



Universiteit
Leiden
The Netherlands

The beginnings of ancient Kurdistan (c. 2500-1500 BC) : a historical and cultural synthesis

Ahmed, K.M.

Citation

Ahmed, K. M. (2012, June 19). *The beginnings of ancient Kurdistan (c. 2500-1500 BC) : a historical and cultural synthesis*. Retrieved from <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/19095>

Version: Not Applicable (or Unknown)

License: [Licence agreement concerning inclusion of doctoral thesis in the Institutional Repository of the University of Leiden](#)

Downloaded from: <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/19095>

Note: To cite this publication please use the final published version (if applicable).

Cover Page



Universiteit Leiden



The handle <http://hdl.handle.net/1887/19095> holds various files of this Leiden University dissertation.

Author: Ahmed, Kozad Mohamed

Title: The beginnings of ancient Kurdistan (c. 2500-1500 BC) : a historical and cultural synthesis

Date: 2012-06-19

CHAPTER ONE



Before 2500 BC



The region under study counts as one of the earliest areas occupied by prehistoric man. It has been inhabited for almost half a million years. The humans living there in early societies formed the basis from which the early agriculturalists emerged.

The Palaeolithic

Early traces of human existence in the region have been found in several spots, including the upper Tigris valley to the north of Mosul, where pebble tools from the later quarter of the lower Palaeolithic¹ (upper Acheulean c. 500,000 – 110,000 BP) have been found. To the east, in the middle Zagros, traces of lower Palaeolithic presence were identified in the 1970s.² Better evidence has come from **Shiwatoo**, a site in the Mahabād region (in the northwest of Iran), where Acheulean pebble tools have been identified during recent investigations.³ The main discovery in this site was a typical cleaver made on a side-struck flake of a dark volcanic rock (Fig. 1). This classical Acheulean tool, well-known in the Levant and in the Indian subcontinent, is now attested for the first time at a site between those two areas.⁴ In **Kagia**, near Kirmashān, artefacts that appear to be semi-Acheulean have been found.⁵ Similar artefacts, although not certainly dated, have been found in the region between Tabriz and Miyaneh in the northwest.⁶

From **Bardabalka**, an open site near Chamchamāl, between Sulaimaniya and Kirkūk, we have stone pebble tools dating to Acheulaean-Taycian-Mousterian periods (c. 80,000 BP)⁷ (Fig. 2). They are tools, made out of flakes and core bifaces similar to hand-axes,⁸ and

¹ Inizan, M. I., "Des indices acheuléen sur les bords du Tigre, dans le nord de l'Iraq," *Paléorient*, XI, 1 (1985), p. 101-102.

² Hole, F., Archaeology of the Village Period, in: *The Archaeology of Western Iran, Settlement and Society from Prehistoric to the Islamic Conquest*, ed. F. Hole, Washington, 1987, p. 32.

³ Jaubert, J., F. Biglari, J.-G. Bordes, L. Bruxelles, V. Mourre, S. Shidrang, R. Naderi and S. Alipour, "New Research on Paleolithic Iran: Preliminary Report of 2004 Iranian-French Joint Mission," *Archaeological Reports* 4 (Iranian Center for Archaeological Research, Tehran), p. 18.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ شه‌میرزادی، ص. م.، ایران در پیش از تاریخ، باستان شناسی ایران از آغاز تا سپیده دم شهرنشینی، تهران، ۱۳۸۲، ص. ۱۲۰.

[Shahmirzadi, S. M., *Prehistoric Iran, Iranian Archaeology from the Earliest Times to the Dawn of Urbanism*, Tehran, 2003, p. 120 (in Persian)].

⁶ شه‌میرزادی، ص. ۱۲۰.

The uncertain dating of these artefacts, Shahmirzadi explains, is because they were collected from surface surveys in those regions, not from excavations.

⁷ Wright, H. E. and B. Howe, "Preliminary Report on Soundings at Barda Balka," *Sumer* 7 (1951), p.109.

⁸ Redman, Ch., *The Rise of Civilization. From Early Farmers to Urban Society in the Ancient Near East*, San Francisco, 1978, p. 64.

constitute evidence of tool manufacture at the site.⁹ Other interesting finds included faunal remains, including those of the Indian elephant, rhinoceros, large cattle, perhaps *Bos primigenius* and probably the onager, *Equus hemionus*.¹⁰ During surveys conducted before the Mosul dam was built Cham Bazar, Eski Kelek and some 22 other sites were identified in the Tigris valley to the north of Mosul as being from this period.¹¹ Developed Mousterian tools have been found in the caves of **Behestūn**, **Ghār-i-Khar**, **Marāftāw**, **Mardudar** and the rock shelter of **Warwasi**, all near Kirmashān,¹² and at **Tamtameh** near Urmia,¹³ but skeletal material is quite scarce.¹⁴ In the same region of Kirmashān almost 4000 Mousterian artefacts in the cave of **Do-Ashkaft** have been collected recently (1996-2001), consisting of tools, flakes, trimming flakes, shatters and cores. Most of the tools were single or convergent scrapers, but they also included other types of scrape, retouched pieces, notches, burins and other miscellaneous artefacts.¹⁵ **Hazarmērd** cave, opposite the modern city of Sulaimaniya, was excavated briefly by Dorothy Garrod in 1928. She found deposits of a mixed Levalloiso-Mousterian lithic culture (c. 50,000 BP).¹⁶ The diet of its ancient inhabitants, as shown by the bone remains, consisted of wild goat, red bear, gazelle, fieldmouse, mole-rat, hare, bat, snail and other food from a mixed environment of grassland, woodland and scrub, which would have been similar to the environment there today.¹⁷ **Zarzi**, another cave to the northwest of Sulaimaniya, produced evidence of Upper Palaeolithic and Mesolithic occupation.

Shanidār is a large cave in Erbil Province. It is located on the southern side of the Bradōst Mountains, close to the Upper Zāb (Fig. 3). It enjoyed maximum sunlight and its large size (c. 1000 m²) made it ideal for prehistoric man, so it is no surprise that it contained almost 14 metres of prehistoric deposits. Its oldest occupation (Level D) yielded a mixture of bones, ash and stone implements dating to the Middle Palaeolithic (Mousterian). Its excavator, R. Solecki, thinks that the oldest human habitation of this cave goes back at least 100,000 years and lasted continuously for about 3,000 generations.¹⁸ Most interestingly, nine human skeletons from various levels of the cave could be identified as Neanderthal. They “form one of the most extensive and informative collections of Middle Palaeolithic hominoid remains from anywhere in the Near East.”¹⁹ There are seven adults and two children, datable according to radiocarbon analysis and stratigraphic comparisons to periods ranging from 70,000- 46,000 BP.²⁰ One of them seems to have been handicapped but was well cared for

⁹ Matthews, R., *The Early Prehistory of Mesopotamia 500,000 to 4,500 BC*, Subartu V, Turnhout, 2000, p. 14.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 13-14.

¹² شه‌م‌زاد‌ی، ص. ۱۳۲-۱۳۳.

¹³ Due to the high altitude of this cave (c. 1500 m above sea level), Coon believed it was occupied only in the summer. For this cf. ۱۲۲. شه‌م‌زاد‌ی، ص. (referring to Coon, C. S., “Cave Explorations in Iran,” *Museum Monographs*, The University Museum, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, 1951).

¹⁴ Sunderland, E., “Early Man in Iran,” *Cambridge History of Iran*, vol. I, ed. W. B. Fisher, Cambridge, 1968, p. 398-399.

¹⁵ Biglari, F., “Vorläufige Beobachtungen zur Gewinnung mittelpaläolithischen Rohmaterials und seiner Verwendung in der Ebene von Kermanshah,” *Persiens Antike Pracht*, Band I, Bochum, 2004, p. 134.

¹⁶ Garrod, D. A. E., “Primitive Man in Egypt, Western Asia and Europe in Palaeolithic Times,” *CAH* I, part 1, Cambridge, 1970, p. 87. The results of her investigations are published as “The Palaeolithic of Southern Kurdistan: Excavations in the Caves of Zarzi and Hazar Merd” in *Bulletin of American School of Prehistoric Research*, VI (1930).

¹⁷ Matthews, *op. cit.*, p. 18.

¹⁸ Solecki, R., “Shanidar Cave,” *Old World Archaeology: Foundations of Civilization*, San Francisco, 1972, p. 43. Cf. also: Matthews, *op. cit.*, p. 17.

¹⁹ Matthews, *op. cit.*, p. 18.

²⁰ Solecki, R. S., “Two Neanderthal Skeletons from Shanidar Cave,” *Sumer* 13, parts 1 & 2 (1975), p. 59-60; cf. also Solecki, “Shanidar Cave,” p. 47. Additional studies of these skeletons include Stewart, T. D., *Sumer*, vols. 14 (1958); 17 (1961); 19, (1963); Stewart and Trinkaus, vol. 36 (1980); Solecki, vols. 13 (1957); 17 (1961); Trinkaus, vol. 33 (1977).

during a considerable period of his life by his family members with whom he had shared the cave.²¹ Another one of the cave dwellers was probably honoured at his funeral with a garland of flowers placed on his body.²² Such attention to burials as far back as 50,000 years ago is the earliest evidence anywhere for any careful ritual for the dead.²³ The later levels were no less significant, producing evidence of Aurignacian culture (level C), within which developed a typical local Aurignacian industry, called by Solecki 'Bradostian' after the Bradōst Mountains.²⁴ Bradostian culture is divided by Hole and Flannery into Old Bradostian (c. 38,000-30,000 BP) and New Bradostian (30,000-20,000 BP).²⁵

Levalloisean tools have been found in the cave of **Mar Tarik** at the foot of Mount Behistūn.²⁶ Other sites in the Khurramabād valley provided evidence of Mousterian (Kunji and Arjeneh Caves),²⁷ Bradostian (Yafteh and Pa Sangar Caves) and Zarzian occupations (Pa Sangar Cave). From these remains it appears that the Mousterian culture was the first extensive habitation of the area of the Zagros Mountains and its lithic industry was distinct from that of the Levant.²⁸ In **Yafteh** Cave several coarse stones have been found that were used to grind ochre. This is the first evidence of a ground stone industry, a prerequisite for early agriculture.²⁹ A definite trend towards regional technological specialization in the Zagros after the Mousterian occupations has been noted by some scholars. This probably indicates that the hunters of that period were moving about less than their predecessors had.³⁰ In the north, in the Urfa region, tools have been found that range in age between Acheulean (stone hand-axes) and Levalloisean-Mousterian (stone scrapers).³¹ Field surveys showed evidence of occupation in the Ergani region in the middle and late Palaeolithic, while the areas to the south of the Hilar rock outcrops showed Upper Palaeolithic traces.³²

Mesolithic and Neolithic

The drastic climatic changes at the end of the late glacial period (c. 10,000- 9,000 BC) which are known to have occurred in the inhabited parts of the world were less severe in the Near East than in Europe. However, gaps in cave occupation, in our region and in Anatolia and in Lebanon, have been identified by archaeologists, together with a low population density between 25,000-10,000 BC for the whole region.³³ The new conditions forced man to

²¹ جواد، عبد الجليل، "النياندرتاليون و تراثهم الثقافي"، *سومر* 27، الجزء 1 و 2 (1971)، ص. 30-31.

[Jawad, Abduljalil, "The Neanderthals and their Cultural Heritage," *Sumer* 27, parts 1 & 2 (1971), p. 30-31 (in Arabic)].

²² *Ibid.*

²³ Redman, *op. cit.* p. 61.

²⁴ Solecki, "Shanidār Cave," *Old World Archaeology*, p. 45; Garrod, *op. cit.*, p.87. Bradostian industry prevailed in the whole area of the Zagros Mountains. Its traces were found in Ghār-i-Khar, Yafteh and Arjeneh. The arrow-heads from the latter cave were unique and replaced the Mousterian arrow-heads, cf. شهميزادي، ص. 127.

²⁵ شهميزادي، ص. 127.

²⁶ Jaubert, J. and others, *op. cit.*, p. 19.

²⁷ شهميزادي، ص. 121.

Shahmirzadi lists more sites in the Zagros and its mountain valleys in Luristan, such as Havdeh Ghār, Qumri, Humiyān, Pul Barīk and others, *ibid.*

²⁸ Redman, p. 64.

²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰ *op. cit.*, p. 65.

³¹ Hauptmann, H., "The Urfa Region," *Neolithic in Turkey, the Cradle of Civilization*, ed. M. Özdoğan and N. Başgelen, vol. I (Text), Istanbul, 1999, p. 68.

³² Yakar, J., *Prehistoric Anatolia, the Neolithic Transformation and the Early Chalcolithic Period*, Jerusalem, 1991, p. 41.

³³ Mellaart, J., *Earliest Civilizations of the Near East*, London, 1965, p. 11.

adapt his way of life. With the retreat of glaciers to the north the large herds of herbivorous animals disappeared and consequently the food became more scattered and less abundant. Man turned to smaller and more agile animals like deer and wild boar.³⁴ At this stage, a new era in human history began called Mesolithic. The people of this culture were still hunter-gatherers but they also domesticated dogs for the pursuit of game and fowl. Skeletal remains indicate that they were *homo-sapiens* who lived in larger and better organized communities with more technological specialization. In particular grindstones and storage pits were found in their settlements, such as those of Shanidār B 1.³⁵ The storage pits probably indicate extensive gathering of food stored for times of shortage.

A new feature of this culture was the appearance of microliths: small geometrical shaped stone tools that were fixed on bone or wooden handles to make composite weapons. Mellaart thinks the numerous small points indicate the use of the bow and arrow,³⁶ but they could also have been the remains of small, fragile and delicate tools that were easily broken. Another new feature was the establishment of open settlements, close to water resources and at the gathering points of game. Yet man still lacked leisure and freedom from constantly looking for food, for so far no luxury articles have been found.

The presence of obsidian in the cave of Zarzi was for Mellaart enough evidence to suggest that Zarzian culture probably came from the north, perhaps from the Russian steppes behind the Caucasus.³⁷ Similar obsidian tools from this period have also been discovered in the site of **Palegawra**, but with a larger variety of animal bones. Among these are gazelle, red deer, roe deer, wild cattle, wild goat and equid, and probably also wild sheep, pig, fox and wolf, as well a lynx-sized cat and what has been identified as a domestic dog.³⁸

The site of **ʿAin Mrer** in northeastern Syria, two caves at the northern side of Jebel ʿAbdul-Aziz, and the site of **Dederiyeh** near ʿAfrin, produced Late Natufian tools that correspond to the period under discussion (c. 10,500 BC).³⁹ Shanidār Cave again is one of the richest Mesolithic sites in this respect. Radiocarbon dating gives a date for the Mesolithic deposits of the cave of 10,000 - 9,000 BC.⁴⁰ The large number of microliths found here and the several pits suggest that the people at Shanidār were preserving vegetables for food. The lithic industry of this level of Shanidār resembles that of nearby **Zawi Chemi Shanidār**. This is a small site (275 by 215 m)⁴¹ dating to the ninth millennium BC, situated 4 kilometres downstream from Shanidār on a terrace above the Upper Zāb. In the lower levels of this site bones were found, perhaps of domesticated sheep dating to 8,900 or 9,200 BC (according to C14 dating),⁴² and bones of wild animals, such as red deer, wild sheep, wild goats, wild pigs, cattle, fallow deer and wolves; snail remains were also found. It seems that the site was in use for part of the year only; most probably it was the summer to be closer to the river for water and food and its opportunities for hunting any assembled game. A curved wall built of stones and river pebbles was found there,⁴³ presumably to support a hut or tent. It is probably the

³⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁵ Redman, *op. cit.*, p. 51.

³⁶ Mellaart, *op. cit.*, p. 16.

³⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁸ Matthews, *op. cit.*, p. 27.

³⁹ Akkermans, P. and G. Schwartz, *The Archaeology of Syria, from Complex Hunter-Gatherers to Early Urban Societies (c. 16,000- 300 BC)*, Cambridge, 2003, p. 32. The authors, however, state that "there still is much uncertainty on the date of these occupations," *ibid.*

⁴⁰ Mellaart, *op. cit.*, p. 16.

⁴¹ Solecki, R., *An Early Village Site at Zawi Chemi Shanidar*, Malibu, 1980, p. 1.

⁴² Mellaart, p. 20. According to Perkins (D. Perkins Jr., "Prehistoric Fauna from Shanidar, Iraq," *Science*, 144: 1565-1566) the suggestion of domestication in Zawi Chemi is based on the abundance of sheep bones, not morphological changes; so domestication is not certain; after: Redman, p. 83.

⁴³ According to Matthews, these are remains of circular structures about 2 m. in diameter, cf.: Matthews, p. 33.

oldest known man-made structure in this region.⁴⁴ It is believed that the occupation of Zawi Chemi began in about 8,920 ± 300 BC, according to radiocarbon dating, and lasted for almost a millennium.⁴⁵ Some other oval structures have been found in the site, probably roofed with flimsy superstructures of wattle and daub or reeds or matting. Traces of reed-matting or baskets were found in the contemporary level of Shanidār Cave (B1). Querns, mortars and pounders found in the site suggest an increasing dependence on vegetables for food. Obsidian and one piece of bitumen⁴⁶ indicate trade contacts with far regions.⁴⁷ Yet it is noteworthy that there are eight adults, all accompanied by a child, buried in Zawi Chami Shanidār, which suggests some kind of ritual.⁴⁸ The body of a young woman in the Shanidār Cave of this period was buried accompanied by red ochre, a grinding stone and a necklace of small beads.⁴⁹ A complete cemetery of 28 burials at Shanidār has arc-shaped settings of stone which seem to be connected with some mortuary cult.⁵⁰

Two other sites from the same period are **Karim Shāhīr** and **Mu‘alafāt**. The first is 10 km east of Chamchamāl, and consists of one occupational level in an open area of 6,000 m². It seems it was a camp for a semi-sedentary group of people.⁵¹ Grindstones, sickle blades, clay figurines, marble rings and bracelets in addition to other artefacts found there suggest a date later than Zawi Chami Shanidār, c. 8000-6500 BC.⁵² Mu‘alafāt lies near the road between Erbil and Mosul, close to the Khāzīr River, and was a settlement with a total of 10 round or oval houses. Some of these houses were built with cigar-shaped bricks, some of *pisé*, and some are pit-houses.⁵³ Such houses were surrounded by walls of stone and the floors were paved with pebbles.⁵⁴ Similar round pit-houses were also found in **Qirmiz Dere** (c. 8,000 BC) (Fig. 4) close to Tell A‘far. In the middle of two of these houses erect stone slabs had been set up as pillars,⁵⁵ probably comparable with those of Nemrik and Navali Çori and others.

The last phases of the Mesolithic, during which the Neolithic Revolution⁵⁶ took place, is called by some ‘Proto-Neolithic.’ In this phase, as has been shown, querns, mortars, grinders, storage pits and sickle blades made their first appearance, indicating a change in economy. There also appear early permanent settlements that have been frequently rebuilt. The burials were furnished with luxury articles, such as beads and pendants “which show that man had

⁴⁴ *Op.cit.*, p. 53.

⁴⁵ Mellaart, J., *The Neolithic of the Near East*, London, 1981, p 70.

⁴⁶ Mellaart, *Earliest Civilizations...*, p. 20.

⁴⁷ While this is valid for obsidian, it cannot be certain for bitumen, which is found in considerable quantities leaking out from stone layers in the nearby mountain ranges to the southwest of the cave, across the Zāb, where the Bekhma Dam is planned to be built.

⁴⁸ Mellaart, *The Neolithic of...*, p. 72. Cf. also Ferembach, D., “Étude anthropologique des ossements humains Proto-Néolithiques de Zawi Chami Shanidār (Irak),” *Sumer* 26, parts 1&2 (1970), p. 21-46.

⁴⁹ Mellaart, *Earliest Civilizations...*, p. 20.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

⁵¹ Braidwood, R. and B. Howe, *Prehistoric Investigations in Iraqi Kurdistan*, Chicago, 1960, p. 52; 170; cf. also Braidwood, L. S. R. *et al*, *Prehistoric Archaeology along the Zagros Flanks*, ed. Braidwood, L. S., R. Braidwood, B. Howe, Ch. A. Reed and P. J. Watson, Chicago, 1983, p. 8 and 9. Sedentism can be difficult to identify by strictly archaeological evidence (architecture, lithic industry, bone etc.), which offers only secondary evidence in this respect. An alternative approach some prefer is to use bioarchaeological evidence “such as high frequencies of human commensals - the house mouse, the house sparrow, and the rat; indications of year-round hunting of gazelle based on cementum increment analyses; or the particular age profiles of hunted specimens - a steep rise in the young specimens,” cf. Belfer-Cohen, A. and O. Bar-Yosef, Early Sedentism in the Near East, A Bumpy Ride to Village Life, in *Life in Neolithic Farming Communities, Social Organization, Identity, and Differentiation*, ed. Ian Kuijt, New York, 2002, p. 20.

⁵² Mellaart, *The Neolithic of...*, p. 74.

⁵³ Matthews, p. 35. Matthews considers these bricks as the oldest known bricks from Mesopotamia.

⁵⁴ Mellaart, *The Neolithic of...*, p. 50; Dittmore, M., The Soundings at M‘lefaat, *Prehistoric Archaeology along...*, p. 672.

⁵⁵ Matthews, *op. cit.*, p. 37.

⁵⁶ The term ‘Neolithic Revolution’ was first introduced by V. Gordon Childe in his *Man Makes Himself* in 1936.

leisure and time for other things than appeasing his hunger.”⁵⁷ The art portrayed animals, mother goddesses and male figures. Trade was extended to more distant regions. Some think that the trade in obsidian through networks stretching to other parts of the Near East in this remote period could have started in eastern Anatolia.⁵⁸ Luxury articles began to appear, including beads made of stone, bone and even copper, rings and bracelets.

The main reason that the Neolithic cultures of our region are better known than any others there is because of the numerous prehistoric sites adequately excavated, many during salvage campaigns. The large scale salvage campaigns conducted in the regions of Hamrin and Eski Mosul in Iraq and those of Urfa and GAP (Batman Dam) on the Turkish side are good examples. Another reason has been the attention paid to this region by American archaeologists and anthropologists since the 1940s, especially to Iraqi Kurdistan, which led to starting the well-known Jarmo and Shanidār projects.

Climatic changes around 9,000 BC were perhaps responsible for the transition from Mesolithic to Neolithic. However, the availability of the wild ancestors of cereals in our region, especially of *emmer* and *einkorn*, was fundamental to the Neolithic Revolution (Figs. 5 and 6). Abundant new material from this period comes from the village of **Hallan Çemi**, an important site (c. 7 ha) in the Botān region, on the western bank of Sason River, a tributary of the Batman River in Batman province. The site was discovered during salvage excavations in 1990 and is dated to the late 11th millennium BP. The settlement represents the oldest fully settled village site thus far known from eastern Anatolia.⁵⁹ It was inhabited throughout the year by a society of essentially sedentary hunter-gatherers.⁶⁰ The subsistence of its inhabitants was based on hunting and food gathering, though they also practised domestication, especially of the pig.⁶¹ The pre-pottery deposits of the settlement are distributed on four levels. The upper three contained architectural structures set around a central area, perhaps for common activities.⁶² Packed clay, river stones and wood have been used to build the C-shaped houses (level 3). The floors of the second level houses were paved with stone slabs. Obsidian was imported from regions about 100 km away, as well as copper ore from almost 150 km and sea shells probably from the Mediterranean.⁶³

Among the significant discoveries of Hallan Çemi is a complete aurochs skull that appears to have once hung on the wall facing the entrance of one of the first level buildings.⁶⁴ Its ritual function is uncertain. It might be associated with the tradition that continues until now, involving the practice of hanging skulls of hunted animals in the houses. The discoveries at the site show cultural affinities with its neighbours. The lithic industry has strong typological relations with Zarzi and particularly with Zawi Chemi. Noteworthy is the discovery of stone statues with birds' heads, strikingly similar to those found in Nemrik to the north of Mosul, that were probably goddesses.⁶⁵ Decorated stone bowls with incisions and sometimes in relief forming geometrical or naturalistic motifs (Fig. 7) are also significant.

