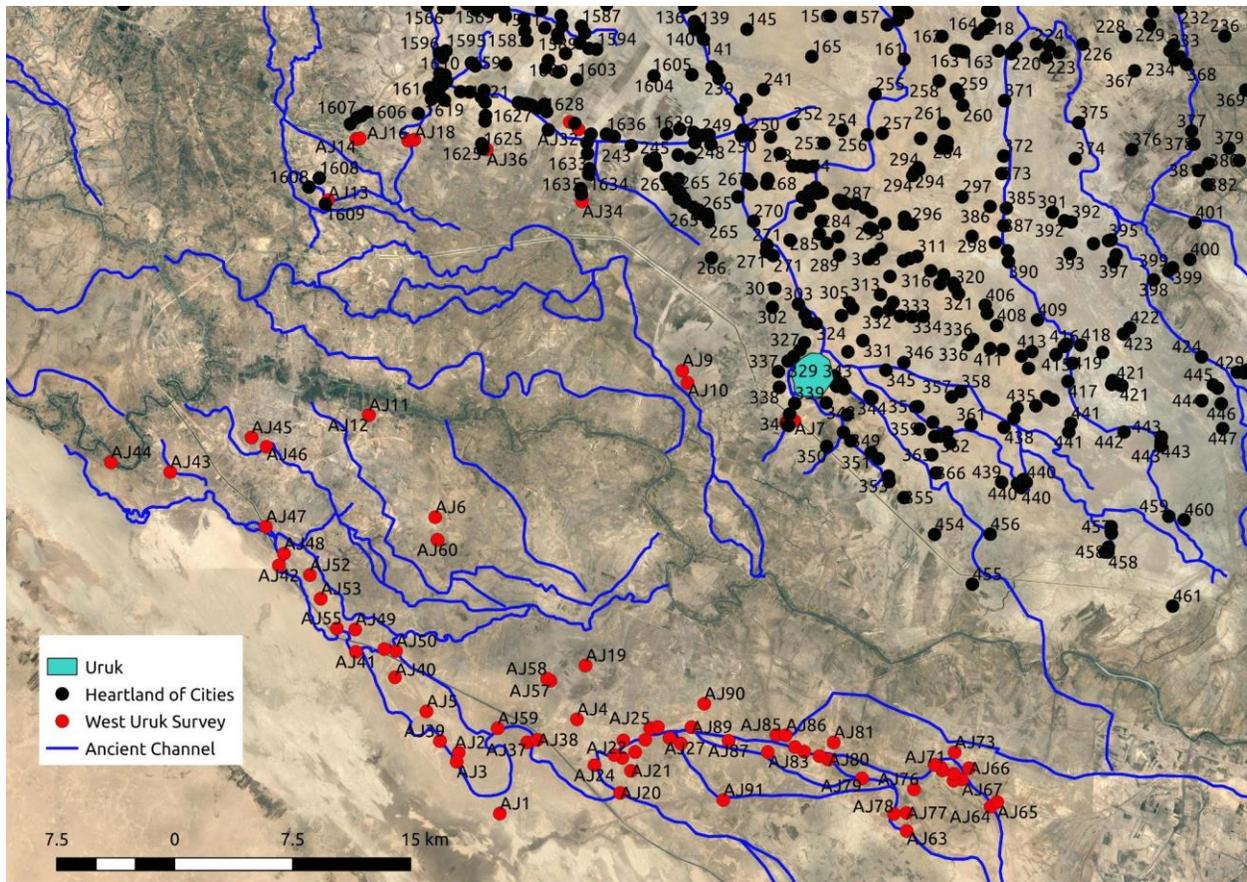
