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Original Research Article

Urartian Mass Deportation: Punishment or Policy?

Mahsa Zareei¹, Farshid Iravani Ghadim^{2*}

1. Ph.D. Candidate of Archaeology, Faculty of Conservation and Restoration, Department of Archaeology, Art University of Isfahan, Isfahan, Iran.
2. Associate Professor, Faculty of Conservation and Restoration, Department of Archaeology, Art University of Isfahan, Isfahan, Iran.

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Abstract

The Urartians are one of the ancient peoples who played an important role in technological advancements in the ancient Near East during the first millennium BC. The name “Urartu” appears as (U(ru)artri) in Assyrian texts in the 13th century BC, and, after a hiatus, reappears in documented texts in the mid-9th century BC. Despite fundamental changes in the structure of societies at the beginning of the first millennium BC, it can be understood why forced migration, exile, and resettlement occurred, and the resident ethnic groups remained as a limited power based on Urartian sources. The main issue of this research is to determine the approach to mass deportation by the Urartu state. Based on this, the following questions have been raised: What are the reasons and significance of mass deportation by the Urartu state? How can the approach and consequences of mass deportation during the time of Urartu be explained?

This research was conducted within the framework of historical studies and aims to determine the consequences of mass deportation in the Urartu state. The research method is descriptive-analytical based on written sources. The research findings indicate that, unlike the Assyrians, the Urartians intended to dominate the surrounding areas after exhausting wars and military campaigns. They have attempted to implement a policy of mass deportation differently from other powerful peoples in the region by exerting influence on states, establishing favorable political relations through ethnic ties, respecting the gods of the region, and performing rituals.

Keywords: *Urartu, Mass Deportation Policy, Exile, Resettlement, Urartian Texts.*

Introduction and Statement of the Problem

During the reign of Shalmaneser I (1274 BCE), written sources refer to a region called Uruatri or Nairi, which was the birthplace of the Urartian kingdom (Salvini, 1988-2001, 87; Salvini, 2006, 287; Sevin, 1999, 150). In the 9th century BCE, the state of Biainili was formed as a united kingdom around the Lake Van basin and gradually expanded its borders to include the South Caucasus, northwestern Iran, and northeastern and southeastern Anatolia. Exile is one of the actions exercised by a dominant authority over a

society, and literally means to drive away. Sometimes exile took the form of forced migration of an ethnic group or nation or for the transfer of labor in an organized and systematic manner, and sometimes it occurred alongside resettlement. Organized transfers or exile and forced migration that took place collectively faced many challenges. The exiles had to endure great hardships, leaving their homes and facing problems such as disease, food shortages, and cold during their journey. Methods of population transfer in Anatolia date back to the 13th-9th

*corresponding author: +98 9141181319• iravani@au.ac.ir

centuries BCE. During this period, Urartu was governed as a federation. Subsequently, the Urartian kingdom, with all its administrative and economic units, established its state identity and began organizing military campaigns to neighboring lands, concurrently resorting to methods of population transfer. Captive groups needed political, social, and economic status to maintain their community (Çilingiroğlu, 1997, 89). The main issue of this research is to determine the approach to mass deportation by the Urartian state. This study aims to establish the chronological timeline of the onset of forced migration in the Urartian state and to explain the results of this policy during the Urartian period.

Research Background

In the early 20th century, Marxist scholars such as Melikishvili (1951, 23) and Diakonoff (1963, 35) considered the exile of war captives by Urartian kings as a means to acquire slaves. Diakonoff believed that in Urartian society, slaves existed as a class called *Purale*, who were typically war captives. In a book titled “The Political Treaty Texts of the Hittite State Based on Cuneiform Documents from Bogazkoy and Ugarit” published by Gongorkar Aghoz in 2002, NAM.RA was an essential part of transferring individuals during the Hittite period. Accordingly, the earliest methods of mass population transfer in ancient Anatolia were observed with the Hittites (Akkus, 2007, 303).

In a study titled “Examples of Population Movements in the Assyrian Era” by Hande Durmuş, published in 2012, the methods of displacement or policies related to exiles during the reign of Assyrian kings are discussed based on cuneiform texts. In Durmuş’s studies titled “Aramean Kingdoms in Written Sources of the Assyrian Period,” also published in 2012, she refers to the role of the Arameans in population transfer, detailing by whom and where these groups were relocated.

