

Chapter 2: Ancient Near Eastern Art

- Mesopotamia, it is a Greek word that means “the land between the (Tigris and Euphrates) rivers”
- The land where Judaism, Christianity, and Islam began and is now Southern Iraq

Contextual Issues

- Geology:** Building restricted by available materials, not stone quarries/forests = sun baked brick
- Politics/History:** Slow political start to region, slow to construct unified communities because of openness to outside world; invasion (Sumerian>Akkadian>NeoSumerian>Babylonian>Hittite>Assyrian>Neo-Babylonian>Persian) and different racial groups
- Religion:** King/ruler was not god-like but merely his delegate- few kings were deified= city states

Sumerian Art- (3500- 2340 BCE) (Iraq) (images)

2-4, 2-5, 2-8a, 2-8b, 2-10, 2-14, “Gudea”- (Diorite statue/ sitting) 2-15

- First great urban communities “city-states”, earliest known writing system (pictographs scratched into soft clay), invented the potter’s wheel, first literature story “Epic of Gilgamesh” (the king of Uruk-a city-state of Sumeria)
- Development of agriculture led to distribution of labor and the specialization of some individuals in a trade, manufacturing, administration
- The local god’s temple was the nucleus of the city, it held both religious and secular functions, with priests and staff carrying on the official business of both the ruler’s and the god’s possessions
- Their gods were great and rich holder of the lands, herds, and protectors of the city
- Their temples were seen as “waiting rooms”
- The ruler was divinely chosen and received the god’s favor thus greater in stature than other men
But not god-like
- Artwork starts to depict: victory and defeat, war and peace, animals acting like humans
- Mesopotamian Seals made out of stone, stamp and cylinder form
- Birth of art in service of state and religious
- During Neo-Sumerian reign Gudea went back to using the votive statues as a way to intercede to the gods, placing himself as not a god-king.

Akkadian Art- (2180- 2340 BCE) (images)

2-12, 2-13 (detail)

- First Near Eastern kings, and introduced the concept of loyalty to the king over the city-state, and placed the kings on the same level to a god

Babylonian Art- (1792- 1750 BCE) (images)

2-16, 2-25

- Babylon was a great city-state that created an empire
- King Hammurabi, gods bestowed him with authority to rule and to enforce laws, “Hammurabi’s Law Code” (written in Akkadian)
- Most renowned Neo-Babylonian King was Nebuchadnezzar II (book of Daniel, in the bible recounts his exploits) He restored Babylon to its rank as one of the greatest cities of antiquity; the hanging gardens-one of the 7 ancient wonders of the world- and the enormous Ziggurat which was called the “Tower of Babel” in the Bible
- Mud brick city, but blue glazed bricks covered most important monuments

Hittite Art- (1600- 1200) (images)

2-18

- Anatolian (Turkey) people who sacked Babylon (1595 BCE), but left it to retire to their homeland
- The theme of the guardian beasts on either side of an entryway was echoed throughout the Near Eastern Empires

Assyrian Art- (1000- 612 BCE) (images)

2-20, 2-21, 2-24

- Ruled Mesopotamia during a period of almost constant warfare, strong defensive walls reflect this
- Sargon II regarded his palace as an expression of his grandeur, monstrous guardians (Lamassus) guarded the entrance, commissioned narrative reliefs for the walls of victories in battle and slaying of wild animals

Persian Art- (559- 331 BCE) (images)

2-26, Bull Capital

- The largest Empire the world had yet known
- Persian art is evidence of the exchange of ideas and art among all the Mediterranean and Near East, naming Greeks, Medes, Egyptians, and Babylonians as artists that helped build the palace.

Vocab

Apadana- royal audience hall

Cuneiform-

Cylinder seal-

Façade-

Hierarchy of scale- (bigger more important)

Lamassu-

Negative space- empty space around an object or a person

Relief Sculpture- very shallow relief bas-relief (Bah-relief)

Stele-

Ziggurat-

Heraldic Composition-

Questions:

Why is the Stele of Hammurabi so important?

Why was this part of the world such a 'hot spot' for the development of civilization and war?

What great inventions have the Sumerians been credited with?

Egyptian architectural history seems preoccupied with tombs and burial. What are the chief concerns of Mesopotamian architecture?

