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### TOWARDS THE LOCATION OF THE ANCIENT "ROYAL CITY" OF DAIAENI/DIAUKHI "ROYAL CITY" OF DAIAENI/DIAUKHI

The country of Daiaeni is mentioned in the inscription of the Assyrian king, Shalmanasar III, which was dated to 844 BC and where he informs us about the fact that he erected his statue in the anonymous city of the king of Daiaeni, Asia when the latter came to him to the source of the Euphrates and "fell before his feet". It is clear that the "Royal City" of Daiaeni was located near the source of the Kara-su (the Western Euphrates), in the territory which is known by Georgian and Armenian tradition as Tao or Taik.

An additional information from the point of view of the location of the Asia's "capital" Daiaeni might be provided by the name of the "Royal City" of Diaukhi (Urartian form for Assyrian Daiaeni) – *Šašilu* – mentioned in the inscription of the Urartian king Menua who destroyed it nearly half a century after the Shalmanasar's expedition. It seems that *Šašilu* was situated on the place of the Medieval Georgian village of *Sasire* (immediately west of the castle of Tortomi or Tortum-kale, on the upper flow of Tortomis-tskali or Tortum-zai, ca 20-30 km north-west of the source of the Euphrates (*i. e.* Dumlu-su). Such a location of *Šašilu* and at the same time of Asia's city seems quite reasonable if we take into account that in the Urartian cuneiform script it is impossible to distinguish from each other the sounds *š* and *s*, *l* and *r*, *u* and *o*. and the above information of the inscription of Shalmanasar that he followed Asia to his anonymous city when the latter came to him exactly to the source of the Euphrates.