

TFA 1121 ASSIGNMENT 1

HISTORY AND THEORY

Civilization defines an advance state of intellectual, cultural, and material development in human society. Sumer which was a country in Southern Mesopotamia was the source of first civilization. The Sumerian civilization began upon the flood plain of the lower parts of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers because the rivers were close to the land it was fertile and enabled the people to grow food. With the excess of food people could settle down to village life and with these new settlements towns and cities were created. The creation of towns and cities and with the surplus of food the population was allowed to grow. Agriculture was an important factor for civilization in Sumer. The Sumerian people grew different types of foods. They farmed everything from wheat to onions, they could create dykes and canals, they had cattle to loosen the soil and ease the workload off them, and with the creation of there calendar system it helped them knowing when to start harvesting. The development of cities and the growth of population created interaction between people. The Small villages that evolved into cities and where distant from Tigris and Euphrates had problems getting supply of food so the Sumerians created a stable food supply this allowed to increase the amount of people who wanted to settle into the cities away from the two rivers which helped expand the land of Sumer. Trade was an important reason for civilization. The Sumerians traded within the Middle East and the Persian Gulf. Local products were traded such as food for ivory and gold. There was a shortage of stone; metal could only be obtained in the mountains so trade was important between its neighbours. The raw material the help create Mesopotamia civilization was clay. Permanent mud brick residential structures were being created and later on the Sumerians built large temples in each city that housed priestly class. The priests controlled the religious life, the economy, land ownership and the management of long distance trade. "The Sumerian language became the main speech of the land, and the people developed the cuneiform script, a system of writing on clay. This script was to become the basic means of written communication throughout Mesopotamia. In the centuries that followed the immigration of the Sumerians, the country grew rich and powerful. Art and architecture, crafts, and religious and ethical thought flourished." There were many achievements of civilization in southern Mesopotamia. Agriculture became the main method of subsistence; farming was made easier from the introduction of the plough. The invention of the wheel made pottery. The construction and careful planning of the epic buildings such as the temples and ziggurats. But the main achievement is of the civilisation was the invention of there system of writing which was known as cuneiform.

A courtyard house is type of house where the main part of the building is set around a central courtyard that is open to the sky. The courtyard can be completely surrounded and only be accessible from the inside the house or accessed externally with the use of a walkway. Courtyard houses are more suitable for higher temperate climate countries. The open central court was an important aid to cooling houses in warm weather by creating cooling affect convection currents this is the help of the courtyards shape, size, and environmental system. Theses features give the courtyard an advantage for attractive and adaptable to changing social needs. The courtyard design is specific in Islamic culture for security and privacy in that way protecting the sanctity of the family unit. Over the years new unique strategies, solutions and devices had been developed. One of them was solar zoning. This dictates the house layout so that rooms looking into the middle court and surrounding spaces are cool in the summer and warm in the winter. In the summer living would be on the south side of the house looking north during the hottest months this avoided the high temperature summer sun and in the winter the living would be on the north side of the house trying to receive full sun exposure. One of the main features of the courtyard house is the vaulted hall known as the Iwan. This is a spacious covered space, closed on three sides and generally extended up through two floors. It's a large semi outside room facing opening into the middle of the courtyard. The courtyard is a circulation for climate as well as an adaptable space for different functions for instance entertaining guests and family gatherings. The court space offers the chance for family to create a quiet private area uniquely established with the family and its Middle Eastern culture. It allows a safe area for children play under parent's supervision, a calm place to sleep during the hot summer nights, a foundation for daylight for the surrounding rooms and a circulation core of the house linking all the rooms in a controlled manner. But there are disadvantages of the courtyard structure, there are problems of drainage. Drainage was a well know problem for the courtyard design and when there was heavy rainfall it had to be tolerated by the residents.

Reference

<http://history-world.org/sumeria.htm>