



# nîĝ-ba dub-sar maĥ

Studies on Ebla and the Ancient Near East  
presented to Amalia Catagnoti

Edited by  
Elisabetta Cianfanelli and Fiammetta Gori

EDIZIONI QUASAR  
ROMA 2024

CONSIGLIO NAZIONALE DELLE RICERCHE  
ISTITUTO DI SCIENZE DEL PATRIMONIO CULTURALE

## Documenta Asiana

Collana di studi sull'Anatolia e l'Asia Anteriore antica fondata da Mirjo Salvini



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Edizioni Quasar di Severino Tognon s.r.l.

Via Ajaccio 41-43 – 00198 Roma

Tel. +39 0685358444, Fax +39 0685833591

email: [info@edizioniquasar.it](mailto:info@edizioniquasar.it)

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Documenta Asiana  
XIV

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Publicazione realizzata con il contributo del Progetto PRIN 2017 “Big Data and Early Archives (Big-DEA). Measuring Settlement Dynamics and Environmental Exploitation in the Ebla Region during the 3rd Millennium BC: Archaeological Record, Cuneiform Texts, and Remote Sensing”, unità di Roma, CNR – ISPC (responsabile: Marco Bonechi).

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ISSN 1126-7321  
ISBN 978-88-5491-497-1

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## The temple gates. Some considerations on the dynastic cult under Šu-Suen

Noemi Borrelli  
Università di Napoli L'Orientale

### Introduction

Few things characterize the Mesopotamian royal institution as much as the tireless effort dedicated to the construction of monumental buildings, whether secular or religious. The Ur III kings devoted themselves to the renovation or *ex-novo* construction of royal residences, fortifications, and temples, demonstrating their authority throughout the kingdom. Building projects drained enormous resources from the provinces in terms of materials and manpower, triggering positive feedback nonetheless for their contribution to the visibility of royal power.<sup>1</sup> Such enterprises enhanced the perception of the king's mightiness and disseminated the idea of divine rulership.<sup>2</sup>

The fourth ruler of the Ur III dynasty, Šu-Suen, proved to be very attentive to this strategy, making divine kingship the pillar of his royal propaganda.<sup>3</sup> Effigies of the king were fashioned throughout the kingdom, beyond the boundaries of capitals and royal residences, and placed side by side with the divine statues of local deities. Statues of Šu-Suen entered the temples of Šara and Gula in Umma, as well as the sanctuaries of Ninġirsu and Bau in Ġirsu;<sup>4</sup> others were consecrated at Ur to sanction the king's bond with divine figures, including the dynastic god Nanna and the patron goddess of kings, Inana.<sup>5</sup> The king was not satisfied with having hypostases in other deities' shrines, nor were his efforts limited to the kingdom's core: temples dedicated to him dotted the periphery, from Susa to Duġduġli, from the Diyala to Urbilum.<sup>6</sup> Governors seeking his approval emulated this disposition by building temples in his name.<sup>7</sup> Yet, the only archaeological evidence that survives is Šu-Suen's temple at Ešnuna, a beautiful complex built in the administrative centre of the city.<sup>8</sup>

The textual data available for the construction of Šu-Suen's temples are far less informative than comparable sources about other national building projects; however, they do bear witness to the toll levied on the provinces and the great deal of attention required for their furnishing. In this article, which I am glad to dedicate to Amalia in appreciation of her work, the inquiry will focus on Šu-Suen's temples as buildings, not as economic institutions. Within this scope, two cases may prove revealing, and although they come from different parts of the kingdom – Lagaš and Irišaġrig – they both deal with the construction of temple doors.

<sup>1</sup> STEINKELLER 2015.

<sup>2</sup> The most recent discussion of the phenomenon of divine kingship in third-millennium Mesopotamian is STEINKELLER 2017, 107-156.

<sup>3</sup> BRISCH 2006.

<sup>4</sup> BPOA 1 516 (ŠS 9.I), Nisaba 31-2 29 (ŠS 9.IX), and TCTI 1 793 (ŠS 5.IV), respectively.

<sup>5</sup> Rochester 86 (ŠS 3.VI) and BIN 3 571 (ŠS 4.XII), respectively.

<sup>6</sup> STEINKELLER 2017, 132.

<sup>7</sup> Evidence for this practice is collected in PRITTS 2015, 48-49.

<sup>8</sup> REICHEL 2008.

