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COLLOQUIA ANTIQUA
17

BETWEEN TARHUNTAS AND ZEUS POLIEUS

Cultural Crossroads in the Temples and Cults of Graeco-Roman Anatolia

Edited by

MARÍA-PAZ DE HOZ, JUAN PABLO SÁNCHEZ HERNÁNDEZ
and CARLOS MOLINA VALERO



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THE TEMPLE ON UZUNOĞLAN HILL IN SMOOTH CILICIA

Mustafa H. SAYAR

Abstract

Uzunoğlan Hill is situated at the transition between Smooth Cilicia and the Anti-Taurus Mountains. Monuments from different epochs and with different functions are located on the top of this hill. A Neo-Assyrian rock relief from 839 BC commemorates a military victory of Shalmaneser III. Pottery finds indicate a Hellenistic presence, but no Hellenistic architecture has been attested yet. An inscription dating between 20 BC and AD 17 honours Tarcondimotus II Philopator and was reused in a mediaeval structure. Only a few metres apart from the rock relief of the Assyrian king there is a Roman prostyle temple dating to the mid-2nd century AD. An inscription from AD 149 on an altar was discovered at the slope of the hill. This inscription can be connected with a cult for Zeus Ceraunius. During the Byzantine period the site was turned into a fortified settlement. It is highly likely that the sanctuary at Uzunoğlan Hill started to lose its function in this period.

Reaching a height of about 670 m, Uzunoğlan Hill is one of the southern extensions of the Anti-Taurus Mountains found within the district of Kozan in Adana province (Fig. 1). It is located about 30 km north of Anazarbos, the ancient metropolis of Smooth Cilicia, and 5 km south-east of Mt Karasis, which contains an unfinished Seleucid citadel of the 2nd century BC (Fig. 2). Proceeding northward from the plains, this grand hill is noticed from a distance. To the west of Uzunoğlan Hill runs the north to south road connecting Çukurova/Cilicia with Cappadocia. It is understood that a road ran west of the hill in antiquity leading to Comana, the closest Cappadocian city.

Remains from various periods can be found on the hill.[1] In 1974, one of the works found in this area was the relief of an Assyrian king, which also gave

[1] The surveys on Uzunoğlan Hill were carried out between 2004 and 2006 by the author. They were financed through the Research Fund of the University of Istanbul with the Project No 530/0522006. The investigations on the hill and on the temple undertaken in 2009 and 2010 were conducted by him on behalf of the University of Istanbul with the collaboration of the Archaeological Institute of the University of Bern. The members of the team from the University of Bern were Ralph Rosenbauer, Daria Hollenstein, Gino Caspari, Reto Witschi, Zora Grossen, Katarzyna Langenegger and Susanne Rutishauser; from the University of Istanbul, Mustafa H. Sayar, Reyhan Şahin, İpek Dağlı, Esen Kaya and İ. Gürkan Öztürk. For the preliminary report concerning the work on the hill, see Rosenbauer, Rutishauser and Sayar 2009.

