

# Ethno-Assyriological Analogies and Eclectic Landscape from Glocal to Global

## Küyerel'den Küresel'e Etno-Asurolojik Analojiler ve Eklektik Manzaralar

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### Abstract

Archaeology as a discipline began in the 19th century following the main moves of globalization, such as the worldwide spread of capitalism and the imperialist moves of the colonial powers. The discipline's core intellectual goals were also global, such as understanding the vast spread of material culture and the evolution of human ancestors later in the century. In the 20th century, this trend grew even greater; however, with the emergence of numerous social actors towards the end of the 20th century, this situation changed dramatically for many reasons. Archaeology has shifted from a potentially limited, Western narrative of the past to a chaotic but pluralistic study of past material culture from a variety of contradictory perspectives. This is actually a major epistemological shift from a normative, uniform, and integrative narrative to a diversity of different interpretations. The idea of glocalization has been put forward in order to clearly reveal the 'heterogenizing' aspects of globalization. In this vein, it is quite common to find proposed issues related to the "rehumanization" of archaeology and global archaeology. In this article, in the light of a number of examples, the ways in which localities were 'produced' in the ancient Near East, especially in the light of Assyrian examples in the Upper Tigris Basin, and some of their reflections on the global are examined. Our goal is to understand some of the ideas that underpin these recommendations.

**Keywords:** Global, Glocal, Assyrian, Birkleyn Cave, Salmanassar III.

### Öz

Bir disiplin olarak arkeoloji, kapitalizmin dünya çapında yayılması ve sömürgeci güçlerin emperyalist hamleleri gibi küreselleşmenin ana hamlelerinin ardından 19. yüzyılda başlamıştır. Disiplinin temel entelektüel hedefleri de maddi kültürün geniş alanlara yayılmasını ve yüzyılın ilerleyen dönemlerinde insan atalarının evrimini anlamak gibi küreseldi. 20. yüzyılda bu eğilim daha da büyüdü; ancak 20. yüzyılın sonlarına doğru çok sayıda toplumsal aktörün ortaya çıkışı ile pek çok nedenden ötürü bu durum çarpıcı biçimde değişti. Arkeoloji, geçmişe ilişkin potansiyel olarak sınırlı, Batılı bir anlatıdan, çeşitli çelişkili bakış açılarından geçmiş maddi kültüre ilişkin kaotik ama çoğulcu bir çalışmaya doğru kayd. Bu aslında normatif, tekdüze ve bütünleştirici bir anlatıdan farklı yorumların çeşitliliğine doğru büyük bir epistemolojik değişimdir. Küreselleşmenin 'heterojenleştirici' yönlerini açıkça ortaya koymak için küyerelleşme fikri ortaya atılmıştır. Bu doğrultuda arkeolojinin ve küresel arkeolojinin "yeniden insanlaştırılması" ile ilgili önerilen konuların bulunması oldukça yaygındır. Bu makalede birtakım örnekler ışığında Antik Yakın Doğu'da, özellikle de Yukarı Dicle Havzası'ndaki Asur örnekleri ışığında yerelliklerin 'üretileme' yolları ve bunun küresel olan birtakım yansımaları incelenmektedir. Amacımız bu önerileri destekleyen bazı fikirleri anlamaktır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Küresel, Küyerel, Asur, Birkleyn Mağarası, III. Salmanassar.

### Introduction

The tendency to consolidate earthly life into a single system has a long history. The great discoveries and subsequent formation of colonial empires in the 15th to 19th centuries (Logan, 2002, p. 51, 53) represent a major wave of globalization with dramatic cultural consequences. The development of electronic information technologies in the second half of the 20th century is another major wave that has created a time-space convergence and, has the potential to replace local cultures with a soft, global one. In the early 20th century, in the final phase of World War II, a series of meetings were held at Bretton Woods in the United States, which mobilized another great globalizing force, both economically and culturally. At these meetings, representatives of the nations on the allied side of the war sought to find ways to prevent another such global catastrophe and facilitate post-war recovery and development. From these meetings, the establishment and growth of the United Nations and its subsidiaries such as the World Health Organization, the Food and Agriculture Organization, UNESCO, UNICEF and the International Labor Organization and the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank were encouraged.

