

Urban Design History

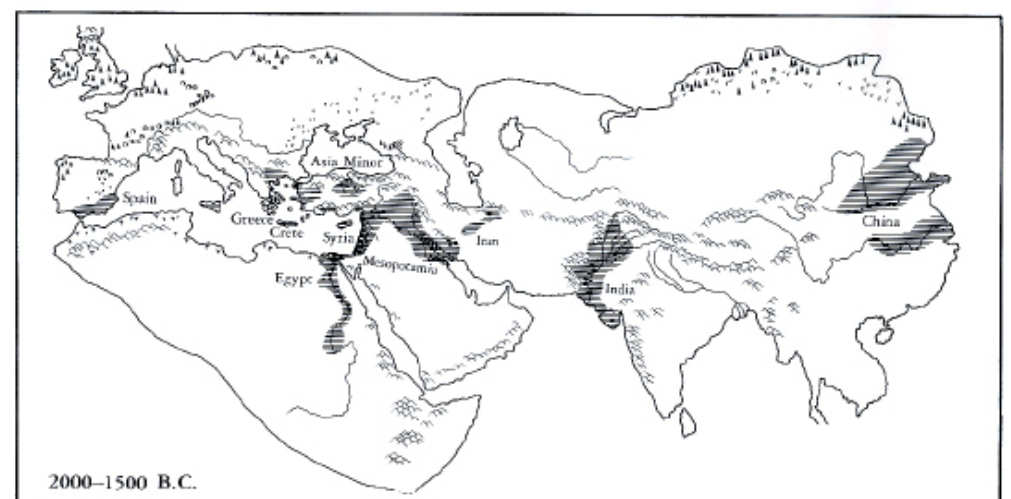
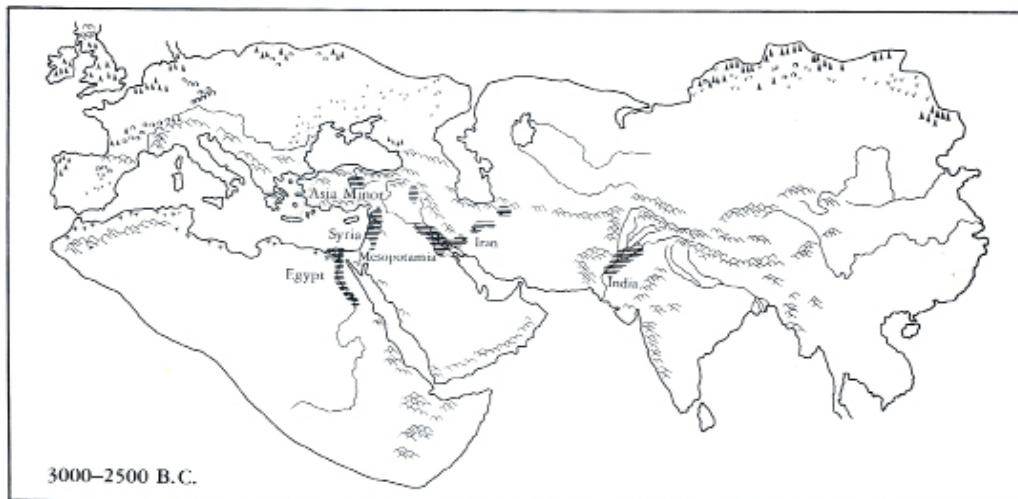
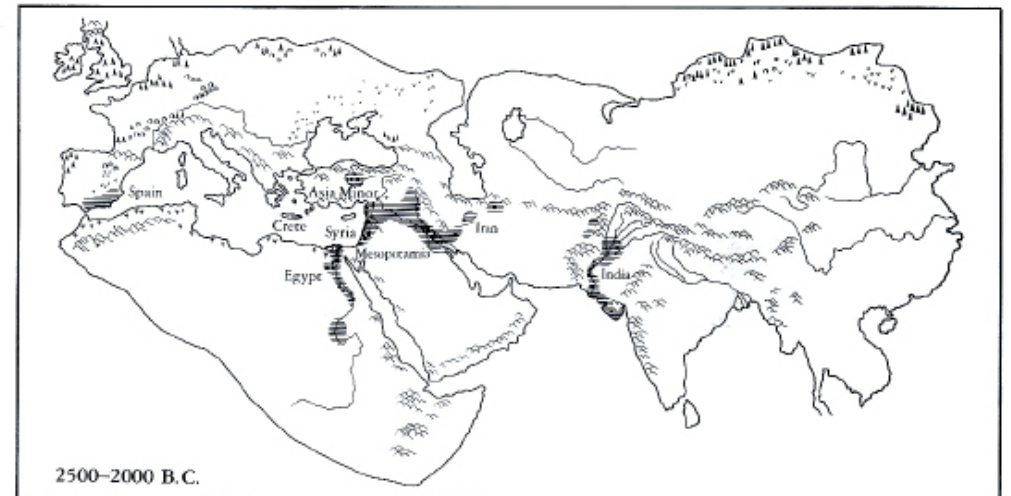
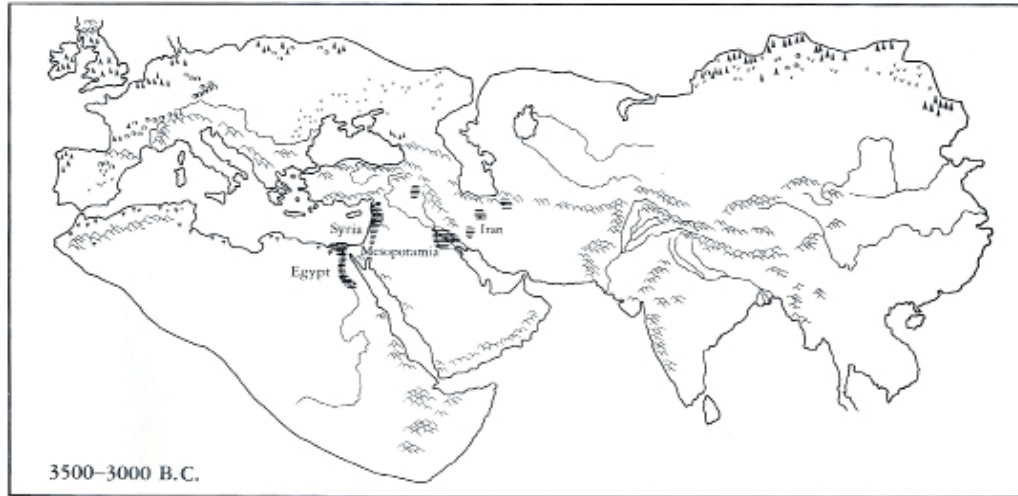
Grigor Doytchinov