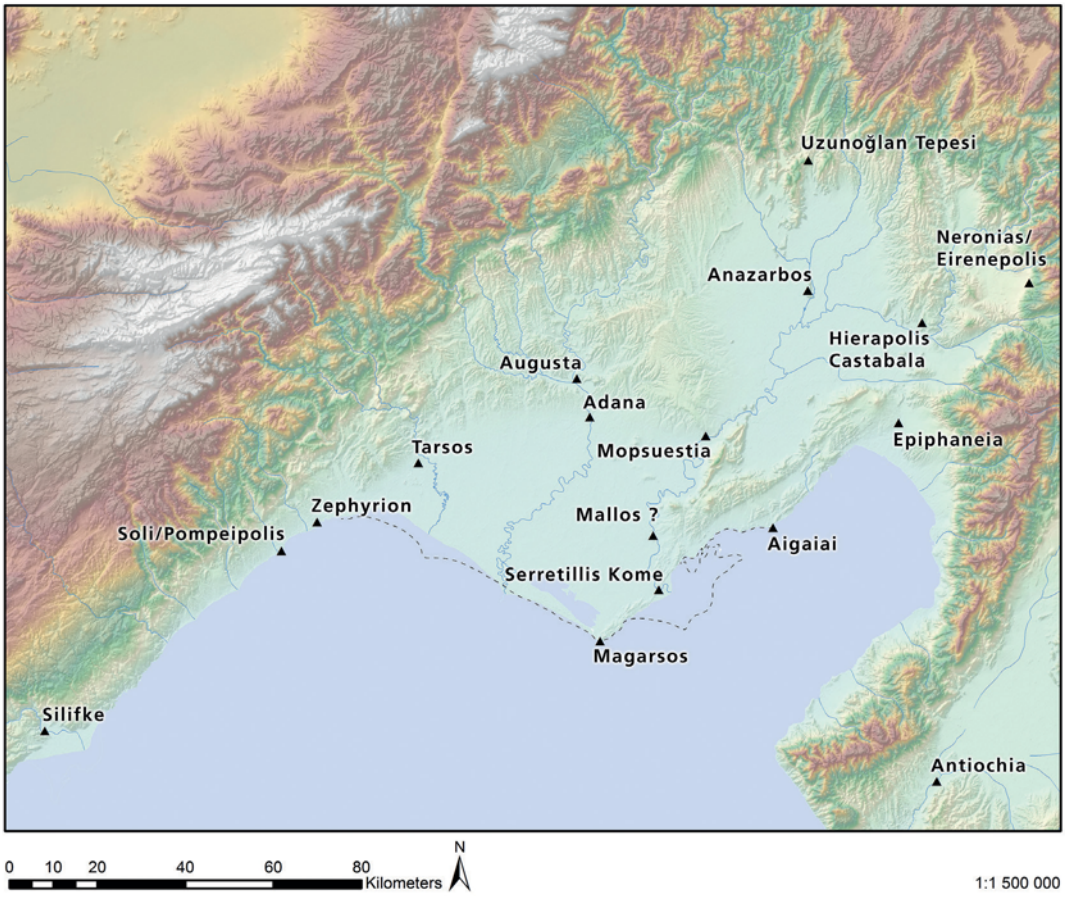


Fig. 1. Map of the Cilician plain (drawing by Susanne Rutishauser).

the name Uzunoğlan, literally ‘tall youth’ in Turkish, to the hill (Fig. 3). The relief is 1.40 m tall and is identified as that of Salmanassar III; it was connected with his military campaign into the region in 839 BC (Fig. 4).[2] The relief depicts the king in the gesture of prayer in front of the gods, which are represented as symbols. There is no inscription attached.

[2] For information on this relief, see Taşyürek 1974, 27–29; 1975, 118; Börker-Klähn 1982, 220, together with former publications. For the relief depicting the Assyrian King Salmanassar III, see Yamada 2000, 205.



Fig. 2. Uzunoğlan Hill in eastern Cilicia (photograph by author).

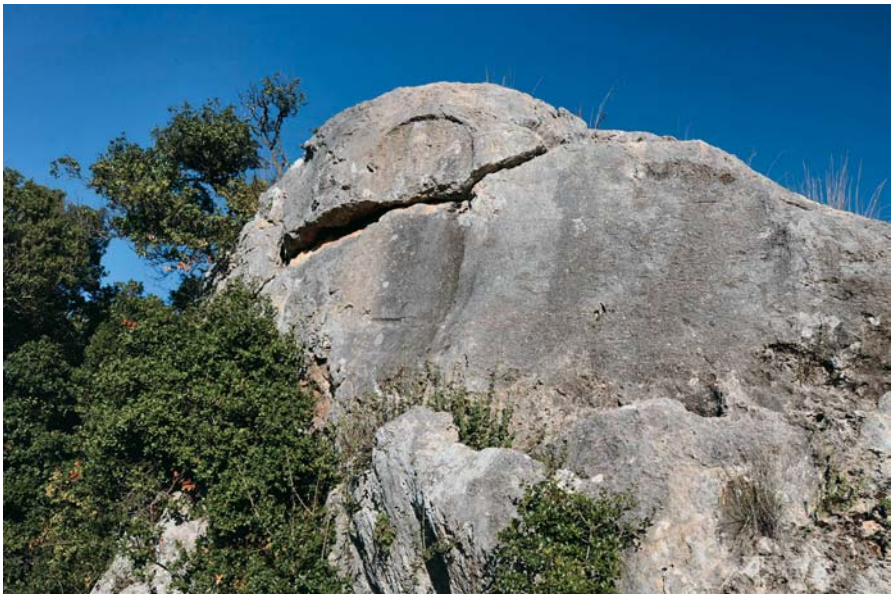


Fig. 3. Relief of an Assyrian king, probably Salmanassar III (photograph by author).



