

HATRA: THREE NOTES, HISTORICAL, ICONOGRAPHICAL, AND RELIGIOUS

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Historical Note

The chronological table of rulers of Hatra includes an ambiguous person named *Wrwd mrya*, who supposedly succeeded *Nshryhb mrya*. Is he the latter's younger brother or older son? The epigraphical and sculptural evidence suggest that *Nšru mrya*, who followed *Wrwd*, is the son of *Nshryhb mrya* and was in fact *Wrwd* himself, who acquired the epithet or appellative *Nšru*, meaning the winner, protector, and defender. This epithet reflects that he led the Hatrenes and Arab tribes in their defence against the Roman army of Trajan in 116/117 A.D. *Wrwd/Nsru* commemorated his victory in a relief lintel in Shrine V at Hatra.

Iconographical Note

The excavators of Shrine I discovered the famous sculptured slab known as the Cerberus relief, depicting a god of the underworld with snakes and scorpions, thought to be an image of Nergal. However, the excavation of Shrine II revealed an altar, one side of which is carved in relief with a similar underworld deity with snakes. The other side of the altar is incised with an inscription mentioning a god *Zqyqa*. Thus, *Zqyqa* at Hatra is the god of the underworld, rather than Nergal.

Religious Note

An enigmatic statue was discovered in Shrine I, depicting a standing horned male. On the base is an Aramaic inscription mentioning the name *Kenzw*; he was identified as an 'unknown god'. The excavation of Building A by an Italian team discovered a horned male statue with an inscription that referred to him as *Hpyzw*. It was originally placed on a podium set against the façade of the house courtyard. In front of the podium was an altar and evidence of ashes and burnt offerings. This context indicates that the horned statue of *Hpyzw* was worshipped and offerings were presented to him as a founder of the household. The similarity of the two statues suggests that a type of ancestor worship was practised at Hatra.

Introduction

The ruins of the city of Hatra lie in northern Iraq in a semi-desert area c. 110 km southwest of the modern city of Mosul and 70 km to the west of Ashur, the first capital of the Assyrians. Hatra was a capital of an Arab kingdom known in Aramaic inscriptions as Arabaya, the country of the Arabs, because Arab tribes lived, defended and were buried there. Hatra held a strategic location controlling trade and military routes parallel to the Tigris and Euphrates rivers. A minor route leads to the city, therefore it is not considered to be a caravan city. Its early rulers called themselves *mrya*, or 'majordomo', and subsequently they acquired the title of 'king', among them Sanatruq I, Abdsmya, and Sanatruq II. The importance of the city increased over time because of its formidable defence against the Roman armies led by Trajan in 116/117 A.D. (when *Nsru mrya* was the Hatrene leader) and by Septimius Severus in 198/199 A.D. (when Abdsmya was ruling). Hatra was well-known to classical writers, such as Dio Cassius and Herodian, as the only city that stood against the attacks of the Roman emperors.

The excavations at Hatra have uncovered more than 500 inscriptions written in Aramaic, which was its official language. Hatra was unique in many cultural aspects. In architecture, the Hatrenes' favourite element was the *iwan*, and they also used every available type of vaulting system. In sculpture, thousands of statues and reliefs were discovered during the excavations; they followed the rule of frontality, with very few exceptions. The deities of the Hatrene religion were an amalgam of deities of varied origins, derived from older Mesopotamian, Greek, Arab, and other traditions, but the gods, both supreme and minor, were designated by their own specific

appellatives. The favourable circumstances of Hatra's flourishing ceased when Ardashir I, the Sassanid, put an end to the Parthian Empire in 227 A.D. and made an abortive attempt to seize Hatra. His son Shapur I managed to capture the city in 240/241 A.D. in spite of its allegiance with the Romans. However, the city was not completely abandoned, since dwellings persisted in certain parts, especially at the circuit wall and areas around it. Al-Dhaizan, as the Arab writers related, was a chief of the Hadramite tribe who took advantage of weakness in the Sassanid rule to occupy areas that were previously Arab territories, like Kadhima, Bahrain, and the Jazera. He settled in Hatra and claimed himself as the king of the Jazera and the Levant. However, the power of the Sassanids was restored by king Shapur II, son of Hormozd II, who laid siege around Hatra and captured it in 327 A.D., and when Ammianus Marcellinus passed by it in 363 A.D., he said it was deserted.

