



Ur 1922–2022

**Papers marking the centenary
of Sir Leonard Woolley's first season
of excavations at Ur**

Edited by J. Nicholas Postgate and David C. Thomas



THE BRITISH INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY OF IRAQ
2024

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Front cover: Ziggurat of Ur from the east. After Royal Air Force photograph, probably 19 September 1937. UE 5, pl. 41.

Back cover: Ziggurat of Ur in 2016. Photo J.N. Postgate

C. Leonard Woolley and Hamoudi supervising excavations at Ur in 1933/34. © The Trustees of the British Museum

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Ur 1922—2022 Centenary Colloquium

16th November 2022

Dr Laith M. Hussein
Dr P. Collins
Dr J. Jotheri
R. Goodman

Prof. J.E. Reade
Dr E. McAdam
Prof. A. McMahon
Dr C. Lecompte
Prof. R. Matthews & Dr. A. Richardson
Dr R. Zettler
Prof. W. Sallaberger

Prof. D. Charpin

The treasures of Ur in the Iraq Museum
Searching for the Sumerians at Ur
The geomorphology of the Ur region
Woolley's flood mud: a high-resolution proxy for the chronological and ecological context of Ur's first inhabitants
The background and status of the Ur ziggurat
The Ubaid period figurines from Ur
Tell al-Ubaid and the Ubaid period
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“Brought In”: collections from sites in Ur's hinterlands
The fragmentary Ur III ritual tablet from Ur: new light on royal representation
Samsu-iluna and the end of the occupation of Ur in the Old Babylonian period

17th November 2022

Dr T. Greenfield

Dr M. Shepperson
Dr B. Hafford
Prof. Dr. A. Otto & Dr. B. Einwag

Profs. E. Stone & P. Zimansky
Prof. J.N. Postgate
Prof. S. Tinney
J. Jawdat

Prof. J. Tenney
Prof. H.D. Baker
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Were there royal herds? The cattle from the Early Dynastic Royal Cemetery of Ur
Old Babylonian household architecture
Woolley and site formation at Ur: old notes and new excavations
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Preface

On the 17th and 18th November 2022 an on-line colloquium was held to celebrate the centenary of Sir Leonard Woolley's first excavation season at Al-Muqayyar, the Babylonian city of Ur. The colloquium was sponsored by the State Board for Antiquities and Heritage, the Penn Museum at the University of Pennsylvania, and the British Institute for the Study of Iraq. The participants, listed on p. iv, came from Iraq, France, Canada, the USA, Germany, and the UK, and those papers which have been submitted for this volume are arranged in the order in which they were delivered. Some contributions revisit Woolley's own work in the light of the passage of time, others report on fresh initiatives at the site. We have sought to present both the archaeological and the historical evidence, as far as possible integrating the two.

When this volume was nearly ready to send to the printer, we learnt of the report of J.G. Taylor written in 1858. This is now included as the final paper thanks to John Curtis' expert transcription of the sometimes scarcely decipherable manuscript.

Throughout the volume we have used the UE (and UET) volume numbers as listed on p. vi, to refer to the definitive publication of the excavations, believing that this is both convenient and instantly recognizable in place of the author and year system otherwise employed. Many of the images in this volume come from these reports or from artefacts in the British Museum, and are credited as: © The Trustees of the British Museum. These are all shared under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International (CC BY-NC-SA 4.0) licence. Our thanks are also due to the Penn Museum for permissions to publish.

This is not the first time that an international event has recognized the importance of Ur: the proceedings of the 62nd Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale were published in 2021: Grant Frame, Joshua Jeffers, Holly Pittman: *Ur in the Twenty-First Century CE: Proceedings of the 62nd Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale at Philadelphia, July 11–15, 2016*. (Penn State University Press, Eisenbrauns).¹ New research at the site and the wealth and range of Woolley's discoveries mean that the contributions to this volume complement, rather than duplicate, the Rencontre publication.

Since 2007 the Penn Museum and the British Museum have collaborated in a major project, with lead funding from the Leon Levy Foundation, to scan and put on-line the extensive archives of Woolley's field records kept in their storerooms. This information is now on-line at: <http://www.ur-online.org>. Over the years this has been made possible by the combined efforts of John Curtis, the late Jonathan Tubb and Paul Collins of the British Museum, and Richard Zettler and William B. Hafford for the Penn Museum.

The editors' thanks for help and advice go to Mark Altaweel, Paul Collins, Jacob Jawdat, Ali Khadr, Robert Killick, Graham Philip, Rosalind Wade Haddon, and Richard Zettler.

11 March 2024

J.N. Postgate & D.C. Thomas

¹ <https://doi.org/10.5325/j.ctv1g80954>

Ur Publications

Ur Excavations

- UE 1 Hall, H.R. & C.L. Woolley 1927 *Ur Excavations Volume I. Al-'Ubaid*. Oxford: Published for the Trustees of the Two Museums by the Oxford University Press.
- UE 2 Woolley, C.L. 1934. *Ur Excavations Volume II. The Royal Cemetery*. 2 vols. London / Philadelphia: Published for the Trustees of the Two Museums by the aid of a grant from the Carnegie Corporation of New York.
- UE 3 Legrain, L. 1936. *Ur Excavations Volume III. Archaic Seal Impressions*. London: British Museum and University of Pennsylvania Museum.
- UE 4 Woolley, C.L. 1955. *Ur Excavations Volume IV. The Early Periods*. Philadelphia: Published for the Trustees of the Two Museums by the aid of a grant from the Johnson Fund of the American Philosophical Society.
- UE 5 Woolley, L. 1939. *Ur Excavations Volume V. The Ziggurat and its Surroundings*. London: Published for the Trustees of the Two Museums by the aid of a grant from the Carnegie Corporation of New York.
- UE 6 Woolley, L. 1974. *Ur Excavations Volume VI. The Buildings of the Third Dynasty*. London: Published by the Trustees of the Two Museums.
- UE 7 Woolley, L. & M.E.L. Mallowan 1976. *Ur Excavations Volume VII. The Old Babylonian Period*. London: Published for the Trustees of the Two Museums by British Museum Publications Limited.
- UE 8 Woolley, L. 1965. *Ur Excavations Volume VIII. The Kassite Period and the Period of the Assyrian Kings*. London: Published for the Trustees of the Two Museums.
- UE 9 Woolley, L. & M.E.L. Mallowan 1962. *Ur Excavations Volume IX. The Neo-Babylonian and Persian Periods*. London: Published for the Trustees of the Two Museums.
- UE 10 Legrain, L. 1951. *Ur Excavations Volume X. Seal Cylinders*. London: Published for the Trustees of the Two Museums.

Ur Excavations: Texts

- UET 1 Gadd, C.J. & L. Legrain 1928. *Ur Excavations Texts I. Royal Inscriptions*. 2 Vols. London: Printed by order of the Trustees of the Two Museums.
- UET 2 Burrows, E. 1935. *Ur Excavations Texts II. Archaic Texts*. London: Printed by order of the Trustees of the Two Museums.
- UET 3 Legrain, L. 1937, 1947. *Ur Excavations Texts III. Business Documents of the Third Dynasty of Ur*. 2 Vols. London: Printed by order of the Trustees of the Two Museums.
- UET 4 Figulla, H.H. 1949. *Ur Excavations Texts IV. Business documents of the Neo-Babylonian Period*. London: Printed by order of the Trustees of the Two Museums.
- UET 5 Figulla, H.H. & W.J. Martin 1953. *Ur Excavations Texts V. Letters and documents of the Old Babylonian Period*. London: Printed by order of the Trustees of the Two Museums.
- UET 6 Gadd, C.J. & S.N. Kramer 1963. *Ur Excavations Texts VI. Literary and Religious Texts First Part*. London: Printed by order of the Trustees of the Two Museums.
- Gadd, C.J. & S.N. Kramer 1966. *Ur Excavations Texts VI. Literary and Religious Texts Second Part*. London: Printed by order of the Trustees of the Two Museums.
- Kramer, S.N. & A. Shaffer 2006. *Ur Excavations Texts VI. Literary and Religious Texts Third Part*. London: Printed by order of the Trustees of the Two Museums
- UET 7 Gurney, O.R. 1974. *Ur Excavations Texts VII. Middle Babylonian Legal Documents and other Texts*. London: Printed by order of the Trustees of the Two Museums.
- UET 8 Sollberger, E. 1965. *Ur Excavations Texts VIII. Royal Inscriptions Part II*. London: Printed by order of the Trustees of the Two Museums.
- UET 9 Loding, D. 1976. *Ur Excavations Texts IX. Economic Texts from the Third Dynasty*. London / Philadelphia: Published for the Trustees of the Two Museums by the Babylonian Fund.

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Foreword

Dr Laith Majid Hussain
The State Board for Antiquities and Heritage

The ancient city of Ur holds a special place in the annals of humanity because of its historical time depth and its preeminent reputation in antiquity, which is reflected in the important role it plays not only in contemporary cuneiform inscriptions but also in long lasting religious traditions and later historical sources.

Last century the archaeological investigation of the ruins of al-Muqayyar, standing proud with the towering ziggurat for the worship of the moon god Sin, only served to emphasise the importance of this Sumerian capital city. The excavated evidence revealed that its beginnings reach back to more than 5,000 years BC, and exposed the layout of one of the most important and oldest established Mesopotamian cities with its buildings, its harbours, its thoroughfares and its residential housing quarters.

Of the antiquities which were discovered here even a limited selection is now the pride of three world-class museums, distributed between the collections of the Iraq Museum, the British Museum and the Museum of the University of Pennsylvania.

