

The background of the cover is a photograph of ancient Anatolian rock monuments. These are large, rectangular stone blocks, some standing upright and others lying horizontally, featuring carved figures and symbols. They are situated in a shallow body of water, and their forms are reflected in the calm surface below. The scene is bathed in warm, golden light, suggesting a sunset or sunrise.

# PLACE, MEMORY, AND HEALING

AN ARCHAEOLOGY OF ANATOLIAN  
ROCK MONUMENTS

ÖMÜR HARMANŞAH

# PLACE, MEMORY, AND HEALING

*Place, Memory, and Healing: An Archaeology of Anatolian Rock Monuments* investigates the complex and deep histories of places, how they served as sites of memory and belonging for local communities over the centuries, and how they were appropriated and monumentalized in the hands of the political elites. Focusing on Anatolian rock monuments carved into the living rock at watery landscapes during the Late Bronze and Early Iron Ages, this book develops an archaeology of place as a theory of cultural landscapes and as an engaged methodology of fieldwork in order to excavate the genealogies of places.

Advocating that archaeology can contribute substantively to the study of places in many fields of research and engagement within the humanities and the social sciences, this book seeks to move beyond the oft-conceived notion of places as fixed and unchanging, and argues that places are always unfinished, emergent, and hybrid. Rock cut monuments of Anatolian antiquity are discussed in the historical and micro-regional context of their making at the time of the Hittite Empire and its aftermath, while the book also investigates how such rock cut places, springs, and caves are associated with new forms of storytelling, holy figures, miracles, and healing in their post-antique life. Anybody wishing to understand places of cultural significance both archaeologically as well as through current theoretical lenses such as heritage studies, ethnography of landscapes, social memory, embodied and sensory experience of the world, post-colonialism, political ecology, cultural geography, sustainability, and globalization will find the case studies and research within this book a doorway to exploring places in new and rewarding ways.

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Anatolian Rock Monuments

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# PREFACE

In the spring of 1971 when I was a small baby, my mother Güler woke up one morning in tears and with a heart beating from a nightmare. She had seen me, her first child, at a spring from her childhood known as Köşk (literally “mansion” or “villa”). In my childhood I also visited this spring many times; ice cold waters emerge here under a stone-built Roman pool, overseen by marble statues of reclining lions. The spring is right next to a large prehistoric mound, known as Köşk Höyük. A restaurant/tea house under shady trees used to be here, as is often the case with such pleasant settings where water and ruins come together in Turkey. In her dream, my mother had accidentally dropped her baby into the pool and I floated into the source and disappeared. On waking, my mother told her dream to my grandmother Melahat, who was a great interpreter of dreams. My family holds a belief in a prescient power that is granted to those who have a pure and sincere heart. The dreams of those people, whether auspicious or ominous, often come true or turn out to have some intimate link to future reality. My mother is thought to be one of those people; she fears even herself seeing and remembering her dreams. Now you can imagine how frightened and terrified she must have been when she woke up. Despite her fears, my grandmother consoled her with the words that her dream was a beautiful omen and that I would grow up to become a “great man” or a leader. According to my grandmother, a descendant of a major holy figure and local poet Ahmed Kuddusî, flowing into the source or the eye of a spring was one of the most wondrous things that could happen to someone. I am not sure if her interpretation is accurate but at least at this stage in my intellectual life, I am very interested in springs, water and the cultural significance of springs for human communities. This book is on these subjects, that is, the concept of place, imagined as an eye of a spring and at the intersection of geological bodies, human practice, and cultures of storytelling and remembering. Equally evocative for this book is the miraculous disappearance of my infant body into the source,

in a direction opposite to the flow of water. Deeper in the chapters of this book, readers will discover that miraculous events, bodily engagement with the mineral world, and the imagination of caves, sinkholes, and springs in Anatolian cultural history are central themes in this book.