Fig. 4. Relief of an Assyrian king, Salmanassar III (photograph by author).

Pottery finds indicate an intensive Hellenistic presence; yet, no Hellenistic architecture has been attested. After the Assyrian period, the earliest clearly dated find is an inscription of the 1st century BC honouring Tarcondimotus II Philopator, son of Tarcondimotus, a local lord of Smooth Cilicia, who was killed by a priest whilst fighting on the side of Mark Antony at the Battle of Actium in 31 BC.[3] Right after the battle, Tarcondimotus II Philopator declared his loyalty to Octavian, but it was not before 20 BC that he finally received the right to rule over part of Smooth Cilicia, including Anazarbos and Kastabala, part of the territory once ruled by his father between 64 and 31 BC, and given to him in order to ward off the Parthian threat at the eastern frontier (Cassius Dio 54. 9. 2). It is understood that Tarcondimotus II Philopator ruled over this region until his death in AD 17 (Tacitus *Annales* 2. 42).[4] Therefore, it looks plausible that the honorary inscription from the Uzunoğlan Hill could be dated to 20 BC–AD 17. The block bearing the concerned inscription was reused upside down in the construction of a medieval structure of 7 × 4 m located straight in front of the four columns of the Roman temple.

On a 7.5 m-high terrace right behind this structure, and only 10 m south of the rock relief of the Assyrian king, is a temple (Fig. 5). The temple was built with local stone possibly procured from the quarry site attested about 30 m north. On the façade of the temple there were four columns, which originally reached a height of at least 10 m (Fig. 6). The prostyle structure measures 35 × 13 m and faces south-west. The temple does not rise on a podium or *crepis* typically seen in sacral architecture of the Roman period. It is still not known whether a stairway provided access from the lower level to the stylobate level.[5] The exterior walls of the structure were built with isodomic masonry. On the north-west, the wall has survived in seven courses reaching a height of 3.5 m (Figs. 7–8). On the exterior west wall there are three stelai or quadratic bases and a semi-circular altar projecting out of the wall (Fig. 9). These elements do not exhibit any order for their placement on the wall which rises on levelled bedrock: the altar is found on the second row while the stelai are on the fifth row, about 2 m above the ground. None of these elements bear any inscriptions that would help us to identify their functions. The fact that the protrusions for lifting were not chiselled off from the column shafts suggests the temple was not completed; however, the presence of Ionic capitals to the

[3] For this inscription and the Tarcondimotid dynasty, see Sayar 2001; see also Tobin 2001.

[4] *Cf. Prosopographia Imperii Romani* P 282.

[5] The closest parallel to this temple with respect to architecture may be the temple in the agora of Laertes in western Rough Cilicia. This building, which measures only 12 × 7 m, does not have a podium or *crepis*. Thus the Laertes temple, which has four columns in its prostyle, is only half the length and width that on Uzunoğlan Hill (see Söğüt 2001).



Fig. 5. Peak of Uzunoğlan Hill and the remains of the temple (photograph by author).



Fig. 6. The four columns of the temple and the view from the temple to the plain and Anazarbos (photograph by Ralph Rosenbauer).

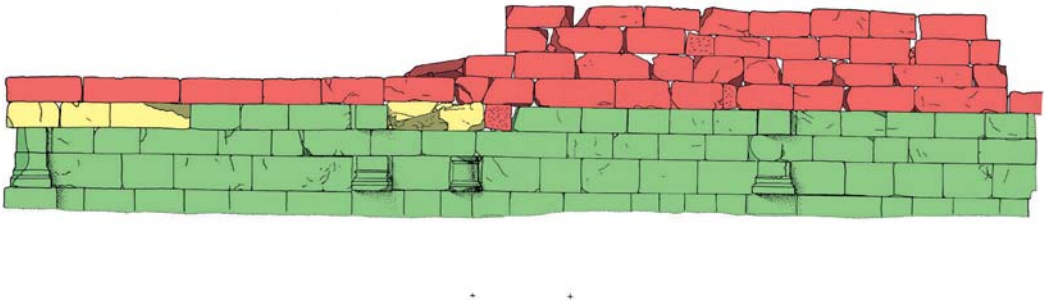


Fig. 7. Cella wall (scale 1:100) (drawing by Ralph Rosenbauer).