The site of Ur stands very high in the priorities of the State Board for Antiquities and Heritage especially in view of its inclusion, along with the sites of Eridu and Warka and the Marshes, on the list of World Heritage sites, and the ceremonial visit of his Holiness the Pope from the Vatican in March 2021, and in the coming years we are all hoping to initiate further excavation and restoration projects at this site.

The excavations of Sir Leonard Woolley illuminated the golden age of Sumerian civilization in all its glory, both in the time of the Early Dynastic royal cemetery, and then during the reigns of Ur-Nammu and Šulgi, the greatest kings of the Third Dynasty of Ur, under whom was seen the renaissance of Sumerian language and traditions, when we witness great advances in the formation of civilized society and the flowering of artistic and literary excellence.

The city of Ur was the subject of the 62nd Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale in Philadelphia as recently as 2016, with the title “Ur in the 21st century”, yet since then archaeological research has continued and many fresh discoveries about the city have been made, notably by the recent excavations of Elizabeth Stone and Paul Zimansky, from SUNY Stony Brook, and Adelheid Otto and Berthold Einwag from the Ludwig Maximilian University in Munich. These new excavations have shed fresh light on the subsequent history of the city of Ur in the first half of the 2nd millennium BC. The different branches of the research accompanying these projects involved both the study of the remains of animal bones and human remains from within the same context, and intensive survey of the area undertaken with the application of geophysical instruments. So the few years which the two above mentioned expeditions spent on the work at Ur, provided a great opportunity for the application of a range of modern excavation techniques, including remote sensing, which were not available at the time of Woolley’s excavations a century earlier.

In addition to contributions to the present volume celebrating the centenary of the initiation of excavations at Ur, with the final publication of these studies we shall witness in the near future how archaeological, linguistic and geographical approaches will enhance the field of research and generate for us additional issues for investigation in the region of Ur and Eridu and their wider geographical environment.

The collections of the Iraq Museum include numerous treasures from the excavations of Woolley, but now also from the recent Iraqi excavations between 2000 and 2002, some of which took place in the Old Babylonian residential area. Some were located in the vicinity of the south-eastern side of cemetery of the Ur III kings, and the excavations at that time revealed a rectangular building, which probably served as an annex to the group of royal tombs, since it faces the south-eastern entrance to the cemetery of the kings of Ur. It is also worth mentioning that various restoration works were undertaken at that time in the Ur royal tombs and in part of the Old Babylonian residential quarter (AH).

During the recent past we have been striving to prepare one part of the catalogue of the Iraq Museum's holdings from the royal cemetery at Ur. We shall try as best we can to complete this work with descriptions of the artefacts, along with the information linking these pieces to their archaeological contexts. This will be of great benefit to researchers and those interested in material culture, especially by way of comparison with the previous discoveries at Ur or the other cities of Mesopotamia.

We offer our sincere gratitude and appreciation to the British Institute for the Study of Iraq and especially to Prof. Paul Collins and the Council of the trustees of the Institute for their participation in this colloquium and for their ongoing collaboration with the State Board carrying forward our successful decades long partnership. Likewise I offer thanks to Prof. Nicholas Postgate for his efforts in organizing the colloquium and editing this volume.

The coronation of the Ur III King Ibbi-Suen: from Sumer's main shrines to Innana-Ninkununa's garden at Ur

Walther Sallaberger¹

Ludwig Maximilians Universität, Munich

Ritual texts are a rare text type in the earlier periods of cuneiform writing, and this holds especially true for the time of the Third Dynasty of Ur (2110–2003 BC), historically outstanding as a century of peace in the region of Sumer and Akkade, and featuring an unparalleled wealth of textual documentation. One single fragment of a royal ritual text has been discovered, at Ur (UET 3, 57), which attracted early scholarly attention but has until now withstood a proper contextualisation. This contribution demonstrates that the text describes ritual actions that have been known for a long time from administrative documents as related to the coronation of the last king of Ur, Ibbi-Suen (2026–2003 BC). The combined textual data allows for reconstructing the coronation ceremonies in remarkable detail. The cultic journey started in Nippur and ended at Ur in the garden of Innana-Ninkununa and at the “Dais of An”. The find-spots of various inscriptions are essential to locate the garden to the south-east of the Nanna temenos.²

1. The ritual tablet UET 3, 57 + 9, 1170

The starting point for this contribution is the only text with a prescription for a royal ritual from the Ur III period, UET 3, 57+.³ The text type of prescriptions by itself is not completely unknown from that time, and besides some medical and magical prescriptions,⁴ the closest parallel is the list of regulations for the overseer of the Innana Temple at Nippur, explicating his duties during Innana's annual festival (6 NT 254).⁵ Both there and in the ritual tablet from Ur, the texts provide only a rough outline of the procedure by pointing to the central action of a day. Both texts are organized in a daily sequence, offering one phrase for each day. Two actions for one day are linked by the particle **u₃** “and” (6 NT 254:3'. 8'. 11' and UET 3, 57+:9'). The prescriptive character of the texts is generated by the usage of imperfective verbal forms, often infinite imperfective forms with the copula **-am**; examples are from the Nippur text **e₂ lu_h-dam** “the temple is to be cleaned”/“to clean the temple” (6 NT 254:5'), and from the Ur text **e₂ DN-ka ku₄-ku₄-dam** “to enter the temple of DN” (UET 3, 57+:3'. 8').

The main tablet fragment of the ritual was found in the fourth season (1925/26) of Woolley's Ur excavations in the Giparu complex on a floor level of Amar-Suena (U 6707) and published a decade later by Léon Legrain (1937) in his monumental edition of Ur III texts, UET 3, as no. 57. Legrain noted the character of the text already on the file card: “Ritual of the king for the 3/4/5th

¹ E-mail: wasa@lmu.de

² Abbreviations of Ur III sources follow BDTNS (<http://bdtns.filol.csic.es/>). Dates of tablets are given in the form ŠS.09.10.01 “year Šu-Suen 9, month 10, day 1”.

³ This fact was acknowledged in scholarship, for example by Sjöberg (1960:85): “Der Ritualtext UET III 57 – übrigens das älteste bekannte Ritual – erwähnt das Baden des Königs im Garten der Göttin Ninkununna.” Hallo & Levine (1967:17) called it the “oldest prescriptive ritual now known.” Both statements are now outdated since the discovery of the Ebla royal rituals.

⁴ See especially the texts from Nippur published by van Dijk & Geller (2003).

⁵ 6NT254, edited first by Civil (1980) as “daily chores”, and re-edited and contextualized by Zettler & Sallaberger (2011:26–8).

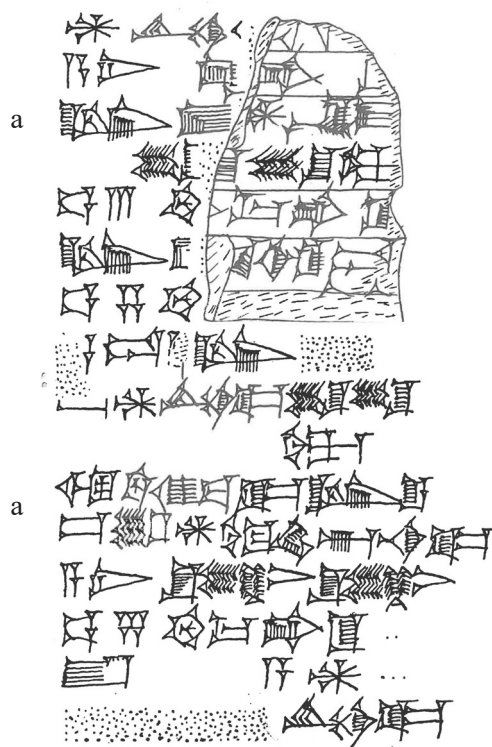


Fig. 1 UET 3, 57 + 9, 1177

the third season at Ur, its find spot is unknown; Darlene Loding (1976) published it as UET 9, 1177. As could have been expected, the join did not support van Dijk's reconstructions.

Transliteration and translation of UET 3, 57 + UET 9, 1177

	(...)	(...)
1'	^d nanna ṛ x x ¹ [xx]	Nanna (...)
2'	u ₄ ¹ ("A") zal-la-be ₂ -š[e ₃]	Until the passing of this day,
3'	lugal e ₂ ^d en-lil ₂ -[ka] / ku ₄ -ku ₄ -dam	the king will enter the temple of Enlil.
4'	u ₄ 3-kam-ma-be ₂ -še ₃	Until the 3rd day,
5'	lugal ṛ unu ^{ki} -še ₃ du	the king will go to Uruk.
6'	u ₄ 4-kam-[ma-be ₂ -še ₃]	Until the 4th day,
7'	ṛ a ¹ -ra ₂ ṛ 2 ¹ lugal-[kam]	it is the second trip of the king,
8'	e ₂ ^d nanna-ka ku ₄ -ku ₄ -dam	he will enter the temple of Nanna.
9'	u ₃ ša ₃ ḡe ₆ -ba-ka lugal-e	Furthermore, before dawn the king
10'	ḡe ^š iri ₆ ^d nin-ku ₃ -nun-na-ka	will bathe in the garden of Ninkununa.
11'	a i ₃ -tu ₃ -tu ₅	
12'	u ₄ 5-kam-ma-be ₂ -še ₃ [lugal]	Until the 5th day, [<i>the king</i>]
13'	luḥ-am ₃	is purified.
14'	[e ₂ ^d]nanna-ka [...]	In [<i>the temple</i>] of Nanna
		[...]

⁶ http://www.ur-online.org/media_item/243495/. The identification of the handwriting as that of Legrain, I owe to Dominique Charpin (the Ur Online collection labels it as "Woolley's catalog cards").

