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Nucléus mésolithique de Glanów. Collection de Musée archéologique de Cracovie (grâce à l'aimable autorisation de Mirosław Zajac; photo par Agnieszka Susuł)

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Instytut Archeologii Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, ul. Gołębia 11, PL 31-007 Kraków  
mniauj@interia.pl; mszprzybyla@gmail.com

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**Professor BOLESŁAW GINTER**

THIS VOLUME OF *RECHERCHES ARCHÉOLOGIQUES, NOUVELLE SERIE*  
IS DEDICATED  
TO PROFESSOR BOLESŁAW GINTER  
ON HIS 75TH BIRTHDAY



In 2013 Professor Bolesław Ginter turned seventy five, therefore his students, colleagues and friends, together with editorial board of *Recherches Archéologiques NS*, decided to dedicate to him the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> volumes combined.

Professor is one of the most eminent and respected European authorities in the field of Paleolithic and Mesolithic issues. In 1961 he graduated from the Faculty of Philosophy and History at the Jagiellonian University, reaching his master's degree in archaeology. In 1966 he acquired his PhD and in 1973 he became Assistant Professor. In 1985 he received the title of Associate Professor and he obtained the full professorship in 1994. He is an educator and researcher, appreciated in many different centers. He has been conducting lectures at the University of Rzeszów since several years and in 2011 he was granted the *honoris causa* doctorate of the University of Wrocław. During his academic career he held scientific internships and invited lectures in the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Ukraine, Germany, Denmark, Switzerland and Italy. In the years 1984–1987 Professor Bolesław Ginter was Vice Dean of the Faculty of History and Philosophy at the Jagiellonian University and in the years 1990–1993 the Vice Rector. From 1985 to 2008 he was head of the Department of Stone Age Archaeology at the Jagiellonian University. Professor was a member of the Central Council of Science and Higher Education, and from January 3<sup>rd</sup> 2003, he served as Vice Chairman of the eighth cadency. Professor Bolesław Ginter conducted excavations at many sites. As particularly important we should mention the Balkan works, which embraced, e.g. Middle- and Upper Paleolithic sequences in Bacho Kiro and Temnata Caves. Last but not least were the works in Egypt, which initially had been performed in cooperation with the Centre of Mediterranean Archaeology of the University of Warsaw and subsequently were run by share of the *Deutsches Archäologisches Institut* and encompassed predynastic positions of El-Tarif and Armant (west and south of Luxor) and also Qasr el-Sagha (north of the Fayum Oasis). In the years 1994–2005 Professor co-led the excavations in the Peloponnese, in the cave no. 1, in the Klissoura Gorge in Argolid. They led to the documentation of the first comprehensive sequence of the Neanderthal stratum in this part of Mediterranean Europe. From among Polish positions we should distinguish co-direction of a long-term, so far lasting project of the research of the main chamber of the Ciemna Cave in Ojców. He also directed an investigative project of the Committee for Scientific Research: “The site of the Magdalenian culture in Dzierżysław in Upper Silesia”.

Professor's studies enriched the Paleolithic flint workshops systematics by contents of fundamental significance. It can be best proven by the brilliant habilitation thesis titled *Wydobywanie, przetwórstwo i dystrybucja surowców i wyrobów krzemienych w schyłkowym paleolicie północnej części Europy środkowej* from 1974 and the monograph from the same year *Spätpaläolithikum in Oberschlesien und im Oberen Warta Flussgebiet*. Among other monographs, it would be hard not to mention about such important, co-edited

items like *Excavation in the Bacho Kiro Cave (Bulgaria)*, *Predynastic Settlement near Ar-mant, Temnata Cave. Excavation in Karlukovo Karst Area, Bulgaria* (1992, 1994, 2000), and also co-authorship of an eminent and repeatedly resumed academic textbook *Technika obróbki i typologia wyrobów kamiennych paleolitu i mezolitu* (1975).

Professor Bolesław Ginter has published a total of 170 scientific items. He is the author, co-author or co-editor of 14 books. He supervised 19 masters and 5 doctors. He has participated in the sessions of numerous scientific bodies on the electoral basis. Professor is a deputy president of the Committee of Prae- and Protohistoric Sciences Polish Academy of Sciences, a member of the board of Archaeological Commission of the Kraków Branch of Polish Academy of Sciences, and member of following Commissions of the Polish Academy of Art and Sciences: Paleogeography of Quaternary, European Affairs, Praehistory of Polish Carpathians. He is deputy chairman of the XXXII Commission of *Union Internationale des Sciences Préhistoriques et Protohistoriques*, member correspondent of *Deutsches Archäologisches Institut*, member of International Association of Egyptologists and American Academy in Rome.

In recognition of his services, Professor Bolesław Ginter was six times individually awarded and twice as a team by the Minister of Education. Eight times he received the Award of the rector of the Jagiellonian University. He was honored by the Knight's Cross and Officer's Cross of the Order of Polonia Restituta and the Medal of the National Education Commission.

