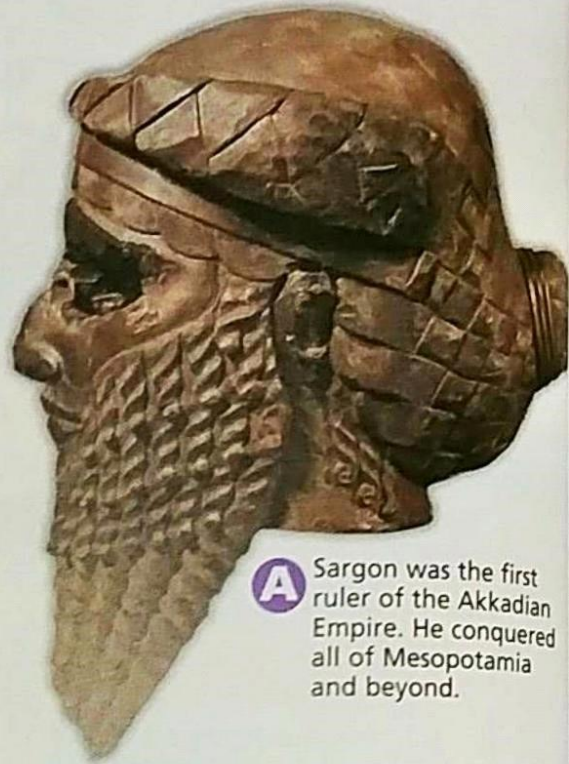


# Civilization in Ancient Mesopotamia

The earliest known civilization, Sumer, and the world's first empire, the Akkadian Empire, both developed in Mesopotamia.

- The Sumerians developed the first written language and the first laws. They also traded with places as far away as Egypt and India.
- Each Sumerian city-state was independent. Each had its own ruler, own special god, and own army.
- People from the neighboring region of Akkad later conquered Sumer and the rest of the area around the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers. Once conquered, city-states were simply cities.



**A** Sargon was the first ruler of the Akkadian Empire. He conquered all of Mesopotamia and beyond.

## Sumerians Develop Writing 7000–3000 B.C.

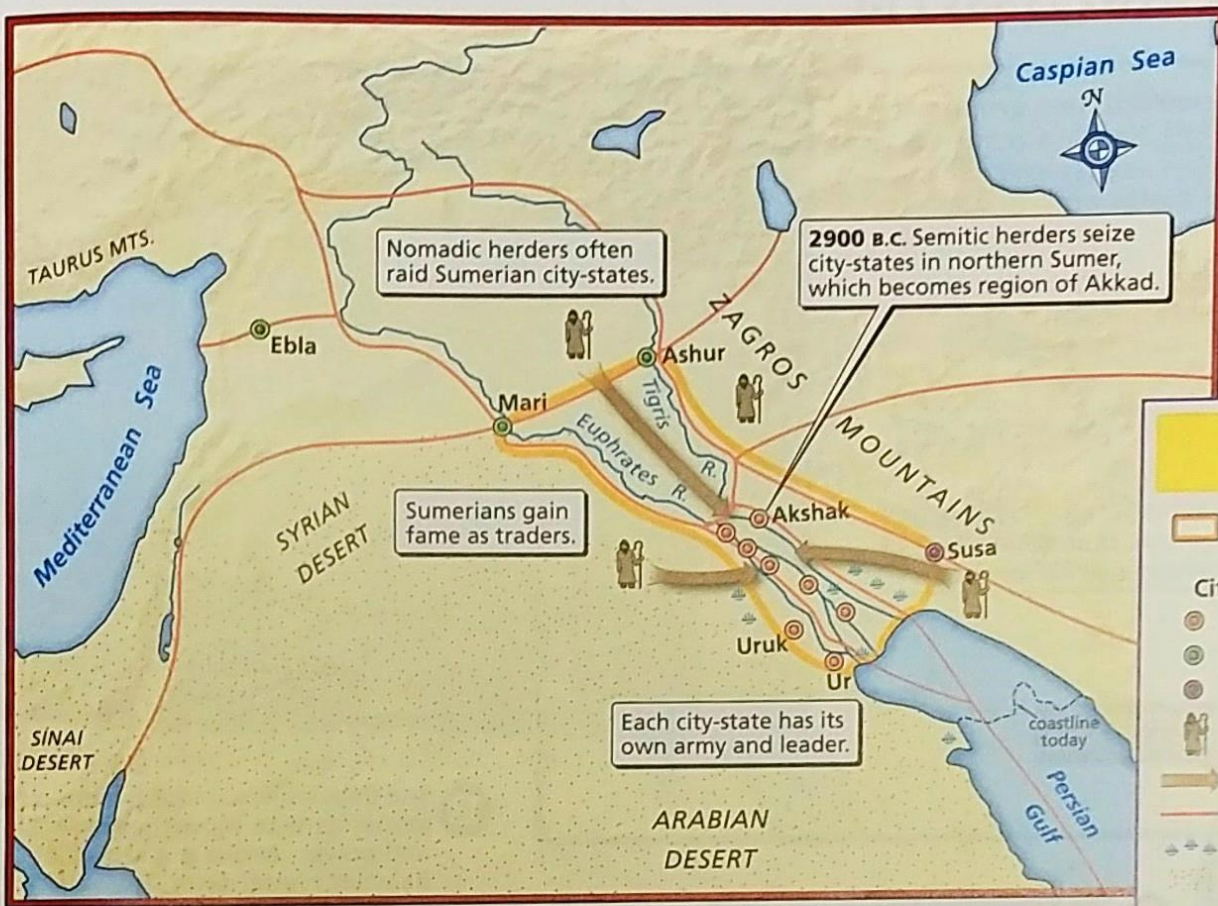
Word	Token 7000 B.C.	Pictograph 3500 B.C.	Cuneiform 3000 B.C.
Sheep			
Metal			

**B** People in Mesopotamia first used objects, or tokens, to record trades. Sumerians then drew the same shapes on clay tablets. Later they used triangular reeds to draw these shapes. These wedge shapes, or cuneiform, became the basis of written languages in Mesopotamia.

### Is it a city or is it a state?

Early civilizations weren't part of a large country. Instead, people were governed by their own city-state. A city-state included a city and the surrounding countryside. There are a few city-states today, such as Monaco in Europe and Singapore in Asia.





**D** Sumerians all spoke the same language and had the same customs, but their Semitic and Elamite neighbors spoke different languages and had different customs. Even so, trade was common.



**E** The Akkadian Empire spanned most of the Fertile Crescent. Compare maps D and E. Empires rule many different people. What groups were ruled by the Akkadian Empire?