This paper deals with three specific aspects which are important and of interest to Hatrene scholars, to further the understanding of particular details of the history of Hatra and of deities that were Hatrene *par excellence*. In addition, the last aspect discussed suggests a possible solution to two enigmatic horned statues that excavators have labelled 'unknown deities'. The concept behind these two statues is not unknown in Mesopotamia but was revived in the Hellenistic period, when dead kings were worshipped by their families and followers.

Historical Aspects

In writing accounts of the history of the city of Hatra, we encounter an enigmatic episode in the first century A.D. regarding the rule of *Wrwd mrya*, whose name was engraved on the wall of the Great Iwan¹. *Wrwd* is thought to be either a younger brother or eldest son of *Nšryhb marya*, who had initiated the rule of *maryas* at Hatra². He was seemingly followed by *Nšru mrya*, known from inscriptions, who embarked on a large-scale building programme, which covered not only the building of the Great Iwan (Temple Complex)³, but also the small shrines, the principal military circuit wall, main gates⁴, and the northern wall of the Great Temple. *Nšru mrya* left his image carved in relief on the lintel of the main entrance of shrine Iššarbel (V) (Fig. 1), where he is shown reclining on his left side, holding a victory cup in his left hand, with his name inscribed close to his head⁵. This image is flanked by two winged Nikes, each holding triumph wreaths in their hands. Parts of a reclining figure were also found in the entrance area of the North Gate, where a number of inscriptions related to him were also discovered⁶. Apparently, he fortified the city's defenses, as is clearly shown in the main North and East Gates of the wall as well⁷. He also left his name inscribed in many dedicatory inscriptions, in which he is titled '*by' rb*' 'the great father', and '*pkl' rb*' 'the chief priest', of the city⁸.

At the East Gate, a very important and beautifully carved life-size male statue was unearthed⁹. The statue has elaborate hair-do and a tunic embroidered with images of gods; he is portrayed carrying a statuette of an eagle, a symbol of *Mrn/Šmš*, the great god and protector of Hatra. He is also bare-footed, which is a distinguishing feature restricted to priests, clergymen, and some of the rulers or kings of Hatra, to show their utmost respect to their religion and gods. This statue thus depicts a ruler with the highest rank of ecclesiastical superiority. The title *apkla raba*, 'chief priest', is thus suitable for the portrayed person, and this statue very well could be of *Nšru* himself¹⁰. He was responsible for the construction of a large edifice with the triple *ivan* appearance, for he left two images of himself carved on the voussoirs of the arch of the Western Iwan, one showing him as a

¹ H266, H267; Aggoula 1991: 128; Safar and Mustafa 1974: 415; Vationi 1981: 87.

² Gawlikowski 2013: 75–77; Hauser 1998: 501–503; Safar and Mustafa 1974: 17; Sommer 2003: 384–398.

³ Kaizer 2013: 68; Safar and Mustafa 1974: 28; Venco Ricciardi and Peruzzetto 2013: 81–89.

⁴ Al-Salihi 1980: 108; Al-Salihi 1991a: 186–198; Ibrahim 1986 are primary reports on the North and East Gates; see also Gawlikowski 1994 for a synthetic account of the fortifications of Hatra.

⁵ Aggoula 1991: 17; Beyer 1998: 37; Safar and Mustafa 1974: fig. 237, H33; Vationi 1981: 36.

⁶ Aggoula 1991: 154; Al-Salihi 1975: H335, 101; Beyer 1998: 89; Vationi 1981: 104.

⁷ Ibrahim 1999–2000: H461, 181.

