NEO-ASSYRIAN GEOGRAPHY

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Assyrian Geography and Neo-Assyrian Letters
The Location of Ḫubuškia Again

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In the framework of the historical geography of western Iran in Neo-Assyrian times, the problem of the location of Ḫubuškia has been much debated in the past. Leaving aside older ideas discarded by modern research\(^1\), in recent times two diverging proposals have been advanced. The first is that Ḫubuškia should be looked for in the mountain area north of Assyria, between Lake Van and Lake Urmia, on the Yükseková / Hakkâri plain\(^2\); the second is that it must have been located east-south-east of Assyria, in the valley formed by the Lower Zab headwaters, south-west of Lake Urmia\(^3\). A third, intermediate position has been proposed by Russel, who has located Ḫubuškia in the mountain area east of Rowanduz and south of Mušasir\(^4\).

Both proposals rely exclusively on the reconstructions of the itineraries followed by the military campaigns of the Assyrian kings, which are described in their royal inscriptions. The question has been briefly, but adequately summed up recently by M. Liverani and M. Liebig\(^5\). A northern location of Ḫubuškia is backed up by the following elements: it is close to Mušasir (in the Baradost), to Kîrîrû/Kabarû (the Dasht-i Ḥarî plains), and to Gilzanû (western-south-western shores of Lake Urmia); it is separated from Assyria by one of the two Zabs, usually identified as the upper one. The south-south-eastern location, however, is backed up by its proximity to Mannea (east of Assyria), and again by its proximity with Mušasîr and Kîrîrû/Kabarû. As for Russel's proposal, he identifies the Zab (mentioned by Sargon in his "Letter to the God" as separating Ḫubuškia from Mušasîr) as the Rowanduz river, a western tributary of the Upper Zab.

The possibility that other texts such as Neo-Assyrian letters may offer some clues to the solution has never been seriously taken into account, probably because of the poor state of the editions and of the fragmentary information they offer. Nevertheless, they contain geographical data, the letters represent a first-rank source for historical-geographical reconstruction, on the condition that they are adequately understood and that their historical and contextual background is fully appreciated. All this obviously implies the knowledge and the control of a wide series of elements, such as chronology, administrative background, communicational and rhetorical questions, and many other problems, which generally pile up on each other to such an extend that, as has been aptly stated, the final impression is that of a swamp of innumerable unrelated data\(^6\).

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\(^1\)The bibliography is aptly assembled in ATA, p. 25 fn. 61.
\(^2\)ZU, p. 60.
\(^4\)H.F. Russel, Shalmaneser's Campaign to Uratu in 858 B.C. and the Historical Geography of Eastern Anatolia According to the Assyrian Sources: AnSt 34 (1984), pp. 196-198.
\(^5\)Cf. fn. 1 and 3, above.
\(^6\)LAS II, p. xi.
However, most recent research on Neo-Assyrian letters has begun to throw light on such problems, through the refinement of the methodological approaches and through the clarification of many aspects that too often had remained hidden behind a poor understanding of language and style. With these premises, letters—together with administrative and juridical documents—rise to the top of the list of significant sources for historical reconstruction, as they are closely connected to everyday life and fixed administrative practice. In this way, the comparison with data stemming from royal inscriptions, which have for a long time been considered essential sources in historical research, may result in crucial corrections and updating of our knowledge.

The main source for the location of Ḫubuškia is a letter written to Sargon by Šulmu-bēli, the deputy of the Palace Herald7; it contains a description of the route taken by the king of Ḫubuškia to come to Assyria, bringing his tribute in cattle and sheep. The letter, well-known since its publication in Harper’s copy and Waterman’s transcription (ABL 809), has recently been re-published by S. Parpola and myself in SAA 5, no. 133. In studies on the historical geography of the Assyrian Zagros, the crucial data stemming from this letter have not been fully appreciated, because of its fragmentariness and the apparent uniqueness of some of the toponyms it mentions. The present contribution is aimed at solving such problems, offering a new reading of one of the toponyms, which may fix, I hope definitively, the location of Ḫubuškia on the map.

In this letter, the deputy reports to Sargon on the arrival of the king of Ḫubuškia in Assyria with his tribute consisting of horses, cattle and sheep, and asks the king whether he has to go to receive the foreign prince. Here follows the text as edited in SAA, with slight modifications in the rendering of some toponyms, which are necessary in order to avoid anticipated judgment based on the SAA edition.

