



The Newly-Donated Urartian in Scription from Bastam by Rusa II

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(19-36)

Abstract

The Urartians ruled over the shores of Lakes of Van, Sevan and Urmia from *ca.* the ninth to seventh centuries BCE. While there are only several stone and rock inscriptions remaining in northwestern Iran, a newly-discovered Urartian stone inscription has been donated to the Maku Office of the Cultural Heritage Ministry of the province and is presently stored in the Urmia Museum. It was discovered during a construction project behind the fortification of Bastam. The stone block has been inscribed with a sixteen-line Urartian cuneiform text. As the block is damaged, especially on its right side, it appears that the missing lines are greater in number than the preserved lines, requiring some reconstruction to interpret the text. The inscription dates to the reign of Rusa II, Argišti II's son, who founded the Bastam fortification. The text concerns the perfect construction of "The Small City of Rusa" with the support of Ḫaldi. The inscription also includes a rare curse-formula. But, there are several questions remaining to be answered. What is the context of the inscription? What are the possible reconstructions of the inscription? What other texts have similar terminal curse-formulae? Where was the stone block possibly installed? This article is written with the help of the field and library research and it aims to introduce and reconstruct the inscription text in order to raise the possibility that the stone block may have been installed at the place where the king received tribute. It seems that the original context of the inscription might have been a place or gate of reception by the king.

Keywords: Bastam, Rusa, Stone Inscription, Curse Formula.

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Introduction

The Urartians ruled over the regions between and on the shores of Lake Van and Çıldır Lakes (Eastern Turkey), Sevan Lake (Armenia), Lake Urmia (Northwestern Iran) (Zimansky, 1995: 104; Barnett, 2008: 322). Kleiss and Hauptmann (1976) commented that Urartu extended along an east-west gradient from the upper Euphrates in Turkey to the area of Ardabil in Iran, and from north-south between Çıldır Lake in northeastern Turkey and Gyumri or Leninaken in northwestern Armenia to Rowanduz in northeastern Iraq. According to Belli (2003-2004: 13), the kingdom reached the South Caucasus in north, Northwestern Iran in east, and the Euphrates in west. Biscione (2009: 2) proposed that the Urartian kingdom developed between the Tigris River and the Iranian Plateau. Kleiss (2009: 27) commented that regions to the southwest, northwest and areas to the east of Lake Urmia belonged to the Urartian kingdom from about 800 BCE onward. Köroğlu (2011: 12) mentioned that there are Urartian finds from Gyumri (Leninakan in northwestern Armenia), south to the Taurus Mountains and Rowanduz in northeastern Iraq as well. Recently an inscription reported from Taraghe Mountain, close to Bukan, located to the south of Lake Urmia, may indicate that Urartians extended their influence there, even if they did not control it for a considerable duration (Salvini and Dara 2019).

The Urartian language belonged to neither the Indo-European nor Semitic language families, but rather, had a strong bond with the Hurrian language. The Urartian and Hurrian languages are believed to be driven both from the Hurro-Urartian proto-language (Diakonoff, 1967: 7; Benedict, 1960: 101; Fournet, 2011: 43). Urartians had three writing systems, including Assyrian cuneiform, Urartian cuneiform, and Urartian Hieroglyph. Their royal inscriptions were written on weapons, seals, steles, stone blocks, rocks, tablets, vessels, ceramics, bullae, metal objects, and ornaments.

There are several discoveries excavated from the Urartian fortifications. Rusa II (*ca.* first half of the 7th century BC), son of Arğišti, constructed the forts of Bastam, Karmir-blur, Adilcevaz, Kef Kalasi, and Ayanis (Kleiss, 1988: 30-31; Salvini 2008: A 12; Kroll, 2011: 153-159) as the military and administrative centers of different regions (Grekyan, 2013-2014: 66). Rusa's main purpose was to strengthen Urartu against the Sakas and Cimmerians. He reconstructed the country and became the last powerful king of Urartu (Barnett, 2008: 360). His probable innovations of Urartian bullae, tablets and seals are among his contributions.

Bastam is located 9 km northwest of Gharezyaedin, about 40 km from Khoy and 85 km east of Maku, in Western Azerbaijan province. Bastam was called ^mRusai=URU=TUR (The Small City of Rusa). The name is not only mentioned in the inscriptions discovered at Bastam but also is mentioned in the inscriptions from Ayanis (Salvini, 2008: 567, A 12-1 V, 1-3). ^mRusai=URU=TUR is the most developed Urartian fortification known (Biscione, 2012). It seems that the fortification was conquered and burned, but it was partially reconstructed later (Kroll, 2013: 247). There are several sections within the fort, including Haldi's temple. Moreover, there are houses and public constructions in the lower fort (Kroll: 2013: 248). The Bastam fortification was discovered in 1967 by Germans

and was excavated during 1968 to 1979 except for 1971 and 1976 (www.iranicaonline.org). ^mRusai=URU=TUR is also mentioned in the Ayanis inscription (Salvini, 2008: 567, A 12-1 V, 1-3). Additionally, there is a bowl discovered at Karmir-blur with the inscription of Rusa (^mru-sa-a-ni-i-URU-TUR-gi) which was probably transferred from Bastam in antiquity (Salvini, 2012: B 12-16). Several types of inscriptions have been discovered at the fortification of Bastam and among them are two building-stone inscriptions, as well as tablets, and inscriptions on stone, bullae and ceramics. Recently, another stone inscription was donated to the Maku Cultural Heritage Office, which was discovered during the construction project behind Bastam Fortification. This stone block has been moved to the Urmia Museum for safekeeping.