Paweł Valde-Nowak

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Krzysztof Hipp<sup>1</sup>

## Sarduri II – One of the most unfortunate rulers of the 8<sup>th</sup> century B.C.E.<sup>2</sup>

**Abstract:** This paper aims to present Sarduri II's policy towards Assyria from a broader perspective. Contrary to his successors, Sarduri II's rule has not been a subject of such interest among Assyriologists and Urtologists, which results from the character of the available sources. Although his Chronicle from Van, describing the first fourteen years of his rule, has been preserved, the last period of Sarduri's reign is known to us only from Assyrian royal inscriptions and letters from the times of Tiglath-pileser III.

**Keywords:** Sarduri II, Urartu, Assyria, Arpad, Tiglath-pileser III, Kištan, Tušpa/Ṭurušpa

### 1. Introduction

After the death of Argišti I, Sarduri II inherited a well organized and expanding empire. It occupied vast areas of Eastern Anatolia, Transcaucasia and north-western Iran. Sarduri's reign can be divided into two contrasting phases. In the early stage he continued the policy of his father by conquering new lands and incorporating them into his empire. At that time, Urartu reached unprecedented heights, culminating in the alliance with Syro-Anatolian states. However, this political move, whose aim was to block

Assyria's access to the Levant and Central Anatolia, proved futile and ended in disaster, after which Sarduri's position was shattered. So, his reign is a good example of the changing wheel of fortune. Therefore, the first parts of this article deal with the successes of Sarduri until his defeat at Kištan in 743 B.C.E. The second parts describe the Assyro-Urartian war which resulted in the collapse of his rule and the possible turmoil which followed thereafter.

### 2. The initial successes of Sarduri II

Until 743 B.C.E. Sarduri conducted victorious military campaigns in all directions (see Fig. 1). To the north, he regularly campaigned against the land of Etini and the tribe of Eriaše in the Lake Sevan basin. His father Argišti I had annexed the plain

<sup>1</sup> Institute of Archeology, Jagiellonian University; Kraków, Poland; krzysztofhipp@gmail.com.

<sup>2</sup> This article is based on the poster presented at the 60<sup>th</sup> Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale "Fortune and Misfortune in the Ancient Near East," held in Warsaw, Poland, on July 21<sup>st</sup> through 25<sup>th</sup>, 2014.



of Ararat to Urartu and founded two large centres to the north of the Araxes River – Arinberd (Erebuni) in the south-eastern part of Yerevan and Argištiḫinili located 15 km to the southwest of the present-day town of Armavir (Salvini 1995, 61–62; CTU A 8 16–20). These fortified cities enabled the Urartians to continue further expansion in Transcaucasia and gave easy access to the Lake Sevan basin. According to his Van annals, Sarduri subdued the land of Qulḫā – part of the historical classical Colchis (Diakonoff, Kashkai 1981, 68–69).

In the east, his armies reached the remote land of Puluade. The rock inscription discovered near Seqendel (CTU A 9-8), not far from modern Ahar, the capital of the Iranian East Azerbaijan, testifies to the earliest Urartian presence in this region. Contrary to his predecessors, who left commemorative inscriptions in situ, the reconstruction of the Sarduri's campaigns in the Lake Urmia basin and to the south thereof is based only on his annals. These brief accounts make it impossible to follow the successive stages of the given campaign.

In 751 or 750 B.C.E., the Urartians campaigned in Mannea, and then for the second time in their history they reached and laid waste to the land of Babilū, which is identified with Assyrian Namri located in the area of Ḫāniqīn, to the east of the Diyala River (Diakonoff, Kashkai 1981, 17–18; Arutyunyan 1985, 50). Sarduri advanced even further south-east towards Baruātā known from the reign of Tiglath-pileser III as Bīt-Barrūa (Diakonoff, Kashkai 1981, 18–19; Arutyunyan 1985, 54). He devastated and plundered three unnamed fortresses and twenty three settlements (CTU A 9-3, 6-8). There is no doubt that Sarduri's policy in the Zagros aimed at destabilizing the Assyrian presence along the Great Khorasan Road and was the continuation of his predecessors' efforts to block access for Assyria onto the Iranian Plateau.

