

ANCIENT MESOPOTAMIA: THE RISE OF SUMER



**Sumerian statues – used in
religious services**

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SUMER

- In Southern Mesopotamia, the world's first advanced society developed - Sumer

- Around the year 3200_{BCE}

- They mainly lived in rural areas

- Rural - Countryside

- Centers of Sumerian life were urban areas

- Urban - City



SUMER

- Sumerian civilization was divided into city-states
 - City-State - A city and all the land around it (similar to a small country)
- City-states often fought each other
 - Looking for more land and resources
 - City-states had large armies and walls
- Two of the most powerful city-states in Sumeria were Ur and Uruk
 - One king of Uruk was named Gilgamesh



SUMERIA



THE AKKADIAN EMPIRE

- Another group of people lived in Mesopotamia called Akkadians
 - Different than Sumerians
 - Although they had a similar culture
- The Akkadians set up the world's first empire under Sargon the Great



SARGON THE GREAT

- Sargon the Great was the first ruler to have a permanent army
 - His soldiers were more well-trained than others
- Sargon the Great established the world's first empire around 2730_{BCE}, which included conquering Sumeria
 - Empire – Land with different territories and people under a single ruler
- Sargon ruled for more than 50 years!
 - His empire lasted for around 125 years after his death
- Many later Mesopotamian kings were inspired by Sargon the Great

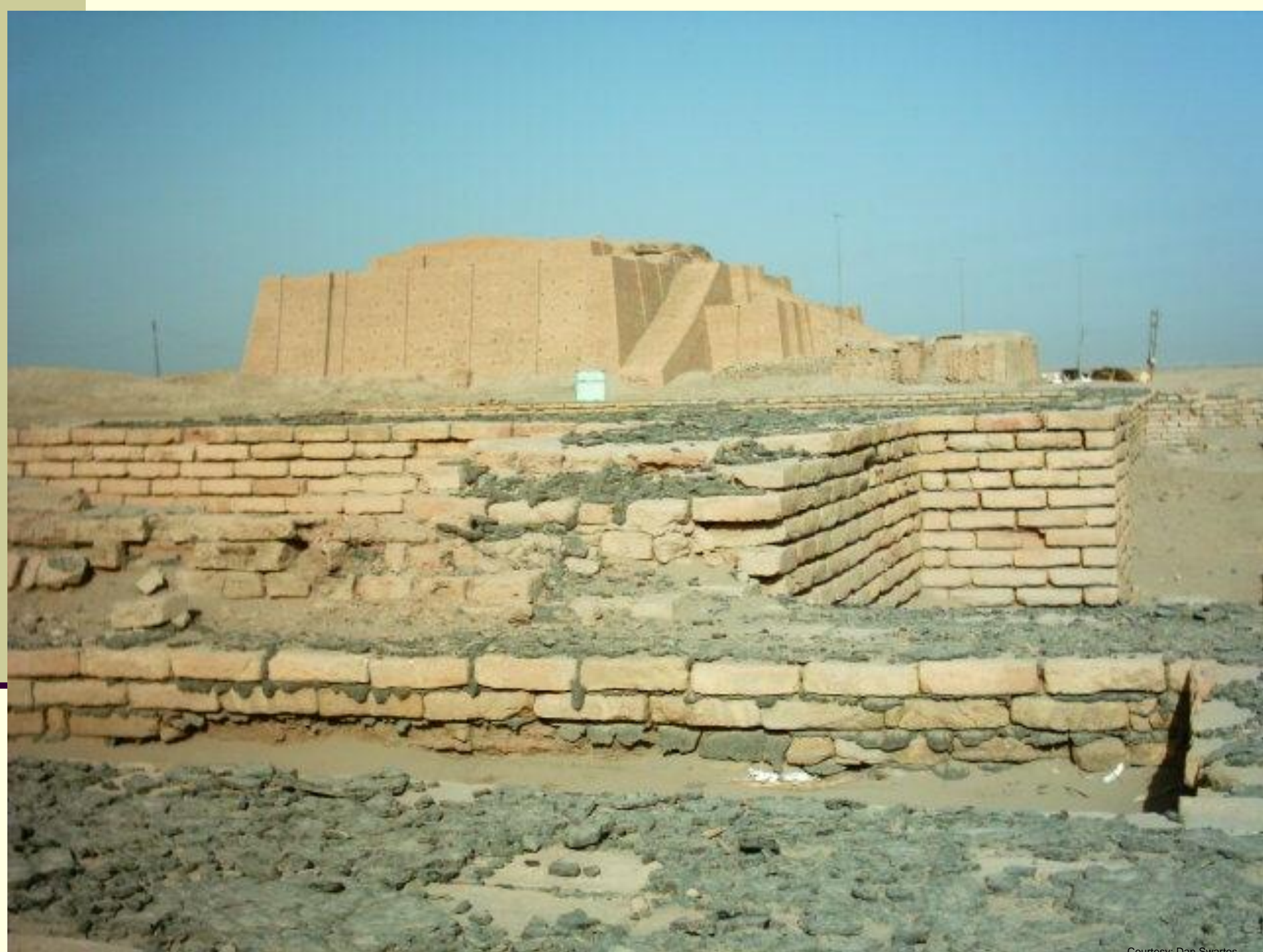
AKKADIAN EMPIRE



RELIGION AND SOCIETY

- Religion was one the most important aspects in the life of a Sumerian
- The Sumerians practiced Polytheism
 - Polytheism - worship of many gods
 - The Gods could punish or reward the people
 - Every city-state had its own god/goddess
- Priests had a lot of power in Sumeria
 - They were upper class
 - They did all their work in temples or Ziggurats



