

THE URARTIAN ROCK INSCRIPTIONS OF RAZLIQ AND NAŠTEBAN (EAST AZERBAIJAN, IRAN)

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On the 2nd of June 1997, during a brief stay in Tabriz, we had the opportunity to visit on a one day excursion¹ the easternmost cuneiform documents of the Urartian Kingdom. The rock inscriptions of Razliq and Našteban were published in 1965 by Warren C. Benedict, on the basis of latex rubber squeezes² (fig. 4 and 9). See the sketch map published on the first page of his article and here fig. 1. The reference point is the city of Sarāb, 120 km east of Tabriz on the road to Ardabil and the Caspian Sea. The inscriptions lie on the southern slope of the Sabalān Mountains, 4810 m, three meters higher than our Mont Blanc. From Sarāb we took a track going uphill³ in a northern direction; we passed through Tappeh Qal'a Zuk and the village of Razliq (13 km from Sarāb). Five km further uphill, we reached with some difficulty a small hamlet called Dizadz Sefid. From there we were obliged to continue on foot and after a march of half an hour on a downhill path we reached the rock with the inscription of Argišti II (fig. 2-3). It commands a small valley that, in Urartian period, was the easiest and most direct link with the great communication axes of Aji čay valley, i.e. the plain of Sarāb. From the inscription the plain is clearly visible (fig. 5) and this shows how much modern paths (especially those for cars) differ from the ancient ones. Despite the statement of the inscription, the existence of an

¹ The expedition was organized by the Director of the Azerbaijan Museum in Tabriz, Mr. Javad Ghandgar; we wish to express to him our gratitude for his extraordinary hospitality. On that expedition see also the brief report in SMEA 39, 1997, 291.

² W. C. Benedict, "Two Urartian Inscriptions from Azerbaijan", JCS 19, 1965, 35-40, with reference to the preliminary publication by M. J. Mashkur. See also the appendix of G. A. Melikišvili's *Urartskie Klinoobraznye Nadpisi*, Moscow 1960 (= UKN), p. 453 f. (No 13). The sites are registered in W. Kleiss-H. Hauptmann et alii, *Topographische Karte von Urartu*, AMI Erg. 3, Berlin 1976 (= TKU), p. 32, Nos 57 (Razliq) and 56 (Našteban). See also St. Kroll, AMI 17, 1984, 42 ff.

³ Even the off-road vehicle of Mr. Ghandgar had some difficulty.

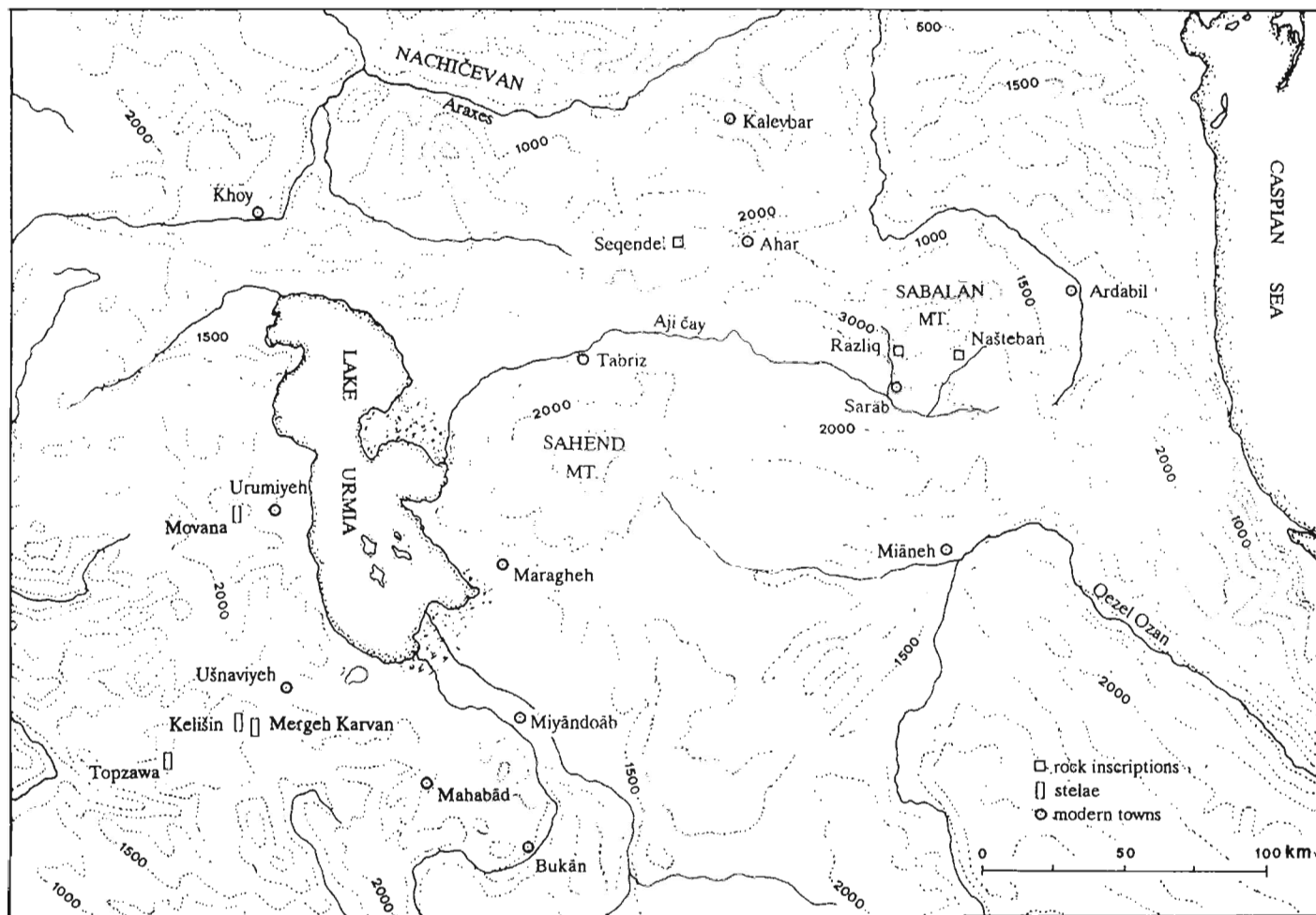


Fig. 1 – Map of Iranian Azerbaijan (drawing A. Mancini).