It is the aim of this paper to introduce and study this newly-donated inscription from Bastam. Because the beginning of each line of the inscription has been severely damaged, the main question regarding this text therefore concerns possible reconstructions of the missing portions and the overall meaning of its full content. Additionally there are lexical-interpretive challenges in the text in the cases of “in front of” and “reception of the king” that have raised questions for the authors.

Previously discovered Urartian inscriptions at Bastam

1. Bastam construction inscription

There is an inscription from Bastam stored at the National Museum of Iranⁱ (Fig. 1) that has been published by several scholars (Lehmann-Haupt, 1928-1935: np. 153A; Melikišvili, 1960: no. 280; König, 1955-1957: no. 129; Harutjunjan, 2011: no. 419; Mashkour, 1966; van den Berghe and de Meyer, 1982-1983: no. 237; Payne, 2006: 284, no. 12.2.1; Salvini, 2008: 579, A 12-7; Helwing and Rahimpour, 2016: 207; Dara, 2017: 123-126).

The inscription in 16 lines of Urartian cuneiform is written in favor of "The Small City of Rusa" and its temple construction. The epigraphy of the inscription uses the renaissance method which was used during the second half of the Urartian dynasty's rule. The inscription contains the following text:ⁱⁱ

- 1-3. (To God) Ḫaldi, Lord, Rusa, son of Argišti, built this temple. By the favor of Ḫaldi, Rusa, son of Argišti,
4. says (this) stone was empty (unwritten). Nothing (was)
5. here the builder (?). When Ḫaldi
6. determined (willed), I built.
7. I named it “The Small City of Rusa”.
8. Rusa, son of Argišti, says
9. whoever destroys this inscription, whoever
10. erases, whoever destroys (and) ruins,
11. Ḫaldi, Storm God, Sun God, and gods (shall punish him).
12. (his) name cannot be under Sun God.
13. Rusa, son of Argišti,
14. the mighty king, king of the countries,
15. king of country of Bia, king of kings,
16. lord of city of Tušpa (Dara, 2017: 126).



Figure 1 (Dara, 2017: 123)

2. Bastam temple inscription

This inscription was discovered in the foundation of Haldi's temple terrace ruins (Fig. 2) (von Schuler, 1972: 122, *Abb.* 37) and is kept in the warehouse of National Museum of Iran, number 6595.ⁱⁱⁱ

The six-line inscription on this piece of stone is severely damaged, but the epigraphy is in the renaissance method, meaning that it was likely written during Rusa II's reign. Harutjunjan (2001: 390, 510), Payne (2006: 324) and Dara (2017: 129) published this inscription as well but Salvini's reconstruction seems more complete (Salvini, 2008: 577, A 12-5)^{iv} with respect to the Karmir-blur, Adilcevaz, Armavir, and Ayanis temple inscriptions. According to the first and third lines, the inscription is an offering related to the construction of Haldi's Temple.



Figure 2 (Dara, 2017: 127)

Kroll reported seven small inscribed fragments of stone, which were discovered during the Bastam excavations of 1972 to 1975 and 1978, which are preserved in National Museum of Iran warehouse (1979, 159; 1988b, 159 *Abb.* 3, 1). There are only traces of signs preserved on the fragments. There are also fragments of a smashed stone inscriptions reported, which could possibly pertain to the installation the inscription by Rusa, son of Argišti (von Schuler, 1970: 105 *Taf.* 48/1-2; Harutjunjan, 2001: 343; 420; Payne, 2006, 295).

3. Tablets

Urartian tablets have been discovered at Bastam during the excavations of 1969, 1970, 1973 and 1974 which are in National Museum of Iran (Salvini, 1979: 115). Tablets could bring crucial and significant information about the details of daily life in antiquity. Unfortunately, they are sometimes discovered after severe damages but even a small piece can be a blessing. The first tablets include the subjects of agriculture (Fig. 3a) and bread rations (Fig. 3b) and are regarded as commandments. Šeini's tablet (Fig. 3c) is damaged severely but also seems to be a command. Additionally, a fragment of a sheep list (Fig. 3d) and a list of numbers are preserved.



