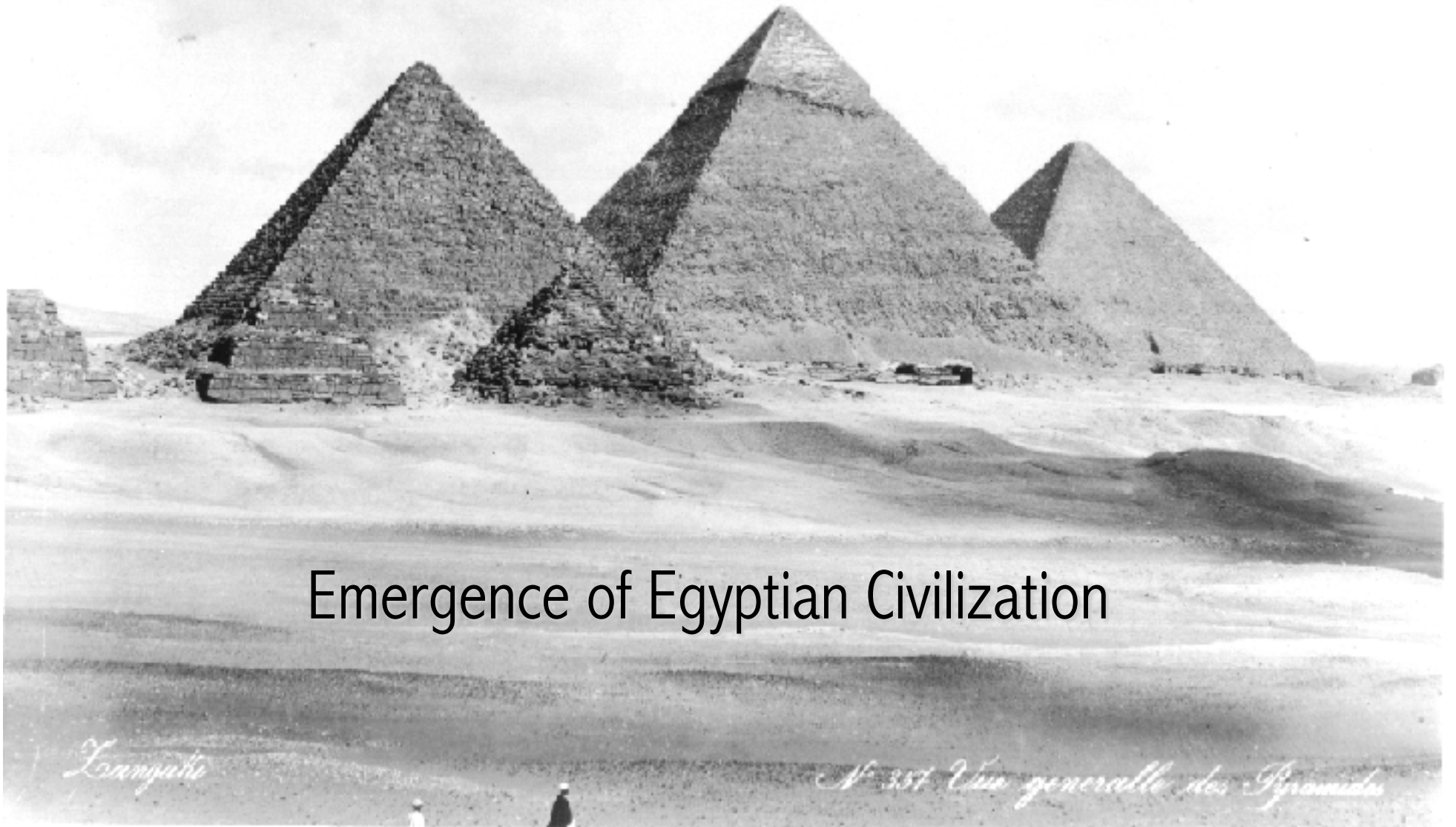


# Egypt



Emergence of Egyptian Civilization

*L'Égypte*

*N° 357 Vue générale des Pyramides*

# Defining Civilization - McAdams



- ◆ Class stratification
- ◆ Ownership and control of production
- ◆ Political and religious hierarchies
- ◆ Central administration
- ◆ Division of labor
- ◆ Skilled workers
- ◆ Officials
- ◆ Peasants

# Defining Civilization - Childe

- ◆ Size and density of cities
- ◆ Surplus (craft specialization)
- ◆ Specialized labor
- ◆ Class structured society
- ◆ State organization
- ◆ Monumental public works
- ◆ Foreign exchange
- ◆ Highly developed art
- ◆ Writing
- ◆ Arithmetic, geometry, astronomy



# Defining Civilization - Trigger



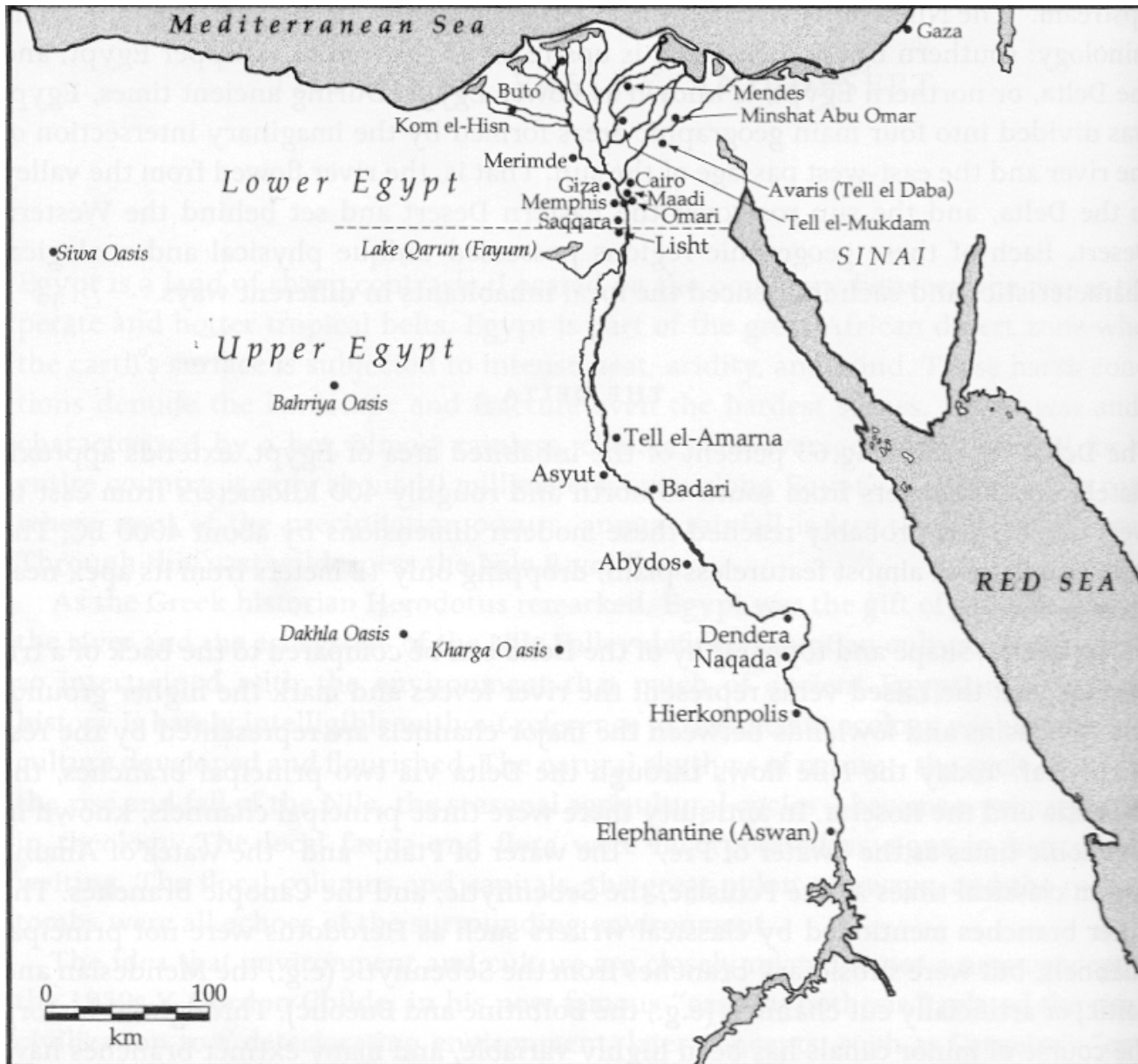
1. Economic complexity = division of labor in craft production, people divorced from food production
2. Different strategies for obtaining food
3. Political context