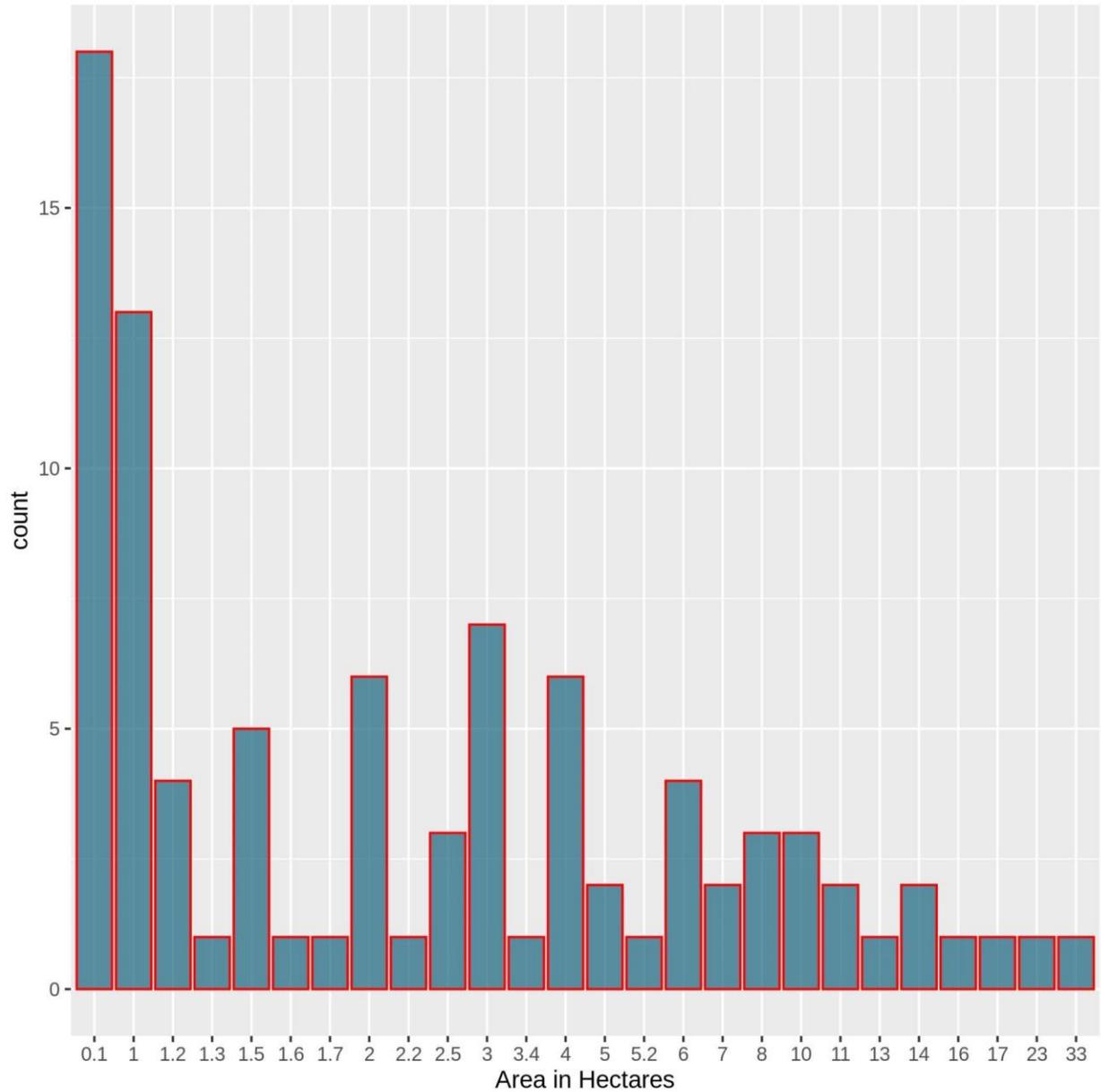


