

TIGLATH-PILESER III (745–727 B.C.): MASS DEPORTATIONS AND RESETTLEMENTS POLICY IN ASSYRIA

TSAKANYAN R.

rooslantsakanyan@yahoo.com

Introduction

In the Assyrian Empire the policy of mass deportations and resettlements (*našāhu, iss(š)uḥ*¹) was of key importance. It became a characteristic feature of Assyria's foreign and domestic policies.

In the context of the Assyrian military chronicles, one should notice, that the raids and deportations were considered as a strategy. The mass deportations and resettlements in Assyria became systematic and an integral part of state policy from the reign of Tiglath-pileser / Tukulti-apil-Ešarra III (745–727 B.C.)². Further, during the reign of Aššurbanipal (669–627 B.C.) it began to weaken, and then it ceased because of foreign political crisis in Assyria.

In the specialized literature there are quite many attempts of seeing such a policy applied in other countries and in earlier periods. Such attempts tended to consider the mass deportations and resettlements of populations as result of a special state policy. B. Oded also wrote: “The policy of mass deportations had already been put into practice by Assyrian kings who reigned before Tukulti-apil-Ešarra III and the phenomenon of the large-scale deportations of a civilian population was long since known in Egypt, the Hittite Empire, and Mesopotamia. Under the neo-Assyrian Empire, however, mass deportations became a regular

¹ **The Assyrian Dictionary** of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago (there on CAD) 1980, XI, N₂, pp. 1–15; in more details see **Oded B.**, Mass Deportations and Deportees in the Neo-Assyrian Empire, Wiesbaden, 1979, p. 5ff.; **Ջականյան Ռ.**, Էթնոքաղաքական տեղաշարժերը Մերձավոր Արևելքում և Հայկական լեռնաշխարհում մ.թ.ա. VII–VI դդ., Ե., 2018, էջ 17–26.

² *Tiglath-pileser* is the Biblical form of the name of *Tukulti-apil-Ešarra*, so from now on we prefer to use the correct name.

Tiglath-Pileser III (745–727 B.C.): Mass Deportations and...

feature of Assyrian imperial means of its domination of others, with far-reaching political, demographic and cultural consequences”³. And A. K. Grayson finds that it began to be used in Assyria, from the period of Aššūr-nāṣir-apli II (884–859 B.C.)⁴.

In our previous work, we have referred to this phenomenon in general terms, noting that the massive application of this policy started in Urartu at the state level, and in Assyria due to Tukultī-apil-Ešarra III's military-political reforms, not excluding the possibility of borrowing this policy from Urartu.

It should also be noted that before the reign of Tukultī-apil-Ešarra III this policy was not included in the agenda of the state policy so the capturing and taking prisoners to the land of Assyria or any other country cannot be regarded as mass deportation.

The Application of Deportation of Foreign Population until the Reign of Tiglath-pileser III

Among the Middle-Assyrian kings' well-known inscriptions the first record of deportation and resettlement in the area of Assyria is witnessed during the reign of Arik-dēn-ili (1307–1296 B.C.)⁵, and then in the reign of his son Adad-nīrāri I (1295–1264 B.C.) associated with the problem of Mitannian⁶. In contrast to the cases Arik-dēn-ili and Adad-nīrāri I, which were episodic in character and were unique, the phenomenon was becoming more frequent during the reign of Š/Salmānu-ašarēd (Shalmaneser) I (1263–1234 B.C.) and his son Tukultī-Ninurta I (1233–1197 B.C.).

In his inscription Shalmaneser I noted that he conquered Urartian (Uruaṭri) 8 lands and their forces, sacked 51 towns, and carried off peoples to Assyria as hostages⁷. During the Syrian campaign, he plundered and destroyed 180 cities, deported and blinded 14.400 people⁸. But here it is clear that the Assyrian king simply blinded and took the habitants of these cities as a trophy of war and of

³ Oded B., op. cit., p. 2.

⁴ Grayson A. K., *Assyria: Ashur-Dan II to Ashur-Nirari V (934–745 B.C.)*, Cambridge Ancient History (there on CAH), III/1, 1982, p. 253ff.

⁵ Grayson A.K., *Assyrian Rulers of the Third and Second Millennia BC (to 1115 BC)*, The Royal Inscriptions of Mesopotamia, Assyrian Periods (there on RIMA 1), Vol. 1, Toronto-Buffalo-London, 1987, A.O.75.8, II. 27–34.

⁶ RIMA 1, A.O.76.3, II. 35–51.

⁷ RIMA 1, A.O.77.1, II. 22–46.

⁸ RIMA 1, A.O.77.1, II. 56–87.

course it cannot be considered as a result of the deliberate policy. And, Tukultī-Ninurta I reported, that during the first year of his reign he deported 28,800 Hittite population from the Euphratian zone whom he had captured and taken to Assyria⁹. However, in the case of Šalmānu-ašarēd I and Tukultī-Ninurta I the phenomenon was actually of episodic character. In any case, apart from this episode other cases were not recorded. It can be assumed, that these episodic phenomena have not become an integral part of foreign and domestic policy.

After the death of Tukultī-Ninurta I, Assyria steeped in political chaos until the reign of Tukultī-apil-Ešarra I (1114–1077 B.C.). In the year of Tukultī-apil-Ešarra I's accession and his first campaign to Mušku, he claims «84. *a-na la-a mi-nu ú-še-ša-a 6 LIM* 85. *si-te-et um-ma-na-te-šu-nu ša i-na pa-an* 86. *GIS.TUKUL.MEŠ-ia ip-pár-ši-du GĪR.MEŠ-ia* 87. *iš-ba-tu al-qa-šu-nu-ti-ma* 88. *a-na UN.MEŠ KUR-ti-ia am-nu-šu-nu-ti*»¹⁰ - “I took the remaining 6,000 of their troops who had fled from my weapons (and) submitted to me **and regarded them as people of my land**”¹¹, and like his predecessors, he plundered and destroyed many settlements.