# Defining Civilization - Kluckhohn



1. Permanent towns with at least 5,000 residents
2. Record keeping
3. Monumental ceremonial architecture





# Basic Chronology



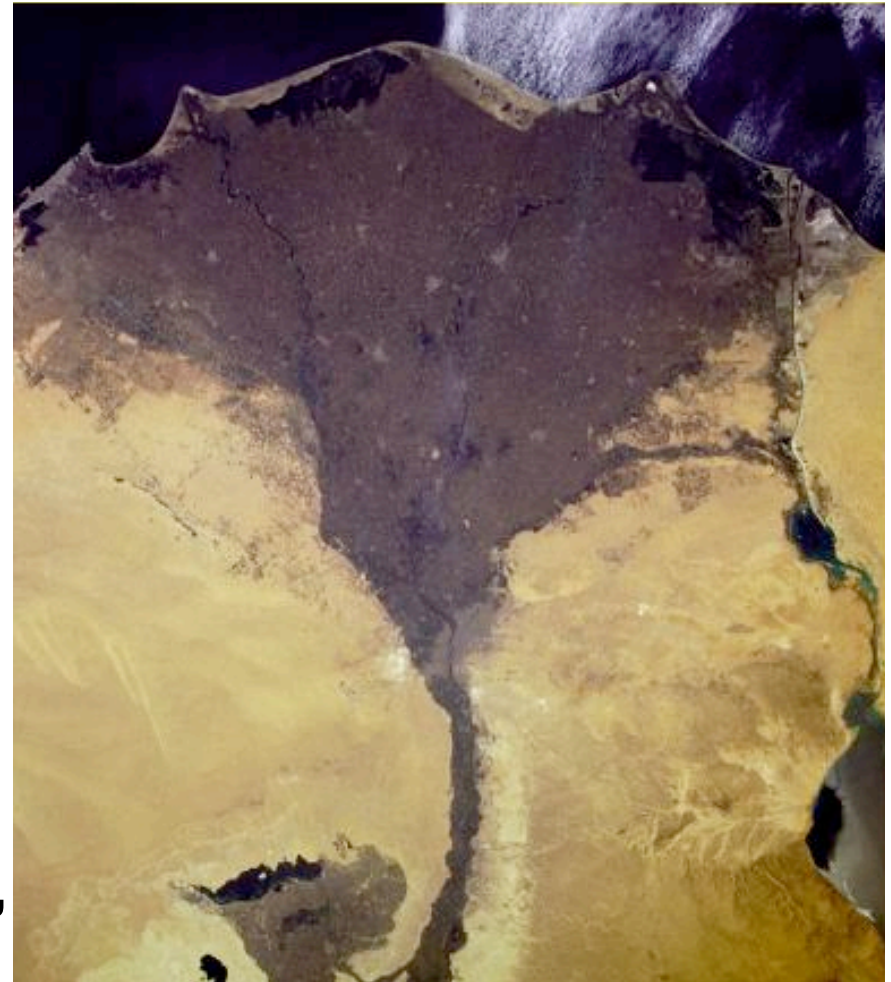
Upper Egypt	Lower Egypt	Dates (BC)	Period
Naqada I	Maadi-Buto	4200-3600	Chalcolithic
Naqada II	Maadi-Buto	3600-3300	EBIa
Naqada III (unification)		3300-3000	EBIb
Early Dyn. (1-2)		3000-2700	EBII
Old Kingdom (3-6) Pyramids		2700-2200	EBIII
1 <sup>st</sup> Intermediate (factionalism)		2200-2000	EBIV/MBI
Mid. Kingdom "Classic period"		2000-1700	MBI
New Kingdom		1550-1069	



# Environmental Circumscription



- ◆ Nile Valley very fertile, surrounded by barren desert
- ◆ Forces people to stay in valley, limits mobility
- ◆ Political significance
  - Magnifies competitive pressures
- ◆ Nile Valley, “Socio-political pressure cooker”