### 3. The confrontation with Assyria and expansion towards the West

According to the Annals, at the beginning of his reign, Sarduri defeated the Assyrian king, Aššur-nārārī V (CTU A 9-1). As a result of this victory, the Urartians devastated the land of Arme and its royal city Niḫiria. We can also assume that the clash between both armies and the defeat of the Assyrian king took place somewhere in this area. The land of Arme is located in the upper reaches of the Tigris, to the north-west of modern Diyarbakir and to the west of Šubria (Diakonoff, Kashkai 1981, 11) while Niḫiria/Niḫira may be identified with modern Diyarbakır, the once capital of the Assyrian province Amēdi/Amidi, although there are some other proposals which suggest other sites in the generally the same area (Diakonoff, Kashkai 1981, 60–61; Arutyunyan 1985, 39; Wittke 2004, 300–301). However, J. L. Miller (2012) has recently questioned the location of Niḫiria/Niḫira in the Upper Tigris valley. After analysing the relevant older sources he has come to the conclusion that the city should have lain in the upper Balih. In the light of what we know about the range of the Urartian expansion towards the west, it is difficult to imagine that the Urartians controlled the area so far to the south-west. Therefore, it seems possible that there were two toponyms bearing the same name. In any case, the victory of Sarduri and internal strife in Assyria itself gave him a free hand to pursue military operations further to the west of the Euphrates. Sarduri attacked Melid, whose ruler was still Ḫilaruada, son of Šaḫu, known as the opponent of Sarduri's father – Argišti I during his fourth campaign (CTU A 8-3 II; Bryce 2012, 107–108). The annals (CTU A 9-1 Vo) and the rock inscription from Habibušaḡi (CTU A 9-4) on the left bank of the Euphrates, not

**Table 1.** The military campaigns of Sarduri II till 743 B.C.E. \* – Possible absolute dates according to M. Salvini 1995 and 2008, A. Fuchs 2012

YEAR*	NORTHERN FRONT	SOUTH-EASTERN FRONT	WESTERN FRONT	EASTERN FRONT	SOURCE
753	- <b>Tuliḫu</b> - “royal city” of king Lueḫu; - <b>Welikuḫe</b>	-----	- <b>Arme</b> - <b>Niḫiria</b> – “royal city”	-----	CTU A 9-1 l.d.; CTU A 9-6; CTU A 9-18
752	-----	-----	- <b>Meliṭea</b>	-----	CTU A 9-1 V <sub>0</sub> ; CTU A 9-4; CTU A 9-18
751					<b>Riḫišā</b> (case uncertain ?) – CTU A 9-11.s.
750	- <b>Etiune</b>	- <b>Mannea</b> - <b>Babilū</b> - <b>Baruātā</b>	- <b>Urme</b>	-----	CTU A 9-3 I
749	- <b>Qulḫā</b>	-----	-----	-----	CTU A 9-3 II
748	- <b>Eriāḫe</b>	-----	-----	-----	CTU A 9-3 II
747	- <b>Etiune</b>	-----	-----	-----	CTU A 9-3 II
746	- <b>Qulḫā</b> - <b>Wiṭeruḫe</b>	-----	-----	-----	CTU A 9-3 III
745	- <b>Wedure Etiune</b>	-----	-----	-----	CTU A 9-3 III
744	- <b>Eriāḫe</b>	-----	-----	- <b>Puluade</b>	CTU A 9-3 IV; CTU A 9-8
743	-----	-----	- <b>Qumaḫā</b>	-----	CTU A 9-3 IV

far from Kōmūrhan describe the Sarduri’s campaign. The Urartians were successful in vassalising the country. They devastated the country and imposed a tribute. Additionally, Sarduri annexed ten Melidean fortresses along the frontier, including the fortress of Ṭumiški, which is identified with classical Tomisa, today’s citadel of Yazilikaya Tepesi (Salvini 1995, 68–69; Dan 2012, 68). Ṭumiški/Tomisa was a strategically important stronghold lying along the Old Persian Royal Road on the Euphrates, between Malatya and Elaziğ. The fortress was to become a base for further expansion to the west.

The next success of Sarduri was the final conquest of the land of Urme (CTU A 9-3 I), which occupied the plain of Muş (Dan, Neri 2014). As a result, the Urartians got access to the route leading across the Armenian Taurus to the land of Šubria, in particular, to the royal city of Qulmeri

(Assyrian Kulimмери), which is generally identified with the archaeological site Gre Migro (Kessler 1995, 57-58; Parker 2001, 231–232).

The main goal of Sarduri’s policy in the west was to make use of Assyria’s temporary weakness and block her access to the Levant and Central Anatolia. He succeeded in forming an anti-Assyrian coalition of the already mentioned Melid and, as we know only from the later Assyrian sources, of the Anatolian land of Gurgum (e.g. RINAP 1, 35 i 21’-27’a). He also won former Assyrian allies – Kummuḫu (Urartian Qumaḫā, classical Commagene) (CTU A 9-3 IV) and Arpad over to his side. The former was a trusted ally of Assyria, whose rulers had been paying a tribute regularly since the middle of the 9th century (RIMA 2, A.0.101.1, 94’-95’; RIMA 3, A.0.102.2, 36b’-37’; RIMA 3, A.0.102.2, 82’-83). It seems that its king Kuštašpi was forced to join the anti-Assyrian

coalition against his will, when he became a vassal of Urartu (Na'aman 1991, 90-91; Tadmor 1994, 262). Because Arpad played a key role in the alliance, it will be dealt separately in the next paragraph.