1. [a]-na LUGAL.EN-ia
2. ARAD-ka 'Di-mu—EN
3. lu-u Di-mu a-na LUGAL.EN-ia
4. TA* URU.BÀD—LUGAL—GI
5. DU-ak LÛ*—A—KIN-ia
6. TA* Šâ-bî URU.a-ni-su
7. ina URU.EN-an ina [GA]BA1-ia
8. i-lal-ka ma-[a]
9. 'iâ'-an-uzu- u* [0]
10. KUR.ḫu1-buš'-a-a [0]
11. ma-a UD-24-KÂM [0]
12. i-na URU.i'-.x'-x'-[x] (SAA 5: i'-.a'-[sî])
13. e-ta-'rab6
r.1. i-na URU.ḥar-ra-[ni-a]
2. i-la-a[i']8
3. ma-a šâm-ma i-na Šâ-bi
4. URU.ḥar-ra-ni-a la e-[i']
5. UD-26-KÂM ina URU.Pû-te
6. ū-la-a ina URU.ḥar-ra-ni-a
7. e-te-li UD-27-KÂM
8. ina URU.Pû-te ANŠE.KUR.MEŠ
9. GUD.NITÁ.MEŠ-šu' "UDU".MEŠ-šù

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7 His dignity is mentioned in SAA 5 150: r. 8'-9' and SAA 1 30: 3'.
8 Correct in this way the transcription i-tu-ṣ[i'] erroneously given in SAA 5 (see collations ibid., p. 269).
10. 1'-en' UD-mu i—pa-na-tû-šû
11. [i-na] pu'-ut URU.a-ni-su
12. [i]-tal-ka-ni
13. [x A]NŠE.KUR.MEŠ
14. [x GU]D1.MEŠ
15. [x x UDU.NIT1]A2.MEŠ
16. [x x (x)]-šû-nu
17. [x x i]-i'-sî'-šû
18. [x x x] 'x x' [x x]
s.1. [šûm-m]a LUGAL. be-li i-qa-bi la-li'-[kî]
2. [i-x]i'-šû' la-da-bu-ub

"(1) [T]o the king, [my lord]: your servant Šulmu-bêli. Good health to the king, my lord! (4) I was coming back from Dûr-Šarrukîn; my messenger, coming from Anîsu, met me in Adân and said: (9) "I amû of Ḫubûškia has entered ...[...] on the 24th, and has to go to Ḫarrâ[nia]. If he does not go up to Ḫarrânîa, he will be in ...te on the 26th; else if he goes up to Ḫarrânîa, he will be in ...te on the 27th. "(r.9) The horses and his oxen and sheep came in one day ahead of him opposite Anîsu. [He has with him] [x] horses, [x ox]en and [x shee]p [plus] their [.....]. (s.1) [I]f the king, my lord, so orders, I sha[ll go] and speak [with him]."

As for its contents, the letter—like some others—deals with the bureaucratic control of the flow of tribute towards Assyria. The Assyrian officials had to receive the foreign kings or rulers (or their representatives) accompanying their tribute; and they had in all probability to check the amount of tribute, assuming full responsibility for its arrival at the Assyrian collection centers without losses or changes in composition. Since the bureaucratic responsibilities of Assyrian officials did not extend to events occurring in formally "foreign" territory, we may safely assume that tribute was checked upon entering Assyrian territory; thus, if a letter describes an itinerary to be followed by the tribute (animals and merchandise), it is highly probable that this itinerary lies within Assyrian territory, and not outside it. Consequently, our letter in all probabilities mentions an itinerary from Ḫubûškia to Assyria which was entirely or partly inside Assyrian territory.

The location of the Ḫubûškian king's itinerary may be pinpointed on the map in two ways. The first, very obviously, consists in trying to establish relations with other well-known fixed points of Assyrian geography. The second way is to consider the geographical location and extension of the administrative area subjected to Šulmu-bêli. In a sense, all this has been partly attempted in the past; but no firm results have been attained.

As far as the first method is concerned, on one hand, the readings of the names of the first and last towns quoted in the letter have never been absolutely certain, and this has prevented a comparative approach with other texts; on the other hand, the reference to Anîsu, which is mentioned in some relation to Ḫabîlu in a letter of Ṭâb-šar-Aššur (with which we shall deal below), was sufficient