In the inscription of Tukultī-apil-Ešarra I's son Aššūr-bēl-kala (1074–1057 B.C.) for the first time we come across the earliest manifestations of one *našāḥu*-policy in Assyria. He marched to the land Ḫabḫu, conquered and carried off people¹². King claimed, that after the campaigns to the land Mari he **uprooted** their people - «-[šu-nu] **as-su-[ḫa]**»¹³. The following references in all probability concern his campaign to Babylonia. In the inscription is literally written, «1) 1 LIM ĒRIN.MEŠ KUR x [...] šap-[...] 2) 4 LIM šal-la-su-nu **is-su-ḫa** KUR ḏA-šur» - “1000 troops of the land [...] he **uprooted** 4000 hostages from them and brought to Assyria”¹⁴.

The next evidence, according to the information we possess, belongs to the period of Aššūr-dān II's reign (934–912 B.C.). B. Oded wrote, “From the data it is also clear that the system of deportation did not develop gradually, starting from

⁹ RIMA 1, A.O.78.23, II. 27–42.

¹⁰ Grayson A.K., Assyrian Rulers of the Early First Millennium BC, I (1114 859 BC) (there on RIMA 2), Vol. 2, Toronto, 1991, A.O.87.1, Col. I, l. 88; Col. II, l. 89- Col. III, l. 6; A.O.87.2, l. 22; cf. Oded B., op. cit., p. 81.

¹¹ RIMA 2, A.O.87.1, Col. I, II. 62–88; Oded B., op. cit., p. 81.

¹² RIMA 2, A.O.89.1, II. 12–13.

¹³ RIMA 2, A.O.89.1, II. 14–16.

¹⁴ RIMA 2, A.O.89.7, Col. II, l. 2.

Tiglath-Pileser III (745–727 B.C.): Mass Deportations and...

the time of Ashur-dan II¹⁵. According to his own calculations, in Aššūr-dān II's reign deportations were recorded in two cases¹⁶. Aššūr-dān II marched to the lahānu, the land of Arameans, he plundered it and seized their booty and possessions. He deported and settled them, including these people within the borders of Assyria¹⁷. In the reign of his successor Adad-nīrāri II (911–891 B.C.) another deportation case¹⁸ was recorded. In the course of his six campaigns to the Aramean tribe Temannu, Adad-nīrāri II deported peoples and resettled them in Assyria¹⁹. And, two deportations took place in the reign of Tukulti-Ninurta II (890–884 B.C.)²⁰.

In the reign of Tukulti-Ninurta II's son Aššūr-nāṣir-apli II (883–859 B.C.), 13 cases were recorded. There was a deportation, which included a population of about 12.900²¹ people, and in some cases, the number of those deported is unknown²². In the reign of Šalmānu-ašarēd III (858–824 B.C.), 167.500 people in 8 cases were deported²³. According to the data, known to us, Šamši-Adad V (823–811 B.C.) deported nearly 36.200 people in 6 cases²⁴. And during the reign of Adad-nīrāri III (810–783 B.C.) the deportations were rather small, and very often, their number is unknown. It should also be noted that in the king's inscriptions there is no record about them. It is only known, that the king prohibited deportations in Ḫindānu region²⁵. B. Oded notes only one case²⁶, while their

¹⁵ **Oded B.**, op. cit., p. 19.

¹⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 20.

¹⁷ **RIMA 2**, A.O.98.1, ll. 23–32; **Oded B.**, op. cit., pp. 117, 126.

¹⁸ **Oded B.**, op. cit., pp. 20, 129, 133.

¹⁹ **RIMA 2**, A.O.99.2, (ll. 62–90).

²⁰ **RIMA 2**, A.O.100.5, (ll. 30–40); **Oded B.**, op. cit., pp. 20, 127, 128.

²¹ **RIMA 2**, A.O.101.1ff.; **Oded B.**, op. cit., p. 20.

²² **Mayer W.**, *Politik und Kriegkunst der Assyrier, Abhandlungen zur Literatur Alt-Syrien-Palästinas und Mesopotamiens*, Band 9. Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 1995, S. 267–274.

²³ **Grayson A.K.**, *Assyrian Rulers of the Early First Millennium BC, II (858–745 BC)* (there on RIMA3), Vol. 3., Toronto, 1996, A.O.102.1ff; **Oded B.**, op. cit., p. 20; **Mayer W.**, op. cit., S. 274–289; **Yamada Sh.**, *The Construction of the Assyrian Empire: A Historical Study of the Inscriptions of Shalmaneser III (859–824 BC) Relating to His Campaigns to the West*, Leiden, 2000.

²⁴ **RIMA 3**, A.O.103.1ff; **Oded B.**, op. cit., p. 20; **Mayer W.**, op. cit., S. 289–292.

²⁵ **RIMA 3**, A.O.104.7, 9.

²⁶ **Oded B.**, op. cit., p. 20, and see in Appendix, pp. 117, 121ff., 126, 128, 130ff.

number could reach about ten. In Aadad-nīrāri III's successor kings' inscriptions there is no direct mention about deportation or resettlement.

However, in the first half of VIII century B.C., the active foreign policy began to decline in Assyria, and the state appeared in a political chaos. Aadad-nīrāri III's all efforts, which were directed to guarantee the safety of the state border, were not in all directions. Day by day the Urartian state increased, and that soon managed to change the balance of power in the region in favor of Urartu. Urartu soon became a powerful political force in the Near East, creating even a stronger anti-Assyrian alliance²⁷. In Northern and North-Western Mesopotamia, Assyria had great difficulty in defending the Assyrian domains. In Assyria, in 768–746 B.C., centrifugal forces organized rebellions²⁸. On June 15, 763 B. C., after the Eclipse of the Sun, riots began in Assyria²⁹. The situation was even more aggravated when the Urartians launched a military action against Assyria. From the East and from the West in particular, important trading nodes passed under the control of Urartu. Assyria was thereby actually confronted with an economic blockade. To control the trade routes Mesopotamia – Syria – Asia Minor as well as to gain control over the Eastern Mediterranean shores was again extremely important for Assyria; these were problems which were solved with the Tukulti-apil-Ešarra III's accession.

Tiglath-Pileser III, and Mass Deportations' Policy Application, the Methods and the Character. As a result of a palace coup in 745 B.C., and apparently of the rebellion of the Assyrian commander-in-chief Šamši-ilu (tur-tā-nu)³⁰, the power passed over to Tukulti-apil-Ešarra III (745–727 B.C.), one of the prominent personalities of the Ancient world. He ascended the throne («took the

²⁷ **Grayson A.K.**, Assyria: Tiglath-pileser III to Sargon II (744–705 B.C.), CAH, III/2, 1991, p. 74ff.

