



-*hi* in The List of Sheep Presenter Names in Bastam

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Submitted: 26.01.2024

Revision Requested: 17.05.2024

Last Revision Received: 18.05.2024

Accepted: 18.05.2024

Citation: Dara, M. (2024). -*hi* in the list of sheep presenter names in bastam. *Anadolu Arařtırmaları-Anatolian Research*, 30, 167–178. <https://doi.org/10.26650/anar.2024.30.1426381>

ABSTRACT

Urartian inscriptions from ca. 900 to 700 BC have been discovered in Iran, Armenia, Turkey, Iraq, and Nakhchivan. *hi* was used in the Urartian language in several cases, but as a suffix, it is challenging for translation as it forms patronymic, genitive, dative, adjective of appurtenance, and locative cases. There are several possibilities for its translation as “of,” “in,” and “from.” But *hi* could also be used to form the names of the cities or a noun or adjective. This suffix is usually used with the names of persons and geographical places or the root and is comparable to the suffix in Hurrian. A very rare example has been detected in a tablet from Bastam, which contains a list of sheep presenters or owners. The above list includes UDU 1-*hi* mX in four damaged lines, and the rest of the inscription is lost. The aim of the author is to detect the suffix function and translation. It seems that the persons were the owners of the sheep or the presenters who were not the owners. In this case, it can be translated as “of” or “from.” It is also possible that this list was a ration or blessing from the bone room to these people.

Keywords: Toprakkale, Urartian, Bastam, Patronymic Names



Introduction

Urartians ruled over the regions around Lakes Van, Çıldır, Sevan, and Urmia from *ca.* 9th to 7th centuries BC (Zimansky, 1995, p. 104). The Urartians used three systems of writing, i. e. Assyrian cuneiform, Urartian cuneiform, and Urartian hieroglyphs; their royal inscriptions are attested on a wide variety of media, including weapons, seals, steles, stone blocks, rocks, tablets, vessels, ceramics, metal objects, and ornaments. Urartian inscriptions have been discovered as administrative texts, letters of command, building inscriptions, annals, and votive inscriptions. Also, there are pieces of evidence of the everyday life of people during the Urartian reign. Wilhelm (2008b, p. 120) suggests two narrative categories of Urartian written evidence. First, the king's projects include fortifications, temples, vineyards, canals, and military campaigns and victories. The other is administrative-economic texts.

The Urartian written genres were limited in variability, and the lexicon, requests from deities, curses, openings, and endings were almost constant. However, the inscriptions are still worthy of illustrating Urartians' history, policy, beliefs, and culture.

The Urartian language is neither Indo-European nor Semitic but has a strong bond with the Hurrian language, both of which derive from an ancestral language named Hurro-Urartian (Benedict, 2011, p. 43). The Hurro-Urartian language may have been used in northeast Mesopotamia and the Caucasus in the third millennium BC.

The grammar of the Urartian language could be studied in comparison with that of Hurrian, but they are not identical. *-hi* seems a complicated suffix among several other suffixes in the Urartian language and is sometimes challenging to identify and translate correctly. Melikišvili (1971), Salvini (1979), and Wilhelm (2008b) contributed to this suffix.

This paper aims to first review the different roles of *-hi* to form the patronymic, adjective of importunance, dative, genitive, locative, and other forms. In addition, the author would like to recognize whether this suffix was always added to the noun and root.

