آیا روسا خودکشی کرده است؟[1]

میخائیل داگلاس روآف[2]

مترجم منصورحمدالله‌زاده[3]

چکیده

در این مقاله، من نه تنها صحت ادعای آشوری مبنی بر خودکشی روسا را زیر سؤال می برم، بلکه نظراتی را در مورد هویت حاکم اورارتو که سارگون ادعا می کند او را شکست داده و گفته می شود «با دست خود با خنجر یا کمربند آهنی خود به زندگی پایان داده است، ارائه می کنم. ». اولین روایتی که درباره روسا (که نام او در متون آشوری به صورت اورس نوشته شده است) را توصیف می کند، نامه سارگون به خدای اشور است. بر اساس این متن که اندکی پس از پایان لشکرکشی هشتم سارگون نوشته شده و تاریخ آن به ۷۱٤ پ.م. است، سارگون اورس را در نبرد کوه واوش شکست داد و پادشاه اورارتویی به کوه ها فرار می‌کند. سرنوشت او چنین توصیف شده است: «او را مانند یک زن در حال زایمان به رختخواب انداختند و آب و غذا را از دهانش جدا کردند. او یک زخم لاعلاج به خود وارد کرد.» سارگون در ادامه شهر مقدس موسیسر را که اورارتوی ها آردینی می نامیدند تصرف کرد. او در آنجا کاخ و معبد خدای هالدی را که خدای اصلی اورارتویی ها نیز بود غارت کرد. سارگون خانواده اورزانا، فرمانروای موسیسر و همچنین خدای شهر هالدی و همسرش را به اسارت گرفت و به آشور تبعید کرد.

کلید واژه‌ها: اورارتو، روسا، سارگون، زبان‌های باستانی، ماد

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EISENBRAUNS

Did Rusa Commit Suicide?

Michael Roaf
MÜNCHEN

In this paper I not only question the validity of the Assyrian claim that Rusa committed suicide, but also present some ideas about the identity of the ruler of Urartu whom Sargon claims to have defeated and who allegedly "with his own hand ended his life with his iron girdle dagger".[1]

The earliest account describing what happened to Rusa (whose name was written in Assyrian texts as Ursā)[2] is Sargon's Letter to the god Assur (Sg 8).[3] According to this text, which was composed soon after the end of Sargon's Eighth Campaign and is dated by the name of the eponym of 714 BC, Sargon defeated Ursa at the battle of Mount Waush and the Urartian king fled into the mountains. His fate was described as follows (Sg 8: 151): "he was thrown into bed like a woman in labour and he cut off food and water from his mouth. He imposed on himself an incurable illness."

Sargon went on to capture the holy city of Musasir that the Urartians called Ardini. There he looted the palace and the temple of the god Haldi, who was also the chief god worshipped by the Urartians. Sargon took captive the family of Urzana, the ruler of Musasir, as well as the city god Haldi and his consort and deported them to Assyria. Ursa's illness had not proved immediately fatal and when the news of the events at Musasir was reported to the Urartian king (Sg 8: 411–413)[4]:

1. These ideas result from an International Symposium on the topic Biainili-Urartu held in Munich in October 2007. A more detailed paper entitled 'Could Rusa son of Erimena have been king of Urartu during Sargon's Eighth Campaign?' is published in the Proceedings of that symposium (Kroll et al. (eds.) 2012: 187-216). Here I outline the main elements of the argument and those interested in the details should consult that publication. I am grateful to the specialists with whom I have discussed the suicide of Rusa especially Andreas Fuchs, Ursula Hellwag, Stephan Kroll, Karen Radner, Mirjo Salvini, Joanne Scurlock, Ursula Seidl, Martin Worthington, and Paul Zimansky.