The conquest in the west resulted in the reorganization of the newly subdued territories. According to the inscription from Elaziğ/Bahçeçik, Sarduri appointed a certain Zaiani as a new governor (CTU A 9–18). This high-ranking official was to administer the vast areas which included the lands of Melid and Qu[maha] (interestingly, in the inscription it is mentioned as a city), the city of Niḥria, the lands of Ar[me?] and Ḥašime. This appointment demonstrates that Sarduri intended to secure the interests of his kingdom in this region for a longer period of time. An interesting fact is that the Urartian king entrusted one of his officials with authority over such large areas. But the case of Zaiani is exceptional. His privileged position may have resulted from him being a member of the royal family (Sevin 2005, 382–384). Zaiani's administration must have been short-lived. The Elaziğ/Bahçeçik inscription is dated after the Sarduri's campaign against Qumahā in 743 B.C.E. In the very same year, the situation changed dramatically. The confrontation with Tiglathpileser III, which led to the defeat of Sarduri at the battle of Kištan, deprived the Urartians of the acquisitions in the west and the newly established territorial administration, as known from the inscription, collapsed.

#### **4. The strategic importance of Arpad/Bīt-Agūsi**

Bīt-Agūsi was sandwiched between the kingdom of Carchemish on the Euphrates to the east and Patina/Unqi on the Syrian coast to the west. To the north, Arpad bordered on the land of Kittik, whereas the kingdom of Hamath lay to the south (on the detailed

location of Bīt-Agūsi see Lipiński 2000, 199–211). Such a location made Arpad a gateway to the Levant. By controlling this land, the Assyrians could get the easiest access to the Mediterranean coast, reaching as far as Egypt to the south. They could participate in the Phoenician trade and collect the large amounts of highly valued tribute and booty from the subjugated Levantine countries.

If we have a closer look at the Assyrian campaigns in the Levant from the 9<sup>th</sup> century B.C.E. onwards (see the maps of the campaigns in Bagg 2011, Karte 4.1-4.35), we can see that the army most frequently took the routes through the land of Arpad / Bīt-Agūsi. It seems logical and highly possible that while building up an anti-Assyrian coalition with Arpad, Sarduri II possessed the knowledge, based on a deeper historical perspective, of how important the location of Arpad was for the Assyrians.

A possible alliance between Matī-ilu, an ambitious ruler of Arpad, and Sarduri could have been a real threat for Assyria. Despite an internal crisis within the empire, weak rulers such as Aššur-dan III and later Aššur-nārārī V tried to keep Arpad under control and in that way to stop the rapid Urartian expansion. According to the Eponym Chronicle (Glassner 2004, 172–173), at the end of his reign, in 754 B.C.E., Aššur-dan III set off on a campaign against Arpad in order to demonstrate Assyria's power in this key region. Undoubtedly, this move was intended to warn Matī-ilu that any attempt to break off ties with Assyria by entering into an alliance with Urartu would lead to a direct Assyrian intervention. It seems reasonable that the growing pressure from Assyria contributed to Matī-ilu entering into a vassal treaty with the next Assyrian ruler Aššur-nārārī V (SAA 2, 2; Parpola, Watanabe 1988, XXVII–XXVIII). The treaty imposed numerous curses on Arpad, in which

case Matī<sup>1</sup>-ilu did not comply therewith and he was obliged to be loyal to his suzerain, which meant providing military assistance to Aššur-nārārī (iv 1); deporting any fugitives who escaped to Arpad from Assyria and not dispatching them to any other countries (iii 19). The badly preserved fragment (o iii 5' - o iii 8') mentions Ḫatti (KUR.ḫat-ti) and Urartu (in the gentilicium form - 'KUR<sup>1</sup>.ú-ra-ar-ṭa-a-a). In the next two lines (o iii 9' - o iii 10') there are references to “catching” (*la <ta>-šab-ba-tú-ni*) and “dispatching” (*'tu<sup>1</sup>-še-bal-an-'ni-ni<sup>1</sup>*). We can assume that this part of the treaty dealt with the treatment of envoys (or informers) from Urartu and other countries by Arpad's authorities. They were to be arrested and sent to Assyria. In this way, the Assyrian empire tried to control Arpad's foreign policy as well as to secure its interests against any interference of the enemy countries. As we know from the previous paragraph, somewhere around 753 B.C.E., Sarduri II defeated Aššur-nārārī V, and probably as a consequence Matī<sup>1</sup>-ilu broke up the treaty and entered into an alliance with Urartu, which was one of the *casus belli* of the Assyrian military operations in 743 B.C.E. (RINAP 1, 35 i 21').

