

# 12 ICAANE

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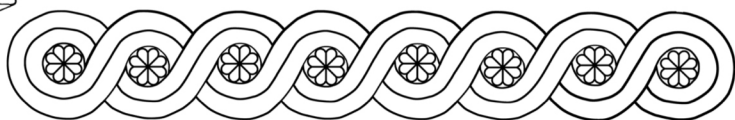
Volume 2

Field Reports

Islamic archaeology



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of the 12<sup>th</sup> International Congress  
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## Foreword to the Section “Field Reports”

Nicolò Marchetti, Francesca Cavaliere, Claudia D’Orazio, Gabriele Giacosa  
and Eleonora Mariani

Field reports generally represent the largest relative share of papers at the ICAANE. Reassessments of old excavations fall in this category as well. In Bologna, 95 papers were presented in four parallel sessions and 49 of them are published here. They have been simply arranged according to the alphabetic order of first authors (with the exception of course of the keynote paper, opening this section). They attest to a diversity of agencies, methods, perspectives and urgencies which represent a singular asset of our field.

While new digital architectures of knowledge are about to deeply transform the ways of our scientific dissemination, these reports do supply in the meanwhile loads of new information on near eastern sites, as well as on neighbouring areas, which are all too often insufficiently considered in our discussions.

# Field Reports

# A New Archaeological Response to an Old Question: When and how Did Ur Recover in the Old Babylonian Period?

Adelheid Otto<sup>1</sup>

## Abstract

The destruction of the city of Ur at the end of the Ur III period was so radical that it remained in the collective memory for centuries. But when and how did Ur recover in the Old Babylonian period and become important again? New research on the South Mound of Ur provides fresh answers to this old question. The area in the southern part of the South Mound shows a hiatus in occupation between the Ur III period and the 19<sup>th</sup> century and suggests that a new living quarter was designed here after a period of abandonment. Combined with historical sources attesting to a Larsa dynasty restoration programme and the creation of new residential areas, we argue that Ur did not fully recover from the aftermath of destruction until the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century.

## New questions about old excavation sites

The recent trend for renewed excavations at earlier investigated sites can be considered as an attempt to solve open questions with the ever-growing arsenal of modern methods, and to address new questions to seemingly well-known sites. This case study is to show how renewed excavations at Ur, even on a small scale, can help to answer old questions.<sup>2</sup> More precisely, the question will be addressed when and how Ur recovered from the well-known catastrophic destruction at the end of the Ur III period and became again an extended, densely inhabited city in the Isin-Larsa or early Old Babylonian period.<sup>3</sup>

Ur is clearly a key site for understanding ancient Mesopotamian society and culture. The legendary excavations directed by Leonard Woolley from 1922-1934 brought to light a major city which flourished for millennia due to its character as an internationally important trade center near the gulf on the one hand, and due to its position as the main cult center of the moon god Nanna and his spouse Ningal on the other hand. Ur was important already during the third millennium and outmatched other powers during the Ur III period. Ur-Namma and his descendants enlarged the cultic complex with temples, a palace, a store-

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1 Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München.

2 The investigations by LMU Munich were part of the larger Ur project 2015–2019 directed by Elizabeth Stone (Stony Brook University, New York). We are very grateful to her, to Paul Zimansky and to the late Minister of Culture Abdel-Amir al-Hamdani for inviting us to participate in the 2017 and 2019 seasons. We thank all our team members for their excellent work. Financial support of the LMU fieldwork was granted by the Gerda Henkel Foundation.

3 I thank Nicolò Marchetti and his Bologna team for having organized the first remote ICAANE, where finally, after more than one year of isolation, the community of Near Eastern archaeologists had the chance to “meet” and exchange their results. This paper is the slightly modified version of the keynote lecture which I had the honor to deliver during the opening session.

house, royal tombs, and the first ziggurat – the most impressive monument in southern Iraq until today (Fig. 1).