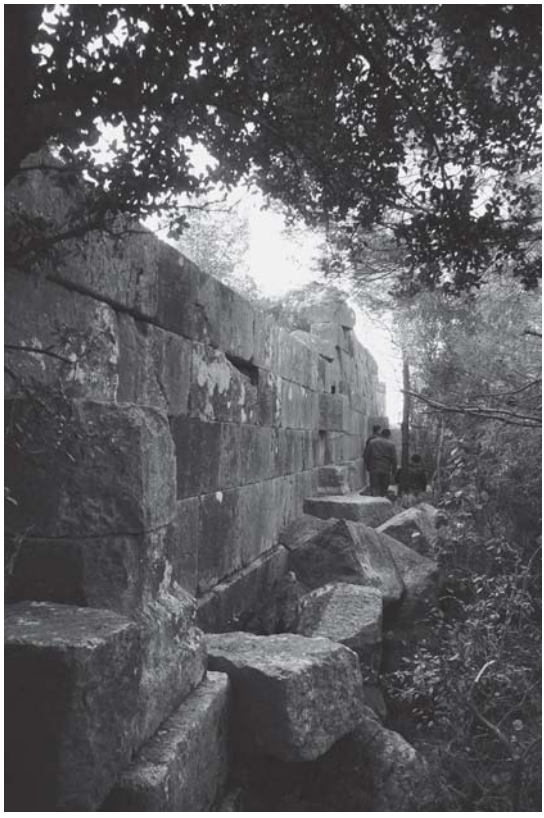


Fig. 8. The west cella wall of the temple (photograph by author).



Fig. 9. The altar and one of the stelai or bases (photograph by author).



Fig. 10. One of the Ionic capitals (photograph by author).

south of the temple, cyma and lion head gargoyles all indicate that it was completed to a great extent (Fig. 10).

The construction date of the monument can be inferred from architectural decoration, especially the mouldings on the stelai in the west wall, column bases and capitals. The earliest examples of such decoration are attested during the Flavian period and they are seen with some modifications during the Severan period. Thus, the building can be dated to the mid-2nd century AD. This also conforms to the period of intensive construction activities in Smooth Cilicia, particularly at Anazarbos, of the mid-2nd century AD.[6]

Observations on the hill suggest that the temple was built and the terracing formed for its construction in the 2nd century AD (Fig. 11). However, it is not possible to propose a more precise dating. The temple should have been surrounded with porticoes on the terrace because there are fragments of column shafts scattered around and their diameter is smaller than that of the columns in front of the temple. The terrace where the waste from sacrifices was dumped into lies downhill about 100 m away. The remains here cast a light on the duration of use of the temple and the sanctuary.

[6] Posamentir and Sayar 2006.