Figure 3 a-d (Dara, 2017: 136)

The agricultural command tablet is inscribed on the reverse of the tablet no. 882^v. The text^{vi} includes the king (most probably Rusa II) commanding his subordinates Išpiliúqu, the seal bearer or holder, and Lubšúšini, the fortification lord or officer or guardian, about the agricultural activities of the region and about how to deal with Adiabdi, the rebel (?) (Salvini, 2012: CT Ba-1; Dara, 2017: 139-142).

The second tablet (no. 881)^{vii} bears an inscription on the reverse^{viii} as the command of the king to the same person named Lubšúšini to give three bread rations daily to the people of Ameriši and two bread rations to the people of Ḫalbi (Salvini, 2012: CT Ba-2; Dara, 2017: 145-148).^{ix}

Tablet no. 339^x is severely damaged but some parts of the inscription are preserved.^{xi} The inscription concerns Šeini, the official.

Another tablet (no. 11771)^{xii} was discovered during the excavation of the Bastam bone room. This specimen is severely damaged but it seems that it is a list of sheep or sheep bearers (Dara, 2017: 155-156).^{xiii} According to Zimansky, the bone room of Bastam was not used as meat storage and the bones could be related

to sacrifices, slaughtered animals or the king's meal leftovers (1979, 55; 1988, 107). Kroll suggested that the bone rooms were to keep the meat. Bone rooms seem to be the innovation of Rusa, as no other such rooms have been discovered from the constructions of previous Urartian kings (1984, 165-168; 2019, 187-191). There are similar bone rooms discovered at Toprakkale and Karmir-blur, however. In the 1949 excavations at Karmir-blur, a small room with several bones was discovered between two store-rooms at the center of the citadel. According to Zimansky, these rooms had more than a local significance (Zimansky, 1979: 54). The author suggests that perhaps these rooms were not built everywhere but were an Urartian custom in the larger fortifications and perhaps were an innovation of Rusa II.

Finally, fragments of tablets have also been discovered through the excavations of Bastam in 1969 (von Sculer, 1972: 122). Therefore, they also might have been inscribed during the reign of Rusa II or onwards. One of them seems to be a numeral or list or an economic text of Bastam and may be the beginning of a longer list (von Schuler, 1972: 122; Harutjunjan, 2001: 391; 512).

4. Ceramics

Several pieces of inscribed ceramic vessels discovered in Bastam (Kroll, 1979: 221; Salvini, 2012: 225-250; Dara, 2017: 201-224). The vessels were used to store wine, oil, water, wheat, and barley (Salvini, 2012: 223). Therefore, they were mostly inscribed in Urartian cuneiform and hieroglyphs to indicate their measurement and according to their capacity. Three of the inscriptions are inscribed on the edge of the vessels with the short version of *^mru-URU-TUR* and are stored at the National Museum of Iran (Fig. 4).^{xiv}

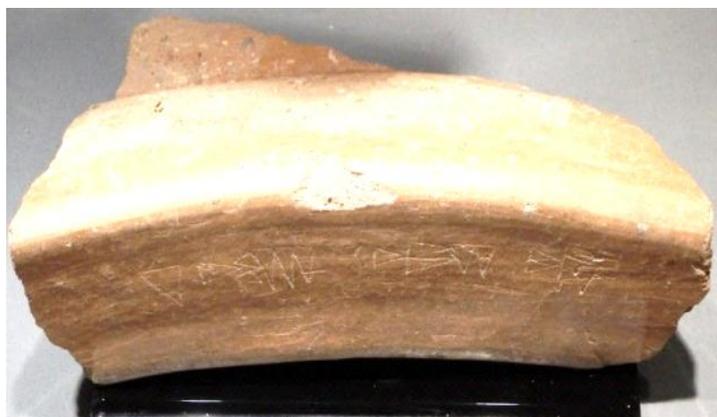


Figure 4a (Dara, 2017: 220)

5. Bullae

Bullae are small lumps of clay, in a variety of shapes ranging from elongated pyramids to tear-shaped, which are attached to different kinds of objects and vessels as tags. Some of the Urartian bullae are inscribed but most of them are sealed. Urartians inscribed or sealed bullae have been discovered at several Urartian sites, such as Bastam, where 1418 examples were discovered, mainly in in the upper levels of the bone room (Dara, 2021: 1). They are stored at the National Museum of Iran.

The contents of the inscriptions on the bullae were about the storage

numerals, city names, measures, and officials or people's names (Dara, 2017: 225-242). The bullae in Bastam were formed by pressing clay over knots and cords that were once clearly tied to something as possibly documents or baskets or bones (Zimansky, 1979: 54-55).

The bullae of Bastam are sometimes inscribed with *KIŠIB* (seal) (Dara, 2017: 228, 230, 231, 239-242), personal names and toponyms indicating different lands, regions and cities (ibid: 232-238). On some, such as as bulla no. 13320, Ba 78-146^{xv} (Fig. 5a) and no. 51115, BA 78-423^{xvi} (Fig. 5b) "The Small City of Rusa" is mentioned.