Chapter 2

N = name D = date (century) P/S = Period/Style A = artist or architect
 Pa = Patron L = original location C = context N = notes of importance

2-4



N:Warka Vase **D:**3200-3000 BCE **P/S:** Ancient Near East
A:unknown craftsman **Pa:**Citizens of Uruk **L:**Uruk, Iraq
C: -Sumerians worshiped _____, mostly nature gods
 -this was made to depict a _____ festival in honor of the goddess _____.
N: -first great work of narrative _____ sculpture
 -lowest band=ewes and rams and crops, symbols of _____, expressing that Innana had blessed them with good _____ and increased their _____.
 -middle band=_____ men carrying _____ with overflowing grains, bringing it to the temple as a _____ offering (votive offering) to the goddess
 -mixture of _____ and _____ views
 -upper band=larger female and priest-king, their _____ symbolizing their _____ (Hierarchy of scale)

2-5



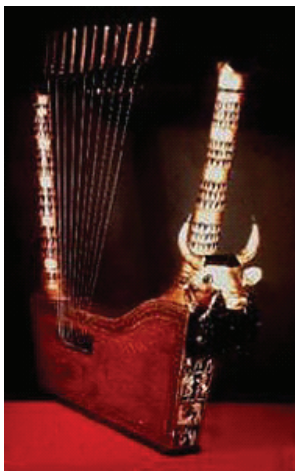
N:Sumerian Votive Offerings **D:**2700 BCE **P/S:**Ancient Near East
A:unknown craftsman **Pa:**Individual citizens of Sumeria **L:**Square Temple at Eshnunna (modern Tell Asmar), Iraq
C: -some inscriptions state that they are made to represent the _____ of the statue and offer up a specific _____ on behalf of the owner.
 -they wait in the "_____ " for the god to appear (surrogate, or avatar)
-exaggerated eyes wide open symbolizing their _____
N: -from 1' to 30" tall, different sizes depicts the _____, **representing mortals, hands folded in prayer** holding small beakers used in religious rites
 -men wear _____ and shoulder-length hair, beards
 -women wear _____, right shoulder bare

2-8



N:Standard of Ur **D:**2600 BCE **P/S:** Ancient Near East
A:Unknown craftsman **Pa:** citizens of Ur **L:**Royal Cemetary, Ur, Iraq
C: -function is unknown but is seen as a _____ narrative
 -the lavishness of the box as well as other items found in the tombs shows that they laid to rest some of _____ in regal fashion.
 -dozens of bodies, chariots, and other luxurious items buried with the "_____ " or those of greater esteem, sacred spaces
N: -the top is the war side, (read left to right, bottom to top), depicts _____ mowing down enemy, foot soldiers gathering _____ and leading them away, degrade them by _____ them, and then present to king who is _____ (hierarchical)
 -the bottom depicts men bringing _____ to a great _____, equipped with dignitaries, musicians and larger than life king, perhaps a _____ celebration

2-9
2-10



N:Bull Headed Lyre/ Soundbox of the lyre **D:**2600 BCE **P/S:**Ancient N E.
A:Unknown **Pa:**Unknown **L:**Tomb 789 ("Kings Grave") Royal Cemetary, Ur, Iraq
C: -lavish _____ set to rest in tomb/sacred space
N: - _____ overlaid on bull head, with hair, beard, and details of _____
 - _____ composition, seen as a continuous theme throughout the ages
 -bull bodies with human heads, and other _____ creatures and animals acting as humans--a very early specimen of the recurring theme in _____

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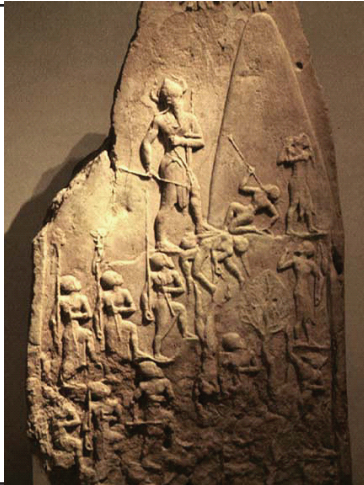
2-14



N: Head of an Akkadian ruler **D:** 2250-2200 BCE **P/S:** Ancient Near East
A: unknown sculptor **Pa:** unknown king of Akkad **L:** Nineveh, Iraq
C: - _____, a new concept introduced by Akkadians, answer to
 _____ above the city-state
 -king seen as _____

N: -sculptor balanced _____ with _____ patterning
 -life-size, hollow cast, metal sculpture, the _____ great
 monumental work of hollow-cast sculpture
 -sophisticated skill in casting, polishing, and engraving the _____

