



ABSTRACT SUBMISSION

Evolution of Monumental Centres in Southern Mesopotamia at the Dawn of the Sumerian City-State

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Abstract

At the end of the 4th millennium BCE, the populations in southern Iraq underwent considerable socio-economic upheaval. Southern Mesopotamian culture, in a phase of contraction, appeared to be in crisis, leading to the establishment of a new political model centred on divinity. Society was transformed, laying the foundations for the Sumerian city-state. During the Jemdet Nasr period (3200-2900 BCE), the monumental centres of major sites in southern Mesopotamia were completely transformed. The large tripartite buildings of the Uruk period disappeared, replaced by integrated complexes of a new type. During a period marked by many architectural innovations, construction techniques also changed.

Data on the architecture of the Jemdet Nasr period, mainly excavated in the 1920s and 1930s and poorly understood, have been thoroughly revised by major publications from 1988 to 2020. This paper proposes a reassessment of the evolution of the monumental centres of the main sites of the alluvial plain during the Jemdet Nasr period in the light of new research and studies. Within a revised chronological framework, the stratigraphic and architectural data from key sites will be examined. This will lead to new hypotheses about the political organisation of the alluvial plain at the dawn of the Sumerian city-state.

Keywords

Jemdet Nasr, Mesopotamia , Uruk, Architecture, Stratigraphy

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