However, this prosperous period with Ur as the capital lasted for hundred years only before it was destroyed by the Elamites and Išbi-erra of Isin *c.* 2003 BC. This destruction at the end of the Ur III period was so tremendous that it remained in the collective memory for centuries, testified also by numerous copies of the great literary text, the “Lament over the destruction of Sumer and Ur”, which were found at several Near Eastern sites.<sup>4</sup> However, the archaeological record had given no hints so far about how radical the destruction of the living quarters had been, since only public buildings of Ur III date have been excavated so far, but not a single private dwelling. Ur III remains had been excavated or traced only on the North Mound, but not on the South Mound, except for the city wall (Woolley 1974: pl. 61).<sup>5</sup>

The next impression of Ur that everybody has in mind is the flourishing Old Babylonian city (Woolley and Mallowan 1976; Zettler and Hafford 2014-2016). Woolley investigated not only the cultic area, but also other features, especially important being areas AH and EM – extended surfaces of domestic quarters excavated at a time in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century when the excavation of living quarters was not very much in vogue. They became the model of Mesopotamian urban domestic quarters, also due to the fact that Woolley was “a most gifted writer.”<sup>6</sup>

The published plans of the housing areas are mostly composite maps of numerous dwellings which were inhabited at some point in the Old Babylonian period, but not necessarily at the same time. Woolley himself stressed that “the general plan is therefore, to some extent a compromise showing each building in what was in the course of the period its most characteristic form” (Woolley and Mallowan 1976: 14). Many of the houses looked approximately like those published in the famous composite plans of AH and EM (Woolley and Mallowan 1976: pls. 122, 124) in the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, before the city came to a temporary halt during Samsu-iluna’s regency. But clearly many of the houses had been erected much earlier and were inhabited and altered in multiple ways over the centuries. Woolley dated the first phase of private houses to the earlier 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium and occasionally mentioned traces of earlier houses with a similar ground plan below, unfortunately without showing them.

This raises fundamental questions: Had the domestic quarters lived on more or less continuously after the Ur III destruction, or had there been a hiatus in the settlement history before the houses were rebuilt in the Isin-Larsa period? And when transferred to the social sphere: were political, economic and social changes perceivable in the dwelling quarters due to Ur’s transformation from the capital city of the powerful Ur III state to one among many cities of the Isin and – a bit later – the Larsa kingdoms? These were some questions which led to the new Ur project of Elizabeth Stone from 2015-2019, and at which a team from LMU Munich was invited to participate in 2017 and 2019.

4 Michalowski 1989. A copy was also found in Room 5 of the Old Babylonian house in Area 5, see below.

5 The roughly oval main mound of Ur is divided into a North Mound with mainly official buildings and a South Mound. The latter was investigated by Woolley mainly in the Old Babylonian house quarters AH and the nearby Late Babylonian dwellings. This led to our geophysical prospection (see below) and to the new excavation Areas 1-4 (by Elizabeth Stone’s teams) and Area 5 (by the LMU Munich team); see Stone *et al.* 2021.

6 Mallowan (1960: 16) formulated this perfectly: “Lastly, he was a most gifted writer with a fluency of style which has entranced a multitude of readers the world over. His books may well serve as a model to all archaeologists, an immortal reminder that good writing, which can only be achieved through good reading, should be the crown for our endeavours.”



The newly opened Areas 1-4, directed by Elizabeth Stone and William B. Hafford, were situated close to Woolley's Area AH (Stone *et al.* 2021: fig. 1). Their teams encountered a continuous, several meters high sequence of houses below the uppermost Old Babylonian level, going back to the Isin-Larsa, Ur III, Akkadian and possibly even the Early Dynastic periods. If there has ever been a gap in occupation after the Ur III period, it cannot have lasted long in Area AH, which is still today the most elevated and central part of Ur's dwelling areas and certainly has always been the ancient, crowded city center. However, since many material and textual sources underwent only slight changes from the Ur III to the early Old Babylonian period, it is challenging to date precisely the levels of the final 3<sup>rd</sup> and early 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium on archaeological grounds only.<sup>7</sup>

But how about the other parts of the city? Was the whole South Mound occupied in the Old Babylonian period? Very little was known about the South Mound, since only some Neo-Babylonian houses and a few features along the city-wall had been investigated earlier. To answer this question, a team of LMU Munich with Jörg Faßbinder, Marion Scheiblecker and Sandra Hahn conducted magnetometer prospections in 2017 and 2019 (Scheiblecker and Faßbinder 2022: 372-373, fig. 6). Many deep wadis and countless baked bricks on the surface made walking difficult; the results were nevertheless encouraging (see Fig. 7). It turned out that Old Babylonian buildings can be distinguished from Neo-Babylonian ones in magnetometry, since the anomalies caused by mudbrick walls from 1<sup>st</sup> millennium buildings differ from those caused by baked brick walls from 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium buildings. Additional electric resistivity profiles (by Mandana Parsi, LMU) produced further information about houses, the harbour with its quay wall and the fortifications. The overall result is that the area inside the city wall was densely settled in the Old Babylonian period, although a few areas show no remains, at least in magnetometry. A strong positive anomaly south of the city wall points to a massive construction which stood probably in connection with water management.