Rusa II (first half of the 7th century BC), Argišti's son, founded and developed several fortifications and cities such as Bastam, Toprakkale, Adilcevaz Kef Kalesi, Ayanis, and Karmir-blur and reinforced the kingdom (Kleiss, 1988, pp. 30-31; Kroll, 2011, pp. 153-159, Grekyan 2013-2014, 66). Bastam is 9 km northwest of Qareziyaedin, about 40 km from Khoy, 85 km east of Maku, Western Azerbaijan province. Bastam was called *rusai=URU=TUR* (The Small city of Rusa). Although it is the most developed Urartian fortification (Kleiss, 1988, p. 31; Biscione, 2012). It seems that the fortification was conquered and burned in the same era. However, some parts were reconstructed later (Kroll, 2013, p. 247). There are several sections inside the fort, including Haldi's temple. Moreover, there are houses and public constructions in the lower fort (Kroll, 2013, p. 248). Bastam was discovered in 1967

by Germans and was excavated during 1968 to 1979, except for 1971 and 1976 (Kleiss, 2008, www.iranicaonline.org).

The damaged short tablet of Bastam has an inscription with several names and numerals and *-hi* plays a significant role in it. As this suffix is mostly translated as ‘of’ the author would like to investigate whether there are more possibilities for the translation as ‘from’. She also would like to trace *-hi* added to the numerals as an exceptional example among the Urartian inscriptions and to investigate whether this list belonged to the people who presented offerings to the room or took a ration from it with the research both in the field and in libraries.

Varied roles of *-hi*

-hi is a very challenging suffix. Although it does not have gender or number, it could cause problems for the translators and interpreters. Melikišvili 1971 introduced *-hi* shortly but totally comprehensive and Salvini (1979) presented its detailed roles completely.

In several cases *-hi* was used to demonstrate patronymic names as *^mminua=ni ^mišpuini=hi* ‘Minua, (son) of Išpuini’ (Dara, 2017, p. 60), *^mr Sarduri=ni ^margište=hi* ‘Sarduri, (son) of Argišti’ (Dara, 2017, p. 81, 5) and *^mrusa=še ^margište=hi=ni=še* ‘Rusa son of Argišti’ (Dara 2017, p. 125, §1-2). Melikišvili (1971, p. 31) called this suffix an affiliation suffix. The second name (the father’s name) bore *-hi* in this case.

This method of presenting patronyms was written in Urartian inscriptions when the king by whose order the inscription was engraved wanted to introduce himself and his father, whether he was the king before him or not. This even happened in the case of the father, son, and grandson as Išpuini, Minua and Inušpua (Salvini, 2008, pp. 177-178, A 4-1, 2-5, 13-16, 18-21, 29-32, 35-37, 45-48). This means that the son is from a family that could be royal and his father could be the king as Išpuini, the son of Sarduri I, or Minua, son of Išpuini. It is also possible that the father of the king was not a king himself but from a royal family or even another Urartian tribe such as Sarduri I, son of Lutibri, or Rusa, son of Erimena.

According to Wilhelm, regarding nominal morphology, there are noun-formation and derivational suffixes. *-hi* forms adjectives of appurtenance used with geographical or tribal names as *Abiliane=hi ebani* ‘the country of Abiliani’ and *Diaue=hi* ‘the [king] of Diauean’ or ‘the king from Diaue’ (Wilhelm, 2008b, p. 125). Salvini described this as genitive and locative forms, and according to Salvini and Wegner (2014, p. 31), this suffix was attached directly to the root. Salvini, who proposed a wide range of coordination composed by adding suffix *-hi* mentioned that the genitive role of *-hi* could also be substituted by the genitive suffix of *i* or *e(i)* as *^{KUR}Paršua=i ^{KUR}ebani* ‘Land of Paršua’ and *^{KUR}šatiru=i ^{KUR}ebani* ‘Land of Šatiru’ (Salvini, 1979, p. 98) or *^mrusai=URU=TUR* ‘Small city of Rusa’ (Dara, 2017, p. 125).

Salvini (1979, p. 111) suggested that the dative role of *-hi* could also be traced in several examples as *Rusa=hi=na=ue* ‘city of Rusa (Toprakkale). The author suggests that this could be regarded as an adjective of appurtenance as well.

The dative form of *-hi* is mentioned for belonging to something (cities) mostly to the king, and in this case, all three forms of genitive, dative, and adjective of appurtenance could be translated as ‘of’. Although *-hi* as the adjective of appurtenance with geographical names could also be translated as ‘from’.

