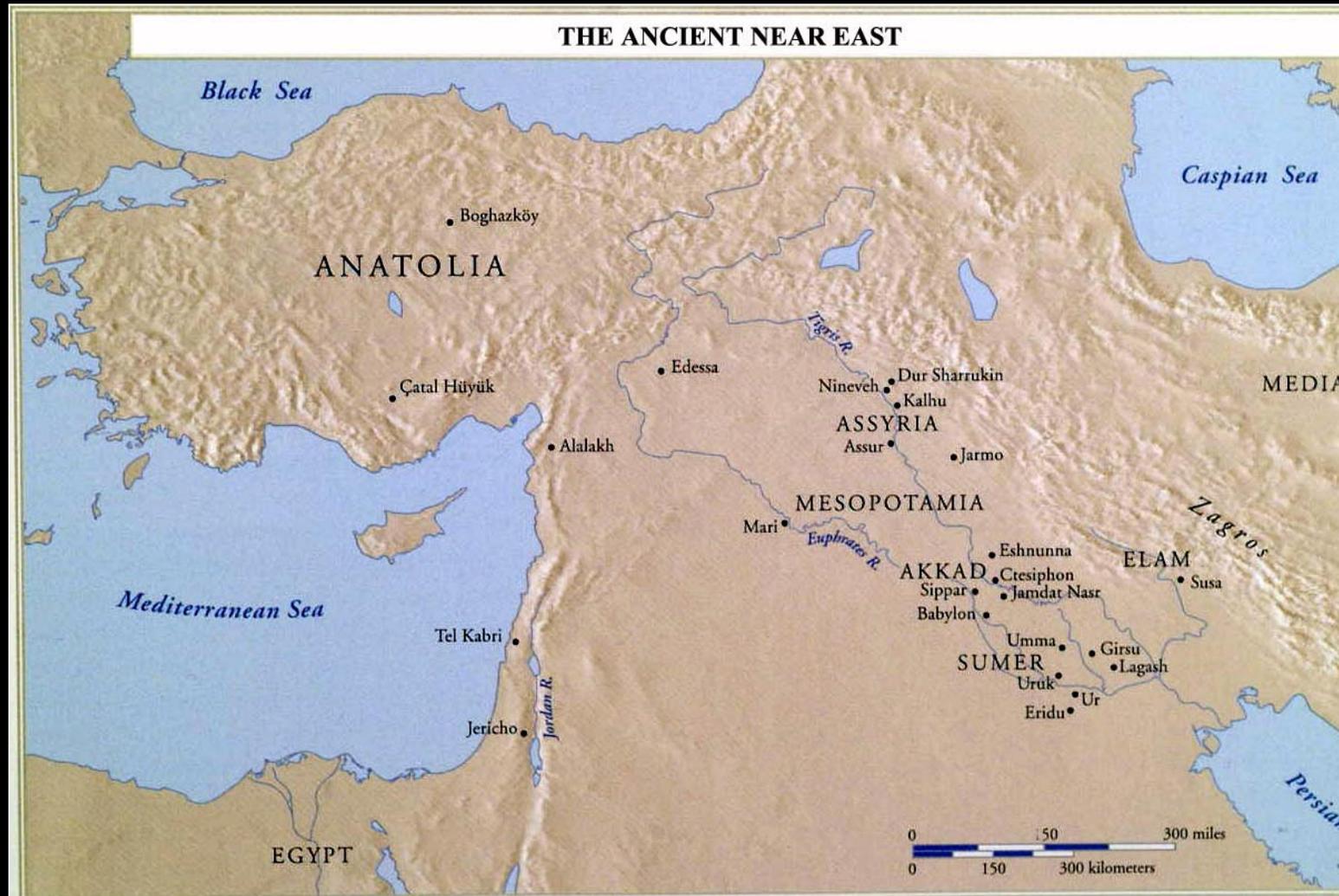


# The Rise of Civilization

# The Fertile Crescent



# Mesopotamia

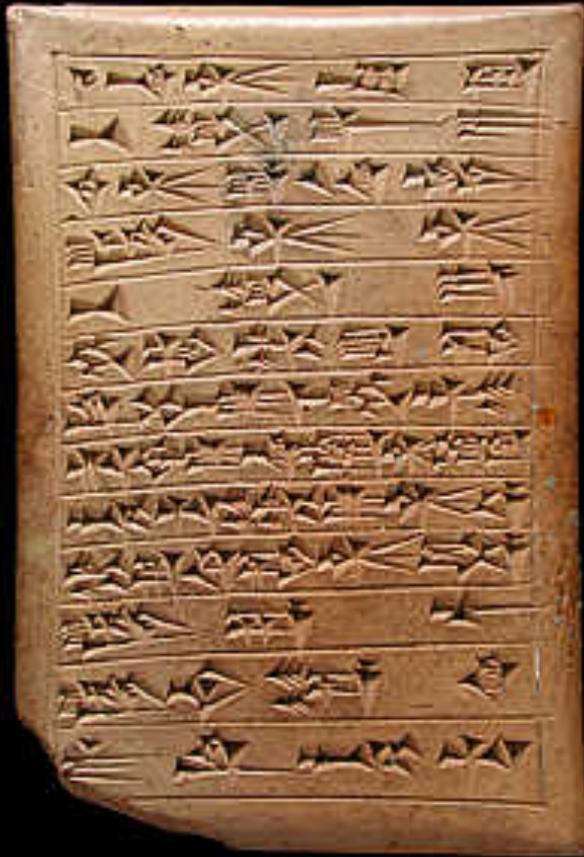
Greek word that means “the land between (Tigris and Euphrates) rivers”

- Sumerians, with access to two rivers, were the ones to develop irrigated agriculture on a grand scale.
- This would result in surplus of grain far beyond the day to day needs, which gave the people of Sumer the time to develop new skills.
- Artisans, traders, priests, scribes, and merchants came into being, sustained by the efforts of the farmers.
- System of government emerged, as did organized religion and a new order of social classes = civilization
- In the 4<sup>th</sup> millennium BCE, the people of ancient Sumer established the earliest complex urban cities, called “city-states”, and invented writing

- Sumer, the world's first civilization, flourished about 3500 bce
- The Sumerians diverted the rivers' waters to irrigate fields of grain, learned to use the plow, wheel, etc. resulting in agricultural wealth and used it to nurture such powerful city-states as Uruk, Ur, and Lagash. Soon they were trading w/ many parts of the ancient world.

# Cuneiform

## The invention of writing



- First form of writing
- The first documents were inventories of cattle, food, etc.
- Used clay tablets and a sharp tool or stylus

# The Epic of Gilgamesh

- Written long after the time of King Gilgamesh
- Based on earlier Sumerian legends of Gilgamesh
- The most complete version preserved on eleven clay tablets
- Considered the oldest story ever recorded
- Earliest Sumerian version date to 2100 BC-2000 BC
- Aspects of the story parallel the Odyssey and Noah's Ark from the bible
- About King Gilgamesh of Uruk the greatest king on earth.