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9The tribute did not pertain to the provincial economic administration controlled by governors, but was considered strictly belonging to the central royal administration (TCAE, p. 123). The provincial governors' duty was only to have it correctly delivered to the center.
10The tribute kingdom is always treated as formally independent, even though it may be mistreated in political relations at the kings' level. An Assyrian governor, once the border is trespassed, formally loses his otherwise politically attested primacy. See e.g. SAA 5 35 where the Assyrian governor of Tuššân protests against the Šubrian king's refusal to extradite Assyrian deserters who had fled to his country, or SAA 5 33, where Šubrian people capture Assyrian envoys and soldiers, and their king rather insolently pretends to investigate the matter personally, forcing the Assyrian governor to write to his king asking permission to react.
11Deller, ZU, p. 121, has applied this line of reasoning to another letter of Šulmu-bêli which shall be commented below.
indication in favour of the location of Ḫubuškia north of Assyria, since Ḫabłu was clearly north of it. The picture has not been changed by the proposals put forward in the last edition. The restoration of the name of Waisi (the well-known Urarțian city south-west of lake Urmia, which in all probability may be identified as the modern Ushnuviyeh) as the first town in the itinerary has generally been suggested by the vague connection between Anisu and Ḫabłu; by circular reasoning, this confirmed the northern location of Ḫubuškia, with particular emphasis on the area of Yüksêkova/Hakkâri, which lies immediately north of Ḫabłu.

As for the second method, the location of the itinerary in the province of the Assyrian Palace Herald accorded well with the connection with Ḫabłu emerging from Tāb-šar-Aššur’s letter, since the Palace Herald’s province ought to have extended north-east of Central Assyria. Thus, by similarly circular reasoning, the northern location of Ḫubuškia was roughly confirmed.

However, the location of the itinerary in the province of the Palace Herald should be more carefully considered. At least for a certain time, the province of the Palace Herald included administratively the mountain state of Muşaşir: this is clearly stated in Sargon’s Annals, and is confirmed by a letter which shows the king of Muşaşir’s political dependance on this Assyrian official. More interestingly, in another letter of his, Śulmu-bēli reports about the journey of Urzanā to Assyria with his tribute, and gives a detailed description (which is partly broken in the text) of the itinerary followed by the Muşaširian king. As we have seen, Śulmu-bēli had to take care of foreign tribute passing through his own territory: thus, we may assume, as working hypotheses, (1) that the itinerary followed by Urzanā should to some extent reflect the itinerary followed by the Ḫubuškian king; and (2) that both itineraries may have had one point in common in their final part, where they should have converged in order to reach a further common collection point in central Assyria. Here follows the text as given in SAA 5, no. 136:

4. pr-ur-za’-na UD-10-KĀM
5. ina URU.a-la’-mu iz-za-az
6. ‘UD’[1]-KĀM ina URU.ḥi-ip-tu’-ni
7. [UD-12’-KĀM] ina URU.mu-ši
8. [UD-13’-KĀM ina URU.1-te
9. [UD-14’-KĀM ina URU.arb]a-il’

"Urzanā is staying in Alamu on the 10th; on the [11th?] he will be in Ḫiptuna; [on the 12th?] in Muši, [on the 13th?] in Issête, [on the 14th?] in Arab Jail".

Alamu and Muši are hapax legomena. Ḫiptuna has been identified with Ḫefṭōn / Tall Haftün, a town in Dasht i-Ḫārīr (along the Upper Zab, north-east of Erbil), which, according to Nestorian and Arabic sources, lies at two days’ march from Erbil in the direction of Azerbaijan. As stated by K. Deller,

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12ATA, pp. 25-27, with bibliography on fns. 69 and 70.
13See lastly Zimansky: JNES 49 (1990), pp. 16-18.
14For its location in the Baradost, around the modern town of Sidekan, see most recently the bibliography in Liverani, ATA, in 37 on p. 24. It must be stressed that Muşaşir is one of the few fixed points in the historical geography of the Assyrian Zagros.
15In his Annals, Sargon claims to have incorporated Muşaşir in the Palace Herald’s province: Lie, Sargon Annals, p. 28: 163-164.
16SAA 5 147.
17SAA 5 136; for a previous edition and comment, see Deller, ZU, pp. 120-121. The mentions of horses and sheep, and of the audience-gift (namuru), point clearly to the delivery of tribute.
19Deller, ZU, p. 121.
it was an important town, possibly the administrative center of the province of the Palace Herald; according to the penalty provided in a delivery contract for corn, it was probably very close to a river, which should obviously be identified as the Upper Zab or one of its tributaries, such as the Rowanduz river. Issête is the reading of the town name which is usually written ideographically l-te (and previously read Anate / Anatu), as was ingeniously suggested by K. Deller, who stated that it was not far from Arbai and Kurbai. The last name is that of Arbai; the name is fragmentary on the tablet, but it has been restored by double collation. An administrative document shows that some dependent kinglets, one of whom clearly reigned in the Zagros area, brought their tribute to Arbai; this town was very probably a collection center for tributes coming from the East, to which Urzanâ too had to converge with his own contribution.