Figure 5a (Photo by Maryam Dara)



Figure 5b (Photo by Maryam Dara)

There is not a single Urartian seal discovered at Bastam,^{xvii} but several seal impressions have been identified on the bullae and tablets from the site, which provide us with significant information. The Urartian inscribed cylinder and stamp seal impressions could imply the seal bearer official degree, name, region, beliefs, and royal or public information.

The most common seal impressions at Bastam belong to Rusa II (Dara, 2021)^{xviii} (Fig. 6a) and an official named Ašuli (Dara, 2022)^{xix} (Fig. 6b). The figural scenes of these seal impressions are quite different from each other.^{xx}

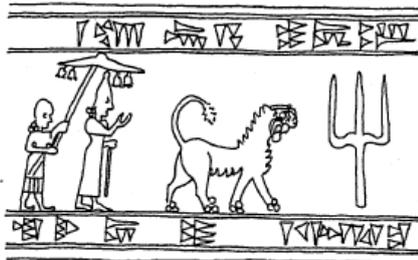


Figure 6a (Seidl, 1988: 146, B 2)

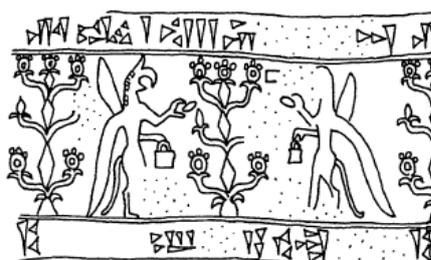


Figure 6b (Seidl, 1979: 137, A 1)

The newly identified inscription

A large broken stone block made of a pink sedimentary rock has been donated to Maku Office of the Cultural Heritage Ministry. Recently, this stone block was transported to the Urmia Museum from Maku. It was discovered during the course of the construction of the Agh Chay Dam behind the Bastam fortification, east of Bastam village in 1996 (Fig. 7).



Figure 7. The discovery point of the inscription

The stone block is 64 cm high, 56.5 cm wide and 19 cm thick. There is a sixteen-line Urartian cuneiform inscription inscribed on this piece of stone. The text is limited between about four-centimeter margins carved as thin lines and the signs are about 3 cm tall (Fig. 8).



Figure 8. Obverse of the newly donated stone inscription

The upper and lower parts of the obverse of the stone block are almost unharmed and unbroken (Fig. 9a). Additionally, the right side of the stone block is not broken nor missing, but has been damaged by hammering (Fig. 9b). The left side of the obverse, which would bear the beginning of the inscription lines is severely damaged and some parts are missing entirely (Fig. 9c). Therefore, it seems that the inscription starts from the upper part of the stone block and ends on its lower part and is complete. The end of the lines at the right side of the obverse is almost completely preserved with only slight damages. But unfortunately a large part of the left side of the obverse has lost, causing the main damage to the beginning of each line of the inscription. The reverse of the stone block is unwritten (Fig. 9d). There also are traces of sediment and fractures around the stone block.

The epigraphy of the Urartian cuneiform inscription is in the shape of stretched and needle-like signs and wedges. This epigraphy was used from Rusa I's reign to the end of Urartian reign (Salvini, 2012: 321-322).

The gap between the signs is increased in the last nine lines. It is possible that the scribe did not pay attention to the length of the text and the text was shorter than expected. Therefore the scribe was obliged to add to the gaps between the signs to fit the length of the text with the size of the stone block.



Figure 9a. Upper part of the stone



Figure 9b. Right side of the reverse of the stone block

Figure 9c. Left side of the reverse of the stone block



Figure 9d. Reverse of the stone block

1. Transliteration

As mentioned earlier, the left side of most of the lines was lost. Therefore the authors had to reconstruct the beginning of many lines. Therefore the proposed reconstruction of the text is as following:

1. [Ḫal-di-i-ni-ni uš-ma-ši]-ni ^mru^r-sa-[a-še]
2. [^mar-giš-te-ḫi-ni-še i-ni] 'É'.GAL ba-du-^rsi^r-[i-e]
3. [ši-di-iš-tú-ni ^mru-sa ar]-ri-giš-te-[ḫi-ni]-še
4. [x x x x x x x] 'i' ze-e-i-x-x-ni
5. [x x x x x x x] i zi di tú i-e-še
6. [x x x x x x] ar-ni-ú-ši-ni-li iš-ti-^rni^r
7. [x x x x x x]-hi 'É'.GAL-ka-i ša-tú-ú-^rbi^r
8. [x x x x x x]-e 'šú'-ḫi-e te-ru-ú-^rbi^r
9. [ši-di-iš-tú-bi] 'ti'-ni ^mru-^rsa^r-a-i URU.'TUR'
10. [a-li ^mru-sa] 'ar'-giš-te-ḫi 'MAN' DAN-NU a-lu-[še]
11. [x x x x x x]-a-e URU '^mru-sa-a-[še]
12. [^mar-giš-te-ḫi-ni-še] 'a-li' a-lu-še i-^rni^r DUB-[te]
13. [tú-li-e a-lu-še pi]-tú-li-e a-lu-[še]
14. [x x x x x a-i-ni]-e i-ni-li du-li₁₂-^re^r
15. [a-lu-še u-li-še ti-ú-li-e ú-li]-i tú-ri-^re^r
16. [tú-ri-ni-ni Ḫal-di-še] 'IM'-še ^DUTU-še DINGIR^{MEŠ} -[še]