Additionally, sometimes *-ni*, which has a wide range of grammatical functions in Urartian language i. e. to form an absolutive or ablative-instrumental (Wilhelm, 2008b, p. 125), could also compose the genitive role as well as *^{DIM}-ni URU* ‘City of Storm God’ and in this case could perhaps be the equivalent of *-hi*.

Previously, the author mentioned that Salvini (1979, p. 106) also comments that *-hi* could compose locative adjectives i. e. the name of the countries as *Erikua=hi KUR=ni* ‘country of Erikua’ (Salvini, 1979, pp. 101-102) and name of a king or lord of a city or country as *^{URU}Turkriš=hi ewir=ni* or *^{URU}Halmeru=ni ^mTušurie=hi*. They could be translated as both ‘Lord in/of Turkriš City’ and ‘Halmeru City of Tušurie’.

In some cases there are no sign, word, or suffix used to illustrate that something belongs to somebody. On the mace of Qaquli queen (*^{MUNUS}qaquli MUNUS*) (Salvini 2012: 68, B 12 A-I), only her name is written to show that the mace belongs to her or her court.

Sometimes a problem emerges in expressions such as *Rusa=hi=ni=li* ‘city of Rusa (Toprakkale) (Salvini, 1979, p. 111) and *^{URU}Minua=hi=ni=e* ‘City of Minua’. Melikišvili (1971, p. 30) explained *hi=ni=li* as a suffix to form the city names that were called according to the names of the kings. Salvini (2001, p. 282, CB AY-4) suggested the translation of ‘City of Minuaḫinili’ for *^{URU}Minua=hi=ni=e*, but the author preferred ‘City of Minua’ because the ending (*hi-ni* or *hi-ni-li*) could be regarded as the grammatical function. In this case, the city is built by the king on bare land or over the previous fort. Therefore, *hi=ni=li* and *hi=ni=e* has sometimes been regarded as a part of the name. However, there is a grammatical difference between the two translations as ‘City of Minuaḫinili’ is regarded as the name of the city and ‘City of Minua’ is translated as the adjective of appurtenance or possessive form.

This suffix also formed adjectives and nouns after *u* or *ú*: *egur=u=hi* ‘clean, pure’, *tarai=ú= hi* ‘?’ (Wilhelm, 2008b, p. 125; Dara, 2017, p. 43, 15), *šú`-hi* and *tarai=u=hi* (Melikišvili, 1971, p. 31). Also this occurs after *i* or *e*: *ter=i=hi* ‘plantation’ and *qarm=e=hi* ‘?’; and *a*: *babana=hi* ‘mountainous?’. Accordingly, *-hi* is added to the root or part of the word with the assistance of specific sounds.

According to Melikišvili (1971, p. 30) it could also form a noun after *-iš-* as *uri=šhi* ‘property’ (Dara, 2015, p. 71). Wilhelm suggested that *ú-ri-iš-ḫi* (*uri=šhe*) has two parts: The root is attached to the suffix *-šhe* (Hurrian *šə*) (Wilhelm, 2008b, p. 125). Therefore, in this case *-ḫi* is attached to the root. Salvini (2012, p. 28, B5-1), Belli (1991, p. 46), Zimansky (1995, p. 109), and the author (Dara, 2015, p. 71) prefer the translated of *ú-ri-iš-ḫi* as ‘property’. However, a more accurate translation could be ‘the property of’.

Although the Urartian language is studied in comparison with the Hurrian language, according to Wilhelm *-ḫi* has no parallel in Hurrian but *-šhi* is presumably a suffix complex containing the abstract suffix *-še* (Wilhelm, 2008b, p. 125). Although the suffix *-ḫe* with the initial voiceless consonant is sometimes parallel to “of” or “belonging” (Wilhelm, 2008a, p. 106).