²⁸ **Millard A.**, The Eponyms of the Assyrian Empire 910–612 B.C., State Archives Assyria Studies, Vol. II, Helsinki, 1994, pp. 41, 58; **Grayson A.K.**, Assyrian Officials and Power in the Ninth and Eighth Centuries, State Archives Assyria Bulletin, 1993, VII/1, pp. 19–52.

²⁹ **Grayson A.K.**, Assyria: Ashur-Dan II to Ashur-Nirari V (934–745 B.C.), p. 245.

³⁰ **Grayson A.K.**, Assyria: Tiglath-pileser III to Sargon II (744–705 B.C.), p. 73; **idem.**, Assyria: Ashur-Dan II to Ashur-Nirari V (934–745 B.C.), p. 278; **Mattila R.**, The King's Magnates. A Study of the Highest Officials of the Neo-Assyrian Empire, State Archives Assyria Studies, vol. XI, Helsinki, 2000, p. 110f.

Tiglath-Pileser III (745–727 B.C.): Mass Deportations and...

throne»)³¹ on the third day of the month of Ayyaru³², 745 B.C. the eponym Nabu-bel-ušur the governor of Arrapha³³.

Tukulti-apil-Ešarra III carried out several reforms immediately after having ascended the throne with the aim of resettling the territories abandoned in the course of continuous wars with new population and restoring the Assyrian army. Only regulations of those problems could make the restoration of the former political power of the country possible. However, in the very first year of his enthronement military and administrative reforms were held due to his ardent activities, and as a result, Assyria managed to get out of the political chaos, into which it had plunged half a century before. In all probability those reforms gave birth to the notion of “**world power**”. Previously the Assyrian kings used to confine themselves to maintaining political hegemony over the conquered territories and their inhabitants. Such a political hegemony was strengthened by a special treaty, which was drawn up between the Assyrian king and the local kinglets.

In the reign of Tukulti-apil-Ešarra III, this policy was fundamentally changed and it obtained qualitatively new nuances. A new domestic and foreign policy was formed, and the former one was given up. The history of the Assyrian Empire entered a new phase, which can be called “**pax Assyrian**”: the imperial ideology acted as a mechanism for giving the empire some cohesion at the elite level. Thus, the policy towards the occupied territories underwent radical changes. If formerly the occupied territories were adjoined to Assyria as suspended kingdoms and were governed by the viceroys known as *amēl saknû*, after the reforms the viceroalties were divided into smaller administrative units, so called provinces, which were governed by the provincial rulers *amēl bēl pīhât*³⁴. Because of these reforms in the Assyrian state system and due to a complete reorganization of the Assyrian army, the struggle between Urartu and Assyria for a hegemony in the

³¹ Millard A., op cit., p. 59.

³² April- May

³³ Zawadzki S., The Revolt of 746 B.C. and the Coming of Tiglath-Pileser III to the Throne, *State Archives Assyria Bulletin*, VIII/1, 1994, p. 53f.; Millard A., op cit., pp. 59, 103; Glassner J.-J., *Mesopotamian Chronicles*, Atlanta, 2004, p. 173.

³⁴ Postgate J. N., The Place of the Saknu in Assyrian Government, *Anatolian Studies*, № XXX, 1980, pp. 68–76.

Near East and particularly in eastern Asia Minor and North Syria ended by the latter's victory.

Anyway, rearranging forces, Tukulti-apil-Ešarra III was actively involved in strengthening the international status of Assyria. In order to restore the position of Assyria in the Near East, Tukulti-apil-Ešarra III began to organize successful military campaigns across all geographical directions. The first attack was on Aramaean tribes living in the border regions of Assyria and Babylonia. Then, he went to the North-Western Iranian Plateau and conquered Parsua and Bīt-Ḫamban which soon turned into Assyrian provinces³⁵. After the victory over them, Tukulti-apil-Ešarra III integrated the military troops of these regions into his army as infantry³⁶. And a year later, in 743 B.C., Urartu and its allies were defeated in Syria.

Every single military success provided the opportunity to recruit and quantitatively increase the number of Assyrian army. After the military reforms of Tukulti-apil-Ešarra III, the Assyrian army became more professional; the military service had actually become a profession in Assyria. This enabled Assyria to have a stable, strong and a permanent army. According to B. Oded, one of the constant elements of the military policy of the Assyrian state as far as its regular forces were concerned, was the conscription of recruit from tributary vassal states as a type of a tribute paid to Assyria, as well as the mobilization in the Assyrian army of those men who had served in the army of the conquered countries and had been later deported from there to Assyria³⁷.

As a result of administrative reforms in Assyria, the policy in the conquered territory was radically changed. These changes exerted influence on the specific

³⁵ **Tadmor H., Yamada Sh.**, The Royal Inscriptions of Tiglath-Pileser III (744–727 B.C.) and Shalmaneser V (726–722 B.C.), The Royal Inscriptions of Neo-Assyrian Period (there on RINAP 1), Volume 1, Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2011, № 9, II.12–13; **Cole S. W.**, Nippur in Late Assyrian Times c. 755–612 B.C., State Archives Assyria Studies, vol. IV, Helsinki, 1996, p. 70f.; **Diakonoff I.M.**, The Cities of the Medes, M. Cogan, I. Eph'al (eds.). Ah, Assyria, Studies in Assyrian History and Ancient Near Eastern Historiography Presented to Hayim Tadmor, Scripta Hierosolymitana, XXXIII, Jerusalem, 1991, p.15f.

³⁶ **Dezső T.**, The Assyrian Army, I: The Structure of the Neo-Assyrian Army as Reconstructed from the Assyrian Palace Reliefs and Cuneiform Sources, 1. Infantry, Budapest, 2012, p. 152f.

³⁷ **Oded B.**, op. cit., p. 50; **Dalley S.**, Foreign Chariotry and Cavalry in the Armies of Tiglath-Pileser III and Sargon II, Iraq, № 47, 1985, p. 31ff.

ethnic population and led to the application of the *našāḫū* policy of mass deportation, which had both political and economic grounds. Actually, Tukulti-apil-Ešarra III's aim was to make Assyria an unparalleled economically powerful empire, without any significant ethnic differences. This policy pursued the goal of making Assyria a kind of global empire without any strong ethnic distinctions. The Assyrian state for this reason not only initiated a mass resettlement of inhabitants of the conquered countries, but also formally encouraged the domestic migration. The main purpose of the Assyrian ethnopolitics was to create a common culture and homogeneous ethnic society within the empire³⁸.

