<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years BC</th>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5000–4000</td>
<td>Halaf/Ubaid</td>
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<tr>
<td>4000–3200</td>
<td>Uruk</td>
<td>Protoliterate period</td>
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<td>3200–3000</td>
<td>Jemdet Nasr</td>
<td>Pre-Sargonic period</td>
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<tr>
<td>3000–2750</td>
<td>Early Dynastic I</td>
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<tr>
<td>2750–2600</td>
<td>Early Dynastic II</td>
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<td><strong>2600–2350</strong></td>
<td>Early Dynastic III</td>
<td><strong>ED IIIA 2600-2500 BCE</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>2350–2150</td>
<td>Dynasty of Akkad</td>
<td><strong>ED IIIB 2500-2350 BCE</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>2350–2150</td>
<td>(Gutian interregnum)</td>
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<tr>
<td>2150–2000</td>
<td>3rd Dynasty of Ur</td>
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<tr>
<td>2150–2000</td>
<td>(Amorite interregnum)</td>
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<tr>
<td>2000–1800</td>
<td>Isin–Larsa Dynasties</td>
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<tr>
<td>1800–1600</td>
<td>1st Dynasty of Babylon</td>
<td>Old Babylonian period</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Kassite interregnum)</td>
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</table>

Outline of archaeological and historical periods.
Comparison of the sizes of some major cities of antiquity.
Gilgamesh  The epic hero Gilgamesh here holds two bulls with human faces. Gilgamesh is not being an animal lover. The scene probably depicts his epic battle with these monstrous and powerful enemies. (Source: The University Museum, University of Pennsylvania)
The Epic of Gilgamesh
THE ANCIENT NEAR EAST
c.a. 9000 to 2000 B.C.
Sites mentioned in the text
Reconstruction by Hamilton D. Darby
Figure 8.1 Door plaque from near gateway to Temple Oval at Khafajah, late Early Dynastic (c. 2500 BC). The processions of sheep and goats belong in a tradition of temple iconography reaching back to the Uruk period. (Frankfort 1939, Plate 111 A. Photo: courtesy the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago)
49. Offering stand, from Khafaje. Copper.
University of Chicago, Oriental Institute
Above left: The cire perdue, or lost-wax method of casting complicated shapes in bronze, gold or silver was invented in the 4th millennium BC. The earliest examples are from the Nahal Mishmar hoard in Palestine. First, a model was made out of wax. This was covered with fine clay to form a mold, which was then heated so that the wax melted and ran away. Molten metal was poured into the clay mold which would be broken open to release the complete object.

As early as the Aceramic Neolithic period objects were manufactured out of copper, perhaps originally native natural metallic copper, and soon afterward copper was smelted from ore. In the 4th millennium BC gold, silver and lead also came into use. The properties of copper were much improved by alloying with other metals: first arsenic, then tin, lead and zinc (c. 700 BC). In the 2nd millennium BC iron and steel were manufactured but they did not become important until the 1st millennium BC.

The earliest objects were shaped by hammering but by the end of the 6th millennium BC copper artifacts were cast from molten metal.
Base of Hollow-Cast Statue
Stone Statue of Priest (from Al-Ubaid)
Temple of Ninhursag
Pillar from the Temple at Al-Ubaid
Stone Frieze (Temple of Ninhursag): Milking Cows, Making Butter

Stone frieze, framed in copper, from the Ninhursag temple facade at Tell al-'Ubaid. On the right a cow is being milked, while its muzzled calf looks on. In the centre is a farm shed. The men on the left, holding large jars and transferring liquid from one container to another, are probably making butter for storage. About 2500 BC.
Stone Frieze (Temple of Ninhursag):
Cow Husbandry

33 Cow husbandry was an important feature of the ancient Mesopotamian economy. The top section of this frieze from Tell al-Ubaid, ED III period (c. 2600 BC), shows a dairy scene. The figures are of limestone, mounted on a slab of slate, 22 cm (nearly 9 in) high.
Lioness Statuette (Elam)
Figure 45. Protoelamite seals, from Susa. From L. Delaporte, Musée du Louvre, Cat. des cylindres orientaux I (Paris, 1920), (a) pl. 24.8, (b) pl. 26.7.
Figure 6. Wild sheep (*Ovis ammon anatolica*). Photographed in 1983 near Konya, Turkey. Photo by S. M. Tarhan. Courtesy, Dr. G. Heidemann, Institut für Haustierkunde, Universität Kiel.
Leonard Woolley excavating
Mesopotamian Chronology

(All Dates B.C. and Approximate)