⁷ See below fn. 38.

day (etc) of the month of [...] in the temple of Nannar, the garden of Ninazag-nun-na [i.e., Ninkununa, W.S.], the []."⁶ In the catalogue, Legrain (1947:195) offered translation and gave precious information regarding the goddess Ninkununa, namely that Ur-Namma had built a shrine for Innana Nin(ku)nuna, and he referred to her name in two archival documents.

Jan van Dijk (1967:235–7) included the fragment in his seminal article on Sumerian ritual texts in the Falkenstein Gedenkschrift, and he proposed various restorations based on his understanding of the text. He concluded that the text deals with a cultic celebration as known from the hymnic literature, including the bath of the king and the participation of priestess. In the same spirit, also Sjöberg (1960:85) and Römer (1987:163–4) suggested that the bathing belonged to a "hieros gamos" in which the king participated annually at the New Year festival—an interpretation stemming from a period when scholars had hypothesised the existence of a Sacred Marriage rite at an overall New Year festival in Sumer.⁷ Römer (1987) repeated van Dijk's edition, although Krecher (1979:431) had ingeniously seen that a second fragment from Ur can be joined: U 4976 stems from

Philological commentary:

It remains unknown how much is missing at the beginning of the text.

- 2'. Van Dijk (1967:235) thought of “flowing” (**zal**) water, but ***a zal-la** does not exist elsewhere. The term N.LI, which is actually found in the references given by van Dijk, especially Gudea Cylinder B.xiv.25, can not be read “***a zal-le**”, but is **a i₃-li** (Cavigneaux 2022a:45–6 with further literature); for **zal** “to disappear, fuse, melt” see Cavigneaux 2022b. I assume that the sign copied as A is not completely preserved on its left side (collations of Ur tablets have shown that Legrain’s copies often render signs or lines more complete than they can ever have been on the tablets themselves; see here the right end of **kam** in line 4’ represented by Legrain although it is preserved on the other fragment copied by Loding). The term **u₄ zal-la-be₂-še₃** “until this day has elapsed” is attested in Ur III documents; the passing of the day is expressed in the perfective, as especially made clear by the dating formula **u₄ n ba-zal** “the *n*th day elapses” = “on the *n*th day”. Although collation may provide still another reading this would not affect the general reconstruction of the ritual sequence.
- 4'. The **-be₂** may refer to the month; “its (i.e. the month’s) third day”.
- 5'. What looks like the beginning of **e₂** in Legrain’s copy must in fact be the beginning of the UNUG sign; Legrain had evidently expected an **e₂** here. The missing **-d-am** proves the reading **du** (of the DU sign), imperfective of **ĝen** “to go” (note the parallel in 6 NT 254:3’).

2. The royal ritual according to UET 3, 57 +

The first complete phrase already comes as a surprise: after the mention of Nanna, the king should enter the temple of Enlil—and since there was no temple of Enlil in Ur, this must have referred to Enlil’s temple in Nippur. Therefore, perhaps it is not necessary to restore “day 2” in the preceding line, and the name of *Nanna* may not refer to his temple in Ur, but give an indication of the time comparable to expressions such as **nanna-ra igi du₈-a**, “after he had seen Nanna”, indicating the sighting of the moon on the evening sky that marks the beginning of a month (Sallaberger 1993:54–5). In our ritual, the New Moon festival of the second day would accordingly have been celebrated at Nippur.

Although the wording of the ritual text is very simple, the facts continue to be exciting: The next day already the king should go to Uruk. Was that possible? The distance from Nippur to Uruk is ca. 100 km as the crow flies, and a trip on the Euphrates is not much longer. Although the stream velocity of the Euphrates seems much too low to do this in a day,⁸ workers managed to transport goods by boat from sites in the environment of Nippur, Tummal and Esaġdana/Puzriš-Daġān, to Uruk within only two days.⁹ Therefore, a royal boat with a motivated punting team should have done it in a single day.¹⁰

The prescriptions continue to be demanding for the king and they require another well-trained team of punters: already on the next day, he should enter the temple of Nanna at Ur, not less than 60 km away from Uruk. Everybody will see the king’s bath in the garden of Ninkununa in a different light after the strain from the preceding rides. Purity and the god Nanna on the next day may well go together in a ritual, but I am not aware of data for a plausible restoration of the last line(s).

The ritual described in the fragment from Ur thus forces the king to show up in the main sanctuaries in the empire’s three capitals: first in the temple of the divine king Enlil in Nippur, then in the second capital Uruk, a city of central importance in royal ideology as the home of the primaeval king Gilgameš, seen as a brother of king Šulgi; therefore, the mother Ninsumun, originally from

⁸ Blaschke 2018:35: a maximum of c. 3 to 4 km/hour for the Tigris in the alluvial plain.

⁹ Steinkeller 2001:82–3 refers to Istanbul 1911 o.3, SAT 3, 2223 o.3–5.

¹⁰ Otherwise the king could have used a chariot with onager–donkey hybrids, the best and enduring runners of the Early Bronze Age. The success of such hybridisations is described by Saint Hilaire (1861:63); I am very grateful to Emmanuelle Vila who sent me this precious reference (2nd Nov. 2022).

Uruk, was venerated in the royal palace at Ur.¹¹ Furthermore, the queen was closely related to Innana, Uruk's goddess of love and war.¹² And the tour ended at Ur, the city mentioned as the king's seat in his royal titulary.

3. The administrative evidence

The philological edition of the fragmentary tablet from Ur has led to a rudimentary reconstruction of a royal ritual, but substantial parts of this ritual have been known since seventy years thanks to administrative documents assembled by Sollberger (1953) that list the animals sacrificed at royal offerings at exactly the same locations and in the same sequence. The tablets stem from ancient Puzriš-Dagān, modern Drehem, where scribes kept track of the royal stock of animals, especially of animals for slaughter. They noted carefully each single animal expended for the royal kitchen or as gifts to guests, and, of course, for royal sacrifices in the Ur III kingdom. A series of four documents lists exactly the same series of sanctuaries as the ritual text, and the sequence of sites within a single tablet leaves no doubt that the same cultic event is referred to both in the prescriptive text from Ur and in the occasions for sacrifices listed in the expenditure document. The administrative texts deal exclusively with fattened oxen, and in total 37 of these animals were slaughtered (13+7+16+1) in the course of the royal ceremonies. The four documents—and only these four—note one and the same occasion for the sumptuous rites, it is: “when Ibbi-Suen received the crown”.¹³ The monthly summary of expenditures of animals AnOr 7, 108 (ŠS.09.10.01–30) lists the standard deliveries provided by Urkununa, and they are only partly parallel to the special donations provided for the coronation (for Nippur and Ur).

Table 1 The sequence of the coronation ritual according to the ritual text and administrative documents¹⁴

Ritual text UET 3, 57+	Administrative documents from Puzriš-Dagān with the subscript “when Ibbi-Suen received the crown”		
	Sacrifice of fattened oxen (expended by Puzur-Enlil):	Date	Reference
entering temple of Enlil	Enlil, Ninlil, “entry of the king”, (before dawn), in Nippur	ŠS.09.10.01	JCS 7:48 (MAH 19352)
3rd day: going to Uruk	Innana et al., “entry of the king”, in the evening, “when the king goes from Nippur to Uruk”		
	Innana, “entry of the king”, before dawn, in Uruk	ŠS.09.10.02	Nisaba 33, 38
4th day: second trip, entering temple of Nanna	Nanna et al. in the evening, “when the king goes from Uruk to Ur”		
bathing in Ninkununa's garden before dawn	Ninkununa et al., “entry of the king”, before dawn	ŠS.09.10.03	UDT 100
5th day: purification; Nanna [...]	Nanna, in the evening (king not present), in Ur		
[...]	...		
	Ninḫursaĝ of Nutur, before dawn (king not present), in Ur	ŠS.09.10.06	JCS 10:28 no.4

¹¹ The royal family of Ur had strong ideological ties to Uruk, but no family relationship to that city can be substantiated; see the summary by Sallaberger 2015.

¹² Sallaberger 2021a discusses that Innana and related goddesses (Nanaya, Gansura) were promoted under the Ur III dynasty to the disadvantage of other deities.

¹³ Sollberger (1953) listed MAH 19352 (published there; cited here as “JCS 7:48”), UDT 100 and AnOr 7, 107; JCS 10:48 no. 4 was published 3 years later, and Nisaba 33, 38 in 2020 by Sigrist and Ozaki. Sollberger l.c. also referred to CST, 453 (not related to the coronation) and AnOr 7, 108 (expenditures for the complete month) and collected further evidence that Ibbi-Suen started his rule late in the year Šu-Suen 9.

¹⁴ Note: The dark lines separate days as indicated in the texts.

The day of the month is earlier in the documents than the one in the ritual text, but this agrees well with the observation made for lunar festivals (of New Moon, Quarter or Full Moon) that expenditure documents were regularly dated one or two days before the particular event (Sallaberger 1993:55).