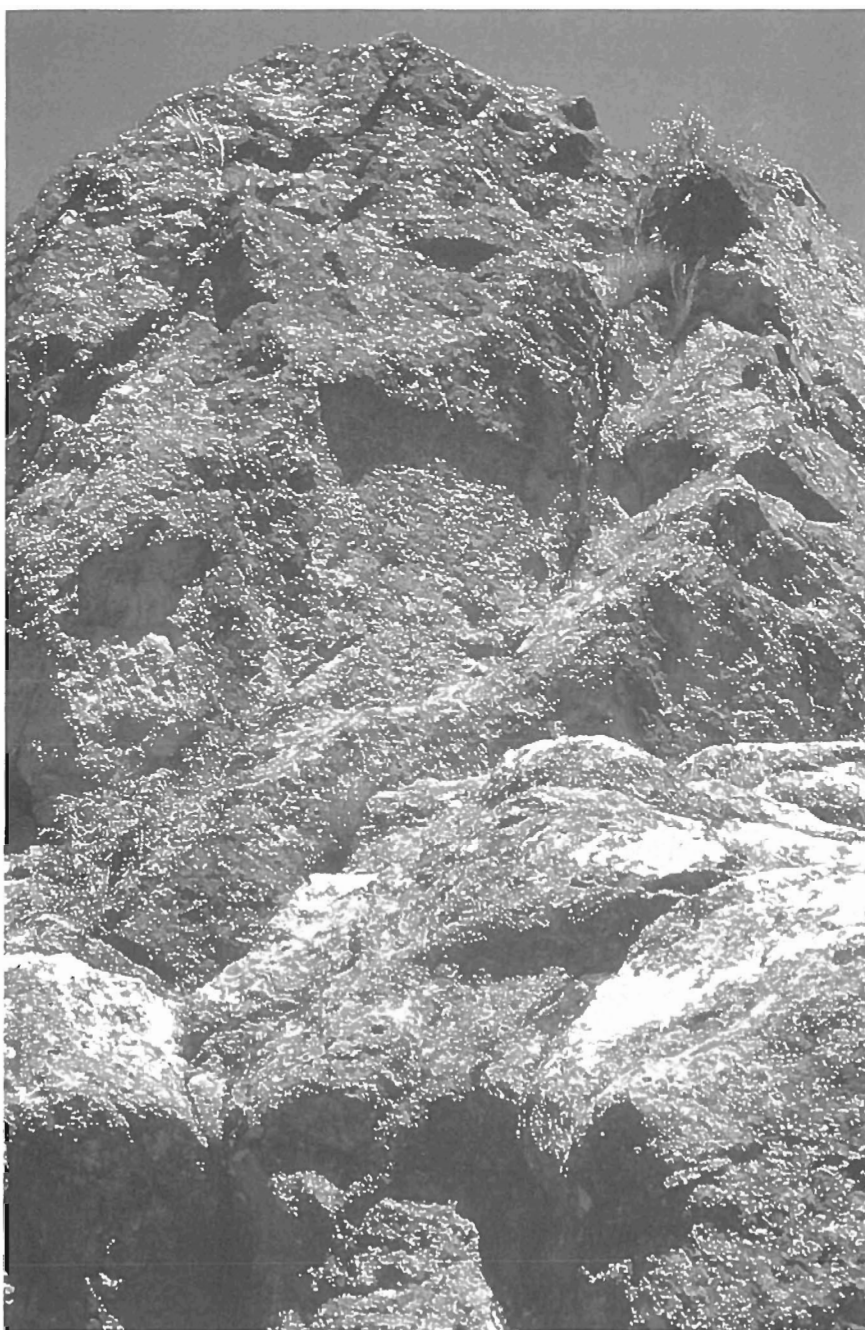


Fig. 2 – The rock with the inscription of Argišti II near Razliq.

Urtian fortress has not yet been established by archaeological survey. W. Kleiss relates that he noted traces of a pre-Urtian fortress, but no Urtian remains⁴. A new careful survey around the rock inscription of Razliq is necessary. The inscription looks south and is completely sunlit around 11 a.m.

UCT⁵ A 11-4 = *UKN II 445: Razliq, collated 2.6.97.

Dimensions: width ca 110 cm, height ca 85 cm. Height of each line ca. 4,5 cm.