Pre-pottery sites in the Upper Habur region are quite scarce (3-4 only). The excavations of the two sites of **Fakhariya** and Tell **Feyda** showed no traces of settlement. Only recently

⁵⁷ Mellaart, *Earliest Civilizations...*, p. 18.

⁵⁸ Redman, p. 152.

⁵⁹ Rosenberg, M. and R. W. Redding, Hallan Çemi and Early Village Organization in Eastern Anatolia, in *Life in Neolithic Farming Communities*, p. 40.

⁶⁰ Rosenberg and Redding, *ibid.*; cf. also Belfer-Cohen and Bar-Yosef, *op. cit.*, p. 31.

⁶¹ Rosenberg, M., “Hallan Çemi,” *Neolithic in Turkey*, p. 30-31.

⁶² Rosenberg, p. 26. Cf. also: Yakar, J., *Prehistoric Anatolia, The Neolithic Transformation and the Early Chalcolithic Period*, Supplement No. 1, Tel Aviv, 1994, p. 4.

⁶³ Rosenberg, p. 27.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

⁶⁵ The Nemrik excavators call these statues ‘goddesses,’ while Rosenberg thinks they were just pestle handles made in the shape of birds’ heads.

some U-shaped ovens and floor pavements with gypsum together with stone vessels have been found in Tell **Seker Al-Aheimer**, near the town of Tell Tamer.⁶⁶ Some other stone tools from **Khazna** from the late eighth or the beginning of the seventh millennium BC indicate pre-pottery occupation.⁶⁷

The large and important village of **Çayönü** is a key site of the pre-pottery culture of the region under discussion with its thick deposits and abundant material. The site is a low oval tell, c. 350 by 160 m and 4.5 -6 m high,⁶⁸ located on a tributary of the Tigris to the north of the city of Diyarbakir. Although the settlement began as early as c. 10,000 BP, it flourished between c. 7,300 and 6,750 BC, according to radiocarbon dating.⁶⁹ That was a period in which the flora of the surrounding area was composed of steppe forest in the beginning of the Holocene.⁷⁰ Pistachio and oak trees were abundant in addition to potentially domesticable plants, such as wild wheat and barley. The fauna was no less rich: bones of wild aurochs, pigs, sheep, goats and other animals have been found in the settlement. The subsistence of the people of Çayönü consisted of wild animals and a mixture of wild and domesticated plants.⁷¹ But towards the end of the village's life, between 6,800 - 6,500 BC, they possessed large numbers of domesticated sheep and goat. The size of the village leads to an estimated population of 100-200 individuals at any given time, who lived in 25-30 houses through all the phases of the village's life except for the first.⁷² The skeletal remains showed that "its inhabitants belonged to the Proto-Mediterranean stock consisting of both gracile and robust types."⁷³

The first and oldest phase yielded no buildings except circular pits for cooking, so it is called the BP (= Basal Pits phase).⁷⁴ Perhaps at that time the site looked more like a camp than a permanent village, with groups of reed huts arranged around central areas,⁷⁵ similar to Hallan Çemi. The following GP (= Grill Plan) Phase produced abundant architectural material. Five separate buildings have been uncovered, whose stone foundations are in the shape of grills (Fig. 8),⁷⁶ on which beams seem to have been placed to lift the floors from the ground to avoid damp and allow air circulation. Buildings with similar plans have been uncovered in **Tell Dja'de al-Mughara** (8100-8000 BC), north of Mureybet in Syria, but these were storage structures.⁷⁷ This phase is important because of "its great diversity of activities and experimentation, using many different raw materials and techniques for working them."⁷⁸ Yet the large buildings and their uniform orientation and spacing might indicate a rather advanced level of organization and cooperation in the community. In one of these buildings, known as 'Flagstone Building,' three monumental standing stones without decoration have

⁶⁶ Akkermans and Schwartz, *op. cit.*, p. 48.

⁶⁷ *Op. cit.*, p. 48-49.

⁶⁸ Özdoğan, A., "Çayönü," *Neolithic in Turkey*, p. 38.

⁶⁹ Yakar, *op. cit.*, p. 42; cf. also: Yakar, *Prehistoric Anatolia, Supplement No. 1*, p. 9.

⁷⁰ Some insist that the climate of that time was not much different from the present, while others think that Savanna forests in the region were not impossible. Cf.: Yakar, *op. cit.*, p. 40.

⁷¹ Redman, p. 153-4.

⁷² *Op. cit.*, p. 153.

⁷³ Yakar, *op. cit.*, p. 53.

⁷⁴ There is some confusion about the names and division of the phases in Çayönü. According to Yakar there are five pre-pottery phases: 1- Round Plan; 2- Grill Plan; 3- Intermediate transitional Grills and Channelled-Foundations Buildings; 4- Cell Plan and 5- Large Room Plan; cf.: Yakar, J., *Prehistoric Anatolia, Supplement No. 1*, p. 7. Özdoğan enumerates six phases: 1- Round Plan; 2- Grill Plan, early and late; 3- Channelled Buildings; 4- Cobble-Paved Buildings Plan; 5- Cell- Plan and 6- Large Room Building; cf.: Özdoğan, *op. cit.*, p. 41.

⁷⁵ Özdoğan, *op. cit.*, p. 43.

⁷⁶ Long parallel walls with 15-40 cm space between them, cf.: Huot, J.-L., *Une archéologie des peuples du Proche-Orient*, Tome I, Paris, 2004, p. 27. In Cafer Höyük they used large bricks for this purpose, *Ibid.*

⁷⁷ Akkermans and Schwartz, *op. cit.*, p. 60-61.

⁷⁸ Redman, p. 164.

been found, which were called by the excavators ‘stelae.’ It has been noticed that old buildings were cleared, with some artefacts left behind in them (perhaps as gifts), and then carefully filled with earth before new buildings were built there.⁷⁹

The building floors of the next phase, the BPP (= Broad- Pavement Plan), were paved with white and pink stone slabs giving a brilliantly executed terrazzo floor.⁸⁰ In two other buildings, one of them having an open courtyard, several free-standing monoliths were revealed.

The CP (= Cell-Plan) phase (Fig. 9) lasted a long time⁸¹ and followed the BPP phase, the remains of which are well-preserved thanks to a conflagration. The discovery of large numbers of ground stones and antler tools in the level of this phase indicates manufacturing. “In each of these buildings, different cells contained different types of artefacts, implying that specific parts of a building were used for specific tasks.”⁸² Possibly these parts were used only as work places, not dwellings, as no traces of food preparation activities have been noticed.

Among the interesting finds are two clay models of houses found in the middle cell of the southern part. These models provide a hint of building techniques in Çayönü. One of them has a rounded door jamb, the roof is supported by twigs and there is a parapet running around the roof with holes, probably for drainage (Fig. 10). The burials and small finds uncovered in two of the cells might imply that some rituals were performed in these buildings.

The last Pre-Pottery phase in Çayönü is called LPR (= the Large Room Plan) Phase⁸³ (Fig. 11) for which we have several complete building plans. The best preserved of these is the one-chambered building 5m by 9m, in which large basalt hand-stones, pestles, mortars and querns have been recovered that indicate the preparation of vegetables for food.⁸⁴

Some of the large and elaborate buildings from the previous levels had particular architectural features, and they were sometimes named after those objects, such as Flagstone Building, the monoliths of the so-called plaza, the Bench Building, the Skull Building and the Terrazzo Building. These features mean the buildings are not to be considered domestic but places for cultic purposes or at least communal gatherings. Among the most outstanding discoveries were the lower jaws of four large pigs that were buried together in the middle cell of the Cell Plan building. It could have been part of a primitive ritual, such as an offering under the foundation of a new building. If so, these buildings and those of Nevalı Çori can be considered “the oldest sacral architecture in the Near East.”⁸⁵

It is notable that the ratio of flint tools to obsidian⁸⁶ in the BP Phase was 6:10, but in the CP phase it became equal. The most common obsidian tools in the site are borers, drills, scrapers and sickle blades. One finds all kinds and shapes of stone tools throughout the different phases of the village, but their ratios vary. Ground stone industry principally depended on basalt, which was imported from mines almost 32 km away. Nevertheless, tools such as awls and needles were made of bone, and large numbers of ornamental objects were made in the village itself, using raw materials provided by trade. Rectangular, tubular and uniquely shaped beads and pendants were made from hard stones, shells and bones;⁸⁷ stone and lightly baked clay figurines of animals and tiny pregnant or sitting female figures were also found.⁸⁸ Stone bowls, some (but only in the BPP phase) decorated, have been recovered

⁷⁹ Özdoğan, p. 46-47

⁸⁰ Yakar, *op. cit.*, p. 51; Redman, p. 157.

⁸¹ Yakar, *op. cit.*, p. 47.

⁸² Redman, p. 158.

⁸³ Some new studies consider this phase as part of the Cell Plan Phase, cf.: Özdoğan, p. 40.

⁸⁴ Redman, p. 159.

⁸⁵ Hauptmann, p. 75.

⁸⁶ Obsidian was seemingly imported from Bingöl region, some 150 km away, cf.: Özdoğan, p. 38.

⁸⁷ Özdoğan, p. 57.

⁸⁸ Redman, p. 160.

from the site. Pottery was unknown, and instead they used unbaked clay vessels, sometimes modelled in the bottom of a basket.⁸⁹

It is astonishing that the people of Çayönü knew of copper at an early phase of the village's life. They probably brought the ore from Ergani, some 20 km to the north, and made pins, rings, hooks, reamers and flat-rolled tubular beads by cold striking⁹⁰ or even by hot-hammering and heat-smelting the ore.⁹¹ However, they stopped using it after the GP Phase, but why they stopped after making such a technical breakthrough has to be still answered.

Domestication was in progress, especially of goat and sheep, until there were 13 times more bones of domesticated animals than of wild animals (aurochs and red deer).⁹² The pig was present in all phases, perhaps having been domesticated after the LRP phase. As to plants, we know that *einkorn* and *emmer* wheat, peas, lentils, bitter vetch and wild vetch were all domesticated. They collected pistachio and almonds and a little wild barley⁹³ for food, linseed for oil with the flax used for textiles.⁹⁴

The burials of the early phases in Çayönü were in the open areas of the settlement or under the floors of the huts. Bodies were generally laid out north-south on their right sides in tightly flexed positions and without funerary gifts.⁹⁵ Later the dead were buried in individual graves and still later they were left with simple funerary gifts and were sometimes buried in buildings dedicated for this purpose. One of these buildings is known as 'The Skull Building' by its excavator, where 70% of the human skeletal remains uncovered so far were found.⁹⁶

Another important Pre-Pottery site of our region is **Nemrik**, on the way between Mosul and Duhok. The site was discovered in the 1980s and consists of at least seven settlement phases, interrupted by six intervals of abandonment and erosion. Except for the first period, the other six represent a village type occupation "repeating the situation known from Guran and Jarmo."⁹⁷

The oldest finds of Nemrik are dated by the lithic industry to the Zarzian period (c. 10,500 BP) and the most recent to about 8,400 BP.⁹⁸ This means the village had been occupied for approximately 2,700 years and during its early phases was contemporary with Mu'allafāt and Qirmiz Dere in Iraq, with Mureybet, Sheikh Hassan and Jirf Al-Ahmer in Syria, and with Çayönü, Demirköy and Hallan Çemi in the north in Turkey. Its later phases were contemporary with Dja'da in Syria and Navali Çori and Göbekli in southeast Turkey and Tepe Abdul Hussein in Iran. The village was occupied by nuclear families, each comprising 6-10 individuals.⁹⁹

At least 27 architectural structures have been uncovered in the village, mostly houses but also burials and magazines. The houses are usually circular or oval in plan, some with an area of 30-45 m². Only in level V were semi-rectangular buildings built. Some houses still had walls up to 1.8 m high when excavated.¹⁰⁰ The roofs in Nemrik were covered by heavy clay and were supported by pillars or posts without leaning on the walls. The interiors of the houses were divided into smaller units by low clay walls. Circular and rectangular platforms

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

⁹⁰ Özdoğan, p. 54.

⁹¹ Yakar, *op. cit.*, p. 51.

⁹² Redman, p. 162; Yakar, *op. cit.*, p. 53.

⁹³ Yakar, p. 53.

⁹⁴ Özdoğan, p. 48.

⁹⁵ Özdoğan, p. 44.

⁹⁶ Yakar, *op. cit.*, p. 49.

⁹⁷ Kozłowski, S. K., *Nemrik, An Aceramic Village in Northern Iraq*, Warsaw, 2002, p. 24.

⁹⁸ Kozłowski, p. 25-26.

⁹⁹ Kozłowski, p. 46.

¹⁰⁰ Kozłowski, S., A. Kempisty, K. Szymczak, R. Mazurowsky, A. Reiche and W. Borkowsky, "Fourth Report on the Excavation of the Prepottery Neolithic Site Nemrik 9," *Sumer* 46, Part 1 & 2 (1989-1990), p. 29.

were found inside the houses built of plastered clay and attached to the walls. It is thought that they might have served as banquettes.¹⁰¹ But, comparing them with their modern parallels, they are more likely to have been used as benches where skin containers of oil, water and other liquid food stuff could be kept cool and clean, out of reach of animals and some insects, exactly as is done in modern times. The vast majority of the walls have cigar-shaped mud bricks (51 by 12 by 6 cm),¹⁰² although yellowish clay lumps and *pisé* are also found.¹⁰³ No windows and even no doors have been found in the walls of the houses, so the inhabitants probably used ladders and staircases through the roofs instead. There were storage pits, perhaps also burials as well as stone slabs and querns installed in the floor inside. Traces of dye show the floors were decorated with red paint in phase IV, and red and yellow painted dadoes are also reported.¹⁰⁴

The people of Nemrik seem to have had small stone statuettes associated with their religious beliefs, especially the heads of vultures and eagles, and also lionesses, leopards, snakes and one bull's foot (Fig. 12).¹⁰⁵ These statuettes were put sometimes in niches in the walls, but one was found on the floor of a burnt house (House 2A, phase III b) beside a human skeleton with hands outstretched towards the figure, probably trying to save it from the flames of the burning house before the roof collapsed.¹⁰⁶ A total of 29 such complete or fragmentary statuettes have been found in Nemrik that date between 7,800- 6,500 BC.

The burials were sometimes under the floors of houses but mostly between the houses or outside the settlement.¹⁰⁷ They were provided with little funerary objects, such as stone tools or ornaments made from stone beads, shells and the like. The bodies were laid on their sides, most often contracted if under floors or in an embryonic position if outside. This difference in burial traditions implies most probably ethno-religious differences within the population of the settlement. It is important to mention the burials to the southwest and in the centre of the site that consist of small circular or oval structures dug in the ground.

Apart from some pure local features, the small finds of Nemrik bear both the features of the western Zagros and of southeast Anatolia. The most prominent finds from there were stone tools, querns, mortars, beads, needles, awls, clay tokens and a stone ring.

The site of **Navali Çori** in the Kantara Valley, east of the Euphrates, represents the best pre-pottery site hitherto known in the Urfa region. The excavations revealed five Neolithic levels that contained a total of 29 houses, with longitudinal plans, built of limestone bound together with a thick mud-mortar.¹⁰⁸ The C 14 dating of Levels I and II pointed to 8,400-8,100 BP, so that the older level is contemporary with Çayönü 2 (GP). A series of square buildings have been uncovered in the northwestern end of the terrace that were seemingly devoted to cultic and ceremonial purposes. The inner walls of the unique building of Navali Çori II (Fig. 13) are plastered with white clay with traces of a red and black paint. Two steps lead downwards to its terrazzo floor, where a bench of quarry-stone bonded with clay and covered with slabs runs round the inner side of the hall, which is cut by a dozen monolithic pillars with T-shaped crowns.¹⁰⁹ This cultic building contains the principal architectural elements of later Mesopotamian temple architecture and probably also the scene for its rites.

¹⁰¹ Kozłowsky, *op. cit.*, p. 29.

¹⁰² Matthews, p. 38.

¹⁰³ Kozłowsky, S. K., A. Kempisty, K. Szymczak, R. Mazurowsky, A. Reiche, W. Borkowski, "A Preliminary Report on the Third Season 1987 of Polish Excavations at Nimrik 9/ Saddam's Dam Salvage Project." *Sumer* 46, Part 1&2 (1989-90), p. 24.

¹⁰⁴ Kozłowsky, p. 30.

¹⁰⁵ Kozłowsky, p. 77-78; Matthews, *ibid.*

¹⁰⁶ Kozłowsky, p. 31.

¹⁰⁷ Kozłowsky, S. K., A. Kempisty, K. Szymczak, R. Mazurowsky, A. Reiche, W. Borkowski, *op. cit.*, p. 24.

¹⁰⁸ For a detailed description of these architectural structures cf.: Hauptmann, p. 70 ff.

¹⁰⁹ Yakar, *Neolithic Anatolia, Supplement No. 1*, p. 13-14; Hauptmann, p. 74.

Its four angles are oriented towards the four cardinal points. The niche for the statue of the god is on a broken axis from the entrance. This was a feature which prevailed later in Assyria and in the mountainous regions to the east, as for instance in the Bazmushiān temple in the Bitwēn Plain that dates to the second millennium BC. The probable burying of old statues of gods under the floor is reminiscent of the buried group of statues in the Abu Temple in Tell Asmar.¹¹⁰ The discovery of 9 human skulls placed facing one another in pits under the floor of two houses in Navali Çori¹¹¹ can be associated with this practice. The building in the next level contained two decorated pillars in the middle of the hall; although these were missing in the earlier level it can be supposed they existed there also. The decoration is executed in the form of low relief on the wider faces of the pillars. It represents two bent arms with hands joining under a ridge cut into the narrow face. In **Göbekli Tepe** two similar pillars have been uncovered, one of which is larger – c. 6.7m by 3m – decorated with fine reliefs of various kinds of animals, such as lions, foxes and interwoven snakes (Fig. 14). The lion catching a human head in its paws is perhaps a unique piece of round sculpture from this period.¹¹² The stone human head with a snake on top (Fig. 15) found in Nevali Çori was probably part of a complete statue. Together with other pieces of art it shows the richness of the intellectual life of the people living in the region at that time. Astonishingly they knew how to make baked clay figurines and small clay models of stone vessels, but no pottery was found.¹¹³ The richness in this part of the region of Neolithic sites, including Göbekli Tepe, Cefer Höyük, Söğüt Tarlası, Gritille, Levzin Höyük, Hayaz, Biris Mezarlığı, Demirci Tepe, Papazgölü,¹¹⁴ Kikan Harabası, Gölbent Mevkii, Gri Havarisk, indicates a dense population during the Neolithic period in an economy that depended on hunting and gathering as well as some primitive agriculture.

To the southeast, close to Chamchamāl, **Jarmo** (c. 6750 BC)¹¹⁵ represents a well-known Neolithic site of the region under study. The site covers almost 1.5 ha with ca. 7 m of deposits at the edge of a deep valley. 16 levels have been identified by its excavators. The lower 11 yielded no pottery; stone vessels, baskets plastered with bitumen and perhaps skin containers were used. Pottery makes its appearance in the upper five levels and is described as ‘developed,’¹¹⁶ although it was hand-made, thick and coarse.¹¹⁷ It appears that the village was a permanent settlement, lasting for three to five centuries.¹¹⁸ But it was small, consisting only of 20-25 houses made of *tauf* and inhabited by 150-200 individuals.¹¹⁹ It is noteworthy that a modern typical village in this same region has almost the same number of houses and inhabitants, because of the limited water resources and pastures. The walls of the houses of Jarmo were plastered with fine mud, and the floors with mats were also plastered with mud. The later houses had stone foundations and were provided with ovens and chimneys. The plans are rectilinear. Each house comprised several small rooms (1.5 by 2 m) and many had small courtyards. The roofs were made of reed and covered by thick clay. It seems that the dead were buried outside the village, because human skeletal remains inside the settlement are

¹¹⁰ For the fragmentary limestone statues, which were buried into the bench and the back wall of the cult building of level II, and the clay statue, buried into the podium of the cult building of level III in Navali Çori, see further Hauptmann, p. 74.

¹¹¹ Yakar, *op. cit.*, p. 68.

¹¹² Hauptmann, p. 79.

¹¹³ Hauptmann, p. 77.

¹¹⁴ This site is, according to Yakar, the largest pre-pottery site hitherto known in Anatolia, cf.: Yakar, *op. cit.*, p. 41.

¹¹⁵ For exact radiocarbon datings of the finds from Jarmo, cf. Braidwood, Jarmo Chronology, *Prehistoric Archaeology* ..., 537-8.

¹¹⁶ Mellaart, *Earliest Civilizations of* ..., p. 47.

¹¹⁷ Braidwood, R. and Howe, B., *Prehistoric Investigations in Iraqi Kurdistan*, p. 64.

¹¹⁸ Braidwood, Jarmo Chronology, *op. cit.*, p. 537.

¹¹⁹ Redman, p. 165-6.

scanty.¹²⁰ Subsistence in Jarmo depended on settled agriculture, although gathering was still considerably significant. The discovery of the oldest carbonised cereals in Jarmo is of special importance, for we now know that the inhabitants there consumed *emmer* wheat, which was morphologically close to its wild type, and also *einkorn* wheat and two-row barley.¹²¹ Secondary cereals found in Jarmo included field peas, lentils, blue vetchling, pistachio and acorn. Faunal remains indicate a gradually increasing percentage of domesticated goat. Probably dogs were domesticated and sheep, pigs, gazelles and wild cats were hunted.¹²² The large amount of snails found in the settlement indicates that they were consumed as food.¹²³

The lithic industry of Jarmo was dominated by flint. The significant additions of imported obsidian were used for the manufacture of blades for composite tools, such as sickles and knives, fixed on wooden handles with bitumen (Fig. 16). Ground stone industry was developed; axes with polished cutting edges, saddle querns and grinders, mortars, panders, door-sockets, stone balls, fine palettes for grinding, spoons, mace-heads, perforated discs, and marble and alabaster rings and bracelets (sometimes with incised or grooved decoration). All these were made in the village.¹²⁴

Some elegant cups and bowls might be the most beautiful products of the ground stone industry at the site, for which veined stones had been carefully selected. Bones were used to make awls, spatulae, rings, beads and pendants. More than 5,000 clay objects were recovered during the excavations¹²⁵ that represent geometrical, faunal and human figures, including mother goddesses (Fig. 17).