According to the documents, the king was supposed to arrive at his destinations, at Uruk and at Ur, in the “evening” (**a₂-u₄-te-na**), when the deities there received an offering. This corresponds to the wording of the ritual text: “until the (end of) nth day (the king should enter the temple of DN).” The main sacrifice at a shrine was performed early in the morning, “before dawn” (**a₂-ġe₆-ba-a**),¹⁵ when the king left. Royal presence at a sacrifice is marked by the phrase **lugal ku₄-ra**, literally “the king having entered”, and exactly the same verb **ku₄** “to enter” (a shrine) is used in the ritual text. And finally, the appearance of the rarely mentioned goddess Ninkununa both in the ritual text and in the administrative documents and in both sequences two days after the king’s presence before Enlil, proves beyond any doubt that the two sets of textual data relate to the same event.¹⁶ Therefore, the ritual text found on the Ur III floor of the Gipar at Ur, was composed to set the scene for the coronation of Ibbi-Suen after the death of his predecessor.¹⁷

4. Ibbi-Suen’s coronation: timing and meaning

King Ibbi-Suen of Ur was crowned in the first days of the tenth month of the ninth and last year named after his predecessor Šu-Suen; following the Middle Chronology this corresponds to a day in or around January 2026 BC. Šu-Suen had died during the ninth month of the same year, and he was buried in the third royal mausoleum at Ur, the northern mausoleum.¹⁸ Šu-Suen must have died shortly after day 4 of this month when he is documented the last time acting in a ritual at Nippur.¹⁹ The preparation of his grave pit started on day 15, the funeral took place on the 17th, and a wailing period of nine days lasted until the 25th day.²⁰ Only another five to seven days later, on the first days of the tenth month, the new king was ready for the coronation.

As the ritual text and the documents attest, Ibbi-Suen appeared for his coronation at the three main sanctuaries Nippur, Uruk, and Ur within the shortest time possible; he was thus seen almost simultaneously as the new king by the highest dignitaries in these centres. The special occasion and the absolutely exceptional rapid sequence of rituals must be seen together: Ibbi-Suen emerged “everywhere” in his kingdom “at the same time” as the one in front of the gods. At Ibbi-Suen’s coronation, the “miracle” of the royal presence at three distant sanctuaries within three days was made possible thanks to the perfect organisation of royal transport and of the procurement of sacrifices.²¹ The seemingly contemporaneous coronation ritual at different places can be understood as another

¹⁵ This term is discussed by Sallaberger 2021b:4 n. 5 (with previous literature).

¹⁶ Ninkununa is attested only 26 times in over 16,000 documents from Puzriš-Dagān, and never again with two fattened oxen as here (1 ox in SET 116 r.11–13; BDTNS, search of Nov 1, 2022).

¹⁷ One might suspect that the ritual text was composed for Šu-Suen’s coronation (the find spot on the Amar-Suena floor excludes an earlier date) and performed exactly in the same way for Ibbi-Suen’s. However, first, the cultic calendar displays so many subtle innovations in that time (especially around Šu-Suen year 3) that such a strict repetition would seem anachronistic. Secondly, the Ur III kingship faced a time of crisis exactly around Šu-Suen’s accession, and thus a repetition seems even less likely.

¹⁸ The evidence for Šu-Suen’s burial stems from the monthly summary of expenditures for the ninth month of Šu-Suen’s ninth year, YBC 4190 published by Sigrist 1999. A detailed study of the burial by the present writer has been promised since almost twenty years but unfortunately he has failed to fulfil this promise properly. For some general information see Sallaberger 2012.

¹⁹ YBC 4190.ii.9: [**lugal**] **ku₄-ra**, “entry of the king”.

²⁰ It might be seen as a coincidence that exactly Šu-Suen’s burial and Ibbi-Suen’s coronation are attested in such detail, but probably this results not only from the developments of royal representation but more from changes of the administration under Šu-Suen.

²¹ Jacobsen (1953:42 with n. 2) already observed “that the king was crowned successively in Nippur, Uruk and Ur” and guesses: “Should this interpretation prove true, we may see in the successive coronations survivals from the time when Uruk and Ur were independent monarchies.” Jacobsen had thought of ceremonies as formed by long traditions, whereas it has become clear in the meantime to what extent the Ur III kings have developed their new forms of royal representation including their presence in the three capitals.

element to underline the transcendent nature of the divine king, an outsider and “stranger” in the human world of his subordinates.²²

How the act of ritual installation of a new king was called in everyday Sumerian is conveyed by the subscripts of the administrative documents. According to them, the sacrifices took place “when Ibbi-Suen had received the crown” (**u₄ dⁱ-bi₂-^dZUEN aga₃ šu ba-an-ti-a**).²³ Thus (as in English and other languages) the ceremony was named after the crown, the insigne relating to the divine bestowal of the royal office, and neither the throne of the forefathers nor the sceptre guiding the people denominated this procedure. As for the ancients, also for modern observers, the crown has become the typical feature to recognize a king of the Ur III dynasty in the imagery.²⁴ Seals, the Ur-Namma stela or some reliefs and statues at least in the tradition of the Ur III dynasty (Anubanini; head from Susa Sb 95) show the format of this most important royal insigne which was introduced in this form by Ur-Namma, the founder of the dynasty, as an unadorned hemispherical headgear with a broad brim, characterized by its absolutely plain surface (Gudea who had introduced the prototype of this headgear of a sovereign, had a crown covered by rows of knobs). The plain surface indicates that the Ur III crown was definitely not made of cloth or leather. The Ur III document BIN 3, 344 informs about the material characteristics of a crown (**aga₃**), albeit that of an *en* priestess and not the king; it apparently was adorned with an agate eye on the forehead (see the edition in Appendix 2). The crown was a kind of light helmet made of wood and completely plated by first-quality gold. That guaranteed a brilliant shining appearance of the crown on the head of the Ur III king.

Precisely this image is generated by the final lines of an Old Babylonian incantation on the crown which was described as fashioned by the gods (see the edition in Appendix 3). When in the morning the king appears with his crown on, the rising sun would shine on it and produce an effect of flashes throwing lightning! This was the more spectacular as larger shining surfaces were extremely rare in the material world of Sumer, and mostly confined to metal vessels of copper, bronze, silver, and gold. The large hemispherical crown with its completely plain shining golden surface thus offered the most stunning effect—and any decoration on it would only have reduced its radiance. The picture painted by the incantation suffices to explain convincingly the specific shape of the Ur III crown.

5. The sacrifices: Nippur and Uruk

A central religious component of the coronation ceremony is the presence of the king in front of the main deities of Sumer, he “entered” (**ku₄**) their temples, as both the ritual text and the administrative documents call it (see Tables 1 and 2, Appendix 1). The latter enumerate the sacrifices of fattened oxen and of sheep, but of course, the presentation of meat must be understood as one element in an elaborate ceremony in the presence of an audience and accompanied by music. The subsequent discussion intends to follow the course of the ceremonies and shortly elucidate their relevance for the king at the coronation.

The first sacrifices were presented at Nippur to Enlil and Ninlil, the divine ruling couple and with their special relevance for kingship obviously the first station of the newly installed “king of Sumer and Akkade”. The first preserved administrative text (JCS 7:48) starts with the sacrifice

²²The concept of the “stranger” king by Graeber & Sahlins (2017) allows a structural understanding of many aspects of Ur III kingship. In this understanding, a king (as an entity setting the societal rules) is seen as being placed outside of the society of his subjects (which allows his influence on the people and their acceptance). The Ur III king did not play the role of an ethnic foreigner (as the ‘Amorite’ or ‘Kassite’ kings did), but as a divine king, he was a super-hero for his people.

²³The phrase is not only attested in the four documents of Table 2 and Appendix 1: AAICAB 1/4, Bod. S 365 (AS.01.00.00; Umma), a *mašdarea*—delivery for Amar-Suena, “when the king had received the crown”, **lugal-e aga₃ šu ti-a**; ZA 95: 175 r.ii.22, exactly the same phrase for Ibbi-Suen. The latter act is referred to in the expenditure for a “gift to PN the royal messenger when he brought the good news that Ibbi-Suen had assumed kingship”, **niĝ₂-ba PN lu₂ kiĝ₂-gi₄-a lugal a₂-aĝ₂-ĝa₂ saga₁₀ dⁱ-bi₂-^dZUEN-e nam-lugal šu ti-a de₆-a** (ZA 95 175 r.iii.7).

²⁴On the crown see especially Suter 2010:343. Suter (2015:513–17) also discussed the differences between the earlier “brimmed cap” of Gudea and that of the Ur III kings. The form of the crown has to be added to the long list of important and lasting innovations introduced by Ur-Namma (Sallaberger 2015).

early in the morning, before dawn, before the king departed for Uruk, prescribed by the ritual text UET 3, 57+ for the third day of the month. The main sacrifice to Enlil and Ninlil, therefore, must have taken place on the day before, and in fact the main state-sponsored New Moon festivities at Nippur date to the second day.²⁵

Linked to the New Moon festivities was the bathing ceremony of the healing goddess Nintinuga carried out by a cupbearer in the commission of the king (who, therefore, did not participate personally). The Ur III king often invoked the divine healer,²⁶ and at the coronation ceremonies, she received offerings in all three sanctuaries, at Nippur as Nintinuga, in Uruk and Ur as Gula. This special reverence indicates the high value attributed to the king's personal health for performing his office.²⁷

At Uruk, the king approached not only the city-god Innana both in the evening²⁸ and before dawn, but upon arrival also other deities: Šulgi, thus a statue of the new king's venerated great-grandfather; Innana and An in the temple of Innana; the divine healer Gula; the gate of the high priestess's Ĝepar residence; Nanaya, companion of Innana and like her especially venerated by the queen;²⁹ and Ninsumun, royal mother of Gilgameš and the ruling king.

The Ur III scribes were experts in listing items in meaningful sequences. With deities at sacrifices, three partly overlapping principles are employed, namely hierarchy, location and temporal progression. Thus, a sacrifice to Šulgi listed before the one to Innana can only indicate temporal (and local) priority, pointing to a shrine perhaps in the palace or at the entrance of the Eanna complex, whereas An was in Innana's temple and thus listed after her.