Salvini and Wegner (2014, p. 20) compared *-ḫi* after the sounds of *o/u* with Hurrian as well. Of course *-ḫi-* was also used as a part of the word and not the suffix as *GU4pa-ḫi-ni* ‘bull’ in Merge Karevan obverse inscription (Dara, 2017, p. 100, 40).

According to the above-mentioned examples the suffix *-ḫi* could be translated as ‘of’, ‘in’, ‘belonging’ and ‘from’ in different cases, or it might remain with no specific function and be a part of the word.

Sheep presenters’ list tablet

A broken fragment of a tablet has been discovered in Bastam and could have been written during the reign of Rusa II. It is in the National Museum of Iran with number 11771 GPM. It is 4.5 cm, 3.5 cm, and 1.5 cm on three sides. The broken side is 5 cm long. Its thickness is 2 cm, and the signs are from 0.3 to 0.5 cm tall (Dara, 2017, p. 155). There are parts of a four-line inscription remained on its obverse (Fig. 1). This has been studied by Salvini (2012, p. 131, CT Ba-4), Haroutyunyan (2001, p. 510), Payne (2006, p. 329, 14.2.17), and the author (Dara, 2017, p. 155).



Figure 1a. Obverse of the Bastam tablet (Dara, 2017, p. 153)



Figure 1b. Reverse of the Bastam tablet (Dara, 2017, p. 153)



Figure 1c. Bastam tablet (Photo by the author)



Figure 1c. Broken view of the Bastam tablet (Photo by the author)

The tablet was discovered through excavation in bone room 1 in Bastam (Fig. 2). Urartian bone rooms have also been discovered in Toprakkale and Karmir-blur. The bones in Bastam belonged to both wild and domesticated animals such as cattle, wild sheep, gazelle, wild goat, deer, and even dogs, which were probably watchdogs (Zimansky, 1979, pp. 54-55). The author suggests that perhaps these rooms were not built everywhere but were an Urartian custom in some larger fortifications and perhaps were an innovation of Rusa II.



Figure 2. Largest bone room in Bastam (Zimansky, 1979, p. 54)

Several inscribed bullae have been found in the upper levels of the bone rooms in Bastam, which could be interpreted as belonging to the second floor (Zimansky, 1979, p. 55) to prove the powerful administration center of Urartu in Bastam. These bullae were unearthed in three bone rooms on either side of the walls immediately down the hill and close to a gate complex (Zimansky, 1979, pp. 53-54). According to Zimansky (1979, p. 55), it is possible that the bullae were tied to parts of the animals' bodies and served as a kind of property marker or sticker. It is also possible that they were attached to baskets, bones sacks, or even perishable documents.

Bullae and burned animals and human bones in massive numbers were discovered without skulls in the bone room of Toprakkale. In addition, a massive collection of animal bones in a small chamber with no skulls was discovered in Karmir-blur. This was the reason Lehmann-Haupt and Belck concluded that these are the remaining parts of the Urartian sacrifice ritual (Zimansky, 1979, p. 53).

There are several challenges and problems in the interpretation of these rooms. In Bastam, there is still the question of whether these rooms were specified for meat or bone storage. Scholars go so far as to suggest that the numbers of the bulla and animals correspond together (Zimansky, 1979, p. 55). According to Kroll (1984, pp. 165-168), these rooms were places to store meat for the fort. Several unearthed bones are not burned, and perhaps they were protected by the meat and remained untouched by the flames (Zimansky, 1979, p. 55). However, Zimansky (1979, p. 107) argued that bone rooms were not meat storage because the size of the rooms was very small and it was not possible to store the corpse or meat of too many animals. Also, he thinks that the bones were intact, jumbled, and pressed, and if the meat was protecting the bones, this could not happen. He doubts the hypothesis of keeping the meat here as the seal impressions mostly belonged to Rusa II and the time of the destruction of the construction is later, and it is inconceivable that the meat of Rusa's reign could be kept until the end of the existence of these rooms. Zimansky (1988, p. 123) and

the author believe that using the Rusa's seal could be continued for years after his death. He (Zimansky, 1979, p. 55) suggested different possibilities for bone storage. According to him, another possibility is that these were leftovers from the king's table and were not supposed to be in the hands of evil people who wanted to curse the king.