2. In this article I use the Assyrian form of the name (i.e. Ursa not Rusa) when discussing the Assyrian sources and the Urartian form (i.e. Rusa) when discussing the Urartian sources. Since there were three rulers of Urartu called Rusa and since their order is uncertain, I include the name of the king's father when it is known: thus Rusa son of Sarduri, Rusa son of Argishti, and Rusa son of Erimena (who have commonly been called Rusa I, II, and III). In the interest of brevity I will sometimes abbreviate these names by only writing the first letter of the father's name thus Rusa S, Rusa A, and Rusa E. Similar abbreviations will sometimes be used for other rulers, Sarduri A for Sarduri (II) son of Argišti, Argišti M for Argišti (I) son of Minua, and Argishti R for Argishti (II) son of Rusa (see Table 2).

3. In the following abbreviated to Sg 8. For the text and a German translation see Mayer 1983 based on the earlier edition by Thureau-Dangin 1912 but including an additional fragment in Berlin. For a recent English translation see Foster 2005.

4. This translation follows Hurowitz (2008: 118–9), who provides a detailed literary commentary on the way Sargon's relationship with Ursa was portrayed in the Letter to Assur but does not discuss the details of Ursa's possible suicide.

> Ursa . . . squatted on the ground; he tore his clothes, and threw up his hands; he ripped off his crown, and tore out his hair; he pounded his chest with both his arms, and was thrown on his face; his heart stood still, his innards burned, in his mouth were placed distressful cries.

Having survived his incurable illness, there is still no mention of suicide or of the death of Ursa. But in his Cylinder Inscription (Fuchs 1994: Zyl. 27), copies of which were written as early as the following year (713 BC), Sargon described himself as the one, "who devastated Urartu, plundered the city of Musasir, in terror (great fear) of whom Ursa king of Urartu ended his life with his own weapon."

And in his Display Inscription (Fuchs 1994: Prunk 76) more details of the weapon were supplied: "Ursa king of Urartu heard of the destruction of Musasir, the carrying off of Haldi, his god, and with his own hands ended his life with his iron girdle dagger."

In Sargon's Annals (Fuchs 1994: Ann: 164) Ursa's suicide is described with the events of Sargon's 8th year (714 BC). "Ursa of Urartu – the splendour of Assur, my lord, overwhelmed him and with his own iron dagger he stabbed himself through the heart like a pig and ended his life."

But according to these same annals (Fuchs 1994: Ann. 198–200) in Sargon's 9th year (i.e. the following year, 713 BC) Ambaris of Tabal appealed to Ursa of Urartu and Mita of Mushki proposing an alliance against Sargon, an episode described in greater detail in Sargon's Display Inscription (Fuchs 1994: Prunk 29–31)

> Ambaris of Tabal whom I had placed on the throne of Hullu his father, to whom I had given my daughter, . . .that faithless one sent a messenger to Ursa of Urartu and Mita of Mushki, (proposing) to seize my territory.

The next dated mention of an Urartian king in Assyrian sources dates to 709 when Argishti (i.e. Argishti [II] son of Rusa) was on the throne of Urartu (Fuchs in 2012: 137).

Amongst Urartian specialists and Assyriologists a consensus has reigned for more than 80 years that Ursa the opponent of Sargon was Rusa son of Sarduri who has left us no fewer than three steles describing how he mounted a counterattack, drove the Assyrians out of Ardini (Musasir), and re-established the Urartian king's right to worship at Haldi's temple (André-Salvini & Salvini 2002). An Urartian occupation of Musasir, presumably the same as that described on Rusa S's steles, is the subject of numerous letters written by Assyrian agents including one written by Urzana himself (SAA 5 87, 88, 89, 112, 147, and 148, Lanfranchi & Parpola 1990). [5]

If this successful counterattack was in response to Sargon's onslaught as one might assume was the case, then there would be even less reason for Rusa S to commit suicide.

5. In this paper which is concerned with the death of Ursa I have not discussed the circumstances of the crushing defeat of an Urartian king by the Cimmerians described by several Assyrian informants. Although some scholars have linked this to the events of 714, Fuchs has convincingly argued that this took place some years later. For further details and discussion see Fuchs 2012: 155–57 and Roaf 2012: 211–3. The same individuals from Assyria, Urartu and Musasir crop up in the Assyrian reports on the Urartian occupation of Musasir and in those on the disastrous Urartian invasion of Cimmeria and this strongly supports a date for Rusa S's counterattack in the years following Sargon's onslaught of 714 but before the invasion of Cimmeria. Dating Rusa S's counterattack described on the steles to before 714 requires two Assyrian invasions of Musasir (one not documented in Assyrian sources) and two Urartian counterattacks, all of which involved Urzana.