Margaret Payne, in a book titled “Catalog of Urartian Cuneiform Documents,” published in 2006, provided the campaign texts of Urartian kings and their population transfers (Payne, 2006, 83). Altan Çilingiroğlu, in an

article titled “Urartian Population Transfers,” published in 1983, presented the political and economic reasons and consequences of population transfers during the Urartian period (Çilingiroğlu, 1976, 320).

Research Methodology

This research was conducted within the framework of cultural history studies. It attempted to determine the consequences of forced migration in the Urartian state using a descriptive-analytical approach based on written sources. Data collection was carried out through library studies. In the first phase, the analysis of existing studies is conducted based on the cultural findings of Urartu, particularly written sources. In the second phase, the opinions of scholars are examined, and then the behavioral functions related to forced migration in the Urartian state are analyzed and evaluated. Finally, using an inductive approach, the information is compiled and the final analysis is performed.

Mass Deportation Based on the Chronology of the Urartu State

• Period of Ishpuini and Menua (830-810 / 810-786 BCE)

It is believed that 825/824 BCE marks the year Ishpuini ascended to the throne. One of his initial actions was gaining control over part of Hubushkia and reaching the borders of the kingdom of Musasir in the south. After Ishpuini came to power, he appointed his son Menua (810-786 BCE) as his heir (Çilingiroğlu, 1997, 27). During this period, the first steps were taken towards expanding the state’s borders, and military campaigns to the east, north, and south began (Fig.1).

One of the most significant aspects of the joint reign of Ishpuini and Menua was the journey beyond the land of Urartu and the policy of population transfer for the first time. The official state religion policy, declared with the Mehrapi inscription during the reign of Ishpuini and Menua, indicates that the process of state formation was completed. According to the inscription’s text, it can be understood that the kingdom was part of a larger religious



Fig. 1. The Urartian kingdom and its sphere of influence and expansion. Source: Gökce et al., 2012, 107.

community (religion-centered) (Konakçı, 2006, 32). The Urartu state, in the regions it expanded into, also had gods that, according to this inscription, were added to its pantheon of deities. This passage describes the acceptance of the gods of the people of lands where significant population shifts have been imposed by the government of Urartu. The inscriptions belonging to Ishpuini, the inscriptions of castle buildings ordered by him, are mostly found in Tushpa, the capital, and its surroundings such as Zivstankale, Aşağı Anzaf, and Patnos (Çilingiroğlu, 1997, 28). The Kasimoğulları inscription indicates that the Urartians campaigned to the northern and northeastern regions of Lake Van, and areas such as Anaşe, Eturiki, Lusha, and Katarza were conquered (Payne, 2006, 37; Pehlivan, 2013, 198). Based on these inscriptions, it can be inferred that population transfers occurred as a result of northern expeditions, and groups of men and women were likely moved from the city of Anaşe to Van and its surroundings (Konakçı, 2006, 20). Ishpuini conquered Parsua in northwestern Iran with a campaign (Çilingiroğlu, 1997, 30), and with this campaign, Ishpuini and Menua began their military operations in the basin of Lake Urmia. Information about this military campaign can be identified from the Karagündüz inscription. The Urartu government also carried out a population transfer

policy during the campaigns conducted with the regular army in this region. The Kellešin inscription reflects the exiles who were captured during the eastern campaigns under the Joint Monarchy. However, the statement that “they distributed it among countries after leaving the country” probably means that the exiles were resettled in various regions along the transfer route. By this method, the monarchy might have carried out this resettlement as part of planned measures to prevent potential rebellions. During a period when Menua came to power alone, more than 110 inscriptions were well organized, portraying Urartu as powerful and transforming it into a great and flourishing state (Payne, 2006, 38; Çilingiroğlu, 1994, 55), which can be introduced as Urartian propaganda (Irvani Ghadim, 2017, 127-136). Menua engaged in construction activities to defend all major roads leading to the capital Tushpa, especially those coming from the north and east. For this purpose, the Urartian king built fortresses such as Körzüt, Muradiye, Karahan, Aşağı Anzaf, Bostankaya Çaldıran, Sint, Hacıhatun, Kubik, and Alikale (Çilingiroğlu, 1994, 59). The need for manpower led to the continuation and increasing deployment of population transfer methods initiated during the Joint Monarchy period by Ishpuini and Menua. The use of individuals brought in as a result of population transfer

policies in uninhabited areas provided resources and support for Urartian agriculture, production, and economy.