The Terms The policy of the Assyrian Empire towards the conquered territories and their inhabitants was full of numerous destructive dangers, but it was a success in case of a strong regal power and centripetal state. In the conquered areas, the Assyrians pursued the so called mass deportation policy called *nasāḫū* (*našāḫū*, *iss(š)uḥ*)- “to root out”, “destroy”, “drive”. Here we used *našāḫū* as a term, however, this does not mean that this verb is unique. B. Oded mentioned about twenty verbs to describe the word “deportation”³⁹. Among the verbs mentioned by him we find the following ones: *abāku* – to lead away, leave out, drive away, remove⁴⁰; *ramū* – to settle, to settle down⁴¹; *ṣabātu*⁴² – and so on. Of great interest is the verb *šalālu* (*šallatu*, *šallūtu*)⁴³ which denotes a mass deportation of human beings, but in other cases it denotes a captured property⁴⁴.

In this case, the main point of *našāḫū* was to remove the inhabitants completely from the occupied territories and to resettle them in the outlying districts of the enormous empire. Thereby areas, which had formerly been void, or the population of which had previously been displaced, were resettled by the population of other territories, and the result was a drastic change in the ethnic picture of these areas. The policy of *našāḫū*, which pursued a political aim, did not give the expected results at the end. As the further course of events showed, the

³⁸ Parpola S., National and Ethnic Identity in the Neo-Assyrian Empire and Assyria Identity in Post-Empire Times, *Journal of Assyrian Academic Studies*, vol. XVIII, № 2, 2004, pp. 7, 10f.

³⁹ Oded B., op. cit., p. 5.

⁴⁰ CAD 1964, I, A1, *abāku*, 3f.

⁴¹ CAD 1999, XIV, R, *ramū*, 127–147.

⁴² CAD 1962, XVI, Š, *ṣabātu*, 5–41.

⁴³ CAD 1989, XVII, Š1, *šalālu*, 195ff.

⁴⁴ Oded B., op. cit., p. 7; Ջակատյան Ռ., Էթնոքաղաքական տեղաշարժերը ..., էջ 21-26:

mass deportation policy had only transitory success. Later on, it apparently led to the fall of Assyria and precipitated the process.

The investigation suggests that the policy of mass deportations as part of the Assyrians' foreign policy as such was for the first time used in Urartu, and it is not excluded that Assyrians could have borrowed this policy from Urartians. To describe the "Urartian model" of *nasāḥu*- policy, the following Urartian verbs can be mentioned: ***tamḥ(u)?***, ***tašm(u)?***, ***naḥ(u)?***, which mean "displace"⁴⁵. Nevertheless, the kings of Urartu mainly used the verbs ***ag(u)*** – take, to lead away, leave out⁴⁶ and ***par(u)*** – drive, banish⁴⁷ in their inscriptions. Very often these two verbs are used in the same inscription⁴⁸. But for the resettlements in Urartu, the Urartian verb ***eršid(u)***, ***eršidu[bi]***– "*made populated*"⁴⁹– is used. In one of the inscriptions of the Urartian king Minua we find the phrase "***ešinini duni***", which N. V. Harutyunyan translates as "*populated*", "*dwelling-made*"⁵⁰. M. Salvini translates it in the same way, "*rese abitato (?)*"⁵¹.

The active foreign policy of the Near-Eastern two most powerful states, Assyria and Urartu, and their fight for hegemony in the Near East suggest the existence of a military vehicle, which included a unique institution the task of which was to deal with ethnic issues. We believe that it was centered in "*the palace administration*" by which the state was governed. In charge of it was «***rab ummâni***», and it was carried out by «***mušarkisu***»⁵². Apparently the function of the «*rab ummâni*» can be compared with the function of «***hazārapati (hazāruff***,

⁴⁵ **Арутюнян Н. В.**, Корпус урартских клинообразных надписей (there on КУКН), Е., 2001, № 388, 3; **Salvini M.**, Corpus dei Testi Urartei (there on CTU I), I, Le Iscrizioni su Pietra e Roccia i Testi, Roma, 2008, № A10: 3.

⁴⁶ **КУКН**, № 44: 9-10 and 14-15, № 52:4; № 173:13,43; **CTU I**, A5-9: 14-15, 9-10, A5-2E: 4; A8-3: 13,43, etc.

⁴⁷ **КУКН**, № 173, I: 13-15, 30; **CTU I**, A8-3 I: 13-15, 30, and etc.

⁴⁸ **КУКН**, № 174 B2:29-33; **CTU I**, A8-2: 29-33.

⁴⁹ **КУКН**, № 241C:4-5; **CTU I**, A 9-3 II.

⁵⁰ **Հարությունյան Ն.**, Նոր ընթերցումներ և մեկնաբանություններ Այանիսի նորահայտ ուրարտական սեպագրում, Մերձավոր և Միջին Արևելքի երկրներ և ժողովուրդներ, 2002, № XXI, էջ 221-225:

⁵¹ **CTU I**, A5-27: 5.

⁵² **CAD 10**, M2, 260-261; **Oded B.**, op. cit., p. 39; **Dezső T.**, The Assyrian Army I: The Structure of the Neo-Assyrian Army as Reconstructed from the Assyrian Palace Reliefs and Cuneiform Sources, 2. Cavalry and Cariotry, Budapest, 2012, pp. 43f., 122ff.;

hazārbed, huqurawutur)» in Sasanid Iran and in Great Armenia. The corresponding Greek term for it is «*χλῖαρχος*»⁵³.

One paid special attention in the deportation policy to road problems and to food provision. As can be seen in an Assyrian relief, those who are being resettled to their new place of residence are accompanied by Assyrian soldiers and their helpers⁵⁴.