### **Excavations of an Old Babylonian house in Area 5 near the southern edge of the South Mound**

Due to the results of the first geophysical prospection in 2017, our team chose Area 5 on the South Mound for excavations. It is located near the city wall in an area which has never been investigated before. Situated as far as possible distant from AH and close to the city wall, this offered the opportunity to investigate if structurally different buildings existed in the city center and in the periphery, and if social or economic differences could be noticed in domestic dwellings. Further questions concerned the stratigraphy in this peripheral area and – coming back to the core question of this paper – if Ur III buildings had existed here; and if so, how and when the area recovered in the second millennium.

The baked brick walls of an Isin-Larsa / early Old Babylonian house appeared immediately below the surface. Later levels of the Kassite period and the first millennium were largely eroded in this heavily sloping area. The house turned out to be a spacious compound measuring 236 sqm and consisting of 16 rooms most of which were arranged around a courtyard (Fig. 2). The ground-plan of the house is regular and nearly rectangular. The

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7 Stone 2002. I thank Elizabeth Stone and Brad Hafford for many discussions on this difficult topic. A project (DFG) on the Ur III and Old Babylonian pottery from Ur is presently under way in Munich; see Dietz in press.

south-western and south-eastern outer walls form a perfect right angle and are each 16 m long, i.e. measured 32 Babylonian cubits. The other two sides are slightly more irregular because they had to respect the streets in the north-west and north-east which apparently were laid out first. Remains of neighboring houses are visible on the ground opposite the streets. A small lane separates the house from the neighbouring compound in the south-east. It seems that the well-planned house had not to respect other buildings, only the broad street in the north-west, from where the house was entered.

The house was oriented in the south towards a large open yard, at least 14 m large and 10 m wide, which was accessible via Room 5 and Room 6. It may have served as a large courtyard or garden. The area must have been sloping even then, because the walls of the neighbouring house to the south-west are about one meter lower than the walls of our house. A corbel-vaulted tomb was built in this yard outside the house – a rare habit in Ur where the tombs were usually placed below the floor of one of the rooms, but not totally unique.<sup>8</sup>

If we compare the size and number of rooms with other houses at Ur, our house is among the largest with the highest number of rooms, with the exception of No. 11 Paternoster Row, which had more than 19 rooms.<sup>9</sup> If we additionally take into consideration that the house was built very regularly, nearly corresponding to the ideal type of a courtyard house defined by Woolley (Woolley and Mallowan 1976: 23-29), and that the house even disposed of a private open space or garden, one cannot help but getting the impression that spacious building plots must have been freely available here at the moment when the house was built.

The house was occupied during three main phases. Their date can be derived with the help of dated tablets and sealings. In Phase 1 the house was built, but after not too long a time the house was abandoned. When it was occupied again in Phase 2, it underwent massive change: it was divided into two parts, and the floor was risen with the help of an artificial fill which varied in height between 30 cm and 80 cm in the different rooms. In Phase 3 the house was altered again; parts of it were possibly – most of this phase has not been preserved due to erosion – transformed into a workshop area, before it was abandoned, probably together with the rest of the city during the regency of king Samsu-iluna. But for the main question addressed in this paper, how did Ur recover in the Isin–Larsa period, only Phase 1 is of interest here.

### **Area 5, Phase 1: The regularly built house of *Sîn-nādā* and *Nuṭṭuptum***

The plan of the house was completely determined during the two campaigns in 2017 and 2019. While it was not possible to reach the lowest floor in all rooms at the end of the 2019 season, there were still enough remnants of the installations and former inventory that the functions of most rooms could be accessed. The entrance to the house was in the north-west corner, where steps led from the street into Entry Room 14b. Continuing on, Room 14a led into the large rectangular courtyard, which not only served as a source of light and air, but

8 In Area EM, the open court called “Closed Lane” north of No. 3 Gay Street was used as a burial-place. Woolley and Mallowan 1976: 97 claim: “...it is quite possible that the old court became the domestic chapel of No. 3 in the secondary phase of the house’s occupation, perhaps replacing an older chapel in Room 6.”

