

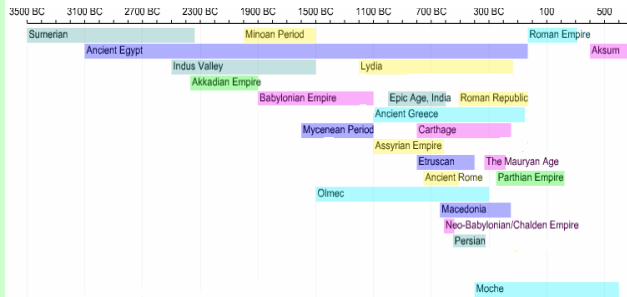
The Collapse of the Ancient Akkadian Empire and Climate Change

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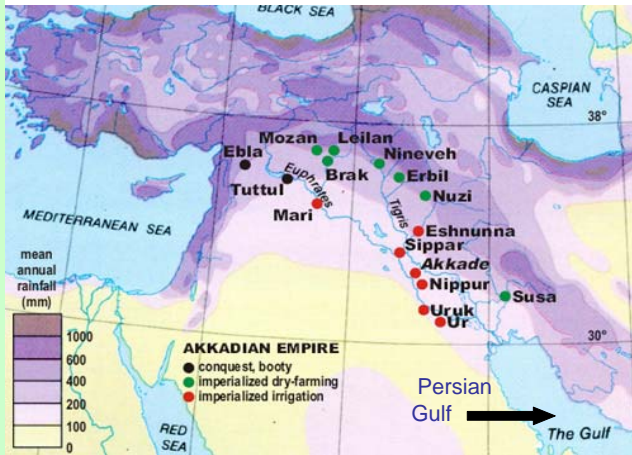
I. Introduction and Background

The Ancient Akkadian Empire is one of the oldest empires in the world.



This time line shows when the Ancient Akkadian Empire existed in relation to other well known empires and cultures.

The Akkadian Empire was located in what is now Iraq. They were an agricultural empire that farmed grain and raised farm animals such as sheep and cattle.



The Persian Gulf is shown in the lower right hand corner of the above map. The Gulf of Oman is located to the southeast of the Persian Gulf. The next map shows where the empire was located in relation to a present day geopolitical map.



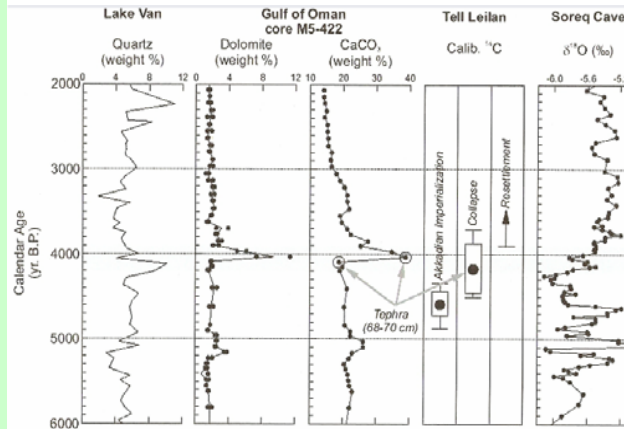
II. Hypothesis

Dr. Harvey Weiss of Yale University hypothesized that the Akkadian Empire collapsed from a long period of drought and increased winds.

III. Evidence

Sediment Core Samples:

- There was unusually high levels of dust (detrital dolomite, calcite, and quartz) in the lake sediment.



Archeological Digs:



Researchers found:

- bones of sheep and cattle.
- abandoned pottery.
- grain storage vessels.

IV. Conclusions

The Ancient Akkadian Empire's collapse was due to increased aridity and severe drought.

- The unusually high levels of dust in the lake sediment, which is mud composed of different minerals, proved that there was a period of increased aridity and increased winds around the time of the Akkadian Empire's collapse.
- The thin skeletons of sheep and cattle that were found were proved to have died from the drought.
- The pottery and grain storage vessels that were found were most likely abandoned.
- When the aridity and winds increased it caused the soil to dry and to no longer be farmable.
- An unusual amount of volcanic ash in the lake sediments is evidence that there was increased volcanic activity during this period, which in turn would lead to more carbon dioxide in the atmosphere.

V. Acknowledgements

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