Table 2 The key elements of the documents in translation (see Appendix 1)

Number of oxen, deity	Cultic act, participant	Time and place	Reference
Day 2:			
(Enlil and Ninlil)		(in Nippur)	
Day 3:			
1 Enlil 1 Ninlil	large ritual, entry of the king		JCS 7:48 o. 1–4
1 bathing of Nintinuga •	executed by the cup-bearer Atu	in Nippur	o. 5–7
1 Šulgi ♣ 4 Innana * 1 An, in the temple of Innana 1 Gula • 1 gate of the Ĝepar-building 1 Nanaya * 1 Ninsumun ♦	entry of the king	in the evening; when the king went from Nippur to Uruk	o.8–r.6

²⁵ The monthly summary of standard animal expenditures AnOr 7, 108 obv.i.1–7 lists 17+20 sheep for the “large ritual”, at “entry of the king” (see on these offerings Sallaberger 1993, vol.2, Tab. 33), thus in fact the same occasion. See Sallaberger (1993:55) on the sequence of an eve ceremony (“Vorabendfeier”) when the new crescent was observed and marking the first day of the month (which started after nightfall in the evening) and the main *ešeš*-celebration on the second day.

²⁶ This is proven by the travels of Gula/Nintinuga to the royal palace; see for a discussion and the references known at the time Sallaberger 1993:87 and vol. 2: Table 50.

²⁷ The Ur III kings' high esteem for the healing goddess surely helped the Isin kings to promote their city-goddess Ninisina / Gula.

²⁸ The “large ritual” (**siškur, gu-la**) received also a ‘standard’ expenditure of 10 sheep for the “various statues” (**alan dili-dili**) in the temple of Innana, from Urkununa: AnOr 7, 108 o. i 18–25.

²⁹ On the royal wives Abi-simfi and Kubatum and their cultic roles see below fn. 37.

Number of oxen, deity	Cultic act, participant	Time and place	Reference
Day 4:			
1 Innana *	for the large ritual		Nisaba 33 38 o.1–5
1 Innana *	entry of the king	before dawn, in Uruk	
2 Nanna 1 Ninsumun ♦ 1 Šu-Suen-loved-by-Nanna ♣ [1] Gula •		in the evening; when the king went from Uruk to Ur	o.6–r.1
Day 5:			
2 Ninkununa * 2 Nanna-murinaba'a 1 Ulmašītum * 1 Anunītum * 1 Allatum 1 Meslamtaea 1 Dais of An	entry of the king	before dawn	UDT 100 o.1–10
1 Nanna 6 Nanna	large ritual executed by the cup-bearer Sîn-abūšu	in the evening; in Ur	o.11–r.6
Day 7 or 8:			
1 Ninḫursaġa of Nutur	executed by the cup-bearer Sîn-abūšu	before dawn, in Ur	JCS 10 28 no. 4

Legend: Days of the month are counted according to the modern definition of a day. Key terms appearing also in the ritual text UET 3, 57+ (see above) are underlined. **Main deities** of a city are in **bold** type.

Types of deities: * = Innana figures; • = healing goddess; ♦ = royal mother Ninsumun; ♣ = statues of kings

6. Ur: Nanna, and deities in the royal palace Eḫursaġ

Upon his arrival at Ur the king first entered the temenos of the city-god Nanna, as shown by the ritual text and confirmed by the administrative list of sacrifices (Tables 1 and 2, Appendix 1). After Nanna, ten deities from Ur follow, who do not belong to the circle around Nanna with his wife Ningal (venerated in the Ĝepar residence of Nanna's high priestess), the entrance to the temenos called Dublamah, the shrine Du'ur (perhaps the ziggurat) or Nanna's vizier Alamuš and his wife Ninurima. In order to understand the coronation ceremonies, crucial evidence has been assembled in the following pages to localise the other minor shrines (see the map below, Fig. 2).

The group of deities venerated after the arrival at Ur resembles the deities the king met the day before at Uruk: there is again mother Ninsumun; another royal statue, here of the new king's father, Šu-Suen-kiaġ-Nanna "Šu-Suen, beloved of Nanna"; and again the healing goddess, Gula. Both Gula and Ninsumun had a sanctuary in Ur where also their divine spouses and son (Damu and Gunura, and Lugalbanda, respectively) were venerated. Whereas no building inscription is known for Gula, the shrine of Ninsumun at Ur may be localized thanks to the find of a limestone foundation tablet of Ur-Namma, "king of Sumer and Akkade", who built the temple Emaḫ to Ninsumun, "his goddess" (**diġir-ra-ne₂**), an epithet evoking a more intimate relation than the standard "his lady" (**nin-a-ne₂**; RIME 3/2.1.1.23). Hall had found the object east of the excavated parts of the Eḫursaġ in walls of mud bricks. These must have belonged to the royal palace as well (Hall 1930:162–3; see Frayne 1997:58), since the baked-brick walls of the Eḫursaġ stood on foundations of mud-brick, and the eastern extension of the Eḫursaġ was never exactly determined. Although Ninsumun and

especially Gula are often enumerated close to Ninkununa in lists of sacrifices regarding Ur, they are not only separated from her in our ritual, but the two are also conspicuously absent from the long list of deities in Ur, venerated during the funeral for Šu-Suen when the palace had remained closed.³⁰ All these indications seen together suggest that it was the palace Eḫursaĝ where Ibbi-Suen presented a welcome offering.

The procession of the new king on the fourth day thus may have looked like this: arrival from Uruk at the West Harbour, entering the monumental centre near the temple of the gatekeeper Nimintaba,³¹ turning north to Nanna for the evening sacrifice, and then back south to the royal palace Eḫursaĝ, venerating the divine mother Ninsumun, the father Šu-Suen, and the healing goddess Gula.

7. Ninkununa's Garden, An's Dais, Innana figures, and other deities

According to the ritual text, the king bathed in the garden of Ninkununa “before dawn” (UET 3, 57:9'–11'). The administrative tablet (UDT 100) agrees with this time of the day, does not mention the bathing, but lists Ninkununa first and thus as the most prominent deity before another six deities (Table 2 and Appendix 1). These gods include neither Nanna and his circle nor Ningal and therefore these rites were neither performed in the Nanna temenos nor in Ningal's chapel in the Ĝepar residence. This is the most peculiar rite of the whole coronation ritual since the ritual text explicitly mentions the king's “bathing” in the “garden” of the goddess, and in the list of sacrifices, the otherwise less prominent goddess Ninkununa is listed first and with two oxen.

Ninkununa, the name meaning “Lady Silver of the Prince”, is a by-name of Innana, and the founder of the dynasty, Ur-Namma dedicated a shrine to “Inanna, Ninkununa, his lady” (^dinnana | ^dnin-ku₃-nun-na | nin-a-ne₂) at Ur (RIME 3/2.1.1.15 and 16).³² Door-sockets of the shrines of Ninkununa stem from the late Giparu, and thus her sanctuary must be sought for in this region. At the coronation ceremony, two further Innana/Ištar figures were venerated together with her, Anunītum and Ulmašītum, referring to Ištar of Akkade with her by-name Anunītum and her temple E'ulmaš. A door socket from a shrine dedicated by Šu-Suen “to his wife” (**dam-a-ne₂-er**) Anunītum was found in the southern part of the Ĝepar building, thus pointing to a site not too distant from Innana-Ninkununa's.³³ In lists of sacrifices commissioned at Ur by the royal lady Šulgi-simtī, Anunītum and Ulmašītum feature prominently with the netherworld deity Allatum (as in the coronation ritual) and often other goddesses like Išhara or Bēlat-Nagar.³⁴ When the localisation, the references to Innana, the epithets and the veneration by royal wives are taken together, the appearance of the Innana deities during the coronation ceremonies can be read as a clear reference to the king's bond to his lady. The presence of the queen and the image of the royal couple was a crucial and central constellation in the leadership of the kingdom³⁵—and in fact an important aspect to appreciate the king's association with the goddess Innana. When the new king bathed in the garden of Innana this can most plausibly be seen as preparation for a meeting with his wife Geme-Enlila

³⁰ YBC 4190.ix.18–xi.2.

³¹ The location of Nimintaba's temple south of the Ĝepar residence, on a terrace south-east of the southern corner of the Ur III temenos, is based on the find of a Šulgi inscription in situ (RIME 3/2.1.2.4); for the building see UE 6:40–1 (“The Dim-tab-ba temple of Dungi”). Nimintaba or Ninmintaba (in god list TCL 15, 10:310) was a wife of the divine doorkeeper Kalkal, and one of the four deities “at service” (**diĝir gub-ba**) of Nanna in the god-list An-Anum III 45 (Cavigneaux & Krebernik 1998:319–20; Charpin 1986:144–7); her function at the entrance entailed purification (see Charpin l.c. 146–7 for seal UET 1, 62; U. 7765). In the Ur III period, she is only attested in AnOr, 7 73:9: ^dnimin-dab₆-ba, listed among other deities of Ur (reference hitherto not identified, to the best of my knowledge).

³² Revealing of the character of Innana-Ninkununa as beloved mistress of the king is the fact that Ur-Bau of Lagaš had built a shrine for ^dinnana nin-ku₃-nun-na(-ra) in Urub, the cult-centre of that region's Dumuzi-figure Lugal-Urub (statue of Ur-Bau RIME 3/1.1.6.5 iv 8–10).

³³ Anunītum: RIME 3/2.1.4.20 (U 3059), door socket, from “SFS doorway to room 7”.

³⁴ Sharlach (2017) adduced evidence that Šulgi-simtī, a wife of Šulgi, was not considered the reigning “queen” (**nin**).

