

Newly Found Inscribed Elamite Bricks of Untaš-Napiriša in the Čahār Fasl Museum of Arak

Sina Abaslou
 University of Iranshahr

Amir Zamani
 Leiden University

§1. Introduction

§1.1. This paper investigates two inscribed bricks from the reign of the Middle Elamite king Untaš-Napiriša (ca. 1275-1240 BC). The bricks are in storage in Arak “Čahār Fasl” Museum. Both bricks are inscribed in Middle Elamite cuneiform.

§1.2. A comprehensive analysis of the texts and comparison with similar bricks makes it clear that they belong to Untaš-Napiriša. These two incomplete and broken pieces are exact parallels to other bricks by Untaš-Napiriša from Čogā Zanbīl.

§1.3. These brick inscriptions, which are inscribed in Middle Elamite and presented here for the first time, were confiscated from antiquities dealers during a routine periodic motor vehicle inspection in Tureh, Markazi Province, Iran, in 2015.¹

§1.4. By comparison with other, identical inscriptions, the key-topics of the texts are as follows: introduction of Untaš-Napiriša, wishes for the continuity of his prosperity, and mentioning of the building of a temple with baked and glazed bricks, and its dedication to Inšušinak.

§1.5. Untaš-Napiriša (meaning “Napiriša protects/protected me”) is the first Elamite king to have left a large corpus of inscriptions in Elamite. From Čogā Zanbīl alone 53 discrete brick inscriptions are known (Henkelman 2014: 337, 339).

§1.6. In these texts, Untaš-Napiriša dedicates the temple to Inšušinak of Siyan-kuk which was a prominent deity during Middle Elamite period, but completely ignored by the Achaemenids (Henkelman 2017: 281). The name Inšušinak has been recorded in two spelling forms: ^{AN}in-šu-uš-na-ak and ^{AN}in-šu-ši-na-ak (Hinz & Koch, 1987: 760)

§2. Arak “Čahār Fasl” Museum 01 (Plate 1)

Artifact type: Elamite brick
 Language: Middle Elamite
 Measurements: 9.8 * 7.3
 Discovered in: Tureh
 Stored in: Arak, Markazi Province (Čahār Fasl)
 Date: Middle Elamite

§2.1. Transliteration and translation

- | | |
|--|------------------------------|
| 1. [az]-ki-‘it’ [...] | a thing... |
| 2. si-ia-an u ₂ -pa-at [...] | temple with bricks... |
| 3. ^{AN} in-šu-‘uš-na-ak ‘si’-[ia-an ku-uk-ra ...] | to Inšušinak of siyan-kuk... |
| 4. [ki]-‘ik’-ki-te-eḫ ḫu-‘ut-[tak ...] | I raised, the built... |

¹ Tureh is a city and capital of Zalian District, in Shazand County, Markazi Province, Iran.

§3. Arak “Čahār Fasl” Museum 02 (Plate 2)

Artifact type: Elamite brick

Language: Middle Elamite

Measurements: 5.4 * 13.4

Discovered in: Tureh

Stored in: Arak, Markazi Province (Čahār Fasl)

Date: Middle Elamite

§3.1. Transliteration and translation

- | | |
|---|----------------------|
| 1. [... su]-un-ki-ik ṛanṛ-[az-an ...] | the king of Anzan |
| 2. [... si]-it-me u ₂ -ṛmeṛ [...] | my happiness |
| 3. [...] ḥi-en-ka ṛinṛ-[...] | for this reason |
| 4. [...] ṛumṛ ubṛ-qu-mi-[aṛ ...] | glazed bricks |
| 5. [... du]-ṛniṛ-iḥ u ₂ zag-ṛraṛ-[tu ₄ -me] | I gave the temple... |
| 6. [... ^{AN} in-šu]-ṛuš-na-ak ṛulṛ-[...] | Inšušinak |

§4. Commentary

§4.1. Untaš-Napiriša was the king of Elam during the Middle Elamite period and his prominent temple still stands on the plateau above the banks of Diz river about 25 miles southeast of Susa (Potts 1999: 222). He ascended to the throne after Humban-numena, who is mentioned as his father in an inscription of king šilhak-Inšušinak (Potts 1999: 205).

§4.2. The two texts are similar to MDP 41 (Steve, 1967: 7-12), EKI 12 (König, 1965: 60-63) and IRS 28 (Malbran-Labat, 1995: 71-72). Unfortunately, the two bricks published here are broken and damaged.