Mesopotamia | Egypt

Institute of Urbanism

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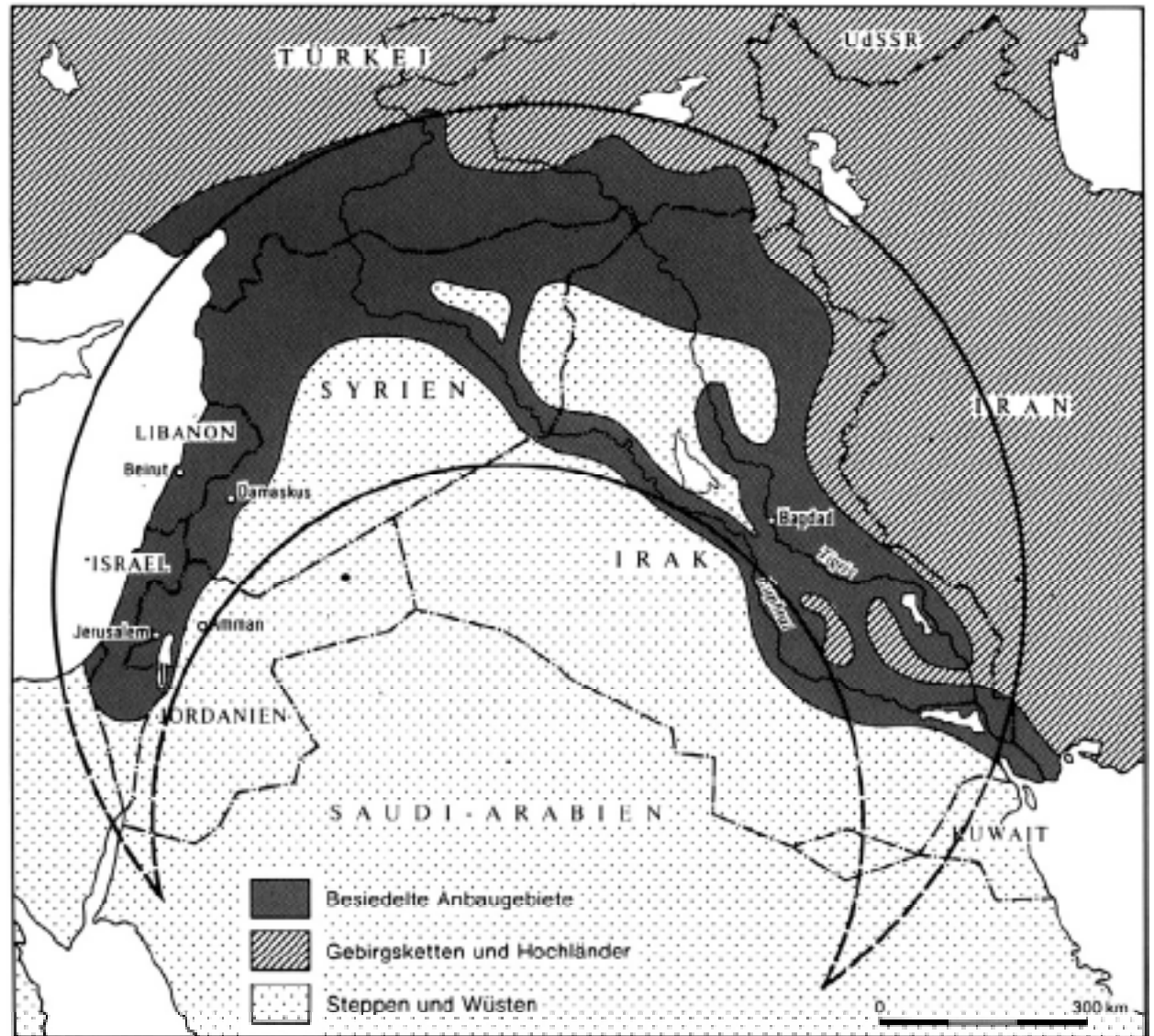
The development of urban civilization



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Fertile Crescent

pre-urban settlements
after the ice age (8000 BC)
cultivation possible without
hydrotechnical constructions



Dyala Basin

Survey shows that the cities developed out of a multitude of villages before the development of irrigation systems



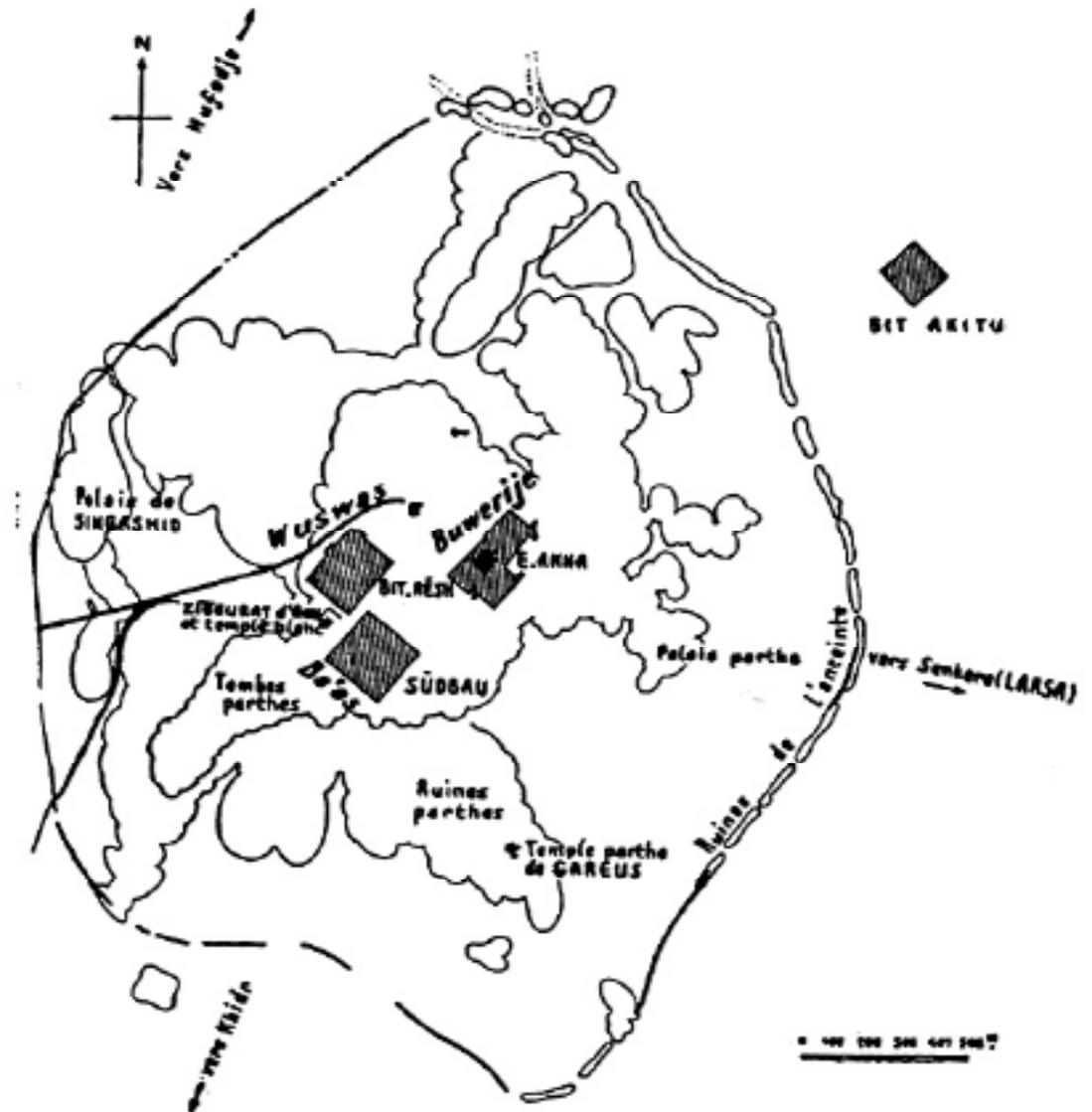
Uruk - ancient city of Sumer and later Babylonia (zenith 2900 to 2300 BC)