A 11-4

- 1 ^hal-di-ni-ni al-su-i-ši-ni mar-ti-giš-še
- 2 mar-sa-ḫi-ni-še a-li a-šá-di KURar-ḫu¹-ú-e
- 3 iš-ti-ni¹-a-ši ka-r[u]-ḫi¹ KÚR KURú-šú-lu-ni-i KUR-ni
- 4 KURbu-ḫu-ú-e¹ KUR-ni [ku-ú]-ḫe¹-a-di¹ pa-ri
- 5 ^hmu-na¹-i-di i-šá-ni bi-ḫi-a-di¹ ka-ru-bi KURgír-du-ni¹
- 6 KURgi-tú-ḫa-ni-ni KURḫu¹-iš-du-ni¹ URUru-[x-]ni-tar-ni URU
- 7 ḫa-ú-bi KUR^{MEŠ} ḫa-ú-ú-li me-ši-ni pi-i¹ a-al¹-du-bi
- 8 e-a¹ i¹-ni É.GAL¹ gu-nu-šá-a¹ ḫa-ú-bi ši-di-iš-tú-bi
- 9 te-ru-bi ti-ḫi-ni mar-giš-te-i-ir-du URU
- 10 KURbi-a-na-ú-e u[š]-ma-a-še¹ KURKÚR^{MEŠ} na-a-pa¹-ḫi-a¹-i-di
- 11 ^hal-di-ni-ni a[l-su]-ši-ni mar-giš-ti-ni LUGÁL¹ DAN-NU¹
- 12 LUGÁL KUR šú-ra-ú-e LUGÁL KUR¹bi-a-i-na-ú-e
- 13 [LU]GÁL.LUGÁL^{MEŠ}-ú-e¹
- 14 a¹-lu-si URUtu-uš-pa URU mar-giš-ti-še a-l[i]
- 14 a¹-lu-še ti-ni-n[i] tú-li e-a-i¹ i-ni DUB-t[e]
- 15 p[i]-tú-[i]i-e t[ú-r]i-ni-ni ^hal-[di]-še ^DIM-še¹
- 16 ^D[UTU-še] DINGIR^{MEŠ}-še ma-a-ni ^DUTU-ni pi]-i-n[i]

Translation:

(1) Through the greatness of Ḫaldi, Argišti, (2) the son of Rusa says: I set up (I settled)⁶ in the country of Arḫu, (3) from this place. I subdued the enemy country of Ušulu (and) (4) the country of Buque. I reached (5) the River; from there I turned (and) I conquered the countries of Girdu (6),

⁴ TKU, p. 32, and W. Kleiss, *IstMitt* 18, 1968, 39 Abb. 33, 43. See also St. Kroll, *AMI* 17, 1984, 41-42.

⁵ *Urtian Cuneiform Texts* is the title of the corpus prepared by M. Salvini. We quote the texts adding this abbreviation to those of the corpora UKN and HchI.

⁶ The translation of Benedict, "I campaigned" is acceptable, although it refers to the wrong reading of šá¹-šá-di.

Gituḥani and Tuišdu. I stormed in battle⁷ the city of Ru[x]nitar(ni). (7) I conquered the territories (and) I placed them under tribute, (8) and I built this fortress. (9) I gave the name of “Argišteirdu City”, (10) as strength of Biainili and for the mortification of the enemy countries. (11) Through the greatness of Ḫaldi (I am) Argišti, mighty king, (12) king of the armed(?) lands, king of Biainili, king of kings, (13) lord of the city of Tušpa. Argišti says: (14) Whoever effaces my name or damages this inscription, may Ḫaldi, the Storm God, (15) the [Sun God], (all) the gods erase him under [the Sun light].

Commentary

Line 1. The evident mistake of the scribe, who inverted two signs cutting the sequence ^mar-ti-giš-še instead of ^mar-giš-ti-še, provides an argument to explain the very strange construction of line 8 (see below).

Line 2. The collation of the text confirms that we clearly have a-šá-di (see fig. 6) instead of ^ršá¹-šá-di, as was read by Benedict. The same verbal form, aš=a=di, a 1st sg. intr. from a root aš-, is also attested in Argišti II's stela of Sissian⁸, and on the bilingual stela of Rusa I in Topzawa⁹. Diakonoff too, RGTC 9, 10, amends a-šá-di and translates “I left (for Arḫu from here)”; but his restitution of the allative suffix in the form ^{KUR}ar-^rḫu¹-ú-e[-di] is not possible after collation, because *e* is the last sign of the line, close to the right end of the inscription. The contexts are the following:

Topzawa (A 10-5, Obv. 14'),]x-ru-ni a-šá-di ŠUM-ši za-du-ú-bi.

This passage is not preserved on the two duplicates from Mergeh Karvan¹⁰ and Movana¹¹. The corresponding passage of the Assyrian version of Movana is the following: Ass. main side 41' [x ina] libbi(ŠÀ) DÛ-šú¹².

⁷ See the commentary.

⁸ First publication by N. V. Haroutiunian, “La nouvelle inscription ourartéenne découverte en Arménie soviétique”, in H. Klengel (Ed.), *Gesellschaft und Kultur im Alten Vorderasien*, Berlin 1982, 89-93. The stela is kept in the Erebuni Museum in Jerevan.

⁹ Cf. M. Salvini, “La bilingue urarteo-assira di Rusa I”, in: P. E. Pecorella-M. Salvini, *Tra lo Zagros e l'Urmia. Ricerche storiche ed archeologiche nell'Azerbaigian iraniano*, Roma 1984 (further quoted as “Zagros”), pp. 79-95, esp. p. 87 and 90.

¹⁰ On the circumstances of the discovery of the Mergeh Karvan stela see H. Khatib-Shahidi, SMEA 40, 1998, 131-141.

¹¹ This important text was first published by R. B. Kanzaq in the Iranian Cultural Heritage Organization Periodical “Mirathe-e Farhangi”, 15, 1996, p. 102-109. We are preparing a new edition for the next issue of SMEA.

¹² Consequently, we have to correct the restitution made in the Assyrian versions of both Topzawa and Mergeh Karvan, see “Zagros”, p. 84, line 13'/16', translation p. 85. No more *[ērub] ina lib-^rbi¹-šú “[I went down] therein”. On the other hand it is now clear that Urartian za-du-ú-bi is translated by Assyrian DÛ-šú, i.e. by a form of epēšu; it must be a 1st Person Sing.