⁸ Najafy 1983. H345; Aggoula 1991: 160–161; Beyer 1998: 94. H352; Aggoula 1991: 163; Beyer 1998: 95. H361; Aggoula 1991: 165; Beyer 1998: 96.

⁹ Al-Salihi 1991b: 35–40.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*



Fig. 1 Lintel with image of reclining *Nşru* from the entrance of the Işşarbel Shrine (V) at Hatra

beardless young man, while in the other he appears with a shadowy beard. His name is inscribed beneath the two images¹¹. This temple was labeled by archaeologists as the Temple of the Triad, for the reliefs of the three major Hatrene gods, *Mrn*, *Mrtn*, and *Brmryn*, were found behind the building¹². Furthermore, a number of inscriptions citing his name were also discovered, which testify to his architectural activities in building this temple¹³. The construction of the northern wall and the adjacent entrance of the Great Temple complex were attributed to him, as one of his grandsons testified in an important inscription¹⁴. Shrines Işşarbel (V)¹⁵ and Hercules-Nergal (X) were also built by *Nşru*¹⁶.

During his reign, he led the Hatrenes and allied Arab tribes in their formidable defenses against the Romans, the most powerful army at that time, commanded by Emperor Trajan himself. The Romans besieged the city and Trajan's soldiers attacked the defensive wall, but they failed to capture it¹⁷. He commemorated his victory over Trajan and the Romans in a relief on the entrance lintel of Shrine Işşarbel (V)¹⁸.

Who really was *Nşru*? Numerous inscriptions testify that he was the son of *Nşryhb marya*¹⁹ and father of Sanatrug, the first king of Hatra²⁰. The question remaining is what was his relationship to *Wrwd*? I suggest that *Nşru* and *Wrwd* are the same person and that *Wrwd* himself was endowed with the honorable 'epithet name' *Nşru*, which means the winner or defender, protector or guardian. This new epithet name was bestowed due to the tremendous deed of courageous and formidable resistance that he and his people had taken against Trajan and his army. Thereafter, he was known by his honorable bestowed name, and he has left us numerous inscriptions using that epithet name, as have also his successors, such as King Sanatruq I, as well as his grandsons, including '*bdsmy*', son of Sanatrug I²¹, and '*bdlh*', son of *Tpşr*²².

Iconographic Aspects: Zqyqa, Hatrene God of Underworld

During the first season of excavations at Hatra, the excavators concentrated their efforts on revealing the plans, architecture and the furnishing of certain small shrines located outside the Great Temple complex²³. The excavations were extended to include fourteen such shrines, all located around the central temple complex. In Shrine I, important reliefs were discovered including those depicting

¹¹ Aggoula 1991: 164–165; Al-Salihi 2019: H258, H359, figs. 6, 7.

¹² Al-Salihi 2019: 83–88; Safar and Mustafa 1974: 113–115, figs. 8–90.

¹³ Aggoula 1991: 160–167; Najafy 1983: H345, 346, 347, 348, 352, 353, 355, 361, 365.

¹⁴ Aggoula 1991: 128–129; Beyer 1998: 79; Safar and Mustafa 1974: H272; Vationi 1981: 88.

¹⁵ According to the Lintel of the Shrine with inscription H33; see footnote 5.

¹⁶ Safar and Mustafa 1974: 39, H67.

¹⁷ Dio Cassius 1925: Book 68: 31.

¹⁸ See footnote 5.

¹⁹ For example, H250, 345, 346, 351; Aggoula 1991: 160–163; Beyer 1998: 94–96; Najafy 1983.

²⁰ To cite a few of the many relevant inscriptions: H82, H194–199; Beyer 1998: 66–67; Vationi 1981: 51–52, 72–73; H367, 369, 370, 371, 378; Aggoula 1991: 167–170; Najafy 1983.

²¹ Beyer 1998: 97; Najafy 1983: H367, 369.

²² Safar and Mustafa 1974: H272; Aggoula 1991: 128–129; Beyer 1998: 79; Vationi 1981: 88; Al-Salihi 1985b: H338; Aggoula 1991: 156; Beyer 1998: 91.