The ideas in this book have benefited a great deal from a series of academic events and research fellowships, which I would like to acknowledge here. The first of these academic events was a two day workshop that I organized at Brown University in Spring 2008, entitled *Drawing on Rocks and Gathering by the Water: Archaeological Fieldwork at Rock Reliefs, Sacred Springs and Other Places*. This was a platform where archaeologists working in different parts of the world from Sasanian Iran to Hellenistic Greece all the way to Mayan Belize discussed their field experiences and theoretical questions concerning their work at rock monuments, sacred springs and lakes. An edited volume based on the workshop has now appeared (Harmanşah 2014e). Several of the foundational ideas of this monograph have benefited much from those two intensive days of debate, and I am very grateful to the participants of the event, but especially Christopher Witmore, Matthew Canepa, Lisa Lucero, Ben Marsh, Elliot Colla, Ian Straughn, Lee Ullmann, Betsey Robinson, Thomas Garrison and John Cherry.

I am grateful to the excellent cohort of students in my Spring 2009 graduate seminar *Archaeologies of Place*. This seminar was fortunate to host Hamish Forbes for almost a week for a set of gatherings, public conversations, collegial and intellectual exchange in the light of his influential monograph *Meaning and Identity in a Greek Landscape: An Archaeological Ethnography* (Forbes 2007). I am very grateful to Hamish Forbes for his time and generosity. This book is deeply influenced by his long-term dedicated work in the landscapes of Methana.

In Spring 2010, I was tasked with designing the plenary session of the Theoretical Archaeology Group Gatherings, which fosters the most critical debates in archaeology. My colleague Nick Shepherd and I had proposed the key theme “The Location of Theory” for the gathering and had written a manifesto around the theme (Harmanşah and Shepherd 2012). The basic question was how much do archaeological theories, which are largely produced in the western academia, impact the way archaeological fieldwork is done and archaeological knowledge is produced worldwide, especially in the global south. In the plenary session, Yannis Hamilakis (UK), Uzma Rizvi (Pratt Institute, NY) and Alejandro Haber (Argentina), wrote and precirculated position papers in response. A leading post-colonial scholar of our time Homi Bhabha was invited to discuss the three papers. He was clearly delighted to engage with the work of younger, adventurous scholars in archaeology, and responded with verve. The plenary session concluded with an open forum discussion which was moderated by Nick Shepherd. The topic was followed up with two additional paper sessions with the same title “Location of Theory” the next day. I am very grateful to Nick Shepherd, Homi Bhabha, Uzma Rizvi, Yannis Hamilakis, Alejandro Haber, Alfredo González Ruibal, Rodney Harrison, Sarah K. Croucher, Stephen H. Lekson and other participants of the Location of Theory sessions. This entire event has been quite



formative of my increasing interest in political ecology and the role of heritage in contemporary landscapes.

Early stages of the research and writing of this book took place at the time of my sabbatical year at Koç University's Research Center for Anatolian Civilizations in the academic year 2010–11, with financial support of the Senior Residential Fellowship and Brown University's top-up grant. I am grateful to both of those institutions. At RCAC, I am very grateful to the Director Scott Redford and his wonderful staff including Esra Erol, Duygu Paçalı, Deniz Özdinler, and Tayfun Şenel who made Merkez Han in Beyoğlu an environment conducive for productivity, collegiality, and intellectual exchange. Among my "fellow fellows" at RCAC, some have been influential in developing the ideas that went into this book. I would especially like to mention the memorable weekly meetings of the *Space, Place and Landscape Working Group* including Galina Tirnanic, Rachel Goshgarian, Dana Sajdi, and Sofia Georgiadou. It was equally wonderful to exchange ideas with Lucienne Thys-Şenocak, Oya Pancaroğlu, Mara Horowitz, Ekin Tuşalp, Oya Dinler, Patrycja Filipowicz, Bärbel Ruhl, Alessandro Poggio, Nicholas Gailhard, Elena Frangakis-Syrett, Leah Long, Leigh Stork, and Nicoletta Momigliano during my time in Istanbul.