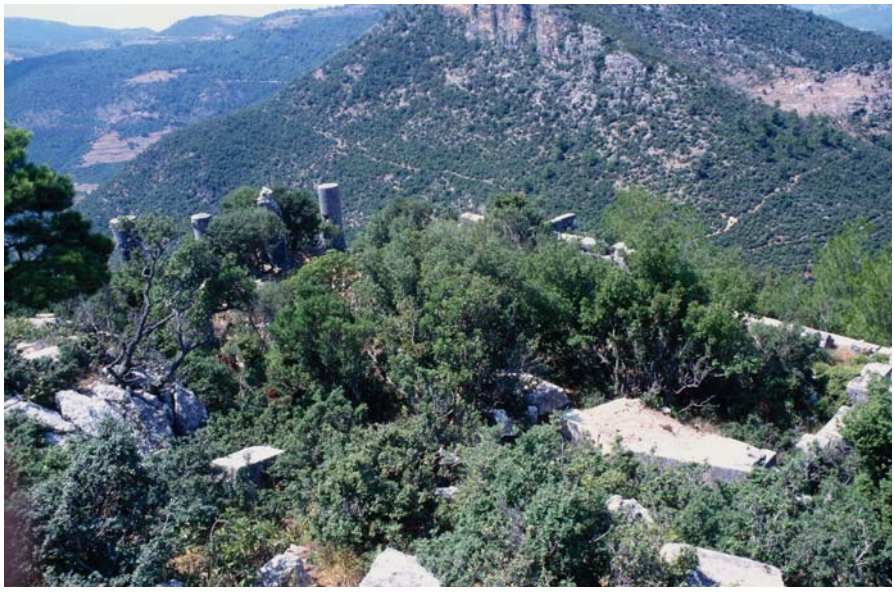


Fig. 11. Uzunoğlan Hill. The temple of the God of Thundelbolt (photograph by author).

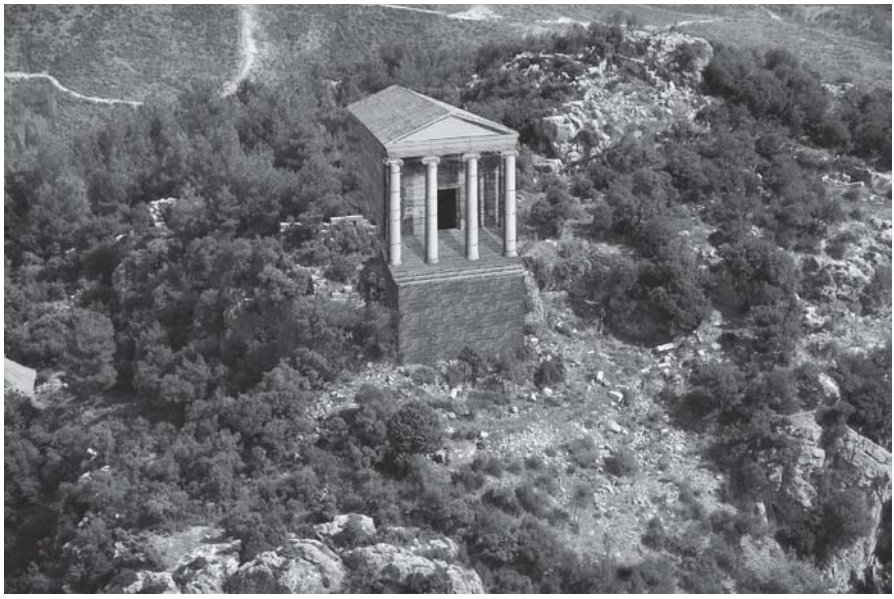


Fig. 12. Reconstruction of the temple (by Ralph Rosenbauer).

The architectural elements lying on the ground allow for a reconstruction proposal to some extent. The temple thus reconstructed is the only temple in Cilicia whose architectural details have been identified solidly and it also gives an idea on the actual look of the structure (Fig. 12).

Studies on the structural elements and cella wall prove that a prostyle temple was built on Uzunoğlan Hill situated on the northern part of Anazarbos' territory in the 2nd century AD; yet, it is necessary to clarify many more details regarding the architecture of the temple. The damage caused by earthquakes to the column drums is currently under study in order to facilitate a comprehensive structural analysis and trace the construction and repair phases.

It is understood that Uzunoğlan Hill witnessed radical structural changes in the Byzantine period. There is a rectangular structure of about 6.5 m in wall length, located to the south-west of the temple. Fragments of an architrave with three fasciae embedded in its walls indicate that the temple's superstructure had fallen down by the time that this was built. But on the other hand, the outer wall was still standing and was in partial use during the Byzantine period (Fig. 13). The temple and its auxiliary buildings were encircled with a fortification wall of 30 m in length and 1–2 m in thickness, built with reused materials to a great extent (Fig. 14). It is also understood that a semi-circular tower was built projecting out at the bottom of the rock surface below the temple.