Urzanâ's itinerary should have followed the well-known road which comes down from Rowanduz to the Dashî-i-Çarî, and then reaches Erbil, either crossing the Khatî Dagh and Sefin Dagh hills through the modern town of Shalawâ, or passing west of the Pirman Dagh (see Fig. 1). *Prima facie*, the itineraries of the king of Hubûskia and of Urzanâ of Musaîr do not have any point in common. Nevertheless, we should notice that in both itineraries one of the stages—the last in the Hubûskian king's, the penultimate in Urzanâ's—is represented by a town whose name is written by way of a logogram followed by the phonetic complement -te: Issête / URU.l-te in Urzanâ's, URU.Pû-te in the Hubûskian king's. Following the instructions of our manuals on epigraphy, the second name has been reconstructed in SAA 5 as Burte, on the basis of the equation of the logogram Pû with burru, bûrî, "cistern".

But Šulmu-bêli was a high dignitary, as was his superior; and certainly had very clever and expert scribes at his disposal. The author of this letter was certainly one of these: and he did not limit his craft to the short lists of equivalences given in our manuals—as we sometimes do. He had certainly at his disposal the vocabularies: and the A, Ea and Proto-Ea Vocabularies state that the sign Pû might correspond to the word issu, "pit, clay pit." It is clear that, to render a sound like issêtel, our scribe did not make use of the writing which used the logogram l (= issênl, "one"), adopted by other scribes, but preferred a more sophisticated rendering. It seems, in fact, that our scribe uses peculiar writings or rare linguistic forms: he writes ḫu-bûš-a-a instead of the normal ḫu-bûš-ka-a-a (such a writing is not due to an error, since it appears in another letter, which is attributable to the Palace Herald or rather his deputy given its content); and he uses ina GABA (ina iirü) instead of the common ina UGU (ina
Thus, it is clear that a town named Burte did not exist, and that only one town, Issête, lies behind the writings $1$-te and Pû-te. \footnote{SAA 5133: Obv. 7.}

On the basis of this interpretation, it becomes clear that the two itineraries, crossing the territory subject to the Assyrian Palace Herald converged at the end towards one common point, the town of Issête, which—as Urzanâ’s itinerary clearly shows—was only one stage of march away from Arbail. The exact location of this town on the map has hitherto been not possible, owing to the scarcity of attestations and to the failure in determining the name of the last stage of Urzanâ’s itinerary (i.e., Arbail); but at this point a less indefinite location may be looked for.

We may start considering the location of Hiptuna/Heftôn as reconstructed by Medieval sources. As stated above, it was situated on the Upper Zab or on one of its eastern tributaries\footnote{If a tributary of the Zab, the river mentioned by Yaqût must be east of it, because for a traveller who moves from Arbail towards Azerbaijan it would be illogical to cross over to the western bank of the Zab.}, in the Harîr plain; and was at a distance of two days’ march from Erbil\footnote{Zadok, Studies Loewenstein, p. 170.}. Now, Urzanâ needed three days as a minimum
to reach Arbail departing from Ḫiptuna (two stages, Muṣī and Issēte, lie between the two towns). This obviously means that he was moving slower than a traveller on horse or on mule, very probably because he was accompanying the animals which he was bringing as tribute to Assyria. But this means also that Issēte, the last stage before Arbail, was very close to the latter. The distance by land between the western end of the mountains which border the Ḥarrīr plain to the north-east and Erbil must be around 100 kilometers\textsuperscript{34}; we may thus calculate three average stages (Ḫiptuna - Muṣī; Muṣī - Issēte; Issēte - Arbail) of about 35 km each, which gives 35 km ca. as the distance between Arbail and Issēte.

Such a distance brings us to the area of the hill chain formed by the Pirman Dagh and the Sefin Dagh: it extends east of Erbil and bars the way to the Ḥarrīr plain although there are passes which are very easily crossed\textsuperscript{35}. But this is not yet sufficient to establish a more precise location. As stated above, two roads can be taken to reach the Ḥarrīr plain from Erbil: either through the passes on the hills, or avoiding the hill area by a detour west of the Pirman Dagh.

However, an inscription of Sennacherib celebrating his construction of a canal supplying Arbail with water may help to solve this problem definitively. It was found at Qaḍat Mörkta, at the head of an ancient canal—probably Sennacherib's own canal—which ran partly underground from the Bastura Chai, an eastern tributary of the Upper Zab originating in the Sefin Dagh. The inscription lies ca. 5 km away from the point where the Bastura Chai is crossed by the road from Erbil to Shaqlawa\textsuperscript{36}. In the inscription, Sennacherib states—with a rather difficult syntax—that he had dug waters from pits which flanked three rivers flowing from Mt. Ḥani, in order to add their waters to the rivers themselves\textsuperscript{37}. The inscription refers very probably not to the canal built or restored by Sennacherib, but to the headwaters of the Bastura Chai, which, as may be seen on the map, originates from the confluence of some small streams.

