SOME NEW ASSYRIAN ROCK-RELIEFS IN TURKEY

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Of the Assyrian rock-reliefs in Turkey, only two long-known groups, those of the Cudi Dağ and Birklin ("the Tigris Tunnel") have been fully published. These groups are both accompanied by inscriptions and present no problems of dating. A further relief at Eğil has been known for some time but is somewhat inaccessible, to the extent that it is still unclear whether or not it is inscribed. It has been the subject of a recent study.

It is the purpose of the present article to make known some further Assyrian rock-reliefs, a single one from Cilicia, and a group from the Hatay. These reliefs were located by the author during surveys and travels, 1973–74. That these reliefs have remained undiscovered up to the present is a curious coincidence, and they may now take their place alongside those of the Cudi Dağ and Birklin, as well as the rather few other reliefs discovered outside Assyria proper such as those of the Nahr el Kelb; we shall also see that they offer parallels to some of the native Assyrian reliefs such as those of the Maltai. In the absence of any identifying inscriptions the new reliefs present greater problems of dating. The present study should be regarded as a preliminary report, and it may be hoped that subsequent archaeological investigation, as well as an analysis of stylistic criteria, will contribute to the solution of the problems here raised.

1. FERHATLI, UZUNOĞLANTEPE RELIEF
(Figs. 1–3)

This site with its accompanying rock-relief was discovered by the author during a survey of Cilicia in 1973, and notices of its discovery have already been published, as noted above. The rather weathered relief is situated on Uzunoğlanterpe about 2 km. north of Ferhatlı village in the vilayet of Adana, 20 km. north-east of Kozan as the crow flies. Uzunoğlanterpe is about 200 m. above sea level, and dominates the whole of the Çukurova as far as the sea.

The relief is in a niche 137 x 60 cm., 4 cm. deep, and is situated on the western face of the granite outcrop which forms the summit of the hill. The figure although very eroded is recognizable as that of an Assyrian king, showing the usual beard and hairstyle. He faces to the right and raises, as is usual, the right hand in a gesture of reverence to a group of divine symbols, only traces of which are visible. The figure is split in two by a fissure in the rock, which has destroyed the middle part of the torso and the left hand. Remains of the sceptre held in this

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FIG. 1. Summit of Uzunoğlanıtepe. The arrow indicates the position of the rock relief.

FIG. 2. The Uzunoğlanıtepe relief.
FIG. 3. The Uzunoğantepe relief.
hand are however still visible. The king wears the usual pointed fez and long, fringed robe.

It is interesting that the top of Uzunoğlanıntepe was later crowned with a precinct of the Roman period. Remains of the massive temenos walls built of large granite blocks still survive, and on the south side a four-columned portico looks out over the plain below. The columns, each still standing to a height of several drums, are visible from below for a considerable distance. The skirts of the hill show signs of having been used as a necropolis in the classical period. It would seem that the Roman precinct might owe its existence to some sanctity attached to the Assyrian figure which, when its origins were forgotten, may have been taken for the image of a god.

The poor condition of the monument renders difficult a stylistic analysis by which it could be attributed to any specific individual king. The historical probabilities suggest a choice between the following Assyrian kings, known to have campaigned in or passed through Cilicia:—

Shalmaneser III (839, 836 (?), 833, 832 B.C.)
Sargon II (718, 713, 706 B.C.)
Sennacherib (698 B.C.—not in person)
Esarhaddon (677/76 B.C.)

In addition Tiglath-pileser III and/or Shalmaneser V may have gone to Cilicia. It seems likely that Cilicia became an Assyrian province in the reign of one or other of them, between the years 732–718 B.C., but we do not have any references to the event.6

The Ferhatlı relief could have been the work of any of these kings in any of these years, with Shalmaneser III or Sargon as perhaps the most likely candidates. In the absence of an inscription, a judgement as to which king was the author will await any suggestions that can be offered on the basis of stylistic criteria.

2. THE KARABUR RELIEFS
(Figs. 4–14)

The reliefs were first seen by the author in December 1974.7 They are situated in the area known locally as “Karabur” or “Siara” (= “Rocky”), in the vilayet of the Hatay some 25 km. south-east of Antakya itself, about 1 km. west of Çatbaşi (Karsabul–Karsabay) in the district of Şenköy. Karabur is situated north of a bridge over a seasonal stream in quite a dominant position over its surroundings. It is an area of conical outcrops of rock extending over some 100 m., and is visible from a distance of about 5 km. (Figs. 4–5). Such groupings of granite outcrops resembling “fairy chimneys” are quite common in this area. The four reliefs are to be found placed apparently haphazardly on individual outcrops through this area. They are separated by some distance from each other and no particular plan of arrangement is obvious.