In January 2012, I and my colleagues from Istanbul Research Institute of the Suna-İnan Kıraç Foundation, M. Baha Tanman and Gülru Tanman, organized *The Cultural Life of Caves: From Palaeolithic Shamans to Seven Sleepers*, an interdisciplinary symposium at the Pera Museum, Istanbul. That was an extremely stimulating gathering that supplied many critical insights for the present monograph, especially Chapter 6. I thank the participants of that gathering as well. In particular, conversations with Anna Stroulia, Lisa Lucero, Anneliese Peschlow-Bindokat, Felipe Rojas, Andreas Schachner, and Ilana Halperin in that context have been very nourishing for me. The product of that symposium will be published in the coming months with the same title from Suna-İnan Kıraç Foundation Istanbul Research Institute Publications, Symposium Series.

In Fall 2013, I was one of the Faculty Fellows at the Cogut Center for the Humanities, which allowed me into a diverse intellectual community of humanities-based scholars and students and to teach an undergraduate humanities seminar entitled *Places of Healing: Memory, Miracle, and Storytelling*. At the Cogut Center, earlier versions of two chapters of this book (Chapters 2 and 3) have been "workshopped" among a highly critical but very collegial group of fellows. I am particularly thankful to Michael P. Steinberg, Nathaniel Berman and the staff members Kit Salisbury, Leslie Uhnak, and Traude Kastner for making this fellowship a wonderful experience. Among the Cogut seminar participants, I am especially grateful to Gianpaolo Baiocchi, Michal Oklot, Eng-Beng Lim, Nathaniel Berman, Felipe Gaitan-Ammann, Madhumita Lahiri, and Stephanie Malin. I also thank my students in the *Places of Healing* seminar, who generously allowed me to test several developing ideas on them, and the seminar discussions were instrumental especially in Chapter 7. In the context of this seminar, I invited two anthropologists Carla Bellamy and Marko Živković to spend a few days on Brown campus to attend the

*Healing* seminar and make public presentations. I am very grateful to Carla and Marko for their generous time and energy and for engaging with the seminar. The reader will find many traces of their influential work in this book.

The final stages of writing took place at the University of Texas at Austin, who generously awarded me one of their Donald D. Harrington Faculty Fellowships, to spend a sabbatical year at their institution. I thank the Donald D. Harrington Fellows Program as well as the Departments of Middle East Studies and Religious Studies who welcomed me to Austin. During my stay at the University of Texas, I organized the two-day workshop *Place Memory, Place Politics: Cultural Perspectives on the Local and Locality*. I am grateful to my colleagues at the University of Texas who were generously supportive of this event, especially Kamran Scot Aghaie, Kristen Brustad, Nassos Papalexandrou, Glenn Peers, Karen Grumberg, Stephennie Mulder, Asfar Moin, John Huehnergard, Jo Ann Hackett, Na'ama Pat-el, Jonathan Kaplan, Blake Atwood, and Kamran Ali. I learned much from the contributors of the workshop, and it was delightful to meet and discuss matters of place with Jani Scandura, Tracey Heatherington, Sonya Atalay, Amy Mills and Rachel Goshgarian. Many sections of this book have been written at Blue State Café in Providence, and Café Medici in Austin, so I thank the friendly faces in those two institutions.

I am grateful to the three anonymous readers of the book proposal for their genuinely constructive feedback. It was wonderful to work with Routledge editors Matthew Gibbons, Amy Davis-Poynter, and the production editor Sarah Douglas. I thank them for their patience with my schedule. I am also grateful to the whole production team at Swales & Willis, especially Caroline Watson and freelance copyeditor Viv Lillywhite.

Finally I would like to thank Peri Johnson, who has read and critiqued a good deal of this work, and my daughter Nar, who survived all of my absences and has always been the source of happiness. I dedicate this book to my parents Güler and Fahri, from whom I learned my sense of place. I thank my sister Rabia and brother Onur for their encouragement and support.