The evidence to hand does not allow us to clarify when the development on Uzunoğlan Hill started and since when the site served as a cult area. The summit of Uzunoğlan Hill had an impact for centuries and the cult area probably began use in the 1st millennium, continuing through the Hellenistic and Roman Imperial periods and well into the Middle Ages. Thus, it is possible to study the levels from antiquity to the Middle Ages at the same time, which is not common in Cilicia. The fact that the building remains from antiquity and the Middle Ages have survived in a very good condition may arise from the difficulty of access to Uzunoğlan Hill from north-eastern Çukurova. Thus, fortunately, it has in the main escaped the recycling of its materials by local population in previous centuries. The greatest damage on the hill now comes from the illicit digs that increase every year.

In spite of the extant building remains on the north slope of the hill, the centre of development was on and about the rock mass on the summit as well as to its south. Pottery finds indicate a period of activity from the mid-3rd century BC through the end of the 2nd century AD. This period also corresponds to the time when the sanctuary containing the temple discussed here was extensively used and reached its peak. For the period from the 9th century BC, when the Assyrian king relief was carved, to the end of the Persian rule in the region, with the Battle of Issos fought in 333 BC, there is almost



Fig. 13. The part of the wall of rectangular structure on the south-west of the temple (photograph by author).



Fig. 14. The remains of the Byzantine wall below the temple (photograph by author).

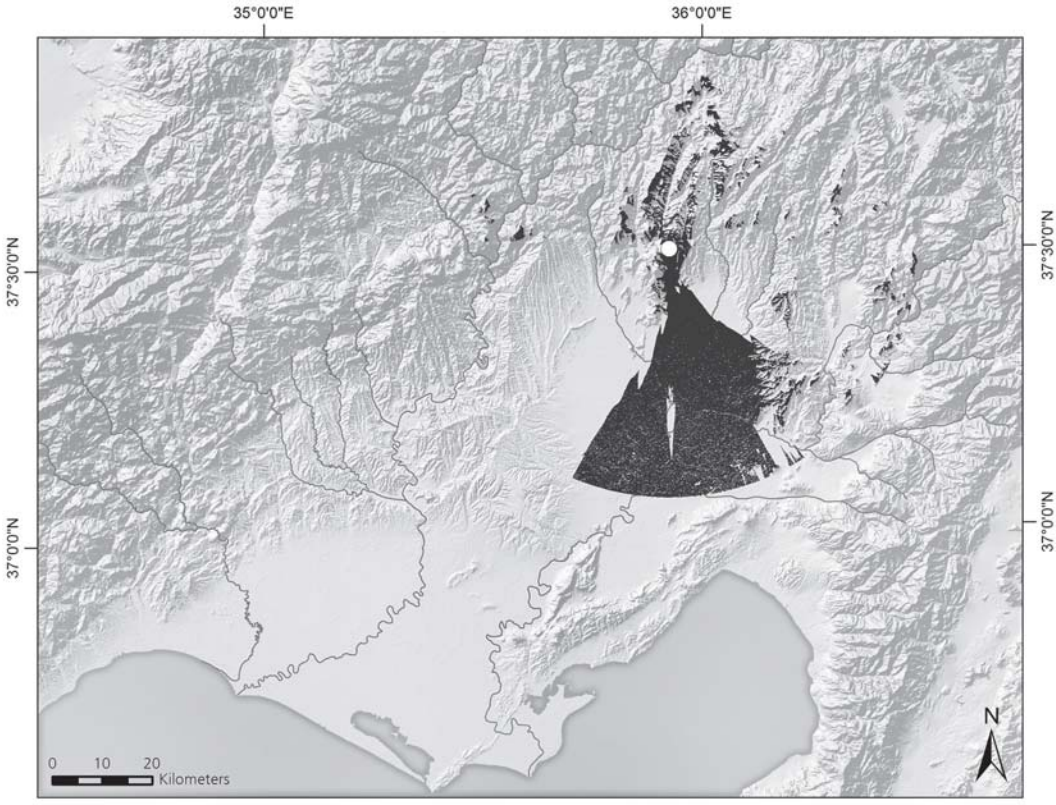


Fig. 15. Map of Cilicia (drawing by Susanne Rutishauser).

no evidence available regarding Uzunoğlan Hill. The rock-relief of the Neo-Assyrian king located on a rock surface facing west on the summit might be related to a road passing below it. Nonetheless, the accessibility and the visibility for people passing by must have been less important, since the relief was far away from the road from where it could have been seen.[7] It is, however, just as conceivable that this relief was carved on that hill with an overview across the plain (Fig. 15), emphasising the north-westernmost point of the Assyrian king's territory.[8] Colbow suggested that Neo-Assyrian rock

[7] Kreppner 2002, 370.