## Building Šu-Suen's temple at Lagaš

At the very beginning of his rule, Šu-Suen ordered the construction of a temple to himself in the province of Lagaš. Canes, reed mats, glue, and bitumen feature among the building materials requested for this project, while the local administration kept track of bookkeeping for the workforce and stored the relevant documentation in baskets (MVN 2 275, ŠS 2). Besides unskilled labourers mobilized for ordinary construction work (TCTI 2 3260, ŠS 1), specialists like smiths and carpenters were gathered and stationed at the site of Šu-Suen's temple at the expense of the province, working under the authority of the *zabardab*, the highest cultic official in the kingdom.<sup>9</sup> Also worth mentioning is the employment of stonecutters (*zadim*), engravers of inscriptions (*mu-sar*), and metalworkers skilled in gilding (AN-dim<sub>2</sub>-dim<sub>2</sub>).<sup>10</sup> The quality of the hands recruited for the project hints at the lavishness expected to result.

The works lasted at least four years coming to an end towards Šu-Suen 4. The final touch on the temple's décor was its monumental doors,<sup>11</sup> whose height must have been between 4 and 6.50 m (ITT 5 8238). Coniferous timber was used for manufacturing door shutters, poles, and handles, while panels were decorated with inlays made of turtle carapaces (*ba-murgu<sub>2</sub>*), a prestigious material used also in the Tummal residence.<sup>12</sup>

A shipyard official named Nammaḥ managed the deliveries of timber, which in one case came directly from the household of the state chancellor.<sup>13</sup> Interestingly, a private inscription found on door sockets at Ĝirsu witnesses the dedication of a temple to Šu-Suen by the very own state chancellor Aradĝu (RIMEP 3 2.1.4.13). The recipients of the building materials were either Urguena or Lu-Gudea, whose administrative function was the monitoring of the artisanal workforce.

A few years later, Nammaḥ appears again, issuing fir timber for Šu-Suen's temple in Urbilum (SAT 1 377, ŠS 7). The recipient of the consignment was the royal ambassador, Abba. The legend of his royal seal identifies Abba as a chief priest (*lu<sub>2</sub>-maḥ*) and son of Ubarum. As suggested by Fabienne Huber Vulliet,<sup>14</sup> the involvement of a *lu<sub>2</sub>-maḥ* points to the construction of cultic places, within which the priest was responsible for the ritual correctness of the process. Although uncertain, it is tempting to identify Abba's father with Ubarum, the purification priest (*gudu<sub>4</sub>*) in charge of the royal mortuary chapels at Irisaĝrig (see below).

## Building Šu-Suen's temple at Irisaĝrig

As with the temple at Ĝirsu, construction at Irisaĝrig started at the beginning of the king's reign. The smith Inim-Nanna was sent to erect the structure under the supervision of Šulgi-māṭi the courier.<sup>15</sup> The king's building activity in the region must have been intense: ste-

<sup>9</sup> See TCTI 2 2680 (IV) and TCTI 2 4164 (XI).

<sup>10</sup> Outside Ĝirsu, AN-dim<sub>2</sub>-dim<sub>2</sub> feature only in inspection records from the Treasure Archive of Ur. Their specialization can be inferred from UET 3 342 (ŠS 1.IV) and UET 3 416 (IS 8.XII.15).

<sup>11</sup> All records related to the doors of the e<sub>2</sub> Šu-Suen are dated to ŠS 3, with the sole exception of ITT 5 8238 (ŠS 4).

<sup>12</sup> The use of turtle carapaces for the construction of Šu-Suen's temple doors is mentioned in Owen 2003-04 ([http://bdtns.filol.csic.es/ficha\\_simple\\_ventana.php?miReferencia=33](http://bdtns.filol.csic.es/ficha_simple_ventana.php?miReferencia=33), accessed on 26/2/2024, ŠS 3). See also TCL 5 5680 (ŠS 2) from Umma mentioning carapaces for Šu-Suen's statue.

<sup>13</sup> Another source was the warehouse of the governor (ITT 5 6982), an office held in those years by the state chancellor Aradĝu.

<sup>14</sup> HUBER VULLIET 2019, 97.