The Social Status of the Deported and Resettled People

The population deported from the conquered territories and resettled in various regions of Assyria had to be registered legally. Obviously, one cannot designate them as slaves, though there were slaves in Assyria. However, we believe that their number was quite a small one. The Assyrian kings preferred to resettle the displaced population in small separated groups or even families, uniting people with multiethnic groups in the same place. The displaced people were settled in regal or even private lands, also in lands belonging to religious temples. Officially, they were considered to be «*wardu ša šarrim*» - king's slaves⁵⁵, but at the same time most of them were personally free and, obviously, were not enslaved. The people of the occupied areas and the immigrants were equal in rights to “the people of Assyria” («*nīšē māṭAššur*») or “the people of the empire” («*nīšē māti*») - *it-ti UN.MEŠ (nišē) KUR Aš-šur am-nu-šu-nu-ti*» – “and were regarded as people of my land”⁵⁶. They were considered to be free citizens of Assyria «*awilum*», but in essence they were different from the native Assyrians «*mar'ē māṭAššur*» – «the sons of Assyria»⁵⁷. Those who possessed moveable and immovable property, joined the Assyrian army⁵⁸, ran a household of their own and even had their own slaves⁵⁹, etc.

⁵³ Յակոբյան Ռ., Էթնոքաղաքական տեղաշարժերը ..., էջ 21.

⁵⁴ Oded B., op. cit., p. 39.

⁵⁵ Diakonoff M., op. cit., p. 19; Ponchia S., Slaves, Serfs, and Prisoners in Imperial Assyria (IX–VII Cent. BC) a Review of Written Sources, State Archives Assyria Bulletin, 2017, XXIII, pp. 157-179.

⁵⁶ RINAP 1, № 5, l. 4; № 6, l. 4; Sargon II's after the expression ceases to apply. For a detailed discussion, see Oded B., op. cit., p. 81–91; Parpola S., op. cit., p. 13 n. 38.

⁵⁷ Ibidem.

⁵⁸ Dalley S., Foreign Chariotry and Cavalry in the Armies of Tiglath-Pileser III and Sargon II, Iraq, № 47, 1985, p. 31ff.

⁵⁹ For details see Oded B., op. cit., pp. 75–115.

The arguments mentioned above give us the right to believe that the Assyrian policy of mass deportations and resettlements was an integral part of the state's governmental system. In all probability, the policy of *nasāhu* was a kind of ethnic assimilation or **Assyrianization**. In the Assyrian Empire, the living together of different ethnic groups in the same territory without ethnic discrimination was usually considered "**assyrian**". In this respect, S. Parpola notes, "Its ethnic diversity notwithstanding, it was a uniformly structured political entity with well-defined and well-guarded borders, and the Assyrian kings certainly regarded it as a unified whole, "the land of Aššur", whose territory they constantly strove to expand. To the outside world, it must have appeared as a uniform, monolithic whole, whose inhabitants were unhesitatingly identified as Assyrians regardless of their ethnic backgrounds"⁶⁰. A little different is B. Oded's approach, he writes, "The Assyrians were the victors, the overlords, while all the other nations were inferiors, and any attempt to throw off the yoke of Assyria was doomed to failure. No country was equal to Assyria, and every treaty was a vassal treaty"⁶¹.

All these circumstances, however, could politically weaken the area and at the same time reduce the risk of new rebellions. To those deported, that usually were high-ranking officials, governors, the military elite etc, the Assyrians gave large territories. Thus, quite an effective administrative organization was created in territories conquered by Assyria. The political aim of the Assyrian deportation policy was the resettlement of the new inhabitants of the empire in border areas, in order to create thereby stable strongholds for the state. Kings were provided for the conquered territories for particular domestic issues⁶².

The Social Structure The violence, lootings and destructions, mass deportations and resettlements in the course of wars were at the same time combined with the goodwill of Assyrian kings. According to the historical facts that we possess, Assyrians were rather inclined to deport their enemies than to punish them, in this way the deportations were not seen as punitive in nature, but a voluntary action. The willingness of one to be deported was conceived as an expression of free will to change the place of his former residence. The deportations were not made arbitrarily, but according to a specially organized

⁶⁰ Parpola S., op. cit., p. 5f.

⁶¹ Oded B., op. cit., p. 89.

⁶² Ibidem, p. 46.

Tiglath-Pileser III (745–727 B.C.): Mass Deportations and...

program, on a selective basis and for specific purposes. Most likely it was determined in advance what kind of social groups and what classes of people (for example craftsmen) should be deported. On the lists that we possess the urban elite is mentioned first, then scientists, craftsmen, etc.

What has been said above gives us reason to believe that the Assyrian kings sought to make the maximum use of the intellectual and physical potential of the inhabitants of the conquered territories. All this was aimed at strengthening the state's political structure, its economic and cultural sustainability and stability. Moreover, the state's economic growth was necessary to provide special policy under which not only the empire's peripheries and distant settlements would obtain new population, but also new settlements would be found. These developments would improve the economic ties between the peripheries and central provinces.

Despite the fact that mass deportations and resettlements were of great political and economic importance, the Assyrian kings stopped providing the resettlements with new localities. At the same time, in most cases it did not give the expected results and, in particular, it can be considered a failure in terms of the Arameans and the Jews. However, the mass resettlements resulted in actual changes of the ethnic picture of the territory, though the majority of the resettled population for a long time had to carry the cherished idea of returning home. The existence of a foreign culture becomes apparent in Assyrian spiritual and material culture, religion, ritual ceremonies, language, traditions, architecture, high-reliefs⁶³, etc.

In the new settlements and especially in the environs of the major cities which lay in the royal domain those who had been resettled were turned into a resident population and which now had to live permanently in one concrete area and play for the Assyrian royal government a role of a kind of a deterrent to the aspirations of the Assyrian military elite, day by day becoming more and more powerful. According to B. Oded, this stratum of displaced people was the most dangerous. For their loyalty to the Assyrian king they usually received privileges and autonomy. This became gradually the cause of the discontent in the Assyrian society. Despite the split in the Assyrian society, the resettled population remained loyal to the Assyrian royal government. It had no profit in the conflict between the

⁶³ Oded B., op. cit., p. 55.

Assyrian society and the Assyrian royal government, almost no benefit, with the exception of hope to get one day the opportunity of returning to their homeland⁶⁴. Some of the resettled people had the chance to occupy high administrative positions in the Assyrian state and gain levers of power⁶⁵. A famous example of it are the governmental positions of Israelites in Media during the reign of Tukulti-apil-Ešarra III⁶⁶.

