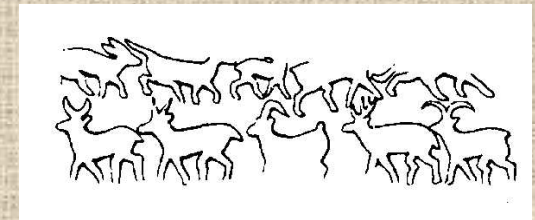
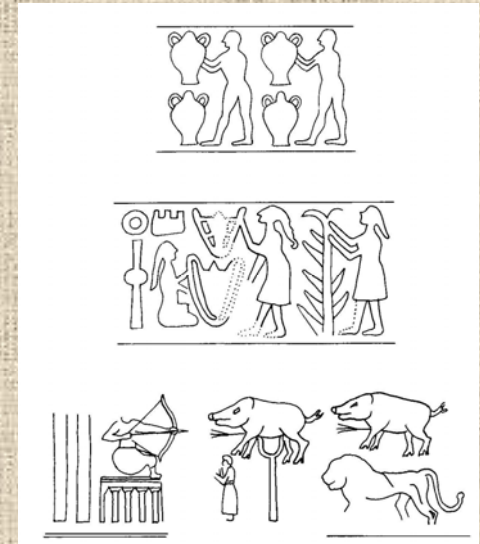
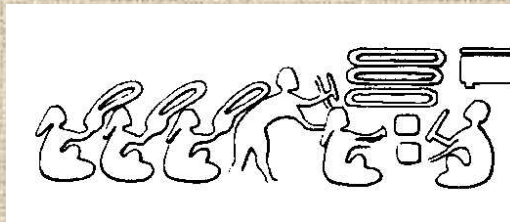


Chogha Mish



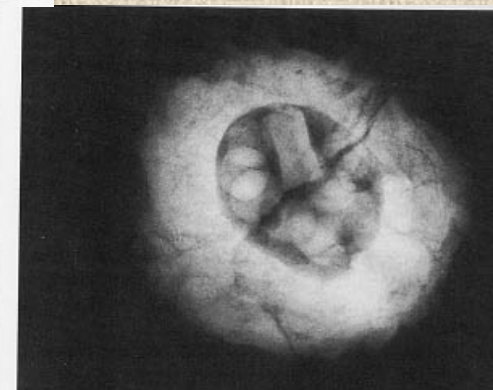
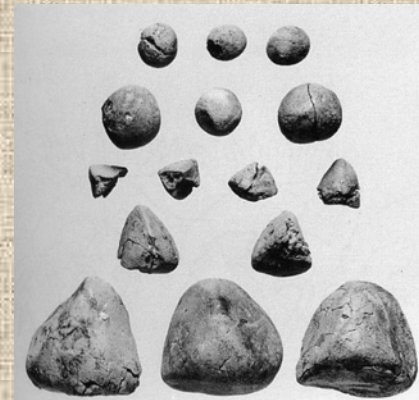
Stamp seals to cylinder seals

- First cylinder seals in the later part of Middle Uruk
- Become common in Late Uruk
- Wide range of motifs



Tokens and Bullae

- Clay tokens in use since Late Neolithic (D. Schmandt-Besserat)
- In Uruk times they become more varied
- Presumably used to store information on quantities of things
- Bullae or 'clay envelopes'
 - contain tokens, seal impressions on exterior



Beginnings of writing

- Clay tablets
- Earliest have only numerical signs
- Subsequently 'proto-cuneiform'
- Most proto-cuneiform tablets from Uruk



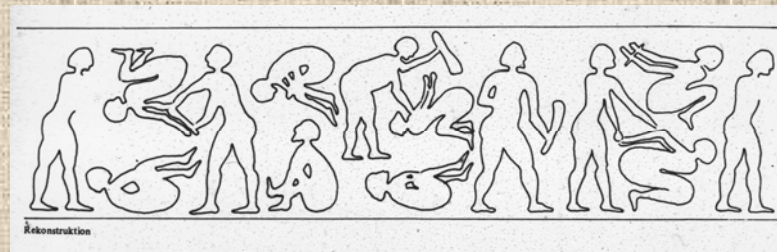
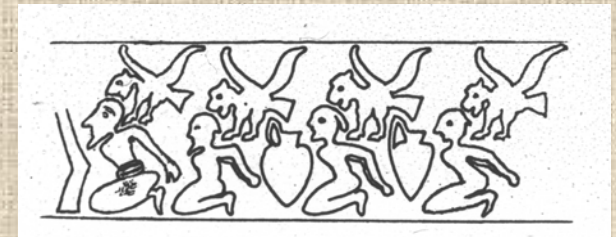
Images of a leader: “Man in the Net Skirt”

- Appears in Late Uruk period
- Statues, stelae, seals



Images of violence

Late Uruk: seals and sealings



Burial

- almost completely disappears
- occasional burials of children or infants

Exotic materials

- lapis lazuli, stones used for vessels and seals, metals
- relatively small quantities

What happened in Uruk times?

- Robert McC. Adams: urbanization
- Henry Wright, Gregory Johnson: state emergence
- Guillermo Algaze: emergence of first world system (“informal empire”)
- Hans Nissen: “early high civilization”

- All of these scholars see the Uruk period as crucial period in history
- Some focus on Early Uruk (Wright, Johnson), others on Late Uruk (Nissen, Algaze)
- What they think is most important varies as well as how they interpret the existing evidence