A straightforward reading of these texts presents us with a chronological problem. Ursa was alive at the time when the Letter to the God Assur was composed in 714, but he committed suicide the same year. The following year (713) he was part of a conspiracy against Sargon. Rusa son of Sarduri occupied Musasir in response to an Assyrian occupation of the city: the only Assyrian intervention in Musasir that we know of is that of Sargon in 714, though an unclear passage in the Eponym Chronicle for 713 mentions Musasir as the site of some Assyrian activity (Millard 1994: 47).

Table 1. The principal episodes concerning Sargon, Ursa, Rusa S, Urzana and Musasir.

Date	*Urzana and Musasir*	*Urartian king*	*Ursa*	*Rusa S*	*Source*
714	Sargon sacks Musasir Urzana left in charge		is in despair		Sargon's Letter to the god Assur
714			commits suicide		Sargon's Annals
713			conspires against Sargon		Sargon's Annals
713	Assyrian activity in Musasir				Eponym Chronicle
autumn unknown year	Urzana in charge	re-captures Musasir from the Assyrians			Assyrian reports
no date	Urzana left in charge			re-captures Musasir from the Assyrians	Topzawa, Movana, Mergeh Kervan steles
709		Argishti king of Urartu			Sargon's Annals

Various proposals have been made for resolving the chronological problems apparently in these episodes:

- Ursa's suicide took place not in 714 but in 713 shortly after the conspiracy and it was included under year 8 in the Annals because other events concerning Ursa were recorded in that year. (It could not be later than 713 because the Cylinder inscriptions were written in that year.)
- Ursa's conspiracy took place some time earlier and was only included under the events of 713 because Sargon took action against the conspirators in that year.
- Rusa S's occupation of Musasir took place before Sargon's attack or took place almost as soon as Sargon had returned to Assyria in 714/713 shortly before his suicide.
- The Urartian invasion of Musasir recorded in the letters was a different event to the invasion of Musasir described in Rusa S's steles.

While these are all possible explanations none of them is particularly satisfactory. In particular the idea that Ursa would have committed suicide after Musasir had been re-occupied by the Urartians is hardly tenable.

Sargon had deported the gods and the royal family of Musasir and had taken an enormous amount of booty back to Assyria but he had left Urzana still in charge at Musasir. Furthermore although there were close ties between Musasir and Urartu, Musasir was an independent state (see Radner 2012: 253–54) and not an integral part of the empire of Urartu. Sargon had done a certain amount of damage to Urartian settlements in his march through Urartian territory but reading between the lines of his reports it appears that the Urartians for the most part successfully avoided the Assyrian attacks and that the rewards of the campaign up until the somewhat treacherous attack on Musasir had been disappointing.

When Rusa S went to Ardini to worship Haldi his absence and that of his consort Bagbartu were not mentioned. It would have been possible for new cult statues to have been made to replace those taken by the Assyrians, though this might have been a rather long process to judge by how long it took for the statue of Marduk to be returned to Babylon. Alternatively the Assyrian king may have voluntarily returned the gods to Musasir: that this might actually have happened is suggested by a letter which the editors interpreted to mean that Sargon offered to return the gods to Urzana in exchange for his acting as an Assyrian agent and supplying the Assyrians with information.

Three reasons for Ursa's suicide were given in Sargon's texts: "the splendour of Assur, my lord, overwhelmed him", he was "in terror (great fear) of (Sargon)", and he learnt about "the destruction of Musasir (and) the carrying off of Haldi, his god". Clearly none of these would apply if Ursa had already neutralised the Assyrian influence by re-establishing his presence in Musasir and was able to worship in the Temple of Haldi in that city as is explicitly stated both in the Assyrian correspondence and in Rusa S's stele inscriptions.