Following the major trends of globalization, such as the rise of capitalism and the imperialist actions of the colonial powers, archaeology emerged as a field in the 19th century. The main intellectual objectives of the discipline were also universal, as evidenced by the widespread dissemination of material culture and the development of human ancestors later in the century (Funari & Carvalho, 2014, p. 4595). Even while this tendency got more pronounced in the 20th century, as was already indicated, things drastically changed by the century's conclusion due to a variety of factors, including the rise of several social actors. Archaeology has evolved from a possibly constrained, Western historical narrative to a disorganized but diverse examination of historical material culture from a number of opposing viewpoints. This is actually a major epistemological shift from a normative, uniform, and integrative narrative to a diversity of different interpretations.

Economic globalization is accompanied by cultural globalization, and archaeology has a broad framework within global developments (Meskell, 2010, p. 192) are the direct results of a particular disciplinary trajectory that is slowly embracing social theory, politics, philosophy, heritage, and local-scale interventions. With the "New Archaeology" (Processual Archaeology) movements that started in America in the 1960s and the "Post-Processual Archaeology" movements that developed as a reaction, many subjects began to be handled from different perspectives. One of these issues is the formulation of policy, practice and legislation of cultural heritage. Cultural heritage refers to a highly dynamic and ever-expanding set of entities, characterized by strong and expressive aesthetics, and the unrepeatability and non-reproducible values of the society from which it emerges. This concept was first used in Italy in the 1960s by the Franceschini Commission to represent civilization, history and cultural assets (Pacelli & Sica, 2021, p. 1, 6). Cultural heritage assets can be "tangible" or "intangible". Tangible assets have a defined and stable form and include paintings, sculptures, architectural and archaeological artifacts. Intangible entities, by contrast, exist only in the moments when they are enacted and include festivals, popular performances, ceremonial processions, religious ceremonies, sporting events, and competitions (Pacelli & Sica, 2021, p. 5).

The metaphorical condensing of the globe and the rising consciousness of it as a single entity are referred to as globalism. Numerous localization phenomena (such as ethnicity, indigenous movements, and exoticism), which are essentially two sides of the same coin, go hand in hand with this realization. On a global scale, globalism encompasses people and activities. In the past fifty years, there have been unparalleled human migrations, empire collapses, decolonizations, the obliteration of former states, and the emergence of new ones. These conflicts frequently centre on assertions on national, racial, and linguistic identities. We are faced with the opposing trends of globalization and glocalism as a result of these processes. While a new internationalism unites us (e.g., tourism, communication systems, and environmental problems), new nationalisms and ethnicities cross these expanses and provide demarcation lines. While globalization seemingly produces homogeneity, the tendency to localization produces difference, transformation, and new identities (Meskell, 1998, p. 2). According to Guldi and Armitage, who seek globalization within glocalisation (Guldi & Armitage, 2016, p. 43), what we think of as global is a collection of local problems that are often perceived as part of a more universal crisis.

Glocalization is an approach that proposes equal attention to globalization and localization (local differentiation). It is an appropriate term to denote the processes by which new boundaries are created between orders from local to global, and they are all intertwined. As an analytical concept, glocalization directs our attention to the institutions and power relations made possible by globalization as well as localization (Salazar, 2010, p. 133). Although the heritage of societies tends to be globalized, it has glocal effects. However, the homogenizing tendencies of the worldwide global heritage, which began with the postmodern movement, can ignore the local characteristics of the heritage (Salazar, 2010, p. 132; Logan, 2002, p. 54). In fact, the strength of the global approach is proportional to the strength of the local components. Although UNESCO's 1972 Convention for the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (World Heritage Convention) appears to be aimed at preserving human heritage, which is a global heritage, and is assumed to be a depoliticized process, the nomination of

sites to the World Heritage List has been deeply politicized at both the global and local level. However, UNESCO is also an important globalizing actor in terms of being founded on universal ideas, operated by a global bureaucratic apparatus and advocating common cultural, educational and scientific policies on a global scale (Bortolotto, 2010, p. 97-98).