2. Translation

1. [By the favor of Ḫaldi], Rusa,
- 2-3. [son of Argišti, built this] fortification perfectly. [Rusa, son of] Argišti,
- 4-5. (not clear to be translated)
6. [...] the achievement here
7. [...] in front of the fort I received
8. I built (or put or install) the new [...].

9. [I built]. (Its) name (is) “The Small City of Rusa” (or I called it “The Small City of Rusa”).
10. [Rusa], Son of Argišti, mighty king, [says] whoever
11. [...] the city. Rusa,
- 12-13. [son of Argišti], says whoever [destroys] this inscription, [whoever] erases (it), whoever
14. [...] says to another one to do these
15. [...says to another one] to destroy, to eliminate,
16. [to destroy, Ḫaldi], Storm Deity, Sun Deity, other deities (shall punish him).

Discussion

As mentioned earlier, there are several different Urartian cuneiform inscriptions discovered at Bastam inscribed with the name of "Small City of Rusa". The newly donated stone block bears the name of the city as well. Each line of the stone block inscription could have had 15 to 16 cuneiform signs. There are 110 signs of the text remaining after the damages to the stone block and more are missing.

Some of the damaged signs have been reconstructed by the authors according to other Urartian inscriptions with similar contents. It seemed that line 10 was the most complete and preserved line and unharmed, therefore the length of the other lines has been guessed according to line 10, where the beginning and ending of it are preserved. The other lines have been reconstructed accordingly.

Uš-ma-ši-ni or *al-su-i-ši-ni* could have been reconstructed in line 1 as the length of both words could fit the damaged part and both are very common in the Urartian inscriptions with almost similar meaning. It is most possible that the royal construction is mentioned as the favor and by the assistance of Ḫaldi.

Rusa II constructed “The Small City of Rusa” (^m*Rusai=URU=TUR*) perfectly (Lines 1-2). The king insists on the perfection of the royal construction as a common formula in line 2. And the king mentions his name as the son of king Argišti (Lines 2 and 3). Later, the king announces his achievement in this land (Line 6).

According to line 7, "in front of" the fortification (*É`GAL-ka-i*) was the place that he received something and with respect to the original place where the inscription has been discovered, it is possible that here was the place of the reception. By “in front of the fortification” one comes to the idea that the inscription might have been installed outside or near the entrance gate of the fort. This means that tribute or offerings to Rusa II were possibly received at this point, which is outside and in front of the fort. Of course this can be proposed if the discovery point of the inscription was the original installation point of the inscription. But, there also is another possibility that "I received" is at the beginning of another sentence in line 7 and has no relation with the prior words. This means that something is mentioned in front of the fortification in the first part of line 7 and then the king received something mentioned in line 8, the beginning of which is severely damaged.

Additionally, according to line 8 Rusa has built a “new” (*šú`-hi-e*) construction or put or installed a “new” inscription in the honor of the place he built. Unfortunately, due to the construction project and activities at the point of the stone inscription, the discovery of evidence of any construction, gate, room,

hall or wall where the inscription might have been installed has been foreclosed by the destruction of this part of the site. The text itself could still, however, lead us to possible interpretations.

The terminal curse-formula of the inscription begins at line 10 and lasts for six lines; it seems that a large part of the inscription is comprised of this curse. It is in fact a rare curse-formula (Dara, 2018), but it resembles the Tashborun inscription curse, which reads “Whoever destroys this inscription, whoever erases it, whoever says another to do it, destroys it, eliminates it, conquers the city of Luhiu, destroys, Haldi, Storm God, Sun God, gods (punish him) under (the control of) Sun God” (Salvini, 2008: A 5-1, § 15-24).^{xxi} There are minor differences between the two cursing formulae and both were rarely used in royal inscriptions.

Conclusion

“The Small City of Rusa” (^m*Rusai*=*URU*=*TUR*), or the Bastam fortification, was the greatest fortification of Urartu. A number of significant inscriptions of different types have been discovered at Bastam mentioning ^m*Rusai*=*URU*=*TUR*. There were two previously discovered and published stone inscriptions regarding the foundation of “The Small City of Rusa” and its temple. Inscribed bullae, tablets, and ceramics also specifically mention “The Small City of Rusa” have also been discovered. Recently a newly donated stone block with a sixteen-line Urartian cuneiform inscription has been studied by the authors which is currently stored in the Urmia Museum. The authors propose it was installed at a significant point of the fortress based on its textual content. The inscription is damaged, but still there are pieces of information it can provide. “The Small City of Rusa” is mentioned in the inscription and illustrates that the stone block was installed on a construction related to the fortress.