Some of the ideas and chapters used in this book are already published elsewhere. The brief discussion on the Assyrian Source of the Tigris reliefs derives from my earlier *Archaeological Dialogues* piece in a longer version (Harmanşah 2007). My chapter for the *Of Rocks and Water* edited volume, entitled “Event, Place, Performance: Rock Reliefs and Spring Monuments in Anatolia” (Harmanşah 2014b) includes certain sections in Chapter 2 and Chapter 5. Finally, a portion of the Epilogue has been published in *Forum Kritische Archäologie* 1 (2012).

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# 1

## INTRODUCTION

### **Place, Memory, and Healing**

In today's world of globalization, movement and migration, of diasporas and transnational identities, of mobile technologies and virtual worlds that we dwell in, it may seem surprising that we are still firmly attached to places. We visit and revisit places that make up our identities, take part in our stories, and nurture our bodies. A remote battlefield now peaceful with silent monuments, the eye of a spring amid a heat-scorched landscape, a dark cave where shepherds take refuge, or a ruin where revolutionary youth secretly meet – these are sites of memory and human practice. Such places may often be remote from the scenes of everyday life, but are poetic nonetheless and vibrantly present in our imagination. This project aims to reach to the edges of our cultural environment, to places made up of matter, meaning, and memory.

This book tells the story of a series of powerful, roughly hewn places in an attempt to investigate the complex and deep histories of places, how they served as sites of memory and belonging for local communities over the centuries, and how they were appropriated and monumentalized in the hands of the political elites. Place can be described as a culturally meaningful locality that is dependant upon specific human practices and interactions with the material world. Many academics have been arguing that places continue to be significant sources of cultural identity, memory, and belonging for local communities today. Since they are inherently fragile entities, they must be defended and carefully cared for in contexts of globalization and development (Escobar 2008: 7). Engaging with place as a unit of field research affords unique opportunities for academics to challenge myths of universality and the structural violence of colonial globality.

Thanks to the fairly recent development of research fields such as political ecology, environmental humanities, landscape archaeology and cultural geography,

## 2 Introduction

there is an increasing interest in places in the humanities and social science from a variety of disciplines.<sup>1</sup> With the help of the rising stars of postcolonial studies, heritage studies, and the poststructuralist critique of academic field practices and engaged scholarship, place studies has dramatically shifted from a more nostalgic and romantic notion of an anthropological place as authentic and pristine to a much more critical and politically engaged perspective on place, oftentimes overlapping with ecological activism and meaningful engagements with local communities around the world.<sup>2</sup> This is a moment when a fascinating convergence between different fields is taking place in post-disciplinary environments: consider for example the encouraging rapprochement between anthropologist Arturo Escobar's *Territories of Difference* on the political ecology of the Colombian Chocó region (Escobar 2008) and art critique Lucy Lippard's new work *Undermining* (Lippard 2014) on land use politics in New Mexico. The idea behind this book was to contribute to this debate from the perspective of archaeology, and to suggest that archaeology as a discipline inherently engaged with local communities and indigenous knowledge systems through fieldwork, and as a discipline of memory grounded in materiality, has a lot to contribute to these debates in place studies.