7On information given in the Adana District Museum by Ali Tok of Çatbaşi village, preliminary investigations took place at Karabur in December 1974. Early in 1975 more detailed research was carried out together with Y. Karalar and M. Bilici, archaeologists, and N. Doğru, technician, assistants at Adana Museum. Here we are pleased to record our gratitude to these assistants and to Ali Tok.
FIG. 4. The Karabur rock outcrops, seen from the distance.

FIG. 5. Closer view of the same.
The importance of this monument lies not only with the Assyrian reliefs but also in a tradition of sanctity which even today attaches to the spot. As at Ferhatli, the outer parts of the locality were used as a necropolis in Roman times. A rock-cut burial chamber of a characteristic Cilician type on the southern edge of the area suggested the possibility of the presence of further tombs, and in fact some questioning soon served to locate many other Roman graves. Another point of interest is a wall, probably Roman, found c. 100 m. north of the area of the reliefs at a spot surrounded by fir trees. The villagers of Çatbaşi, who speak Arabic as their mother-tongue and belong to the Alawite sect, regard this as a place of pilgrimage and name it Seyh ul Kal'a ("Sheikh of the Fortress"). Around the Roman wall, which they regard as a tomb, and where on certain religious days they burn various kinds of incense, there are stones in the shape of orthostats, and about 7 m. to the north, there is an undamaged marble pool, probably also of the Roman period.

THE RELIEFS

Relief 1 (Figs. 6–8): On the road from Çatbaşi village the first relief to be found is that of a single figure in a niche 129 x 57 cm., 3–4 cm. deep. The relief is somewhat protected from the ravages of the weather by a projection of the rock above, and from human disfigurement by its height above ground, c. 170 cm. It faces north.

The figure faces to the left. It has a beard and long hair; the right hand is raised as if in blessing, and in the left an indistinct object, possibly a flower, is held. It wears a long, fringed robe, and on its head a tall cylindrical helmet with triple horns, which clearly marks it as a deity. In front of the god on a level with the helmet, traces of a star-shaped symbol are faintly visible.

Relief 2 (Figs. 9–10): 30 m. away and centrally placed in relation to the other reliefs is Relief 2, showing two figures and clearly the most important. It is also fortunately the best preserved. Placed in a niche 166 x 142 cm., 1–4 cm. deep, we see the two figures facing each other. Between them, on a level with the helmet of the left figure, are six divine symbols.

The God (left): occupying the entire height of the niche, this figure resembles that of Relief 1, but seems to have been better executed. The bearded long-haired god faces right, confronting the other figure. His right hand is raised in blessing and in the left he holds a lotus-flower. He wears the long, fringed robe with the row of tassels round the hem, and the cylindrical triple-horned helmet of divinity. He also has a sword at his left side, shown passing behind his body. The figure is that of the typical Assyrian deity closely comparable with other well-known representations such as the god on a glazed tile from Assur or a Khorsabad Palace wall painting, although the lotus in the hand is somewhat unusual for a god.

The Worshipper (right): this figure is much shorter than that of the god, occupying only about two-thirds of the height of the niche. It stands on a raised platform facing left in an attitude of reverence to the deity, right hand raised in

salute, left hand held out, perhaps expectantly. The head is bare and the long hair falls in the usual style to the shoulders; surprisingly the figure is beardless. It thus can hardly represent the king, nor is there any reason to suppose that a woman is depicted. The usual long, fringed robe is worn. If we seek parallels to this figure, the most similar is that of Bel-harran-bel-üşur, the "Herald of the Palace" (nāgir ekalli) from Shalmaneser IV to Tiglath-pileser III, as seen on his stele from Tell Abta,9 which is closely comparable in all details, though wearing a slightly different, apparently more elaborately embroidered, robe. We may also compare the figure of Muṣezib-Šamaš, governor of Duru, known from his stele found at Anaz.10 With these comparisons we may be confident that this figure too represents a royal official. The lack of beards in this class of functionary probably indicates that they are eunuchs.