Rusa II, son of Argišti, by the favour of Haldi, the Supreme Urartian god, built the fortress and commanded this inscription to be written. The fortification was constructed “perfectly” and the king also mentioned his achievement in this place.

Based on the text, it seems that the king received something as tribute at the point where the inscription originally installed, which could possibly correspond to its findspot, but this remains uncertain and irresolvable. This is because, unfortunately, the original place of the inscription’s discovery has been destroyed by the dam construction but still the text can bring light to some possible ideas about Bastam fortification.

In any event, the text indicates this was the place of reception and that Rusa installed this stone block to be present at that place, as mentioned, “in front of the fortification.” Of course, this is more a speculation and proposal by the authors than a definite fact. But, there also is another possibility that “I received” should be understood to scan at the beginning of another sentence from in line 7, and would thus not be related to the other words in this line, but rather should be understood as the beginning of another sentence continuing into line 8, the beginning of which is severely damaged. This would mean that something is mentioned as being in front of the fortification in the first sentence and then the king received something mentioned in the next sentence. Unlike the other

inscriptions discovered at Bastam, this stone inscription ends with a long and rather rare curse-formula.

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کتیبه به تازگی اهداشده متعلق به روسا دوم در بسطام

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چکیده

اورارتوها بر سواحل دریاچه‌های وان و چیلدیر در ترکیه، دریاچه سوان در ارمنستان و دریاچه ارومیه در ایران در حدود سده‌های نهم تا هفتم پیش از میلاد حکومت می‌کردند. از شمال غرب ایران در نواحی آذربایجان شرقی و آذربایجان غربی آثار اورارتویی از جمله سنگ و صخره‌نیشته‌های بسیاری به دست آمده است. به تازگی سنگ‌نیشته‌ای به اداره میراث فرهنگی ماکو اهدا شد و سپس به موزه آذربایجان غربی انتقال داده شد. این بلوک سنگی در جریان عملیات سدسازی در پشت قلعه بسطام به دست آمده بود. بر این سنگ‌نیشته شانزده سطر کتیبه میخی اورارتویی نوشته شده است. سمت راست این بلوک سنگی تقریباً سالم‌تر و در واقع پایان هر سطر کتیبه است که باقی مانده است. اما، سمت چپ آسیب بسیاری دیده و ابتدای بسیاری از سطرها از میان رفته است. بر این سنگ‌نیشته حدود صد نشانه میخی دیده می‌شود و بیش از این تعداد از میان رفته که نیاز به بازسازی متن داشت. متن کتیبه به دوران شاهی روسا دوم، پسر آرگیشتی دوم، بنیان‌گذار دژ بسطام یا «شهر کوچک روسا» تعلق دارد که بزرگ‌ترین دژ اورارتویی محسوب می‌شود. نفرین پایانی سنگ-نیشته نیز نسبتاً طولانی است و کمتر دیده شده است. پرسش‌هایی از این قبیل برای پژوهشگران وجود داشت؛ محتوای کتیبه چیست؟ بخش‌های از میان رفته کتیبه را چگونه و بر اساس کدام متن‌های اورارتویی می‌توان بازسازی کرد؟ نفرین‌های پایانی مشابه نفرین‌نامه این کتیبه کدامند؟ این کتیبه احتمالاً در کدام بخش از دژ بسطام کار گذاشته شده بود؟ بنا بر این پژوهشگران به کمک مطالعات کتابخانه‌ای و میدانی بر آن شدند که کتیبه‌های به دست آمده از بسطام را در این مقاله آورده و در ادامه سنگ‌نیشته به تازگی اهداشده را معرفی کنند و بازسازی و تحلیل خود از متن آن را ارائه نمایند. این احتمال وجود دارد که کتیبه در مکان دریافت چیزی مانند مالیات یا هدایا کار گذاشته شده بود.