³⁵ The prominence of queens as exemplary women and the public representation of the king as loving partner together with his queen are central features of the Ur III rulership. Here is not the place to discuss the image of the queen as an indispensable element in the study of the Ur III society.

who would have become queen then.³⁶ The significance of this ritual element becomes more evident when considering the historical situation: the two most prominent ladies at court who had previously performed rituals, Kubātum and Abī-simtī, the wife and the queen-mother of Šu-Suen, disappeared soon after the coronation of Ibbi-Suen.³⁷ The garden ceremony by its reverence of Innana celebrates the new queen, and it may thus be viewed as both a kind of marriage and an elevation of Geme-Enlila to the status of a queen.³⁸

The second god named after Ninkununa, but like her considered with two oxen instead of one as the other deities, is god Nanna from a place called (e₂) **mu-ri-(a)-na-ba-a₅**, meaning perhaps “in his distant years it was made”.³⁹ A door socket of this sanctuary of Nanna was discovered in the Ġanunmaḥ, the main storehouse for the temple and the palace, and there in the central room south of the main courtyard.⁴⁰ Nothing speaks against a sanctuary for Nanna murianaba’a in the Ġanunmaḥ building, in my view.⁴¹

The netherworld deity Meslamtaea appears often side by side with Allatum also in other lists concerning offerings at Ur, but no building inscriptions are known that refer to a sanctuary of them. Therefore, it is impossible to reflect on their role beyond pure speculation.

The sacrifices at the coronation end with the “Dais of An” (**para₁₀ an-na**), a cult place known well from several lists for offerings where it precedes the city-god Nanna and his sacred places, the Du’ur, perhaps the ziggurat of Ur, and the Dublamaḥ at the south-eastern entrance to Nanna’s temenos.⁴²

³⁶ Geme-Enlila’s first appearance by name is some 18 days later in sacrifices at Uruk and the royal palace there for deities of the Innana circle (PDT 1, 563; ŠS.09.10.21; Weiershäuser 2008:164); see Sallaberger (1993:214–16) for the festival in Uruk in the tenth month.

³⁷ Kubātum is known until the second month of Šu-Suen 8 (Weiershäuser 2008:160 and 163). Abī-simtī’s last mention dates to ŠS.09.10.29 (thus at the end of the month of the coronation), directing 5 sheep to Innana (AnOr 7, 108 r.ii.23–5); offerings for the memory of the dead queen are attested at the end of the same year (**ki-a-naḡ**, ŠS.09.12.17; ASJ 3:92 no. 3; Weiershäuser 2008:107).

³⁸ The role of the queen as representative of Innana entailed the concept that the role of her beloved spouse Dumuzi is taken over by the king (if the constellation is situated in a royal setting). This constellation has been appropriately described by Jacobsen (1987:87) regarding the Dumuzi-Innana songs; regarding the reflex of these relations in rituals and festivals, see Sallaberger 1993:210 n. 990 and 291 n. 1358; for a summary regarding the Ur III period Sallaberger 1999:155–6. Surely, van Dijk and others had in mind the relation of king and queen-as-Innana when using the label “sacred marriage” rite for the ritual text UET 3, 57, but this term has become too vague and too much laden with wrong assumptions (as, for example, that of a national “New Year” in the Ur III kingdom, or the presence of a priestess) so that it should better be avoided and replaced by more precise descriptions. For a recent collection of secondary literature see Attinger 2022.

³⁹ This interpretation is inspired by the line from the time-honoured formula **mu ri-a mu sud-ra₂ ri-a** “in those years, in those distant years”. Of course, other interpretations are possible as well although I am not aware of more convincing proposals (cf. Hall 1985:351). Reading and interpretation are also based on the variant **-mu-ri-na-ba** (for **-mu-ri-a-na-ba-a₅**) StOr 9–1, 27 o.11.

⁴⁰ RIME 3/2.1.4.21 (U 838); Frayne (1997:331) notes: “Found in situ in the brick door box against NW jamb of the door of the NE wall of room 22 of the E-nun-maḥ = TTB 31”; i.e., a small room situated near the centre of the south-east side of the courtyard.

⁴¹ Hall (1985:351–2) observed the fitting correlation of Nanna-murianaba’a with “deities who personify produce of the land”, with Alamuš caring for “honey” (**la₃**, because this sign was used to write Alamuš as well), Nisaba for barley, and Nin-e₂-i₃-gara₂ for dairy products. Three texts with this list forming a coherent series are UET 3, 161 (IS.06.10.00), SAT 3, 2015 (IS.06.11.00), UET 3, 164 (IS.06.12.00). Many misreadings of SAT 3, 2015 have to be corrected in the edition (reported to BDTNS).

⁴² Three door sockets with an inscription that Amar-Suena built the Dublamaḥ for Nanna (RIME 3/2.1.3.9) are reported; of these, U 1165 was “reused” close to the S corner of Ziqqurraḥ; U 3224 (two exemplars) stems from “Room 30 of Edublamaḥ” (after Frayne 1997:253). The identification of the Dublamaḥ with the entrance to the Nanna temenos is confirmed by the find spot, the presence of door sockets as appropriate for a building with doors, the dedication to court cases that were often held in gates, and the usual presence of the Dublamaḥ as first offering place in sequences leading to Nanna (see above on the sequence of such lists: this indicates a local/temporal precedence before the main deity, thus the sacrifice at the entrance, as for Kalkal or the gate of Enlil at Nippur). A clear reference to the Dublamaḥ as gate is UCP 9–2–2, 37, a sacrifice at the Dublamaḥ **nin-ḡu₁₀ E₃-da-ne₂** “when my lady was about to go out”. This cumulative evidence, as I see it, hinders me from adopting the proposal of Nicholas Postgate (this volume) that the Dublamaḥ was an open-air podium (a literal translation of the Sumerian term “**dub-la₂**” remains indeed an unsolved problem, as Postgate reminds us). The podium of Ur-Namma near the southern main gate to the Nanna temenos is instead identified as the “Dais of An” built by Ur-Namma in this study (see presently and n. 48); it is sometimes named together with the Dublamaḥ in offering lists.

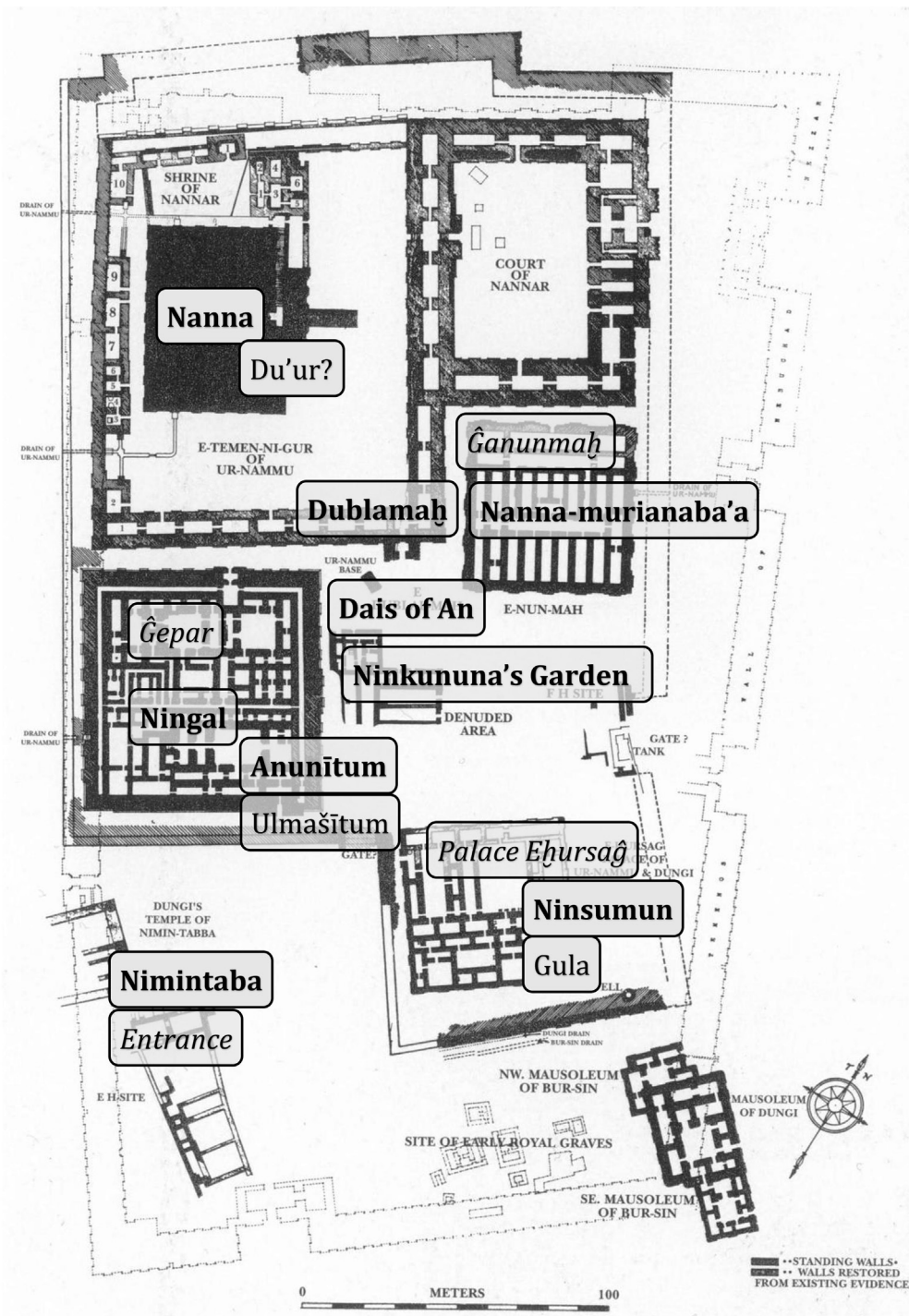


Fig. 2 Monumental Centre of Ur (after UE 6: Pl. 53) with proposed localisations for shrines (divine names in bold are based on find-spots of building inscriptions)