The Symbols: we find the following symbols representing the corresponding gods:–

- Horned helmet : Assur
- Moon crescent : Sin (moon god)
- Winged sun disc : Šamaš (sun god)
- Eight-pointed star : Istar
- Spade : Marduk
- Stylus : Nabu

The symbols used on this relief correspond exactly with those of Bel-harran-bel-üşur (who names them on his stele), with the addition of the Horned Helmet representing the chief Assyrian god, Assur.

The Scene: in Assyrian scenes of worshipper and god, which are common in wall paintings, reliefs and glyptic art, the god is usually raised on a podium or animal base above the worshipper who stands on the ground. The present arrangement with the worshipper raised, which is obviously more suitable to the composition, is unusual in Assyria and recalls the Late Hittite rock-relief of İvriz, where the small figure of the king, Warpalawas, is raised up into the presence of the gigantic Tarhundas.

Relief 3 (Figs. 11–12): This is found about 15 m. away from Relief 2, and faces west. The figure in a recess 104 x 65 cm., 3–5 cm. deep, faces right. Insofar as it is visible, the figure has the same hair and beard styles, robe and helmet as the deities of the other reliefs. The right hand is, as usual, raised in blessing, and the left, stretched downwards, appears to hold a long staff which passes behind the body.

Relief 4 (Figs. 13–14): This figure is placed on another outcrop of rock near Relief 2 at a distance of 30 m. from the latter, on the north face of the block. It stands in a niche 119 x 54 cm., 3–5 cm. deep, facing to the right. It is the most eroded of all the reliefs, but appears to be a deity with the same attributes as the others.

No inscriptions identifying the monuments have been found. Furthermore, their weathered state does not facilitate an analysis of stylistic criteria to deter-

FIG. 9.
Karabur, Relief 2.

FIG. 10.
FIG. 11.
Karabur, Relief 3.

FIG. 12.
Karabur, Relief 3.
mine their date, though it may be that when scholars have had an opportunity to consider these in detail, some opinions may be forthcoming. Here we confine ourselves to a suggestion of the possible historical context of the reliefs.

According to Libanius of Antioch (314–393 A.D.) the Assyrian queen Semiramis built at a place called Meroe near Antioch a temple for a goddess later worshipped by the Greeks as Artemis.\(^\text{11}\) Semiramis (Sammuramat) was the wife of Šamši-Adad V (823–811 B.C.) and mother of Adad-nirari III (810–783 B.C.), with whom she is thought to have been associated as regent in the early years of his reign.\(^\text{12}\) Two recently discovered boundary stelae belonging to the latter king are on display in the archaeological Museums of Marāş and Antakya.

We would like to suggest that the site of the “Assyrian temple” of Meroe may be sought in Karabur and its environs, which Libanius may well have known. However, the word of Libanius alone is not sufficient evidence to attribute the main Karabur relief to Semiramis herself. It would be unheard of for an Assyrian queen to set up a stele in a distant land on her own account. It is more likely that Libanius knew the tradition of Assyrian building and attributed it to “Semiramis”, which would have been the only royal name of an Assyrian known to him.

However, that the tradition may not have been far-fetched is shown by the Marāş Museum stele, which mentions that Semiramis crossed the Euphrates, apparently in 805 B.C. Both the above-mentioned steles also mention Šamši-ilu the turtan (commander in chief), the Antakya stele for the year c. 800 B.C., and the Marāş stele for the year 773 B.C. We know that Šamši-ilu was turtan during four reigns (c. 800–750 B.C.), and as Assyrian governor in Til Barsip (Tell Almar) on the Euphrates he was virtually king of the West. It is possible, as noted above, that he was a eunuch, or at least would have been represented beardless as other governors of this period (for example Bel-harran-bel-ušur and Mušezib-Šamaš). Šamši-ilu is one of the very few governors who would at any time have had the power to set up such a monument as Karabur. He is also one of the few who might have been so represented, beardless and bare-headed.\(^\text{13}\)

We would therefore like to suggest that, while the tradition associating the temple at Meroe-Karabur with Semiramis was not without foundation, it is more likely that the human figure on Relief 2 is that of Šamši-ilu, the powerful Assyrian governor, and that therefore it may date to the first half of the eighth century B.C., some time after the period of Semiramis. It may be hoped that archaeological investigations in the neighbourhood of Karabur will serve to throw further light on this interesting subject.

\(^\text{12}\)I am indebted to J. D. Hawkins for this information, and also for help with the English in writing this article.
\(^\text{13}\)For the possible appearance of Šamši-ilu, see J. E. Reade, Iraq 34 (1972), 89 and 93 f.