# The Nile: Unifying Force

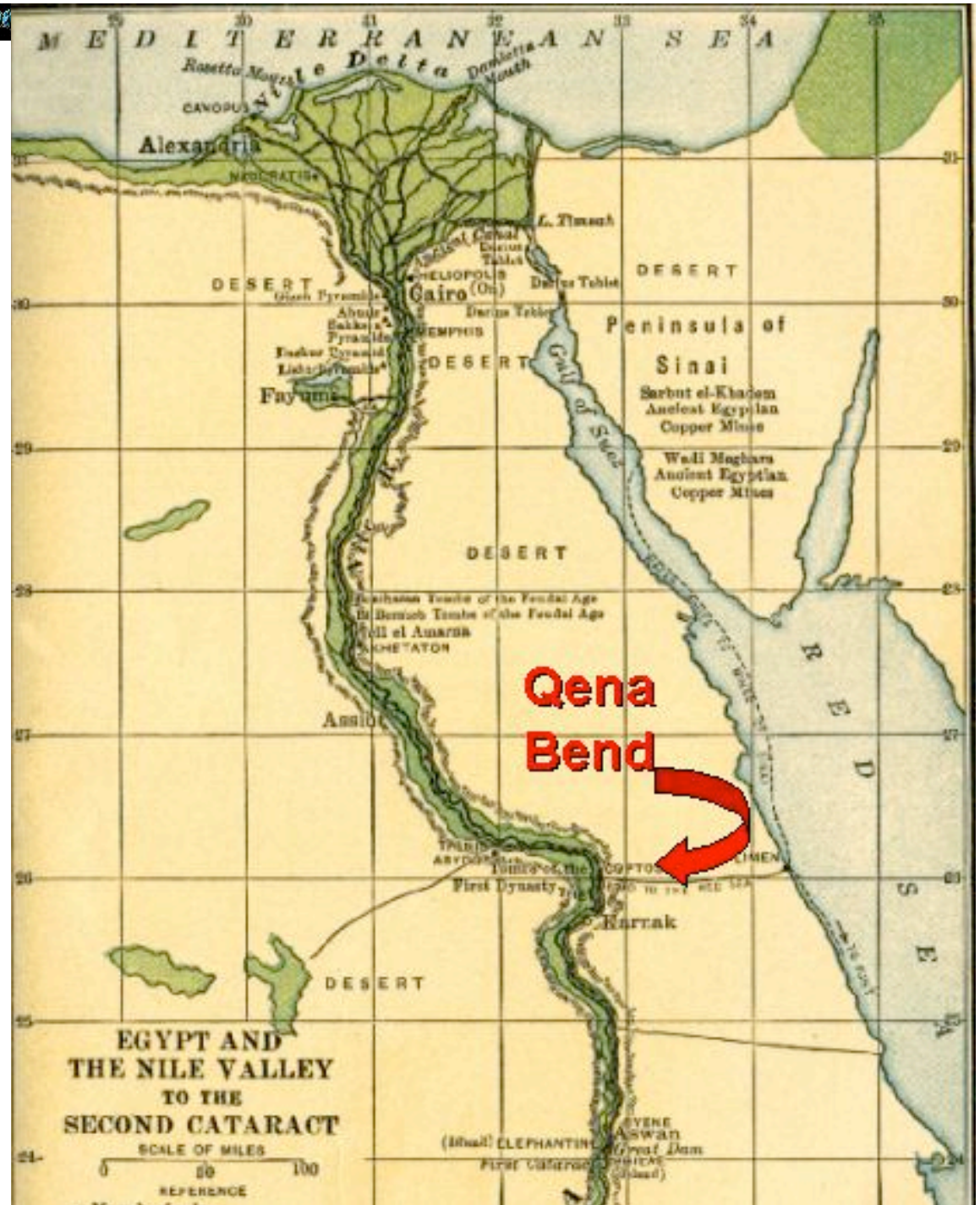


- ◆ North-South wind
- ◆ South to north river flow Allows transport along 800 kms of valley
- ◆ Encourages communication, contact, and magnifies social competition



# Upper vs. Lower Egypt

- ◆ Delta = Lower Egypt (north) – peripheral to state formation
- ◆ Upper Egypt = Nile Valley – center of state formation, esp. around Qena Bend



# Early Dynastic Egypt (c. 3000 BC)



- ◆ Controlling Nile from Aswan to Delta (1000 km)
- ◆ Evidence for state control; serekhs, sealings, labels
  - suggests taxation system
- ◆ Abydos (south) important cult center
- ◆ Kings of 1<sup>st</sup> Dynasty found at Abydos
- ◆ Organization very different to Mesopotamia

# Egypt



- ◆ The Old Kingdom period (2700-2200 BCE) marked the beginning of Nile valley civilization
- ◆ The merger of Nile valley societies under one king created the world's first nation state
- ◆ The pharaoh was the supreme power of societies

# Narmer Palette: Unification?



# Egypt = Civilization ?



- ◆ Spread of pottery and architectural styles
- ◆ Unequal distribution of wealth, power and prestige
- ◆ Kingly authority
- ◆ Post 3100 BCE



# Writing = Civilization

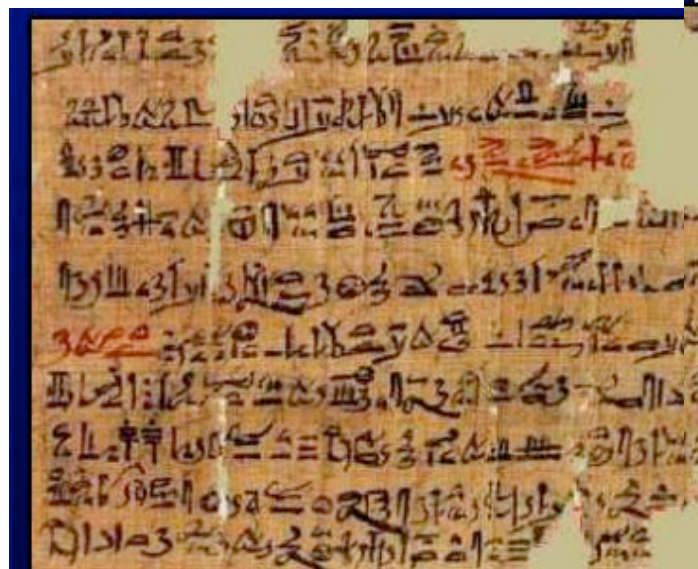


- ◆ Earliest writing found in Naqada III (3300 BCE)
- ◆ Inspiration from Mesopotamia?



# Egyptian Writing

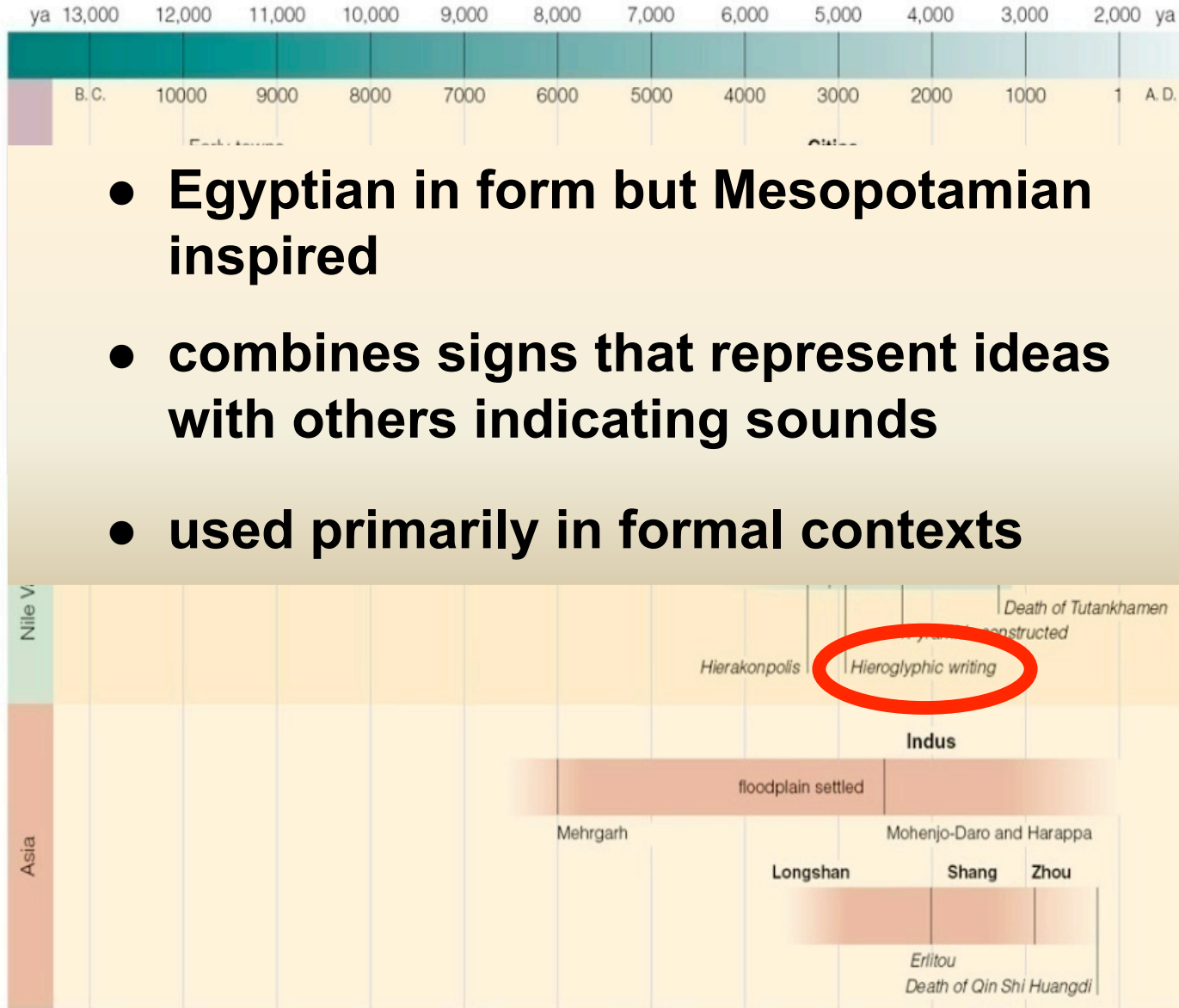
- ◆ Forms of writing specialize
- ◆ Bureaucratic
  - Hieratic (Cursive)
- ◆ Monumental/Display
  - Hieroglyphic (Aesthetic)