On the Iranian side of the region **Tepe Asiāb** in the Kirmashān plain produced similar evidence of a Proto-Neolithic culture from 11,000- 9,000 BP.¹²⁶ Some pits have been found, one of them containing numerous human coprolites, covered by ochre, but no vegetable or cereal diet was identified. The subsistence of its inhabitants depended on lizards, frogs and toads, perhaps the seasonal diet of semi- nomadic herdsmen;¹²⁷ while some think that they may also have had domesticated goat.¹²⁸ Clay figurines, some human, were found.¹²⁹ The only architectural evidence at the site is a semi-subterranean structure, 10 metres in diameter, but it is not known whether it was roofed. The flint tools of the site showed a similarity with those of Karim Shāhir. Pre-pottery levels have been excavated in the village of **Ganj Dareh** near Kirmashān, which seems to have been one of the oldest Neolithic sites of our region. This oval tell of 1 ha has 8 m of Early Neolithic deposits.¹³⁰ Shallow pits and circular hollows containing ashes and burnt stones covered part of the site in the mid-ninth millennium BC.¹³¹ There was an area enclosed by an arc of stone slabs, probably for roasting or heating. Here too the people seem to have been semi-nomads. No pottery was found, but in a later phase they began to make pots and vessels of unbaked clay; these had been hardened later by an accidental fire in the settlement.¹³² The upper levels contained the remains of an early village

¹²⁰ Mellaart, *Earliest Civilizations of ...*, p. 49.

¹²¹ Mellaart, *ibid.*

¹²² According to Redman, pigs, cattle, horses and to a lesser extent sheep, were domesticated in Jarmo, cf.: Redman, p. 166-7.

¹²³ Mellaart, *op. cit.*, p. 50; Redman, p. 167; Braidwood, R. and Howe, B., *op. cit.*, p. 44ff; see also: Braidwood, R., "The Agricultural Revolution," *Old World Archaeology: Foundations of Civilization*, San Francisco, 1972, p. 75f.

¹²⁴ Redman, p. 167.

¹²⁵ Redman, p. 167.

¹²⁶ Hole, *Archaeology of Western Iran*, p. 32-33.

¹²⁷ Bernbeck, R., "Iran im Neolithikum," *Persiens Antike Pracht*, Bochum, 2004, p. 141.

¹²⁸ Hole, p. 33.

¹²⁹ شهرزادی، ص. ۲۴۶.

¹³⁰ Redman, p. 169.

¹³¹ Redman, p. 84.

¹³² Bernbeck, p. 142.

built of solid mud-bricks, dated to c. 7000 BC, with rectilinear structures and small rooms built of long cigar-shaped bricks (50-95 cm long).¹³³ This kind of brick, found in Nemrik, Choga Mami and also as far away as Jericho,¹³⁴ seems to have been used over a large area of the ancient Near East. It seems very probably to be the prototype of the Mesopotamian ED Plano-Convex brick. Perhaps some houses in Ganj Dareh had a second storey,¹³⁵ supported by tree trunks, with the ground floors used for storage, as in the corridor rooms of Beidha and cell-plan structures of Çayönü.¹³⁶ As in other villages of the period, the roofs were covered by wooden beams and clay. The discovery of a number of very small compartments built inside one of the cubicles is interesting. The compartments were made of thin vertical plates of clay with bevelled edges that had apparently been prefabricated and dried by the sun before being placed in position and plastered.¹³⁷ At this site specimens of what could be, according to Redman, the oldest known pottery in the Near East were found: a lightly fired, chaff-tempered coarse ware in large (80 cm high) and small (5 cm high) sizes.¹³⁸ Clay was also the material from which geometrical and human figurines of mother-goddesses were made¹³⁹ as well as animal figurines from levels E and D. The abundant stone tools of Ganj Dareh include no obsidian.¹⁴⁰ Other tools have “undergone little change from the earliest to the latest levels of the site.”¹⁴¹ Some sickles and grindstones came from level D and were associated with settled agriculture,¹⁴² although these could equally well have been used for harvesting wild grain in our opinion.

It seems that the inhabitants of the village had domesticated goat and some plants but still depended largely on hunting and gathering. On the other hand, in view of the location of the village, the availability of wild cereals nowadays and the domesticated animal bones that have been found suggest that “Ganj Dareh holds evidence of the shift from hunting and gathering to an economy based on domesticates.”¹⁴³

The skulls of two wild sheep with the lower jaws missing, the one placed on the other, found in a cubicle and fixed on the plastered interior of a small niche¹⁴⁴ are considered to be evidence of a shrine and to indicate some ritual practice in this remote period.

A burial of an adolescent from level D contained a necklace made of 71 stone and shell beads. Some of the shells are marine, probably from the Persian Gulf or the Mediterranean,¹⁴⁵ a rare indication of the site having distant contacts. Other burials showed both contracted and stretched positions of the bodies. They were buried in the houses, sometimes rolled in mats, but with no funerary objects found with the adults except for the one with the necklace.¹⁴⁶

Other sites from this period include **Tepe Guran** in Luristan, which yielded three Pre-Pottery levels from the 21 occupational levels dated to 6,500-5,500 BC. The inhabitants of Tepe Guran lived in wooden huts and used mats to cover the floors. It seems to have been a winter camp used by hunters and herders in its early age,¹⁴⁷ but houses became numerous in

¹³³ Smith, P., “Ganj Dareh Tepe” in: Survey of Excavations, *Iran XIII* (1975), p. 179; شهمیرزادی، ص. ۲۶۰.

¹³⁴ For Jericho, cf. Huot, *Une archéologie des ...*, p. 27.

¹³⁵ Hole, p. 49.

¹³⁶ For Çayönü, cf.: Yakar, *op. cit.*, p. 47.

¹³⁷ Smith, P., “Ganj Dareh Tepe” in: Survey of Excavations, *Iran X* (1972), p. 166.

¹³⁸ Redman, p. 169; cf. also: Bernbeck, “Iran im Neolithikum,” p. 142 and شهمیرزادی، ص. ۲۶۰.

¹³⁹ Smith, p. 179.

¹⁴⁰ Matthews, p. 40.

¹⁴¹ Redman, p. 169.

¹⁴² Hole, p. 49.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁴ Smith, *Iran X* (1972), p. 166.

¹⁴⁵ Smith, *Iran XIII* (1975), p. 180.

¹⁴⁶ شهمیرزادی، ص. ۲۶۲.

¹⁴⁷ Redman, p. 171.

the following phases, when there is evidence of agriculture and domestication, probably around 6,400 BC.¹⁴⁸ The pottery that appeared later was coarse, plain and sometimes painted. In **Tepe Sarab**, east of Kirmashān, a culture typologically later than Jarmo¹⁴⁹ produced a better type of pottery than that of Jarmo; it was red slipped and burnished or red painted.¹⁵⁰ The famous mother-goddess figurine, known as 'Venus of Tepe Sarab' (Fig. 18), together with other well-made, more realistic and lively figurines (797 animal and 650 human figurines in total),¹⁵¹ imply a higher level of this kind of art in this community. The village had no substantial architecture. There is some fragmentary evidence of mud structures,¹⁵² and oval pits with reed and mud roofs, probably for seasonal occupation.¹⁵³ But there is evidence of permanent occupation during the year, at least in parts of the settlement.¹⁵⁴ **Tepe Abdulhusein** in Nihavand has architectural remains consisting of shallow pits in the early phases. But in the next level, still pre-pottery, there were houses of mud-brick (12 by 36 cm), rectangular in shape and plastered floors. The ovens were inside the rooms and beside the walls.¹⁵⁵ The pottery, mostly small fragments, is coarse and poorly baked, sometimes with a thick buff slip and the inner sides of the vessels are red.¹⁵⁶ Among the 1,800 sherds, only 70 were decorated, with simple geometric motifs in (dark) brown paint, and only 5 sherds were painted with a red paint. Numerous arrow-heads, scrapers, blades, retouched tools, sickle-blades, grindstones, stone vessels and obsidian tools were also among the finds, in addition to beads, human and animal figurines and objects made of bone, such as awls, and beads.¹⁵⁷ The dead were buried in the houses together with funerary objects. They were buried in both contracted and stretched positions.¹⁵⁸

Later similar sites have been identified in the Mahidasht Plain near Kirmashān, such as Shian, Zibiri and Tepe Geneel, but **Seh Gabi**, close to Godin provided architectural evidence of a settled community around the year which kept pig, sheep and goat.¹⁵⁹

Hassuna and Samarra

Recent investigations during the last few decades have shown that other cultures filled the gap between the Early Neolithic Culture, such as Jarmo, and the Hassuna Culture. These cultures show the first substantial movements of small groups of people, probably 20-30 individuals, over the northern Mesopotamian plains, where they practised the techniques of agriculture and specialised hunting.¹⁶⁰ One such culture was found in **Umm Dabbaghiyya**,

¹⁴⁸ The dating according to Mortensen, cf.: Hole, p. 47.

¹⁴⁹ Its earlier levels date to 6,200- 5,800 BC, cf.: Hole, p. 47. However, according to Braidwood, its earliest levels date back to 9,000-8,000 BP, ٢٤٧. شهمیرزادی، ص.

¹⁵⁰ Mellaart, *Earliest Civilizations of....*, p. 51. For a detailed description of the pottery of Tepe Sarab and its distribution, cf.: Levine, L. D. and T. Cuyler Young, Jr., "A Summary of the Ceramic Assemblages of the Central Western Zagros from the Middle Neolithic to the Late Third Millennium BC," *Préhistoire de la Mésopotamie, La Mésopotamie préhistorique et l'exploration récente du Djebel Hamrin*, ed. J.-L. Huot, Paris, 1987, p. 16; ٢٤٦، ٩-٢٤٨. شهمیرزادی، ص.

¹⁵¹ شهمیرزادی، ص. ٢٤٧.

¹⁵² Hole, p. 47.

¹⁵³ شهمیرزادی، ص. ٢٤٦.

¹⁵⁴ Redman, p. 172.

¹⁵⁵ شهمیرزادی، ص. ٢٥٣.

¹⁵⁶ شهمیرزادی، ص. ٢٥٤.

¹⁵⁷ شهمیرزادی، ص. ٢٥٥-٦.

¹⁵⁸ ٢٥٦. شهمیرزادی، ص.

¹⁵⁹ Hole, p. 49-50.

¹⁶⁰ Matthews, p. 63.

outside our region. Another was **Sotto**, dating to c. 6,000 BC¹⁶¹ and containing large pits in its oldest level, seemingly semi-subterranean houses like those of **Qirmiz Dere** and Mu'alafāt. Houses of *tauf* appeared only from level 2 onwards. They were one-roomed rectangular houses containing hearths, ovens and pots sunk into the floor.¹⁶² The burials were under the floors or next to the houses; some corpses had been dismembered before burying and others were strongly contracted. Funerary gifts have been found in 2 of the 9 burials, one of which is said to have consisted of beads of lapis lazuli. If this is correct, it would be one of the very first attestations of this stone in the region.¹⁶³ The stone tools were made of available local flint; obsidian is rare. There are also clay figurines, tools made of bone, spindle whorls and clay sling missiles.¹⁶⁴ Similar artefacts from this period have been found in **Tulul Al-Thalathāt** (55 km west of Mosul), Tell Kashkashuk II and Khazna II in the Habur region.¹⁶⁵

The **Hassuna** Culture (c. 5,800-5,500 BC) is known for its multi-roomed, small rectangular houses containing hearths, storage pits and occasional burials in pits. In **Yarim Tepe** (10 km south of Tell A^cfar) some houses had up to 10 rooms and in each complex one room had an oven, usually associated with a mortar. The structures (c. 5,600 BC) were made of *pisé* with reed matting on the floors plastered with clay and straw or gypsum,¹⁶⁶ while the roofs were covered with mats, clay and gypsum. The dead were buried under the floors; some had been dismembered and provided with gifts.

Hassuna pottery has three main groups: plain coarse ware; plain ware with incisions; painted and incised ware (Fig. 19).¹⁶⁷ Its quality had improved and had begun to be painted with a dark brown paint; some pieces were painted and incised.¹⁶⁸ The decorative motifs were parallel lines, hatched triangles and a herringbone pattern, resembling ears of wheat or barley. The extent of Hassuna as well as its origin is not yet adequately known; except that it is distributed along a line from Sinjār, passing through Nineveh to Rawāndiz and then to the Urmia region. There, Hajji Firuz, slightly to the south of Lake Urmia, showed 6 occupational levels contemporary with Hassuna.¹⁶⁹ Its small rectangular houses were built of *pisé*, set around an open courtyard and contained hearths and large storage jars. Some of the houses have an added area with a curved wall, without roofing, the purpose of which is unknown.¹⁷⁰ Remnants of red paint were found on part of a wall of one of the houses and some of the floors were painted with red ochre.¹⁷¹ The dead were buried inside the houses, accompanied by few funerary gifts;¹⁷² sometimes after the flesh had decomposed the bones had been placed in ossuaries under the floors.¹⁷³ The pottery found in the settlement is plain, painted and straw-tempered and poorly fired.¹⁷⁴ Some clay figurines represent a few animals and the rest humans, whose lower parts are impressed by fingernails and pointed tools, a

¹⁶¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 60-61.

¹⁶² *Op. cit.*, p. 61.

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁵ *Op. cit.*, p. 62.

¹⁶⁶ Mellaart, *The Neolithic of....*, p. 146.

¹⁶⁷ Redman, p. 190.

¹⁶⁸ Lloyd, S. and Safar, F., "Tell Hassuna," *JNES* 4, No.2 (1945), p. 279-81. Cf. also: Dabbagh, T., "Hassuna Pottery," *Sumer* 21, part 1 & 2 (1965), p. 93-111.

¹⁶⁹ Hole, p. 45. However, according to Mellaart they are "roughly contemporary with Hassuna and Samarra," cf.: Mellaart, *The Earliest....*, p. 71.

¹⁷⁰ شهرزادی، ص. ۲۸۹.

¹⁷¹ شهرزادی، ص. ۲۹۰.

¹⁷² Hole, p. 45.

¹⁷³ شهرزادی، ص. ۲۹۲.

¹⁷⁴ Mellaart, *The Earliest*, p. 72.

characteristic of this site.¹⁷⁵ The subsistence depended on a mixture of agriculture and herding.¹⁷⁶ A remarkable Hassuna occupation has been found in Shemshāra, on the Lower Zāb (levels 9-16),¹⁷⁷ and in some other sites of Rāniya Plain, such as Gird-i-Dēm¹⁷⁸ and Kamariyān.¹⁷⁹ But generally it appears that this culture was scantier in the regions south of the Lower Zāb, a line probably marking its southern borderline.¹⁸⁰ Even the Habur culture and lithic industry is linked more tightly with Hassuna and Proto-Hassuna of Northern Iraq than with the cultures of (Western) Syria from the same period.¹⁸¹

In many sites like Hassuna, Shemshāra and Matarra, a new kind of pottery appears in the upper layers of the Hassuna occupation which is mixed with that of Hassuna itself. This new kind of pottery was first discovered from excavations at the Abbasid site of Samarra on the Tigris; hence it was called **Samarra** pottery and its culture Samarra Culture (c. 5,600-4,800 BC). The new pottery gradually replaced the old one¹⁸² and it can be subdivided into three, as painted, painted and incised, and fine and plain (Fig. 20).¹⁸³ Generally it is characterised by large bowls, jars and vessels, decorated with geometric, human and faunal motifs, arranged in balanced symmetrical designs and coloured with red, dark green or purple paint.¹⁸⁴ The site of Tell es-Sawwan on the eastern bank of the Tigris to the south of Samarra is a typical site of this culture, where large houses with storage areas surrounded by a wall and a moat were found.¹⁸⁵ The use of sun-dried bricks in the architecture of this period is remarkable.¹⁸⁶ Moreover, the inhabitants of this site used the oldest known irrigation techniques by digging a network of canals, a technique best seen in the other important Samarran site of Choga Mami (4,800 ± 182 BC), near Mandali.¹⁸⁷ Among the significant finds from both sites were the numerous clay (mostly in Choga Mami) and marble (in Es-Sawwan) figurines, mostly of women. The clay was painted and the marble inlaid with shells and bitumen. Samarra ware was also found in Kamariyan (mentioned above) in the Rāniya Plain.¹⁸⁸ In the west it reached northern Syria, the southern edge of the western part of our region. As with Hassuna, the origin of Samarra culture is disputed. Some suggest an Iranian origin and others believe it was developed from Hassuna.¹⁸⁹

¹⁷⁵ شهميزادي، ص. ٢٩١.

¹⁷⁶ A detailed study has been made about the subsistence of this village, cf. Voigt, M. M., "The Subsistence Economy of a Sixth Millennium Village in the Ushnu-Solduz Valley," *Bibliotheca Mesopotamica*, vol. 7: Mountains and Lowlands, Essays on the Archaeology of Greater Mesopotamia, ed. L. D. Levine and T. Cuyler Young, Jr., Malibu, 1977, pp. 307-346.

¹⁷⁷ Mortensen, P., *Tell Shemshara, The Hassuna Period*, København, 1970, p. 2.

¹⁷⁸ التكريتي، عبد القادر، "حفريات تل الديم (دوكان)،" *سومر* ١٦، الجزء ١ و ٢ (١٩٦٠)، ص. ٩٥:٩٦.

[al-Tikrīti, A., "Excavations at Tell ed-Dēm (Dukan)," *Sumer* 16, parts 1 and 2 (1960), p. 95; 96 (in Arabic)]; and: Es-Soof, B., "Uruk Pottery from the Dokan and Shahrazur Districts," *Sumer* 20, part 1&2 (1964), p. 39.

¹⁷⁹ Es-Soof, *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁰ Mellaart, *The Neolithic of ...*, p. 144; cf. also: Mellaart, *Earliest Civilizations...*, p. 64.

¹⁸¹ Akkermans and Schwartz, p. 114-15.

¹⁸² Hence it is considered as a southern development from the Hassuna culture, not a new one. Its most important sites lay further to the south, cf. Forest, J.-D., *Mésopotamie, l'apparition de l'état. VI^e-III^e millénaires*, Paris, 1996, p. 36.

¹⁸³ Matsumoto, K., "The Samarra Period at Tell Songor," *Préhistoire de la Mésopotamie*, p. 190.

¹⁸⁴ Lloyd and Safar, p. 281-3; Mellaart, *Earliest...*, p. 66.

¹⁸⁵ Matthews, p. 73-4.

¹⁸⁶ Mellaart, *The Neolithic of ...*, p. 150ff; Oates, D. and J. Oates, *The Rise of Civilization*, Lausanne, 1976, p. 64 (with photo). Cf. also Matthews, p. 73 ff. For the discoveries at Tell es-Sawwan see the series of excavations reports in *Sumer*, vols. 21 (1965); 23 (1967); 24 (1968); 26 (1970); 27 (1971); and in Arabic: 19 (1964); 25 (1969); 28 (1972).

¹⁸⁷ Oates and Oates, *Ibid.* Cf. also Mellaart, *The Neolithic of*, p. 155.

¹⁸⁸ Es-Soof, "Uruk Pottery from Dokan and Shahrazur Districts," p. 39.

¹⁸⁹ Mellaart, *The Earliest...*, p. 66.

One of the main characteristics of the Hassuna and Samarra cultures was the establishment of settlements outside the dry-farming area. This was a very significant step in the history of civilization as it proved the possibility of living outside that area. Botanical evidence recovered from both Tell es-Sawwan and Choga Mami indicates that irrigation was practised from at least the middle of the sixth millennium BC.¹⁹⁰ The Samarra people were highly advanced farmers, their lives were more organized and developed and their settlements were comparatively large. Choga Mami, for instance, covered 6 ha and housed almost 1000 individuals.¹⁹¹ The entrance to the settlement was guarded by an angled gate with towers. Its houses were rectangular with small multiple rooms,¹⁹² as also seen in Shemshāra (level 16). The large buildings had external buttresses in the corners and wall junctions, a feature that later became a main feature of Mesopotamian architecture. Sun-dried bricks were used in the buildings of this period, although *pisé* was still in use in some places. The bricks of Choga Mami were cigar-shaped (60-90 by 12-18 cm).¹⁹³

The data obtained from the Samarran sites give some hints about further development of property rights. Most of the buildings were rebuilt directly on the foundations of the older ones. Moreover, the appearance of seals in this period, as in Hassuna, can be seen to concern ownership, especially when exchanging or communally storing goods.¹⁹⁴ Potter's marks also refer to the increasing significance of craft activities and the sense of craftsmanship that might have accompanied the transformation of manufacturing activities from individual households to specialized manufacturing groups. The burials also indicate the ranking of individuals according to their wealth.

The spread of the Samarra Culture is similar to Hassuna. It extended from the north of modern Baghdad, through the Hamrin region, to northern Mesopotamia (Matarra, Ibrahim Bayis, Arpachiya, Sheshni)¹⁹⁵ and eastern Syria, where its pottery has been found in Baghouz on the Euphrates, Boueid II on the lower Habur, Chagar Bazar on the upper Habur and Sabi Abiyad.¹⁹⁶

Halaf

Numerous cultural developments and innovations were introduced into **Halaf** Culture (c. 5500-4500 BC)¹⁹⁷ that succeeded Samarra. The houses were still built of sun-dried bricks (Tepe Gawra) and sometimes *pisé* (Arpachiya, the type-site of this culture) and mortared with gypsum. However, they were smaller, especially at these two sites¹⁹⁸ that are located to the east and northeast of Nineveh. Yet more interesting was the introduction of a new kind of architecture, which could have been borrowed or brought from abroad by the Halafian immigrants, if that is what they were. This new architecture consisted of a circular building

¹⁹⁰ Redman, p. 195.

¹⁹¹ Redman, p. 196.

¹⁹² It is remarkable that the rooms in Choga Mami are arranged in rows; there is a house of 12 rooms arranged in 3 rows of four; in another house 9 rooms are arranged in 3 rows of three.

¹⁹³ Redman, p. 196.

¹⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁵ Matthews, p. 73.

¹⁹⁶ Akkermans and Schwartz, p. 116.

¹⁹⁷ It is worth mentioning that some C14 tests of finds from Tell Sabi Abiadh in Syria have given an earlier date for the beginnings of Halaf as c. 6100-6000 B. C., cf. Forest, p. 27.

¹⁹⁸ Matthews, p. 85 and 88; Mellaart, *The Neolithic of.....*, p. 159. Arpachiya is located 6 km to the northeast of Nineveh, with a diameter of c. 125 m and 8 Halaf levels. Although it was a small settlement and its inhabitants did not exceed 200 persons, it yielded the best and largest examples of Halaf architecture; cf. Redman, p. 199.

with a rectangular ante-room attached (Fig. 21),¹⁹⁹ thought to have had domed roofs of clay, at least at Arpachiya. Such a building is called a *tholos* for it looked similar to the Mycenaean *tholoi*. Some North Syrian villages around Aleppo still have such domed roofs. Different ideas have been presented about the function of a *tholos*; it may have been a cultic centre or a public building or simply a dwelling house.²⁰⁰ The scarcity of archaeological finds inside such buildings has made it too difficult to determine their true function. Some of them have normal dimensions, others are large and subdivided with inner walls. The *tholoi* of Arpachiya had walls 2-2.5m thick, with a dome 10m in diameter and an anteroom 19m long. The one found in Yarim Tepe III had walls up to 2m high and at opposite sides of the interior right-angled walls had been constructed, making an interior cruciform plan (Fig. 22).²⁰¹ The presence of some paved paths between the buildings on the top of Arpachiya site²⁰² may indicate the first municipal activities in this period. Another significant element of this culture is the pottery, according to which Halaf can be divided into Eastern Halaf (between the lower Zāb and Diyāla Rivers) and Western Halaf (at Jabbul and on the Queiq in Syria).²⁰³ A remarkable development in the use of colours took place. The pottery became polychrome and the designs delicate and beautiful, with the use of a rich collection of geometrical, floral and faunal motifs, the most prominent of which was the *bucranum*²⁰⁴ (Fig. 23). Although the potter's wheel had not yet been invented vessels were well-made: thin-walled, included new distinctive shapes, hand-made, wet-smoothed and lightly burnished; bowls had flared rims, concave or rounded sides, some with small round mouths. Chronologically Halaf pottery can be divided into three phases.²⁰⁵ The first and oldest (Arpachiya phases 1-2, pre TT 10; Chagar Bazar levels 15-13) is characterized by relatively simple shapes, among which is the 'cream bowl.' The preferred decorations were naturalistic: heads of oxen or moufflon or complete animals, leopards, deer, snakes scorpions, birds, onagers, human figures, schematised trees, plants and flowers. The geometric patterns consist of closely packed lines, straight or wavy fields of dots and circles, often placed in panels.²⁰⁶ The colours of this phase are red and black on an apricot ground. In the second phase (Arpachiya: phase 3a- b TT10-TT 7, Chagar Bazar: level 12) elaborate shapes were made with sharp flaring rims. The naturalistic decoration disappeared, except the *bucrania*, that became more stylised. Typical decorations consist of elaborate fields of geometric designs, very similar to textiles and balanced by curved lines, scale patterns, dots, suns, stars, bands, cross-hatching, zig-zags,

¹⁹⁹ Nevertheless, rectilinear architecture was not totally absent in this period. Rectangular buildings have been uncovered in Sabi Abiyad (18 by 10m), see Akkermans and Schwartz, p. 116-7; for Çavi Tarlasi in southeastern Anatolia and Yarim Tepe II-III see Matthews, *op. cit.*, p. 89; cf. also the shrine of Tell Aswad on the Balikh; for the potter's shop in Arpachiya see Mellaart, *Earliest....*, p. 122.