It should also be noted that Assyrians preferred to carry out the deportations and resettlements of various people with their own families. In this regard B. Oded notes, that in case of a deportation of the whole family the resettled people did not try to escape, and while serving in the army they were forced to obey unconditionally the Assyrian commanders. In addition, people with families could get accustomed more easily to the new environment, and would have to work well to ensure their welfare and food. It was necessary that they were in their own social and cultural environment⁶⁷. Even for young men and women there were available possibilities to find their match. One of the characteristic aspects of the Assyrian deportation policy was the encouragement of the marriage of the deported people with local Assyrian citizens, in order thereby to motivate them to stay in the empire and not to cherish the desire of returning to their home countries, therefore the Assyrian kings encouraged mix marriages between the deported population and the local Assyrian citizens. This aspect of the deportation policy of the Assyrian kings finds its confirmation in a report written in a letter by an Assyrian official Aššūr-mat-ka-tera, in which he tells the Assyrian king about Arameans who work under his supervision and want to marry young women but have some financial and other problems; he asks the king for money, in order that they might marry⁶⁸. And Panammuwa II the king of Sam'al/Yu'addi⁶⁹ notes in his

⁶⁴ **Oded B.**, op. cit., p. 89.

⁶⁵ **Ponchia S.**, Administrators and Administrated in Neo-Assyrian Times, in: *Organization, Representation, and Symbols of Power in the Ancient Near East Proceedings of the 54th Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale at Würzburg 20–25 July 2008*, ed. by G. Wilhelm, Winona Lake, Indiana, Eisenbrauns, 2012, pp. 213–224.

⁶⁶ **Galil G.**, Israelite Exiles in Media: A New Look at ND 2443, *Vetus Testamentum*, 59, 2009, pp. 71–79.

⁶⁷ **Oded B.**, op. cit., p. 24.

⁶⁸ **Saggs H. W. F.**, *The Nimrud Letters*, 1952, Cuneiform Texts from Nimrud V, Wiltshire, 2001, ND 2725; **Luukko M.**, *The Correspondence of Tiglath-pileser III and Sargon II from Calah/Nimrud*, *States Archives of Assyria*, vol. XIX, Helsinki, 2012, № 18.

Tiglath-Pileser III (745–727 B.C.): Mass Deportations and...

Aramean inscriptions in Zincirli, about Tukulti-apil-Ešarra III; “and the daughters of the east he brought to the west, and the daughters of the west he brought to the east” – «wbnt mwq' šmš ybl m'rb wbnt m'rb ybl mwq' šmš»⁷⁰, etc.

In another letter-report, Aššūr-mat-ka-tera told the king that for the deported Aramean warriors, who were going with Assyria's army on a campaign, he provided all the necessary material, all accessories available, except the donkeys which he would also send when acquired⁷¹.

The Role and Importance of the Cities

Mass deportations and resettlements were also of great importance for Assyrian roads and cities. The Assyrian kings carried out extensive reconstructions of Assyrian cities for the resettled people. All this information is available to us from Tukulti-apil-Ešarra III's inscriptions, as well as from findings of archaeological excavations which are an important evidence for the policy the Assyrian kings pursued with respect to resettled people⁷². Tukulti-apil-Ešarra III was the first Assyrian king who turned the policy of mass deportations and resettlements into an integral part of the foreign and economic policy of the Assyrian state. Despite the fact that mass deportations and resettlements had a serious political and geopolitical orientation, they made up the basis of the Assyrian economy and were necessary for strengthening the country economically.

The policy of Assyrian rulers towards the populations of the captured territories began to change with the reign of Tukulti-apil-Ešarra III. In contrast to his predecessors, Tukulti-apil-Ešarra III started to apply the method of destructing the captured cities more and more seldom. He began instead to apply the method of mass deportations and resettlements. The conquered and destroyed cities were rebuilt or constructed anew. From the methods which were applied in the policy of Assyria towards the captured cities the following ones can be distinguished which were applied with respect to the population of a particular captured city:

⁶⁹ **Lipiński E.**, *The Arameans: their Ancient History, Culture, Religion*, Sterling, 2000, pp. 233ff., 243ff.

⁷⁰ **Donner H. und Röllig W.**, *Kanaanäische und aramäische Inschriften*, Band 1, Wiesbaden, 2002, № 215, l. 14; **Oded B.**, op. cit., p. 27.

⁷¹ **Saggs H. W. F.**, op. cit., ND 2643; **Luukko M.**, op. cit., № 17.

⁷² **Parker B.J.**, *Archaeological Manifestations of Empire: Assyria's Imprint on Southeastern Anatolia*, *AJA*, № 107/4, 2003, pp. 525–557.

a) In order to be able to consolidate their power in the conquered territories, the Assyrian rulers attached them to Assyria or tried to bring them under the sphere of their influence. For this reason the cities and fortresses of the occupied territories became of great importance to the Assyrian kings. They had to turn them into important strategic strongholds in order to be able to preserve their military power and influence there. On the ground of certain political and economic consideration, even autonomy and privileges were granted to some cities. The cities to which autonomy was granted swore an oath of loyalty to the king of Assyria and undertook to pay taxes regularly⁷³. Otherwise, the king threatened to deport its population⁷⁴. Hiram, the king of Tyre, accepted the rule of Assyria and remained on the throne⁷⁵, however, after some time Metenna/Matan II could be seen on throne of⁷⁶ Tyre. Tyre accepted the dominance of Assyria, while maintaining its autonomy.

The fact that Tyre preserved its autonomous status intact has probably two reasons: a) apparently the Assyrians did not have the possibility to take the island city or keep it in the siege for a long time; and b) most importantly, Tyre appeared to have for them the significance of a perfect trade mediator in the future. Most likely these were the reasons for what Tukulti-apil-Ešarra III granted autonomy to the city⁷⁷. The agreement which was reached between Tukulti-apil-Ešarra III and Bātānu, the ruler of the land of Bit-Kapsi⁷⁸ can also be seen as a similar example.

b) In some cases, the local king or dynasty was replaced by an Assyrian ruler, by another king or even by an Assyrian governor. For example, Peqah, the king of

⁷³ **Cogan M.**, *Imperialism and Religion: Assyria, Judah and Israel in the Eighth and Seventh Centuries B.C.E.*, Society of Biblical Literature and Scholars Press 19, Missoula, Montana, 1974, p. 44ff.

⁷⁴ **Parpola S. and Watanabe K.**, *Neo-Assyrian Treaties and Loyalty Oaths*, *States Archives of Assyria*, vol. II, Helsinki.1988, № 1 (The treaty between Šamši-Adad V and Marduk-zakir-šumi I of Babylonia), № 2 (between Aššur-nīrārī V and Matī'ilu of Bit-Agusi; **Lipiński E.**, op. cit., p. 216f.).

