

TSAKANYAN RUSLAN, ETHNOPOLITICAL SHIFTS IN THE NEAR EAST AND THE ARMENIAN HIGHLAND IN THE VII-VI CENTURIES B.C., INSTITUTE OF ORIENTAL STUDIES, NAS RA, YEREVAN, 2018, EDIT PRINT, 290 P., 2 MAPS, 12 FIG.

The monograph of R. Tsakanyan deals with the fundamental ethnopolitical and geopolitical changes in the Near East and the Armenian Highland in the VII-VI centuries BC and transformations of the ethnopolitical map of the whole region. The study consists of four chapters.

In **Chapter 1** is represented the policy of mass deportations and resettlements in Assyria and Biainili-Urartu, **Chapter 2** describes the ethnopolitical situation in the Near East in the VIII-VII centuries BC, **Chapter 3** discusses the political situation in the Near East during the domination of Assyria, and **Chapter 4** is devoted to the changes of the ethnopolitical map of the Near East in the late VII c. and the first half of the VI c. BC.

The monograph has been carried out on wide source materials – cuneiform texts (Assyrian, Babylonian and Urartian) and studies of classical authors.

The author makes an attempt to present circumstances of ethnopolitical shifts in the Near East in the VII-VI centuries BC. Discussing the problems of the policy of mass deportations of the Assyrian and Urartian kings, it may be assumed that in both countries it has almost the same character. But it is possible that the policy of mass deportations against conquered peoples in their countries was first recorded in Urartu (Van Kingdom). Moreover, it is not excluded that the Assyrians could have borrowed this policy from the Urartian state. They carried out the displacement of population by force generally with the political purpose in Assyria, and with the economic purpose in Urartu. Such policy caused ultimately, in both countries changes of the ethnic situation and as a result, the decline of both states. In addition the author suggests Akkadian verb *nasāhu* - “to root out”, “destroy”, “drive”, and the Urartian verb *tamh(u)?*, *tašm(u)?*, *nah(u)?* - as terms for the mass deportations policy. And for the policy of mass resettlement in Urartu it is possible to offer an Urartian verb *eršid(u)*, *eršidu[bij]* – “made populated” and *ešiniduni* – “populated”.

Also are discussed the issues of the Urartian king Rusa III's (685-660^(?)BC) campaign to Transeuphratian region, the circumstances of the Assyrian conquest of the country of Shubria by king Esarhaddon (681-669 BC), the specification of the year of the Medians' anti-Assyrian rebellion as well.

The comparative study of the ancient Near Eastern history permitted the author to conclude that the campaigns were aimed to prevent the possibility of the attack of the “House of Torgom” (*Bêt-Tôgarma/Torgāmā*) (in the reign of Esarhaddon new dangers had appeared which attracted the Assyrian attention once again to some regions). The latter had occupied serious position in the Eastern Asia Minor at the close of the VIII century and now was trying to extend its influence in the East and in the South-East posing a threat for Assyria and Urartu. And only from such point of view it is possible to consider the necessity of the aforementioned campaigns. As to the Median's anti-

Assyrian rebellion the author came to a conclusion that it took place after the Assyrian conquest of Shubria in the same year (672 BC).

In spite of the traditional opinion (basically in the Armenian historiography) that the loss of the independence of the Kingdom of Urartu dates from the last period of the Assyrian and Babylonian conflict (609-607 BC) and connects with the campaigns of Nabopalassar (625-605 BC) to North Mesopotamia - the author on the basis of the unique source (Babylonian Chronicles") concludes that such an opinion is purely argued. Moreover, the lines 66-75 of the Chronicle B.M. 21901 obviously confirms that the campaigns of the Babylonian king Nabopalassar in 609 BC. was directed against the Assyrians which had besieged Harran with the aid of the Egyptians. According to the lines 70-72 of the Chronicle Nabopalassar battled in the mountains of Izalla, where he burnt down and destroyed numerous cities in the mountains, instead of helping Harran. The army reached the borders of "the district of?", garrisoned there and Nabopalassar returned to his country, without helping Harran which had obviously been lost at that time. Next year, in the 608 BC., the army of Babylonia approached the Armenian Highland and reached the borders of Urartu to the mountain of "Bīt-^mHa-a-nu-ni-ia", for the localization of which there is no common opinion. However, according to the march of the Babylonian army one can conclude that it was situated in the northwestern or northern part of Izalla which probably correspond to the Angeftun region of the "Armenian Geography". The author has come to conclusion that the identification of "Bīt-Hanunia" with Luwian Hanuni(a)assas and Old Armenian Khnunis or Korduk - is wrong. Thus, for the author it is unequivocal that the aforesaid three Babylonian campaigns - in 609 BC. in the mountains of Izalla, in 608 BC in the mountains of "Bīt-^mHa-a-nu-ni-ia" and in 607 BC. In "the district of?", were aimed to eliminate the remains of Assyrian power, and the theatre of military action was unequivocally in the south-western territories of the Armenian Highland.

It may be possible that there was another ethnopolitical power in this region - getting more powerful - the first Armenian Kingdom of "Bêṭ-Tôgarmā/Torgāmā" – "The house of Torgom". The author concludes that the campaigns of Nabopalassar had undoubtedly directed against the Assyrians.