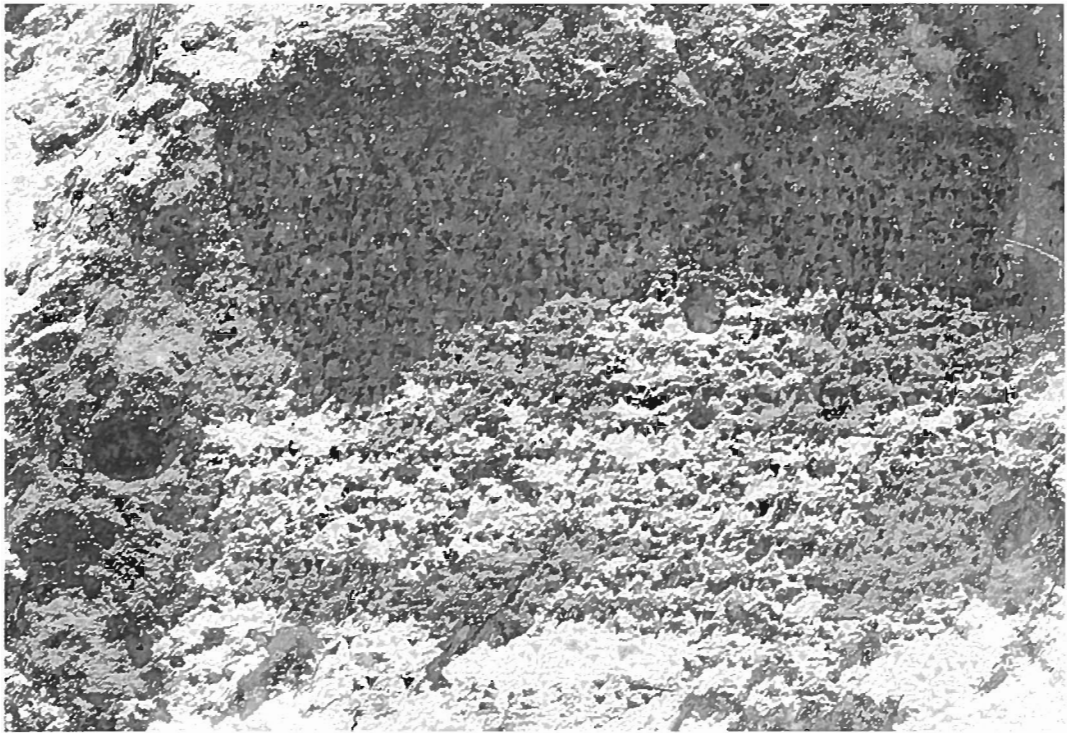


Fig. 3 Rock Inscription of Razliq (2.6.1997).

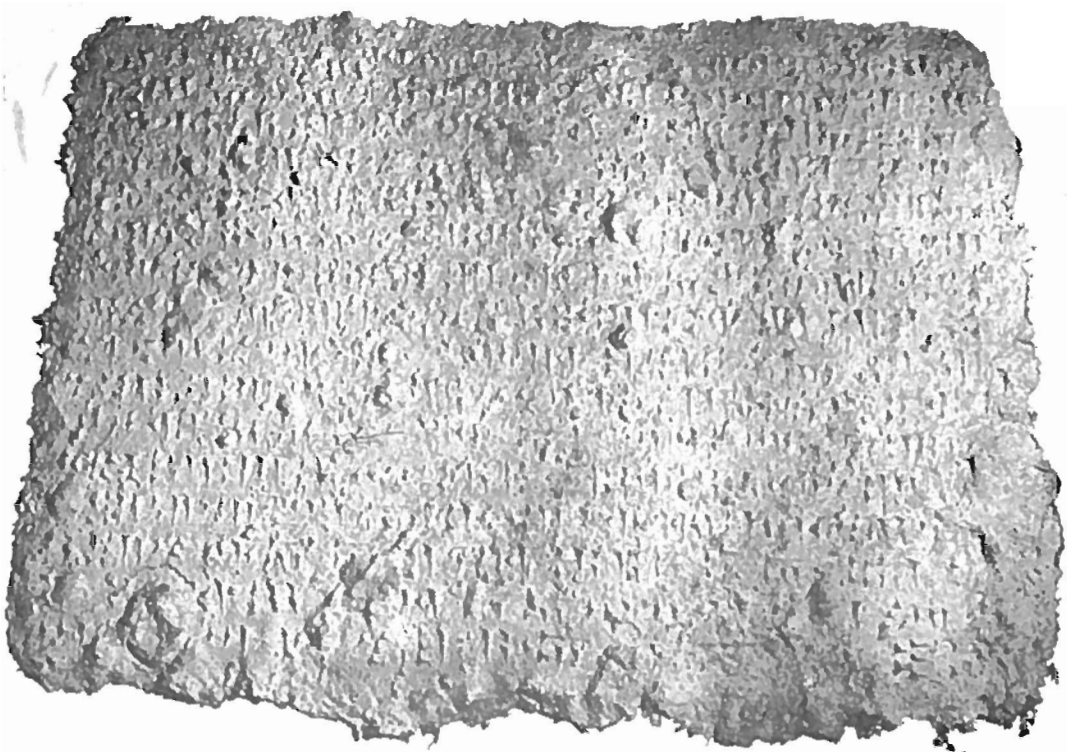


Fig. 4 – Latex rubber squeeze of the Razliq text; from W.C. Benedict, JCS 19, 1965, 36.



Fig. 5 – The valley seen from the inscription of Razliq.

Unfortunately the Assyrian translation of *ašadi* is covered by lacuna in all of the three duplicates.

Sissian¹³:

A 11-3, Rev. (21) ...] (22) *a-šá-di i-ni ḥa-a-ri[-x]* (23) ^{URU}*a-mu-šá-di 'a-ŠI*¹⁴ [*pa-ru-bi?*]

From these three contexts it is clear that *aša=di* is an intransitive form, but we do not have the directive of the place name as in Sissian *Amuša=di* “to the city of *Amuša*”. This could be a rare example of use of the dative case (–*e*) instead of the allative (–*di*); cf. *ušt=a=di Qumaḥa=ḥali=ni=e ebani=edi* “I marched towards the country of *Qumaḥa*”, where a suffix –*e* of the adjective agrees with allative –*edi* of the substantive. One could assume with some reservation that the rare verb *aš-* is more or less synonymous with *ušta-*.