500ha

est. 200.000 Einwohner

9.5km city wall with 900 Bastions

biggest city of its time



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Uruk

started with the Zikkurat and the tempel complex

no housing districts but many villages in the catchment area

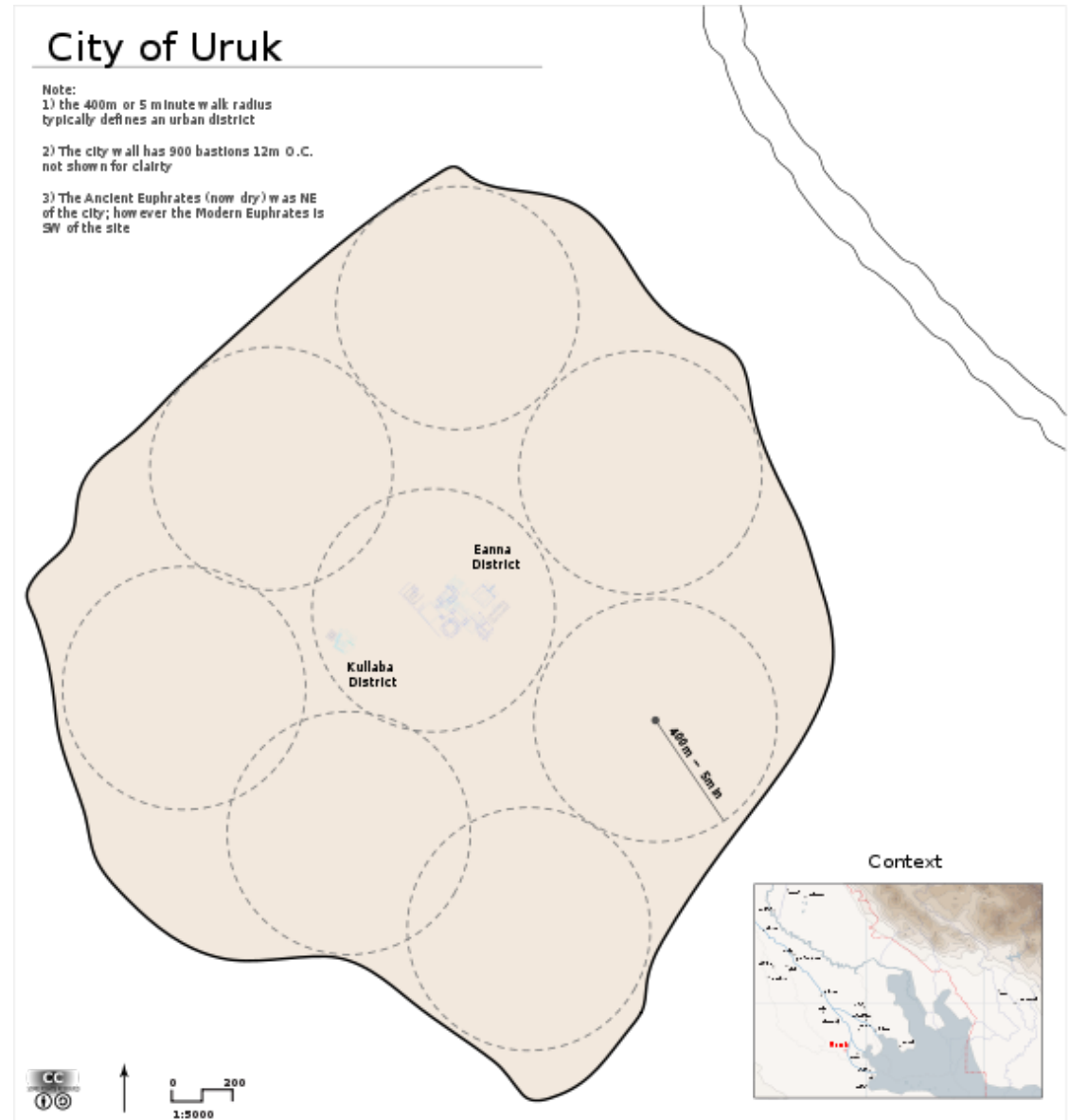
settlements in the neighborhood were abandoned - number decreases from 146 to 26 settlements - unclear reasons

„Epic of Gilgamesh“

the greatest surviving work of early Mesopotamian literature. In the epic his father was Lugalbanda and his mother was Ninsun a goddess.

Gilgamesh is described as two parts god and one part man.

Gilgamesh is credited with the building of the legendary walls of Uruk



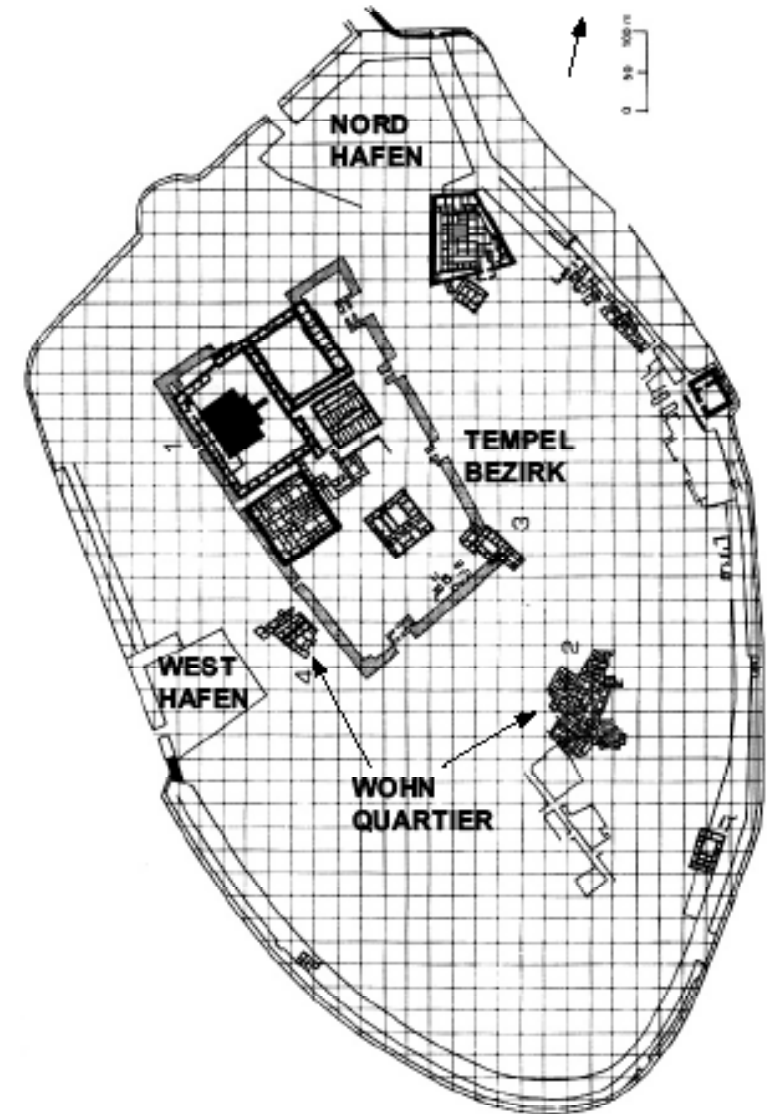
Ur - plan with the temple complex, two harbours and some housing districts (Sumerian capital at 2100 BC)