Localisation of the “Dais of An” in the area between Ĝepar (with Ninkununa and Anunĭtum close by) and the eastern corner of the Nanna complex (its main entrance) is suggested by the find spot of six inscribed bricks in the northernmost room 3 of the Giparu of Nabonidus (Frayne 1997: 27). The brick inscription stems from Ur-Namma in his early years (with the title “king of Ur”); for the god An “he set out a sublime garden and he built him a dais on a pure place” (*ĝes⁶kiri₆ maħ mu-na-gub, para₁₀ ki sikil-la mu-na-du₃*; RIME 3/2.1.1.5). This dais is without any doubt the “Dais of An” (*para₁₀ an-na*) known from the lists of offerings, and one may assume that the garden planted by Ur-

Namma for An is the same as the “garden of Ninkununa”, where Ibbi-Suen bathed for his coronation ceremonies.⁴³ Most of the minor deities of Ur that appear in UDT 100 (Table 2 and Appendix 1) in the context of the coronation, are known as recipients of sacrifices at secondary festivals during the main festival months (VII and X) at Ur;⁴⁴ there, however, precisely Ninkununa and the Dais of An are missing—a further proof that they belonged together. Ninkununa was a by-name of Innana at Ur, and not only were An and Innana venerated together both in Uruk and Nippur, but also their building inscriptions were found in adjacent rooms in the northernmost corner of the late Giparu. Moreover, this localisation agrees with the topography of this day’s coronation ritual in the region between Ĝepar, eastern temenos corner and Ĝanunmaḥ, outside of the Nanna complex and of the palace. One may thus ask whether the area termed “denuded” by Woolley for the Ur III period, was in fact a garden⁴⁵ between the ziggurat of Nanna and the royal palace, surrounded by the sanctuaries for the gods of our list (see the map). The “Dais of An” is surely a first-class candidate to name Woolley’s “Ur-namma base” near the entrance to the sanctuary, the Dublamaḥ.⁴⁶

8. The end of the coronation ceremonies

The end of the ceremonies for Ibbi-Suen’s coronation can not fully be reconstructed. According to the ritual text, the king would have venerated Nanna again. The last administrative text dates to the 6th day, which points to a sacrifice on the 7th or 8th for the mother-goddess Ninḥursaĝa in her sanctuary Nutur, modern Tell el-Obed. A comparable series of sacrifices suggests that in between Enki of nearby Eridu would have been included.⁴⁷ With the end of the coronation ceremonies on the 7th day, their duration corresponded exactly to the phase of the waxing new moon until it reached the first quarter, doubtless a welcome sign for the start of a new king’s reign.

To sum up: During the coronation, the king had been present at the capitals and major shrines of Sumer, Nippur, Uruk, and Ur, almost at the same time, where he entered the temple of the main gods Enlil and Ninlil, Innana, and Nanna; also the healing goddess, named Nintinuga or Gula, received a special tribute, certainly to ensure the king’s health. In the palaces of Uruk and Ur, he venerated most prominently the divine mother of the king, Ninsun, and statues of the royal predecessors. The ceremonies then opened a new perspective with the bathing in Innana’s garden in Ur, which indicates a focus on the new queen and her change of status. The coronation festivities of Ibbi-Suen were concluded in Ur and its environment.

After the coronation in the sanctuaries, the new king met representatives of the land. Already on the first day in Nippur, 1 cow and 55 caprines were put on boats “as selection for the kitchen” (**ṣu-gid₂ e₂-muḥaldim**) “when the king was going to Ur” (**lugal urim₅^{ki}-še₃ du-ne₂**), thus leaving out his stop at Uruk before (AnOr 7, 108 obv.i.8–15). And after the ceremonies, on day 11, the same amount of 1 cow and 55 caprines were provided for a banquet in Ur “for the overseers and captains of the assembly at service” (**mu ugula nu-banda₃ pu-ḥu-ru-um-ma gub-ba-še₃**; *ibid.* obv.ii.8–14). After the coronation, one of the largest festivals of the kingdom, the “Sublime Festival” (**izim-maḥ**)

⁴³ Legrain (1947:195 and no. 57) has by his references already made the connection between Ninkununa’s garden in the ritual and An’s garden in the building inscription.

⁴⁴ Some references: AAICAB 1/4, Bod. S 311 (ŠS.07.10.08); CST, 453 (ŠS.09.10.09); StOr 9–1, 27 (pl. 9) (IS.02.07.02–08); see also AUCT 2, 97 (date not preserved).

⁴⁵ In this context it should be noted that there was a garden of Innana also in Uruk where Šulgi-simṭī stopped during the festival of the “Boat of Heaven/An” (Sallaberger 1993:218). I owe Dominique Charpin a unique reference to a garden in the religious centre of Ur: Oaths were sworn “in the gardens opposite the (temple of Nanna) Ekišnuĝal” (*ina kirātim meḥret Ekišnuĝal*) according to an Old Babylonian literary text (UET 6, 402:16–17 and 30–1; see Charpin 1986:326–7).

⁴⁶ UE 6:75 and 107 n. 105 on this structure (which Woolley would like to connect with the Ur-Namma stela). The rarity of the Sumerian term **para₁₀** “dais” in lists related to deities in Ur and the exceptional feature of a free-standing podium can be seen as a confirmation for this identification. The remarkable dedication to An, the god of the sky, may also depend on the presence of the sky directly above the podium.

⁴⁷ StOr 9–1, 27 (IS.02.07.08), an expenditure of grain-fed oxen: Day 2 for the deities in the palace (Šu-Suen-kiaĝ-Nanna, Ninsun, Gula); Day 3 “large rite” for Nanna and then Anunītum, Ulmašītum, Allatum, Meslamtaea ḥa-zi, Nanna-murinaba (^dnanna-mu-ri-na-ba = ^dnanna-mu-ri-a-na-ba-a₅)—as during the coronation, but without Ninkununa and the Dais of An; Day 4: Enki in Eridu; Day 5: Ninḥursaĝ of Nutur; Day 7 follows the NE.NE-ĝar of Anunītum.

around Full Moon was celebrated in and around Ur, and there one could expect large delegations from all over the kingdom and from abroad, and the new king could then introduce himself to his subjects and the foreign emissaries.⁴⁸

* * *

Appendix 1: Transliteration of lists of sacrifices pertaining to Ibbi-Suen's coronation

Four administrative documents from Puzriš-Dagān (dated ŠS.09.10.01, 02, 03, and 06) list the expenditure of fattened oxen, all summarized “when Ibbi-Suen has received the crown” (see above with Tables 1 and 2). The four expenditures were made by Puzur-Enlil, and were executed by the controller Nūr-Suen and the scribe Ḫaliya. These two persons were active until ŠS.09.12.24 (BCT 1, 111), and the latest text is sealed with the seal of Ḫaliya, son of Addaya, still dedicated to Šu-Suen; it seems the same seal is rolled on these four tablets as well.

The transliteration is offered in a format similar to the translation in Table 2, but line numbers are added to allow easy citation.

Note the following abbreviations:

1 g = 1 gud niga; 1 g^{4/3} = 1 gud niga 4/3-kam us₂
o.=obverse; r.=reverse; le.e. = left edge

JCS 7:48 (ŠS.09.10.01), sealed (see above)

Number of oxen, deity	Cultic act, participant	Time and place
o.1 1 g ⁴ d ⁿ en-lil ₂ o.2 1 g ⁴ d ⁿ in-lil ₂	o.3 siškur ₂ gu-la o.4 lugal ku ₄ -ra	
o.5 1 g a-tu ₅ -a d ⁿ in-tin-ug ₅ -ga	o.6 a-tu sagi maškim	o.7 ša ₃ nibru ^{ki}
o.8 1 g d ^s ul-ge o.9 1 g ⁴ + o.10 3g o.11 d ⁱ innana o.12 1 g ⁴ an o.13 ša ₃ e ₂ d ⁱ innana o.14 1 g d ^g u-la r.1 1 g kan ₄ ḡe ⁶ ḡepar r.2 1 g d ⁿ a-na-a r.3 1 g d ⁿ in-sumun ₂	r.5 lugal ku ₄ -ra	r.4 a ₂ -u ₄ -te-na r.6 lugal nibru ^{ki} -ta unu ^{ki} -še ₃ du-ni

r.7 u₄ dⁱ-bi₂-d^{ZUEN} aga₃ šu ba-an-ti-a | r.8 u₄ l-kam

r.9 ki puzur₄-dⁿen-lil₂-ta ba-zi | r.10 ḡiri₃ nu-ur₂-d^{ZUEN} ša₃-tam | r.11 u₃ ḫal-li₂-a dub-sar

r.12 iti izim-maḫ | r.13 mu d^šu-d^{ZUEN} | r.14 lugal urim₅^{ki}-ma-ke₄ | r.15 e₂ d^šsara₂ umma^{ki}-ka mu-du₃

le.e. [13 gud]

Nisaba 33, 38 (ŠS.09.10.02), sealed (see above)

Number of oxen, deity	Cultic act, participant	Time and place
o.1 1 g ⁴ d ⁱ innana	o.2 siškur ₂ gu-la-še ₃	
o.3 1 g d ⁱ innana	o.4~ lugal ku ₄ -ra	o.4ctd a ₂ -ḡe ⁶ -ba-a o.5 ša ₃ unu ^{ki} -ga

⁴⁸ Sallaberger 1993:191–4 on the festival and pp. 175–9 on the participants at the main festivals at Ur.