Line 3. The translation of Diakonoff “I left (for *Arḫu* from here)” is not exact, because it implies that the suffix –*aši* means provenance “from”. This function is probably expressed by the suffix –*ani*; see M. Salvini, *SMEA* 22, 1980, 160: ^{URU}*Luḫiuni=ani* [*edini...*, “[from] the city of *Luḫiuni*...”. The suffix

¹³ See above note 8.

¹⁴ Harutjunjan reads *še₂₀* and recognizes the substantive ‘*aše* “man”.

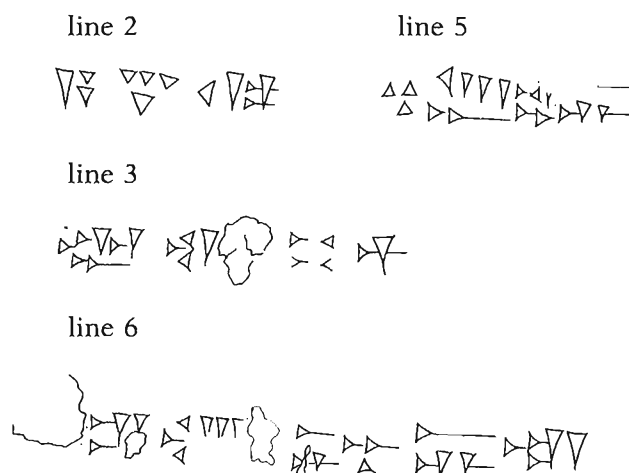


Fig. 6 – Collation of the Razliq text.

–aši or –aše has been interpreted as a postposition, meaning “in”¹⁵. Since ištini is an adverb meaning “here”, we suggest a translation with the adverb “herein”.

A collation allows us to rectify Benedict’s ka-r[u]–¹⁶bi–e? into ka-r[u]–¹⁷bi KÚR (see fig. 6); the Urmartian word hidden under this logogram should be an adjective meaning “foreign, hostile”; we propose šuiaše: cf. the Stela of Movana, Ur. 58 šú–ia–še LUGÁL¹⁸–[še?] “the hostile kings”. Normally KUR.KUR^{MES} šuia– alternates with KURLuluinili, cf. UKN 155 E 7, 47 vs F 4. We know from other texts that KURLuluinili is substituted by KURKÚR or KUR KÚR; cf. UKN 265, line 7, UKN 266 line 18, UKN 268 line 8 ([KUR]KÚR^{MES}–še). See also KURKUR^{MES}–di šú–ia–i–di “towards the foreign lands” (UKN 171, 10).

Line 4/5. [ku]tea=di pari ¹⁹muna=idi “I went to the river”. The word muna occurs with or without the determinative ÍD, river Benedict interpreted it as a proper noun, but since it refers to different places very far from each other it must be a common noun¹⁷. The two quotations of muna in Argišti I’s inscriptions refer clearly to the Araxes (UKN 127 IV 23 // 128 B2 42, and UKN 137, 8). Another text of Minua (UKN 62 Rev. 4), the upper part of a stela, has been found in the island of Akhtamar, but it was brought there

¹⁵ J. Friedrich, *Einführung ins Urmartäische*, MVAeG 37/3, Leipzig 1933, 14; G. A. Melikišvili, *Die Urmartäische Sprache*, Studia Pohl 7, Rome 1971, p. 68.

¹⁶ The copy of Benedict is, however, almost exact.

¹⁷ This is the opinion of G. A. Melikišvili, VDI 1951, 3, 174 ff., UKN p. 402, *Die Urmartäische Sprache*, Rome 1971, p. 84: “Fluß?”, and of I. M. Diakonoff, *Hurrisch und Urmartäisch*, München 1971, p. 62, although his Hurrian etymology is not proven.

from the opposite, southern river of Lake Van, allegedly from Khurkum (modern name Dilkaya); the word muna is connected with the tracing of a canal from the country of Aiduni.

Line 5. $i\text{-}\acute{s}\acute{a}\text{-}ni\text{-}bi\text{-}\acute{d}i\text{-}a\text{-}di^1$ is attested also in UKN 155 F 13 and is commonly translated “from there I turned”; it follows the conquest of a second group of countries.

Collation: $KUR\acute{g}ir\text{-}\acute{d}u\text{-}ni^1$ (see fig. 6), instead of Benedict’s $KUR\acute{g}ir\text{-}ni^1$, is confirmed by the text of Našteban, line 6, with the alternative writing $KURgi\text{-}ir\text{-}du\text{-}ni$.

Line 6. The restitution of $KUR\acute{t}u^1\text{-}i\acute{s}\text{-}\acute{d}u\text{-}ni^1$ is only possible thanks to Našteban, line 7: $KUR\acute{t}u\text{-}i\acute{s}\text{-}du\text{-}ni$. The name of the third country is transcribed by Benedict URU $ru\text{-}u\text{-}tum\text{-}ni^1\text{-}e$; the result of our collation is: $URURu\text{-}[x\text{-}]ni\text{-}tar\text{-}ni$ URU (see fig. 6). It is strange that this geographical name does not correspond to the third name in Našteban.

Line 8. Benedict translates: “And this fortress (which) I seized by force, I reestablished”. Apparently the English syntactic construction of the relative sentence with implicit relative pronoun helps the resolution of this strange formulation. There is a different explanation: it could be simply a mistake of postposition like the evident one in line 1. In both cases the scribe skipped one or more signs and thereafter corrected himself by adding the missing signs, but in the wrong position. This shows that he copied from an original document which was written on a different support.

