

### Royal tombs of Ur

Early Dynastic III, roughly *c.*  
contemporary with Eannatum. *2500*  
*BCE*

Principle occupants = private graves.

Second + Third Dynasty kings and queens,  
provides insight on political structure of Ur.

Also important because it could provide  
concrete evidence of chronology to  
compare to available king lists.

Most famous grave = Queen Puabi,  
identified by a cylinder seal she was  
wearing.

(Reade, 2001)

### The Death Pits of Ur

Found in association with the Royal Tombs  
of Ur, provide insight on social organisation  
or Ur societies.

Evidence Inform us about class  
included human structure, religious  
remains, order and traditions (+  
ornaments and human sacrifice?).  
grave goods.

Blunt force trauma on victims in Great  
Death Pit suggest mass sacrifice of  
subjects.

Identity of individuals = uncertain (conso-  
rts?). One pit contained only women, interp-  
reted as a sacrifice to the moon god of Ur -  
Nanna.

General consensus is that death pits were a  
common practice of ancient Sumerian  
societies.

*Puabi's* grave = most insightful info  
regarding identification of cemetery  
occupants.

Puabi's grave = situated above death pit.

Puabi identified through elaborate and  
ornate headdress.

Individuals in death pit found to have  
overdeveloped back and leg muscles and  
signs of repeated knee and ankle strain ->  
chariot riders?

Evidence of postmortem heating of skulls -  
indicates practice of heating/smoking bodies  
after death?

### Royal Tombs of Ur - Puabi

### Victory Stele of Naram-Sin

**Naram-Sin** *c. 2334-2154*

= Akkadian  
ruler.

Significant  
for his  
deification.

Evidence from inscriptions in statue base of  
teh deification of Naram-Sin and the  
erection of a temple in his honour by the  
people of Agade.

*Sippar stele* (or victory stele) - represents  
Naram-Sin defeating Lullubi people from  
Zagros Mountains.

Represents - *Horned helmet* - reserved  
Naram-Sin for deities and gods, but worn  
both as here by Naram-Sin.  
god and  
king:

- *Size* - Naram-Sin is  
depicted bigger than all  
others on stele and towers  
over the Lullubi enemies,  
themselves small, broken  
and being stepped on.

- *Shamash* - depicted as a  
sun over the mountains, on  
the same side of the stele as  
Naram-Sin. Previous  
depictions would have  
separated the divine and  
kingship on different sides  
(*e.g. Eannatum and the stele*  
*of the vultures*).

Depictions Lullubi warriors differentiated  
of the "oth- by size and posture, but also  
ers" by different *hairstyles and*  
*dress*.

(Aruz *et al.*, 2003)

### Victory Stele of Naram-Sin



### References for your humble perusal

Aruz, J. and Wallenfels, R. (eds) (2003) *Art of the first cities: The Third Millennium B.C. from the Mediterranean to the Indus*. New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art (Museum of Art Series).

Reade, J. (2001) 'Assyrian King-Lists, the Royal Tombs of Ur, and Indus Origins', *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, 60(1), pp. 1-29. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1086/468883>.



Puabi's famous headdress from the Royal Tombs of Ur.

C

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Published 2nd June, 2025.  
Last updated 1st June, 2025.  
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