The idea of glocalization has been put forward in order to clearly reveal the 'heterogenizing' aspects of globalization. In this vein, it is quite common to find proposed issues related to the "rehumanization" of archaeology and global archaeology. In this article, in the light of a number of examples, the ways in which localities were 'produced' in the ancient Near East, especially in the light of Assyrian examples in the Upper Tigris Region, and some of their reflections on the global are examined. Our goal is to understand some of the ideas that underpin these recommendations.

### **The Formation of Glocal Cultural Memory in the Ancient Near East**

The role of collective memory in Babylonian culture was most comprehensively addressed by Gerdien Jonker, who understood it as a dynamic phenomenon that is carried out collectively and repeatedly within society to respond to the demands of our time. Jonker (Jonker, 1995) has tried to explain this particular form of social action in terms of concepts such as "*communicative remembrance*", "*collective remembrance*", "*collective memory*" and "*cultural recall*" in line with theories that aim to make it understandable in a social context. In the early part of the second millennium BCE, during the ancient Babylonian period, a new perspective on the past was offered. This time period was different from the preceding one in a number of respects. Prior centuries had seen a major change in the makeup of the population, primarily as a result of Amorite-speaking populations invading from the West and assimilating. With the inclusion of human names, the historical picture that was created from written records from the third millennium BCE played a significant influence in all succeeding Assyrian and Babylonian cultures. In the process, the first lists of individuals appeared, along with all family relationships, called genealogies. The king and the head of the family kept their memory alive on behalf of the groups associated with them. The names a king wanted to remember, and the stories associated with them, determined the public image of Ancient Babylonian society. To help him, the ruler had at his disposal a system of writers and scholars who transformed the desired memory into a permanent written form and ensured that it was passed down from generation to generation. The names that a head of a family remembered were the basis of that family's prestige and self-image. Thus, securing something in writing in society played almost no role in the transmission of cultural memory; memory was transferred orally. These different forms of transmission, written and oral, resulted in a common image of the past, which was later called the collective memory of Mesopotamia (Jonker, 1995, p. 2-3). Jonker applies the term "*cadre materiel*" to material culture, which is critical to the creation of collective memory, and claims that with the establishment and settlement of the cult formed along with its stone sculptures, monuments, inscriptions, and architecture, it began to condense the remnants of the past into a coherent memory pattern. Jonker distinguishes between "*collective memory*" and "*history*," arguing that in collective memory, the past is actively present in society, while history makes an active effort to reclaim the past. In his own work, Jonker focuses on the role of scribes and priests in preserving memory; Given access to the material and intellectual culture enjoyed by priests and scribes, such a focus is understandable. But only those who had the education and pedigree necessary to be part of the temple hierarchy could come across a number of monuments and inscriptions about how ancient Mesopotamian society understood their past.

Beginning with the work of Mario Liverani (Liverani, 1988), Assyriologists have advanced the argument that Babylonian and Assyrian scribes used mythical figures from the past to comment on contemporary events and influence those in power. The legends surrounding the Akkadian emperors Sargon and Naram-Sin have been cited as prime examples of compositions involving such judgments (Grayson, 1975, p. 44). Subsequent re-evaluations of the Sumerian list of kings have drawn attention to the considerable propaganda value the text had in Antiquity. In the late third millennium BCE, scribes probably compiled the Sumerian King List to appoint the kings of the Third Ur dynasty as imperial successors to the Akkadian emperors Sargon and Naram-Sin. The scribes at Isin later used the ideal of a single city exercising the hegemony expressed in this composition to justify their claims of domination over southern Mesopotamia. Similarly, it has been argued that the literary traditions surrounding Sargon the Great and Naram-Sin may not have had any basis in the abuses of historical figures, but rather were printer inventions created to influence the current holders of the throne (Nielsen, 2012, p. 5-6).

When society is compared with the writer/priest class, it is much more difficult to predict the thoughts and attitudes of ordinary people towards the past. Since this segment of the population did not have the same religious secrets and the same literary education that gave priests the right to enter the holy sites, they also did not have the same cultural artifacts. However, they had access to these public manifestations of the material that inspired collective memory. In their daily lives, they encountered many public projections of the past: temples towering above the roofs of surrounding houses; the main parades leading from the gates to the temples and the city itself. It is not unreasonable to believe that their understanding of these monuments will be shaped by the collective memory of the past, which is kept alive among them through their own

memories and oral traditions. Written culture probably facilitated a dialogue between the printing elite and the imperial household, but it was insufficient to shape the views of society, which made up a large part of the population. Because of this, those in positions of authority have been unable to use texts that purport to depict the past to shape how the general public perceives current events. Instead, they have been forced to use the city itself as a locus of memory, relying on monumental structures in the conventional manner and engaging in associated public activities. As a result, kings engaged the populace via rites and rituals in ways that tapped into aspects of collective memory, possibly reshaping how people perceive the present (Nielsen, 2012, p. 6).