### 5. The Defeat at Kištan (743 B.C.E.)

The ambitious plan of Sarduri to block access to the Mediterranean could not be tolerated by the Assyrian rulers. After Tiglath-pileser III took power in Assyria in 745 B.C.E., a confrontation on a full scale was inevitable. The coalition was defeated between Ḫalpi and Kištan, two districts of Kummuḫu (see Fig. 2). We can learn about the decisive battle only from the Assyrian sources (Glassner 2004, 172–173; RINAP 1: 9, 35, 39, 41, 47, 49). M. Astour (1979, 13–17) has carried out a thorough analysis of the sources in regard to the location of the battle and his proposal has been

generally accepted by other scholars. He has noticed that Ḫalpi can be identified with the Urartian toponym Ḫalpa mentioned by Sarduri II during his campaign against Kummuḫ. Ḫalpa was located near a large body of water. There is an ancient tell on the eastern bank of the Gölbaşı Lake, which may hide the ruins of Ḫalpa/Ḫalpi. The location of Kištan poses a greater problem. It has been suggested that the site of Keysun to the south of the modern town of Besni/Adiyaman is the place of the battle. From the stele from Iran (RINAP 1, 35) we learn that Tiglath-pileser III advanced quickly to the battlefield- “i 27'b-31') *I marched for [a distance of] seven leag[ues], day and night, and I did not allow the troops of Assyria rest, did not give (them) water to drink, (and) did not pitch camp nor bivouac (i 30') my soldiers (allowing them to recover from) their weariness.*” (*iš-kunu si-dir-tú 7 KASKAL.[GID qa-q-ru] GE<sub>6</sub> u ur-'ru<sup>1</sup> al-li-ka-am-ma ERIM.ḪI.A-at KUR aš-šur.KI 'ul ú<sup>1</sup>-šap-ši-'iḫ<sup>1</sup>-ma 'A.MEŠ<sup>1</sup> ul áš-qí uš-ma-ni ul GAR-'un<sup>1</sup>-ma 'ul<sup>1</sup> ak-šura KARAŠ-ši ERIM.ḪI.A-ia 'an<sup>1</sup>-ḫu-su-'nu<sup>1</sup> [TA-šú]-'nu am<sup>1</sup>-da-ḫi-iš BAD<sub>5</sub> BAD<sub>5</sub> - šú-nu GAR-un uš-ma-ni 'KARAŠ<sup>1</sup>-su 'nu e<sup>1</sup>-kim-šú-nu-ti*). The attack of the Assyrians may have come as a surprise for the coalition forces. On the other hand, the location of the battlefield suggests that the Urartians and their allies were combat-ready. As a result of the defeat, Sarduri was forced to retreat beyond the Euphrates, losing his position in Syria. The account about Sarduri's cowardly escape from the battlefield on a mare during the night is part of the typical Assyrian propaganda (RINAP 1, 41 19'b-21'a). The Assyrian victory resulted in the punishment of the allies of the defeated Urartians. The manner in which the Assyrians treated them depended on the degree of engagement in the anti-Assyrian coalition and their importance in future Assyrian

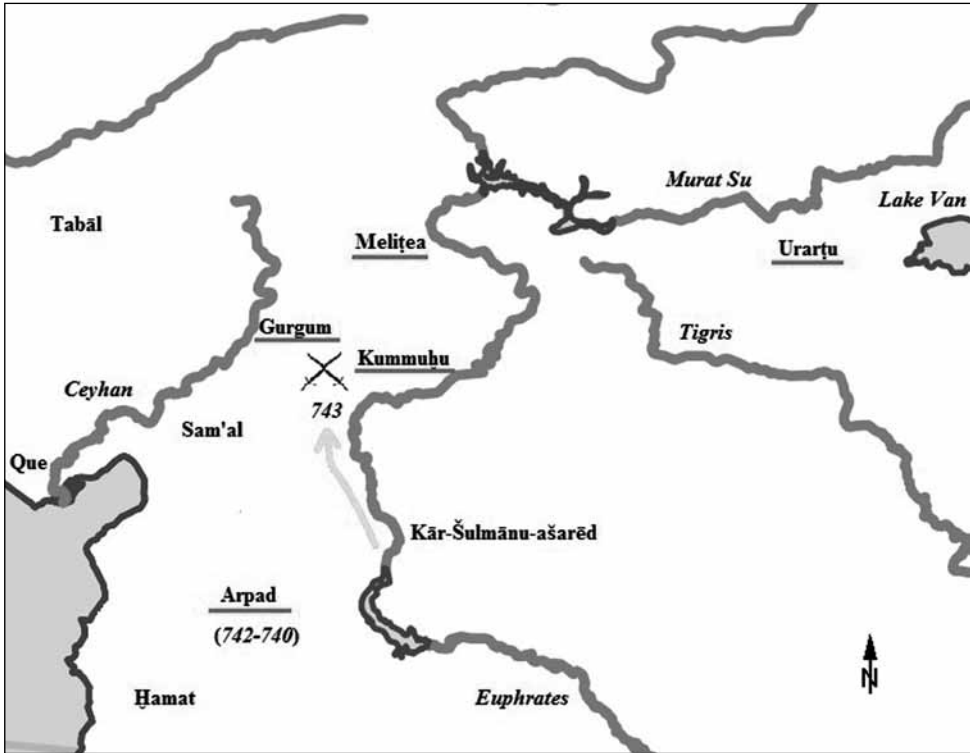


Fig. 2. A schematic map presenting the anti-Assyrian coalition (underlined) and the Assyrian counteraction in 743 B.C.E.