There is only one scattered tablet discovered in the bone room of Bastam, and it is the sheep presenters' list. The function of the room perfectly corresponds to the context of the tablet, as Zimansky (1988, p. 114) suggested that the context of this tablet inscription is coordinated with the function of the room. He believed it seemed reasonable to assume that the bullae discovered at Bastam were tied to documents or baskets and were related to the distribution or disposition of the bones and that the king and other people were involved in this act (Zimansky, 1988, p. 114). Therefore, having access to a tablet in the bone room is important.

There are beginnings of the first four lines of a damaged inscription left on the tablet as following with the author's suggested translation (Dara, 2017, p. 155):

1. *UDU I-hi^ma-ru-[...]*

'One sheep of/from (Mr.) Aru[...]

2. *UDU I-hi^mmi-nu-[...]*

'One sheep of/from (Mr.) Minu[...]

3. *UDU I-hi^mruh-[...]*

'One sheep of/from (Mr.) UI[...]

4. *UDU rI-hi^mγ-[...]*

'One sheep of/from (Mr.) ?'

The exception of *-hi* in sheep presenters' tablet inscriptions

As previously mentioned, *-hi* has a wide range of grammatical functions in the Urartian language. *-hi* along with the name of the king's father as patronym, was the most common and was regarded as an affiliation suffix according to Melikišvili (1971, p. 31). In this case, it can be translated as 'son of'.

The other function for the suffix is the adjective of appurtenance, which is used with tribal and geographical names (Wilhelm, 2008b, p. 125). In this case, it was added to the name and was translated as 'of' or 'from'.

According to Salvini and Wegner (2014, p. 31), if the suffix was used to form genitive and locative forms, it was attached directly to the root. However, it could also be added to the geographical names, and both can be translated as ‘of’ and even ‘in’. In some cases *-hi* could form the dative role (Salvini, 1979, p. 111).

Additionally, *-hi-ni-li* or *-hi-ni* after the name of the king could form city names (Melikišvili, 1971, p. 30). In this case ‘of’ can be a good choice for the translation.

Sometimes *-hi* was used after *u, ú, i, e,* and *a* sound to form the noun or adjective. In this case, a noun or root ending with these specific sounds were used. There is no translation for this case. A root with the addition of *iš-hi* could form a noun (Wilhelm, 2008b, p. 125) and, in some cases, can be translated as “of.” Of course, in some cases *-hi* is not a suffix but a part of the word and remains untranslated.

As is obvious *-hi* in the known Urartian words has always been added to the root or personal, tribal, or geographical names. In most cases, it can be translated as ‘of’ but sometimes ‘from’ or rare ‘in’ can be also chosen as the translation.

Salvini (1979) published his comments on *-hi* and later (Salvini, 1988, p. 129) studies and published a tablet of Batam. According to him *-hi* in this inscription could have acted as *Adjectiva der Zugehörigkeit* in Hurrian. He mentioned that we know little about the numerals and ordinal numbers in Urartian, but M. de Tseretheli commented that the ordinal numbers were also written with the suffix *-hi* but Salvini reported this as a rare case. In this tablet *-hi* is added to the numerals and not the personal names as an extra ordinary example.

Salvini doubted whether the sheep were offered by these persons or taken by them as the end of the lines to show that the directive or dative case was damaged and lost. He thought that these sheep could have been given by the tribute to the rooms. Later, he published his translation of *-hi* as ‘to’ (Salvini, 2012, p. 131, CT Ba-4). This means that these sheep were given to these persons. However, the author did not recognize any other example.