75ha

est. 20.000 people

2 harbors

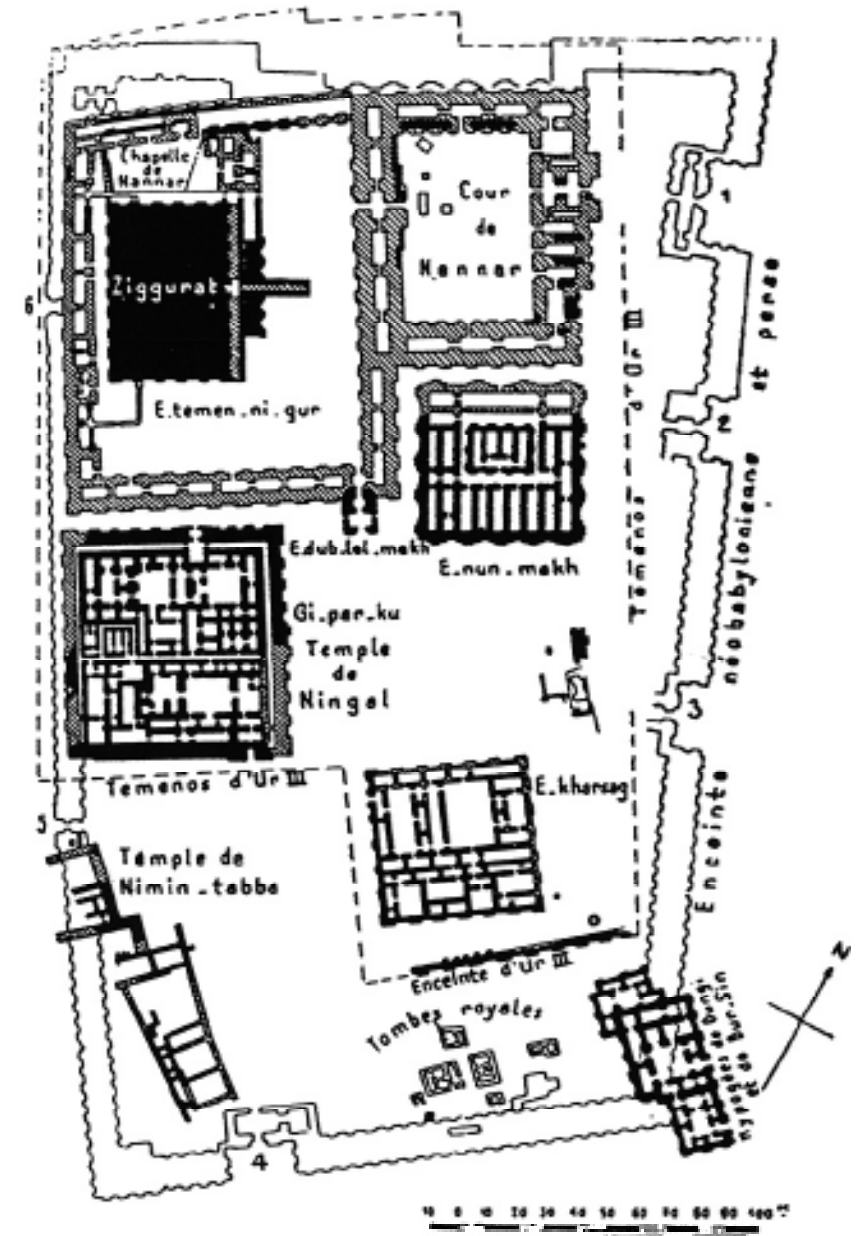
around 2500 BC 4/5 of the
inhabitants lived in cities - later
(1000 BC) this ratio went down
to 1/6



Ur - the temple complex

Ur became the capital of the whole of southern Mesopotamia under the Sumerian kings of the 1st dynasty of Ur (25th century bc). Excavation of a vast cemetery from the period preceding that dynasty (26th century) produced royal tombs containing almost incredible treasures in gold, silver, bronze, and semiprecious stones, showing not only the wealth of the people of Ur but also their highly developed civilization and art.

Not the least remarkable discovery was that of the custom whereby kings were buried along with a whole retinue of their court officials, servants, and women, privileged to continue their service in the next world



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Ur - The Great Ziggurat (shrine of the moon god Nanna, 21st century BC)



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Ur - housing district



Assyrian cities -

on trading routes - area less fertile than the south

main centers for trade - gain their wealth not from the surplus of the region but from tributes



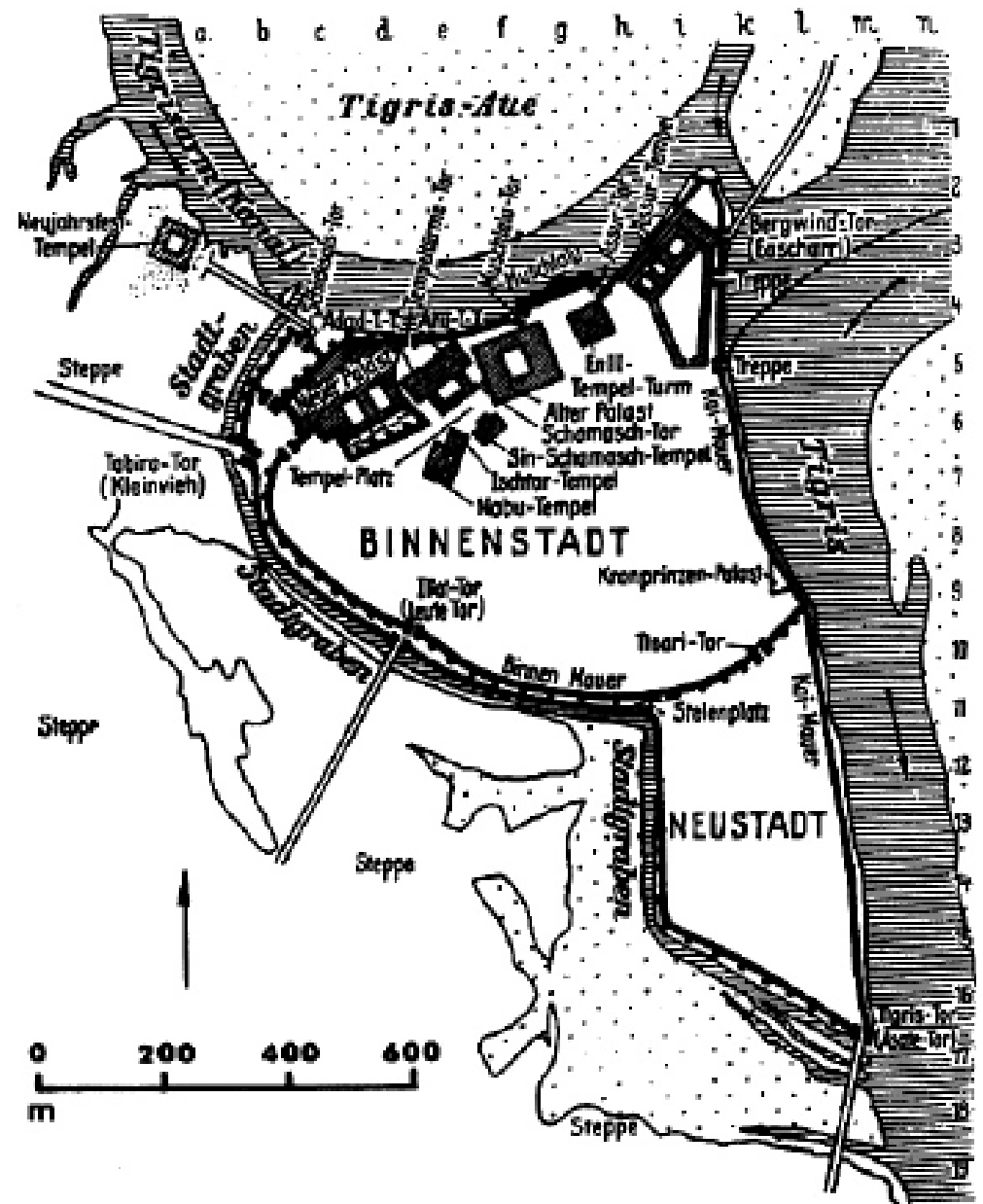
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Assur