8000–4000 Neolithic era
4000–2350 Civilization emerges; intercity warfare
2400–2250 Ebla flourishes
2370–2200 Akkadian Empire: Dynasty of Sargon
2100–2000 Empire of Ur: the Sumerians’ “Last Hurrah”
2000–1530 Amorite domination: Old Babylonian Empire
1700–1500 Emergence of Indo-European peoples
1700 Code of Hammurabi
1530–1100 Kassites dominate Mesopotamia
Jewelry from the Royal Cemetery
Vessels from the Royal Graves
Helmet of Mes-Kalam-Dug
Procession at the Queen’s Grave
Suicides at the Queen’s Grave
Cosmetics in Shells
Gold Bowls from the Royal Graves
Queen’s Headdress (in situ)
Queen’s Headdress (reconstructed)
Harp/Lyre
with
bull’s head
Harp/Lyre (in situ)
Left:
Bull-headed lyre
Gold, lapis lazuli, shell on wooden reconstruction
Ur, Iraq
c. 2660-2550 B.C.
CBS 17694
H. 165 cm.
(reconstructed)
See page 46

Right:
Qur'an
Ink, gold and pigment on paper
Hamadan, Iran
Dated A.H. 559 (25 April A.D. 1164)
NE-P 27
41.5 × 28.5 cm.
See page 51
Gold Dagger
Statuette: The Ram in the Thicket
Phoenician Furniture Inlay (Ivory) depicting a goat eating a tree
The Standard of Ur
The Standard of Ur: Top Register
(Preparations for War)
The Standard of Ur: Top Register
(Preparations for War)
The Standard of Ur: King and Attendant (at banquet)
The Standard of Ur: Banquet Preparations
The Standard of Ur: Harpist at Banquet
Harp/Lyre found in Royal Graves
Outline of archaeological and historical periods.
Trade Routes during the ED III Period
Mesopotamian Chronology

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Stone Plaque depicting Eannatum of Lagash

45 ABOVE Fragmentary inscribed stone plaque depicting Eannatum, ruler of the Sumerian city of Lagash around 2450 BC. The torso is shown frontally, the head is in profile and, despite a certain degree of realism, the eye is still huge (cf. Fig. 43) and is balanced by a large nose on one side and a highly stylised ear on the other. Note the sheepskin skirt. From Tello (ancient Girsu) in southern Iraq. Ht 19 cm.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dynasty</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Monarch</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Ur-Nanše</td>
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<td><strong>Gudea’s dynasty at Lagaš</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Conquest by Ur</strong></td>
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<td>Ur-Nammu</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2095</td>
<td>Šulgi</td>
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Tablet from the time of Lugalzagezi, King of Uruk (2340-2316 BCE)
The Stele of the Vultures
Figure 13:2 Stele of the Vultures (so named from another fragment showing them preying on the dead; see also Figure 13:5), from Girsu, c. 2450 BC. Troops of Lagāš arrayed against the enemy from Umma. With a long inscription of Eannatum. (de Sarzec 1884–1912, Planche 3 bis and 4 ter)
The Stele of the Vultures: Infantry
Figure 13.5  Stele of the Vultures: forming a burial mound of enemy corpses after the battle. (de Sarzec 1884–1912, Planche 3c)
The Stele of the Vultures: The God Ningirsu holding enemies in a net
Tablet from the time of Lugalzagezi, king of Uruk (2340-2316 BCE)
Graph: Historical Levels of Humidity as a Measure of Climate

From Isolated Settlement to Town

Figure 17. Results from deep drilling in the floor of the Persian Gulf: proportions of organic matter (hatched) in the sediments and inferences regarding the ancient climate. After W. Nützel, “The Climatic Changes of Mesopotamia and Bordering Areas, 14,000 to 2,000 B.C.” *Sumer* 32 (1976): 20.
Old Babylonian Cylinder Seal
(from Tell Asmar)
Statue of a Priest (from Tell Asmar)
Statue of a Priest (from Khafaje)
Clay Model of a Sheep
Statue of a Priestess wearing a mantle made of sheep fleece
Stele from Telloh
73. Stele, from Telloh.
Paris, Louvre
Stele from Khafaje
Figure 2.7  Macehead of Me-salim. The inscription reads ‘Me-salim, King of Kish, builder of the temple of Ningirsu, set this up for Ningirsu. Lugal-šag-engur was the ensi of Lagas.’ (AO 2349 A. Photo: Musée du Louvre (AO).
The Imdugud Bird (storm deity): copper relief, Temple of Ninhursag at Al-Ubaid
Altar in the form of a house
Fig. 9. Drawing of an Akkadian period cylinder seal impression showing a house-shaped altar set before a seated deity.
Reproduced from Boehmer 1965, fig. 387
Assyrian Relief of Gilgamesh holding a lion cub
Cuneiform Tablet: record of grain payment
Sumerian Rulers: depicted as laborers carrying building materials for the upkeep of temples