But how to restore the original syntax? It seems evident that the sentence in line 8 has to be changed into $e\text{-}'a\text{-}\acute{i}^1\text{-}ni\text{-}\acute{E}.GAL^1 >gu\text{-}\acute{r}nu\text{-}\acute{s}\acute{a}\text{-}a^1 \acute{h}a\text{-}\acute{u}\text{-}bi < \acute{s}i\text{-}di\text{-}i\acute{s}\text{-}\acute{t}\acute{u}\text{-}bi$, “and I built this fortress”. The intrusion $>gu\text{-}\acute{r}nu\text{-}\acute{s}\acute{a}\text{-}a^1 \acute{h}a\text{-}\acute{u}\text{-}bi <$ has to be displaced into its right position which is suggested by the comparison with the almost duplicate sentence of Našteban line 8, i.e. in the preceeding line 7 before the sentence $KUR^{MES} \acute{h}au=li$ “I seized the territories” (scil. belonging to the above mentioned towns). Thus we understand that the scribe skipped the word $gunu\acute{s}\acute{a}$, “in/with a battle”, and thus felt obliged to repeat the verb $\acute{h}au=bi$ “I seized”. The original formulation was surely the following (in bound transcription): $*URURu[x]nitar=ni\text{-}gunu\acute{s}\acute{a}\text{-}\acute{h}au=bi\text{-}KUR^{MES} \acute{h}au=li\text{-}me\acute{s}ini\text{-}p\acute{i}\text{-}'aldu=bi\text{-}e'a\text{-}ini\text{-}\acute{E}.GAL\text{-}\acute{s}idi\acute{s}tu=bi^*$; “I seized the city of R. in a battle, I conquered the (relative) territories (and) I placed (them) under tribute, and I built this fortress”.

Line 9. The name of the new foundation $\text{Argi}\acute{s}ti\text{-}irdu$ URU is an original type of toponym, which is difficult to translate, because *irdu* is not attested elsewhere. Benedict accepts for *irdu* the meaning “vassal”. The comparison with $URUIrdia$ in the text of Meher Kapısı, line 59 (UKN 27:59), does not help very much. More interesting is the presence of a category of

people called ^{LÚ}irj^(MEŠ) in the Annals of Sarduri II (UKN 155 B 23, D 9, 27). Especially D 26-27 is helpful: É.GAL ši-di-iš-tú-bi ^{LÚ}ir-di-iš-ti-ni a-šú-ú-bi “I built a fortress (and) I installed there garrison troops(?)”. For the verb ašu– see J. Friedrich, ZA NF 6, 1931, 281 Note 5: “eventuell ‘einsetzen, einsiedeln’”. Thus it seems likely we should translate the city name with “Garrison of Argišti” (Argišti=i-irdu). However the vowel –u at the end remains unexplained; it strangely sounds Semitic.

Apparently the same root aš– forms a transitive verb aš=u– and an intransitive/reflexive aš=a– (see line 2). One observes the same phenomenon with the verbs aštu– and ašta–, kuṭia– and kuṭu–, ušta– and uštu–.

Line 10. The logogram KUR.KÚR^{MEŠ} is in opposition to ^{KUR}biainili (dativ ^{KUR}bi-a-na-ú-e) and substitutes ^{KUR}luluinili.

Line 14. E-a-i is not a graphic variant of the conjunction e-’a “and”. As pointed out by Benedict¹⁸, e-a-i was previously known as a member of a correlative pair: cf. UKN 281, 40–41: e-a-i ^{KUR}bi-a-i-ni-še e-a-i [^{KUR}]lu-lu-i-ni-še “both an Urartian and a Barbarian”. We can add “either ... or”. In the present attestation e-a-i apparently means “or”.

NAŠTEBAN

In order to reach the other inscription, that of Našteban, we had to return to Sarāb and to continue eastwards on the asphalt road, until the village of Kalyan (25 km from Sarāb), then to turn left, in a north-eastern direction, on a track following the course of a secondary stream. The ruins of the village of Našteban, which was abandoned around twenty years ago, lie 11 km NE of Kalyan.

Without knowing in advance its exact location¹⁹, it is extremely difficult to find the inscription, since there is nobody to ask directions of. The small rock with the inscription (fig. 7) lies on the hill which dominates the village, at a distance of about two hundred meters. On the top of the hill W. Kleiss found and described the ruins of a pre-Urartian fortress²⁰. In its vicinity there are also the remains of stone walls, which are difficult to date, and megalithic grave stones²¹. Unfortunately the rock with the inscription was in the shade at the time of our visit (about 5 p.m.), and this is reflected in the

¹⁸ JCS 19, 1965, p. 40.

¹⁹ Fortunately Mr. Ghandgar did, having been there many years ago.

²⁰ AMI 5, 1972, 144 f.

²¹ Cf. St. Kroll, AMI 17, 1984, 43-47.



Fig. 7 – The rock inscription of Našteban in its present state.

poor quality of the photographs (fig. 8). The best lighting in June is in the early afternoon, about 2 or 3 p. m.

UCT A 11-5 = *UKN II 446 Našteban, collated 2.6.97.

Height 64,5 cm (H. of the lines 5 to 6 cm each), width of the base 112 cm.