policy. After a three-year siege (742–740 B.C.E.), the city of Arpad, the main Syrian opponent, was conquered, and as a result, Tiglath-pileser created a new Assyrian province (Glassner 2004, 172–173; RINAP 1, 35 ii 4'). Gurgum lost part of its territory to Assyria and the king, Sam'al Panamuwa II (Younger Jr. 1986, 95; RINAP 1, 35 i 37'b-43 and ii 14'-15'; Bryce 2012, 174). Melid and Kummuhu were treated in a very lenient way. Their rulers maintained power, but had to pay a high tribute (Garelli 1991, 48-49; RINAP 1, 14 10b-12). To sum up, the Urartian policy failed, but we must emphasize that never before and after did the Urartians penetrate so deeply into Northern Syria and never were they so close to threaten the political presence of

the Assyrians in that region with all its far reaching consequences.

Following the defeat at Kištan, there is not much evidence concerning the fate of the Urartian king. According to the annals from Van Kalesi (CTU A 9-3 V-VI) Sarduri conducted a few more campaigns in Transcaucasia (among others, against the lands of Etiuni and the tribe Eriaḫi) and one to Mannea to the south of the Urmia Lake. However, it seems that after 743 B.C.E. the initiative was now on the Assyrian side, which is shown in Tiglath-pileser III's activity. Between the year 742 and 735 B.C.E. the Assyrian king campaigned twice along the border with Urartu. In 739 B.C.E. Tiglath-pileser conquered and annexed the land of Ulluba (Postgate 1973, 47–59; Tadmor

1994, 111–116; RINAP 1, 37), which lay on the plain of Cizre, and in 736 B.C.E., the Assyrian king operated behind Mount Nal (RINAP 1, 49 11'–23'). During that campaign he managed to subdue a number of Urartian fortresses and expand the territory of the Assyrian northern province of Na'iri and those of the rab šāqê and turtānu. We do not know what the reaction of Sarduri to the Assyrian expansion was. In the east, on the Zagros front, during his second campaign against the Medes (737 B.C.E.), Tiglath-pileser received a tribute from Iranzu, ruler of Mannea as well as from the lands located along the Great Khorasan Road – Namri, Ellipi, Sangibutu (Radner 2003, 44–50; RINAP 1, 15–17). In that way, he secured, at least temporarily, access onto the Iranian Plateau. These activities can be considered as preparatory steps for the forthcoming campaign into the heartland of Urartu in the following year. It was then in 735 B.C.E., when Sarduri reappears in the Assyrian sources.

### 6. “Confined in the City Țurušpâ”

The Assyrian royal annals report that in his 10th regnal year (11th palû) Tiglath-pileser III marched into the heartland of Urartu (Glassner 2004, 172–173; Kahn 2007, 84–85; RINAP 1: 18, 19, 36 11'–13', 39 23'–25', 41 21'–26'). It is the last time that Sarduri is mentioned in any sources. The relatively well preserved letter SAA 19, 76 from Nimrud concerns Assyrian preparations for this campaign. In all likelihood, the letter was written in 735 B.C.E., just before the Assyrian army started a full-scale military operation (Tadmor 2008, 272). In this document, a certain [Aššû] r-bēlu-[...] reports to the king that the forthcoming campaign against Urartu has been approved by the main gods Aššur and Šamaš. The sender, whom we are not able

to identify with any Assyrian officer, wishes Tiglath-pileser to conquer the enemy capital Țurušpâ. The rest of SAA 19, 76 is, in some ways, quite surprising. The letter testifies that even during an open conflict, when the Assyrians are about to invade the Urartian heartland within a short period of time, both countries still maintain some sort of diplomatic relations by dispatching messengers and possibly playing some kind of a political game, whose details remain unknown to us (Tadmor 2008, 273).

During the campaign of the 11th palû the Assyrian king defeated Sarduri II at the gates of the Urartian capital Țurušpâ/Tušpa, erected a royal stele in front of the enemy capital and devastated the country without encountering any resistance (RINAP 1, 39 23'–25a'). The account itself is very laconic and we are not able to reconstruct the route of the campaign. Only one inscription carved on the king's statue discovered in the temple of Ninurta in Nimrud (Fuchs 2003, 49–51; RINAP 1, 36 11'–13') reports that the Assyrian army crossed the Aršana river. Unfortunately, the remaining part of the inscription is missing, so we can only speculate with some degree of certainty which route Tiglath-pileser may have taken to reach the Lake Van basin. The Aršana River is commonly identified with the Murad Su (Russell 1984, 183; Kessler 1995, 57). The Assyrian army may have set out on the campaign from the northernmost Assyrian province of Na'iri/Āmidu, located along the Upper Tigris, which corresponds to the area around the modern city of Diyarbakır (Parpola, Porter 2001, 3). The campaign was partially successful. Although the Assyrians reached the Lake Van basin and besieged the capital, they did not conquer it, and as a result, Sarduri was not captured. The siege of Țurušpa recalls the later confinement of Hezekiah like “a bird in a cage” (GIM MUŠEN *qu-up-pi*)

