



## IDA

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**IDA**, a land and a city, part of Inner Zamua, located in the area of the southwest shore of Lake Urmia. Ida and its ruler Nikdêra are mentioned in Neo-Assyrian sources dating to the reign of Shalmaneser III in connection with his campaign to the Inner Zamua/Mazamua in the 4th year of his reign (855 B.C.E.). All these place names are first mentioned under this king, which means that Zamua, which had been conquered by Ashurnasirpal II, did not include Inner Zamua/Mazamua.

The annals of Shalmaneser III contain six descriptions of the campaign of 855 B.C.E.; Nikdêra is mentioned there six times, Ida four times. In four cases the route to Inner Zamua was by way of Mount Kullar; in one case the way to Mazamua which ran through the land of Bunais was used (Grayson, 1996, A.O.102.2 ii 75b-78a; A.O.102.6 ii 10-15; A.O.102.10 ii 6b-9a; A.O.102.14 50b-52a; A.O.102.16 24b-26a; A.O.102.28 42-43; on the identity of these routes and the location of place names see Medvedskaya, 2000; cf. Levine, 1973). Three times a sea is mentioned, near which the Assyrians finally defeated Nikdêra and his allies, who tried to escape on the “boats of papyrus.” The localization of Ida ultimately depends on the identification of this sea. There is a pro-Urmia position and one in favor of Zeribor (Levine, 1973, pp. 20-22), a small body of water which lay some distance south of Lake Urmia. There are weighty arguments in favor of the pro-Urmia position—first of all, the titles of Shalmaneser III. The usual formula of his various titles was “conqueror from the Upper and Lower Seas to the land Nairi and the Great Sea of the West.” There is also attested a variant: “conqueror from the Sea of the land Nairi to



the Sea of the West (or to the sea of Chaldea).” However, sometimes one of the seas of Nairi is replaced by “the Sea of Inner Zamua.” In scholars’ opinion, these titles include the names of significant seas and lakes: the Chaldean Sea being the Persian Gulf, the Great Sea of the West being the Mediterranean Sea. If one of the seas of Nairi was Lake Van, then it is difficult to accept that Lake Zeribor was meant by the other, instead of Lake Urmia, as was assumed by Levine.

Moreover, in the Urmia area at Hasanlu (q.v.), a fragment of a stone bowl inscribed in cuneiform was found, which mentions Ida: “Palace (of) Bauri, the country of Idi, šamaš-ušiši [. . . ?].” R. Dyson, referring to a personal communication of A. Goetze, dated the inscription not later than 800 B.C.E. (Dyson, 1965, p. 202, fig. 8). According to I. M. Diakonoff (personal communication to the author; *Iran* 26, 1988, p. 12, n. 3), the shape of the cuneiform characters (which are in cursive writing) allows one to date it to the Middle Assyrian period (prior to 1000 B.C.E.), which most probably excludes its dating to the 9th century. E. A. Grantovskii (1998, pp. 56 f.), who also dated the inscription to the end of the 2nd millennium B.C.E., suggested that Ida was the ancient name of Hasanlu.

The following events may also be taken into account as an extra, indirect argument in favor of the localization of Ida in the Urmia area: Shalmaneser III failed to add Inner Zamua and the land of Ida to the Assyrian empire. His successor Shamshi-Adad V once more conquered the lands of this region. Although the latter does not mention the land of Ida in his inscriptions, it is quite possible that Šaršina, son of Meqdiara, twice mentioned in the annals, was actually the son of Nikdêra (Grayson, 1996, p. 184). By the end of the 9th century B.C.E. the western and the southwestern shores of Lake Urmia were conquered by the Urartians, and for the next hundred years they remained in their possession.

In 714 B.C.E. the Urmia possessions of the Urartians were conquered by Sargon II. However, Ida is not mentioned among the names of the conquered lands enumerated in his annals, nor is the land of Gilzan, situated on the western shore of Lake Urmia, which is mentioned in the Assyrian sources as late as Tiglathpileser III’s reign (745-728 B.C.E.). This omission could mean that the Urartians had renamed these territories. The name of Ida would have been preserved if it were located in the Zeribor area. Later the Mannaeans penetrated these territories, and after 616 B.C.E. they became part of the Median kingdom.



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