## **Archaeological Survey of the West Uruk Region**

In 2019, a regional survey in regions west of the ancient city of Uruk, called the West Uruk Survey (WUS), was undertaken by an Iraqi team from the University of al-Qadasiyah. Regions surveyed mostly covered areas not surveyed previous by Adams (1981). The intent was to learn more about this region using a combination of remote sensing data, from the available CORONA imagery archive (CORONA Atlas 2021), and field survey. A total of 91 archaeological sites were discovered. The region is today remote, being mostly desert shrub with the exception of narrow strips of land that are irrigated from the Euphrates or have groundwater access. The survey was general in that it recorded the presence of material remains from different periods but did not estimate the extent of settlement in any one period. The settlements are mostly small, measuring in most cases less than 2 hectares, indicating that the recorded sites are best described as ancient villages or small occupations whether they were partially or fully occupied in any one period (Figure S1). Area estimates for sites are given and are based on remote sensing data and field observations. The most common sites are between 0.1-1 ha (16 sites). The largest site (AJ26) measures about 33 ha, indicating this could be considered more comparable to a small town. Only three other sites were greater than 15 ha (AJ2,AJ28,AJ80). Sites surveyed by WUS were given the prefix of 'AJ' followed by the site number. What is clear from the survey results is that a channel identified west of Uruk, where many sites sit near or along, appears to be among the most important channel in the region. The presence of sites from different periods in this channel suggest it was also relatively long-lived.



**Figure S1.** The regional survey undertaken showing sites recovered relative to ancient watercourses mapped (after Jotheri et al. 2018) and Adams' survey (*Heartland of Cities*) near the region of Uruk. Site survey numbers are indicated.



**Figure S2.** Distribution of site area based on remote sensing and field observations.

*Survey Results*

Dating of sites is based on surface ceramics recovered from sites. The ceramic typology from nearby Uruk was used as the reference material to date sites. After locating potential sites using remote sensing data, a field reconnaissance was conducted where surface ceramics were recovered and used for dating. Table 1 indicates the number of sites for different periods.

Although an accurate picture for the total area occupied for each period is not possible, given the general nature of the survey, we can use the total area of sites to get an idea of roughly how extensive settlement was for given periods. It is likely for most of the sites the full area extent of

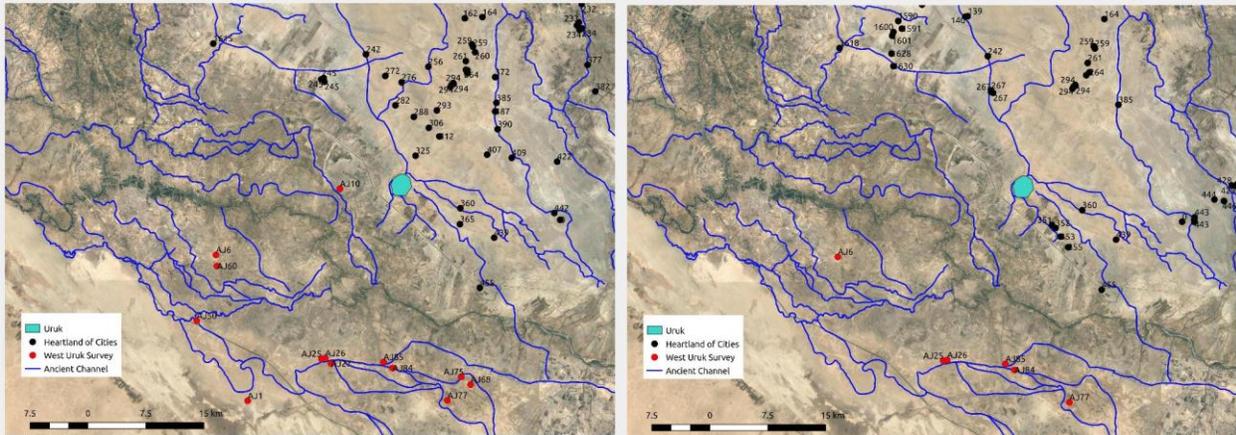
sites were occupied, given that so many sites are small. No sites is occupied prior to the Uruk period. From these results, it is evident that occupation begins to only increase substantially after the Uruk period (i.e., post 3200 BCE), with total occupation increasing greatly to 12 sites and nearly 97 hectares in the Early Dynastic period. By the late 3rd millennium BCE, there is a slight decline in total occupied area (45.5-61 ha). However, in the Old Babylonian and first half of the 2nd millennium BCE, a much more substantial number of settlements are occupied (21 sites; >164 ha). The number of settlements further increases in the late second millennium BCE during the Kassite period with total occupation reaching an apogee for the region (42 sites; 224.5 ha). The number of occupied sites nearly halves in the first half of the 1st millennium BCE, with only about 77 ha occupied in total during the Neo-Babylonian period. There is only a relatively minor presence of sites during the Achaemenid period (9 sites; 18.6 ha), with settlement rebounding somewhat in the Seleucid/Hellenistic occupation (21 sites; 43.7 ha) and Parthian (17 sites; 40.9 ha) period. There is continued decline between the Parthian through the Islamic period, with sites decreasing to 11 sites (16.1 ha) in the Sasanian period and 3 sites (10.2 ha) in the Islamic period (second half of the 1st millennium CE). The peak in occupation, and likely population for the region, appears to be the Kassite period. Figure **S2** shows the locations of occupied sites from the 3rd millennium BCE to the late 1st millennium BCE at the end of the Seleucid period.