in Jerusalem in 701 B.C.E. (RINAP 3/1, 4). The conquest of the Urartian capital, which was quite a sizeable and well fortified city, required siege machines, primarily, and plenty of time. Logistically this task seems to have been unfeasible, if one considers the difficult, mountainous terrain and harsh weather conditions which reduced the time of campaigning to a few summer and early autumn months. As a result, the Urartian capital is one of the very few which successfully withstood the Assyrian siege (Eph'al 2009, 110). However, the war with Assyria seems to have weakened Urartu and resulted in a deepening internal crisis. We can only speculate what happened in Urartu after that the campaign. The defeat may have stimulated the opposition into action against Sarduri, an ineffective ruler, who was responsible for not preventing the Assyrians devastating the countryside. A group of disappointed officials, some of them undoubtedly landowners whose estates suffered most, instigated a coup d'état and brought one of them to the throne.

### 7. After 735 B.C.E.

The fate of Sarduri after the siege of the capital is unknown. From the Assyrian intelligence reports, SAA 19, 71 and SAA 19, 72 dated to the later years of Tiglath-pileser's reign, we learn that Rusa/Ursa replaced Sarduri on the Urartian throne. The reports were prepared by a certain Aššūr-lē'i (PNA 1/I, 193 s.v. Aššūr-lē'i[3]; Luukko 2012, XLI-XLII). We do not know the name of the office he held, but he was responsible for maintaining and supervising a spy ring operating among the Urartian royal entourage, which made it possible for him to send detailed reports about the political situation and military moves of the enemy. He himself was active in the Urartian territory. In SAA 19, 71 Aššūr-lē'i reports on an unsuccessful

campaign of an Assyrian rab šāqê against Urartu. Rusa – the new Urartian king managed to inflict a heavy defeat on him in an unspecified area. According to the letter, the Assyrian army was totally annihilated; no one returned alive to Assyria. The defeat of the army and the death of the rab šāqê enabled Rusa to launch an attack on the forts located in the chief cupbearer's province. The letter ends with an appeal to the king – “*May the king do as he deems best*” (r 2 – r 3: LUGAL <sup>r</sup>ki ša i<sup>2</sup>-la<sup>2</sup>-u<sup>2</sup>-ni<sup>2</sup> le<sup>r</sup>pu<sup>1</sup>-uš) which emphasizes the gravity of the threat and Assyria's impotence in its wake. We do not know anything about the further course of events. The battle must have taken place between 734 and 727 B.C.E. The fallen rab šāqê may have been Nabû-ēṭiranni - eponym of 740 B.C.E. (Glassner 2004, 172-173) or his successor, whose name is not known (Luukko 2012, XLI).

The second letter, SAA 19, 72, contains some information about Rusa's military activities. Aššūr-lē'i writes about a war between the Urartian king and the ruler of Etini. The latter is the attacker and from the report we learn that he has already won two victories over the Urartians. Rusa sets out from Țurušpâ to face the Etinean threat for the third time, but on the way to the battlefield he decides to return on hearing about the Assyrian king's invasion. In the meantime, Aššūr-lē'i launches assaults on the king's forts on the opposite side of the Zab from the previously conquered Urartian city of Sarduriāni, which the Assyrians apparently turned into a military base.

We can ask ourselves a question – was the Urartian king named Rusa mentioned in the above letters Sarduri's son? We cannot rule it out. The traditional theory assumes that after 735 B.C.E. Sarduri's son, Rusa, peacefully took power in Urartu from his father (eg. Salvini 2012, 133). However, there are two other possible scenarios:

1. After the reign of Sarduri II his son and namesake, Sarduri III, was in power for a short period of time (Roaf 2012b, 187-footnote 4 and 213). He is known from only one inscription on a fragmentarily preserved, undecorated, bronze votive shield discovered in Room 53 in Karmir Blur (Seidl 2004, 43 – L.1). The inscription bears the name of the ruler and his titlature. Later, Sarduri III was to be replaced by Rusa I who might have been his son. This hypothesis is supported by A. Fuchs (2012, 146), who additionally puts forward an argument that in Karmir Blur itself the lion's share of the bronzes discovered there belonged to the Urartian rulers from the 8<sup>th</sup> century B.C.E. Therefore, he thinks that Sarduri III may have reigned directly before Rusa I, between the established fifth and sixth generations of the Urartian kings.
2. The defeat in 735 B.C.E. was so disastrous that it resulted in a coup d'état. Sarduri II was overthrown by a usurper. Rusa, son of a certain Erimena, seized power. Such a reconstruction proposed by M. Roaf (2012b) results from a thorough analysis of the Assyrian sources, mainly from the reign of Sargon II and may be quite acceptable. There are a few premises suggesting Rusa seized power illegally. After over 20 years, Rusa was defeated by Sargon II in 714 B.C.E., which may have been the reason that he committed suicide (Fuchs 1994, Ann. 164; Roaf 2012a; 2012b, 201 and 206–207). The throne of Urartu returned to the heir apparent – Rusa, son of Sarduri.