[8] Börker-Klähn (1982, 57), who published the relief, notes that such reliefs were placed in geographically and strategically important sites, for instance at water sources, riversides, on the sheer cliffs and mountain passes.

reliefs could be interpreted as memorials, or for the remembrance of an event,[9] whereas Kreppner assumed that the erection had religious, magical and spiritual purposes – and not the effect of signalling to human beings through visibility and accessibility.[10] A combination of these different factors and functions might be the reason for the erection of the rock relief at the top of Uzunoğlan Hill, given the existence of a path connecting the plain with the highlands passing by the hill and the overview from the top of the hill over the eastern settlement cluster of the plain. The expression of the interaction of the king with the gods does not exclude a function of the relief as a memorial for the campaigns of Shalmaneser III. Even if the monument is not constantly seen, it fulfils the function of a memorial still today.

Uzunoğlan Hill looks out over the entire region from Bucak plain and Bucak Castle to Anazarbos in the south. It is possible that the cult of a weather god was practised at this sanctuary; however, no surface finds from the concerned period have been found. Centuries later, this relief, which did not have much meaning to the Persians and the Seleucids, might have paved the way for the establishment of a sanctuary here. The inscription honouring Tarcondimotus II does not provide any clue regarding the layout of the sanctuary at the end of the Hellenistic period, just before the full establishment of Roman rule in the region: was it a temple, or a roofed cult structure, or only a sanctuary comprising an altar? The only evidence for the identity of the deity worshipped here is an inscription on an altar discovered in the area in 2000 and then published in 2004 by the present author. This altar has a date given as 168 in the calendar of Anazarbos, which started in 19 BC; thus, it is dated to AD 149. Based on this inscription, it is possible to state that Zeus Ceraunius, god of lightning, was presented with offerings at Uzunoğlan Hill at least in the 2nd century AD.[11] The temple structure located on the summit of Uzunoğlan Hill was likely to have been built 45 or 50 years after the erection of this altar, that is, in the Severan period. In case this assumption is correct then this will be well-grounded evidence for a generous refurbishment of ancient regional or inter-regional cults in the Severan period, when it is known that Smooth Cilicia witnessed intense construction activities.[12] However, it is not known for how long pagan deities were worshipped at Uzunoğlan Hill. There is no evidence for any religious activity here during the Christian period. Due to its strategic location dominating over the plains, Uzunoğlan

[9] Colbow 2000, 16.
[10] Kreppner 2002, 376.
[11] Sayar 2004, 177–80, 228, no. 9, pl. 7.
[12] For more information, see Hellenkemper 1980, 1273; Ziegler 1993, *passim*; especially 157–60.

Hill should have been fortified for defensive measures at a time when security became an issue with the occupation of the plains by the Sassanid king Shapur I in AD 260. The fortifications seen on the hill would have been built after this date. It is highly likely that the sanctuary at Uzunoğlan Hill started to lose its importance in this period.

Detailed surveys conducted in Uzunoğlan Hill in order to comprehend the Neo-Assyrian rock relief, the temple and later buildings around the temple, indicate the presence of houses from various periods; and this raises the following questions: did a rural settlement surround the sanctuary or did the sanctuary develop here on its own? There still is a possibility that the site might have served as a summer pasture settlement in late antiquity starting with the Roman Imperial period. The presence of a dense settlement on Uzunoğlan Hill is evinced from the extant houses, rock tombs and cisterns. In addition to dense pottery finds from antiquity, animal bones also reveal evidence for the economic and religious functions of the sanctuary.

It is worth noting once more that the development on Uzunoğlan Hill, with its history reaching two millennia, from a place of the commemoration of a military victory, to a sanctuary where weather and fertility deities were worshipped, and then into a fortified settlement in the Middle Ages provides us with important clues that will determine the parameters of the process of changes in this corner of Cilicia.

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