واژه‌های کلیدی: بسطام، روسا، سنگ‌نیشته، ماکو، اورارتوها.

i . The inscription is 71.5 cm long on top, 71 cm in the bottom, and 55 cm wide. There are 3 to 4 cm borders between the lines and the signs are 3 cm high (Dara, 2017: 123-126).

ii . 1. Dḫal-di-e EN i-ni É.BÁRA mru-sa-še

2. mar-giš-te-ḫi-ni-še ši-di-iš-tú-ni Dḫal-di-ni-ni

3. uš-ma-ši-ni mru-sa-še mar-giš-te-ḫi-ni-še

4. a-li qar-bi sal-zi ma-nu ú-i gi-e-i

5. iš-ti-ni ši-da-ú-ri šú-ki Dḫal-di-še
6. ú-bar-du-du-ni i-e-še ši-di-iš-tú-bi
7. te-ru-bi ti-ni ^mru-sa-a-i URU.TUR
8. ^mru-sa-a-še ^mar-giš-te-ḫi-ni-še a-li
9. a-lu-še i-ni DUB-te tú-li-e a-lu-še
10. pi-tú-li-e a-lu-še ip-ḫu-li-e tú-ri-ni-ni
11. ^Dḫal-di-še ^DIM-še ^DUTU-ni-še DINGIR^{MEŠ}-še
12. mì-ku-u-i ti-ni ma-nu-ni ^DUTU-ni-ka-i
13. ^mru-sa-a-ni ^mar-giš-te-ḫi
14. MAN DAN-NU MAN KUR.KUR^{MEŠ}-a-u-e
15. ^rMAN^r ^{KUR}bi-a-i-na-u-e MAN MAN-ú-e
16. [a]-lu-si ^{URU}tu-uš-pa-a-e URU (Dara, 2017: 125)

ⁱⁱⁱ . It is a broken piece of stone with 32 cm long, 19 cm wide, and 15 cm thick at most. There are traces of 6 lines inscription left on it and the cuneiform signs are 3 cm high (Dara, 2017: 129).

^{iv} . 1' [] x []

- 2' [(zi-el-di-e MAN-e ar-du-li-ni a-li a-šú-li)] ^rDḫal-di-ni^r [(É ku-i-zi)]
- 3' [(zi-el-di ši-la-ni-ni i-šá-ni ši-i-ni ^Ési-ir-ḫa-n)]i-ni ma-ni-[(ni na-ḫi-zi)]
- 4' [(ši-al-a-di-e kam-ni su-ri ku-i-zi ši-la-ni)]-ni ^Dḫa[(l-di-ni É)]
- 5' [(mì-i a-i-ni-i zu-ma-gi-e áš-du-ú-ni a-li)]-^re áš^r-d[(u-li 2-am-di-ni)]
- 6' [mu-ú-ri a-ši-i-ni a-še ši-i-ú-li-e zu-ma)]-^rti^r-[(i-ni ^Ési-ir-ḫa-ni-ni)]

^v . The tablet is 8 and 7.6 cm long in two sides. It is about 6.3 cm wide. The thickness is 1.3 cm on top and 1.5 cm on the bottom. The signs are 1.4 cm high (Dara, 2017: 138).

^{vi} . 1. LUGAL-še a-li ti-e

2. iš-pi-li-ú-qu ^{LÚ}NA₄.DIB
3. ^mlu-ub-šú-ši-ni ^{LÚ}É.GAL
4. ba-ú-še 'a-al-du
5. LUGAL-li ba-ú-še/DU₁₁? TI DINGIR
6. gu-ni ^{GIŠ}ú-du-u-e
7. ḫu-tú-ma-gi ma-nu-bi
8. ^mlu-ub-še-ši-ni-da ^{LÚ}É. GAL
9. a-tú-ú-nu ^ma-di-ab-di-i
10. ^{LÚ}GABA.RI ^{LÚ}NAM^{MEŠ}
11. ^{URU}a-i-su-ab-zu-ni
12. ḫi-ni a-la-gi šá-te-e
13. ^{GIŠ}ú-du-u ^ma-di-ab-di (Dara, 2017: 139-140)

^{vii} . The tablet is 8.3 cm long in right and 6 cm long in its left. The width is 7.3 cm. The thickness is at most 1.2 cm on the top and 1.4 cm in the bottom. The signs are 0.5 cm high (Dara, 2017: 145).

^{viii} . 1. [LUGAL]-še a-li ti-e

2. ^mlu-ub-šú-ši-ni-di ^{LÚ}É.GAL
3. ^ra-la^r-gi e-ku-ú-di-e
4. a-li-li ^{LÚ}a-me-ri-e-ši
5. ma-nu-ú-la-li ar-di-li
6. 3-di NINDA^{MEŠ} 1-di ^{LÚ}MEŠ
7. a-tar-a a-li-e ^{LÚ}ḫal-bi
8. ma-nu-ú-li ar-di-li
9. 2-di NINDA^{MEŠ} 1-di ^{LÚ}MEŠ
10. 1-di-ni ^{U₄}ME i-ni
11. i-da-a-ni a-la-gi-e (Dara, 2017: 145-146)

^{ix} . This is the command or an announcement to decide for the portion of the bread for two groups or tribes or families of Ameriši and Ḫalbi. It is possible that these two groups lived in the region or under the command of The small city of Rusa. It is also possible that the ration of the bread was distributed to the people by some economic or social reasons or a pattern was decided for their ration. As Amerišis take more ration of the bread it seems that they were the upper level or in better position what so ever. It is also possible that Ḫalbis were punished by the commanders to take less ration. Another possibility is that this decision is made according to the wether, war,

surrounding situation or the famine.