The above two reconstructions are hypothetical due to the paucity of the source material and should be treated with caution.

### Sarduri II – jeden z najniezszczęśliwszych władców VIII wieku p.n.e.

W przeciwieństwie do swojego następcy – Rusy, z którego okresu panowania posiadamy stosunkowo liczne, głównie asyryjskie źródła pisane, w szczególności List do boga Aszura oraz korpus listów, postać Sarduri II, jego działania oraz ostatnie lata panowania są trudne do zrekonstruowania. Jest to w pewnym sensie frustrujące, ponieważ opierając się na nielicznych, słabo zachowanych źródłach możemy stwierdzić, iż właśnie w okresie jego panowania Urartu było o krok od odepchnięcia Asyrii od Morza Śródziemnego i Centralnej Anatolii oraz kontroli głównego szlaku biegnącego z Mezopotamii na Wyżynę Irańską – Wielkiej Drogi Chorasńskiej. Wprawdzie zachowały się roczniki tego władcy z Van Kalesi, obejmujące kilkanaście lat jego panowania, oraz inskrypcje znalezione *in situ* wyznaczające kierunki jego ekspansji. Jednak źródła asyryjskie, w tym głównie roczniki Tiglat-pilesara III opisujące kampanie przeciwko Urartu, są fragmentaryczne, zaś wyprawa roku 735 p.n.e., której kulminacją było oblężenie Tuszpy, znana jest przede wszystkim z krótkiego wpisu w Kronice Eponimów oraz tak zwanych Display Inscriptions/Prunkinschriften. Grupują one wydarzenia pod względem położenia geograficznego, a nie chronologii.

Celem tego artykułu jest przedstawienie poszczególnych etapów ekspansji urartyjskiej w kierunku zachodnim – północnej Syrii oraz Centralnej Anatolii oraz trwający na tym obszarze konflikt urartyjsko-asyryjski.



Okres panowania Sarduri II można podzielić na dwa etapy. Pierwszy obejmuje lata od wstąpienia Sarduri II na tron (ok. 753 p.n.e.) do roku 743 p.n.e.. W tym czasie władca Urartu kontynuował politykę swojego ojca Argišti I i z sukcesem poszerzał wpływy swojego państwa przeprowadzając liczne kampanie militarne głównie na trzech frontach: 1) północnym w basenie jeziora Sewan; 2) na południe i wschód od jeziora Urmia; 3) na zachód w głąb wyżyny anatolijskiej, aż do granic północnej Syrii. Utworzenie na tym trzecim obszarze anty-asyryjskiego sojuszu z lokalnymi państewkami oraz włączenie do koalicji strategicznie ważnego królestwa Arpad – jego znaczenie zostało w artykule przedstawione w oddzielnym paragrafie - były zagrożeniem dla żywotnych interesów Asyrii. Ekspansja urartyjska doprowadziła do zbrojnej interwencji Tiglat-pilesara III oraz decydującej o obecności Asyryjczyków na wybrzeżu śródziemnomorskim bitwy pod Kištan (743 p.n.e.). Zakończyła się zwycięstwem Asyrii.

Od tego przełomowego momentu możemy mówić o drugiej fazie panowania Sarduri II. Jest to okres charakteryzujący się powolnym upadkiem tego ambitnego władcy Urartu. Naszą wiedzę musimy opierać głównie na źródłach asyryjskich. W tym czasie Asyryjczycy aktywni byli na obszarze przygranicznym (lata 739 i 736 p.n.e.), zaś w 735 roku p.n.e. Tiglat-pilesar III pokonał Sarduri II przed bramami jego stolicy w Tuszpie. Wprawdzie stolica urartyjska nie została zdobyta, zaś król nie został pochwycony, to jednak jego dalsze losy są nam nieznane. Z listów wywiadu asyryjskiego z Nimrud z końca panowania Tiglat-pilesar III dowiadujemy się, iż nowym władcą Urartu był Rusa. Czy był on synem Sarduri II jak chce tego klasyczna teoria? A może był on uzurpatorem, który przejął władzę w wyniku przewrotu pałacowego? Niestety w świetle dostępnego materiału nie jesteśmy w stanie jednoznacznie odpowiedzieć na postawione pytania.

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