In short the reasons supplied by the Assyrian scribes in Sargon's inscriptions are those that the Assyrian king would have liked to hear and not those that would have led an Urartian king, who was still in control of his territory and had a sizeable fighting force at his command, to consider committing suicide.

* * *

There are many rulers who are said to have committed suicide, some very celebrated such as Cleopatra or Nero. But in every case that I have investigated, either the circumstances of the death are not clear or the position of the ruler was helpless and hopeless, being already imprisoned or in imminent danger of capture with an enemy at the door and his troops having fled. In such a situation suicide might well have seemed a better option than inevitable torture and execution. In many cases the "suicide" seems to have in fact have been a covert "assassination", but presented as suicide which was thought to be more acceptable than regicide. The death of President Salvador Allende of Chile in the military coup of 1973 is a case in point: whether he died in the fighting, was assassinated afterwards, or, as most commentators now believe, committed suicide is essentially immaterial, for his power and authority had already been lost and he was facing humiliation and a certain death. Similarly, many loyal Bavarians are sceptical of the official verdict on the death of Ludwig II, der Märchenkönig, and believe that he was assassinated. In this case too, when he died, he was about to lose his independence and be permanently detained.

In my talk I described the death of King John the Blind, Count of Luxemburg, King of Bohemia, King of Poland. I had asked Andreas Fuchs if he knew of a ruler

who, in control of his army and not in immediate danger of inevitable defeat, had committed suicide and he directed me towards this interesting monarch, suggesting that fed up with life and depressed by his infliction King John had himself tied onto his horse and had ridden into the midst of the Battle of Crecy on the 26th of August 1346 with the intention of committing suicide by allowing the English archers to end his life, which indeed they were obliging enough to do. This explanation, however, was not that given by the chronicler Froissart who wrote that the king and his knights fought valiantly but went too far forward and were all slain.

In fact the only reasonably well documented instance of a ruler committing suicide while still in control of his army and not in immediate danger of inevitable defeat I have been able to find is that of Otho, who was emperor of Rome for three months in the year of the four emperors following the death of Nero. A part of Otho's army had fought against a larger force of his rival Vitellius' army, was forced to withdraw, and then came to terms with the enemy. Otho himself was not involved in the battle and was left with a considerable force and reinforcements were not far away. Nevertheless Otho committed suicide (Dio Cassius LXIV.10–15). It has been suggested that he did so in order to spare Rome the misery of a prolonged civil war, but given the previous hedonistic and selfish reputation of Otho, who was apparently cast in the same mold as Nero, such an altruistic action is not to be expected and perhaps his "suicide" was in actual fact "assisted".

* * *

This short excursus into royal suicides[6] leaves me with considerable scepticism about the description of Ursa's suicide in Sargon's inscriptions.[7] But, whether suicide or not, the death of Ursa presents the modern scholar with a problem. If Ursa died in 714, how could he have conspired against Sargon in 713?

A possibility might be that Ursa did not die. Karen Radner (2012) has described the account given in Sargon's 8th Campaign of Ursa's reaction to the news of the sacking of Musasir as "Assyrian wishful thinking". The bringers of news that the Assyrian kings wished to hear were richly rewarded and it is possible to imagine an unscrupulous messenger inventing the good news of Ursa's suicide in order to collect a gold ring. Once his report was accepted and had entered the official records it might have been as much as a courtier's life was worth to inform Sargon that the report was false and that Ursa was still alive. A similar story of the "invention" of news is given in Evelyn Waugh's novel *Scoop*, a story that is still resonant today, when false information posted on an internet web-site gets repeated again and again (for example the assertion that Barack Obama is a closet Muslim). While it seems to me legitimate to doubt whether Ursa's death was suicide (since I know of no well documented example of a ruler still in power who has committed suicide),

6. For the "surprisingly rare" mentions of suicide, both royal and non-royal, in ancient Mesopotamian sources see Worthington 2010.