Now, if the headwaters of the Bastura Chai are in the area where one must search the "pits of water, springs"\textsuperscript{38} which, according to Sennacherib's inscription, flanked the river, their distance from Arbail would coincide quite well with the distance between Issēte and Arbail which we have reconstructed. And the name of the town Issēte, which very probably meant "the pits, the clay pits"\textsuperscript{39}, would fit in perfectly with the landscape described in Sennacherib's text. Thus, Issēte may be roughly located on the western slopes of the hills of the Sefin Dagh, a few kilometers south-west of—if not coinciding with—modern Shaqlawa, around the headwaters of the Bastura Chai.

There is only one major problem with such a location of Issēte, which is raised by a Neo-Assyrian contract of sale of land where a road leading from Kurbail to Issēte is mentioned\textsuperscript{40}. When a road is mentioned in such a context, it should not be considered as a road connecting very distant places: the geographical horizon of juridical texts seems generally rather limited, except for the penalty clauses which sometime mention very distant places. Thus, Issēte and Kurbail should not be believed to lie too far from one another. The location of Kurbail has always been uncertain: it has been searched for

\textsuperscript{34} My own calculation, based on Tactical Pilotage Chart, TPC G4-B, Ed. 3, Saint Louis, Missouri, 1975.
\textsuperscript{36} Saggs, ibid.
\textsuperscript{37} 1d.i-meš ša al-tukur ha-a-ni kur-e / ša sag uru.arba-il a.meš ku-úp-pi / ša zaka u gōn ša i-ia-at 1d.i.meš ša-ti-na / áh-ri-na uru-si-na u-ú-rad-di "three rivers, which (flow) from Mount Ḥani in front of Arbail: I dug waters from pits which were at the right and at the left of those rivers, and let (those waters) be added to them (i.e., the rivers)". The inscription was published by F. Safar, Sennacherib's Project for Supplying Erbil with Water: Sumer 3 (1947), pp. 23-25 (Arabic version pp. 71-86); re-edition with philological commentary by J. Laesssée, The Irrigation System at UlJu, 8th Century B.C.: JCS 5 (1951), pp. 29-30. I adhere to Laesssée's reconstruction and explanation of the text (anacolouthon construction at ll. 2-3).
\textsuperscript{38} For this meaning of kupp, see CAD K, pp. 550-551.
\textsuperscript{39} See above, fn. 27.
\textsuperscript{40} ADD 385 = ARU 194 = NALK 202 (p. 239): rev. 14'-15': kaskal ša ta* uru.kur-b[a-il] / ša a-na uru.1-ti-il-lak-[u-ni] "the road which leads from Kurbail to Issēte". T. Kwasman (NALK, p. 240, ad 14'-15') adopted the old reading ana-ti for Issētu/e, though admitting that it was dubious and quoting Deller's opinions in ZU.
in the hills north of Nineveh, immediately south of Dohuk (and identified with modern Gir-e Pan)\(^{41}\), and north-east of Nineveh, in the Navkur plain west of the Upper Zab\(^{42}\); no firm proof may be adduced for either location.

On the basis of the location of Issête the western location of Kurbail seems excluded. With a western Kurbail and a consequently western Issête, we would expect more numerous, better known town-names of Central Assyria to be mentioned between Ḫiptuna and Issête than the single Muṣî. On this basis, the location proposed by J. Reade in the Navkur plain seems preferable; and this location explains the ties between Kurbail, Kallîu and Arbai which emerge from the penalty clauses of some contracts apparently coming from Kurbail, which imply the dedication of young people (or the payment of a fine) to the gods and goddesses of those three towns\(^{43}\). On this basis, Issête would be one of the apexes of a triangle of roads whose other apexes were Kurbail and Arbai. It must be stressed at this point that the collations (and the printed copy of Harper in ABL too) show clearly that the last town name in Urzanâ's itinerary is Arbai, and not Kurbail: this is necessary to remove the doubt that the road taken by Urzanâ ended up to Kurbail, and that his last stage was along the road which is mentioned in the contract quoted above.

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Once having ascertained the location of Issête, it is necessary to establish whether the itinerary from Ḫubūškia to Issête lies north or south of the itinerary of Urzanâ. For this purpose, the location of Anisu is the central point of the question.