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**The Rosetta Stone,  
as displayed in the British Museum in the nineteenth century**



- Egyptian in form but Mesopotamian inspired
- combines signs that represent ideas with others indicating sounds
- used primarily in formal contexts



# Monumental Architecture = Civilization



- ◆ Significance of monumental structures
- ◆ Environmental context
  - Role of the Nile & the desert
- ◆ Emergence of the “Cult of the Dead”
- ◆ Social competition in death
- ◆ Unification
- ◆ Pyramids, centralization & decentralization



# Naqada I (Amratian)



- ◆ Similar to Badarian, dead buried in simple pits
- ◆ Some larger tombs
- ◆ Upper Egypt, grave goods are typical
- ◆ Lower Egypt, rare
- ◆ Many tombs looted before Petrie excavated at Naqada
  - Looted during Naqada, or soon after



MU3294 White Crossed Lineware Bowl  
Naqada I

# Naqada I: Beginnings

- ◆ Burials with grave goods in Upper Egypt
- ◆ Minor differences in wealth
- ◆ Differences increasing with time

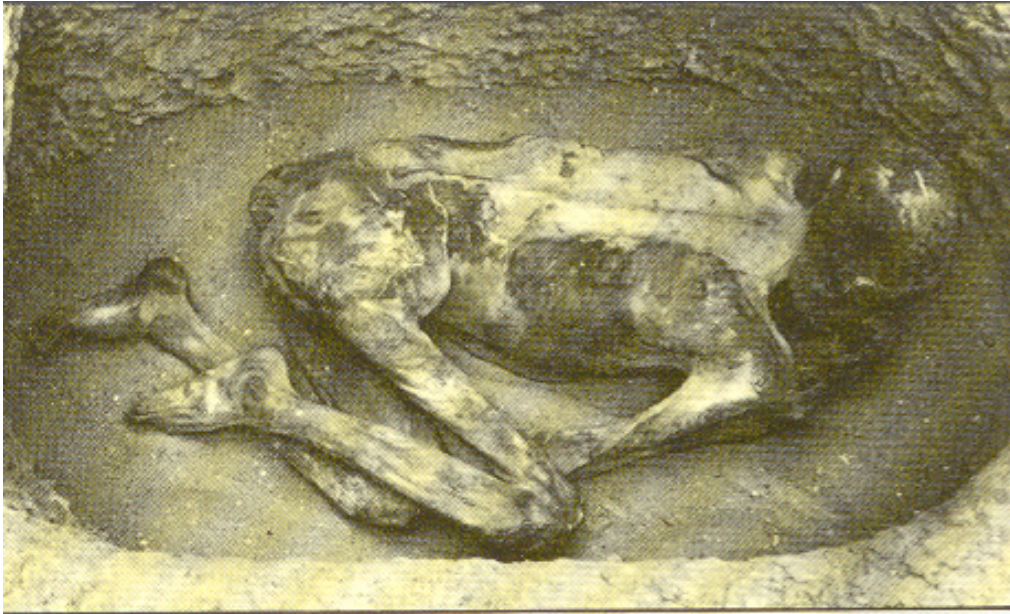


# Naqada I Burial

- ◆ Finds included ivory fragments, ivory bangle, beads, shell armband, pottery
- ◆ Black topped pottery still included, painted pottery appears



# Predynastic pit graves





# Naqada II (Gerzean) Emergent Social Stratification



- ◆ Wide range; some tombs large & elaborate
- ◆ Grave goods differ in quantity & quality

# Non-elite burial



# Naqada II: Craft Specialists



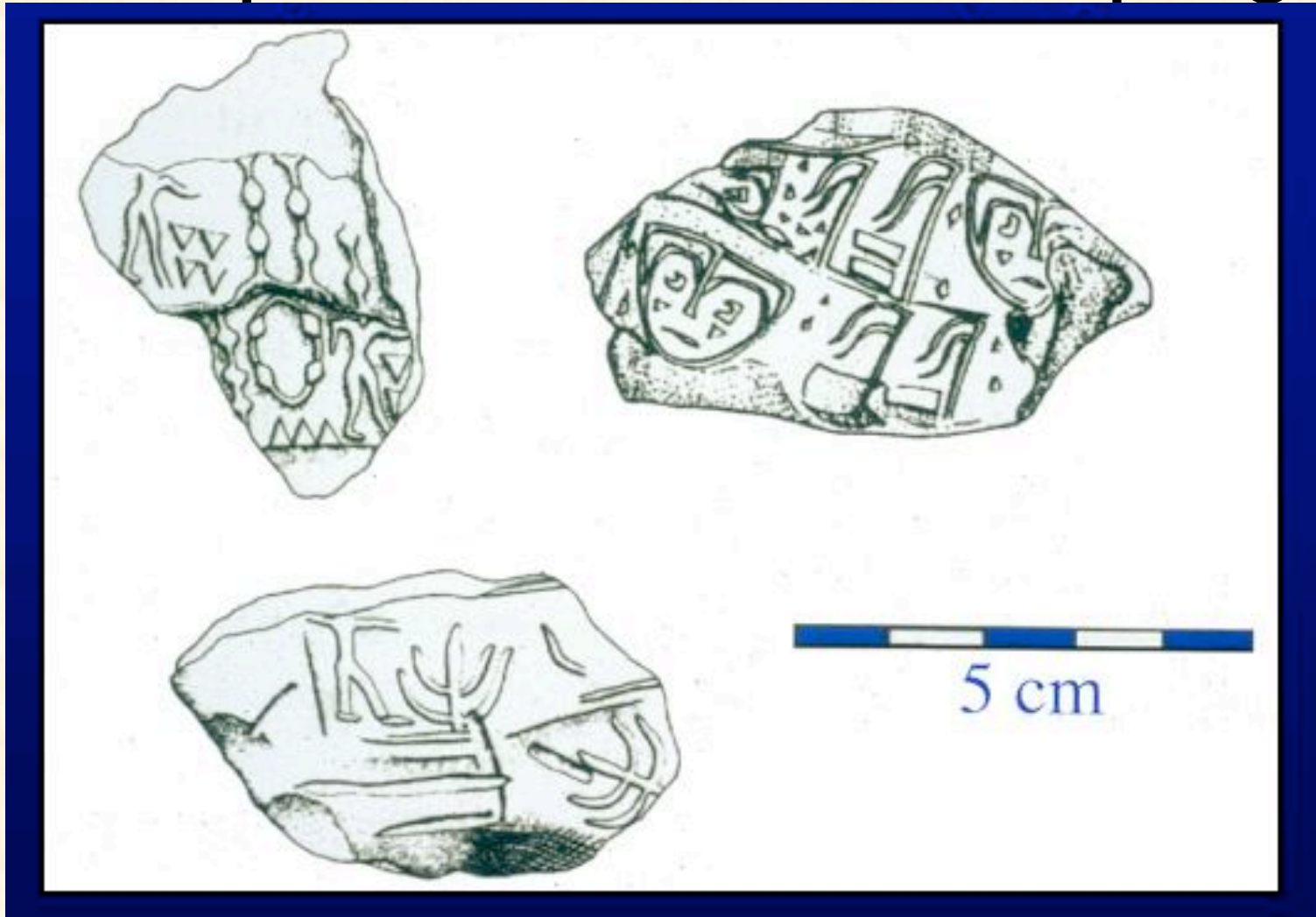
- ◆ Prestige/wealth goods; stone working takes off
- ◆ Labor intensive, exotic or rare raw materials