<sup>15</sup> CUSAS 40-2 1534 (ŠS 2.II.8), Nisaba 15/2 207 (ŠS 2.III.3), and CUSAS 40-2 2 (ŠS 2.III.5). In the same period, the royal ambassador Lu-Utu was sent to retrieve baked bricks (CUSAS 40-2 75, ŠS 2.IV.30) which may have been used for the royal building project.

lae were commissioned first in Šu-Suen 2 and then in Šu-Suen 6<sup>16</sup> when also a second temple to the king's divine self was founded at Nēber-Šu-Suen. The new temple housed a statue of the king, to which meals were offered and sesame oil was applied for ritual anointing (Nisaba 15/2 359, ŠS 6.II). Even in this brand-new construction, the king chose to associate his cult with that of the patron goddess of the region, Ninḫursaĝa.<sup>17</sup> According to a scheme observed in other provinces, association with patron deities was key to promoting the worship of the deified king. In his last year, unaware of his imminent death, Šu-Suen continued to show his religious zeal and to reinforce the image of divine kingship through rites, art, and architecture. In the temple of Ninḫursaĝa at Keš, the cultic statue was polished and the throne was provided with a new cover (ĝiš-ḫum);<sup>18</sup> sesame oil was issued to recoat bathtubs in the temples of Šulgi, Amar-Suena, and Šu-Suen.<sup>19</sup> For Šu-Suen's own temple, old and new chairs were upholstered with white and red leather; the old royal throne was covered with fine textiles; and the stool of the royal bathtub was padded with combed wool and covered in black leather (Nisaba 15/2 549, ŠS 9). New bricks were moulded for the temple (CUSAS 40-2 1267, ŠS 9.I).

Right after Šu-Suen's death, building activities resumed vigorously at Irišaĝrig under the aegis of the new king Ibbi-Suen, who like his father took care of the dynastic cult as much as the local deities. The very next month, upon Ibbi-Suen's coronation, smiths were sent to affix bronze straps to the doors of the temple of Nin-Isina,<sup>20</sup> while royal sculptors supervised leatherworkers and carpenters completing a second statue of Amar-Suena in the temple of Šimtiša.<sup>21</sup> Other works were carried out to mark the journey of the king who came to town for early-spring rites that took place in the great palatial garden (ĝiš<sup>is</sup>kiri<sub>6</sub> gu-la u<sub>4</sub> ĝiri<sub>3</sub> lugal).<sup>22</sup>

Under his son's reign, Šu-Suen's temples were still functioning but in need of repair. The renovation was requested upon the king's visit and extended also to the temples of local deities and those of previous kings. Sesame oil was issued to anoint footstools at the temples of Šulpae, Ašgi, PAP.NAGAR, Šimtiša, Šulgi, Amar-Suena, and Šu-Suen (Nisaba 15/2 582, IS 1.XI). Leatherworkers and smiths took care of the door bolts and thrones at Amar-Suena's and Šu-Suen's temples on the occasion of Šu-Suen's festival (CUSAS 40-2 289, IS 2.VIII); bathtubs and chests were recoated with bitumen in Šu-Suen's temple (Nisaba 15/2 940, IS 3.V).

Although most of the tablets do not specify which of Šu-Suen's temples was renovated, some of these works concerned the baked-brick temple (e<sub>2</sub> sig<sub>4</sub> al-ur<sub>3</sub>-ra) in Nēber-Šu-Suen. Again, the most informative text deals with the temple's monumental doors (Nisaba 15/2 533, ŠS 9). As at Šu-Suen's temple at Ĝirsu, the door embellishments were the product of refined craftsmanship. The wooden band of the door,<sup>23</sup> made from the timber of a conif-

<sup>16</sup> CUSAS 40-2 1536 (ŠS 2.VII) mentions the erection of a stele for the king at an unspecified location. A stele for the temple of Ašgi at Irišaĝrig was commissioned on his sixth regnal year: a sculptor in charge of the preparatory sketch (tam<sub>2</sub>-si-lum) is recorded in Nisaba 15/2 362 (ŠS 6.XI.28) and CUSAS 40-2 695 (ŠS 6.XII.3). On preparatory sketches, see MOLINA – STEINKELLER 2023.

<sup>17</sup> Nisaba 15/2 368 (ŠS 6.IX). Five men coated the throne dais of Ninḫursaĝa and the pedestal of the statue of Šu-Suen with bitumen.

<sup>18</sup> Nisaba 15/2 518 (ŠS 9.VII). A team of sculptors, (gold)smiths, and stonecutters took care of the first task, while mat-makers and tanners carried out the second.

<sup>19</sup> CUSAS 40-2 1293 (ŠS 9.III). The occasion coincided with Šu-Suen's journey to Irišaĝrig as noted in YOS IV 217 (ŠS 9.III.24).

<sup>20</sup> Nisaba 15/2 521 (ŠS 9.IX).