• Period of the Argishti I (764-786 BC)

The reign of I. Argishti (764-786 BCE) solidified Urartian control up to regions such as Erzurum, Gökçe Göl, and Malatya-Elazığ through his military campaigns. By conquering new territories in those areas, he expanded the borders of the kingdom. During the first and second years of his reign (780-756 BCE), he particularly emphasized the northern regions. At that time, the Urartian government established a strong administrative system in the region between Lake Van and the Aras River, conducted military operations in all accessible locations, and erected fortresses there. Among the inscriptions indicating military campaigns towards the Caucasus, the northernmost ones like the Kanlıca Hanak/Ortakent inscription are mentioned (Konakçı, 2006, 35). In the annals of I. Argishti called "Horhor," which provides a summary of his campaigns, three military campaigns to various regions are mentioned (Işıklı, 2000, 63). Argishti states in the Hanak/Ortakent inscription that he gained control over the Turiu region in this area and then reached the borders of the countries of Huşa and Bia (Payne, 2006, 183). According to the texts of this inscription, what is highly significant is that they reached the northern regions up to the border of Diauehi. Another important inscription belonging to the reign of I. Argishti is the Sarıkamış inscription (Ünsal, 2008, 22), which indicates that I. Argishti's policy led to Urartian dominance in the northern region. This inscription, along with others like Horhor, contains information about military operations during this period. I. Argishti relocated an unknown number of individuals to another region during his southern campaigns from Lake Urmia to the country of Mana. In total, he took 18,827 people captive in his campaigns from the east of Lake Urmia to Mana (Payne, 2006, 151). None of the inscriptions discussing these eight campaigns classified the number of individuals as women, men, or children. One of the most important reasons for these transfers must have been to

prevent cooperation between the communities residing south of Lake Urmia and Assyria (Konakçı, 2006, 38).

• Period of the Sarduri II (730-755 BC)

During the reign of II. Sarduri (730-755 BCE), solidified his power based on the successes achieved in military campaigns organized by his father, I. Argishti, in the western, northern, and eastern regions. His father's achievements, especially in the northern and eastern areas, led him to direct his attention towards the western and northwestern regions (Fig. 2). In the Anlıkız inscription, we encounter the names of regions that Sarduri II mentioned for the first time in his campaigns towards the southern Caucasus. The campaigns to these countries and new cities, which had not been mentioned in the royal inscriptions before, can be interpreted as efforts to expand borders in the northern regions. Sarduri II relocated 300 individuals to new areas and succeeded in moving 3,500 men, 4,000 soldiers, and 15,000 women from occupied cities. The number of women relocated was more than twice the number of men, and they predominantly consisted of young men. II. Sarduri adopted different strategies in dealing with regional rebellions. In the revolts around the Bamni mountains, II. Sarduri massacred the people there. During this action, active participants in this uprising were burned alive by the wrath of the god Teisheba. The Urartian king transferred 37,800 people, including 1,000 young men, 4,600 men, and 23,200 women, from the people who participated in this rebellion to Tushpa and its surroundings. At the end of Sarduri II's campaign to the Urmia region, the country of Mana once again joined the lands of Urartu. The reorganization of expeditions to the cities of this region must have been due to the rebellions and the desire for plunder.