# Craft Specialization: Metallurgy



- ◆ Specialized craft, expands in Naqada II, axes, blades
- ◆ Requires access to ores, long-distance trade/contacts, labor intensive exploitation & manufacture

# Naqada II: Record Keeping



- ◆ Growing wealth & scale of institutions
- ◆ Complexity of management

# Narmer *serekhs*

- ◆ *serekh*: kingship name inside stylized rectangle
- ◆ Dyn. 0-3, after that, *cartouche*
- ◆ containing Horus name of kings
  - Catfish = nar; chisel = mer
  - This one missing Horus, falcon on top of facade
- ◆ Narmer, Dyn 0? First Dyn?
  - Menes? Known from later sources as founder of Egypt
- ◆ Found in Canaan, petrography indicates ceramic from Nile



Narmer *serekh*, Nahal Tillah excavations (near Beersheva, Israel)

# External contacts

- ◆ Strong presence of Egyptian material culture in Palestine
- ◆ Egyptian pottery, flints, but few
- ◆ *serekhs*
- ◆ Unclear why
  - Trade?
  - Military conquest?
  - Colonization?



# Levantine objects in Egypt



- ◆ Naqada II-III
- ◆ Primarily pottery





# Hierakonpolis (Kom el-Ahmar) “City of the Hawk”

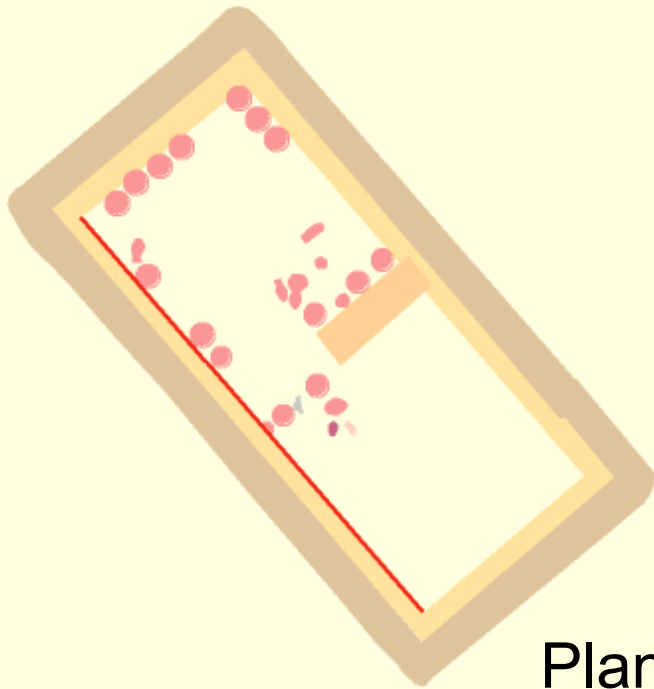


- ◆ Cemeteries and settlement site
- ◆ Excavated since late 19<sup>th</sup> c.
- ◆ Prime importance in pre- and Early Dynastic Period
- ◆ Cult center of the god Horus of Nekhen
  - Horus = god of kingship, celestial power