As anticipated above, Anisu is usually associated with Ḫabîlu\(^{44}\) on the basis of a letter of Ṭāb-šar-Aṣṣur. In this letter, Sargon's Treasurer informs his king of having received a messenger, in the town of Anisu, who had related to him the situation in the town (or province) of Birāte and in the land of Ḫabîlu; then he goes on to inform the king that he will be in the town of Ierî the following day.\(^{45}\) The province administered by the Treasurer was immediately south of Ḫabîlu, in the northern sector of the plain and the hilly area north of the Assyrian capitals.\(^{46}\) Anisu has generally been located in the north because it has been thought—although without any specific study of the matter—that the Treasurer, when writing his letter, was in his own province, and was informing the king about the situation in the territories bordering on (or included in) his own province as stemming from his own personal, routine observation.

But Ṭāb-šar-Aṣṣur was one of the highest officials in the Assyrian empire; as such, provincial governorship was not his only duty: he was often sent by the king on various missions around the empire. His letters show him transporting cultic implements to Aṣṣur,\(^{47}\) or transporting stones—thresholds close to a river,\(^{48}\) or going to Nineveh with basalt slabs,\(^{49}\) or inspecting timber piled on the bank of the river Zab.\(^{50}\) Thus, not all the letters of Ṭāb-šar-Aṣṣur were necessarily written from his provincial capital, or from other towns in his dominion. On the other hand, in his letter Ṭāb-šar-Aṣṣur

\(^{41}\)See the folding map in SAA 1.

\(^{42}\)Reade: RA 72 (1978), p. 178. Perhaps some hints about the geographical proximity of Kurbail with Arbai is offered by ABL 413, where (rev. 11) some female weavers of Arbai are sent to Kurbail: but it must be admitted that this source is rather inconclusive.

\(^{43}\)E.g., CTN II 17: 19-20, 30-32 (1 mina of gold to Ninurta dwelling in Kalbu, 7 male and 7 female votaries to Adad dwelling in Kurbail, 7 male and 7 female hierodules to Istar dwelling in Arbai).

\(^{44}\)See lastly SAA 1, p. 236.

\(^{45}\)ABL 173 = SAA 1 45: 4-rev. 2: "A cohort commander of the Chief Eunuch delivered me the king's sealed message in the city of Anisu on the 27th. The messenger of the commander of the fort came to me in Anisu; I asked him about the news, and he told me this: 'The city of Birāte and the whole land of Ḫabîlu are well; everybody is doing his work'. All is well; the king, my lord, can be glad. On the 28th I shall be in the city of Ierî".

\(^{46}\)UTN, pp. 168-172.

\(^{47}\)SAA 1 54 and 55.

\(^{48}\)SAA 1 56.

\(^{49}\)SAA 1 58.

\(^{50}\)SAA 1 62.
says that the messenger brought him the news about Birāte and Ḥabḥu had arrived in Anisu: this means that Tāb-šar-Aṣšur was far from Birāte and Ḥabḥu; and consequently that Anisu may have nothing to do with those countries.

The location of Anisu must be fixed by comparison with other texts. We have seen that the Treasurer is to go from Anisu to Ieri, a town which lies at one day's march away. In another letter written to Sargon, the same town of Ieri is described as the starting point for a journey of the imperial magnates towards Fort Adad-remanni. Now, Fort Adad-remanni, as has been clearly shown by Levine, is one of the last stages on the road which leads from Arzluğina to the province of Zamua; and is to be located almost certainly near lake Zeribor.

The connection between these letters shows clearly that Anisu was the point of departure of an itinerary (Anisu - Ieri - Fort Adad-remanni) which led decisively south-east, towards the area of Sulimeyaniya in central Zagros. Thus, it is clear that the road from Issête to Anisu is definitely oriented towards the south-east, and that the whole itinerary of the Ḫubuškian king is to be located south of the itinerary of Urzan. If we were to insist on a northern location of Ḫubuškia, and consequently to fix Anisu and Ieri (which is only one day's march away from Anisu) in the north, we would have to prospect a very long tour for the magnates in order to reach territories which were deep in the south-east. Starting not far from an hypothetically northern Anisu, they would have had first to cross in some way the rugged mountains north of Assyria, then either to pass through Musasir, or to trespass into the Urartian territory south-west of Lake Urmia, or even to descend to the Assyrian plain, and lastly to climb the mountains south-east of Arbail again to reach Zamua.