Human actions are too complex to be explained and interpreted by all-embracing passive adaptation, excessive schemes of symbolism. These actions (Hinz, 2012, p. 45), consisting of unordered norms and values on the space-time continuum, between a cyclical and linear concept of time that guides the actions of past societies and represents two aspects of a dialectical relationship (Hinz, 2012, p. 45), can contradict traditionally designed individual strategies for complexity with applications separate from the overall whole (Janusek, 2004, p. 4). Individual attitudes are much more flexible in terms of the complexity of social practices when interacting with other areas of the whole and changing positions in different unpredictable ways. Symptomatic discussions of this issue in recent years, with the increasing awareness of the processual and post-processual in the field of archaeology, have made it almost impossible to reach general assumptions about the complexity of human life (Fahlander, 2001, p. 12, 15).

It is often difficult, if not impossible; to reconstruct the original meaning and significance of old public images that once played a role in creating identity among members of social groups. One of the most important problems of archaeology is to understand the concepts and ways of living constructed in deep temporality. It is a tedious and difficult task to define the social systems of people living in the past, especially those of non-institutional groups, as free or governed decision-making actors. As a social builder, archaeology connects the past and the future, and feeds the future with the value judgments of the past. The common context between the past and the future is the biological structure of humanoid traits, which are themes of material culture that seem appropriate to ethnography. It seems that the future will always be fed by the value judgments of the past. That is why great works in human history (Figure 1) have been written over and over again, referring to glorious times, especially in times of crisis (Ulanowski, 2015, p. 237).

The religious meaning is that the king placed himself in the tradition of intervening in social and legal situations, or at least approving decisions in a formal manner. What he wanted to convey was a picture of the "king of justice" who showed interest in the poor, the oppressed and those dependent on the royal order. He was well aware that power and privilege sometimes overwhelmed those who depended on him, and he wanted to mitigate this as much as possible or rather, he wanted to be seen to alleviate it. He wanted to be seen as a good shepherd of his people. This image of the king may not actually be innovative with him or with this period. As in earlier times, the Mesopotamian leadership had to appeal to the oppressed and, therefore, some concern for their well-being was always imperative (Snell, 2011, p. 60, 61). The future will continue to create an idealized image of our past in how we conceptualize the past, always with different changes. On the other hand, the past will always be the reference point for the future (Figure 2). As Marx said about Napoleon: the same events occur twice in history: in the first they have a real historical value, while in the second they are a caricature of the first, a grotesque adventure; they feed on a mythical reference (Baudrillard, 2021, p. 121). Aspects of the past are commemorated, resurrected, and reclaimed via the preservation, restoration, and display of archaeological artifacts, or they are concealed, forgotten, and momentarily lost. Legitimacy crises frequently happen when regimes experience quick and considerable change and when established power methods are supplanted by new ones. To justify these shifts, new political myths are required (Fahlander & Oestigaard, 2004, p. 12).

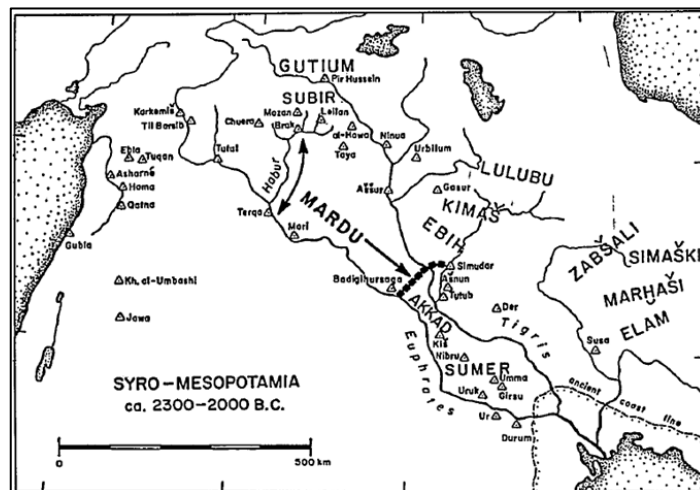


**Figure 1-2.** The painting "Liberty Leading the People", painted by the painter Eugene Delacroix in 1830 and depicting the French revolution, and the Triumphal Stele of the Akkadian King Naram-Sin (2250 BC). Source: (Feldman, 2005, p. 293).