²⁰⁰ The *tholoi* uncovered in Tell Turlu to the west of the Euphrates contained ovens and storage pits perhaps indicating it was used as a dwelling, cf. Akkermans and Schwartz, p. 116.

²⁰¹ Matthews, p. 91.

²⁰² Mellaart, *The Neolithic....*, p. 159.

²⁰³ Copeland, L. and F. Hours, "L'expansion halafienne, une interprétation de la répartition des sites," *Préhistoire de la Mésopotamie*, p. 212.

²⁰⁴ Cf.: Lloyd and Safar, *op. cit.*, p. 283; Mellaart, *Earliest Civilizations....*, p. 120. The bull was and remained a fundamental element in the art and literature of the ancient Near East for a considerable period. As we see here, it was drawn on prehistoric pottery vessels and later appeared on many vases, stamp-seals and cylinder seals; also on sculptures of the proto-historical and the historical periods, particularly in Sumer. Bulls' heads can be seen also on the wall paintings from Nuzi and on Middle Assyrian wall paintings down to later times. Even the Achaemenids depicted bulls on their bas-reliefs and made the column crowns in their capitals of Persepolis and Susa in the shape of doubled crouching bulls. Urartian, Elamite, Hittite and Babylonian cultures are no exceptions in this respect.

²⁰⁵ Some new excavations, particularly in Arpachiya in the 1970s, showed a mixture of Halaf-Ubaid, called Halaf-Ubaid Transitional, which is counted with Halaf itself; for this, cf. Matthews, p. 87.

²⁰⁶ Mellaart, *Earliest Civilizations....*, p. 120.

triangles and chequer-boards.²⁰⁷ In the third phase (Arpachiya: phase 4 TT6; Chagar Bazar: levels 12-6) large polychrome bowls appeared, with elaborate centre-pieces like rosettes, crosses composed of *bucrania*, Maltese Crosses in such a highly artistic style that it became the most outstanding ceramic production of the ancient Near East. Uniquely fine samples of this pottery have been found. For instance, a bowl from Arpachiya is decorated with long-haired women with a fringed rug and a figure hunting, possibly with a bow.²⁰⁸ In Yarim Tepe a spectacular 25 cm high vessel was found (Fig. 24), shaped as a woman with a huge pubic area raising her hands to her breasts.²⁰⁹ Other uniquely decorated pottery comes from Tell Hassan in the Hamrin region and is dated to the late Halaf phase.²¹⁰ Nonetheless, the manufacture of stone vessels had not stopped, using different kinds of stone, including a rare obsidian jar from Arpachiya.²¹¹

It is assumed that trade was well-organized and flourished during the Halaf period. This is indicated by the widespread distribution of pottery of the period over a large area, and the presence of obsidian in almost all sites as well as shells from the Indian Ocean.²¹²

It has been noted that the region of Halaf Culture in general was in the shape of a crescent corresponding to the dry farming areas of the north and northeast. Some scholars speak of the area of Mardin and Diyarbekir as a “suspected homeland of Halaf Culture,”²¹³ while new investigations extend this original home southward to the Hamrin region.²¹⁴ The geographical distribution of this culture in the dry-farming areas was perhaps the reason why no indications of Halafian irrigation agriculture, like its Samarran predecessor, have been found. Archaeological research has shown that Halaf extended from Mersin in the west to the Iranian ‘J’ ware in the east (c. 1200 km) and from the Araxes Valley in the north to the Bīqā‘ Valley in Lebanon (c. 900 km).²¹⁵ In this respect, a distinctive pottery has been found in **Dalma** (4,036 ±87 BC)²¹⁶ to the south of Lake Urmia. This pottery is not coloured but decorated by using tubes, combs, sticks and fingers to press, pinch and knob, and by what is known as the Barbotine technique (Fig. 25).²¹⁷ This pottery spread south to Kirmashān and Hamadan Plains (Kangavar and Mahidasht), Seh Gabi (mound B) and Godin (level X),²¹⁸ and some scattered

²⁰⁷ Redman, p. 200.

²⁰⁸ Matthews, p. 87.

²⁰⁹ For more details about the shapes of Halafian pottery from Yarim Tepe, cf. Amirov, Sh. N. and D. V. Deopeak, “Morphology of the Halafian Painted Pottery from Yarim Tepe 2, Iraq,” *Baghdader Mitteilungen* 28 (1997), pp. 69-85.

²¹⁰ Fiorina, P., “Tell Hassan: les couches Halafiennes et Obeidiennes et les relations entre les deux cultures,” *Préhistoire de la Mésopotamie*, p. 251f.

²¹¹ Matthews, p. 88.

²¹² Mellaart, *Earliest...*, p. 124-5. About the organization and effect of Halaf trade on its culture, cf.: Watkins, T., “Kharabeh Shattani: An Halaf Culture Exposure in Northern Iraq,” *Préhistoire de la Mésopotamie*, p. 223-5.

²¹³ Mellaart, *Earliest...*, p. 64.

²¹⁴ Matthews, p. 85. About this topic cf. also: Copeland and Hours, “L’expansion Halafienne.....,” *Préhistoire de la Mésopotamie*, p. 212. Some think that Halaf was the outcome of a long continuous process of local cultural development, not a sudden change brought by immigrants, cf. Akkermans and Schwartz, p. 116.

²¹⁵ Matthews, p. 85. The Iranian ‘J’ ware is the assemblage found in the sites of Mahidasht in western Zagros, especially known from Tepe Siahbid and Chogha Maran. It is a fine pottery analogous to Mesopotamian Halaf pottery, but the decorative motifs are simpler. For more details, cf. Levine, L. and T. Cuyler Young, “A Summary of the Ceramic Assemblages of the...,” *Préhistoire de la Mésopotamie*, p. 19.

²¹⁶ Hole, p. 45. Concerning its being contemporary with Halaf, cf. also Mellaart, *Earliest...*, p. 71.

²¹⁷ Mellaart, *Earliest...*, p. 70; Hamlin, C., “Dalma Tepe,” *Iran* XIII (1975), p. 118. Mellaart compares Dalma pottery with the incised simple ware of Matarra and Hassuna, cf.: Mellaart, *Ibid.*

²¹⁸ Hole, p. 50. About Seh Gabi cf. also Young, T. C. and L. Levine, *Excavations of the Godin Project: Second Progress Report*, Ontario, 1974, p. 2-4.

samples are found in the Khurramābād Valley in Luristan.²¹⁹ It is interesting that this kind of pottery was also found in the Hamrin region together with Halaf and Ubaid.²²⁰

The burials of Arpachiya contained contracted bodies accompanied by gifts, such as clay figurines, ornaments and pots. One of the skeletons was found with its hands placed over the mouth.²²¹ Amazingly, some skulls, male and female,²²² uncovered at the site were intentionally deformed and put inside pots. This practice was probably unique to Arpachiya, perhaps linked with a ritual function of the settlement.²²³ 24 skeletons were found in a well in Tepe Gawra, apparently victims of a raid or a natural disaster.

The Halafians were farmers who depended on dry-farming. Their flint sickles, mortars, pestles and querns have been found in their settlements. They produced *emmer* wheat, hulled two-row barley with the six-row barley that appeared for the first time at the end of this period, and they also cultivated lentils and flax, for producing textiles and to extract linseed.²²⁴ They domesticated cattle, goat, sheep and a dog like a saluki.²²⁵ Mellaart thinks the attention paid to oxen in art and cult does not necessarily imply domestication,²²⁶ but their large horns depicted on pottery indicate wild oxen, a venerated emblem of male fertility.²²⁷

Pottery decorations show that textiles were apparently developed. The discovery of metal objects, awls and pendants made of copper and lead at Arpachiya, is seen as evidence of considerable progress.²²⁸ A unique copper pendant-seal found in Yarim Tepe indicates this development.²²⁹ Simple round or square seals were made with simple incised designs; some seals or seal impressions have been found in Arpachiya and Tepe Gawra, apparently to ensure control.²³⁰

The excavations at Tell es-Sawwan showed that the Halafians reached this area at the end of the Samarra period, where the remains of a supposed *tholos* together with Halaf potsherds were identified.²³¹ Further to the east, Halaf pottery was identified in Tell Hassan in the Hamrin basin,²³² Kudish Saghir to the southwest of Kirkuk, Qalinj Agha in the Erbil Plain, Gird Bagim in Shahrazūr,²³³ Nineveh, Hassuna, Bana Hilik, Songor B, Kharabeh Shattani, Khirbet Derak, Tell Der Hall, Jikan and other sites on the Iraqi side of the region. In the west it was found in Brak, Aylun, Leylān, Kashkashok I, Khazna II, Chagar Bazar, Aqab, Halaf, Umm Qseir, Sabi Abiyad, Damishliyya, Tell Kurdu and elsewhere. In the north Sakçe Gözü, Domuz Tepe, Turlu (where a silo was found), Tilki Tepe (where a 10 kg piece of obsidian was found), Girikihacian have all yielded Halaf material.

Halaf is distinguished by its homogenous cultural elements, particularly the architecture and small artefacts. It shows much more homogeneity than its predecessors and at the same time over a much larger area.²³⁴ Although the Halafians were farmers like their predecessors,

²¹⁹ Hamlin, "Dalma Tepe," p. 111.

²²⁰ Hole, p. 46.

²²¹ Matthews, p. 86.

²²² Molleson, T. and S. Campbell, "Deformed Skulls at Tell Arpachiyah: the Social Context, *The Archaeology of Death in the Ancient Near East*, Oxford, 1995, p. 49.

²²³ Matthews, p. 87.

²²⁴ Mellaart, *Earliest...*, p. 122.

²²⁵ Matthews, p. 88.

²²⁶ Mellaart, *Earliest...*, p. 123.

²²⁷ *Ibid.*

²²⁸ Mellaart, *Neolithic of ...*, p. 161; 166.

²²⁹ Matthews, p. 89.

²³⁰ Matthews, p. 89.

²³¹ Al-Soof, B., "Tell es-Sawwan, Fifth Season's Excavations (1967-1968)," *Sumer* 27, part 1&2 (1971), p. 4-5.

²³² Fiorina, P., "Excavations at Tell Hassan," *Sumer* 40, Part 1&2 (1981), p. 49.

²³³ Matthews, p. 105-6.

²³⁴ Some speak of more recent evidence of regional variation within Halaf Culture, despite this general homogeneity, cf. Akkermans and Schwartz, p. 115.

in terms of social interaction and organization it is possible to speak about a widespread cultural horizon for the first time in the Near East. This can be seen in the pottery motifs, architectural styles and small finds in almost all Halaf sites.²³⁵

Ubaid

Until the emergence of **Ubaid Culture** our region had been in the forefront of all the developments in human civilization. This has been changed by this time. Although not everyone agrees with the theory of an Ubaidian conquest from the Mesopotamian lowland²³⁶ it remains most likely that the southerners were subjected to conditions that pushed them towards the north. While the communities of the north continued to subsist as they had done for the past millennia, the southern communities were compelled to reorganize their living pattern. Neither irrigation, nor large scale trade of raw materials were necessary for the northerners. It was possible for them to live from dry-farming and limited economic activity within small communities. Hence there were no motives for settlement growth and reorganization. But in the south irrigation techniques produced surplus supplies leading to population growth.²³⁷ Furthermore, it is not impossible that the southern plains had suffered from salinization at some time in that period. These circumstances had pushed them, according to Mellaart, to look for new lands to the north at the end of Halaf, and in doing so they put an end to Halaf culture. This theory implies that there should be some late Halaf settlements in the south, and perhaps some such traces are found that date to Ubaid 0.²³⁸ It seems that the Ubaid expansion was not always peaceful, for a massacre and traces of destruction by fire of the Halaf settlement in Arpachiya are interpreted as a sign of a violent incursion. Ubaid pottery proliferated over a vast area, even larger than that covered by Halaf, reaching to the north of the Taurus in the plains of Malatiya, Elazig, Palu and to the Solduz Plain, south of Lake Urmia at the site of Pisdeli. Although little is known about Ubaid in the west;²³⁹ its deposits have been found in Aqab (Halaf-Ubaid transitional),²⁴⁰ Brak, Leylān, ‘Abr, Hammam et-Turkman and Tell Kuran. In the north, especially in the east Tigris region, Ubaid Culture had its own characteristics that distinguished it from the Ubaid of Southern Mesopotamia.²⁴¹ These characteristics are noticeable especially in the use of stone in architecture, in funeral customs as seen in Tepe Gawra, and in painted pottery that used a wider variety of colours.

An important development in the north was the manufacture of metal tools by the casting technique. For the first time axes of cast copper were found in addition to gold objects.²⁴² In Tepe Gawra many significant remains of Northern Ubaid were found, such as stamp seals

²³⁵ Redman, p. 199. Watson and Le Blanc suggested that the reason behind this similarity and homogeneity was the transformation of the Halafians from a nomadic way of life to the formation of chiefdoms and that this required more intensive communications between their sites and centres, cf. Redman, p. 199.

²³⁶ Akkermans and Schwartz state that there is no archaeological evidence to support the theory of conquests or invasions, and no drastic climatic changes or disasters that led to the end of Halaf and the coming of Ubaid, cf. Akkermans and Schwartz, p. 154.

²³⁷ Mellaart, *Earliest...*, p. 129; Lloyd, *op. cit.*, p. 81. Forest thinks that no ethnic change took place in the north with the coming of the Ubaid culture but that the Halafians have simply adopted the new culture, cf. Forest, p. 53.

²³⁸ About the discovery of deposits in Southern Mesopotamia (Tell el ‘Oueili near Larsa) older than Ubaid 1 with pottery relevant to Samarra cf. Huot, J.-L., “Un village de basse-Mésopotamie: Tell el-‘Oueili à l’Obeid 4,” *Préhistoire de la Mésopotamie*, Paris, 1987, p. 293ff.

²³⁹ Akkermans and Schwartz, p. 158.

²⁴⁰ *Op. cit.*, p. 157.

²⁴¹ Lloyd, *The Archaeology of Mesopotamia*, p. 65; cf. also Nissen, H. J., “Western Asia before the Age of Empires,” *Civilizations of the Near East*, vol. II ed. by J. M. Sasson, London, 1995, p. 795.

²⁴² Lloyd, *op. cit.*, p. 65.

made of various kinds of stones including lapis lazuli. The scenes depict extremely lively human figures surrounded by animals. The pottery of Tepe Gawra was decorated by naturalistic scenes that revived Halaf motifs. A distinctive jar from the late Ubaid period found at this site is worth mentioning. The jar (Fig. 26), although fragmentary, is decorated with the scene of a river flowing between two ranges of mountains; near the river bank there is a hunter walking with his dog, while two horned beasts, perhaps ibexes, are on the other side of the river.²⁴³

Ubaid pottery in general (Fig. 27) is fairly uniform except for some minor variations. It is hand-made with a poorer quality of clay and baking than that of Halaf. It is simply decorated with bold geometric designs, monochrome, seldom beautiful and is hardly likely to have “caused aesthetic satisfaction to people who had been used to the glories of Halaf ware.”²⁴⁴ Some have described this change in the pottery as ‘decadence’ or impoverishment, but the reason could have been the necessity for producing pottery on a large-scale and at low-cost.²⁴⁵

Excavations in Pisdeli brought chaff-tempered buff pottery to light with designs and shapes resembling Mesopotamian Ubaid, which is dated by radiocarbon to 4,500- 3,900 BC.²⁴⁶ Ubaid material with local characteristics have been excavated in Godin Tepe (level IX, Local Ubaid; VIII, Terminal Ubaid; VII, local post-Ubaid) and in Seh Gabi close by.²⁴⁷ Among the significant finds here are a well-preserved structure in Seh Gabi (Mound A) and the remains of a house with walls preserved up to the doors and windows. The house had at least 8 rooms and is thought to have consisted of two or even three storeys.²⁴⁸ Seals also have been found at the site that suggest storage and perhaps administrative business.

The architecture of this period is characterized by the tripartite division of the house and the presence of what is thought by some authorities to be a central living hall in the middle of the building (Fig. 28).²⁴⁹ The so-called central hall was more probably the courtyard of the house with the living rooms around it, a characteristic of the ‘Oriental House’ that can still be seen throughout Mesopotamia. The multi-roomed house and the division was a new social development of the period. It was large enough to accommodate an entire family and a wide range of activities under one roof. This internal control of space meant a “desire for privacy and segregation of the sexes, creating a new social and work ethic.”²⁵⁰ Another development was the appearance of religious architecture with a series of buildings that could be identified as temples, such as those in Tepe Gawra.²⁵¹ These buildings surround an open area on three sides, and on a wall of one of these buildings traces of red, black, ochre and vermilion, the colours of an old wall painting, were found.²⁵² In this respect the Tepe Gawra temple sequence echoes the Eridu temples. One more point is similarity of the plans of these temples in Eridu and those in Tepe Gawra (Fig. 29), especially the northern temple. It is noteworthy

²⁴³ Basmachi, F., *Treasures of the Iraq Museum*, Baghdad, 1976, p. 109, Photo No. 17 on page 120.

²⁴⁴ Mellaart, *Earliest....*, p. 130.

²⁴⁵ Akkermans and Schwartz, p. 169.

²⁴⁶ Hole, p. 46.

²⁴⁷ Hole, p. 50. Mound B too, where architectural structures have been uncovered, is contemporary with the Late Ubaid, cf. Young, T. C. And L. D. Levine, *Excavations of the Godin Project*, p. 4-6; 11.

²⁴⁸ Hole, p. 50.

²⁴⁹ See for example Forest, p. 56. About the tripartite division of Ubaid architecture cf. Roaf, M., “The Ubaid Architecture of Tell Madhhur,” *Préhistoire de la Mésopotamie*, p. 428.

²⁵⁰ Akkermans and Schwartz, p. 160.

²⁵¹ For more details about Ubaid architecture and its classification into four groups, cf. Margueron, J., “Quelques remarques concernant l’architecture monumentale à l’époque d’Obeid,” *Préhistoire de la Mésopotamie*, p. 352. And about the tripartite division of Ubaid architecture cf. Roaf, M., “The Ubaid Architecture of Tell Madhhur,” *Préhistoire de la Mésopotamie*, p. 428.

²⁵² Mallowan, M. E. L., “The Development of Cities from Al-‘Ubaid to the End of Uruk 5,” *CAH I*, part 1, Cambridge, 1970, p. 382. The walls of an Ubaid house in Hamam al-Turkuman were also plastered white and decorated with red paint, cf. Akkermans and Schwartz, p. 165.

that some round buildings have been uncovered in the Ubaid levels of Tepe Gawra and Yarim Tepe III, probably a continuation from the Halaf period. Also in the Rāniya Plain the remains of a small temple with buttresses and recesses, although in a bad state of preservation, were found in Qura Shīna.²⁵³ Ubaid potsherds have been found also in Gird-i-Dēm,²⁵⁴ Kamariyān,²⁵⁵ Qalay Rāniya and Bōskēn.²⁵⁶ Further to the south, Ubaid pottery was found in the Shahrāzūr plain in Duanze Imām,²⁵⁷ Arbat and Girda Rash.²⁵⁸ In the Kirkuk area this pottery was found in Nuzi and Matarra.²⁵⁹ In the Hamrin basin, pottery and good architectural remains were excavated at Abada,²⁶⁰ Tell Hassan,²⁶¹ Abu Qasim,²⁶² Kheit Qasim, Madhur,²⁶³ Songor and elsewhere.²⁶⁴

Little is known about the economy of the Ubaid period. What is known about Northern Ubaid is that they depended on dry-farming and that goats, sheep and cattle were herded. Their settlements ranged from small to moderate in size. Unlike their southern neighbours they made tools of stone and metal. More stamp seals were used than in the south (600 were found in Tepe Gawra).²⁶⁵ That they wove textiles is indicated by the awls, needles, loom weights, spindles and whorls found in their settlements. The interesting discovery of stone “sandal models” at Tell al-‘Abr, Level 3, could be lasts for making leather shoes.²⁶⁶

Uruk

At some sites, such as Hacinebi in the upper Euphrates, just behind the Syrian-Turkish border, post-Ubaid levels showed a transition phase to the new era known as the **Uruk** period (c. 3500-3000 BC).²⁶⁷ In this period a considerable advance in material culture took place throughout Greater Mesopotamia. This progress precipitated another growth in the population, with more and larger settlements.²⁶⁸ The social structure developed also. The

²⁵³ الألوسي، س.، "اخبار و مراسلات"، سومر ١٥، الجزء ١ و ٢ (١٩٥٩)، ص. ١١٤.

[al-Alūsi, S., "News and Correspondence," *Sumer*, 15, parts 1 and 2 (1959), p. 114 (in Arabic)].

²⁵⁴ Al-Takriti, *op. cit.*, p. 96.

²⁵⁵ Es-Soof, "Uruk Pottery.....," p. 39.

²⁵⁶ Mallowan, "The Development of.....," p. 375.

²⁵⁷ الألوسي، س.، "اخبار و مراسلات: لمحات احصائية عن اعمال اقسام و فروع مديرية الآثار العامة"، سومر ١٦، الجزء ٢ و ١ (١٩٦٠)، ص. ١٤٨.

[al-Alūsi, S., "News and Correspondence: Statistical Glimpses about the Works of Departments of the Directorate General of Antiquities," *Sumer* 16, parts 1 and 2 (1960), p. 148 (in Arabic)].

²⁵⁸ حجارة، أ.، "التقيب في سهل شهور"، سومر ٣١، الجزء ١ و ٢ (١٩٧٥)، ص. ٢٧٦.

[Hijara, I., "Excavations in the Shahrāzūr Plain," *Sumer* 31, parts 1 and 2 (1975), p. 276 (in Arabic)].

²⁵⁹ Mallowan, "The Development of.....," p. 375.

²⁶⁰ Jassim, S. A., "Excavations at Tell Abada," *Sumer* 40, Part 1&2 (1981), p. 46.

²⁶¹ Fiorina, P., "Excavations at Tell Hassan," p. 49.