A confirmation of the location of Anisu south-east of Arbail comes from a query to the god Šamaš which was written during the reign of Esarhaddon. With this query, the barû asks the god whether "the troops of the Iškužāiu (the "Scythians") which are in the district of Mannea will move out and go through the passes of Ḫubuškia to the city Ḥarrania and the city Anisu", to take booty from the Assyrian territory. As can easily be seen, Anisu and Ḥarrania are clearly described here as two Assyrian towns which lie in the last section of an itinerary from Mannea to Assyria via Ḫubuškia. Consequently, Anisu and Ḥarrania must be sought south-east of Arbail, since Mannea lies in the mountains east - south-east of this city. On the other hand, Ḫubuškia was very close to Mannea: the turātu of Shalamneser III passed from Ḫubuškia to Mannea only crossing the territory of the town Madḫâja. Setting Anisu—and Ḫubuškia—in the north would again result in an absolutely illogical tour taken by the Scythians (Mannea - Solduz - Hakkâri/Yüksekova - Assyria), partly similar to the impossible tour of the magnates towards Zamua. Finally, this text definitely confirms the assumption that Anisu and Ḥarrania lie in Assyrian territory put forward above.

At this point, the location of Ḫubuškia in a roughly south-east direction in respect to Arbail is, in my opinion, fully ascertained. The southern orientation of the itinerary Anisu - Ieri - Fort Adad-remanni, which coincides partially with a section of the itinerary of the Ḫubuškian king towards Arbail, is strictly cogent to this direction. But we may go further in determining a less general

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51ABL 441 = SAA 5 162: 4-8: "The magnates departed from Ieri on the 20th of [Tam]muz and went to Fort Adad-remanni".
53SAA 4 23: Öv. 7-5: LÜ.ERIM.MEŠ [ṣ]-ku-[za-a-a ša i-na na-gi i ša kur.man-na-a-a åš-bu-ka] (...) / (...) T[ark] nē-ri-bi[-š][a uru.ḫu-bu-uš-ki]-a / [0] a-na uru.ḫar-ra-ni-a a-na uru.a-ni-i-su us-[au-ne]-e; cf. Rev. 9-11: LÜ.ERIM.MEŠ [ṣ]-ku-[za-a-a ša i-na na-gi i ša kur.man-[na-a-a åš-bu]] / T[a nē-ri]-bi ša uru.ḫu-bu-uš-ki-a a-na uru.ḫar-ra-ni-a] / a-na uru.a-[ni-i-sy]-u us-[au-ne]-e etc. My reading of l. 7 differs from that given by Starr in SAA 4, who restores the town name as Anisus]; as it may be easily seen in rev. 11, us- is not a part of the town name, but is the beginning of the verb us-su-ne-ē, which is here repeated twice: "they will go out towards Anisu; once they have gone out, will they go ... ."
location, attempting on one hand to establish the location of the town of Anisu and Ḩarrania more precisely, and on the other hand to identify the "pass of Ḩubuškia" to be crossed by the Scythians coming from Mannea.

Anisu must have been almost immediately west of the "pass of Ḩubuškia", since it is the first town met when coming from Ḩubuškia, as attested by the letter of Sulmu-bēli; it is also the point where the roads coming respectively from Ḩubuškia and Ieri converge. Thus, we must search for its location in an area east-south-east of Arba'il, in the direction of Mannea, which may be used as a starting point towards Zamua. The road from this area to Ieri and further to Fort Adad-remanni may pass only through Mawat, and then proceed south through Ḥarmin or south-east through Shiwakal, to finally reach lake Zeribor. Other roads to Zamua starting east of Arba'il do not exist, except obviously the road from Arzūjina through the Bazian Pass and Suleimaniya described in the well-known itinerary to Zamua; but this however does not include neither Anisu nor Ieri.

Only two areas have such characteristics: the Rania plain and the Pizhdher plain. The former may be connected to Mawat via Mirgah; the latter via the course of the Lower Zab and the Zinu Khan Ahmad pass. If Anisu is the crossroads between the road to Zamua and the road which goes to Ḩubuškia and Mannea, and if it must be immediately west of the pass leading to Ḩubuškia and Mannea, it must necessarily be searched for in the Pizhdher plain. From there, at least four passes lead further east, and the Zinu Khan Ahmad pass leads decisively south towards Mawat. Anisu cannot be located in the Rania plain, since the passage from the Rania plain east to the Pizhdher plain is very easy and has not the aspect of a pass. If Anisu is in the Pizhdher plain, Ḩarrania must be searched for further west, in the direction of Arba'il: keeping in mind the location of Issētte at the headwaters of the Bastura Chai, its best location is modern Rania (which would also give a continuity in the onomastics, a fact that in any case should not be overlooked). From Rania to the Bastura Chai there are easy roads, which run along both sides of the Gumangai river, west of the Sefin Dagh chain, which is anyway very easy to cross in its southern part.