• Period of the Rusas I (714-730 BC)

Following II. Sarduri, his son Rusas I ascended to the throne. During this period, the threat from the Kimmerians and Assyrians persisted with the rise of II. Sargon. It is mentioned in the Topuzova inscription that Orzana, the king of the city of Ardini (modern-day Muşasır), rebelled against Rusas, prompting Rusas to order a military campaign against him. Based on these conflicts,

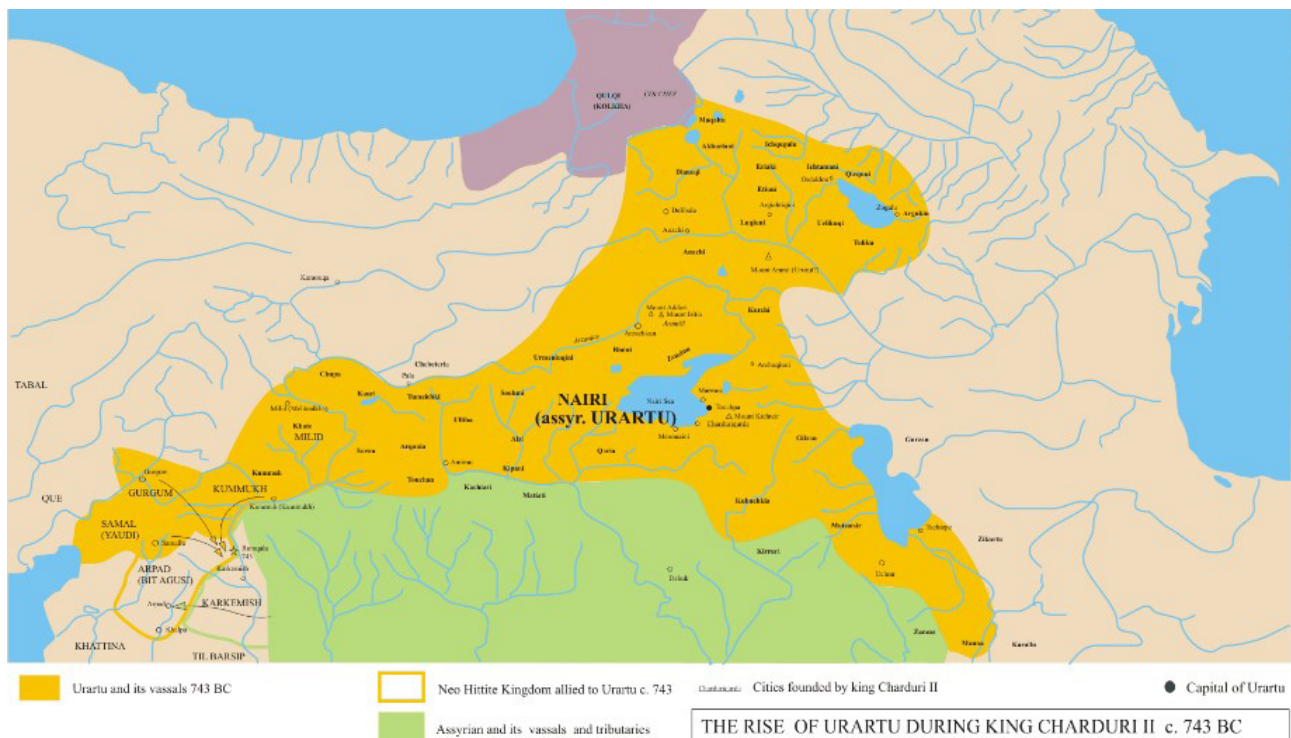


Fig. 2. Map of Urartu in 743 BC. Source: Kotoub, 2019, 10.

Orzana, the king of the city of Ardini, was appointed as the governor of this province. The Urartian government formed alliances with local rulers in this region against Assyria (Çilingiroğlu, 1997, 40-41). A bilingual cylinder obtained from Movana, located west of Lake Urmia, describes Rusas I's struggle with Orzana (Payne, 2006, 155-157). Evaluating the population transfers during the reign of Rusas I seems challenging because the number of transferred individuals is not reflected in the inscriptions of this period. Apart from a sentence stating that women and men were transferred during campaigns to northern regions and settled in Biainili, we have no further information. During the reigns of Rusas I and Argishti II, there seems to be no continuation of population transfer and deportation policies as seen during the period of Sarduri II. The decline in forced migration policies may be attributed to attacks from the Kimmerians and Assyrians.