The site was originally occupied about 2500 bc by a tribe that probably had reached the Tigris River either from Syria or from the south.

Strategically, Assur was smaller and less well-situated than Nimrūd (Kalakh) or Nineveh, the other principal cities of Assyria; but the religious sanctity of Assur ensured its continuous upkeep until 614 bc, when it was destroyed by the Babylonians.

A part of the city was later revived about the time of the Parthian conquest of Mesopotamia in the middle of the 2nd century bc.



city structure is
based on the
housing structures
and not so much on
the network of the
streets

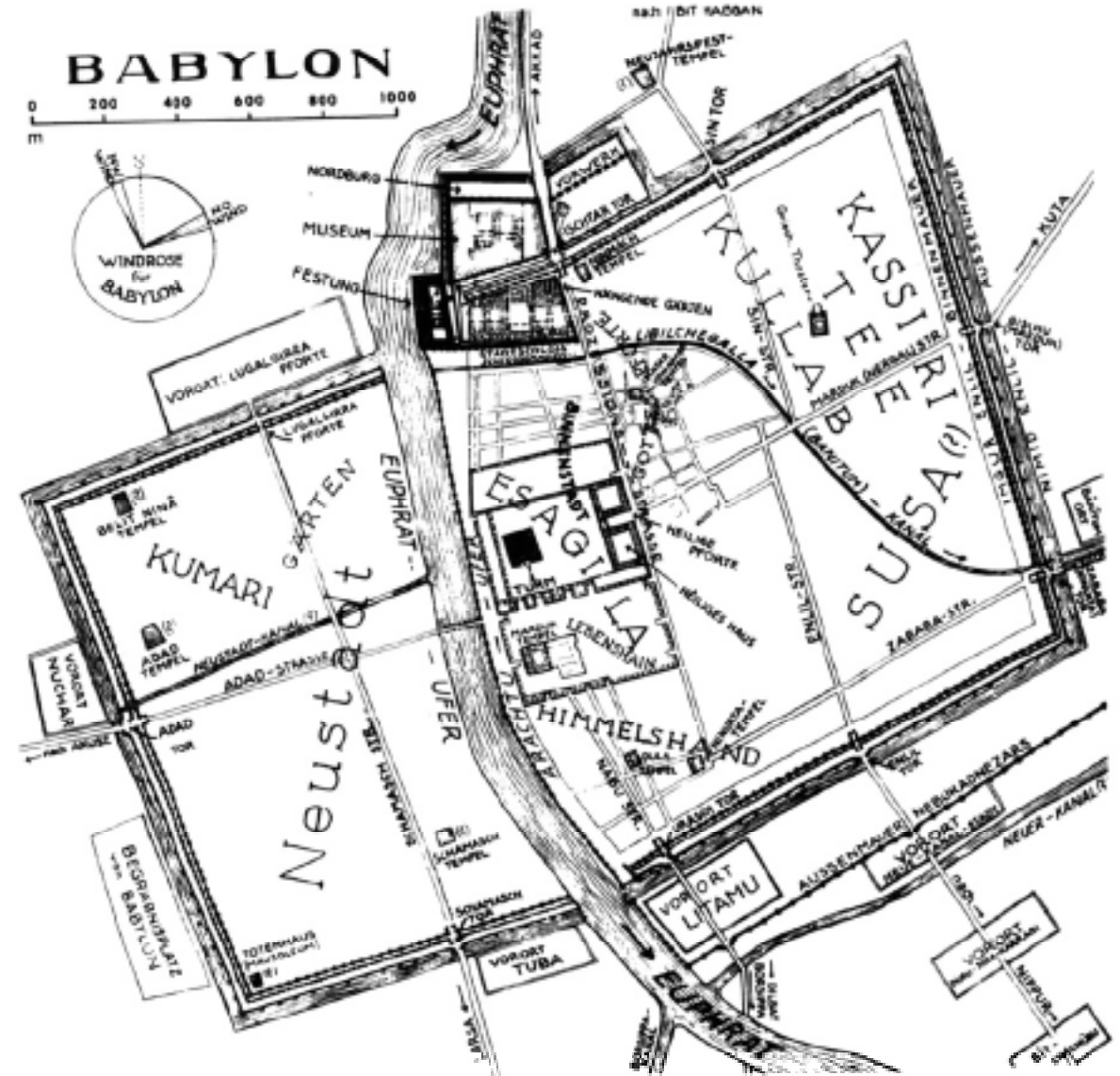


Babylon (capital of the Neo-Babylonian Empire under Nebuchadnezzar II., 604 to 561 BC)