<sup>21</sup> Nisaba 15/2 531 (ŠS 9.XII). Construction work was begun when royal sculptors brought the statue to the temple of Šimtiša. See also CUSAS 40-2 991 (ŠS 9.XII) recording men coating the pedestal of Amar-Suena's statue in the same temple.

<sup>22</sup> CUSAS 40-2 108 (ŠS 9.XI) lists carpenters, leatherworkers, and mat-makers decorating the doors and bolts of the royal warehouse; CUSAS 40-2 595 (ŠS 9.XI) and Nisaba 15/2 494 (ŠS 9.XI) mention works at the orchard taken on by several artisans.

<sup>23</sup> The element ĝiš<sup>is</sup>g mi-sir<sub>2</sub> identifies the horizontal band holding the door slats together (HEIMPEL 2009, 181 fn. 113).

erous tree, was 2.33 m long and 1.13 m wide; coated with bitumen, it was decorated with white leather straps.<sup>24</sup> Panels with leather inserts were lighter than all-wooden doors, yet prized for their artistic value. Three monumental gates made of fir, each 3 m high, were provided with 28 engraved inscriptions (mu-sar). Two other doors were carved with 14 engravings. Forty-two slats of coniferous trees were trimmed into specialized pieces for roofbeams.<sup>25</sup> In addition to various cuts of fir and other materials, 3 kg of a very rare substance known as NI.UD.KA<sup>26</sup> were required. More than a thousand man-days were needed to complete the tasks, and an impressive variety of craftsmen were employed: sculptors, carpenters, goldsmiths, smiths, stonecutters, matmakers, leatherworkers, and felters.

Monumental gates (<sup>ḡis</sup>ka<sub>2</sub>) are quite rare in the Ur III records, inscribed ones even more so. The only other documented case of which I am aware is the commissioning of inscribed doors for Amar-Suena's temple at Irišaḡrig: Nisaba 15/2 25 (AS 7) records woodwork commissioned for door embellishment and temple furnishings very similar to those of Nēber-Šu-Suen. Twenty-six men's chairs made of *šakkullu* wood were plated with bronze and upholstered in leather; at least four monumental passage doors were made of cedar wood; five door bands were decorated with leather inserts; three pairs of bolts (<sup>ḡis</sup>saḡ-kul) and three pivots (<sup>ḡis</sup>nu-kus<sub>2</sub>), made of steatite,<sup>27</sup> were ordered for the eyestones of the statue(s). From the records of the stonecutter Dadani (Nisaba 15/2 71, AS 1), we know that 7.58 kg of steatite, ca. 53 grams of lapis lazuli, and 500 grams of *buršasillu* stone were used to realize these prestigious stone objects. The association of bolts and pivots with statues is puzzling since <sup>ḡis</sup>saḡ-kul and <sup>ḡis</sup>nu-kus<sub>2</sub> exclusively refer to door components. Other gates were embellished with sun discs (*šamšatum*) decorated with ga-li<sup>28</sup> and engraved inscriptions (mu-sar).

### *The dynastic cult at Irišaḡrig*

The presence of Šu-Suen's temple at Nēber-Šu-Suen is interesting not just for its lavish decorations. Another factor calls for some consideration: specifically, its location. Nēber-Šu-Suen was a newly founded settlement that had arisen in the proximity of a territorial boundary. As the toponym claims, the "Ford of Šu-Suen" lay somewhere at a natural riverine crossing in the Irišaḡrig region, which was the northern gateway to the East. The settlement hosted a resthouse (e<sub>2</sub>-da-na) equipped with a *sikkum*, a stable that provided equids and carts to travelling personnel (Nisaba 15/2 945, IS 3.VI). Nēber-Šu-Suen was a preferred – if not obligatory – stop on the route to Der and Kimaš, visited by queens and royal messengers on their way to where the king was residing at that moment (ki lugal). The resthouse thus served personnel moving along the frontier that ran from north-west to south-east, along the Zagros mountains. Toponyms with the element "ford" might have designated borderland settlements, as also suggested by the case of Nēber-Amar-Suena, whose settlers appear in Puzriš-Dagan sources as delivering hundreds of head of cattle, sheep, and goats, which

<sup>24</sup> For kuš ḡI-(še<sub>3</sub>) la<sub>2</sub>, see VELDHUIS 2004. The action refers to the use of leather straps as inserts in wooden frames, either as decoration or sealing.