• Period of the reign of Argishti II (713 BC)

There are few written sources available. However, two columns found in Razlık and Neştaban indicate that Argishti advanced towards the east of Lake Urmia. It is

believed that Argishti II's movement was in response to the eighth campaign of Sargon II and the shift in the power balance in the southeast of Lake Urmia against Urartu, possibly leading to the withdrawal of the Mana region from Urartian rule. One of the most troubling events during the reign of II. Argishti was the presence of the Cimmerian tribes. In 707 BCE, II. Argishti faced the Cimmerians and suffered defeat. After surviving against the Kimmerians, II. Argishti initiated construction activities in various regions, building fortresses, gardens, and various water channels. When the dispersal of some of the fortresses built by II. Argishti is examined, and it becomes clear that Urartian borders, especially in the eastern region, experienced significant growth. Two inscriptions found in Sarab indicate the presence of Urartians in the region. It is presumed that the policy of forced migration continued due to the expansion of political borders to the east, based on Urartian state policy and the construction of extensive structures in Urartu's heartland.

• Period of the II. Rusas (645-685 BC)

During this period, the Urartians continued their political, economic, and social advancement. According to

inscriptions, the settlement policy during the II. Rusas period was based on the construction of “satellite cities” (Çilingiroğlu, 1994, 141). No information about military campaigns is found in the inscriptions belonging to II. Rusas, but a significant feature of this period is the new reforms and construction activities undertaken in the field of infrastructure. II. Rusas appears as a ruler who established settlements like Karmir Blur, Bastam, Toprakkale, Kefkalesi, and Ayanis (Zimansky, 1995, 171-180) in the geography under the control of Urartu. The establishment of the second major city of the Urartian state in northwest Iran named Bastam indicates the political and military presence of Urartu in northwest Iran during the Rusas II period (Muscarella, 1971, 45). The policy of forced migration in the II. Rusas period should be based on a predetermined concept to meet the needs of the kingdom. In the new economic system that II. Rusas tried to establish in the areas he had built, he probably systematically utilized peoples other than the Urartian tribes. The maps of satellite cities created during this period indicate the importance that Rusas attached to these cities for the economic interests of the kingdom. This period can be considered as the phase in which the policy of population transfer and forced migration disappeared after II. Rusas in the Urartian kingdom.

Approaches to Forced Displacement in the Urartian State

The Urartian state faced numerous challenges in implementing the policy of forced displacement in occupied territories. The establishment of new cities, creation of satellite areas around cities, development of suitable agricultural lands, and acquiring the required population to supply military forces and construct infrastructure for public utility buildings were some of their objectives. In some Urartian inscriptions, belonging to the early period of the Urartian state, it is repeatedly mentioned that after paying homage to the great god of Urartu, large groups of people were expelled from the conquered lands. The forced migration of people on a large scale continued significantly throughout

the Urartian period from Menua to Rusas II. Based on conducted studies, the approaches to forced displacement in the Urartian state can be described as follows.

• Economic and construction approach

The endeavor to transform a city-state into an empire without a large and sustainable human force was impossible. This human force required strong economic support, and the economy needed to be supported by a larger workforce. Consequently, the presence of a strong-armed force was necessary for the proper functioning between the two related factors. The enslaved people could be regarded as commodities (Oded, 1979, 78). For the Urartian kings, acquiring human resources and establishing a sustainable economic system, which they initially needed, was not easy. They attempted to maintain their central authority with continuous control and military movements over 200 years. Priority was given to important routes leading to agricultural lands, underground resources, or routes frequented by trade caravans. Although the Urartians understood the necessity of creating the necessary infrastructure for their economic goals in newly established cities, the local settlement conditions in the Lake Van basin posed initial obstacles to the kingdom. Central authorities facilitated the settlement of migrating individuals, leading to the establishment of new settlements in the region. The primary factor in selecting locations for royal cities was agricultural potential. The urbanization policy of the Urartian state could only be realized by controlling the tribes of the region and either employing or enslaving them and relocating them from newly conquered areas to the empire. One of the methods employed by this kingdom to overcome these challenges was the establishment of cities around the central city (satellite cities). Through these cities, the king monopolized the agricultural potential of the plains and also allowed the population he had brought from enemy countries to live with the opportunities created by the kingdom (Konakçı, 2006, 66-69). Satellite cities around the fortresses of Karmir Blur, Bastam, Ayanis, Aadilcevaz, and Kefkalesi, built by Rusas, were identified. There was no difference

between “forced migration” and “exile or transfer of the enslaved population” when it came to looted objects and captives, which were also considered spoils of war. However, when their contribution to production (specialized labor force) and services to the Urartian army are taken into account, it seems that they have covered significant weaknesses thanks to the policy of satellite cities, although they are not considered citizens in today’s sense. It is mentioned in the inscriptions of the Ayanis temple that King Rusas II brought captives and used them as laborers in the construction of Ayanis and settled them in the outer city (satellite area).