capital city

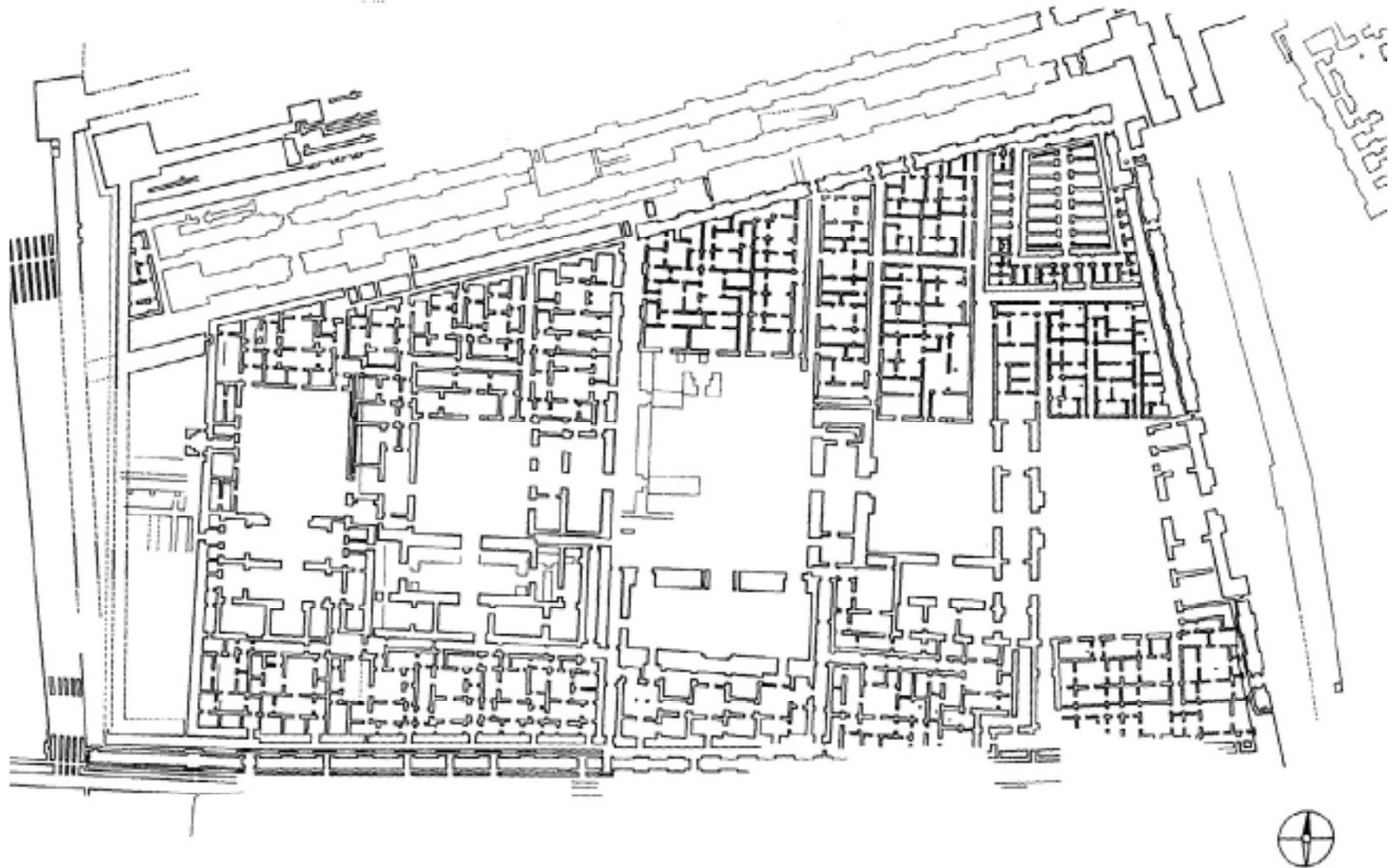
400 ha, 100.000 people

square shaped, divided by the river Euphrat

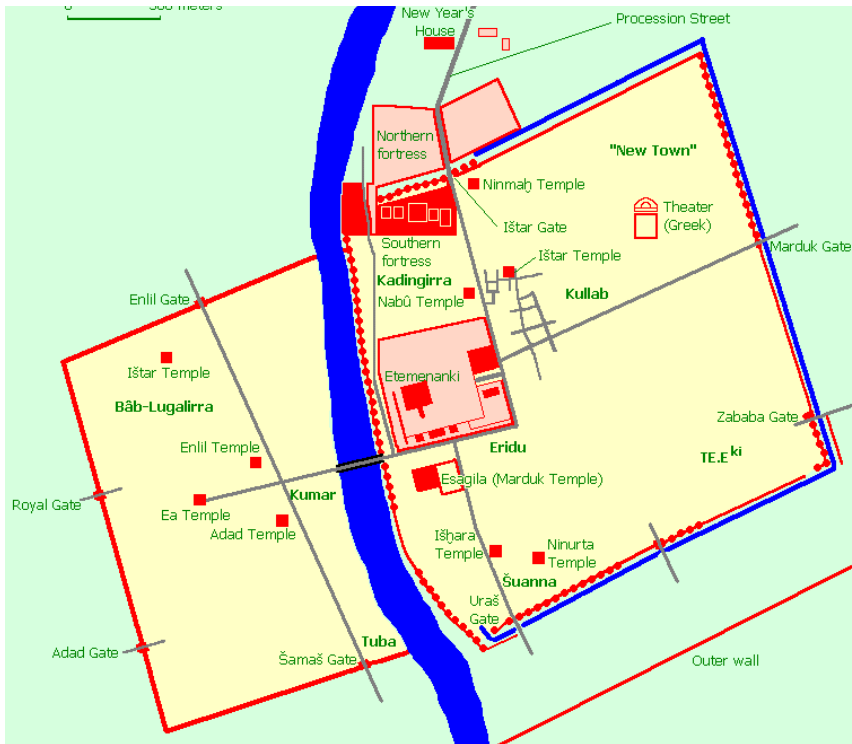


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Babylon - palace



its walls decorated with enameled lions. Passing through the Ishtar Gate, adorned with enameled bulls and dragons



Summary of Mesopotamian cities

walled temple and palace dominated cities, no comprehensive planning of the layout

no fixed situations for the temple and palaces - since 1800 BC mainly at the city walls in NW

best air ventilation - best city quarters

temple on platforms (holy mountain) irregular arranged

no systematic relationship between buildings

housing - small rooms surrounding courtyards - system of kasemates

multi-level (dominant) ziggurats

the city is dominated by the temple in multiple ways (political, religious, economic and social)