9 This house was interpreted as “The Khan” (Woolley and Mallowan 1976: 150–153), but possibly it was a dwelling. Miglus 1999: 77, figs. 220, 221: The size clusters of the built surface in Old Babylonian houses at Ur are around 35 sqm, 76 sqm and 142 sqm, the number of rooms is between 1 and 15 with a peak between 3 and 12. Quite well comparable to our house in size and layout is No. 3 Straight Street.

was also used for grilling fish, as evidenced by an installation near the NW wall. On either side of the grill, two doors led into Room 12 and Room 13, respectively, both of which served to prepare and store food. The trapezoidal Room 13 was equipped with two large domed ovens serving for food production, as well as an accurate drainage system consisting of a paved area with three sewage pipes (Fig. 3).

On the other side of the courtyard, a particularly wide door led into the reception room, which was divided into a larger part with a hearth (Room 2) and a smaller one (Room 9) equipped with a rectangular box-like installation. In front of it was found lying on the ground a moulded table-like terracotta object, decorated with crawling snakes (Fig. 4).<sup>10</sup> Reddish and blackish traces testify to its use as an incense burner. Although the house was not equipped with a neatly decorated house-altar like those found by Woolley, this corner in Room 9 might have been a place for cultic activities.

From Room 9, a door led into the largest room (Room 6), which was obviously located in the least accessible part of the house. This room (Woolley would have called it the domestic chapel) had a small niche in the north-east wall, but there was no family tomb under the floor, as was often the case under comparable rooms dug by Woolley. Exceptionally, this tomb was located outside in the open yard, directly accessible from Room 6 via a door.

North-east of Room 6 were four other rooms, including a carefully paved bathroom (Room 18). An opening in the central terracotta floor slab led to a drainage shaft that was more than 8 m deep (Otto 2022: 354). Such installations contributed significantly to excellent hygiene, which played a large part in the good physical condition of the inhabitants in the Isin-Larsa period. The anthropological remains revealed an exceptionally healthy population with little diseases thanks to hygiene and good health care.

Two narrow rooms, Room 4 and 5, were situated in the southern wing. Room 4 was entered from the courtyard. Several lentil-shaped and a few rectangular school tablets were lying on the floor along the walls. One large rectangular school tablet was found bent over an inverted bowl in such a way that it must have been still soft when it had been disposed of there. This is a strong argument that school education took place in this house. The neighbouring Room 5 was used as a thrash area when the house was abandoned at the end of Phase 1. Sherds and the remains of meals had been thrown away here, mixed with sealed labels, cuneiform documents, letters and sealed letter cases, school tablets and literary texts.<sup>11</sup> The letters had been sent by a certain *Sîn-nādā* to his wife *Nuṭtuṭtum* (Stone *et al.* 2021). *Sîn-nādā* used two different seals for sealing the letter cases (Otto 2019). His first seal shows the suppliant goddess standing opposite a standing male god. The inscription characterizes *Sîn-nādā* as the priest of the Ningal temple and as a servant of *Sîn-eribam*. This king of Larsa reigned from 1842-1840 only, which gives a fairly precise date. Even more precise is the date delivered by more letter cases which had been sealed with the second seal of *Sîn-nada*. This seal, showing the standard Old Babylonian motif of the victorious king opposite the suppliant goddess, testifies that *Sîn-nada* had been promoted to the principal of the Ningal temple, but now he is called the servant of *Šilli-Adad*. This particularly unlucky king of Larsa reigned for only 9 months in 1835, before he was dismissed by *Kudur-mabuk* who

10 Find no. Ur 2019: 3112; terracotta, 65x56x42 mm; Baghdad, Iraq Museum.

11 I thank Dominique Charpin, Walther Sallaberger and Anne Löhnert for reading the texts and seal inscriptions and for discussing them with me. The following information on the ancient inhabitants are results of their work.

installed his son Warad-Sîn on the throne of Larsa (Charpin 2004: 107, 116-118). The seal can therefore be dated to 1835 precisely.