The kings of Urartu, by constructing these citadels/cities, also developed agricultural areas and created new gardens, vineyards, and farming regions that surrounded new urban centers. The rapid expansion of the Urartian kingdom during the reigns of Menua, Argishti I, and Sarduri II brought vast territories under their control, some of which were densely populated, while others were more or less abandoned or had turned into deserted lands due to war (Çilingiroğlu, 1997, 31). Menua constructed a canal called Şamran Suyu, located 51 kilometers from Tushpa, for transporting fresh water, which is still in use today (Çilingiroğlu, 1994, 65). The Urartian approach to resettling prisoners of war and utilizing them in agriculture and public works, which began with Ishpuini-Menua (Sevin, 1979, 101 Çilingiroğlu, 1983, 308), accelerated the development process.

• The political/religious-military approach

The policy of forced displacement was initially implemented within the Urartian government as a distinct component of Urartian state policy. With its far-reaching demographic and cultural repercussions, it became a hallmark of the systematic governance of the Urartian monarchy and its principal tool of domination over other peoples. Many tribes residing near the borderlands consistently posed significant challenges to the Urartian state, prompting Urartian kings to take decisive actions without any tolerance. One of these actions was the killing of people, while another was forced displacement. Actions by Ishpoueini and Menua in their joint

government against the rebellious tribes residing in the southern Caucasus were exemplars of this type of forced migration. King Ishpoueini states in an inscription that “I brought with me six hundred and seventy women and six hundred and seventy men from the lands of Anaşe and Eturiki, some I killed, and some I brought alive from that land” (Payne, 2006, 43). Many inscriptions imply that Menua pursued a policy aimed at military conquest and expansion. At the end of Menua’s campaigns, thousands were transferred as spoils. Settling the captives from military expeditions in the Urmia plain could be seen as a security policy. Menua thus prevented potential uprisings in the Aras region (Melikishvili, 1960, 220). During his reign, Argishti I may have sent many people through forced migration to other regions. Sarduri II, at the outset of his campaigns in the Leninakan region, delegated control of the state to the Kimmerians. The Urartian king likely created a buffer zone along the kingdom’s border to keep enemy forces at bay. After the conquest of cities during his campaigns, he resettled the population of this region in the country of Biainili. Evaluating the impact of suppressions conducted by Rusas I in the northern regions and the implementation of forced migration policies during this period is crucial. Major demographic changes in this region by Rusas I and previous kings may have initially facilitated Kimmerian incursions from the north or served as a preemptive measure against attacks close to the Kimmerians. What is apparent from royal inscriptions is that among the exiles were warriors, many of whom had previously served in their own country’s army and were then employed in the Urartian army. One of Menua’s inscriptions states that he sent war prisoners to be employed in the Urartian army (Payne, 2006, 48-59). In the annals of Argishti I regarding the establishment of Erebuni, it is mentioned that the settlement of 6600 soldiers (battle-ready men) occurred from the lands of Meltia and Şupani (Melikishvili, 1951, 68). Argishti I refers to capturing 10140 (warrior) prisoners alive in his campaigns. Similarly, Sarduri II mentions in three instances the captivity of warriors, including 6000 from Manna, Baruta, and Babilu, 4000 from Etiuni lands, and

would be settled, long-term population growth was a consideration.

Discussion and Conclusion

As a result of successful wars during various periods of the Urartian kings, the captured people were utilized for specific purposes, and to achieve this goal, they were collectively transferred from the conquered country to other regions. In some cases, not only the captives from the war but also the people of the region who did not participate in the war were forcibly displaced from their land to other areas. Forced migration in the Urartian state began during the Ishpuini period and continued through the Menua period from the 8th century BCE, based on the expansionist policies of the Urartian state. This activity was carried out not only to suppress potential rebellions but also to address economic, political, military, and social issues. Therefore, the Urartian kings were able to coordinate complex operations and overcome the challenges related to the transfer of human groups from one place to another over considerable distances.