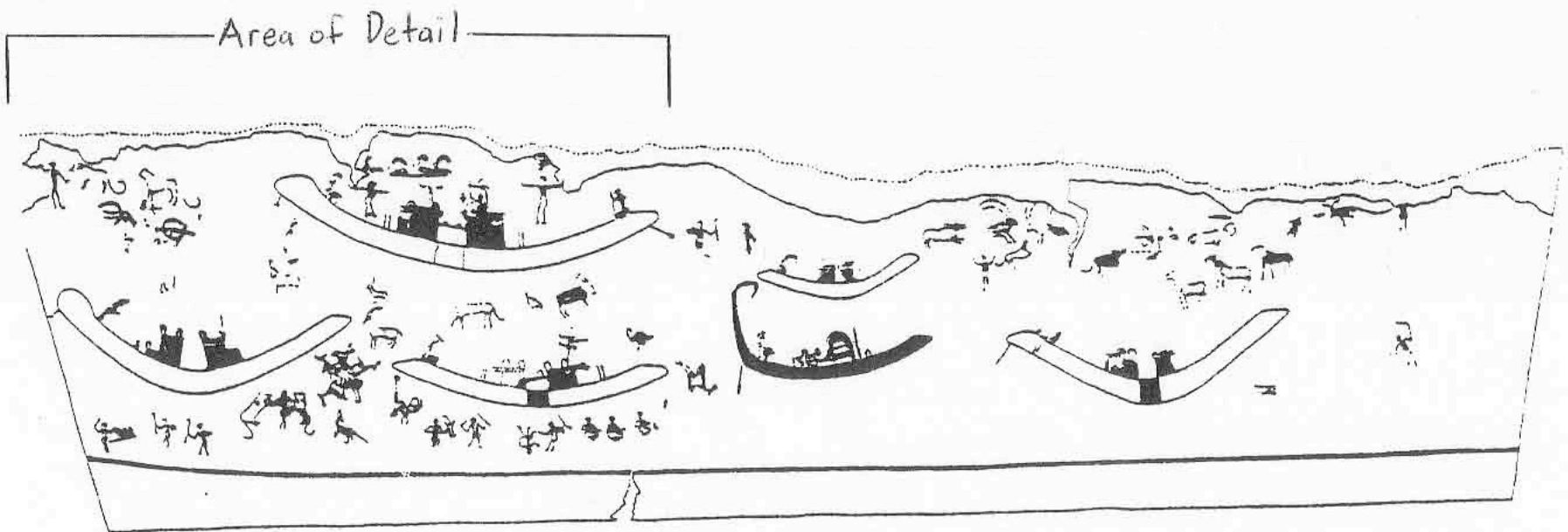
# Hierkanopolis Tomb 100

- ◆ Naqada II
- ◆ about 3500 BC
- ◆ Motifs suggest king



Plan of tomb, red line indicates wall painting

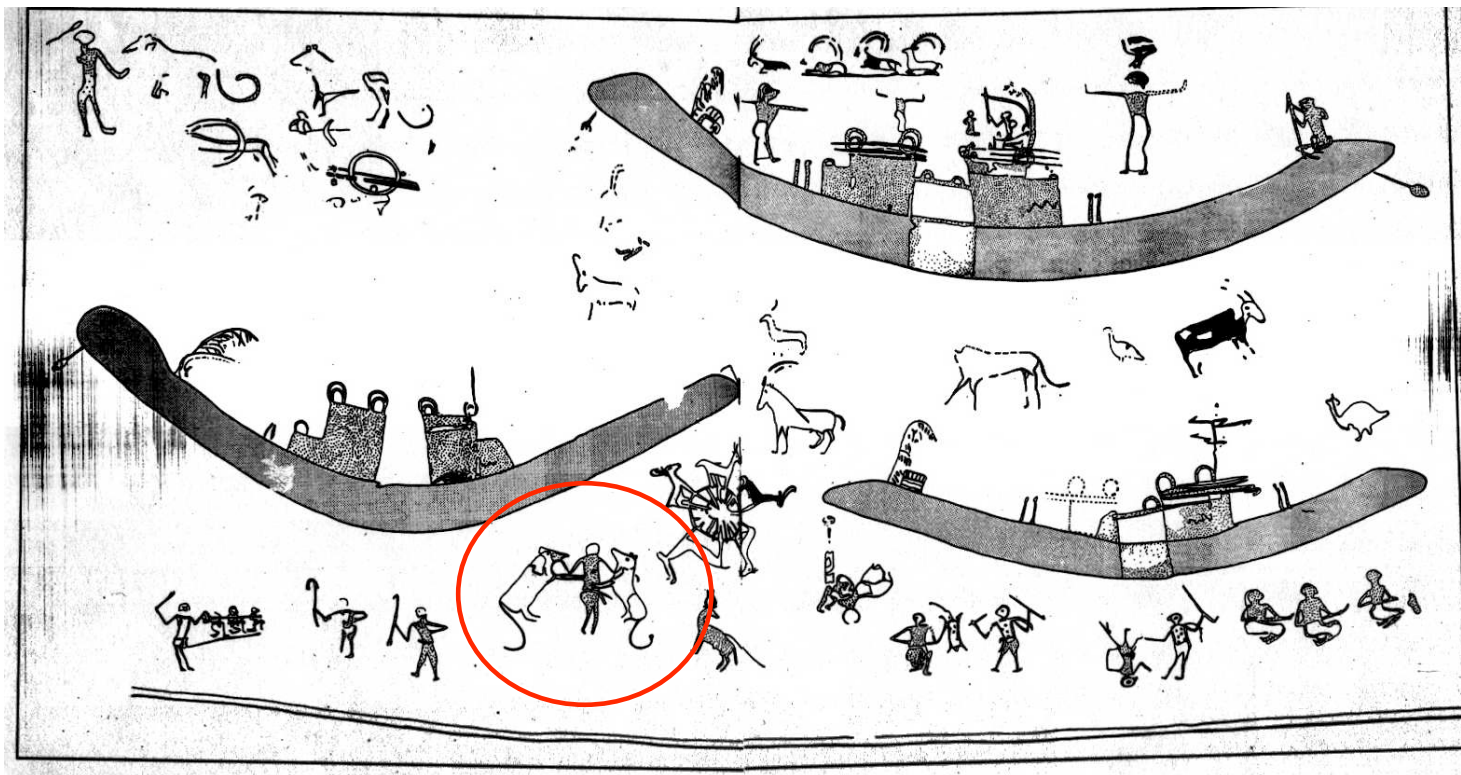
# Wall Painting



# Detail



- ◆ Boats typical Mesopotamian motif
- ◆ Recorded from rock art
- ◆ Boats more typical of Susa (Iran) than Uruk (Mesopotamia)

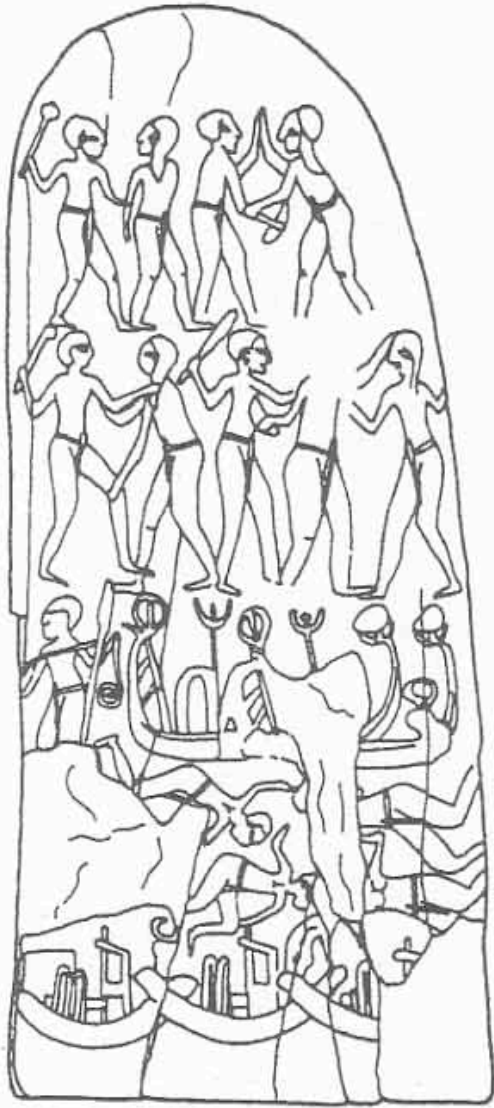


# Gebel el-Arak knife

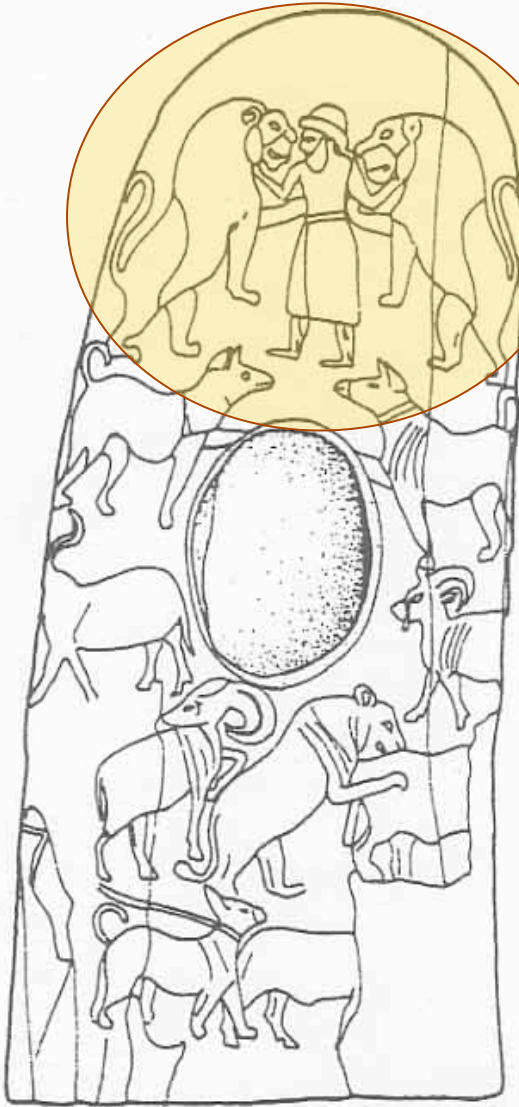


- ◆ Origin unknown, possibly from Gebel el-Arak (south of Abydos)
- ◆ 3300-3200 BCE
- ◆ Hippo ivory and flint
- ◆ 25.50 cms
- ◆ Mesopotamian influences??