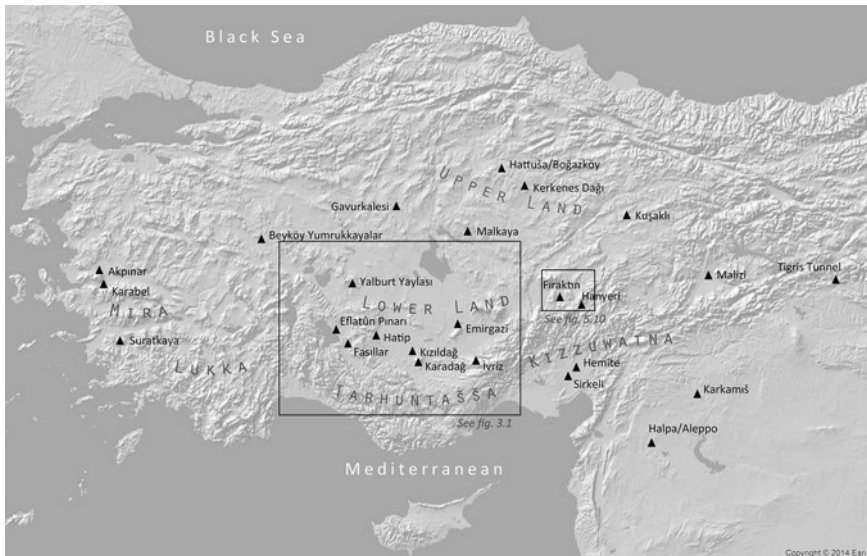
My main concern in this book therefore is to accomplish two things. First and foremost, I present an alternative, place-based reading of rock monuments of the Anatolian peninsula carved roughly into the living rock during the Late Bronze and Early Iron Ages (fourteenth to eighth centuries BCE). This unusual set of monuments offers a rare opportunity to trace the genealogy of places and local practices associated with them, and to investigate the multiple horizons of meanings they acquired throughout history due to their stubborn presence in the landscape.

Rock monuments are often found at sites where the human body is exposed to the elements of the mineral world and this allows us to theorize the intimate engagement of human bodies with specific geologies of places. In this relationship, the coming together of rocks and water in particular places is important for the case studies chosen for this study, principally sites with eventful geologies such as springs, sinkholes, caves, and places of healing, where special geologies overlap with evocative ruins. The haptic and the sensorial experience of such places occurs through touching the rock, drinking its water, ingesting its soils, bathing in its mud, inhaling its gases. This speaks well to the intimacy of places and the embodied nature of experiencing places (Hamilakis 2013). I refer to rock monuments as roughly hewn places to emphasize the unfinished quality of many of the rock reliefs and inscriptions, to suggest that rock monuments are places of memory and human practice and therefore are better seen as cultural processes rather than finished works of art. Finally, I point to the geological groundedness of places and the lived physical experience at those places by highlighting their roughly hewn quality.

Secondly, the book's more ambitious objective is to develop what I would like to call *a critical archaeology of place* as a theory of landscapes conceived as a complex constellation of locally meaningful places, while advocating an engaged methodology of fieldwork to excavate the genealogies of places. Places are discussed in the

humanities and social sciences literature as small, culturally meaningful sites of lived experience and social memory, unmappable through contemporary technologies of macro-scale visualization and models of quantification of the past and contemporary environments. I understand places as deeply historical, culturally contingent, and politically contested sites of human engagement, therefore they do not easily give themselves away through the standardized methodologies of environmental research and regional survey. This book proposes that archaeology can contribute substantively to the study of places by taking an avenue other than quantification-based studies of past environments. Instead, I root for effective collaborations with ethnography, ethno-history, heritage studies, and environmental sciences, and at the same time develop a rigorous theory of place as a contribution to broader scholarly debates on the environment, ecology, sustainability, and cultural geography.

*Place, Memory, and Healing* therefore investigates the cultural biography of rock monuments from ancient Turkey, i.e. rock reliefs and “landscape monuments” of the recent academic literature (Glatz and Plourde 2011). Landscape monuments, in Glatz’s definition include mainly rock reliefs and inscriptions as well as sacred pool complexes, dam structures, and other commemorative monuments set up in the countryside in the form of steles and altars (Glatz 2009: 136) (Figure 1.1). Carved into the living rock and often associated with geologically special places such as springs, sinkholes and caves, such monuments acquired a variety of meanings through the long-term history of landscapes, and became the subject matter of multiple stories among local communities, travelers, antiquarians, and archaeologists.



**FIGURE 1.1** Map of the Anatolian Peninsula during the Late Bronze–Iron Age transition with sites mentioned in the text. (Base Map by Peri Johnson, using ESRI Topographic Data [Creative Commons]: World Shaded Relief).