²⁶² Al-Kassar, A., "Tell Abu-Qasim Excavations," *Sumer* 40, Part 1&2 (1981), p. 589.

²⁶³ Roaf, M., "Excavations at Tell Madhur, the Results of the Third Season," *Sumer* 40, Part 1&2 (1981), p. 147.

Its pottery resembles Gawra XVI-XIII and the deep sounding at Nuzi and late Ubaid, *op. cit.* p. 148.

²⁶⁴ Forest, p. 56ff.

²⁶⁵ Redman, p. 251.

²⁶⁶ Akkermans and Schwartz, p. 171.

²⁶⁷ Cf.: Bauer, J., R. K. Englund and M. Krebernik, Mesopotamien- Späturuk Zeit und frühdynastische Zeit, Annäherungen 1, Herausgegeben von P. Attinger - M. Wäfler, *Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis (OBO)* 160/1, Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, Göttingen, 1998, p. 23.

²⁶⁸ Some idea about this growth comes from the Early Uruk Period (mid fourth millennium BC) of southern Mesopotamia, where there were 17 small settlements and 3 large ones. But in the Late Uruk Period (end of the fourth millennium BC) they had increased to 112 small, 10 large and 1 central city. For these figures cf. Klengel, H. (Editor), *Kulturgeschichte des alten Vorderasien*, Berlin, 1989, p. 26. For Uruk settlements and its urban patterns in general cf. reference works such as Adams, R. McC. and H. Nissen, *The Uruk Countryside, The Natural Setting of the Urban Societies*, Chicago, 1972; Rothman, M. (Ed.), *Uruk Mesopotamia and its Neighbors*, Santa Fe, 2001; Algaze, G., *The Uruk World System*, Chicago, 1993; for the Uruk period in the

society became more clearly hierarchical²⁶⁹ and the social classes appeared more distinctly. Luxury commodities were imported and manufactured for the higher classes by craftsmen of a lower class, and both of them lived from the products of a different class. The Northern Mesopotamian regions continued in the ways they had followed since the Ubaid period, thus broadening the distance between the two sides of North and South Mesopotamia, and making the cultural diversity greater. But Uruk of the south began to expand its cultural and economic hegemony to the region under study, and commenced what is usually called ‘Uruk Imperialism’ by founding colonies in the north with a typically southern Mesopotamian culture. However, the sites of Arslan Tepe (period VII) in the Malatya Plain, Hacinebi (later phase), Brak, Hamoukar and Tepe Gawra provided evidence of metallurgy and pottery mass-production, suggesting that “local highland communities had already begun to develop a fairly complex, specialized economic organization before the Uruk expansion.”²⁷⁰ The most important and best representative site of this period in our region is Tepe Gawra, a large mound situated c. 22.5 km east of the Tigris, to the northeast of Nineveh. The material culture of this period found in this region is so “distinctive in character that for the time being it was referred to as the ‘Gawra Period’ of Northern Iraq.”²⁷¹ Copper was used on a large scale and there was an increase in the manufacture of golden ornaments, especially of golden beads, as found in the rich tombs of that site²⁷² and those of Qālinj Agha (1 km south of Erbil fort).²⁷³

The architectural structures found in Tepe Gawra are of special significance. The unique large circular building of level XI in the middle of the mound (Fig. 30) has a diameter of 18m and an outer wall 1m thick. It contained a granary and in another room a sanctuary, as the buttresses and the presence of a niche in the wall indicate.²⁷⁴ This building was perhaps the governor’s house, taking into account its large size, for it was in the middle of the mound and had a grand long hall in the middle of the building.²⁷⁵ Another building of this period is the temple of Level VIII, which has a tripartite plan with buttresses and recesses (Fig. 31a) recalling the Pre-Greek *megaron*.²⁷⁶ More interesting is its striking likeness to the Karaindash temple in the city of Uruk from the Kassite period (Fig. 31b).²⁷⁷ Yet another feature of this temple is the “deep porch” at its entrance, which Mallowan identified as a new architectural feature, probably introduced from the mountains of the northeast or Iranian Kurdistan.²⁷⁸ A closer examination of this element shows that it was actually the oldest occurrence of the well-known *Iwān* of the Islamic architecture of the Iranian world. This has been in use from very ancient times till now. Two tripartite temples were also found in the third level of Qālinj Agha, and traces of a wall painting in red and black with geometric designs were found on

Hamrin basin and the Diyāla region cf. Adams, R. McC., *Land Behind Baghdad*, Chicago, 1965, p. 36 f. and Adams, R. McC., *Heartland of Cities*, Chicago, 1981, p. 46-7.

²⁶⁹ Forest, p. 103.

²⁷⁰ Stein, G. J., “Indigenous Social Complexity at Hacinebi (Turkey) and the Organization of Uruk Colonial Contact,” *Uruk Mesopotamia & its Neighbors*, p. 267 (referring to Palmieri, 1985: 196).

²⁷¹ Lloyd, *op. cit.*, p. 67.

²⁷² For a detailed preview of the finds in Tepe Gawra see the results of the excavations in Speiser, E., *Excavations at Tepe Gawra*, vol. I, Philadelphia, 1935; Tobler, A., *Excavations at Tepe Gawra*, vol. II, Philadelphia, 1950; and more recently in Rothman, M. S., *Tepe Gawra: The Evolution of a Small Prehistoric Center in Northern Iraq*, Philadelphia, 2002.

²⁷³ El-Waily, F., “Foreword,” *Sumer* 22, part 1 & 2 (1966), p. e.

²⁷⁴ Mallowan, “The Development of.....,” p. 379.

²⁷⁵ Mallowan, M. E. L., *Early Mesopotamia and Iran*, London, 1965, p. 79. A fine reconstruction of this building can be seen in Rothman, *Tepe Gawra: The Evolution of.....*, p. 97, but Rothman thinks it was a silo for the settlement, cf. Rothman, M. S., “The Tigris Piedmont, Eastern Jazira, and Highland Western Iran in the Fourth Millennium B. C.,” *Uruk Mesopotamia & its Neighbours*, p. 387.

²⁷⁶ Lloyd, *op. cit.*, p. 76.

²⁷⁷ For the comparison between the two plans cf. Parrot, A., *Sumer*, Paris, 1960, p. 316.

²⁷⁸ Mallowan, *op. cit.*, p. 78.

one of the walls there.²⁷⁹ The Uruk layers of Tepe Gawra had richly furnished tombs which yielded a collection of golden ornaments and many beads made of metal, bone, ivory and various kinds of precious, semi-precious and common stones. One single tomb yielded 25,000 beads,²⁸⁰ and another tomb yielded 450 beads of lapis lazuli.²⁸¹ Of all these finds an electrum wolf's head (Fig. 32) was given special attention for the techniques used in its manufacture. Some pieces in its composition were made separately from another metal and were attached at a later stage to the bitumen-filled head.²⁸² The tombs in Tepe Gawra were of a different type. Some of them were well built of stone and sun dried bricks and situated on the top of the mound between other buildings, where they were probably used as shrines.²⁸³

Some of the deceased were buried under the floors of the houses according to the old tradition, while others were buried outside the settlement in the 'city of the dead,' recalling the Indo-Iranian custom brought by them to Iran, as can be seen in Tepe Siyalk near Kashān.²⁸⁴ This remarkable diversity in funeral customs may reflect a diversity of religious beliefs, which may indicate in turn a diversity of ethnic background.

Other important finds in this site are the large collection of stamp seals. A wide variety of subjects is depicted on them, such as mythical, religious, ritual and natural scenes, and on some of them masked men appear.²⁸⁵ Some think that the abundant religious, administrative and productive activities of the site between Levels XII and VIII were more than enough for the needs of the residents and management of the town,²⁸⁶ which implies that it served as a centre or capital for the region around. The finds here proved that civilization could flourish in other areas too, outside Sumerian territory, at least in this period.

Extensive Uruk settlements in the western part of the region under study were excavated in the Tabqa Dam region on the Euphrates. These settlements proved to have been newly founded in the fourth millennium BC and yielded southern Mesopotamian material culture. This led to the conclusion that their settlers were southern Mesopotamian Uruk colonists.²⁸⁷ Habuba Kabira represents the largest and best example among these, but it is located outside our region. Inside the region we have the smaller site of Tell 'Abr, upstream from Habuba Kabira, where a *Riemchen*, a small square brick typical of Uruk buildings, was uncovered. In Jarablus Tahtani typical southern Mesopotamian pottery assemblages have also been found.²⁸⁸ It is important in this respect to note that there were other Uruk Culture settlements in the region, influenced by Uruk culture but out of the reach of its colonists. Sites such as Gawra, Hacinebi, possibly Hamoukar and Hawa and small sites in the Balikh valley proved to have had a purely local material culture. Among these Tell Brak is a good example; its Uruk deposits were laid on older layers, not on the virgin soil, but it was not free from southern influence, as can be seen from its eye-temples with thousands of eye-idols (Fig. 34). The temple has a tripartite plan, elaborate niches, buttresses and some clay-cone mosaic decoration.²⁸⁹ Three other lower eye-temples have been excavated, known as the White, the Red and the Grey eye-temples. The latter yielded more interesting finds, such as animal-

²⁷⁹ Es-Souf, "Tell Qalinj Agha," *Sumer* 25, part 1&2 (1969), p. 6.

²⁸⁰ Lloyd, *op. cit.*, p. 82. For a detailed enumeration of finds and description of these tombs cf. Rothman, "The Tigris Piedmont.....," p. 392-5.

²⁸¹ Mallowan, *Early Mesopotamia and Iran*, p. 80.

²⁸² Lloyd, *op. cit.*, p. 82; Mallowan, *op. cit.*, p. 79; 81.

²⁸³ For these tombs and some reconstructions cf. Rothman, *Tepe Gawra: The Evolution of.....*, p. 171ff.; 181.

²⁸⁴ Ghirshman, R., *Iran from the Earliest Times to the Islamic Conquest*, London, 1954, p. 77.

²⁸⁵ For a good review of these small finds cf. Rothman, *op. cit.*, p. 61-8; and for a review of the collection of the seals cf. Tobler, *Excavations at Tepe Gawra*, plates CLVIII-CLXX.

²⁸⁶ Rothman, "The Tigris Piedmont ...," *Uruk Mesopotamia....*, p. 386.

²⁸⁷ Akkermans and Schwartz, p. 190.

²⁸⁸ *Op. cit.*, p. 196.

²⁸⁹ *Op. cit.*, p. 198.

shaped stone amulets, stamp and cylinder seals, and alabaster sculptured human heads.²⁹⁰ The southern influence on the pottery of Brak was substantial from Level 13 (middle Uruk) until Level 12 (Late Uruk).

A similar phenomenon is seen at Arslan Tepe, a site on the northwesternmost edge of the region under study. The seal impressions of the Uruk expansion phase show both local and Mesopotamian traditions, while there is no evidence of any physical presence of Mesopotamians. Rather the settlement was inhabited and ruled by its local inhabitants.²⁹¹ The evidence of metallurgical industry and ceramic mass production indicates that the settlement had developed a highly centralized administrative system, controlling not only metallurgical and agricultural production but also the local exchange system.

These highland societies were outside the Mesopotamian colonization and show a high degree of variability in material culture. At the same time they had several common characteristics, such as regional centres with internal functional differentiation, monumental architecture, exotic raw materials obtained through long-distance exchange,²⁹² advanced copper and silver metallurgy,²⁹³ mortuary evidence for hereditary elites and complex administrative systems based on seals. These seals have similar motifs, suggesting some kind of shared ideology across the regions among the elite where these sites are located.²⁹⁴ Such monumental architecture was found in Hacinebi, Arslan Tepe and Godin in the central Zagros. In Hacinebi, a series of storerooms (7 m long) in the west end of the site were revealed. In the southern end a stone monumental enclosure wall, preserved up to 3.3 m high with 2 m wide buttresses and recesses, was constructed along its east face. Inside the enclosure two platforms of stone and mud, one measuring 7 by 5 m and 3 m high and the other 8 by 7 m and 2.8 m high, were constructed. They were located at the northeastern end and used for special occasions, perhaps for cult ceremonies (Fig. 35).²⁹⁵

Arslan Tepe revealed a local culture towards the mid-fourth millennium (c. 3400-3300 BC) which was distinctive and well-established.²⁹⁶ The internal hierarchy of its society is seen in the architecture and the manufacture of special products for new social needs. The buildings of level VII had columns of mud brick on the higher part of the mound, apparently a house for an elite person. A huge building in the 'public' area contained a central room, 18 m long with walls 1.6 m thick.²⁹⁷ A good example of wall-paintings, which were "an eastern Anatolian trait,"²⁹⁸ according to Frangipane, was recovered in the palace of Period VIA that depicts a complex narrative of mythical figures.²⁹⁹ The sealings and mass-produced bowls from the site indicate a centralized system based on corvée labour. The public area of this period (VIA) has complex buildings with unique features, such as the bipartite layout of the temples and wall-paintings (Fig. 36).³⁰⁰

Turning to the east, to the central Zagros where Godin Tepe is located, important Uruk material has been recovered. The location of the site is strategically important because it can

²⁹⁰ *Op. cit.*, p. 199.

²⁹¹ Stein, *op. cit.*, p. 267; Forest, p. 147.

²⁹² Shells from the Mediterranean and chlorite from the Diyarbakir area were found in Hacinebi. A wide variety of obsidian from Nemrut Dağ, Bingöl, Gölüdağ in central Anatolia and even north of Yerevan has been found: Stein, p. 276-7.

²⁹³ Silver earrings found in a burial of Hacinebi are considered the earliest in our region; cf. Stein, p. 273-4. The tools and devices of copper smiths were found in the site.

²⁹⁴ *Op. cit.*, p. 268.

²⁹⁵ *Op. cit.*, p. 271-2. According to Stein it is not impossible to have been an elite dwelling.

²⁹⁶ Frangipane, M., "Centralization Processes in Greater Mesopotamia," *Uruk Mesopotamia and its Neighbors*, p. 327.

²⁹⁷ *Op. cit.*, p. 328.

²⁹⁸ *Op. cit.*, p. 329.

²⁹⁹ For a more detailed description of the painting cf. Frangipane, *op. cit.*, p. 337.

³⁰⁰ *Op. cit.*, p. 332-3.

control the Great Khorasan Road from Mesopotamia to Iran and beyond and lead to the ancient copper mines on the plateau.³⁰¹ The excavations of Level V of the site have yielded Uruk pottery and typical glyptic and accounting devices.³⁰² Among these accounting devices are numerical notation tablets. These materials may indicate the presence of a group of Mesopotamians in the fort of Godin. During this period the settlement grew to include the whole area later covered by the citadel,³⁰³ comprising a building complex surrounded by an oval wall. The complex consists of buildings and rooms set around a large central courtyard (Fig. 37). The wall is *c.* 1.5 m thick, built of mud bricks, and seems to have included originally an area of *c.* 33 by 21 m.³⁰⁴ Standing at the entrance of the complex was a gate-room (no. 4), with a guard-room (no.5) and storage rooms (nos. 2 and 3). In room 3, which one might call the archive, the tablets were found. A monumental building, perhaps a public building, stood on the northern side. It consists of a central room 18 m long with a carefully-built fireplace (not a cooking hearth) and two large niches flanking two small ones opposite each other on the western and eastern walls. The room has two windows looking on to the central courtyard and two doors at the back leading to two chambers. Another room (no. 6) in the southeastern part of the complex looks like the central room (no. 18) in layout and dimensions. Weiss and Young think it was a private structure as it is located in the corner and has a cooking hearth instead of a fireplace.³⁰⁵

The pottery of Godin in this period is divided into two groups. One continued the local traditions and the other was new with parallels from Uruk Mesopotamia.³⁰⁶ However, most interesting was the discovery of 43 tablets and fragments of tablets. They bear numerical notations and one of them bears a pictographic sign.³⁰⁷ The notation system used five different numerical signs known from both Proto-Elamite and Proto-Sumerian tablets. The pictographic sign is similar to a sign known from Uruk IVa and Proto-Elamite.³⁰⁸ The presence of a blank tablet indicates that at least some tablets was made locally and the fact that none of the tablets was baked could mean that they were not intended to be transported.

Uruk pottery and other remains were also attested abundantly in the two plains of Rāniya and Shahrazūr: at Gird-i-Dēm,³⁰⁹ Kamariyān,³¹⁰ Girde Bōr³¹¹ in the Rāniya Plain, and Duanze Imām, Bakrāwā,³¹² Husēn Fatāh, Chirāgh,³¹³ Girdi Rash and Arbat in the Shahrazūr Plain.³¹⁴ In the Hamrin Basin area Uruk pottery was identified in Tell Abu Hassan.³¹⁵ Further to the south traces of Uruk culture have been found in the Diyāla region. More interestingly, here collections of clay tablets, sometimes called 'archives,' written in archaic cuneiform and dated to the late Uruk period, were discovered.³¹⁶

So the Uruk period and the invention of a writing system in Sumer marks the beginning of history in Southern Mesopotamia. The earliest known samples of this writing were found in

³⁰¹ Forest, p. 145.

³⁰² Algaze, G., "The Prehistory of Imperialism," *Uruk Mesopotamia*, p. 40.

³⁰³ Young, T. C. and L. Levine, *Excavations of the Godin Project: Second Progress Report*, p. 17.

³⁰⁴ Weiss, H. and T. C. Young, Jr., "The Merchants of Susa," *Iran* XIII (1975), p. 3.

³⁰⁵ *Op. cit.*, p. 5.

³⁰⁶ *Op. cit.*, p. 6.

³⁰⁷ *Op. cit.*, p. 8.

³⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁰⁹ Es-Soof, "Mounds in the Rāniya Plain and Excavations at Tell Bazmusian," *Sumer* 26, part 1&2 (1970), p. 66.

³¹⁰ Es-Soof, "Uruk Pottery.....," p. 39.

³¹¹ Es-Soof, "Mounds in the.....," p. 66.

³¹² Es-Soof, "Uruk Pottery.....," p. 41-2.

³¹³ الألوسي، لحات احصائية، ص. ١٤٨.

³¹⁴ حجارة، "التنقيب في سهل شهرزور"، ص. ٢٧٦.

³¹⁵ Al-Kassar, *op. cit.*, p. 59.

³¹⁶ Englund, *OBO*, p. 31.

the city of Uruk (level IV, c. 3400 BC), but it took some time until it developed to a degree that enabled it to record historical events. However, historians do not enjoy such an advantage in the north at this time, for there is no such evidence there. For several more centuries they have to be dependent on archaeological material.

Ninevite V

The colonized sites of the Uruk period in the western parts of our region must have come to end peacefully for no signs of destruction or fire have been detected. Probably it was the same in the eastern part as well. This marks the end of the Uruk Period. The weakness of Southern Mesopotamia apparently coincided with an increasing power in the peripheral communities, who took advantage of this situation to assert their independence.³¹⁷ The archaeological data collected from the settlements around Tell Leylān point to a regional return to dispersed, small, low-density communities in this period, after the collapse of the Late Uruk intensified settlement pattern.³¹⁸ A transitional phase indicated by distinctive painted pottery has been noticed in the sites of Eski Mosul (Karrana 3 for instance) and possibly in Brak.³¹⁹ This signified a new period in the north, culturally distinctive from the south, called **Ninevite V** (3100-2550 BC).³²⁰ This culture was approximately contemporary with southern late Uruk, Jamdat Nasr and Early Dynastic I, but it was clearly different. Unfortunately, our information about this culture is not as abundant as about its southern contemporaries,³²¹ but the salvage excavation campaigns undertaken in the 1980s in the Eski Mosul and Hamrin regions have enriched our knowledge, although much still awaits publication. Archaeologically, it is characterized by its pottery, known as Ninevite V (Fig. 38), named after its first identification in the deep sounding of Mallowan in Nineveh.³²² This pottery is painted or incised or both. Its motifs are different from those of previous cultures and consist generally of modified human figures and repeated zoomorphic figures (mostly with long necks), fishes, birds and geometrical designs such as ladders, crosshatch and hourglass patterns; there was a general *horror vacui*. The colours vary from black to red and purple.³²³ The distinguishing shapes are 'fruit stands' with pedestal bases, small pots with holes, perhaps to be hung as lamps or incense burners,³²⁴ and tall-necked jars with pedestal bases. The shapes, specifically the plain ware, indicate specialized mass production of pottery. The Ninevite V culture was distributed over a relatively wide area, around Nineveh (in Billa, Shenshi, Tepe Gawra, Erbil, Qalinj Agha,³²⁵ Rijim, Tell Muhamed Arab, Fisna, Thuwajj³²⁶

³¹⁷ Akkermans and Schwartz, p. 207-8.

³¹⁸ For this, cf. Weiss, H., "'Civilizing' the Habur Plains: Mid-Third Millennium State Formation at Tell Leilan," *Resurrecting the Past, A Joint Tribute to Adnan Bounni*, eds. P. Matthiae, M. Van Loon and H. Weiss, Istanbul, 1990, p. 389.

³¹⁹ *Op. cit.*, p. 214. They noticed too that such a transitional phase was not noticeable in the Habur region. This perhaps implies the region was abandoned after the end of the Uruk colonies and was repopulated with Ninevite V settlers. For details about Karrana transitional finds cf. Rova, E., "Tell Karrana 3: Ceramic Evidence for the Late Uruk/ Ninevite 5 Transition," *The Origins of North Mesopotamian Civilization: Ninevite 5 Chronology, Economy, Society*, ed. E. Rova and H. Weiss, Subartu, vol. 9, Turnhout, 2003, p. 13 f.

³²⁰ This dating is based on radiocarbon dating, cf. Akkermans and Schwartz, p. 213.

³²¹ This is largely due to the fact that most of the results of excavated Nineveh V sites are still not fully published; cf. Rova, E., "Ninevite V Relative Chronology, Periodization and Distribution: An Introduction," *The Origins of...*, Subartu, 9, p. 2 f.

³²² Mallowan, M. E. L., "Ninevite V," *Vorderasiatische Archäologie, Studien und Aufsätze*, Berlin, 1964, p. 142ff.

³²³ Forest, *op. cit.*, p. 167ff.

³²⁴ Mallowan, "Ninevite V," p. 145.