7. Similar doubts might be raised about the reported death of Shamash-shum-ukin, whose fate appears to be echoed in the later accounts of the suicides of Sardanapallos (Ashurbanipal) and Sarakos (Sin-shar-ishkun). Frame 1992: 153–5 suggests that his death could have been either suicide or murder. Taking responsibility for the murder of the (formerly) favourite brother of Ashurbanipal would have been risky and a more prudent course would have been to claim that Shamash-shum-ukin had killed himself and to have destroyed any evidence to the contrary by burning the corpse. But Shamash-shum-ukin was in such desperate straits that his committing suicide would not have been surprising.

stronger supporting evidence is needed before a convincing case can be made that the Assyrians completely fabricated his death, especially since there is in my opinion another more satisfactory explanation.

The Urartian royal inscriptions taken with the Assyrian synchronisms give an unbroken chain of Urartian kings from the 9th to the 7th century BC each of whom followed a ruler with the same name as his father: Sarduri – Ishpuini – Minua – Argishti – Sarduri – Rusa – Argishti – Rusa.[8]

Table 2. Kings of Urartu mentioned in 8th and 7th century Assyrian texts with their traditional identifications and abbreviated forms of the names used in this article (after Roaf 2012: 187–88). As discussed below it is possible that Ursa should be identified with Rusa son of Erimena (abbreviated to Rusa E).

Dates in Assyrian sources	*Name of Urartian ruler in Assyrian sources*	*Name in Urartian sources*	*Traditional identification and sequence of Urartian rulers*	*Abbreviation used in this article*
774	Argišti/u	Argišti	Argišti son of Minua	Argišti M
743, 735	Issar-dūri, Sardaurri, Sarduri	Sarduri	Sarduri son of Argišti	Sarduri A
719–713	Ursā, Rusā	Rusa	Rusa son of Sarduri	Ursa or Rusa S
709	Argišta/i/u	Argišti	Argišti son of Rusa	Argišti R
673/2, 652	Ursā	Rusa	Rusa son of Argišti	Rusa A
646/642	Ištar/Issar-dūri	Sarduri		

There is, however, one fly in the ointment, a king of Urartu, who called himself Rusa son of Erimena. Traditionally it has been customary to place him at the end of the dynasty along with a Sarduri,[9] who was mentioned in an inscription of Ashurbanipal in a context dated to the 640s BC, and a number of individuals, named on cylinder seal inscriptions (including possibly a Rusa son of Erimena), who were considered by some scholars to have been rulers of Urartu. This comfortable solution was questioned by Stephan Kroll in his ground-breaking paper "Urartus Untergang in anderer Sicht" published in 1984[10] and his doubts about placing Rusa son of Erimena after Rusa son of Argishti have been reinforced in recent years by the realisation that the names on the cylinder seals are not those of kings of Urartu,[11]

8. For details see, for example, Fuchs 2012: 145–49.

9. A Sarduri son of Sarduri, about whom nothing else is known, dedicated a shield found in Karmir Blur. He is sometimes identified with the Sarduri mentioned in Ashurbanipal's inscription.

10. Following the publication of this paper, the problem of the sequence of Urartian rulers has been much discussed. Some scholars have remained content with the previous consensus view while others, following Kroll's lead, have tried to devise a list of rulers in which Rusa son of Argishti, the megalomaniac builder of enormous fortified citadel centres such as Ayanis, Bastam, Karmir Blur and Kefkalesi, was the last ruler of Urartu, who left any Urartian royal inscriptions. This problem was very much at the forefront of several papers given at the Biainili-Urartu Symposium held in Munich (those by Salvini, Kroll, Fuchs and Hellwag) and was considered in a recently published article by Zimansky (2007) and a paper then in press by Seidl (see now Seidl 2007 and 2012).