²³ I–XI: Safar and Mustafa 1974: 250–269; XII: Al-Salihi 1983; XIII: Al-Salihi 1990; XIV: al-Aswad 2013; Hasan 1994; Downey 1988: 162–173; Kaizer 2013: 68; Jakubiak 2013: 91–105.

Šmš, the Eagle, and *Smy'*, the standard, along with related inscriptions. However, another significant relief was found built in the wall of the niche, with its own incense-burner in front of it²⁴. This relief depicts a fierce looking god, a smaller statue of a seated goddess, and a representation of *Smy'* with the usual seven elements (Fig. 2).

The central figure grasps the leash of Cerberus, the three-headed dog that guards the entrance of Hades in Greek mythology. The slab also shows a number of snakes and scorpions executed in both carving and painting. The figure raises his right arm, holding an axe in his hand; one side of the axe is portrayed as the usual sharp edge, but the other side ends in a carved snake. These snakes and scorpions and the general appearance of the god indicate that it represents a god of the underworld. The excavator identified the figure as a representation of Nergal, the Mesopotamian god of the underworld since the Sumerian period (third millennium B.C.), and this interpretation is supported by many scholars, even though the name of Nergal was not mentioned as such in the inscriptions found at the shrine. In the same excavation season, Shrine II was also uncovered and a limestone incense burner was discovered (Fig. 3). It apparently was fixed to a wall; its front side has a relief of a horned god, carved frontally and grasping two snakes in his raised left hand, while in his right hand, which is also raised, he brandished an axe which ends in a snake²⁵. This figure is very similar in attire and attributes to the relief found in Shrine I, therefore the god was also identified as Nergal by the excavators. However, the left side of the incense burner has an inscription²⁶, which is translated as: "May Gdyhb son of Nšry son of 'g' and 'bs' son of 'bdnrgl' the bleacher his friend be remembered favorably before Zqyq' and also be remembered favorably everyone who remembers this".

We deduce from this inscription that there was a Hatrene deity by the name *Zqyq'* and that this inscription identifies the portrayed god as such. The Cerberus relief also depicts a fierce looking deity with unruly hair, snakes and scorpions; the similarity to the relief of *Zqyqa* of Shrine II is striking. Therefore, both are gods of underworld by the name of *Zqyqa*, and the Hatrene pantheon names the deity that rules the underworld as *Zqyqa* not Nergal. Elsewhere, I have argued that Nergal is assimilated and identified with the nude Hercules, as evidenced from numerous epigraphical and iconographical testimonials²⁷. These include the sculptures found in Shrine X and a statue of nude Hercules along with its identifying inscription, and the mention of the name of Nergal among the supreme gods of Hatra. This assimilation was supported by Segal: "A previous article by Dr. Wathiq Al-Salihi seems to provide the solution to a problem which has long vexed students of paganism in North-west Mesopotamia in the first centuries of the Christian era...The association of Nergal with dogs at Hatra was established by Professor Fuad Safar. Dr. Al-Salihi points to the assimilation of Nergal to Hercules at Hatra (as at Palmyra), and alludes to the cult of Hercules at Dura Europos and Palmyra in the Seleucid and Parthian Periods... Dr. Al-Salihi has supplied a link in the reconstruction of the pattern of paganism in Mesopotamia"²⁸. Safar and Mustafa, the first excavators of Hatra, concurred with this assimilation; however, this theory has been challenged by Kaizer²⁹.

Further, according to Hatrene religious concepts, the draped Hercules is identified with Gnda, the God of fortune, as attested by numerous pieces of evidence. These include a statuette found at the north gate with identifying inscription, a relief discovered in the temple of Allat, also with a pertinent inscription, and the cult statue of Shrine XIII, among other reliefs³⁰. Apparently, the Hatrenes had their own local beliefs, named their deities accordingly, and assimilated them with deities derived from various origins, including Mesopotamian, Hellenistic, Arab and other contemporary cultures. In other examples, the Greek Athena, the virgin daughter of Zeus, was identified with "Iššarbel betl"³¹, the Joy of Bel, the Virgin. Bel is another name of Zeus. Likewise,

²⁴ Al-Salihi 1969: 55–60, 1979: 324–330; Safar and Mustafa 1974: figs. 183, 190–191; Hasan 1994: 43–44; Kaizer 2013: 161–168.