³²⁵ For more details about the Ninevite V pottery, specifically in Qalinj Agha, cf. Gut, R., "Zur Datierung der «Proto-Nineve 5» - Ware von Qalinj Agha," *Baghdader Mitteilungen*, 27 (1996), p. 1 ff.

and Jikan) and westwards (to the Sinjār, Chagar Bazar, Leylān, Brak and Hassek Höyük).³²⁷ In the east it reached the Rāniya Plain and both Kirkuk and Sulaimaniya.³²⁸ Its eastern extension to the Iranian plateau (at Ushnu, the Urmia region, Dinkha Tepe, Gird Hasan Ali, Hissar, Siyalik³²⁹ and Hasanlu³³⁰) has motivated some to suggest an Iranian origin for this culture.³³¹ This contradicts others who insist on a Northern Mesopotamian origin, or more precisely the Nineveh region.³³² It has also been suggested that both lands as one whole cultural area share its origin.³³³

Pottery is not the only characteristic of this culture, for during the earlier part of Ninevite V some kinds of cylinder seal were common in the region from Tepe Yahya and Susa across the Zagros, Diyāla region (Gubba, Kheit Qasim and Khafaji), the upper Tigris, Sinjār as far as the Habur region. Hence these seals are called 'Piedmont' or 'Glazed Steatite Cylinder Seals'.³³⁴ They are characterised by geometric motifs, such as rosettes, centre-dot circles and hatched bands of arches or lozenges (Fig. 39). The later part of Ninevite V witnessed the replacement of these seals by a new style which bore themes parallel to the southern Early Dynastic seals and to local traditions as well. The architecture of this period did not yield large monumental buildings such as those of Uruk period. Some simple temples in Chagar Bazar, Kashkashuk III and Brak have been uncovered which consist of single rooms with mud brick altars. Some find it possible that one of the eye-temples of Brak was built or was in use during this period.³³⁵ Several private houses have been excavated in Tell Kutān, 45 km to the northwest of Mosul. Although the houses are in a bad state of preservation and not completely excavated, the excavated portions show a very long central room with a hearth in its centre. A rectangular mud brick platform was constructed beside it.³³⁶ This plan is quite different from those of the earlier Gawra houses, and it is interesting that it contained a unique drainage system made of pottery tubes.³³⁷ In Hamrin also five fortified circular buildings were found and designated as 'forts' by the excavators. One of them is that of Tell Razuk (Fig. 40), a large building dating to c. 2700-2650 BC. In addition to being a fort it was a dwelling for a noble family.³³⁸ Similar buildings were found in Gubba,³³⁹ Madhur,³⁴⁰ Abu Qasim and Suleimeh, all with fortified walls. In 2001 a new round building was excavated in Tell an-

³²⁶ Cf. Numoto, H., "Ninevite 5 Pottery from Tells Fisna and Thuwāij and its Relative Chronology in Mosul Region," *The Origins of...*, Subartu 9, p. 84; 88.

³²⁷ This site, located at the northwestern frontier of the Urfa province, also yielded good Uruk material; about this and its Ninevite V pottery cf. Behm-Blancke, M. R., "Northern Frontiers: Early Ninevite 5 Contacts with Southeastern Anatolia," *The Origins of...*, Subartu 9, p. 481-2.

³²⁸ Es-Sooif, B., "Distribution of Uruk, Jamdat Nasr and Ninevite V Pottery," *Iraq* 30, Part 1 (1968), p. 77-78, giving a list of sites on which surfaces these potteries are found.

³²⁹ Mallowan, *op. cit.*, p. 147.

³³⁰ Mallowan, *Early Mesopotamia and Iran*, p. 82.

³³¹ Like Mallowan, *Early Mesopotamia and Iran*, p. 20; Mallowan, "Ninevite V," p. 153; McCown, D., *The Comparative Stratigraphy of Early Iran*, Chicago, 1942, p. 48, note 88.

³³² Forest, p. 173; Rova, E., "Tell Karrana...", *The Origins of...*, Subartu 9, p. 13.

³³³ Perkins, A. L., *The Comparative Archaeology of Early Mesopotamia*, Chicago, 1949, p. 164-5; Akkermans and Schwartz: "It is now recognized to be of local derivation," p. 213.

³³⁴ Akkermans and Schwartz, p. 216. Le Breton was the first who called this style 'Piedmont.' For this and discussions cf. Marchetti, N., "The Ninevite 5 Glyptic of the Khabur Region and the Chronology of the Piedmont Style Motives," *Baghdader Mitteilungen*, 27 (1996), p. 81 and note 2.

³³⁵ Roaf, M., "The Architecture of the Ninevite 5 Period," *The Origins of...*, Subartu 9, p. 312.

³³⁶ Bachelot, L., "Tell Kutān," *The Origins of...*, Subartu 9, p. 153. According to M. Roaf, buildings with one main room and hearth may be identified as village houses, cf. *ibid.*

³³⁷ Forest, p. 171-2.

³³⁸ *Op. cit.*, p. 201.

³³⁹ Fujii, H., "Outline of the Japanese Excavations," *Sumer* 40, Part 1&2 (1981), p. 51-52.

³⁴⁰ Roaf, M., "Tell Madhur, A Summary Report on the Excavations," *Sumer* 43, part 1 & 2 (1984), p. 116-18.

Naml, a site close to the junction of the Lower Zāb with the Tigris.³⁴¹ This may indicate an insecure atmosphere in the region at that time. Two houses were also incompletely excavated in Leylān. The one consisted of at least 9 rooms constructed during more than one phase. Numerous seal impressions, grindstones and vessels were found in one of its rooms (no. 6). The other consisted of only 3 rooms and yielded c. 60 seal impressions.³⁴² A partly vaulted mud brick structure was found in Tell Atij in the middle Habur, which had served as a grain store that measured 12 by 6 m. In Bderi, slightly to the south of Atij, the foundations of a town wall were identified.³⁴³

The tombs of this period were provided with funerary items consisting in the first place of pottery vessels, sometimes in large quantities, such as the tomb at Tell Rijim (in Eski Mosul). It contained a crouching body lying on his right along a south-north axis on a reed mat (Fig. 41). Scraps of linen cloth were found close to the chest area.³⁴⁴ A total of 28 small vessels of all kinds accompanied the body. This is interpreted as indicating the attendance of 28 persons at the funeral.³⁴⁵ The burial practices in Hamrin of this period were similar to those in Gawra, where they buried the dead outside the settlements, as can be seen in Kheit Qasim (c. 2850-2800 BC, Early Dynastic I in Diyāla) and Ahmed al Hattu³⁴⁶ (tombs built of sun-dried bricks outside the settlement, dating to c. 2750 BC).³⁴⁷ Further to the east, in Pusht-i Kuh (to the west of Kabīr Kuh), tombs were excavated that date to the Early Bronze Age I, which is contemporary with Jamdat Nasr-ED I in Mesopotamia. These are cist tombs that range in length from 0.60 to several meters (Fig. 42).³⁴⁸ The long ones were communal tombs used for several consecutive burials. The four walls and the capstones of the tombs are built with stone slabs. Some of the tombs, such as those of Andjirah, have stone floors.³⁴⁹ For the construction of some other tombs boulders are used instead of stone slabs. The width of the chambers of these tombs narrows towards the top to form a vaulted ceiling (Fig. 42), a technique not used in the EBA IV. Although a little late, the end of the Early Bronze Age II (Late ED I and ED II) produced tombs of 13 m long that “may have been divided into separate rooms by inner walls and sometimes they had well constructed stepped entrances.”³⁵⁰

As can be inferred from the finds in the Hamrin Basin area, the agriculture there depended in certain cases on irrigation. The traces of an old irrigation canal close to Kheit Qasim confirm this.³⁵¹ Yet agriculture was not the sole activity. Trade was another economic activity, as in the Uruk Period. Evidence of this is a ritual vase found in the cemetery of Kheit Qasim bearing strong and clear Iranian influences. The copper axes and instruments found in Gubba, dating to the beginning of the 3rd millennium, show that their ores must have been imported from the Iranian copper mines. Furthermore, the seal impressions on the clay jar sealings, indicate commercial activity and commodity exchange.³⁵²

³⁴¹ Cf. Miglus, P. A., “Rundbau,” *RLA* 11 (2006), p. 456 (referring to Shakir Suleiman, 2001-2002).

³⁴² Calderone, L. and H. Weiss, “The End of the Ninevite 5 Period at Tell Leilan,” *The Origins of...*, Subartu 9, p. 196-7.

³⁴³ Roaf, “The Architecture of the Ninevite 5 Period,” Subartu 9, p. 312.

³⁴⁴ Bielinski, P., “Ninevite 5 Burials at Tell Rijim,” *The Origins of...*, Subartu 9, p. 493.

³⁴⁵ Forest, p. 171.

³⁴⁶ Sörenhagen, D., “Excavations of the Deutsche Orient Gesellschaft at Tell Ahmed Al-Hattu,” *Sumer* 40, part 1& 2 (1981), p. 61.

³⁴⁷ Forest, p. 196.

³⁴⁸ Haenrick, E. and B. Overlaet, Early Bronze Age Graveyards to the West of the Kabir Kuh (Pusht-i Kuh, Luristan, *Luristan Excavation Documents*, VIII, Leuven, 2010, p. 5.

³⁴⁹ *Op. cit.*, p. 6.

³⁵⁰ *Op. cit.*, p. 5.

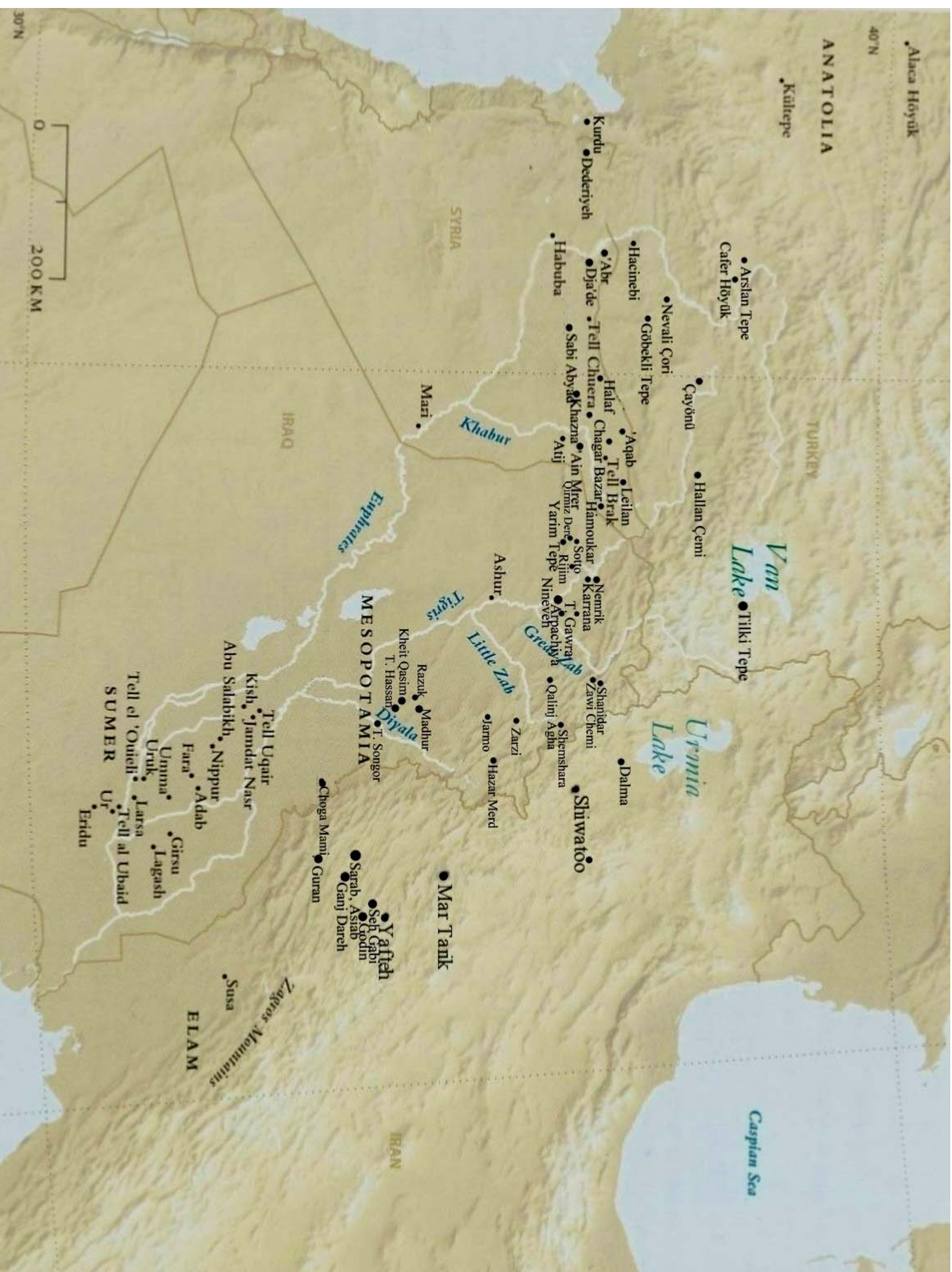
³⁵¹ Forest, p. 202.

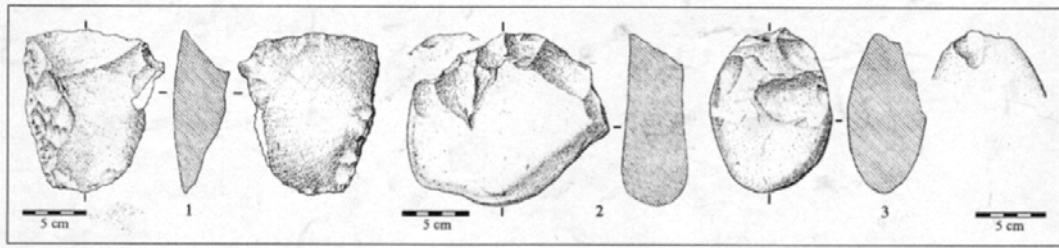
³⁵² Forest, p. 200. For the seal impressions and their designs cf. Lebeau, M., “Notes sur les sceux et empreints des sceux de Kheit Qasim,” *Sumer* 40, Part 1&2 (1981), p. 115-18.

The results of recent excavations undertaken in the Habur area, especially at Leylān, indicate a rapid transformation in this period from small settlements sparsely scattered across the dry-farming region of north Mesopotamia into an urban civilization. This is best indicated by the architectural remains found in Leylān, where a flurry of building activity in levels 17, 16 and 15 has been noticed.³⁵³

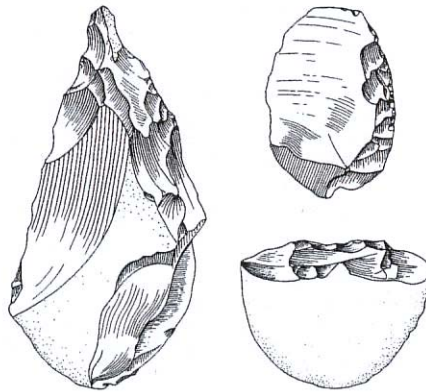
³⁵³ Calderone and Weiss, "The End of the Ninevite 5 Period at Tell Leilan," *Subartu* 9, p. 194.

Figures of Chapter One





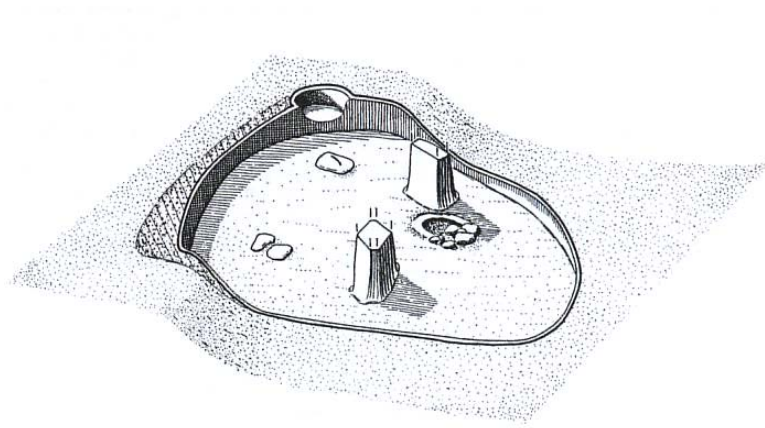
- 1) Acheulian artefacts from Shiwatoo, Mahabad region. After: Jaubert *et al.*, “New Research on ...,” *Archaeological Reports* 4, Iranian Center for Archaeological Research, Tehran, p. 23.



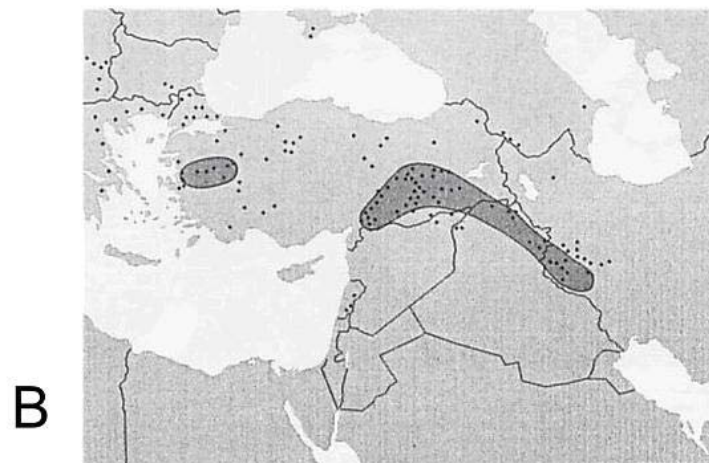
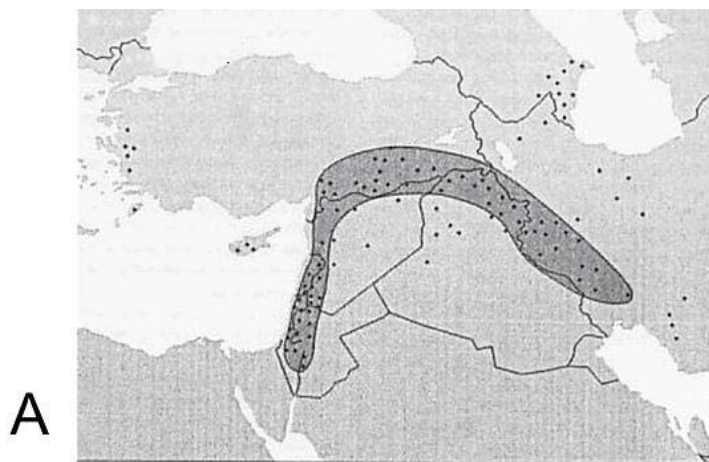
- 2) Pebble tools from Bardabalka. After: Wright H. E. and B. Howe, “Preliminary Report on Soundings at Barda Balka,” *Sumer* 7 (1951), figs. 2-3.



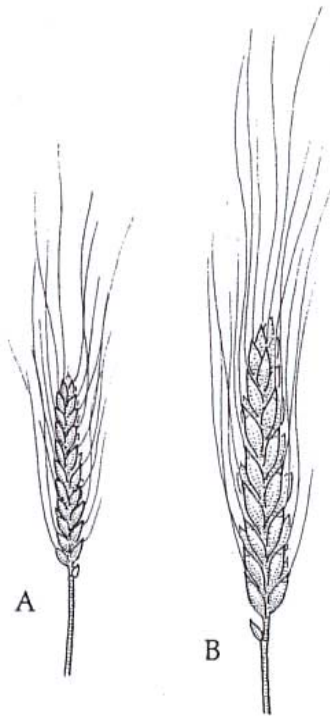
- 3) Shanidar Cave. Photo by author.



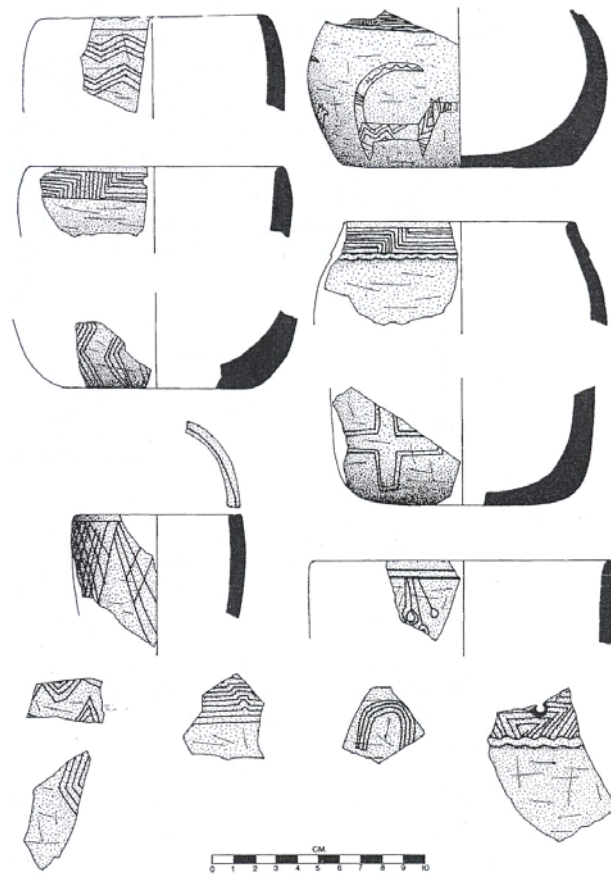
- 4) Pit-houses from Qirmiz Dere. After: Matthews, *The Early Prehistory of Mesopotamia*, p. 37. Courtesy of Brepols Publishers n.v., Turnhout, Belgium.



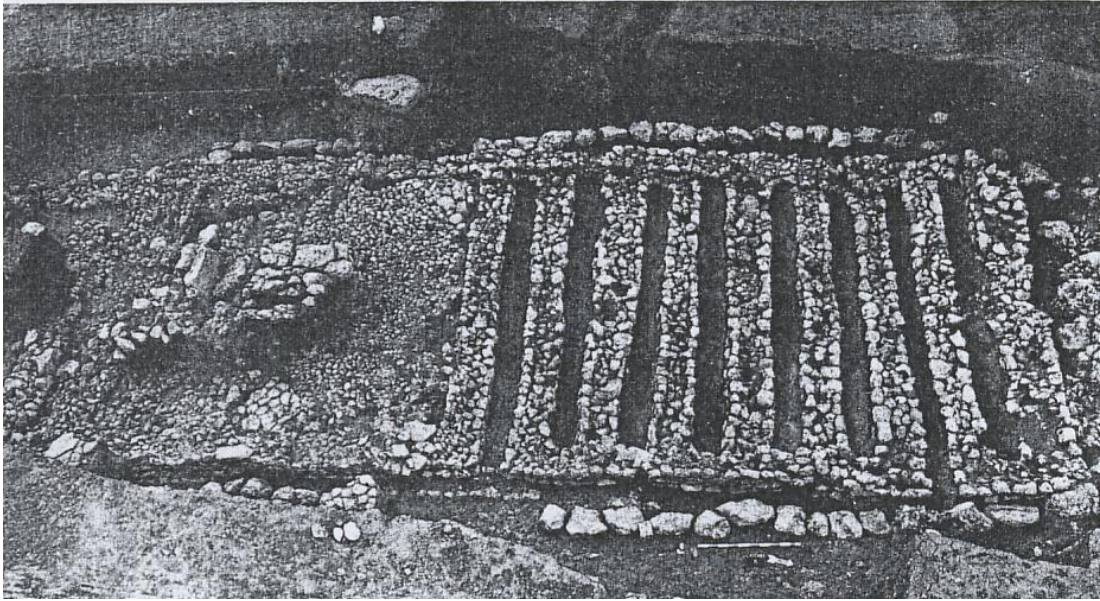
- 5) A- Distribution of a species of wild barley (*Hordeum spontaneum*) in the Near East; dots represent known sites and shaded areas the primary habitats.
 B- Distribution of wild einkorn (*Triticum boeoticum*) in the Near East. Dots represent known sites, and shaded areas the primary habitats. After: Redman, *The Rise of Civilization*, p. 121 and 124.



6) Early domestic wheat, A: Einkorn (*Triticum monococcum*); B: emmer (*Triticum dicoccum*). After: Redman, *op. cit.*, p. 119.



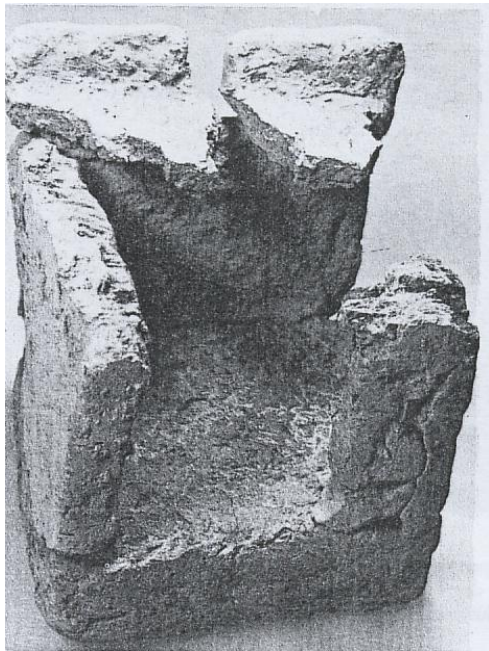
7) Decorated stone bowls from Hallan Çemi. After: Rosenberg, *Neolithic in Turkey* (plates), p. 12. Reprinted by permission of the author.