11. For the names on the seals see Hellwag 2000; 2005; 2012: 230–31. The title that they bear ^{LÚ}A.ZUM.LI was previously read ^{LÚ}A.NIN-li and interpreted as meaning 'the son of the queen'; but it is now generally acknowledged that the connection with the logogram for queen was mistaken and that, while the names of the ^{LÚ}A.ZUM.LI are names typical of the ruling dynasty of Urartu, there is no evidence that this title indicated that they were rulers of Urartu or that it designated them as future rulers.

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that Rusa son of Erimena was of equal importance with other Urartian rulers,[12] that he was responsible for the construction of the citadel of Toprakkale and an extensive system of dams, reservoirs and canals,[13] and that he could not have ruled after Rusa son of Argishti.[14]

Further support for a date for Rusa E before Rusa A comes from the analysis of the titles used by the last Urartian kings which shows that the titulature used by Rusa E was similar to those used by Rusa S and by Argishti R and different from those of the earlier kings Argishti M and Sarduri A as well as from that of Rusa A (see Roaf 2012: 196–98 for details). Most conclusive of all is the art historical analysis of the lions and bulls on inscribed shields that Ursula Seidl presented in 2004 (see also 2007 and 2012).[15] The lions of Rusa E show an unmistakeable similarity to the lions of the early 8th century BC rulers of Urartu, Argishti M and Sarduri A (Fig. 1).

Similarly the lions of Rusa S are intermediate in style between those of Rusa A and those of Rusa E and the earlier rulers. A few minor features are shared by the lions of Rusa E and Rusa S and are not found on the lions of Argishti M and Sarduri A, in particular the markings on their hindquarters. This might suggest that Rusa E ruled between Sarduri A and Rusa S. In any case the widely held belief that Rusa E should date after Rusa A is untenable and even the revised schemes in which the reign of Rusa E was before that of Rusa A and later than that of Rusa S are not in accordance with the iconographic evidence.[16]

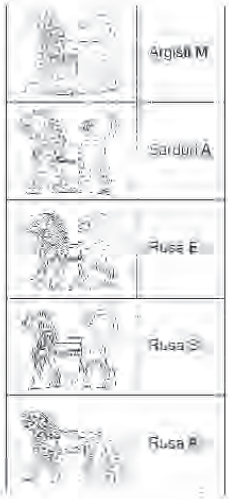

Fig. 1. Lions on shields with inscriptions of later Urartian kings. For the kings' names, see Table 2. After Seidl 2004 and 2007.

To cut a long story short, the various apparently contradictory sources concerning Ursa and Rusa S can be reconciled when one realises that there might have been two different rulers of Urartu that the Assyrians called Ursa, one Rusa son of Sarduri and the other Rusa son of Erimena. Rusa E was the king of Urartu during Sargon's attack on that country. There are hints in Sargon's Eighth Campaign (So

12. For new inscriptions of Rusa E and in particular the realisation that the Keşiş Göl Stele in Berlin describing the irrigation works constructed for Rusahinili (Toprakkale) should be dated to his reign see Salvini 2006.

13. For the conclusion that Toprakkale was founded by Rusa E and not Rusa A see Seidl 2007 and Zimansky 2007.

14. Both Seidl 2007 and Zimansky 2007 make the point that Rusa E called his new citadel Rusahinili without any further qualification but Rusa A added epithets to distinguish his new citadel at Ayanis (Rusahinili Eḫiduriḫai) from the earlier founded citadel at Toprakkale that he called Rusahinili Qilanniḫai. Seidl (2007; 2012) provides other convincing arguments in favour of the earlier dating of Rusa E. See also her contribution in the Biainili-Urartu Symposium volume as well as those by Fuchs, Kroll, and myself. It may be noted that Salvini (2007; 2012: 132) has not yet accepted this new dating of Rusa E and still believes that Toprakkale was another edifice constructed by the obsessive builder-king Rusa A.

15. There are no shields decorated with lions and bulls so far attested for the reign of Argishti II, the predecessor of Rusa A.

16. Fuchs 2012: 117–49, Seidl 2007, 2012. For further discussion see Roaf 2012. A more detailed study of royal Urartian iconography is desirable, but, since many of the finds have not been published in detail and are not easily accessible to scholars, one cannot expect such a study to be completed in the near future.