Nuṭṭuṭtum, Sîn-nādā's wife, is also quite well attested by labels which she had sealed with her own fine seal, by a letter from her father, and by four tablet-labels and 18 sealed labels which had been sent to her. These dealt with the deliveries of wet draff, a by-product of the brewing process, which was used in Mesopotamia especially for the fattening of sheep. According to the texts, the draff was received by <sup>1</sup>Nuṭṭuṭtum from <sup>1</sup>Eburītum. This testifies to two economically active women, Eburītum probably brewing beer on a large scale and Nuṭṭuṭtum probably engaged in animal fattening.

There was even more evidence for Nuṭṭuṭtum in the house. The installations of the kitchen (Room 13) speak for a well organized food production exceeding the private needs of the household and point to Nuṭṭuṭtum's active role in providing provisions for the Ningal temple. The alcove below the staircase at the southern end of the kitchen room served also as a private retreat for the house lady. Nuṭṭuṭtum would retain here a bull's horn, a little bitumen-coated basket, two bowls and a letter from her husband, where Sîn-nada wrote to her: "I am well, do not worry at all". She kept this rather laconic letter next to a terracotta plaque which depicted the seated king holding a large Babylonian bottle in his one hand (Otto 2022: 354, fig. 4). We get the overall impression of Nuṭṭuṭtum as a literate person, loyal to her husband and the king, and actively involved in the provisioning of the Ningal temple. This is corroborated by the fact that some tablets concerned the delivery of flour to Sîn-nādā, others the delivery of draff to Nuṭṭuṭtum, indicating that the couple was involved in the fattening of livestock and in the preparation of bread. Probably the owners of this house held important positions concerning the sacrificial offerings in the Ningal Temple, located in the Giparu at the north end of the city in the Sacred Precinct.

### **Clues for dating the construction of Sîn-nādā's and Nuṭṭuṭtum's house**

Taken all the evidence together, it seems that Sîn-nādā and his wife Nuṭṭuṭtum inhabited the house in Phase 1. When the house was abandoned and altered in Phase 2, a part of the written documents and letters was thrown away in the trash area of Room 5. Since the latest objects date to king Šilli-Adad, we suggest that Sîn-nādā's family had to leave the house, and possibly even the city, due to the political take-over by Warad-Sîn, who might have exchanged officials in high-ranking positions. This gives a perfect date of 1835 BC for the end of Phase 1. But when had the house been built?

There are three clues to date the construction of the house. The first is related to the level below the house. In the southern part of the house, it appeared clearly that the baked brick walls of the Isin-Larsa house had been set directly on top of the earlier mud-brick walls, which had obviously been cut and levelled in order to build the house on top of them (Fig. 5). These walls are part of an Ur III period building. This suggests that there were no buildings in this area after the end of the Ur III period until Sîn-nādā's house was built.

The second clue is the brick tomb in the open yard. It was about 4 m long and 2 m wide and consisted of two chambers. It must have been a corbel vaulted tomb similar to one excavated by Woolley in EM (Woolley and Mallowan 1976: 35, fig. 2a). Its eastern wall leaned against the Ur III mud-brick wall, which must therefore still have been part of a visible ruin when the tomb was built. However, the burials in this tomb were very unusual. The remains

of 11 individuals were found in the larger southern chamber.<sup>12</sup> However, mainly large bones, long bones and skulls lay here, while most of the smaller bones were missing. Not a single skeleton was still intact. Even stranger were the skeletal remains in the smaller northern chamber, where the human remains of at least 13 individuals were even more carefully arranged, and again only the long bones and skulls were piled up like in a bone house (Fig. 6). Remarkably, some bones derived from children and even babies. Woolley claimed that children were usually not buried in the brick-built burial-vaults, but in clay coffins or bowls (Woolley and Mallowan 1976: 33–34). These are all indications that the bones were brought from elsewhere. If we take into account that *Sîn-nādā* and *Nuṭtu* had only lived in the house for a couple of years, it is highly unlikely that 24 family members had died within this short time. So if we add up all the arguments, the most likely explanation is that the long bones and skulls came from long deceased family members which had been buried elsewhere and were brought and reburied here when *Sîn-nādā* rebuilt his house and the family tomb.