²⁵ Safar and Mustafa 1974: figs. 191, 200; Hasan 1994: 50.

²⁶ Aggoula 1991: 12; Beyer 1998: 31; Safar and Mustafa 1974: H13, 405; Vationi 1981: 28.

²⁷ Al-Salihi 1971, 1973; Segal 1973; Kaizer 2007.

²⁸ Segal 1973: 68–69.

²⁹ Safar and Mustafa 1974; Kaiser 2000, 2007.

³⁰ Al-Salihi 1982, 1990: 27–35; Downey 2013.

³¹ H35, H38; Safar and Mustafa 1974: 406; Vationi 1981: 36; Aggoula 1991: 17; Beyer 1998: 37.



Fig. 2 Cerberus Relief with God of the Underworld, from Shrine I at Hatra

the Arab Allat is assimilated to Nemesis, the Greek goddess of revenge and justice, for both of them show similar attributes³².

As for Zqyqa, the Hatrene underworld deity is attested by additional indications. An alabaster statuette found in the Gnda of Rmgw Shrine (XIII) is a similar image to that on the reliefs described above, a god raising an axe in his right hand; a scorpion or snake appears next to him and an inscription is incised on its base that reads: *sm'ny Zqyq'* or "Hear me Zqyq'" (Fig. 4). Here Zqyq' must be the god portrayed³³. A stele made of Mosul marble was found during the excavations of the Gnda of Remw Shrine showing a relief of three deities, one female and two male, along with an inscription incised on the base, which identifies the portrayed figures as Gnyta, Aprtn and Zqyqa³⁴. Gnyta is an epithet of Atrata–Astarte, and the male figures, who were portrayed as armed guards, were associated with protecting and guarding of the caravans. On this relief, Zqyqa is portrayed as a guardian god with a staff, sword and shield. We deduce from the above evidence that the God of the underworld in the Hatrene pantheon is called Zqyqa, not Nergal, although he had the appearance and attributes of Nergal–Hades, and this deity was worshipped in Shrines I and II specifically.

Religious Aspects: The Statues of Knzy(w) and Hp'yzw

As mentioned above, the inhabitants of Hatra had their own beliefs and named their divinities accordingly, and artists carved them with their specific distinguishing attributes. Some of the deities were portrayed with a pair of horns adorning their foreheads as a sign of divinity, a practice known in Mesopotamia for millennia (for instance, the sun god Shamash at the top of the Law Code Stele of Hammurabi or the Naram-Sin relief from Susa), and a tradition that the Hatrenes

³² Al-Salihi 1985a: 131–146; Kaizer 2007.

³³ Al-Salihi 1990: fig. 19.

³⁴ Al-Salihi 1985b: H410, 1987: 58–67; Beyer 1998.



Fig. 3 Front side of limestone incense burner from Shrine II, with image of Zqyqa, God of the Underworld

inherited (see Figs. 2 and 3). The Hatrenes worshipped their deities in temples and shrines through prayers in front of their images, statues, and reliefs. Furthermore, they presented offerings to their ancestors as an indication of their veneration³⁵. This presentation of offerings was probably carried out during visits to their favorite deities in the small shrines, which were dedicated to various gods³⁶. However, the excavations discovered two enigmatic statues that could represent the concept of ‘veneration of ancestors’.