⁷⁵ **RINAP 1**, № 47, rev. 6–13; **Na'aman N.**, *Tiglath-pileser III's Campaigns against Tyre and Israel (734–732 B.C.)*, Tel Aviv, 22, 1995, 268–278; Culican 1991, 468f.

⁷⁶ **RINAP 1**, № 47, rev. 16;

⁷⁷ **Weippert M.**, *Zur Syrienpolitik Tiglathpilesers III*, in H. J. Nissen and J. Renger (eds.), *Mesopotamien und seine Nachbarn*, XXV, 1982, S. 399.

⁷⁸ **RINAP 1**, № 7, ll. 10–12.

Tiglath-Pileser III (745–727 B.C.): Mass Deportations and...

Bīt-Ḫumria (Israel) most likely became a victim of a plot, and Hoshea⁷⁹ ascended the throne of Bīt-Ḫumria, obviously not without the intervention of Tukultī-apil-Ešarra III. Also in Ashkelon the king Mitinti was overthrown by an Assyrian intervention, and Rūkibtu⁸⁰ rose to the throne instead of him. The king of Gaza Ḫanūnu was left on his throne, while all his family⁸¹ was deported. In Gaza, in all probability, an Assyrian trade center was created which, in its turn, gave the Assyrians the opportunity to control all trade roads in the region. As for the conquest of Gaza, S. Holloway notes that the doors of the unilateral economic relations with Egypt were already firmly closed⁸². Usually the populations of the cities which were located at intersections of trade roads were deported and resettled. They were replaced by populations loyal to the king of Assyria. This replacement enabled Assyrians not only to establish control over trade roads, but also to expand the trading area of Assyria. The fact that that Tukultī-apil-Ešarra III paid quite a great attention to the East Mediterranean countries is not accidental either. From what has been said above, one can conclude that the Assyrian expansion in each occupied region had generally economic reasons. This fact in its turn clarifies for what purpose a careful control was established over trade transit roads. He started interfering actively with internal and foreign affairs of the Phoenician cities. Having established its power upon the region, Assyria took control over transit trade roads of Egypt, Western Arabia and the East Mediterranean and the ways connecting these transit trade roads with Asia Minor.

In 729 B.C., after the conquest of Babylonia and consolidation of its positions in the Northwest territory of the Iranian Plateau, Assyria took control of those

⁷⁹ **RINAP 1**, № 42, ll. 15–19; **Dubovský P.**, Tiglath-pileser III's Campaigns in 734–732 B.C.: Historical Background of Isa 7; 2 Kgs 15–16 and 2 Chr 27–28, *Biblica*, 87, 2006, pp. 153–170; Mitchel 1991, 335.

⁸⁰ **RINAP 1**, № 21, ll. 12–16, № 22, ll. 8–13; **Mitchell T. C.**, Israel and Judah from the Coming of Assyrian Domination until the Fall of Samaria, and the Struggle for Independence in Judah (c. 750–700 B.C.), *CAH*, III/2, 1991, p. 334; **Weippert M.**, op. cit., S. 397–398.

⁸¹ **RINAP 1**, № 48, ll. 14–16; **Uehlinger C.**, Hanun von Gaza und seine Gottheiten auf Orthostatenreliefs Tiglatpilesers III, in U. Hübner and E. A. Knauf (eds.), *Kein Land für sich allein: Studien zum Kulturkontakt in Kanaan, Israel/Palästina und Ebir-nāri für Manfred Weippert zum 65. Geburtstag* (*Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis* 186), S. 92–125.

⁸² **Holloway S.W.**, *Aššur is King! Aššur is King! Religion in the Exercise of Power in the Neo-Assyrian Empire*, Brill, 2002, p. 192; **Grayson A.K.**, *Assyria: Tiglath-pileser III to Sargon II (744–705 B.C.)*, p. 77.

most important trade knots where crossed the transit trade roads spreading from "the East" to "the West" crossed.

As for the territories which lay to the north of Assyria or which bordered with Urartu, we consider, that the interest of Tukultī-apil-Ešarra III in them was conditioned by political motives. Having captured the country Ulluba (the border between Assyria and Urartu), Tukultī-apil-Ešarra III carried out a mass resettlement⁸³ there and vice versa, he crushed the anti-Assyrian group and deported 72.950 people⁸⁴.

c) The third and most common case were mass deportations of the population of a captured country or city and its resettlement in other regions of a more powerful and much larger country. At the same time in the territory of that captured country or city the deported people there from other regions were resettled. In some cities of Assyria there existed specific quarters where groups of people belonging to a particular ethnicity were resettled.

As a rule, deported populations were resettled in central and provincial large administrative centers and in their surroundings, as well as in the cities of great strategic importance⁸⁵. Quite important was the construction of new cities near the most important trade roads⁸⁶.

It goes without saying that for mass deportations the Assyrian royal and provincial roads were also of great value. Assyrian frescos show that the state often provided the deported families with vehicles for a more reliable and safer transportation to their destinations. It is clear that in case of much bigger deportations the state was not able to carry out fully its task of supplying them with means necessary for their safe transportation. Some Assyrian reliefs show that in the course of deportations women and children were given vehicles for safer transport, and that men followed them on foot. The availability of comfortable royal and regional roads⁸⁷ for such deportations were, of course, of great necessity.

⁸³ **RINAP 1**, № 13, l. 12, № 37, ll. 16–43.

⁸⁴ **RINAP 1**, № 9, ll. 8–12.

⁸⁵ **Parker B.J.**, op. cit., p. 541.

⁸⁶ **Oded B.**, op. cit., pp. 55–67.

⁸⁷ **Kessler K.**, "Royal Roads" and other Question of the Neo-Assyrian Communication System, in Parpola S. and Whiting R. M. (eds.), *Assyria 1995*, Helsinki, 1997, pp. 129–136.

Tiglath-Pileser III (745–727 B.C.): Mass Deportations and...

In addition to what has been said above, we also believe that the weather conditions too were taken into serious consideration in case of mass deportations. If we take into a careful consideration the geography of the campaigns of Tukulti-apil-Ešarra III, we can assume that the deportations which were carried out from regions with distinct physical-geographical and climatic conditions occurred in different seasons, etc. The governors of those provinces through which the columns passed were responsible for the security and nutrition of the columns of those resettled.