§4.3. Although the police reported that the antique dealers in whose possession the bricks were found had claimed to have unearthed these two

pieces in the same place, it is unlikely that they are pieces of one single brick inscription from Untaš-Napiriša. Rather, they appear to be fragments of two different bricks with identical inscriptions. The depth of the cuneiform signs on the two pieces are not comparable, and they are deeper on the second piece. Furthermore, the writing form of two signs, na and DINGIR (for the determinative AN), are non-identical on the two bricks.

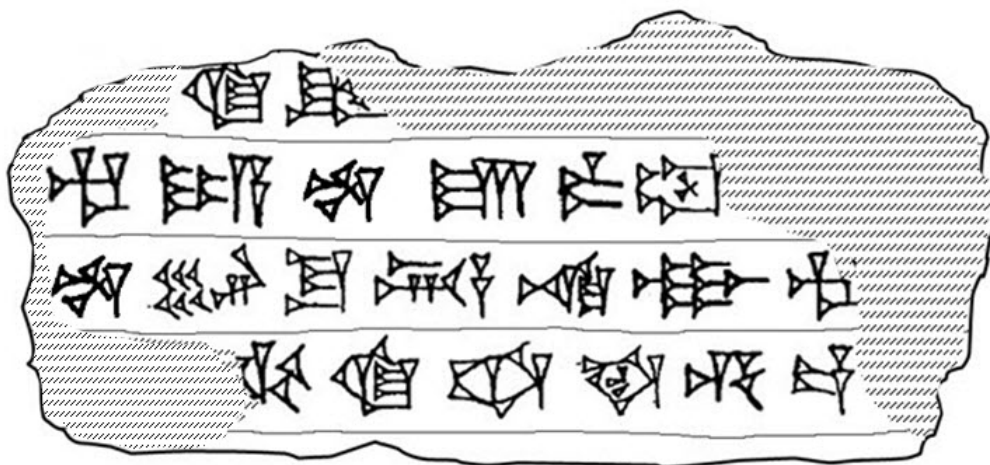
For az-ki-it in line 1 see now Daneshmand 2015 §2.2.2.1.

In line 4, the sign here interpreted as up/ub is written in an unusual way (𐎶𐎶), not attested in any other Elamite text. Based on the context it is here thought to be a variant of ub (𐎶𐎶) (Steve, 1992: 90).

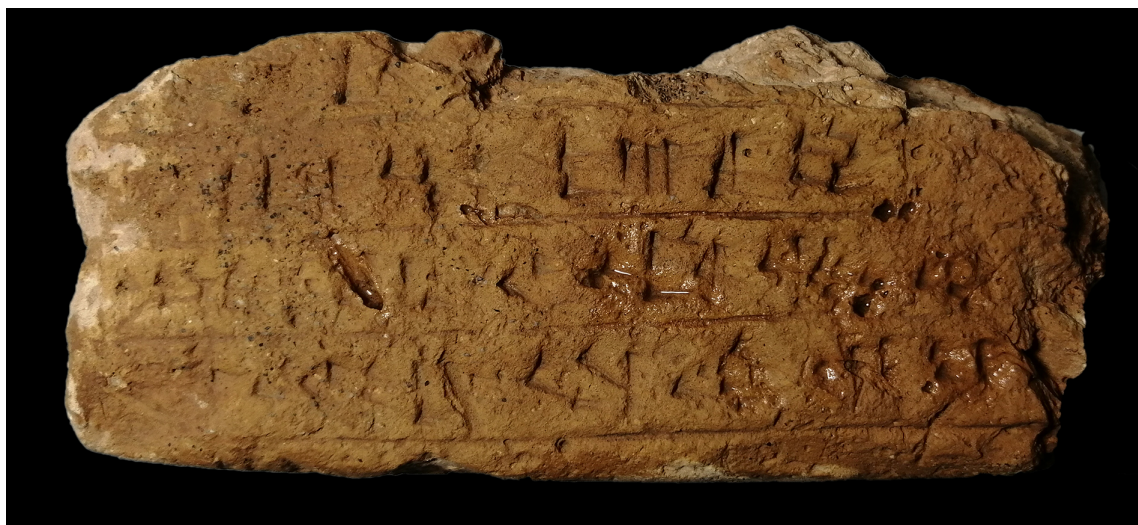
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Plate 1



Drawing of [Arak "Čahār Fasl" Museum 01](#)



[Arak "Čahār Fasl" Museum 01](#)

Plate 2



Drawing of [Arak “Čahār Fasl” Museum 02](#)



[Arak “Čahār Fasl” Museum 02](#)