During the excavations of Shrine I in the spring of 1951, the excavators uncovered an enigmatic statue of a horned male figure³⁷ standing on a base with an Aramaic inscription, which reads '*Kyn Knzw(y) br 'by br Knzw(y) dkyr Itb*, or “Knzw(y) son of Knzw(y) (erected) may be remembered favorably”³⁸ (Fig. 5). A cult bank also records the name Knzw(y), along with two other inscriptions³⁹. The statue is made of local Mosul marble and stands to a height of *c.* 70 cm. The body was found in the niche of Shrine I, while the head was discovered in the middle of the cella. In his left hand he grasps the hilt of a sword hanging down on his left side, while in his right hand he holds a (missing) spear, the lower end of which was placed on the statue base. He wears a knee-length tunic adorned with a horizontal and vertical design composed of discs. On his chest a shallow horse-shoe design was carved, which probably originally contained a precious stone. He wears a belt of large discs and a necklace composed of discs and beads. He wears a coat, the lapels of which are elaborately decorated. He wears sandals with laces tied above his ankles. His eyes are inlaid with ivory, and the pupils were made of black colored stones. His wavy hair is painted black, and over his forehead appears a pair of small horns, a sign of divinity.

Regarding the identity of this statue, the excavators labelled it as a statue of an unknown god; however, he is not a known Hatrene deity, even though he wears a pair of horns on his forehead, since he lacks other indicative attributes, such as a thunderbolt, bulls, lions, writing reeds, club,

³⁵ Jakubiak 2013: 10.

³⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁷ Safar and Mustafa 1974: fig. 173.

³⁸ H6: Aggoula 1991: 5; Beyer 1998: 29; Safar and Mustafa 1974: 405; Vationi 1981: 26.

³⁹ H7, H8: Aggoula 1991: 6; Beyer 1998: 29; Safar and Mustafa 1974: 405; Vationi 1981: 26.



Fig. 4 Cult statue of Zqyqa from Shrine XIII at Hatra

lion skin, fish, etc. For more clarity and consideration of this enigmatic statue, fresh light was shed when a statue similar in concept (Fig. 6) was found in the central courtyard of Building A, excavated by a team of the University of Turin in their first season of excavations at Hatra in 1987⁴⁰. It was originally *c.* 120 cm high but was found broken into many fragments. The right shoulder and arm are missing and also his right leg, foot and the corresponding parts of the base and related background. The left arm, which originally grasped a hanging sword hilt by the left hand, is also missing. To his left is a representation of *Smy'* (the Standard) with its usual elements, the last three are discs, inside of which are eagles with spread wings. He is clad in the Hatrene costume, which is composed of a knee-length tunic with trousers. He wears a necklace consisting of discs alternating with beads, and similar ornaments also adorn his belt. The front of his tunic is decorated with a series of eagles with spread wings, three on his upper body and three below his belt. The head is broken into at least three pieces. The ivory inlays of the eyes are missing. His head is dominated by rows of snail curls, with a pair of small horns on the forehead.

The statue is incised with a line of Aramaic inscription; the remaining letters read “5X100 + 10 + 2 (512 Seleucid era = 200/1 A.D.) gd’...”; an additional inscribed fragment also found may belong to the upper line and reads “...mhrdt”. However, the statue base bears the following inscription: “1-hp’yzw K [mr]’ ‘byd dk [t’..] 2- alhy’ ‘bsmy’ mlk’[... 3-n]ñr”⁴¹, “Hpazw, the priest, Abyd dk?, for the life of King Abdsmya..., the eagle”. The recording name of Hapyzw throws light on a hitherto ambiguous practice. This name was mentioned on at least three other Hatrene inscriptions. ‘Hapyzw son of zhrw’ was recorded twice⁴² and ‘bdsmy son of Hapyzw’ was

⁴⁰ Venco Ricciardi 1988: 41–42.

⁴¹ Pennacchietti 1988: 43–47.

⁴² H118, H121: Safar and Mustafa 1974: 410; Vationi 1981: 59; Aggoula 1991: 71–72; Beyer 1998: 55–56.



Fig. 5 Statue of Knzw(y) from Shrine I at Hatra



Fig. 6 Statue of Hapyzw from Building A at Hatra

recorded once⁴³. Hapyzw could very well be the horned individual portrayed standing next to Smy'. Here he is deified and could be interpreted as a deified ancestor.