Quite impressive are also the numbers of those resettled and deported by the Assyrian royal government. By B. Oded's calculations, during the whole Neo-Assyrian period 157 cases of deportation were in total recorded and 4.400.000 people were deported. In the period of reign of Tukulti-apil-Ešarra III, 37 cases of deportations were recorded, which also belong to the total sum mentioned above, in the course of which 368.543 people were deported and resettled⁸⁸. Unlike the number of deportations recorded by the predecessors of Tukulti-apil-Ešarra III, the number 37 recorded in the period of the latter's reign seems more real. The principle of bringing down the recorded number of deportations under Tukulti-apil-Ešarra III to a round figure is almost absent, and it seems that one was anxious to represent the exact number of deportations under this king. In the inscriptions we have both large and small numbers - 6208, 588, 554, 458, 252,⁸⁹ etc. During the reign of the same king, other 19 cases of deportations are known, but the exact number of the deported people remains unclear. If we try to divide these 157 cases into particular cases, as it is presented in the Appendix⁹⁰ at the end of this work, we get 571 cases of deportations from 485 cities, 171 cases among them belong to the period of Tukulti-apil-Ešarra III's reign. If we take the names of cities or countries in the damaged inscriptions into a closer consideration, these figures will undoubtedly increase. It should also be noted that the data presented by B. Oded needs a serious consideration. It is sufficient to note that, according to him, the territory of Babylonia appears to be a single unit. Therefore, our calculations for the total of 571 and 171 cases - can be changed.

⁸⁸ Oded B., op. cit., p. 20 n. 5.

⁸⁹ RINAP 1, № 14, ll. 5–10.

⁹⁰ Oded B., op. cit., pp. 116–135.

At the end of this work, we considered it necessary to present a list of mass deportations and resettlements, where we indicate the names of 141 settlements, 76 of which were resettled.

Conclusion Summarizing what was said above, we can come to some general conclusions:

1. Among the people who were deported by the Assyrians the experienced warriors were divided from the rest. They were given to the king and complemented the lines of the royal guard.

2. Divided from the rest of the deported population a group of experienced (well-qualified) people (in the manuscripts we have very heterogeneous information about these people among who we find high-ranking officials up to shepherds and gardeners), was given to the stratum of pagan priests, especially to the temple of God Aššur.

3. Part of the deported people was given to the royal court, and the royal officials divided them between themselves. Their share in the deported population had also the environment of the royal palace which had a firm place in the land and was a kind of balance to the Assyrian military upper class.

4. The last part of the deported population was given to the bigger cities (Aššūr, Kalḫu, Nineveh, Arbail). It was no small amount. The majority of the deported people were resettled in the abandoned and empty cities, and particularly in those, which lay at the crossroads of the transit trade roads.

In the course of the mass resettlements the ethnic picture of each concrete region was undoubtedly changed and the possibility of an uprising on part of those resettled became less probable. This could be accounted for by the presence of strong military forces. However, the decay of the same military forces was, of course, to lead to a catastrophic situation, to the decline of Assyria.

**ԹԻԳԼԱԹՊԱԼԱՍԱՐ III Մ.Թ.Ա. 745–727 ԹԹ.
ԶԱՆԳՎԱԾԱՅԻՆ ՏԵՂԱՀԱՆՈՒԹՅՈՒՆՆԵՐԻ ՈՒ
ՎԵՐԱԲՆԱԿԵՑՈՒՄՆԵՐԻ ՔԱՂԱՔԱԿԱՆՈՒԹՅՈՒՆ
ԱՍՈՐԵՍՏԱՆՈՒՄ
ՑԱԿԱՆՅԱՆ Ռ.**

Ամփոփում

Ասորեստանի նասական քաղաքականության կիրառումը լուրջ քաղաքական և տնտեսական հետևանքներ ուներ:

Բավական լուրջ ուշադրություն էր դարձվում տեղահանված բնակչության վերաբնակեցման հարցին: Տեղահանված բնակչության մեջ առանձնացվում էին փորձառու ռազմիկներ, որոնք բաժին էին հասնում արքային և համալրում արքայական գվարդիայի շարքերը: Առանձնացվում էին մասնագիտացված մարդկանց խմբեր (արձանագրություններում նրանց մասնագիտական կազմը բավական խայտաբղետ է՝ բարձրաստիճան աստիճանավորներից ընդհուպ մինչև հովիվ ու այգեպան), որոնք հատկացվում էին քրմական դասին և մասնավորապես՝ Աշշուր աստծո տաճարին: Տեղահանվածների մի խումբ էլ բաժին էր ընկնում պալատականներին: Տեղահանված բնակչության իր մասնաբաժինն է ունեցել նաև «արքայական պալատի շրջակայքը»: Տեղահանվածների մի մասն էլ տրվում էր խոշորագույն քաղաքներին, ինչպիսիք էին Աշշուրը, Քալախը, Նինվեն, Արբելա/Էլբիրը և այլն: Մեծ թիվ էր կազմում տեղահանվածների այն մասը, որը պետք է վերաբնակեցվեր լքված ու անմարդաբնակ քաղաքներում:

**ТИГЛАТПАЛАСАР III (745–727 ГГ. ДО Н.Э.): ПОЛИТИКА
МАССОВЫХ ДЕПОРТАЦИЙ И ПЕРЕСЕЛЕНИЙ В АССИРИИ**

ЦАКАНЯН Р.

Резюме

Проводимая в Ассирии государственная политика *nasāhu* имела серьезные политические и экономические последствия.

Особое внимание уделялось вопросу поселения депортированного населения. Определенную часть депортированного населения составляли опытные воины, которые пополнили ряды королевской гвардии. Часть депортированного населения, в которую входили группы людей с конкретной (профессиональной) квалификацией (в клинописных источниках приводится разнородная информация об их профессиональной принадлежности, при этом среди них находим как высокопоставленных чиновников, так и пастухов и садовников), была поселена при храме Бога Ашшура. Другая часть депортированных была передана королевскому двору. Некоторые же представители депортированного населения нашли пристанище в таких крупных городах, как Ашшур, Калах, Ниневия, Арбела/Эрбиль. В ходе массовых переселений изменилась этническая картина каждого конкретного региона.