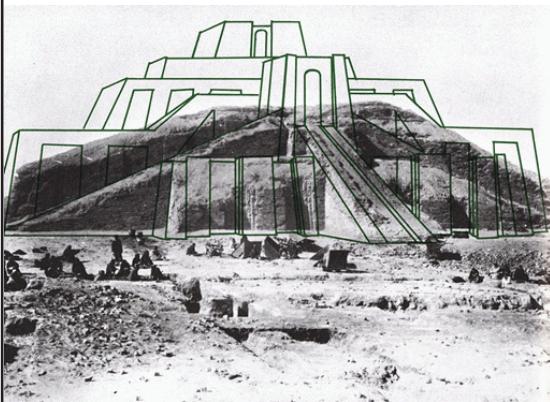
2-13



N: Victory stele of Naram-Sin **D:** 2254-2218 BCE **P/S:** Ancient Near East
A: unknown sculptor **Pa:** Naram-Sin, king of Akkad **L:** Susa, Iran
C: -god-like sovereignty of the _____ of Akkad claimed
 -commemorates his _____ of the Nubuli people
 -first time a king appears as a _____ in Mesopotamian art
 - _____ as a theme

N: -Naram-Sin leads his army up the slope with _____ dying or begging
 for mercy. The _____ stands alone and taller than the rest and looks
 like he is ascending into the heavens
 -horned helmet signifies _____
 -his troops march in _____, signifying discipline and organization while
 the enemy is in _____

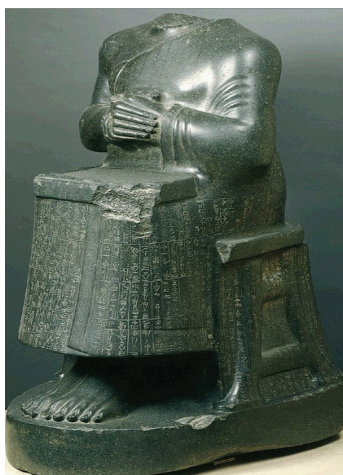
2-14



N: Ziggurat of Ur **D:** 2100 BCE **P/S:** Ancient Near East/Neo-Sumerian
A: citizens of Ur **Pa:** Kings of Ur **L:** Ur, Iraq
C: -the _____ city-states united together and were ruled by the kings
 of Ur.
 -built about _____ years after the ziggurat at Uruk

N: -one of the _____ in Mesopotamia
 -the base is a solid mass of _____ 50 feet high

2-15



N: Seated statue of Gudea holding temple plan **D:** 2100 BCE **P/S:** Ancient NE
A: unknown craftsman **Pa:** Gudea (king) **L:** Girsu, Iraq
C: -follows the _____ view of the gods as coming down to _____
 with them, holds the same position as the Sumerian Votive
 Offerings in " _____ " or _____
 -diorite is extremely _____, and the prestige of the material
 shows the prestige of Gudea's portraits
 -the size and prestige lends itself to the belief that the _____ was
 the god's _____.

N:

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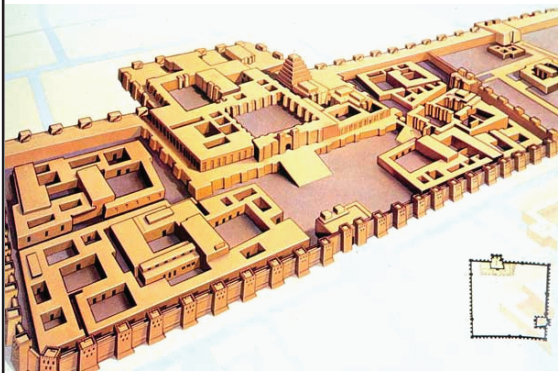
N:Stele with law code of Hammurabi **D:**1780 BCE
P/S:Ancient Near East **A:**Unknown craftsman **Pa:**Hammurabi
L: Susa, Iran
C: -Babylon was a city state that grew to _____ and **under** Hammurabi's leadership, became the centralized _____ & ruled southern Mesopotamia
-his _____ in etched onto the stele and at the top is Hammurabi facing a seated Shamash (flame shouldered _____) who is bestowing Ham. with the authority to _____ laws.
-Ham. hand is raised in _____, and their heads are on the same _____ showing Ham.'s elevated stature, yet Shamash is _____ showing he is still greater
N: -artist depicted them in typical side and front view, except the _____ is in strict profile showing only one side of the set of _____ horns, also he explored the notion of foreshortening with the **lines in the** _____

2-18



N:Lions Gate **D:** 1400 BCE
P/S:Ancient Near East **A:**Unkown craftsmsan **Pa:**Hittite Kings
L:Boghazkoy, Turkey
C: -Hittites sacked _____ and then left to go back home, Turkey
- Heavily fortified _____
-placing set of _____ at the entryway to protect against _____ is quite common in Ancient Near East, although these are huge _____ feet tall carvings from stone, as opposed to the _____ architecture of Mesopotamia
N:

2-20



N:Reconstruction drawing of the citadel of Sargon II **D:**720-705 BCE
P/S:Ancient Near East **A:**unkown Assyrian craftsman **Pa:**Sargon II
L:Dur Sharrukin, Iraq
C: -Assyrian empire extended from _____ river to the _____, and Persian Gulf to Asia Minor
-citadel reveals _____ of their all conquering might
-strong defensive walls show _____, during time of constant _____
- _____ acres, _____ courtyards and rooms, _____ feet elevated
-Sargon II regarded his city and palace as a reflection of his _____
-cultivated an _____ of merciless to those who defy, yet merciful to those who submit
N: -the _____ in the citadel has the same bent axis approach as the Sumerians approach to the Ziggurat of _____ h almost 2000 years later

2-21



N: Lamassu (winged, human-headed bull) **D:**720-705 BCE **P/S:**Ancient Near East **A:**unknown Assyrian Sculptor **Pa:**Sargon II
L: Gate of Sargon's palace, Dur Sharrukin, Iraq
C: -winged _____ bulls, served to ward off the _____
-task of _____ such massive stones was a feat of _____
N: -made of _____
-meant to be viewed by either the _____, but not _____
-from the front the Lamassu is in a _____
-from the side it is _____
-end up with a total of _____ legs
-another example of a _____ picture (all important parts vs. an _____ view (the way it would really look)

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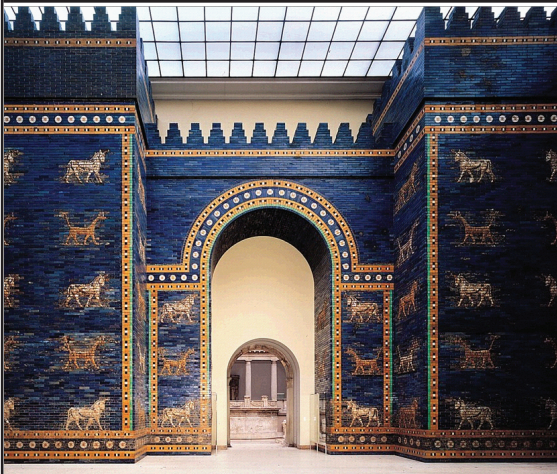
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2-24



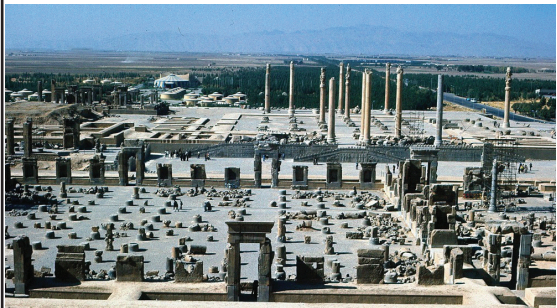
N: Ashurbanipal hunting lions, relief from the North Palace of Ashurbanipal
D: 645-640 BCE **P/S:** Ancient Near East
A: unknown Assyrian sculptors **Pa:** Ashurbanipal **L:** Nineveh, Iraq
C: -artists intentions were to _____ their king in this glorious position of conquering over the _____
 -made to be a _____ depiction of _____ of king over enemies/wild beasts
 -by making the lions full of _____, and nobility, it makes the king's conquering of them _____
N: -this really took place in a _____ environment to _____ the safety of the king, _____ let loose
 - _____ carving made of gypsum

2-25



N: Ishtar Gate (restored) **D:** 575 BCE **P/S:** Ancient Near East
A: Neo-Babylonian **Pa:** Nebuchadnezzar II **L:** Babylon, Iraq
C: -Power and Authority revealed in the grandeur of the _____
 -Neb. most _____ of the Neo-Babylonian kings, hanging gardens, and the " _____ " ziggurat.
N: -Ishtar was a _____ who possessed a sacred _____, the golden _____ is represented on the walls lining the processional way toward the gate. They were _____ of yellow, brown and red, the rest were blue
 -molded with a _____ style
 -the gate has Marduk's _____ and Adad's _____ lining it

2-26



N: Persepolis **D:** 521-465 BCE **P/S:** Ancient Near East
A: unknown **Pa:** Persian Kings (Xerxes?)
L: Persepolis, Iran
C: -Power, grandeur, and _____
 -The largest _____ the world had yet known, extending from Danube river to the Indus river
 -although their sculptures were inspired by _____, seems as though style was echoed from more _____ sculpture, with the folds of drapery and
 -an exchange of _____ is seen throughout the Persian Empire
N: - _____ feet high audience hall, apadana
 -Large _____ winged bulls at the entryway, similar to the _____