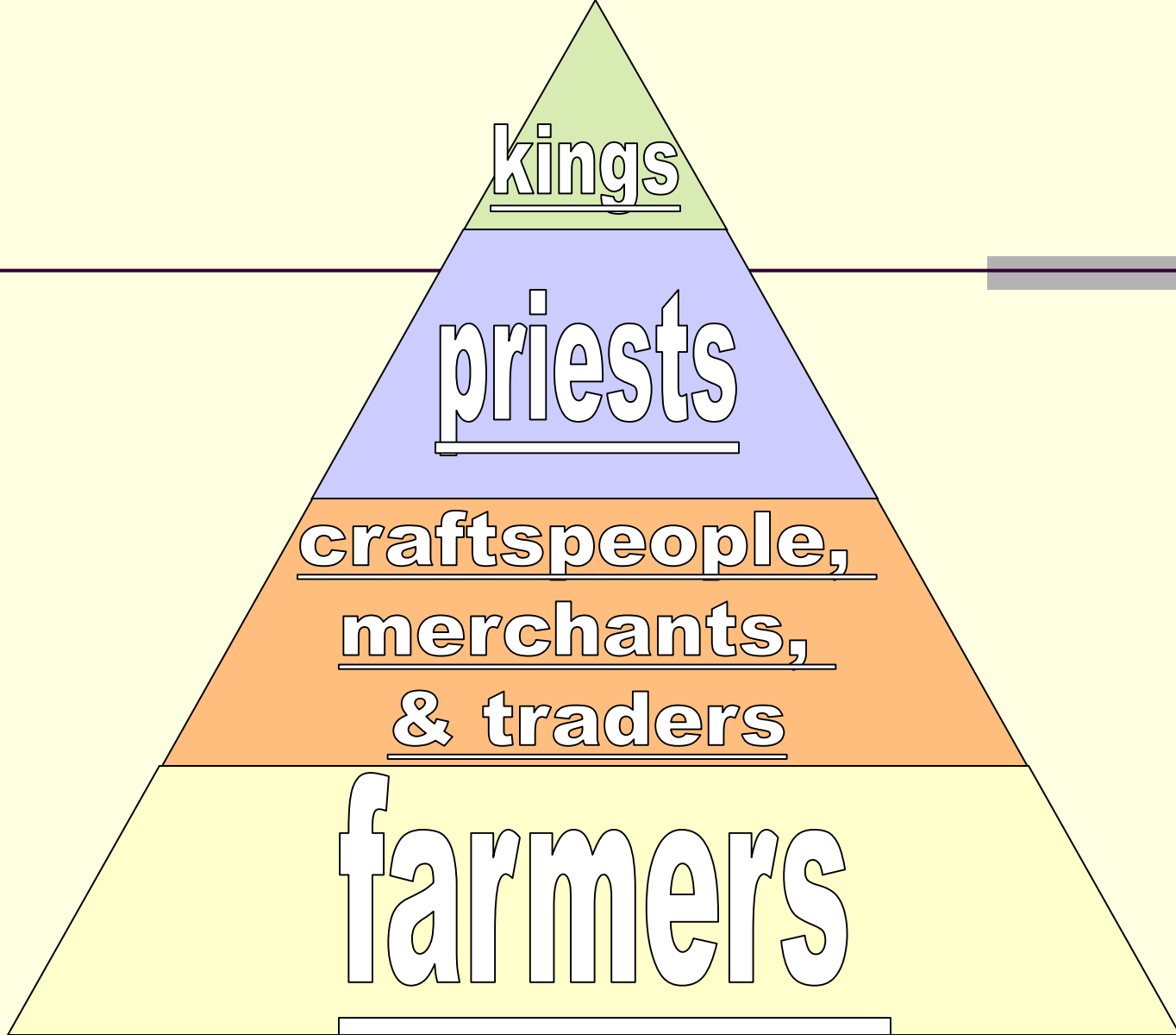






SOCIAL ORDER

- Priests were in the upper level of Sumerian social hierarchy
 - Social Hierarchy - division of society by rank or class (class system)
- Men – had all the political power and made laws
 - They were usually the only ones educated
- Women took care of the home and children
 - The daughter of Sargon, Enheduanna wrote hymns
 - The first female writer in history



kings

priests

craftspeople,
merchants,
& traders

farmers

slaves