The third clue is the size of the house, its regular layout and the location of the family tomb in an open area outside the house rather than under one of the rooms. What could the open space around the tomb have been? Dominique Charpin pointed out to me a text recently published by M. Molina (2019: 694–695). This court record concerning tomb robbers mentions a tomb situated in the garden of the deceased, who was the chief lamentation singer of *Lagaš* in the Ur III period. Apparently it occasionally happened that tombs were erected in a garden or yard outside the house. The existence of a garden or yard within the city is in stark contrast to the crowded dwelling areas elsewhere in Ur.

To sum up: there are clear indications that there was enough free space here on the periphery of the city so that spacious, regularly designed houses could be built, which even had a large outdoor area – courtyard or garden. All this is in striking contrast to the conditions in the city center, where in area AH, for example, the houses were crowded together, often not very large and mostly irregular in layout. It seems that our family had moved here from elsewhere, possibly from the crowded city center. This seems to be in line with Woolley's observations that the AH quarter was in social decline during *Rim-Sîn's* reign (Woolley and Mallowan 1976: 12).

Since *Sîn-nādā's* house was erected directly on leveled Ur III walls, it is clear that there existed no earlier occupation. This fits perfectly with a new historical information published a few years ago (Volk 2011). The clay barrel mentions *Sîn-iddinam* of *Larsa* rebuilding the city wall of Ur, expanding the living quarters of Ur, and settling the 'Children of Ur' in the more peaceful new living quarters where they could sleep well, probably because it was less noisy than in the center. The text seems to give a clear date for Ur's new building program, since *Sîn-iddinam* reigned in *Larsa* from 1849–1843. However, it is more probable that this building program took place already during the regency of *Sîn-iddinam's* father *Nûr-Adad*, that is between 1865 and 1850, when crown-prince *Sîn-iddinam* was in charge of Ur (Charpin 2004: 101–108).<sup>13</sup>

<sup>12</sup> I thank Andrea Goehring for the anthropological analyses.

<sup>13</sup> The clay barrel inscription mentions that king *Nûr-Adad* was still alive when his son *Sîn-iddinam* initiated the building program at Ur. The most likely interpretation of this strange fact is that *Sîn-iddinam* as the crown-prince held important functions in Ur before he ascended the throne. This would fit perfectly with the most recent excavation results in *Sîn-nādā's* house which could be taken into consideration because the editorial team of the 12<sup>th</sup> ICAANE proceedings allowed me to integrate results of

Sîn-nādā and Nuṭṭuṭtum apparently profited from Sîn-iddinam's building program and moved here into the lavish area of new development, where they had lots of space to build the second-largest house so far known at Ur. Presumably they had lived before in the crowded city center. Anyway, they brought the bones of the deceased family members with them, long bones and skulls neatly packed together, and buried the old bones in the brand-new family tomb. But before a member of Sîn-nādā's family could die and was to be buried in the tomb, Sîn-nādā's fate turned down and he and his family had to leave the city or at least their house on the South Mound.

### Conclusions

Area 5 on the periphery of the southern hill of Ur shows no traces of settlement between the Ur III period and the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. Sîn-nādā was able to lay out his spacious house in a planned manner, placing the walls directly on top of the shaved walls of the Ur III period buildings. There was even room for a courtyard or garden outside the house where the family tomb was erected for the secondary burial of the remains of 24 family members. We conclude from these results that the settled area of Ur shrank considerably after the destruction of the Ur III period city and was essentially confined to the center. Not only are the houses in AH lying several meters higher than those in Area 5, but their ground-plans were often irregular, they were closely attached to each other and arranged along winding streets with dead ends. This indicates that here was the continuously grown heart of the domestic areas where the available space was rare and had to be respected by the houses.

This is different in Area 5, where magnetometry shows a fairly rectangular layout of living quarters with large compounds. Probably these can be related to Sîn-iddinam's restoration program which is said to have created new living areas at the periphery. New evidence from the House of Sîn-nādā and Nuṭṭuṭtum now suggests that the rebuilding program was already taking place in the reign of Nûr-Adad, when Sîn-iddinam was in charge of Ur but had not yet ascended his father's throne in Larsa. It seems, then, that Ur fully recovered from the devastating destruction in the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century only. We suggest that the domestic areas spread from the crowded old city center further to the periphery into hitherto deserted areas (Fig. 7). This may have been a further reason for a new flourishing of the city evident also on the social and cultural level. But in case that many wealthy families moved further to the periphery into the new building areas, this may have caused a demographic change of Ur's city quarters.