UCT A 11-5

- 1 ʰhal-di-ni-ni al-su-ši-ni
- 2 ʷar-giš-ti-še ʷru¹-sa-ḫi-ni-še a-li
- 3 ka-ru-bi KURbu-ʷqu¹-[ú-e] KUR-ʷni¹ x-du-ši-li
- 4 a-la-sa-ši-li ʷku-tè-a-di pa¹-ri
- 5 ʰmu-na-i-di i-šá-ni ʷbi-di¹-a-di
- 6 ka-ru-bi KURgi-ir-du-ni ʷKUR¹gi-tú-ḫa-ni-[ni?]
- 7 KURtu-iš-du-ni e-ʷa¹ URUe-ú-[x-x]-ni
- 8 URU gu-nu-šá-a ḫa-ʷú¹-[bi] ʷKUR¹.KUR.[MES x x?]
- 9 ḫa-ú-ú-l[i me-ši-ni pi-i]
- 10 ʷa-al-du-[bi ʷar-giš-ti]-ʷše¹
- 11 a-li-e a-ʷlu¹-[še i-ni DUB]-ʷte¹
- 12 tú-li-ʷe¹ [t]ú-r[i-ni-ni ʰhal-di-še ʰIM]-še
- 13 [ʰUTU-še DINGIRMES-še ma-a-ni ʰUTU-ni pi-i-ni]



Fig. 8 A close-up of the Našteban inscription.



Fig. 9 – Latex rubber squeeze of the Našteban text; from W.C. Benedict, JCS 19, 1965, 38.

The right part of the inscribed surface is now destroyed, and the first line is seriously damaged²² by the destruction of the upper part of the niche (fig. 10), but our transliteration incorporates also what has been read by Benedict on the rubber squeeze (fig. 9). Some restitutions are based on the parallel text in Razliq.

Translation:

(1) Through the greatness of Ḫaldi, (2) Argišti, the son of Rusa says: (3) I subdued the country of Buque. ... (4) ... I reached (5) the river; from there I turned (and) (6) I conquered the countries of Girdu, Gituḫani (7) and Tuišdu, and the city of Eu[xx]ni (8) I stormed in battle. The [related?] territories (9) I conquered, (and) I placed th[em under tribute]. (10) Argišti (11) says: Whoever (12) damages [this inscrip]tion, [may Ḫaldi, the Storm] God, (13) the [Sun God, (all) the gods] era[se him under the Sun light].



Fig. 10 – The rock inscription of Našteban in 1971; from W. Kleiss, AMI 5, 1972, Taf. 34/1.

²² Compare the photo by W. Kleiss, AMI 5, 1972, Pl. 34/1, reproduced here as fig. 10.

Commentary.

Line 3. A different reading, approaching that of Benedict, could be ^{KUR}bu-^ʃqu^ʔ-[x-x] x ^{KUR}[x-x]-du-ši-li; but we prefer to restore the writing of Razliq line 4, with the toponym and its postponed apposition “the Buque land”. The last word of that line is probably not a toponym but a different word, a substantive plural concordng with the adjective alasašili, or possibly the inverse. Both are unfortunately Hapax legomena. This complex suffix recalls ^{ḥu}-ru-la-a-i(-)ši-li UKN 27, 84, which is separated in two words, while Diakonoff UPD p. 55 considers it a single word. See also ^{LÚ}a-ú-[a!-]ra-ši-li UKN 127 III 31. There is also a toponym ending with the same suffix: ^{KUR}za-ba-a-ḥa-a-e(-)ši-i-li UKN 127 I 9. In all the above mentioned cases Melikišvili distinguishes two separate words; see UKN p. 407.

Line 7. After the same sequence of three toponyms like Razliq, namely Girduni, GITUḥani and Tuišduni, the city name ^{URU}e-ú-[x-x]-ni URU follows instead of ^{URU}ru-[x-x]-ni-tar-ni URU (Razliq line 6). The fact that there are different toponyms can be explained if we assume that ^{URU}Ru[x-x]nitar=ni lies near Razliq and ^{URU}eu[x-x]ni near Našteban. In both cases the inscription would have been carved after the conquest in battle (gunuša) of that specific city, and close to their ruins. Thus one can assume that ^{URU}eu[x-x]ni was the ancient name of the pre-Urartian fortress in Našteban. The same connection between the Urartian rock inscription and the ruins of the pre-Urartian fortress of Libliuni is attested in the text of Segendel²³.

The manner in which both of the partially duplicate inscriptions were conceived can be perhaps better understood in showing the common parts of the texts through bold script:

Razliq

- 1 **ḥal-di-ni-ni al-su-i-ši-ni** ^mar-ti-giš-še
- 2 ^mru-sa-ḥi-ni-še a-li a-šá-di ^{KUR}ar-^ʃḥu^ʔ-ú-e
- 3 ^ʃiš-ti-ni^ʔ-a-ši **ka-r[u]-^ʃbi^ʔ** ^{KÚR} ^{KUR}ú-šú-lu-ni-i ^{KUR}-ni
- 4 ^{KUR}bu-^ʃqu-ú-e^ʔ **^{KUR}-ni [ku-ú]-ṭè-^ʃa-di^ʔ pa-ri**
- 5 ^ʔmu-^ʃna^ʔ-i-di i-šá-ni bi-^ʃdi-a-di^ʔ **ka-ru-bi** ^{KUR}gír-^ʃdu-ni^ʔ
- 6 ^{KUR}gi-tú-ḥa-ni-ni ^{KUR}ṭu^ʔ-iš-^ʃdu-ni^ʔ ^{URU}ru-[x-x]-ni-tar-ni URU
- 7 ḥa-ú-bi ^{KUR}^{MEŠ} **ḥa-ú-ú-li me-ši-ni** ^ʔpi-i^ʔ ^ʔa-al^ʔ-du-bi
- 8 e-^ʔa ^ʔi^ʔ-ni É.^ʃGAL^ʔ **gu-^ʃnu-šá-a^ʔ** **ḥa-ú-bi** ši-di-iš-tú-bi
- 9 te-ru-bi ti-^ʔni ^mar-giš-te-i-ir-du URU
- 10 ^{KUR}bi-a-na-ú-e u[š]-ma-^ʃa-še^ʔ ^{KUR}^{KÚR}^{MEŠ} na-^ʃa-pa^ʔ-ḥi-^ʃa^ʔ-i-di

²³ TKU, p. 30. Iran No 27. W. Kleiss-St. Kroll, AMI 13, 1980, 21-61, Pl. 5-6. See also M. Salvini, AMI 15, 1982, 97-100, Pl. 15.