8) One of the grill-plan buildings of Çayönü. After: Redman, p. 156.



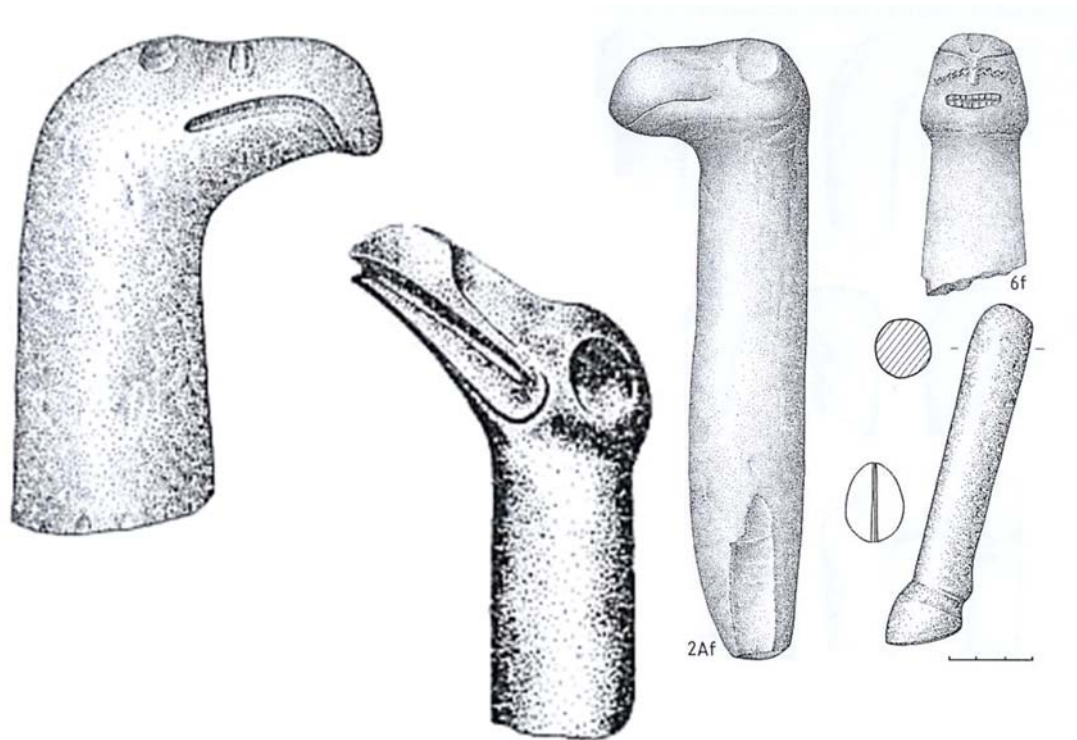
9) Cell-plan building in Çayönü. After: Redman, p. 158.



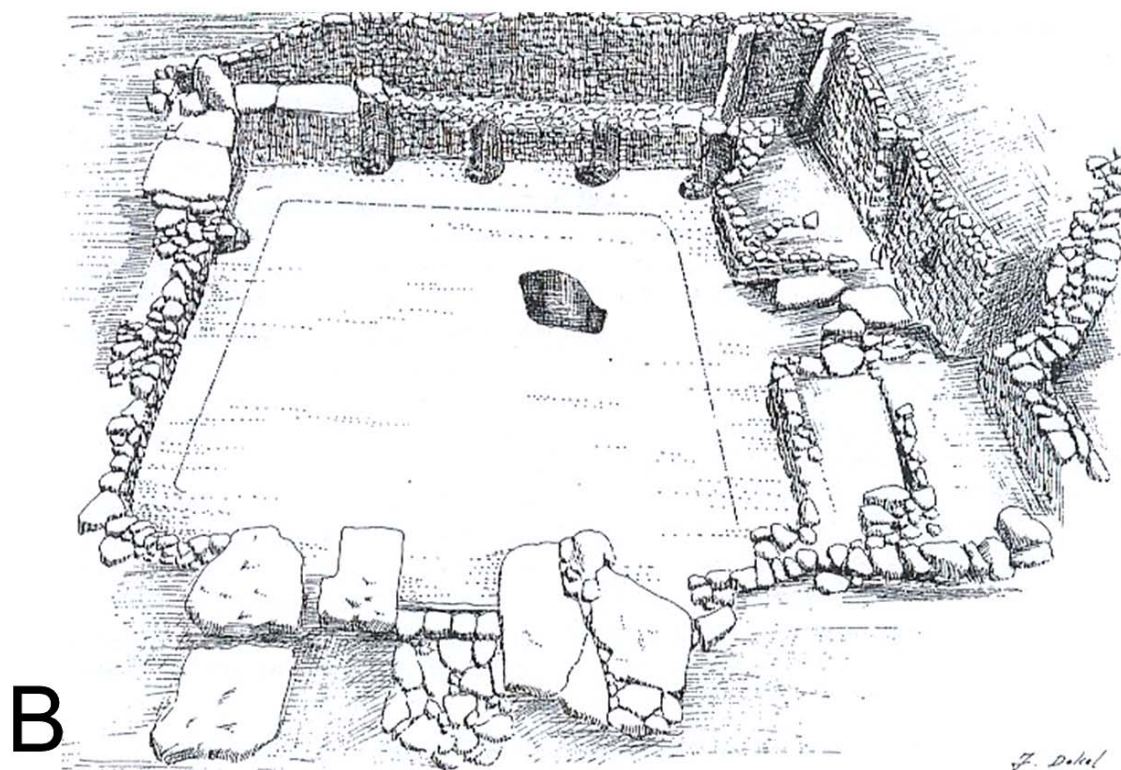
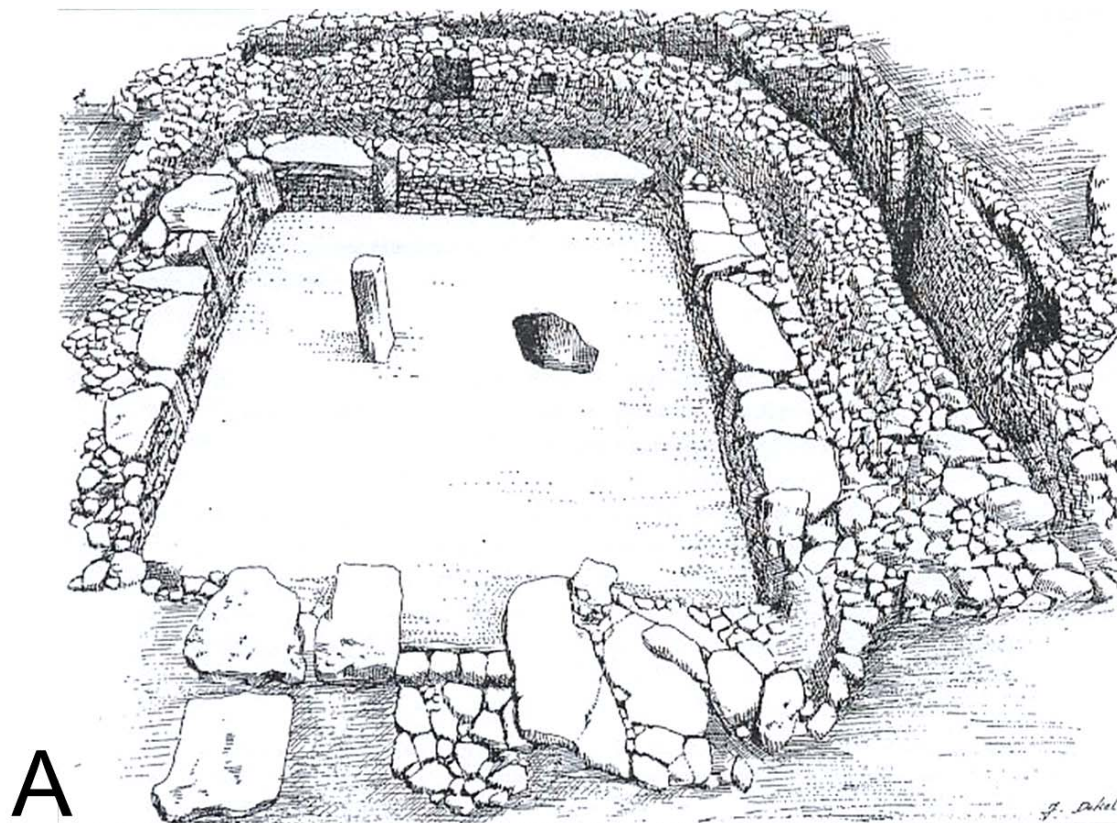
10) A clay house-model from Çayönü.
After: Redman, p. 159.



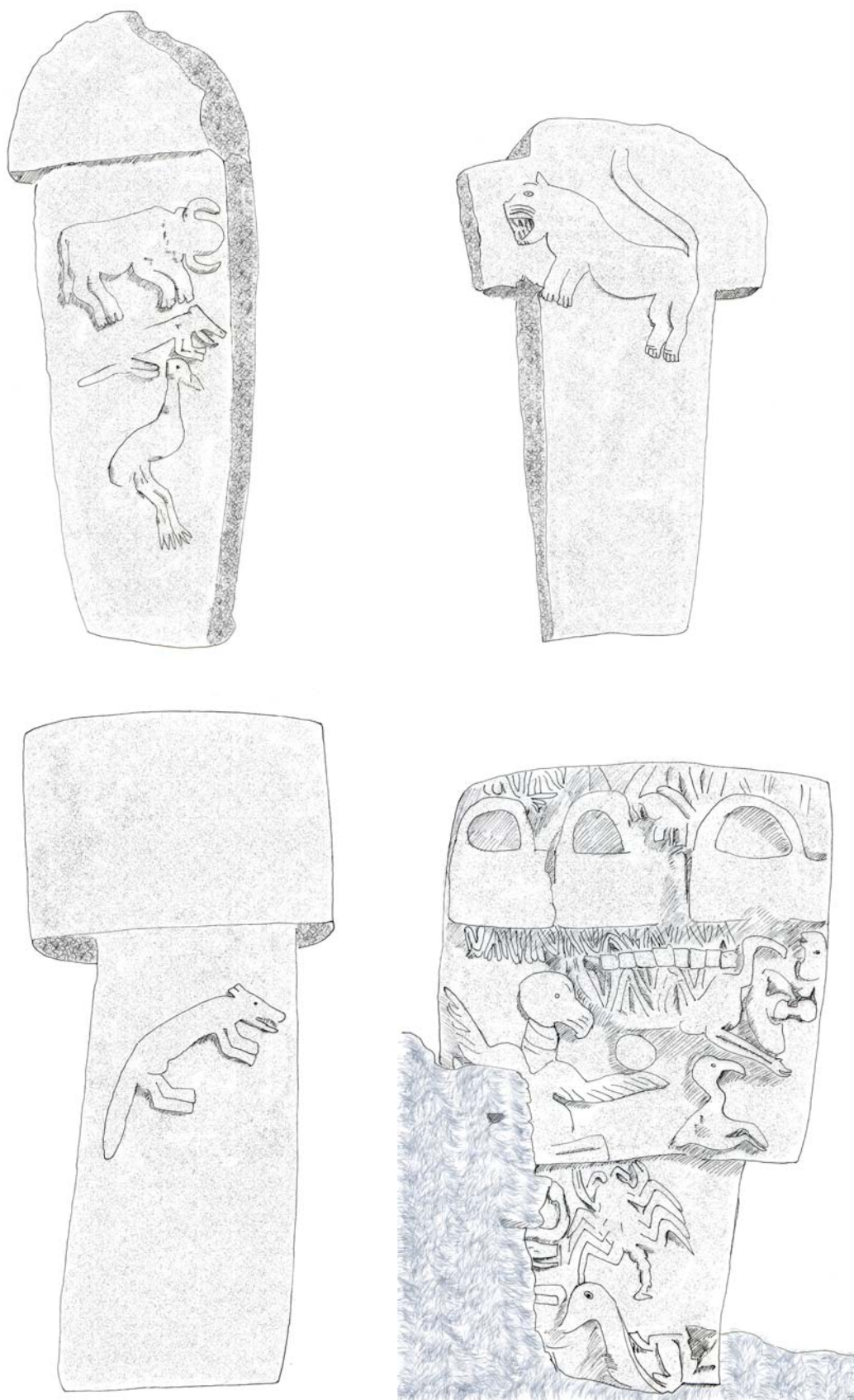
11) Large-Room-Plan building from Çayönü.
After: Redman, p. 160.



12) Gods and goddesses of Nemrik. After: Kozłowsky, *Nemrik, An Aceramic Village in Northern Iraq*,
(Composite figure of) plates CXXXVIII, CXXXIX and CXL.



13) The cultic buildings of Navali Çori. A: Building of level 3; B: Building of level 4. After: Yakar, *Prehistoric Anatolia*, Supplement no. 1, p. 14 and 15. Courtesy of the Institute of Archaeology, Tel Aviv University.



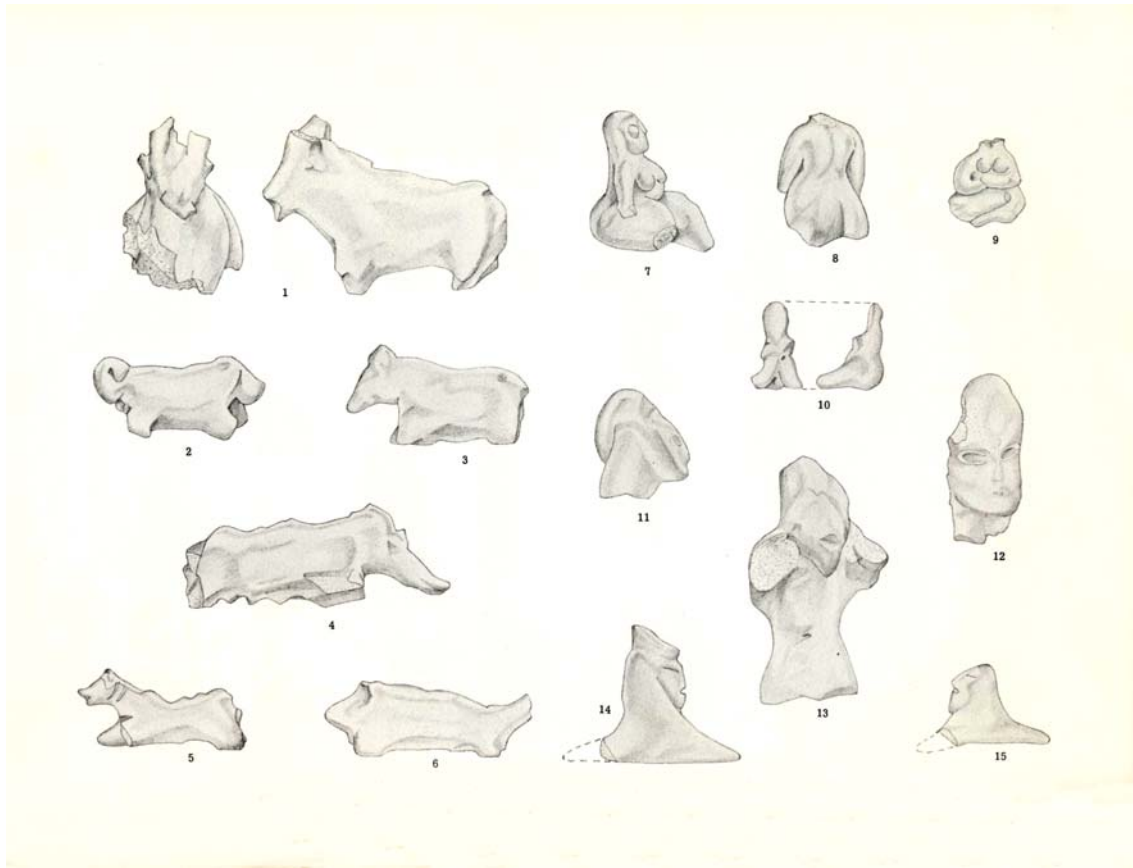
14) Engraved pillars of Göbekli Tepe. Drawings by author from photographs. After: *Die ältesten Monumente der Menschheit*. ed. Badischen Landesmuseum Karlsruhe, Stuttgart, 2007 (figures on pages 83, 84, 88 and 93).



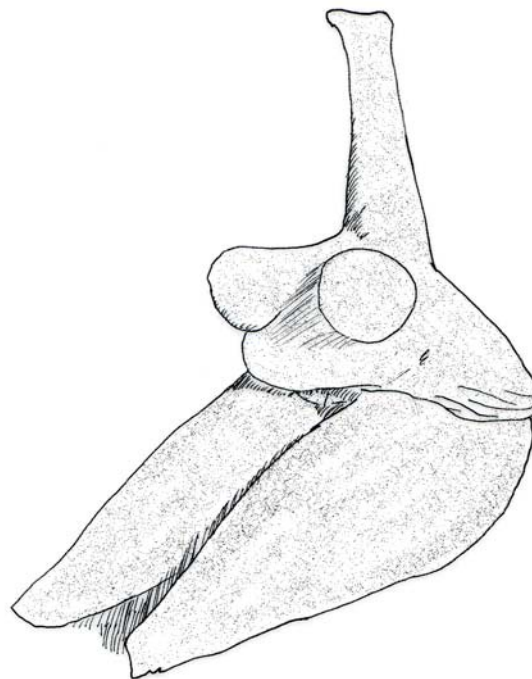
15) The head with snake and other sculptures from Navali Çori. After: Hauptmann, *Neolithic in Turkey* (Plates), figures 10, 12B, 13, 14B, 16 and 18. Courtesy of the Institute of Archaeology, Tel Aviv University.



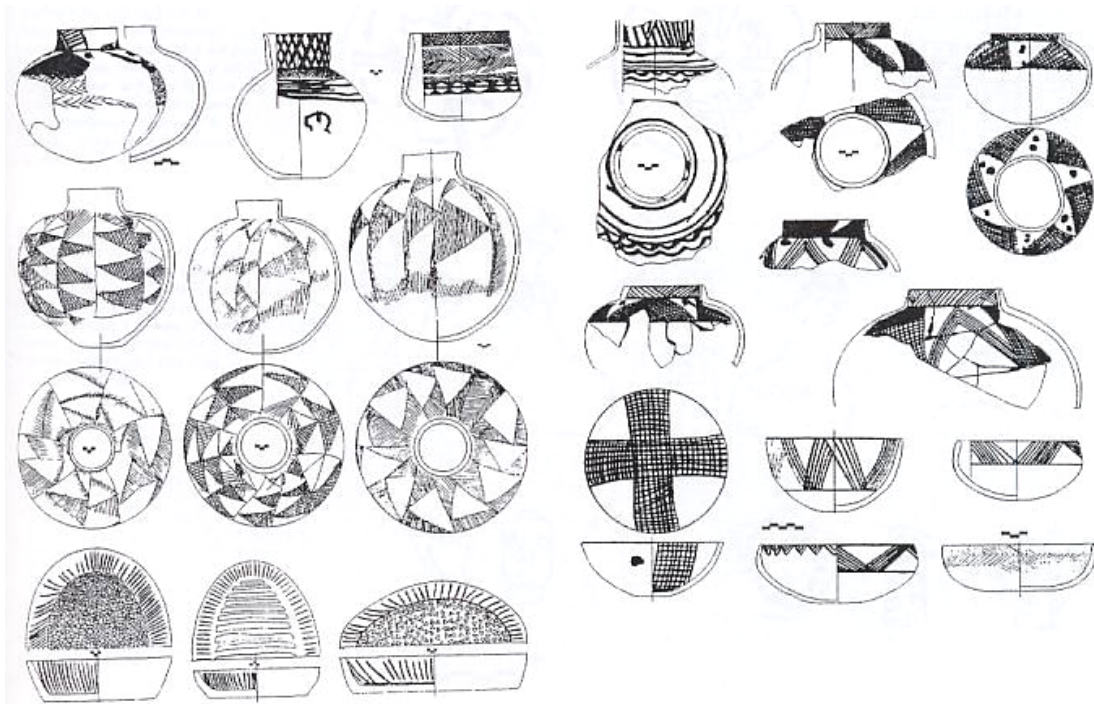
16) Sickle from Jarmo. After: Braidwood *et al.*, *Prehistoric Archaeology along the Zagros Flanks*, fig 89.



17) Clay figurines from Jarmo. After: Braidwood and Howe, *Prehistoric Investigations in Iraqi Kurdistan*, pl. 16.



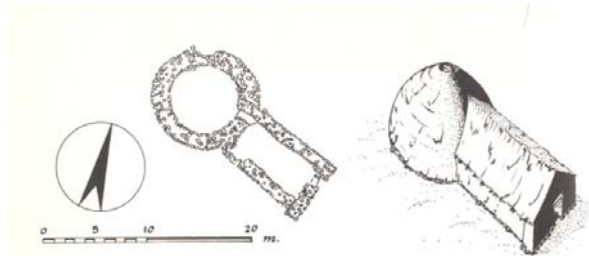
18) Venus of Tepe Sarab. Drawing by author from photographs.



19) Hassuna pottery. After: Lloyd, S. and F. Safar, "Tell Hassuna. Excavations by the Iraq Government Directorate of Antiquities in 1943 and 1945," *JNES* 4 (1945), figs. 2, 3 and 4.



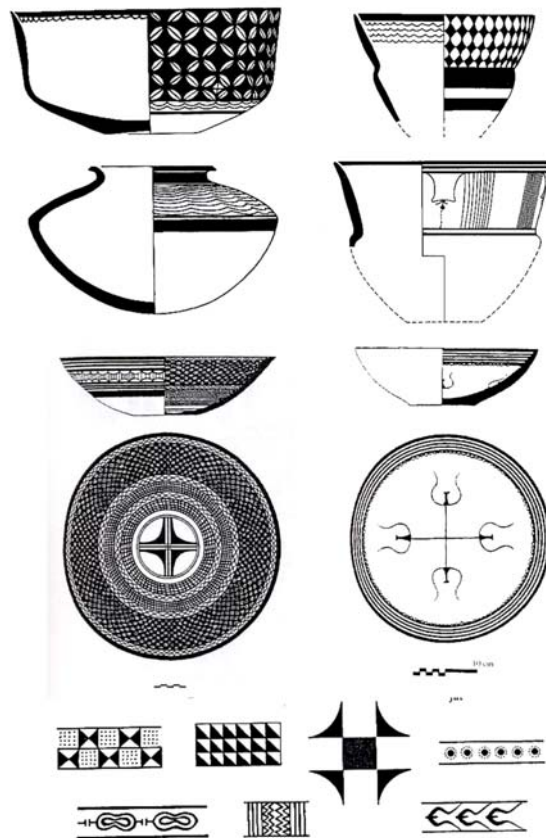
20) Samarra pottery. After: Tulane, E., "A Repertoire of the Samarran Painted Pottery Style," *JNES* 3 (1944), no. 261, 264, 265, 268, 271, 277, 280, 281, 288, 291, 292 and 295.