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the 2022 season (under the direction of W. B. Hafford, Penn Museum Philadelphia). Several tablets in Room 11 dating to Nûr-Adad are the earliest tablets found in the house and point to a time of construction under this Larsa king. I am grateful to Dominique Charpin and Brad Hafford for deciphering them and for detailed discussions on this topic.

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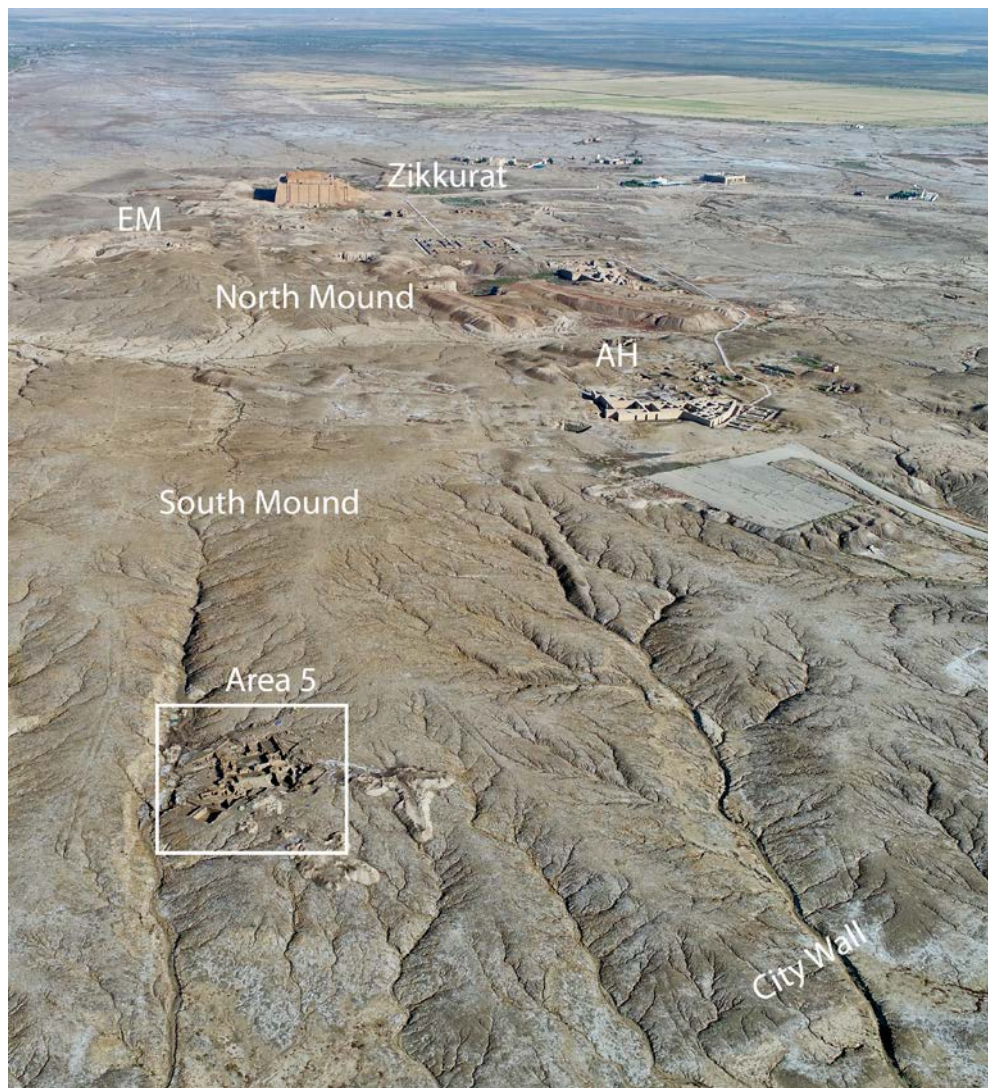


Fig. 1: Ur seen from the south. In the background the North Mound with the public buildings, in the foreground the South Mound with Area 5 (drone photo by Berthold Einwag)