<sup>25</sup> <sup>ḡis</sup>a-si-(ig-)ga are attested only in three Ur III texts: Nisaba 15/2 533 and Nisaba 15/2 25 from Irišaḡrig, and TCTI 2 2714 from Ġirsu. The wood was used in temple construction and particularly for doors. These texts specify that the wooden pieces were used for Šu-Suen's and Amar-Suena's temples. On the term <sup>ḡis</sup>a-si-(ig-)ga, CIVIL 2008, 62 suggests that pre-Sargonic a-si-gi<sub>4</sub> designated a type of <sup>ḡis</sup>u-suh<sub>5</sub> lumber.

<sup>26</sup> On this substance, see STEINKELLER 2015, 225. NI.UD.KA is generally measured in litres, whereas here it is measured in minas.

<sup>27</sup> CIVIL 2008, 71 no. 70 argues that the colour of the *algames* stone was a dark shade. SIMKÓ 2018, 39-42 has proposed an identification with soft stones like steatite or soapstone. The *algames* was also used for finishing Šu-Suen's statue in combination with copper, lead, and yellow ochre (DAS 397, ŠS 8).

<sup>28</sup> For ga-li<sub>2</sub>-(a-tum), see ePSD2: "a decorative object, a bead". These decorations were applied to hard materials, like wood and stone, as suggested by the decoration of Inanna's throne inscription (UET 3 684, IS 16.VIII.8), the standard of Nanna (UET 3 698, IS 17.VIII.11), and ceremonial weapons (i.e., UET 3 560, IS 15.VIII.20, UET 3 1498, IS 15.XII). In alternative, ga-li could identify a yellow mineral as suggested in CAD K, 94 s.v. kalû B, section d.



was the usual toll paid in kind by the military and royal dwellers serving in peripheral territories (MVN 11 140, AS 5.IX.9).

Nēber-Šu-Suen was clearly associated with the king's persona, as suggested by the presence of a temple dedicated to the deified king and the possible name of its resthouse under Ibbi-Suen: the "royal port" (kar lugal).<sup>29</sup> There are grounds for speculating that the settlement was also known as Nēber-nadiātīm, the "Ford of the *nadītu*"<sup>30</sup> since the data available for the three toponyms overlap almost entirely.

The mention of the *lukur/nadītu* in Irisaġrig toponymy calls for further consideration. Although meagre, the provincial archive witnesses the presence of a cultic group called the "four consorts" (*lukur 4-ba*), who were supplied with food, unguents, and clothes. One wonders what the appointments of these "four consorts" were and if their presence can be connected with the dynastic cult, considering the strong relations these cultic personnel shared with kings after the deification of Šulgi.<sup>31</sup>

Indeed, despite the incipient end of the Ur III kingdom, the dynastic cult maintained vigour in the region during Ibbi-Suen's reign. After he acceded to the throne, offerings were bestowed monthly to the "four mortuary chapels" (*ki-a-naġ 4-ba*) at Irisaġrig, that is, to the cenotaphs of his predecessors.<sup>32</sup> Although the exact location of these cenotaphs is unknown, it seems reasonable to assume they were built in every province of the state.<sup>33</sup> At Irisaġrig, furnishing and offerings owed to these chapels were taken care of by the *gudu*<sub>4</sub> priest Ubarum (Nisaba 15/2 716).<sup>34</sup>

It is tempting to construe the "four consorts" of Irisaġrig as the cultic staff who helped to care for the institutions of the four deified kings. Their first mention dates to the end of Amar-Suena's reign, a fact that may seem anachronistic at first, and raises the question of who these "four kings" were.<sup>35</sup> However, as thoroughly discussed by Bertrand Lafont,<sup>36</sup> the deification of Šu-Suen had occurred already during Amar-Suena's reign. Given this, it is not surprising that the "four consorts" appear in connection with four deified kings even before Šu-Suen's accession to the throne.

## Conclusions

Based on royal and votive inscriptions, it has been suggested that Šu-Suen's royal cult differed from that of his predecessors, shifting decisively to his own persona at the expense of local gods. However, administrative texts do not suggest that local cults suffered from a redirection of attention towards the king's worship. A more nuanced picture may be necessary. Šu-Suen was very attentive to embedding his cult into the local religious landscape

<sup>29</sup> Nisaba 15/2 740 (IS 2.III), Nisaba 15/2 927 (IS 3.I), and UCTIS 45 (IS 3.XII).

<sup>30</sup> Nēber-nadiātīm appears for the first time in ŠS 9.I (CUSAS 40-2 444). Note that this settlement was certainly located near a canal (Nisaba 15/2 762, IS 2.IV).