Number of oxen, deity	Cultic act, participant	Time and place
^{o.6} 2 g ⁴ ^d nanna ^{o.7} 1 g ^d nin-sumun ₂ ^{o.8} 1 g ^d šu- ^d ZUEN-ki-aĝ ₂ - ^d nanna ^{o.9} [1] g ^d gu-la		^{o.10} [a ₂]-r ¹ u ₄ ¹ -te-na ^{o.11} [lugal] unu ^{ki} -ta urim ₅ ^{ki} -š _e ₃ du-ni

r.1–10 = JCS 7:48 r.7–15, but r.3 u₄ 2-kam; le.e. 7 gud

UDT 100 (ŠS.09.10.03), sealed (see above)

Transliteration based on a new photo kindly provided by Klaus Wagensohnner (10/2022);
collations marked by *

Number of oxen, deity	Cultic act, participant	Time and place
^{o.1} 1 g ⁴ + ^{o.2} 1 g ^d nin-ku ₃ -nun-na ^{o.3} 2 g ⁴ ^d nanna*-mu-ri-na-ba-a ₅ * ^{o.4} 1 g ^d ul-ma-ši-tum ^{o.5} 1 g an-nu-ni-tum ^{o.6} 1 g ^d al-la-tum ^{o.7} 1 g ^d mes-lam-ta-e ₃ -a ^{o.8} 1 g ³ para ₁₀ * an-na	^{o.10} lugal ku ₄ -ra	^{o.9} a ₂ -ĝe ₆ -ba-a
^{o.11} ~ 1 g ^{r.1} 2 g ⁴ + ^{r.2} 4 g ^{r.3} ^d nanna	^{o.11} ctd siškur ₂ gu-la ^{r.4d} ZUEN-a-bu-šu sagi maškim	^{r.5} a ₂ -u ₄ -te-na ^{r.6} ša ₃ urim ₅ ^{ki} -ma

r.7–14 = JCS 7:48 r.7–15, but r.8 u₄* 3-kam, r.11 u₃ ħal*-li₂-a dub-sar; le.e. 16 gud

JCS 10:28 no. 4 (ŠS.09.10.06), sealed (see above)

Number of oxen, deity	Cultic act, participant	Time and place
^{o.1} 1 g ^{o.2} ^d nin-ħur-saĝ nu-tur	^{o.3d} ZUEN-a-bu-šu sagi maškim	^{o.4} a ₂ -ĝe ₆ -ba-a (...) ^{r.2} ša ₃ urim ₅ ^{ki} -ma

o.5 = JCS 7:48 r.7; o.6 u₄ 6-kam; o.7–r.1 = JCS 7:48 r.9; r.3–7 = JCS 7:48 r.10–15; le.e. 1 gud

Appendix 2: The manufacture of a crown (BIN 3, 344 obv.1–7)

This administrative document from the “Treasure archive” of Puzriš-Dagān describes the materials used for a crown (**aga**₃), albeit that of an *en* priestess and not of the king; it apparently was adorned with an agate eye on the forehead. The text dates shortly after the coronation of Ibbi-Suen, and it may possibly list the insignia for the inauguration of the high-priestess of Enki in the coming month (ŠS.09.12.20–26; see AUCT 3, 489; Huber-Vulliet 2014).

BIN 3, 344 (ŠS.09.11.18) obv.1–7

See Paoletti 2012:392–3; this edition is based on a photo by Klaus Wagenonner (October 2022); after line obv.8 follows the description of a MUŠ₂-keše₂ “diadem”

1	1 ġeš ^{se} saġšu ¹ nam ¹ -en tuku aga ₃ / ar-ma-num ₂ kab ku ₃ -si ₂₂ šub-ba	1 wooden helmet/head-gear, taken for the office of the <i>en</i> -priestess, a crown, of <i>armanum-kab</i> wood, plating (in damascene technique) in gold,
2	ku ₃ -si ₂₂ huš-a-be ₂ ½ ma-na 6 giġ ₄ ⅔ (=KWU 161) 18 še	the red gold (used) for it (weighs) 36 shekels and 138 grains (306 g),
3	1 gu ₂ bar ku ₃ -si ₂₂ huš-a-be ₂	and its 1 outer frame of red gold
4	ki-la ₂ -be ₂ 2 giġ ₄ ⅔ (=KWU 161) 17 še	its weight is 2 shekels and 137 grains (25 g),
5	1 niġ ₂ -su ₃ -a saġ-ki ħar ^{na} -nir ₇ igi / tuku ku ₃ -si ₂₂ huš-a-be ₂	and its 1 mounting at the forehead for an agate eye (made) of red gold,
6	ki-la ₂ -be ₂ 5 ½ giġ ₄ la ₂ 7 še	its weight is 5 shekels and 83 grains (46 g),
7	1 ^{na} nir ₇ igi dur ₂ ki-ta-be ₂ ib ₂ -ta-kur ₂ -be ₂	its 1 agate eye from the lower bottom was exchanged for it

A new photo (kindly provided by Klaus Wagenonner via Eckart Frahm) has solved the puzzle of the base material (obv. 1): it is made of wood, on which the gold was applied. The handcopy BIN 3, 344 shows LAGAB; Paoletti l.c. assumed **tu**,^{1?} “cloth”; the sign ġeš is absolutely clear, however. The verb **šub** “damascene” describes the usual technique to attach the gold to softer materials; see Paoletti 2013. The *armānum*-tree is a hapax in Ur III (AHw. translates “apricot”, but on what basis?); **kab** is defined as a willow, perhaps *Salix alba*. Paoletti l.c. points out that the base material should be wood because of the use of the verb **šub** “to damascene” (“tauschieren”). The term **nam-en** indicates that this is a crown for an *en* priestess; see also: (an instrument of copper) **niġ₂ nam-en en Eridu^{ki}-kam** “an object of the office of the en of the high priestess of Eridu” UET 3, 296 (Šu.27.11d.00). A crown of wood with gold covering seems to be mentioned also in UET 3, 1498 obv.iii.4: 1 ġeš^{se} **nam-en-na ku₃-[si₂₂]**.

Appendix 3: Incantation to the crown (YOS 11, 54)

This Old Babylonian tablet of which the upper third, perhaps its half is preserved, conveys an incantation to the royal crown. The reading of the decisive sign in obv. 1 and 2 as **aga** instead of “**bara₂/para₁₀**” was based on a collation of the original in 2003, and is fully confirmed by a brilliant photo kindly provided by Klaus Wagensonner (10/2022). Ambos 2013:224 offered another edition of the text.

o. 1	aga* huš aga* me-lim ₄ -ma	Red-golden crown, crown of splendor,
2	aga* ^d en-ki-ke ₄ (saĝ) i ₃ -rig ₇	crown, Enki made it a gift,
3	[ag]a* an lugal-e mim ba-ab-du ₇	[crown], king An fostered it,
4	[aga ^d en-lil ₂ (-e)(?)] nam gal ba-an-tar	[crown, Enlil(?)] determined it a great destiny,
5	[aga ^d innana-ke ₄ (?)] gu ₂ -da ba-an-la ₂	[crown, Innana(?)] embraced it,
6	[...] ^r saĝ ¹ ku ₃ -ga-ta [...] ^r in ¹ -du ₁₁	[...] from the (king's) shining head [...] he ...ed it.
	<i>rest of obverse not preserved</i> <i>beginning of reverse not preserved</i>	
r. 1'	[...] ^r x x ¹	
2'	[...] ^r BI* ¹ -gen ₇ ħe ₂ -em-sikil	like [...] it may be cleared,
3'	[...] ^r gen ₇ * ¹ mu-bu-ra ħe ₂ -em-dadag ¹ (UD)	like [...] the dirt may be cleaned!
4'	[^d ut]u agrun(^r E ₂ * ¹ .NUN)-ta e ₃ -a-ne ₂	May Utu when he comes out from (his) bedroom,
5'	igi sa ₆ -ga-ne ₂ -še ₃ ħe ₂ -em-ši-bar-re	gaze upon it favourably!
6'	lugal-ĝu ₁₀ saĝ an-še ₃ mi-ni-in-il ₂	When my king has raised his head to heaven,
7'	igi il ₂ -la-ne ₂ nim-gen ₇ nim ĝir ₂ -ĝir ₂ me-teš ₂ ħe ₂ -i-i	and when he (i.e. Utu) glances at it and it flashes like lightning, may it be praised!

obv. 1: Note that the adjective **huš** is also used to classify the highest quality of gold.

obv. 4–5: The restorations are based on context only.

rev. 1': The restoration [...] **ħe₂-em-ku₃**] by Ambos is not supported by the remaining traces.

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An on-line colloquium was held in late 2022 to celebrate the centenary of Sir Leonard Woolley's first season of excavations at Al-Muqayyar, the Babylonian city of Ur. This book publishes 18 papers from the colloquium by international scholars, together with a foreword from Dr Laith Majid Hussain, as President of the State Board for Antiquities and Heritage, and a recently unearthed report of J.G. Taylor's work at the site, written in 1858.

The papers re-evaluate Woolley's work, re-visit his archives with fresh eyes and apply 21st-century techniques to enrich our knowledge of the 7,000 year old city. They also include results from renewed work at Ur, undertaken by joint Iraqi and international teams of archaeologists. The papers highlight the value of well-documented old excavations and the exciting potential of collaborations to explore new research questions, under the leadership of the Iraqi State Board for Antiquities and Heritage.