The goals of the Urartian kings in capturing and transferring people from conquered areas to other regions were not solely to punish those individuals. Based on the data obtained from Urartian inscriptions, it is evident that forced migrations were carried out on a mass scale, likely for political reasons, which can be categorized as follows:

1. As punishment for rebellion against the Urartian government;
2. To recruit new soldiers into the Urartian army;
3. Utilizing forced expulsion as a source of both unskilled and skilled labor;
4. For the establishment of new urban and suburban centers and utilizing unused lands for settlements and agriculture;
5. Securing the borders and preventing potential rebellions.

A significant portion of the people captured through military campaigns by the Urartian rulers were employed in large construction projects. These projects were likely funded to a considerable extent by tribute and spoils mainly sourced from beyond the river and from the northwest of

finally 2000 warriors from Urme land (Grayson, 1991, 110). Argishti I and Sarduri II have repeatedly spoken of employing warriors from conquered lands, and it is not unlikely that these warriors were formally enlisted in the Urartian army. In the Urartian spoils list, there are mentions of items related to children. Possibly children were also enlisted in the army. Similar to warriors, children or young boys who were enlisted in the army had no allegiance to the country or region where they were settled. The first reference to children dates back to the reign of Ishpoueini in the Karagündüz inscription, which records a military expedition to Meşta and Barsua.

• Social approach

At times, members of the royal family and courtiers have been mentioned among the exiles. In some cases, exiles have been referred to as soldiers, and sometimes as craftsmen. In two instances, captives have been mentioned as slaves. Therefore, it is clear that the Urartians did not confine themselves to a specific social class or group. Instead, various individuals from the conquered population were exiled. However, it must be emphasized that the Urartians also exiled men along with their families. The exile of women along with their families served two main purposes: (a) preventing the exiles from escaping back to their homeland, and (b) improving the prospects of settling the exiles and rooting them in their new location. Forced migration policies during the reign of Sarduri II, like those during the reign of Argishti I, were of great significance, and thousands of people were displaced across vast geographical areas. When comparing the people displaced during the reign of Sarduri II with those during the reign of Argishti I, significant changes in the inscriptions are noteworthy. During this king's reign, the number of women transferred, especially during military campaigns, increased significantly towards northern lands. The number of women reached over 11,300. Sarduri II's political approach must have had various reasons. Most of the women transferred were those who lived in northern regions, which had always sought to rebel against Urartian authority. Additionally, it is presumed that in the areas where the transferred women

Iran and the southern Caucasus. The Urartian kings, to meet the food needs of these targeted groups, attempted to increase the agricultural capacity of the desired regions throughout their history. By settling the displaced populations in uninhabited areas, they maximized the agricultural capacity of the targeted regions. In many cases, determining the destination location is difficult, making it challenging for us to discover the primary routes of forced displacement. However, based on the information obtained from this research, it can be said that most of the displaced people were settled in the center of Biainili and cities with agricultural capacity. The main movement of forced migrations during the Urartian reign was towards Tuşpa, the capital of the Urartians. Despite our awareness of possible exaggerations in figures in some cases and reports of exiles to lands belonging to Urartu, one of the goals of the Urartians was to increase the population (i.e., human resources) mainly in the primary cities of Urartu. Despite the “two-way” exile system employed by the Urartians, the number of exiles from outside Urartu was much higher than the number of those exiled to those areas. Directing a large number of exiles to Urartian lands created an imbalance in the inflow and outflow of people to a specific area. This imbalance favored Urartu, and they usually settled in surrounding areas. The Urartian government strategically evaluated methods of population transfer for the development of the state. The captives taken from various regions and then resettled gradually integrated into Urartian society. However, the emphasis here is that these people lived as Urartian citizens, not merely as slaves. The Urartian approach to forced migration can be characterized as economic and construction-oriented, political-military, and social. Additionally, the Urartians were not inclined to divide communities into individual families and scatter them throughout the empire. Instead, they were keen on preserving the social life of the displaced by keeping them together as cohesive and small groups. This alignment was not contradictory to the interests of the Urartian state.

Declaration of No Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest in conducting this research.

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