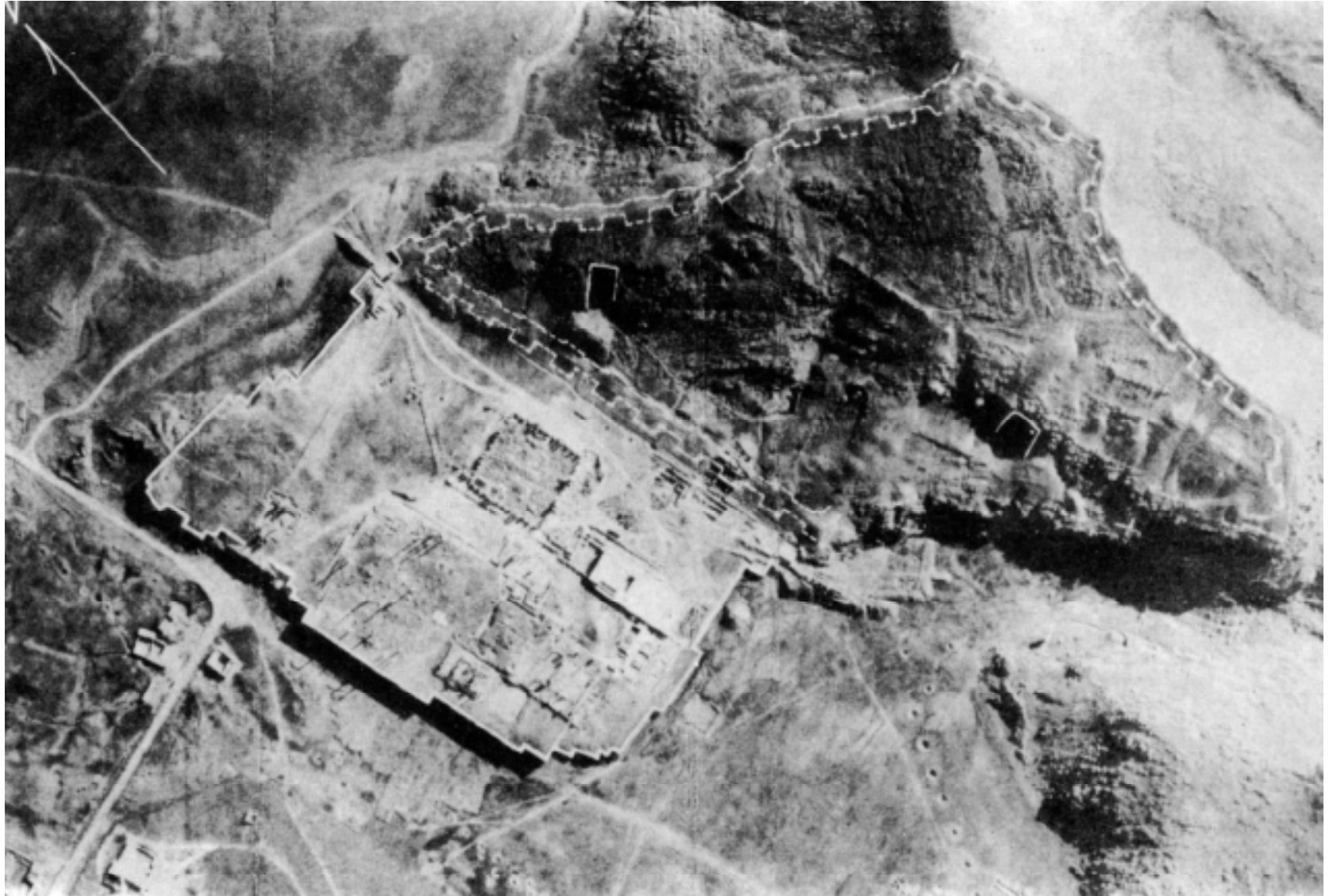






Persepolis (Persian capital, zenith 518 to 460 BC)

The earliest remains of Persepolis date from around 515 BC. To the ancient Persians, the city was known as Pārsa, which means „The City of Persians“.



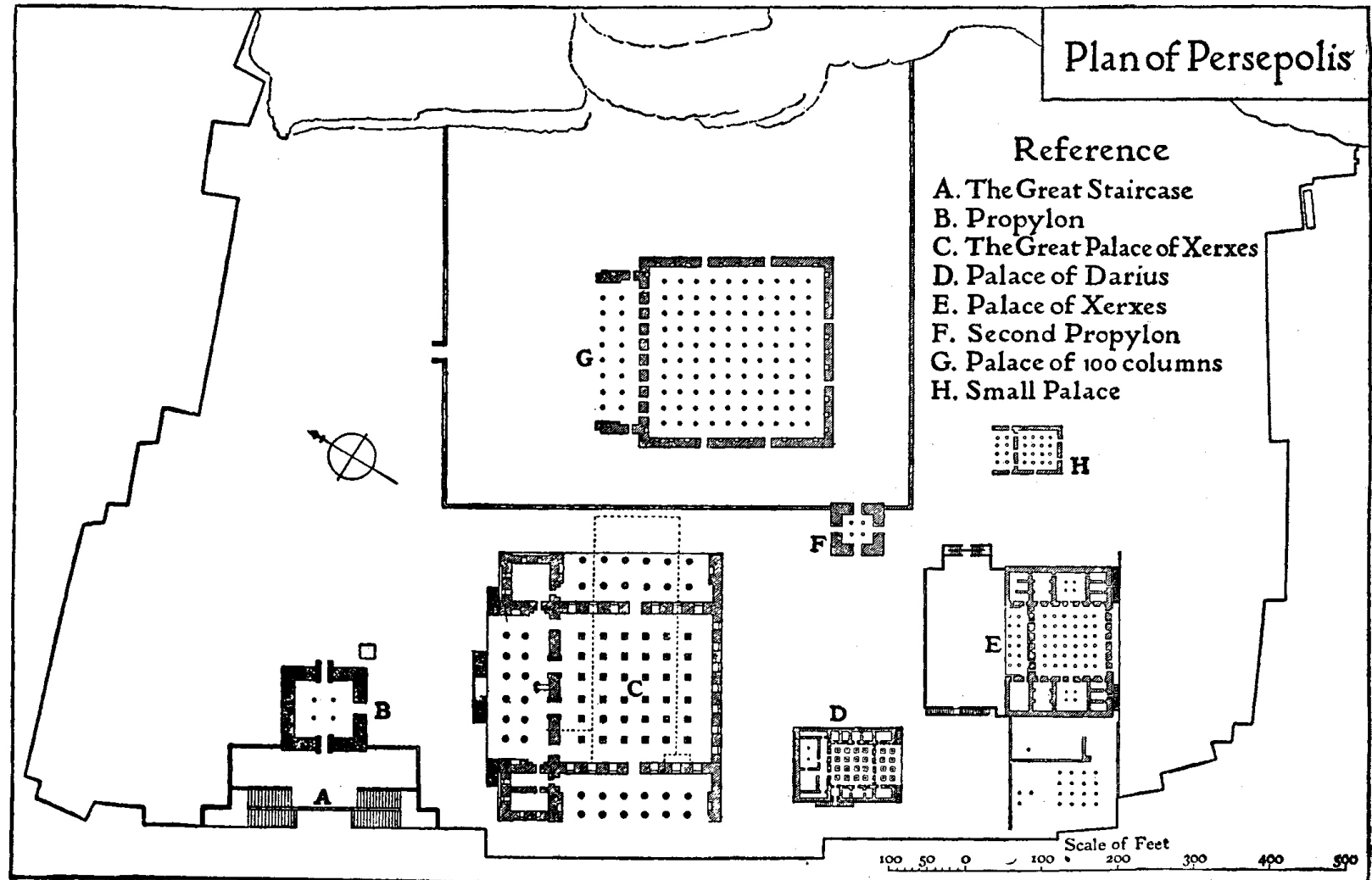
Persepolis

summer resident
on artificial platform

regular shape
monumental
staircases

big peristyles
(columned halls)

founded by Dareios I
destroyed by
Alexander the great
330 BC



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Persepolis



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Gur (founded 220 AD)