This statue was originally placed on top of a podium built close to the northern jamb of the *iwān* on the eastern side of the main courtyard of Building A⁴⁴, which probably belongs to the household of Hapyzw in its last phase. A small hearth was discovered 96 cm in front of the podium, and “traces of fire were found all around the bench”⁴⁵. In addition to the statue, two Nikai statuettes were found in the area, which probably were placed on the podium and had a connection to the statue of Hapyzw. The location of the bench (podium), the Nikai, the hearth, and the remains of related ashes suggest that offerings were presented by the occupants of the house to the deified statue, which in turn transformed this location into a holy place, similar to a niche in small Hatrene shrine. Similarly, the statue of Knzw was placed in a niche of Shrine I to be worshipped as an ancestral deity along with other divinities. To sum up, the two statues of Knzw and Hapyzw represent deified individuals, as evidenced from the small horns on their foreheads, and the contexts in which they were found indicate they were worshipped as deified ancestors, each with a practice within his own household.

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⁴³ H126: Safar and Mustafa 1974: 410; Vationi 1981: 60; Aggoula 1991: 73.

⁴⁴ Venco Ricciardi 1988: 40, fig. 27.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*: 40.

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الحضر : ثلاث ملاحظات : تاريخية و فنية و دينية

التاريخية:

عند كتابه تاريخ مدينة الحضر يواجه الباحث معضلة تتبع حكماها فقد بدأت في عهد السادة اولهم نشر يهب مرثا ثم يليه ورود مرثا ولكن الاشارة اليه في النقوش تتوقف ثم يتبعه في الحكم و في النقوش نصر مرثا الذي ترك لنا انجازات معمارية عديدة وحقق النصر على جيوش الرومان بقياده تراجان وبصمود مدينة الحضر بقيادته نراه يحتفل بانتصاره في لوحه بالنحت البارز على مدخل المعبد الصغير الخامس وفي الحقيقة ان ورود مرثا هو نفسه نصر مرثا وان كلمه نصر صفه و نعت تعني المنتصر او المدافع او الحامي وقد استمرت في التداول بدلا عن اسم ورود.

الفنية:

خلال تنقيبات المعبد الصغير الاول عثر المنقبون على لوحه بالنحت البارز تصور اله العالم الاسفل مع الكلب ذو ثلاثه رؤوس سربيروس الذي كان يحمي باب العالم الاسفل في الاساطير الاغريقية وهو محاط بعقارب و ثعابين وسميت تلك اللوحة باسم لوحة نرجول اله العالم الاسفل في الاساطير العراقية القديمة و عثر المنقبون في المعبد الصغير الثاني على نصب لحرق البخور على واجهته يظهر شخص مشابه للوحة السابقة اشعث الشعر ويحمل ثعابين بيده وعلى واجهه النصب الجانبية نقش يذكر اسم الاله زقيقا وهذا يدل على ان الشخص المصور هو الاله زقيقا بصفته اله العالم الاسفل في معتقدات الحضريين وان نرجال في الحضر قد تطابق مع هرقل العاري الاله والبطل عند الاغريق.

الدينية:

عثر على تمثال لشخص يدعى كنزي عند تنقيبات المعبد الصغير الاول وعلى جبهته قرنان صغيران والقرون تعني ان الشخص المصور اله فلذلك نعت هذا التمثال بالاله المجهول وعثر على تمثال في باحة البناية السكنية (A) و كان يوضع في الاصل على منضه وقرنبا منها عثر علي مذبح وحوله اثار رماد و قرابين محروقة مما يشير الى ان التمثال كان يعبد ويقدم له القرابين وهذا التمثال يعود لشخص اسمه حفيزو وهو ايضا يحمل قرنين فوق جبهته. هذه الدلائل تشير الى ان كنزي وحفيزو عبدا كالهين وان عبادة الاسلاف قد امتدت الى مدينة الحضر و هذان التمثالان خير شاهد على ذلك .