<sup>31</sup> SHARLACH 2017, 20 and 66. For the *lukur/nadītu* in the Ur III period, see WEIERHSHÄUSER 2008, 237-240 and HUBER VULLIET 2019, 112-114, who suggests that one of the cultic functions of these women was to care for statues placed within temples.

<sup>32</sup> Cf. Nisaba 15/2 734 (IS 2.III), which separately lists the *kianaġ* of Ur-Namma, Šulgi, Amar-Suena, and Šu-Suen. Šu-Suen's mortuary chapel at Irisaġrig was established right after his death and Ubarum oversaw its furnishing (CUSAS 40-2 296, ŠS 9.IX). On the offerings to the four mortuary chapels at Irisaġrig, see Nisaba 15/2 716 (IS 2.I), Nisaba 15/2 757 (IS 2), and SSEACI no. 13 (IS 3.V).

<sup>33</sup> The last mention of the four mortuary chapels (*ki-a-naġ lugal 4-ba*) comes from Ur and is dated to IS 7 (UET 3 242). Eight years later, the statues of the four kings (*alan lugal 4*) are still mentioned in records from Ur (UET 2 425).

<sup>34</sup> These priests oversaw purification rites taking place at ritual basins within temples (HUBER VULLIET 2019, 31). The Irisaġrig archive also bears witness to bathtubs (*du*<sub>10</sub>-*us*<sub>2</sub>) installed in the temples dedicated to the kings (Nisaba 15/2 549 and CUSAS 40-2 1293).

<sup>35</sup> SSEACI no. 36 (AS 7), Nisaba 15/2 133 (AS 8), and SSEACI no. 14 (AS 8).

<sup>36</sup> LAFONT 2017, 199-201.

and did not introduce significant changes in the royal titulary aimed at emphasizing his divine status.

Instead of viewing Šu-Suen's choices as an ideological innovation *per se*, one might wonder whether the increased evidence of monuments in his honour was the result of an adjustment process that the Crown had to endure for political reasons. Strategies for redirecting power and prestige to new rulers had been already widely employed. Amar-Suena, for example, seized the land holdings of the pre-Ur III governor Nammaḥani to establish his own household in the province of Lagaš. Dismantling the estate of a traditional figure who was vital to the identity of the southern provinces, namely to the advantage of the royal household, must have had an impact on the audience at which such measures were directed: regional powers.<sup>37</sup> There is evidence that a temple dedicated to Amar-Suena was built in the Umma region as well, or at least financed through resources levied upon the province.<sup>38</sup> At Irišaḡrig, Amar-Suena's policy on cults did not differ significantly from that of his successor, nor was his temple less splendidly decorated than that of Šu-Suen. Creating consensus around the royal authority was still part of the king's agenda during Ibbi-Suen's reign, when the king's own cult did not appear as an isolated goal, but was rooted in a unitary vision of the dynasty.

The royal cult may have differed from one region to the other, according to the role each specific territory fulfilled in the general scheme of Ur III politics. The increased presence of royal *loci* in the north-western periphery under Šu-Suen's reign may be connected with the stronger personal and political ties he shared with those lands by virtue of his previous appointment as general of Der. On his accession to the throne, Šu-Suen adopted various political resolutions in sharp contrast to his predecessor's, from appointing trusted men as provincial governors to revisiting institutional partitions, like restoring the former name of the household of Nammaḥani.<sup>39</sup> The success of the state chancellor Aradḡu can be contextualized amid this new atmosphere. Differences in our perception of the royal cult, and particularly the evidence we have for the devotion of Šu-Suen's subordinates throughout the realm, may have resulted from this new balance between royal and local powers – that is, not necessarily a top-down decision as much as a different bargain between the two parties who mutually acknowledged the other's authority. The dedication of temples by provincial governors represented the most tangible, and undoubtedly most monumental, expression of the validation of the king's lordship at a moment when such recognition of power may have been needed due to a bumpy succession or to troubling foreign politics. The king, although divine, was seeking allegiance.<sup>40</sup>

<sup>37</sup> MICHALOWSKI 2013, 190-191.

<sup>38</sup> *E.g.*, MVN 5 57, NYPL 138, SACT 2 71, and SACT 2 292 from Umma, all dated to AS 6.

<sup>39</sup> For a discussion on the succession between Amar-Suena and Šu-Suen, see LAFONT 2017.

<sup>40</sup> As argued by REICHEL 2008, 134-135, it is revealing that Šu-Suen's temple was built on a previously vacant part of the lower town, connected to the Palace of the Rulers, and voluntarily situated in a palatial complex rather than in a cultic area.

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