- 11 ʰḥal-di-ni-ni a[l-su]-ši-ni ʷar-giš-ti-ni ʿLUGÁLʰ DAN-ʿNUʰ
 12 LUGÁL KURšú-ra-ú-e ʿLUGÁL KURʰbi-a-i-na-ú-e [LU]GÁL.LUGÁL^{MES}
 -ú-ʿeʰ
 13 ʿaʰ-lu-si URUtu-uš-pa URU ʿmʰar-giš-ti-še a-l[i]
 14 ʿaʰ-lu-še ti-ni-n[i] tú-li e-a-ʿiʰ i-ni DUB-t[e]
 15 p[i]-tú-[l]i-e t[ú-r]i-ni-ni ʰḥal-[di]-še ʿDʰIM-ʿšeʰ
 16 ʰ[UTU-še] DINGIR^{ME[š]}-še ma-a-ni ʰUTU-ni pi-i-n[i]

Našteban

- 1 ʰḥal-di-ni-ni al-su-ši-ni
 2 ʷar-giš-ti-še ʷruʰ-sa-ḥi-ni-še a-li
 3 ka-ru-bi KURbu-ʿquʰ-[ú-e] KUR-ʿniʰ x-du-ši-li
 4 a-la-sa-ši-li ʿku-tè-a-di paʰ-ri
 5 ʰmu-na-i-di i-šá-ni ʿbi-díʰ-a-di
 6 ka-ru-bi KURgi-ir-du-ni ʿKURgi-tú-ḥa-ni-[ni?]
 7 KURtu-iš-du-ni e-ʿʰaʰ URUe-ú-[x-x]-ni
 8 URU gu-nu-šá-a ḥa-ʿúʰ-[bi] ʿKURʰ.KUR.^[MES x x?]
 9 ḥa-ú-ú-l[i me-ši-ni pi-e-i]
 10 ʰa-al-du-[bi ʷar-giš-ti]-ʿšeʰ
 11 a-li-e a-ʿluʰ-[še i-ni DUB]-ʿteʰ
 12 tú-li-ʿeʰ [t]ú-r[i-ni-ni ʰḥal-di-še ʰIM]-še
 13 ʰ[UTU-še] DINGIR^{MES}-še ma-a-ni ʰUTU-ni pi-i-ni

A comparison of the two texts allows the following remarks. First of all the countries of Arḫue and Ušuluni must have been situated close to Razliq, and not to Našteban. One could infer that, the Urartians coming from the west, invaded Arḫue and Ušuluni before reaching the region of modern Sarāb and the river which flows in that valley. In both cases the inscription follows the conquest of a city after a battle, but it seems that an outpost was built only near the rock inscription of Razliq, namely the fortress of Argište-irdu. Anyway no Urartian fortification has been found yet in the vicinity. The cursing formula of Našteban is shorter and shows that the verbs *tulie* and *pitulie* are synonymous “to destroy, damage”. This is proven by some other texts, which were published after Benedict’s list of Urartian cursing formulas in the appendix to his important article on the Kelišin stela²⁴. See e. g. the Reverse of Minua’s stela from Baġin (UKN 42 = HchI 73 = CICH 33), published by H.-P. Schäfer in *IstMitt* 23/24, 1972-73, p. 35: ... a-lu-še ini DUB-te-e pi-tú-ú-li-i-e a-lu-še tú-li-e (UCT A 5-8 Rev. 4’-7’) “whoever damages this inscription, whoever destroys it”.

²⁴ JAOS 81, 1961, 383-385.

The last and most important question, from the point of view of historical geography, is the quotation of a river (¹⁰muna-), which seems to be equidistant from both places. The most simple solution is to identify it with the Aji çay, which flows in the plain of Sarāb in the direction of Lake Urmia.

The rock inscriptions of Razliq and Našteban show the formidable expansion of Urartian power during the reign of Argišti II. With the conquest of the Aji çay valley they controlled the road to the Caspian Sea, along which there are no natural obstacles.

Another document of Argišti II's far reaching conquests is the stela of Sissian in eastern Armenia, published 17 years ago by N. V. Harutjunjan²⁵. Its position seems to indicate the march of the Urartian army towards modern Stepanakert in Nagorno Karabakh. Finally a further rock inscription of the same Argišti II has very recently been identified on the road between Ahar and Kaleybar, in the northernmost part of Iranian Azerbaijan. If this information is confirmed, this would be a further confirmation of Argišti II's eastern expansion policy²⁶, and one could infer that the penetration road to the regions north of the Araxes (modern east Armenia) crossed in that time mainly Iranian Azerbaijan. The classical road through the Ararat plain (region of Yerevan) and the western shore of Lake Sevan connected the centre of the Kingdom with its firmly established northern provinces. The newly published rock inscription of Išpuini and Minua north of Julfa in the territory of Nachičevan²⁷ shows that a similar "Azerbaijanian" penetration way was used from the beginning of Urartian conquests at the end of the IXth century B.C.

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²⁵ See note 8.

²⁶ He continued the tradition of his father Rusa I (rock inscription of Tsovinar) and of his grand-father Sarduri II (rock inscription of Seqendel).

²⁷ S. G. Hmayakyan, V. A. Igumnov, H. H. Karagozian, An Urartian Cuneiform Inscription from Ojasar-İlandağ, Nakhichevan, SMEA 38, 1996, 139-151; M. Salvini, Eine urartäische Felsinschrift in der Region Nachičevan, ZA 88, 1998, 94-99.