In comparing these results with Adams' (1981) survey in regions north and east of Uruk, it is worth noting that there seems to be mostly contrasting results from Uruk itself and the *Heartland of Cities* survey (Figures **S3–S5**). While Uruk greatly expands in the early third millennium BCE, with relatively few sites around Uruk to the north and east, sites occupied to the west of the city are relatively small. Uruk and its environs decline in the late third millennium BCE, which appears to be similar to the regions to the west. However, while Uruk and its other regions remain relatively small in the Isin-Larsa and Old Babylonian periods, areas to the west greatly expanded. This trend continues in the Kassite period and, in fact, the regions west of Uruk expand even more while Uruk and its other surrounding regions continue a pattern of smaller and more rural settlements. Reversing an earlier trend, Uruk and its other, non-western environs appear to expand in the first half of the first millennium BCE, with that trend continuing in the late first millennium BCE. Areas to the west of Uruk, on the other hand, appear to become less occupied and have smaller sites. This trend continues, in fact, into the first millennium CE. Even in the second millennium BCE, we see that occupation is mainly restricted to the large channel west of Uruk.

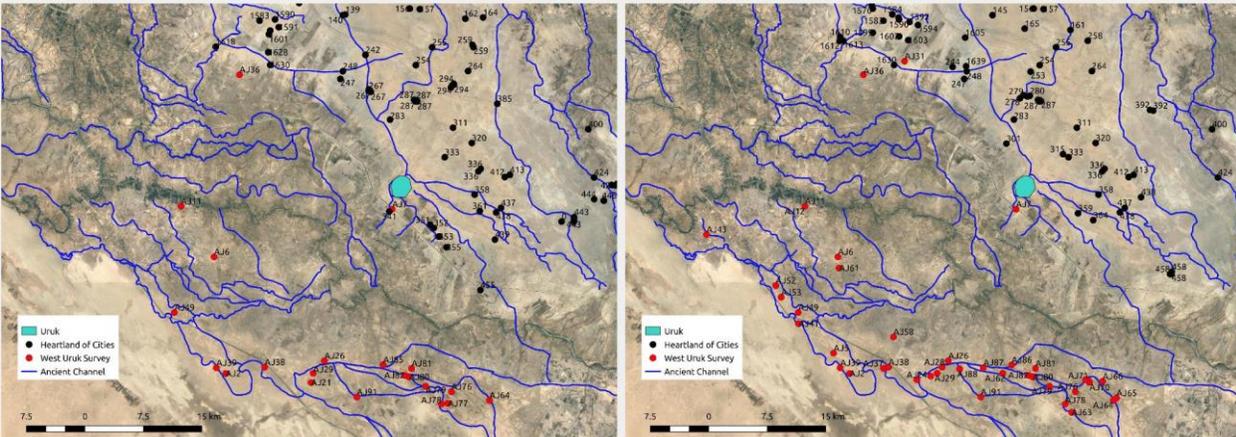
Period	Number of Sites	Occupied Area (ha)	Sites
Uruk	2	2.1	10,27
Early Dynastic	12	96.5	10,27,1,6,25,26,50,60,68,74,75,77,84,85