# Carved ivory knife handle



FRONT



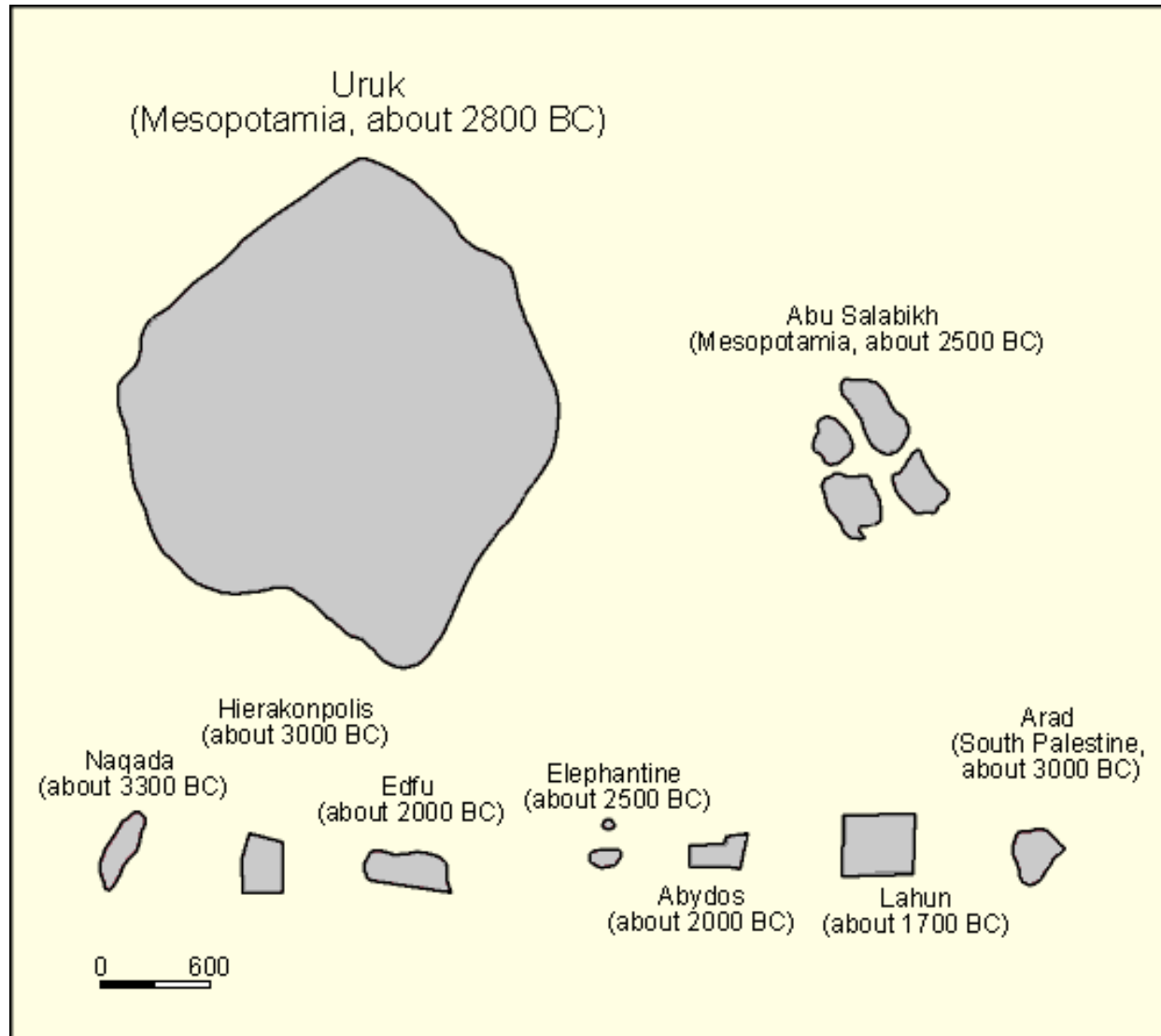
BACK

# Comparison with Tomb 100



Mesopotamian dress ca. 3200 BCE

# Town size comparisons





# Increased Agriculture

- ◆ Increased sedentism in Valley
- ◆ Competitive pressures



# Naqada III: Competition Intensifies



- ◆ Increased evidence for war & factionalism
- ◆ High-stakes competition, massive mobilization of labor & wealth

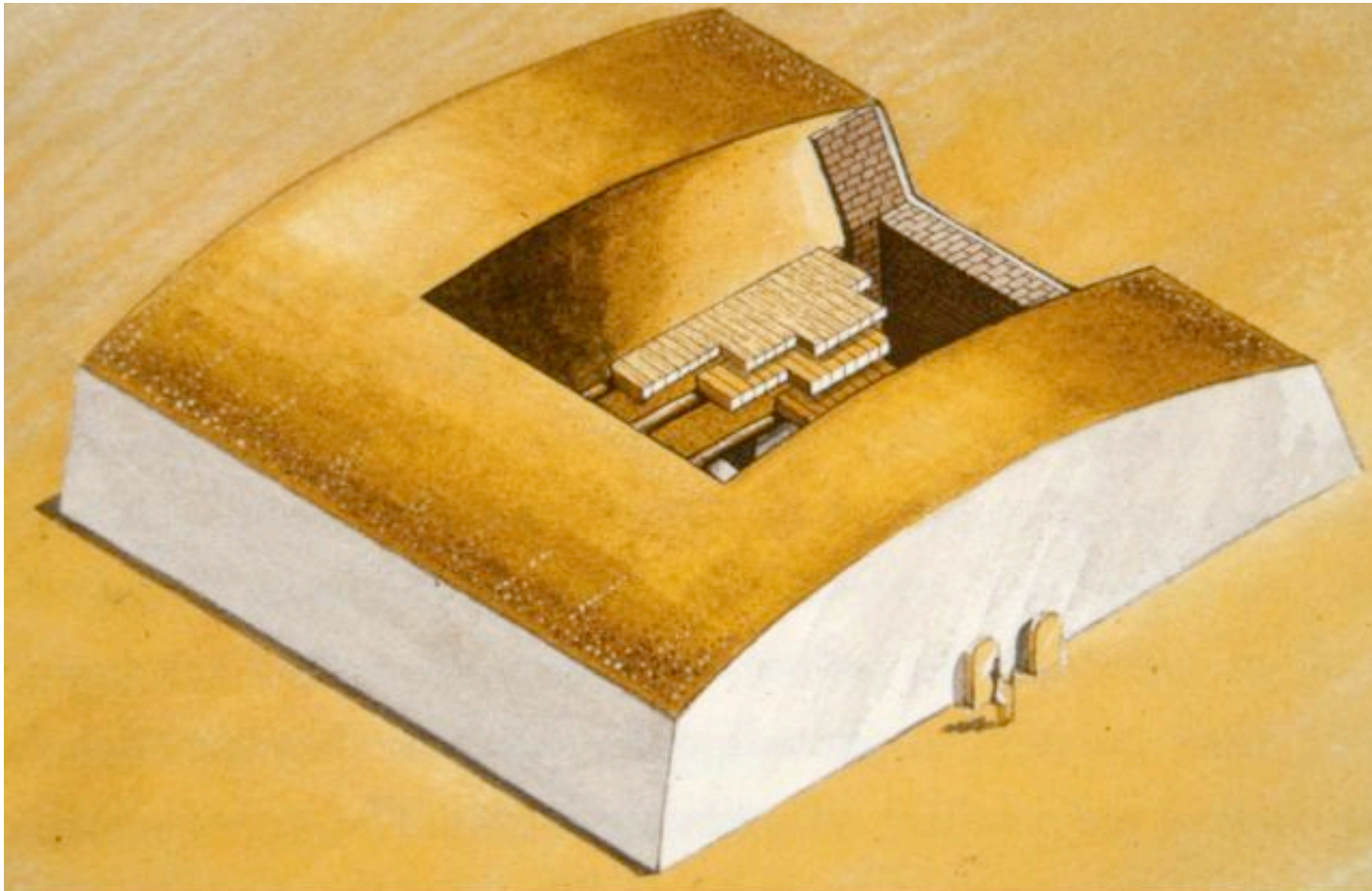
# Who was competing?



