

REPORT CAMPAIGN 2002

Abstract

Eric M. Moormann and Miguel John Versluys

With contributions by: Abraham van As, Bernd Fitzner, Kurt Heinrichs & Dennis La Bouchardiere, Predrag Gavrilovic, Onno van Nijf & Frits Steenhuisen and Tesse D. Stek & Ellen Thiermann

The Nemrud Dag Project: second interim report

The Second Campaign at Nemrud Dag concentrated on the preparation and implementation of a restoration and conservation program. The sandstone slabs at the West Terrace had partly fallen down and all of them show severe damages on the relief surfaces. A snow fence was constructed at their backs that should prevent snow pulling down the remaining stelae. At the East Terrace we experimented hoisting the elements of the limestone colossal statues with a large professional crane. The heads of the five human figures and the four animals were placed in front of the statues as was done with some other fragments. We studied the possibility of stabilisation of the bases and the rocks underneath the statues. These results can be of great profit during the future campaigns that aim at a restabilisation of these statues. The archaeological work focused on the documentation (SIS) and interpretation. Furthermore epigraphic remains were studied with the help of a digital scanner. Artefacts from the monument were sampled and ceramic finds were analysed.

Article in volume 78, 2003, pages 141-166

Full download: www.babesch.org/78moormann.html

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1 INTRODUCTION

In the 2002 campaign, the archaeological research begun in our first season (2001) was continued

and further developed.¹ We worked on the Site Information System (SIS) and, just as in the previous season, our documentation of the site generated new observations and ideas (see Sections 3.1 and 3.2). Our epigraphic team continued their research with the help of a digital scanner that gave new perspectives but also posed practical problems (see Section 3.3). New aspects of our archaeological research on Nemrud Dağ and its monuments are the study of the scarce ceramics found in the 2001 campaign and a plan to produce an inventory of artefacts from the monument dispersed over many Turkish and international museums (see Sections 3.4 and 3.5).

The 2002 campaign also saw the start of a structural engineering project and a stone conservation project. Both were undertaken in close co-operation with the World Monuments Fund (WMF). This part of our campaign required a major investment of time, money and working hours. As the restoration and conservation of Antiochos' monument is one of our project's main goals, however, we found it necessary to obtain as much information as possible from geologists, geophysicists, engineers and stone conservators. Some of their (preliminary) results are described in Section 4.²

During the first campaign in 2001 a meeting on the mountain had been organised at which representatives of the Turkish government, the WMF and our team discussed the outlines of the planned restoration and conservation work. A second meeting to formulate a more concrete pro-

gramme was held in Amsterdam's Allard Pierson Museum in November 2001, and a third meeting took place at Kahta and Nemrud Dağ on 14 July 2002. The goals and objectives formulated during the first two sessions were presented to the Turkish authorities, who gave permission for us to start the work on 3 June 2002. The campaign lasted until 27 July.³

2 SITE CONDITION AND SITE PROTECTION

2.1 West Terrace

During the severe winter of 2001-2002 several metres of snow covered the tumulus and the terraces. At the start of the thaw, masses of snow coming from the tumulus hit the rear of the series



Fig. 1. The two dexiosis reliefs after falling down in the winter of 2001-2002 (photo: E.M. Moormann).



Fig. 2. The snow barrage under construction (photo: A. van As).

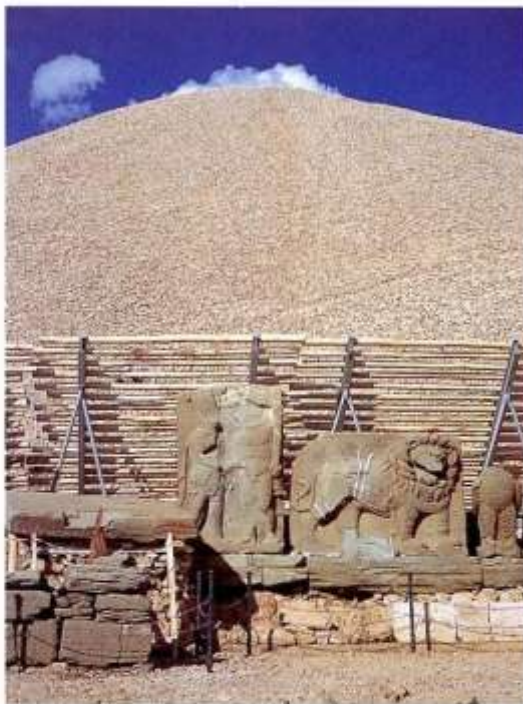


Fig. 3. The snow barrage (photo: A. van As).



Fig. 4. Preconservation of the Herakles dexiosis relief (photo: A. van As).