Akkadian	6	61	6,25,26,77,84,85
Ur III	4	45.5	6,26,77,85
Old Babylonia n	21	164.2	6,26,77,85,2,7,11,21,29,36,38,39,4 964,76,78,79,80,81,82,91
Kassite	42	224.5	6,26,2,7,11,29,36,38,49,64,76,78,7 9,80,81,82,91,5,12,22,24,28,31,35, 37,41,43,53,68,61,62,63,65,70,71, 72,86,87,88
Neo- Babylonia n	22	77.2	29,49,76,82,12,31,35,37,41,63,65, 66,72,9,17,30,44,48,51,54,73,90
Achaeme nid	9	18.6	76,31,41,66,9,17,73,90,32
Seleucid	21	43.7	76,31,41,66,9,17,73,90,32,3,8,14,1 5,20,34,40,42,59,69,83,89
Parthian	17	40.9	31,17,32,8,14,20,40,42,59,83,89,4, 19,23,33,45,57
Sasanian	11	16.1	40,42,56,31,17,32,14,20,59,19,16
Islamic	3	10.2	40,42,56

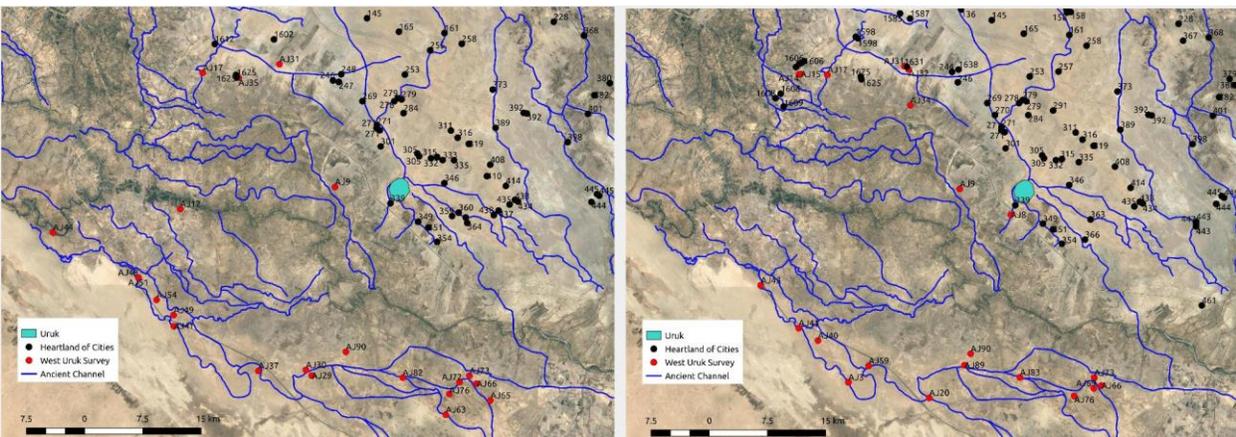
**Table 1.** The number of sites for different periods in the WUS. Only the site number, with the prefix AJ, removed.



**Figure S3.** Sites occupied during the Early Dynastic to the Akkadian/Ur III periods.



**Figure S4.** Sites occupied during the Old Babylonian, including Isin-Larsa, and Kassite periods.



**Figure S5.** Sites occupied during the Neo-Babylonian and Achaemenid/Seleucid periods.

## References

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