### The Birth of Assyrian Glocal Olympus

Assyrian history begins in the city of Assyria, founded in the early 3rd millennium BCE, as a commercial center on the transit point of merchandise coming from the north to the Sumerian cities in the south of modern Iraq. Assyria is the name of the god to whom both this city and the temple that ruled it were dedicated (CAD, 1968, p. 471). Although this country was somewhat far from the centers of Sumerian-Babylonian culture and had its own distinctive features, it was certainly within the cultural periphery of Mesopotamia compared to Syria and Elam (Lambert, 1983, p. 82). The god Assyria and the Assyrian city are inseparable; for this god is the personification of the sheer rock that rises above the bend of the Tigris River at this site. The steep Assyrian cliff, which is located 40 meters above the valley and roughly triangular in shape and resembles the nose of a ship, offered people the opportunity to establish a sheltered and convenient settlement. The temple of Assyria on top of the hillside was the heart of the city, and later of the Assyrian country. This temple was known by different names at different times. In the early phase of the second millennium BCE, the names Eamkurkurra, meaning "Home of the Wild Bull of the Country", and in the late phase of the second millennium BCE, the names Esarra, meaning "House of the Mountains of the Country/House of the Universe", were used. These names in the Sumerian language, which was spoken in the south of Iraq in the third millennium BCE when the city of Assyria was first founded, were used in ceremonial and scientific texts in later periods (Radner, 2018, p. 4-5).

In an inscription by the Middle Assyrian King Tukulti Ninurta I (1243-1207 BCE), indicating that the foundation of Assyria was associated with the mountain, the god Assyria is mentioned as the lord (Map 1) of "Mount Abih/Ebih" (Jebel Hamrin, Sumerian En.ti) rising above the Tigris where his temple was built (Bottero & Kramer, 1989, p. 226; Delnero, 2011, p. 137), which makes it inseparable from this steep cliff, which is considered sacred places in all lands (Maul, 2017, p. 340; Cancik-Kirschbaum, 2003, p. 110, 113). Early records of the god Assyria's relationship with Mount Abih/Abih/Mount About (CAD, 1958, p. 1; RIMA I, 1987, p. 17) and later periods. Mount Abih/Ebih has been cited as a force field that kings constantly resorted to in their campaigns (ARAB I, 1926, p. 20, 122, 258, RIMA II, 1991, p. 103, RIMA III, 1996, p. 187, 190, 235). The god Assyria occupies a special position in the rich world of gods of Mesopotamia in that he descended from a local mountain and city god to a supra-regional imperial god (Cancik-Kirschbaum, 2003, p. 110). A Sumerian mythology describes how Inanna conquered Mount Ebih (Hallo, 2010, p. 63, 127; Delnero, 2011, p. 134, 139; Bottero & Kramer, 1989, p. 98, 217, 219). In a divine poem by Enheduanna, daughter of Sargon of Akkad, it was the role that the Semites gave to the mountains that made Ebih appear as a supernatural figure in the past. From the time of Sargon of Akkad until the middle of the 2nd millennium BCE, and even later, this played a hidden role in the people's devotion to this mountain (Bottero & Kramer, 1989, p. 227-228). Inanna and Ebih is a mythological element in which everyone knows the goddess in a divine cycle. But interpretations have also been proposed that explain the temporary disappearance of this myth Venus "behind the mountain". In the mythos, the goddess is successfully told how Ebih, who refused to accept her superiority, was defeated. Inanna ascends to heaven to seek An's approval, but An warns the goddess not to go there. Inanna ignores his advice and successfully repels Ebih, completely destroying him (Leick, 1991, p. 89-90).