Fig. 2: Area 5, ground plan of the Isin-Larsa house



Fig. 3: The kitchen Room 13 with drainage installations and domed ovens



Fig. 4: Terracotta table-like incense burner with crawling snakes





Fig. 5: The Isin-Larsa baked brick wall on top of the Ur III mudbrick wall



Fig. 6: Longbones and skulls heaped up in the vaulted chamber tomb

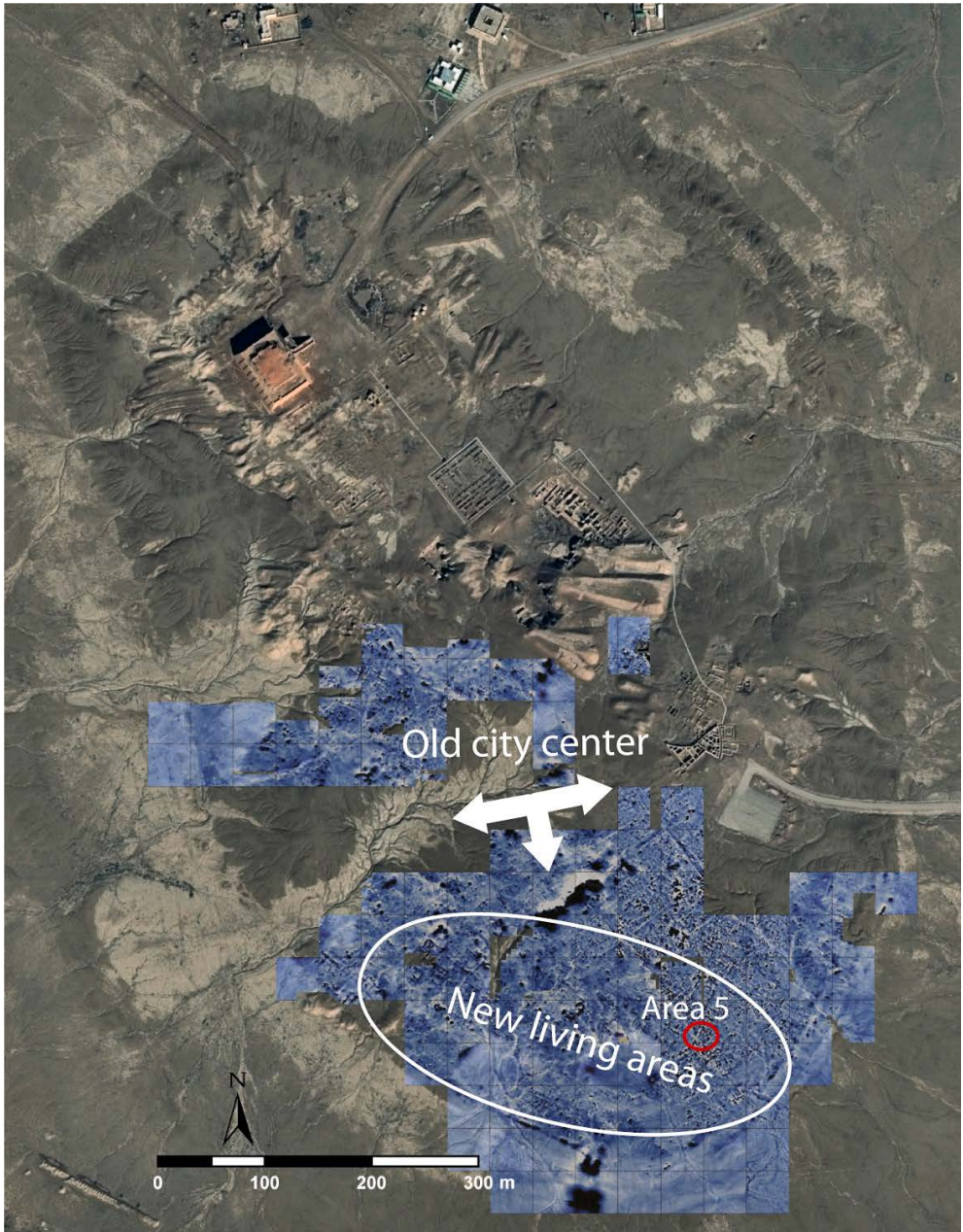


Fig. 7: Proposed settlement development in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century. Aerial photo combined with a magnetogram by J. Fassbinder and M. Scheiblecker (map by B. Einwag)