8: 403–4) that suggest that Ursa had come to the throne through force and was a usurper, as there are in Rusa E's own inscriptions and as may be inferred from the fact that his father is not attested as king of Urartu.[17] There are also passages in the Assyrian sources that indicate that there were two major influential families in Urartu, one of Ursa and the other of Sarduri (Sg 8: 277–9; SAA 5 93). It is easy to think that the usurper Rusa son of Erimena whose father had not been king before him gave his name to the family of Ursa while Rusa son of Sarduri belonged to the family of Sarduri, a name borne by at least two previous rulers of Urartu.

It is therefore possible – and in my view probable – that in 714 in the aftermath of the invasion of the Assyrians Rusa son of Erimena was replaced on the throne by Rusa son of Sarduri. We may well ask "how did this happen?" A passage in a fragmentary letter (SAA 5 93) may provide the answer.[18] Its editors, Lanfranchi and Parpola, entitled the letter "A coup d'état" and they translated the passage as follows: "His magnates [sur]rounded him in [. . . , at the out]skirts of Wai[si] and killed him." The reference to the city of Waisi and the mention of "his magnates" indicate that the victim of this assassination was the king of Urartu. The letter then mentions "the field marshal (*turtan*) of the left of the family (*qinnu*) of Sarduri"[19] and (after a gap of two lines) records that someone (perhaps this field marshal) had "[not y]et entered Tu[rushp]a". The Assyrian agents reporting back about conditions in Urartu were continually concerned about where the Urartian king was and frequently recorded his movements in and out of the Urartian capital Tushpa (called by the Assyrians Turushpa). It is possible that in this letter the person who had not yet entered Turushpa was the new Urartian king.

If this letter does describe the death of Ursa, he did not commit suicide. The usurper Rusa son of Erimena was assassinated by his nobles and as a result a second Rusa, Rusa son of Sarduri, a member of the Sarduri-family that had previously ruled Urartu, was able to seize the throne.[20]

17. As already proposed by Thureau-Dangin 1912: xviii–xix. For further discussion see Roaf 2010 and 2012.

18. SAA 5 93 Lanfranchi and Parpola 1990. Since the text is fragmentary and undated, other interpretations are possible but here I follow what I consider the simplest one.

19. It is not clear what role this field marshal may have played, but one possibility is that he became king of Urartu. The name Sarduri (^{md}15-BAD) is only partly legible, but it is a plausible restoration.

20. In this short and speculative paper it has not been possible to consider all the various possibilities and still less to evaluate them. Further discussion of some of the possibilities can be found in my contribution to the Biainili-Urartu Symposium, but it may be some time before all those interested in Urartu will be convinced that the narrative presented here is possible, let alone plausible, and even longer, if ever, before a consensus will be reached.

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Did Rusa Commit Suicide?

Michael Roaf

Abstract

In this paper, I not only question the validity of the Assyrian claim that Rusa committed suicide but also present some ideas about the identity of the ruler of Urartu whom Sargon claims to have defeated and who allegedly ب with his hand ended his life with his iron girdle daggerپ.1 □□earliest account describing what happened to Rusa (whose name was written in Assyrian texts as Ursā) 2 is Sargonی Letter to the god Assur (Sg 8). 3 According to this text, which was composed soon after the end of Sargonی Eighth Campaign and is dated by the name of the eponym of 714 BC, Sargon defeated Ursa at the battle of Mount Waush and the Urartian king led into the mountains. His fate was described as follows (Sg 8: 151): ب he was thrown into bed like a woman in labour and he cut of food and water from his mouth. He imposed on himself an incurable illness.پSargon went on to capture the holy city of Musasir that the Urartians called Ardini. □ere he looted the palace and the temple of the god Haldi, who was also the chief god worshipped by the Urartians. Sargon took captive the family of Urzana, the ruler of Musasir, as well as the city god Haldi and his consort and deported them to Assyria.

Keywords: Urartu, Rossa, Sargon, ancient languages, Media