- ◆ Unclear
- ◆ In historical periods
  - Estates largely rural
  - Large, stratified households
- ◆ “Estates”
  - Ranches/manors
  - Headed by landlord
  - Bureaucratic
- ◆ Estate-like institutions probably emerge during Naqada II - III

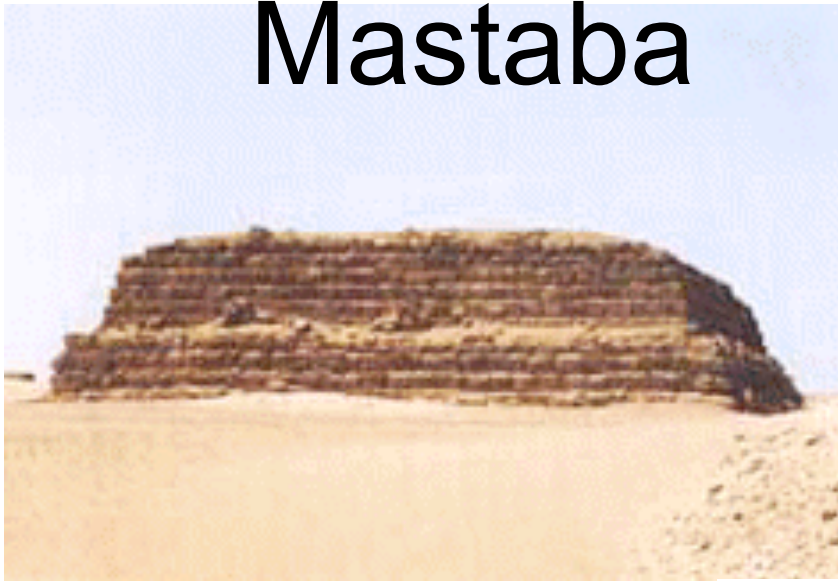


# Naqada III: More Elaboration of Burials

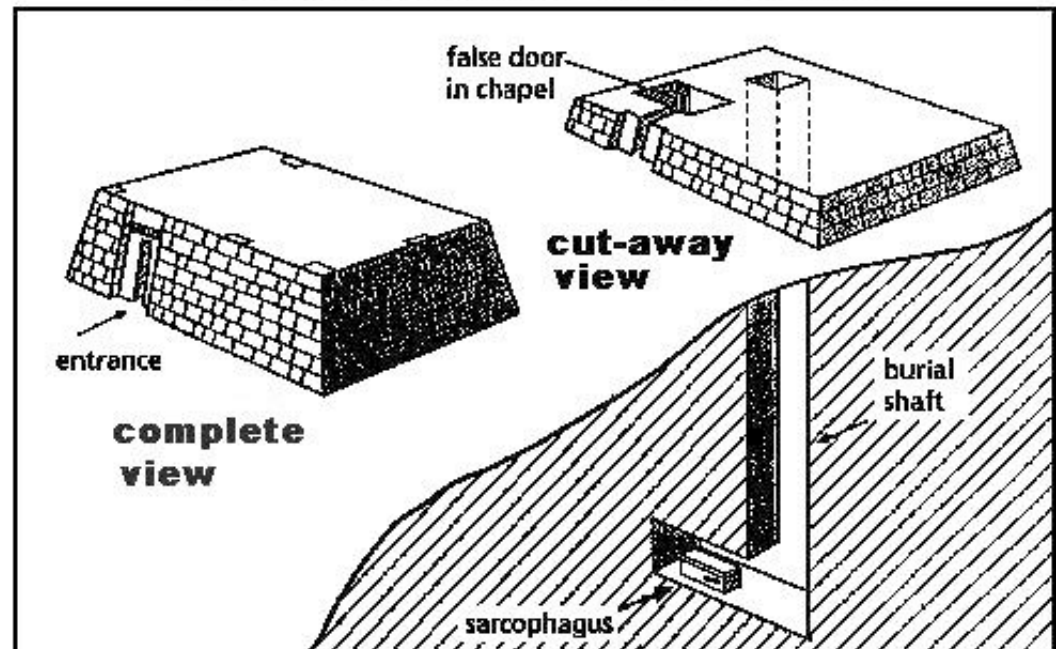


- ◆ Mastabas: Large tombs with superstructure

# Mastaba



A typical Old Kingdom simple mastaba tomb



# Abydos



- ◆ C. 3000-2700 BCE
- ◆ Tomb U-j
- ◆ 12 chambered tomb
- ◆ 9.1 x 7.3 m
- ◆ Roofed with wooden beams, mudbrick and matting
- ◆ Pottery, local types
  - Also over 4000 Canaanite types, for wine
- ◆ King Scorpion?



# Centralized Authority & Architecture



# Centralized Authority & Architecture





# Pyramid Form: King's Singular Status



- ◆ Beginning in Old Kingdom (c. 2700 BCE)
- ◆ Djoser's pyramid at Saqqara
- ◆ Nobility continue to be buried in *mastabas*

# Growing Elite: Economy Stagnant



◆ Evidence for more, but smaller elite tombs

# Collapse of the Old Kingdom

- ◆ Decline seen in 6<sup>th</sup> Dynasty
- ◆ Factionalism in 1<sup>st</sup> Intermediate Period (c. 2200-2000 BCE)
- ◆ Causes?
  - Pious foundations
  - “Top heavy” with elites
  - Low floods?
  - Combination of the above



# The Ultimate Monument