The author suggests that as this tablet was discovered in a bone room in Bastam, there are two possibilities to analyze the inscription. First, it is possible that the sheep (for their meat or bones) were offered by people or officials to these rooms as a custom, tribute, or ritual act. In this case ‘from’ and ‘of’ can be regarded as suitable translations. The second and less probable is that people were taking cattle from this room as a ration or blessing. As the concept and function of the bone rooms in Urartian culture remain challenging and unknown, ritual or storage functions of the room could affect the conjecture of this tablet inscription. The author thinks that the second guess is less probable that these people were taking sheep, their meat, or their bones as a blessing or ration ‘from’ this room as the lack of similar tablets of rations or people’s offerings in the Urartian archives.

The author prefers that *-hi* can be regarded as the appurtenance or possessive adjective in this tablet inscription. It might also have the function of a dative role but surely not a locative genitive. Accordingly, it can be translated as ‘of’ or ‘from’ but with three possibilities. Perhaps it means that the mentioned names have presented their own sheep (of) to this room, or the sheep were brought by the others but “from” these persons or even the sheep belonged to others but were presented by or “from” these persons to the bone room. This means it could act as an ablative.

The problem of the sheep being used for the meet or bone is not the case. The author thinks that it was rarely possible to give a sheep to a person from bone rooms unless it was a kind of ration or blessing to the people. Therefore, it is more possible that some men (or women as the rest of the tablet is lost) named here brought or provided sheep to the bone room, and it is also possible that there were more lists in bone rooms that have been lost or destroyed. Therefore, the translation of ‘of’ or ‘from’ for *-hi* attached to the numerals seems suitable.

Results

-hi is among the most challenging suffixes in the Urartian language. There are several functions recognised for this suffix, including forming patronyms, adjective of appurtenance, genitive, dative, and locative. The proposed translations for the mentioned forms have been ‘of’, ‘from’, and ‘in’. In all of the mentioned forms *-hi* was added to the noun or root. However, *-hi* can also be a part of a word or form a noun or city name.

There is an inscription written on the damaged tablet discovered in the bone room of Bastam. This tablet inscription is indeed a list of people and sheep. The beginning of the first lines of the inscription remain unharmed, and there are names of the persons, numerals and *-hi*. Here the suffix is added to the numerals, which is rare.

As the tablet is discovered in the bone room, it is possible that people offered cattle and animal or their bones to this place as a ritual belief. According to Salvini, “to” could have been a proper translation as the persons brought the sheep to this room. However, there are other possibilities.

These persons could have been the owners of the sheep and they offered the sheep themselves (adjective of appurtenance) or they just owned the sheep and others brought them on their behalf. Therefore, the names are the owners (of) who present their offerings themselves or by the others “from” the owners and it was written that these sheep are offered “from” the mentioned persons or they wanted to mention the owners and “of” was more suitable. Also, it is possible that the presenters of the offering were not the owners. This means that the sheep belonged to others but were brought by or “from” these persons to the

bone room. In this case, perhaps the suffix acts as an ablative.

Additionally, as we are not aware and informed of the definite function of this room and the possible ritual in the room, it is possible that the sheep were ration or blessings ‘for/to’ this people. However, there is a lack of ration tablets from the Urartian kingdom, and we cannot recognize the tablet as one.

Therefore, perhaps it is more probable that these sheep were offered to this room for whatever reason, and the names are either the names of the owners who presented their offering themselves or by others or the presenters of the offering who were not the owners. The first case could be translated as “of” or “from,” and the last can be recognized as ‘from’.

The author hopes for new pieces of evidence from bone rooms or ration tablets from the Urartian kingdom to provide more accurate and understanding of the meaning of this suffix.

Ethics Committee Approval: N/A.

Peer-review: Externally peer-reviewed.

Conflict of Interest: The author have no conflict of interest to declare.

Grant Support: The author have no financial support to declare.

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