^x. The tablet is 3.4 cm long, 3.7 cm wide, and 1.8 cm thick. The signs are 0.3 cm high. The tablet is broken and the inscription is severely damaged that the reverse is broken in to six pieces (Dara, 2017: 150).

^{xi}. 1. ^mše-i-ni-[še ba]-ú-še

2. ši-^rú-ni⁷ [ti]-i-e

3. ^rmše⁷-i-[ni-i]-e-di ^{LÚ}NAM-di

4. [^mx]-ú-[x-x]-ni ^{LÚ}NA₄.DIB

5. ^mma-[x-x-n]i ^{LÚ}IG⁷?LÁ

6. za-ni-[da-bi] TI DINGIR [gu]-ni (Dara, 2017: 151)

^{xii}. The tablet is broken and is 4.5 cm long, 3.5 cm in the left and 1.5 cm in the right side. The broken side is 5 cm long. The thickness is 2 cm and the wedges are 0.3 to 0.5 cm tall (Dara, 2017: 155).

^{xiii}. 1. UDU 1-^hi ^ma-ru-[...]

2. UDU 1-^hi ^mni-nu[...]

3. UDU 1-^hi ^mru⁷[...]

4. UDU ^r1-^hi ^m[...] (Dara, 2017: 155)

^{xiv}. The authors suppose that the short version was used on the ceramic to make it easier or possibly this method was common on daily-life inscriptions.

^{xv}. It is 4.9 cm long, 3 cm wide and 2.5 cm thick. Its inscription is as following:

1. [a-ku]-ki šá-li ^mru-sa-a-še ^mar-giš-te-[^hi-ni-še]

2. [^{GIŠ}]GU.ZA te-ru-ú-ni ^mru-sa-^hi-na-a

3. ^rKUR⁷qi-il-ba-ni-ka i-ni-li ^{GIŠ}ZU^{MEŠ}

4. ^rLÚ⁷ ^{GIŠ}NAGAR^{MEŠ}

5. [TI].BAR-li

6. ^mru-sa-(i) URU.TUR

7. ^{KUR}a-la-'a-ni

1. That (or the same) year Rusa, [son of] Argišti, 2. installed (his) throne in the city of Rusa 3. in front of [region] Qilbani. These timbers 4. carpenters 5. ?s 6. The Small City of Rusa, 7. the region of Ala (Dara, 2017: 236-237)

^{xvi}. This bulla is 4 in 3.4 in 2.1 cm. Its inscription is as following:

1. ^mru.[URU.TUR] ^rKUR⁷ ^ra-la-'a⁷

2. ^mḥa-nu-ú-i ^{LÚ}TE-RI

1. [The small city of] Rusa, the region of Ala, 2. (Mr.) Ḥanu, the palace Head or Master (Dara, 2017: 238).

^{xvii}. Zimansky suggests it is possible that Rusa's seal was reused even after him (Zimansky, 1988: 123). It is also possible that the seals of the king were used by high ranked officials appointed by the king himself to use his seal and as the seals were widely used by these officials they were used even after Rusa. Seidl thinks that the stamp seals with hieroglyph inscriptions could have been in the possession of the lower ranked officials and the scenes on them could be divided in to two groups of royal and everyday use (Seidl, 1976: 146). Therefore, the personal and unofficial seals had hieroglyphic seal inscriptions (Ibid: 61).

^{xviii}. ^mru-sa-i i-ni KIŠIB ^mar-giš-te-^hi-ni-i

This (is) the seal of Rusa, son of Argišti (Dara, 2021)

^{xix}. ^{LÚ}a-šu-li (or ^{LÚ}A.NIN-li) KIŠIB 2. ^{LÚ}a-šu-li ? (ašuli)

The seal of ašuli (Dara, 2022)

^{xx}. Rusa's seal impression contains the shade bearer, the king, the lion and the trident while the other one includes the mythical creatures as griffins, sphinx and genes facing the sacred tree. Other scenes as two men in a ritual ceremony (Dara, 2017: 257) are also discovered on the bullae from Batam.

^{xxi}. mi-nu-a-še a-li-e a-lu-še i-ni DUB-te tu-li-e a-lu-še pi-tu-[li]-e a-lu-še a-i-ni-i i-ni-li du-li-e a-lu-še u-li-še ti-u-li-i-e i-e-še ^{URU}lu-^hi-u-ni-ni ḥa-u-bi tu-r[i-ni-n]i ^Dḥal-di-še ^DIM-še ^DUTU-še DINGJR^{MEŠ} še ma-a-ni ^DUTU-ni pi-i-ni mi-i ar-^hi u-ru-li-a-ni mi-l i-na-a-i-ni mi-i na-a-ra-a a-u-i-e u[lu-li-e] (Salvini, 2008: A 5-1, § 15-24).