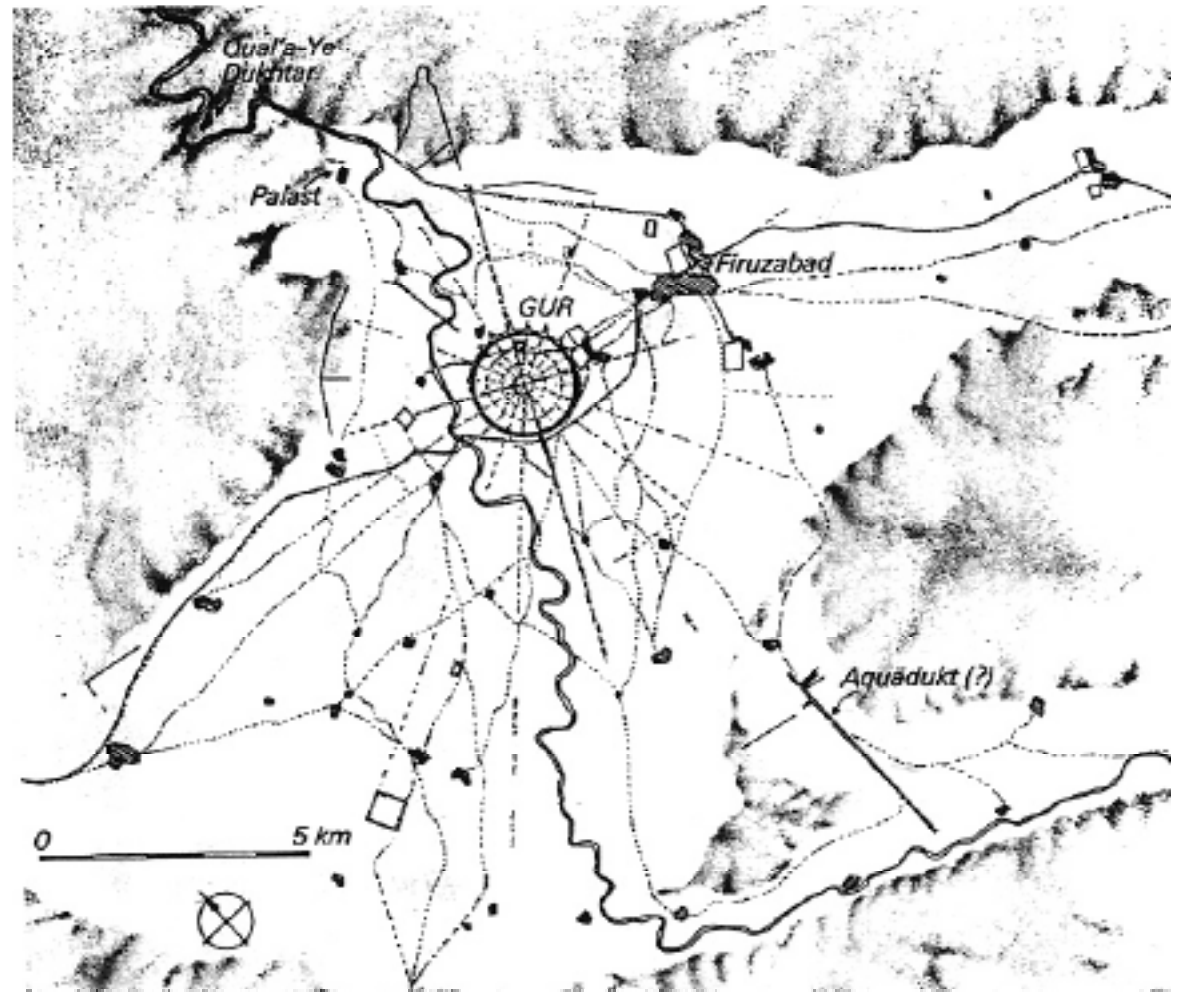
diameter of 2 km, 20 sectors

concentric complex

cosmological and terrestrial organising principle

absolutistic

water supply with a 20km aqueduct





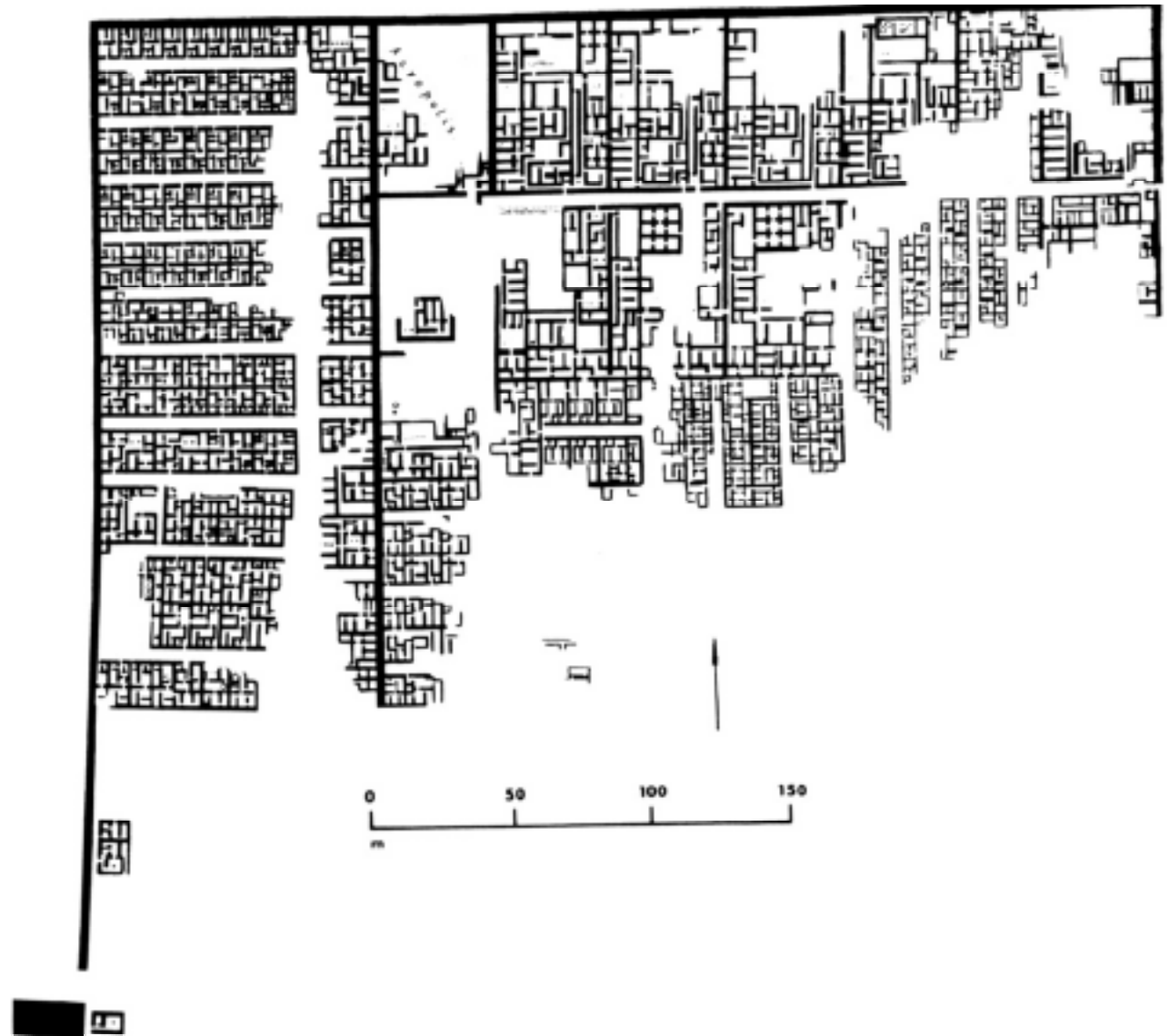
Mortuary Temple of Queen Hatshepsut (ca. 1500 BC)



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Kahun (founded 2000 BC)

It was erected for the overseers and workmen employed in constructing the nearby pyramid of Al-Lāhūn, built by Sesostriis II (reigned 1844–37 BC), and it was abandoned when the pyramid was completed.



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El Amarna - workers' quarter