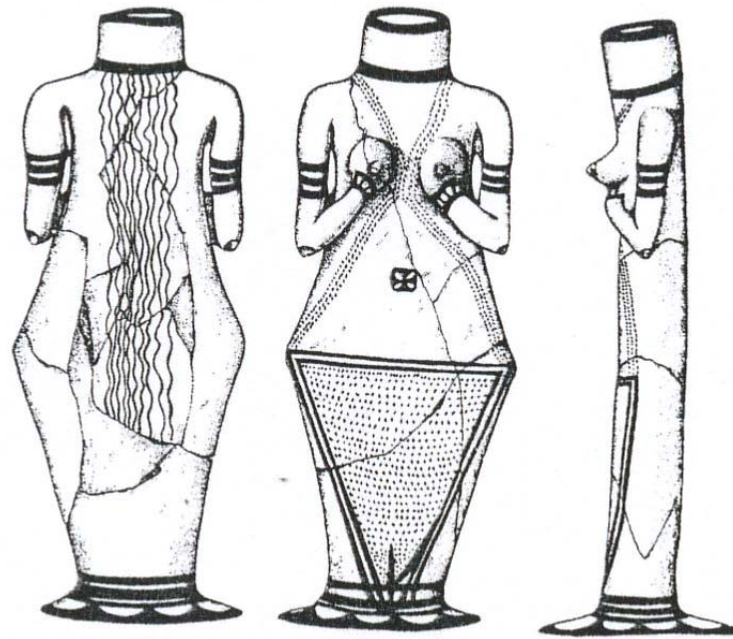
21) The tholoi of Arpachiya and a reconstruction. Drawn by Peter Pratt, after Mallowan. From *The Earliest Civilizations of the Near East* by James Mellaart, Thames and Hudson Ltd, London, fig. 106, p. 122.



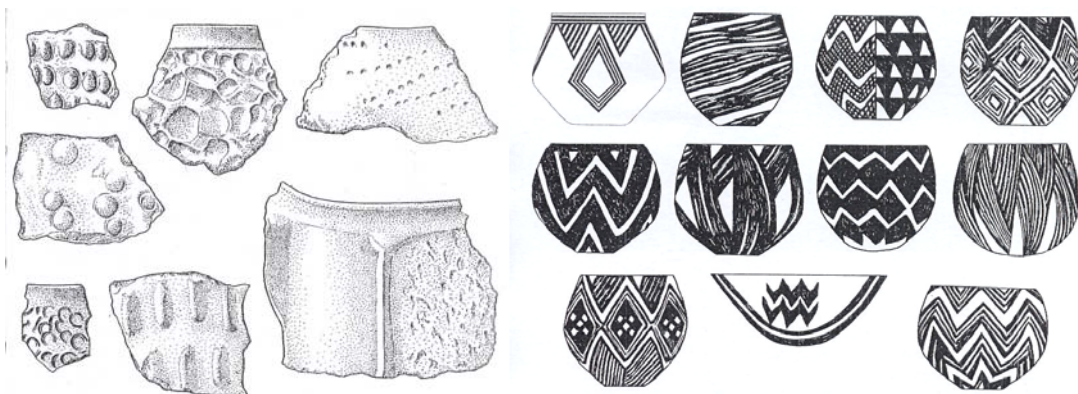
22) The tholoi of Yarim Tepe III. After: Matthews, p. 91. Courtesy of Brepols Publishers n.v., Turnhout, Belgium.



23) Halaf pottery and motifs. After: Tobler, *Excavations at Tepe Gawra*, vol. II, Philadelphia, 1950, pl. CXII, no. 21 and CX, no. 10; Mallowan, M. E. L. and J. C. Rose, "Excavations at Tell Arpachiyah, 1935," *Iraq* 2 (1935), fig. 60; Oppenheim, M. F. von and H. Schmidt, *Tell Halaf I. Die Prähistorischen Funde*, Berlin, 1943, fig. 7; and Redman, fig. 6-12, p. 200.



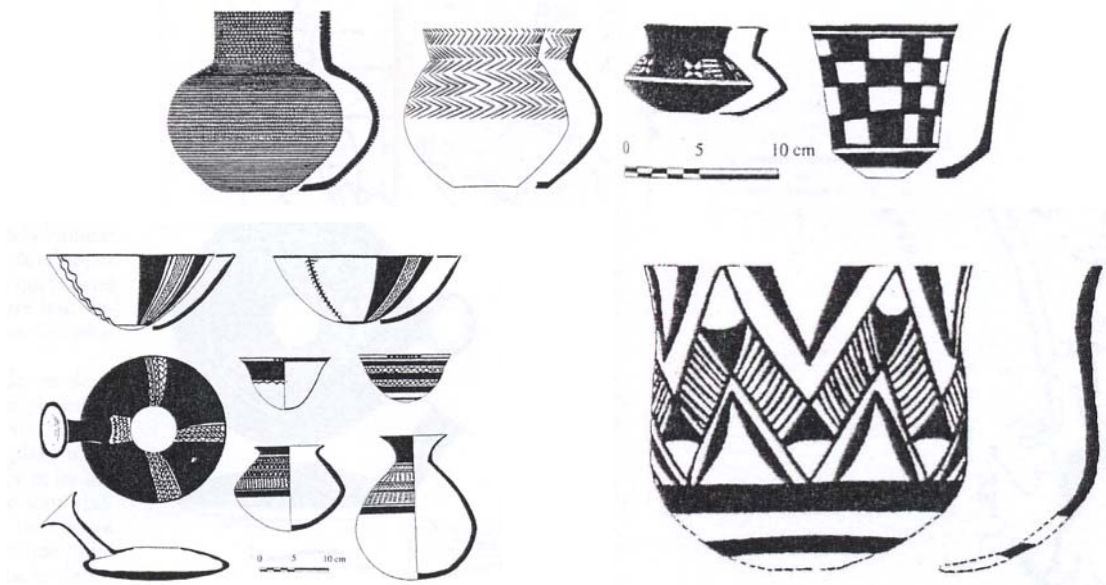
24) Yarim Tepe, vase in the shape of a woman. After: J.-D. Forest, *Mésopotamie, l'apparition...*, fig. 20.



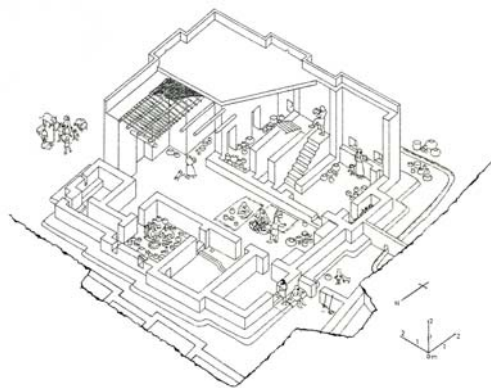
25) Impressed and painted Dalma pottery. Drawn by Gillian Jones after Young. From *Earliest Civilizations of the Near East* by James Mellaart, Thames & Hudson Ltd., London, figures 42 and 43 on pages 71 and 72.



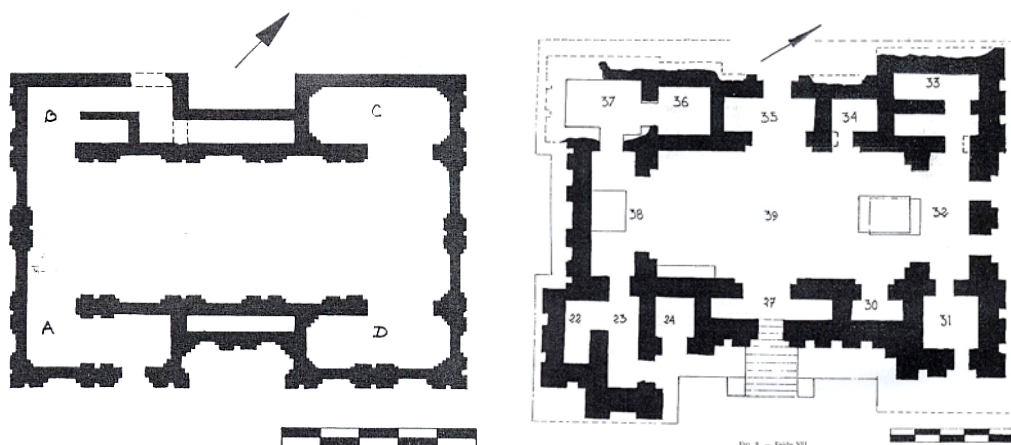
26) Painted jar from Tepe Gawra. After: Basmachi, F., *Treasures of the Iraq Museum*, Baghdad, 1975-6, fig. 17.



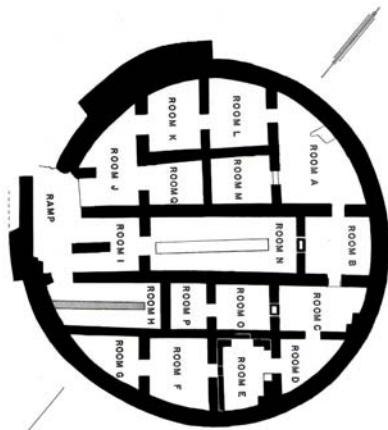
27) Northern Ubaid pottery. After: Tobler, *Excavations at Tepe Gawra*, vol. II, pl. CXXIX, 200 and 202; pl. CXXXI, 214, 217 and 218; pl. CXX, 83-84; CXXI, 89-90; CXII, 106 and 111; CXXIII, 113.



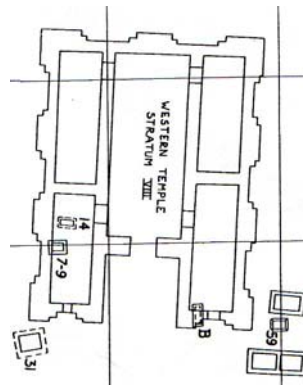
28) A typical Ubaid house from Tell Madhur- Hamrin. After: Forest, fig. 55, p. 58.



29) The Ubaid northern temple of Tepe Gawra (left) compared with the Eridu VII temple (right). After: Tobler, *Excavations at Tepe Gawra*, pl. XII (Gawra temple); and Lloyd, S. and F. Safar, "Eridu. A Preliminary Communication on the First Excavations, January-March 1947," *Sumer* 3 (1947), fig. 3 (Ubaid temple).



30) The round house of Tepe Gawra. After: Tobler, *Excavations at Tepe Gawra*, pl. VII.



31) The tripartite temple of Tepe Gawra. After: Tobler, *Excavations at Tepe Gawra*, pl. XXII.



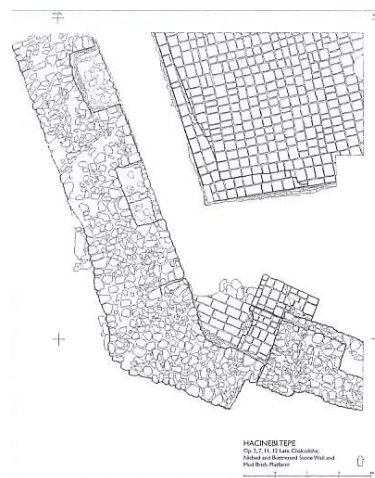
32) A wolf's head of electrum from Tepe Gawra. After: Tobler, *Excavations at Tepe Gawra*, pl. LIX b.



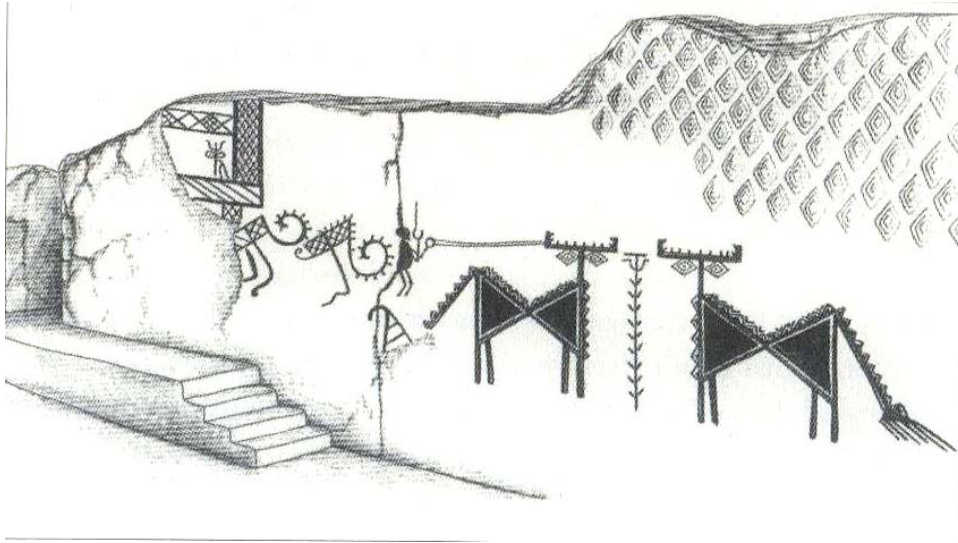
33) Ubaid stamp seals from Tepe Gawra. After Tobler, *Excavations at Tepe Gawra* (selection from different plates)



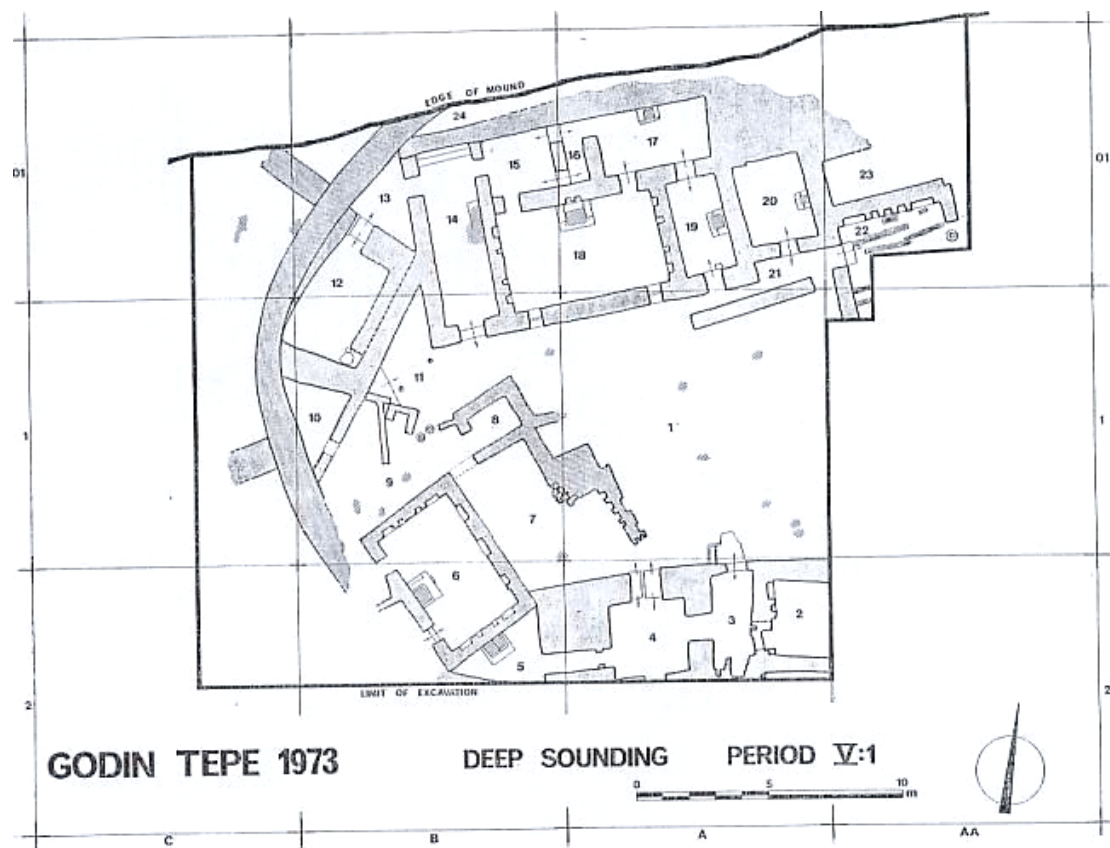
34) Eye-idols from the Eye-Temple of Brak. Drawing by author after: Mallowan, *Early Mesopotamia...*, p. 49.



35) The monumental construction of Hacinebi. Reprinted by permission from *Uruk Mesopotamia & its Neighbors: Cross-Cultural Interactions in the Era of State Formation*, ed. M. S. Rothman. Copyright 2001 by SAR Press, Santa Fe, New Mexico. All Rights reserved, fig. 8.2, p. 272.



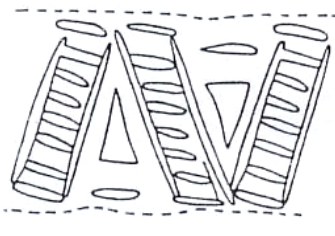
36) Wall-painting of Arslan Tepe. Reprinted by permission from *Uruk Mesopotamia & its Neighbors: Cross-Cultural Interactions in the Era of State Formation*, ed. M. S. Rothman. Copyright 2001 by SAR Press, Santa Fe, New Mexico. All Rights reserved, fig. 9.9, p. 338.



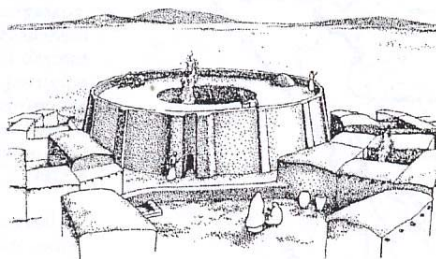
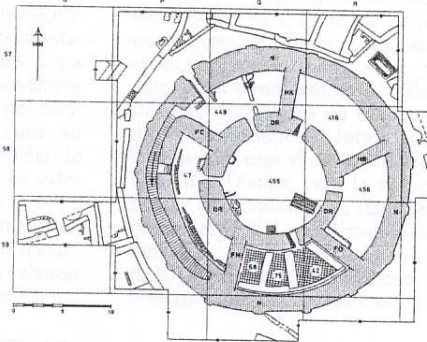
37) The building complex of Godin. After: H. Weiss and T. C. Young, "The Merchants of Susa," *Iran* XIII, fig. 2, p. 4. Courtesy of the British Institute of Persian Studies, London.



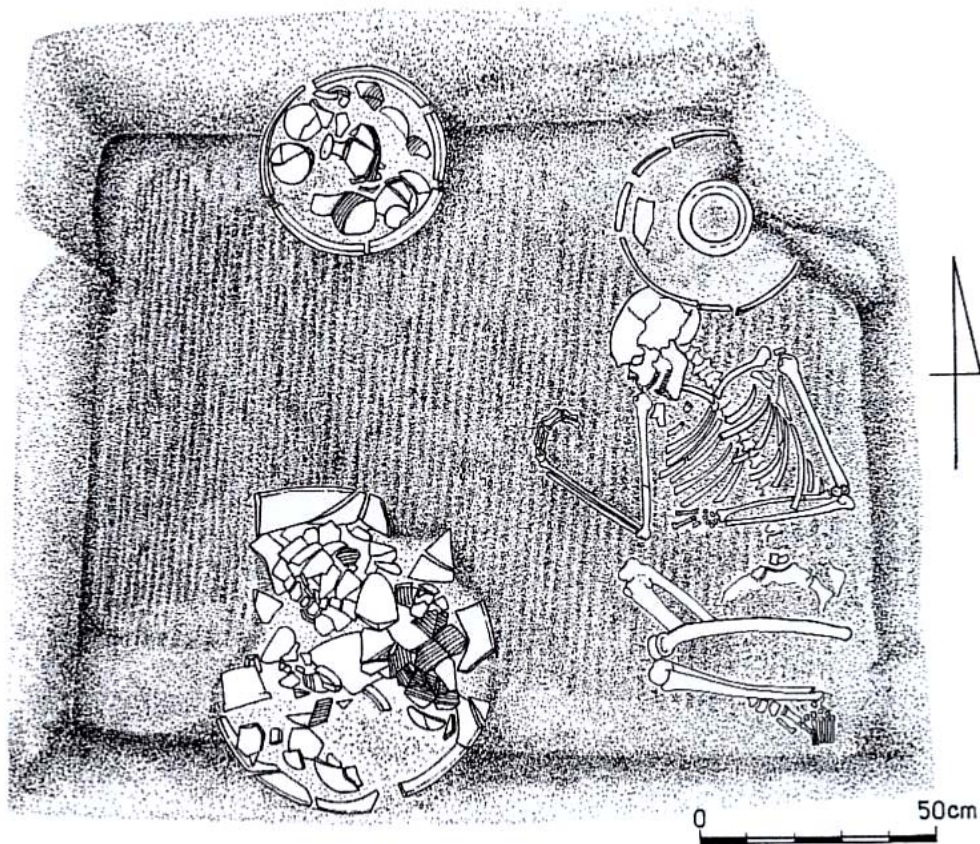
38) Ninevite pottery. Figures to the left after: Bielinski, *Ninevite V Burials at Tell Rijim, Subartu 9*, fig. 6, p. 501. Courtesy of Brepols Publishers n.v., Turnhout, Belgium; figures to the right after Forest, fig. 120, p. 167.



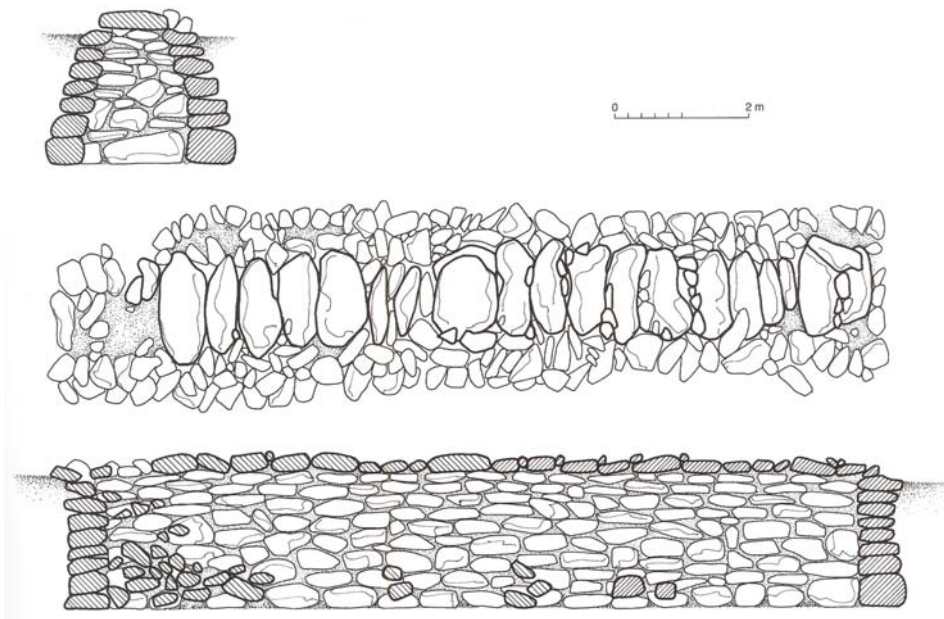
39) Typical piedmont seal impressions. After: Akkermans and Schwartz, fig. 7.4, p. 216. Courtesy of Cambridge University Press.



40) The fort of Tell Razuk. After: Forest, fig. 137, p. 201.



41) The tomb of Tell Rijim. After: Bielinski, fig. 2, p. 499. Courtesy of Brepols Publishers n.v., Turnhout, Belgium.



42) Early Bronze Age I-II tombs from Western Kabir Kuh. After: Haenrick and Overlaet, Early Bronze Age Graveyards to the West of the Kabir Kuh, p. 7, fig. 2.