Having located Ḩarrania at Rania, and Anisu in the Pizhdher plain, all that remains is to identify the "pass of Ḩubuškia" which connected Mannea to Anisu (and Ḩarrania). If the pass were to be crossed coming from Mannea, the Kelishin and Gowre Shinke passes must be excluded, because they appear to be too far north in respect to the axis of the movement of the Scythians. If the Scythians had crossed these passes coming from Mannea, they would have proceeded north to Khaneh (or even Ushnuvīyeh), then made a detour south to reach Anisu in the Pizhdher plain—another completely illogical detour through rugged mountains and difficult passes. Thus, only the passes crossing the Kandil chain, taking from the Lower Zab headwaters to the Pizhdher plain, can be taken into consideration. Levine has described four passes in this area, and two of them as rather easy: the Vasneh pass, in a north-eastern direction from the Pizhdher plain to the town of Alwatan, a few miles north of Sardasht; and the Kanirash pass, in a south-eastern direction towards Sardasht. Esarhaddon’s query does not give any indication for the choice, nor does the itinerary described by Sulmu-bēli, because neither give any hints for calculating the distance from Anisu to Ḩubuškia. Nevertheless, the only candidate for the location of Ḩubuškia remains the upper valley of the Lower Zab, that long and narrow strip of land which extends north-south from its springs, around Khaneh, to Sardasht.

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57 Obviously, such a location of Ḩubuškia forces us to discard the restoration ‘ālī-, ‘ālī-[ṣ] (= Waisi, the famous Urartian fortress taken by Sargon at the end of his eighth campaign) advanced in SAA 5 for the first town name in the itinerary from Ḩubuškia to Issētte. Waisi has been variously located at Ushnuvīyeh (see last P. Zimansky, Urartian Geography and Sargon's Eighth Campaign: JNES 49 [1990], pp. 16-18, with bibliography), or in the mountain basin between Lake Van and Lake Urmi (at Qaleh Ismail Aga: Salvini, ZU, pp. 46-51; O.W. Muscarella, The Location of Uluhu and Ulise in Sargon II's Eighth Campaign, 714 B.C.: Journal of Field Archaeology 13 [1986], pp. 465-475; at Baskale: C.F. Lehmann-Haupt, Musasir un der achte Feldzug Sargons II. (714 v.Chr.): MVAG 21 [1916], pp. 143-144; Armenien Einst und Jetzt, Berlin-Leipzig 1926, pp. 310, 317-319, 322). Such a restoration would imply that the Ḩubuškian king was proceeding north, from
A stricter definition of the extension of Ḫubuškia in the upper valley of Lower Zab is for the moment impossible. Both the area of Khanēh and Sardasht may well have been included in it, even though the distance between them is very great and the terrain which separates them is extremely rugged and difficult. Nevertheless, no clear indications emerge from Neo-Assyrian sources. The descriptions in the royal inscriptions of the Assyrians kings who visited Ḫubuškia suggest that this kingdom was a rather small entity. The number of 100 villages included in its territory given by Shalmaneser III may give the impression of a fairly extended country; but it must be noticed that the number is round, and thus may possibly have been rhetorically adjusted or even emphasized; and, on the other hand, that it corresponds to the number of villages included in sub-units of political entities which were later assimilated in size to an Assyrian province, such as e.g. the polity of Dagara, which was a part of Zamua.

Other data stemming from royal inscriptions are of no decisive help in determining the location of Ḫubuškia more precisely. Proceeding further in evaluating the various hypotheses which may be developed comparing the various itineraries of the Assyrian kings who passed through Ḫubuškia would bear few new results. The geographical scheme presented by J. Reade some years ago, in which Ḫubuškia is located in the valley of the Lower Zab, still offers the best explanation of the itineraries of the Assyrian kings in relation to the location of Ḫubuškia. From the point of view of the methodological approach to historical-geographical problems through different categories of sources, it may be appreciated that the examination of data stemming from letters has led to one of the results deduced from the analysis of royal inscriptions. Nevertheless, the plurality of locations previously suggested reminds us clearly that any historical-geographical reconstruction developed exclusively on the analysis of royal inscriptions should always be considered provisional until more refined data are obtained from different sources.

Khanēh or Sardasht, in order to reach the Pizhder plain (where Anisu must be located). This would have been an unreasonably long and difficult detour, not to be covered in three days: it would have implied crossing either the Kelishin Pass in order to reach Muşar and the Assyrian territories west of it, or one of the other northern passes connecting the mountain area between Lake Van and Lake Urmia with Assyria. The name of the first town in the journey of the Ḫubuškian king must be, for the moment, shrouded in the darkness.

58 I owe this information to L.D. Levine, who visited that area, in a pleasant conversation during the meeting in Rome.
593R 7:120 (Schrader, KB I, p. 154).
60ATA, p. 126.