**Map 1.** *The location of Mount Ebih.*  
Source: (Weiss & Courty, 1993, p. 155).

After the middle of the second millennium BCE, when the Assyrian state became a regional power, the god Assyria also received corresponding attributes. The god Assyria did not have all the attributes of the Sumerian-Babylonian gods. Apart

from the adoption of Mardukian mythology, Assyria had no mythology of its own (Reade, 1978, p. 47). Apart from the Assyrian city, there were no Assyrian chapels and cult centers in other cities or temple complexes of other gods. Since Assyria did not yet have a divine personality, it was not a "deus persona". It lacked the family ties that were characteristic of all the great gods and goddesses of the Babylonians and Sumerians, uniting them into one great clan. Although it is sometimes referred to as a husband and wife with the goddess Ishtar, this is not clearly stated. Assyria lacks a common set of attributes compatible with the entire major and many minor gods of the Mesopotamian pantheon, and is not related to the forces and directions of nature in general like some gods. In early royal inscriptions, rulers only address him as "beli", which means "sir/lord", and in these inscriptions it is understood that "ilum/ili" means "god/god Assyria" (Lambert, 1983, p. 82). But precisely for this reason, the Assyrian temple in the city of Assyria became the central and centralizing institution of the Assyrian Empire. As can be seen from the archives found in the temple, all the provinces had to contribute regularly to the maintenance of the temple. The cult of the god Assyria is arranged according to the practices approved in its other temples. This instantaneous cult was merely a regular, ritualized practice of the god concerned. The ruler of the city of Assyria was also the highest priest of the city god Assyria. The systematic identification of the god Assyria with the god Marduk, the head of the Babylonian pantheon, is another attempt to strengthen the position of the god Assyria, which was systematically pursued by the Sargonid rulers in the late eighth and gradual centuries BCE (Cancik-Kirschbaum, 2003, p. 112-113). The goal of these Babylonizing tendencies, which were consciously incorporated into the systems, institutions, and ceremonies of Assyrian rulers in the late Middle Assyrian and Neo Assyrian periods, was to make Assyria more familiar to the kingdoms and principalities of the Near East (Maul, 2017, p. 336).

For any religion, the construction of locations devoted to mysterious devotion is essential. This location may be a structure, a natural site, or a combination of the two. However, the concept of enclosing god in a specific enclosure might emphasize ideological control over enigmatic phenomena by elite members of a given society more strongly and so serve as a tool for social control in cultures that are evolving toward higher social forms (Laneri, 2015, p. 6). Spaces outside of temples are important for guiding participants' experience dimensions of ritual activities, and this is where ideological forces are frequently manifested in these open spaces. These places are therefore key elements in framing the cognitive schemas of devotees and strengthening their religious beliefs (Laneri, 2015, p. 7).

The fact that many of the iconographic themes of Assyrian art are traditional in nature has been favored as a meaningful way of representing "things." One of them is the creation of rock spaces. These spaces are often memorialized through rewriting in places (Harmanşah, 2015, p. 15). In studies of rock monuments from the ancient Near Eastern period, research questions focused on the specific moment at which the rock was written, while pre-carving significance was largely considered secondary or marginal, including rewriting events that significantly altered the significance of the site, its geological features and landscape context, or what would happen to the rock relief centuries after its creation (Harmanşah, 2015, p. 15). Bedrocks, which can inevitably be altered by a variety of tools and pressure, are monumental spaces that allow us to read landscapes as visible reminders of an activity, as humanity has lived and experienced in the past (Clarkson, 2008, p. 490). Since the most ancient times, the mountains and rivers to which offerings have been made were considered sacred power. The sacred mountain protected the people living in the lands where it was located and influenced the fate of the landowner for good.

Although there is no consensus on the criteria that make something monumental, monumentality, with its wide archaeological use, is usually excluded from any ideological component, but not always, and assumed to be universal by assigning meaning to it (Cunliffe, 2012, p. 61). The effects of stone monuments are judged not only by the fact that they have a social power derived from their representation and are loaded with ritual contexts, but also by the fact that they have other potential qualities such as hardness, texture, color, composition, mineralogy and origin (Janusek, 2015, p. 337). Monuments contain a number of spatial references, such as visibility, proximity, or distance to other places. The landscapes in which monuments are constructed have ontologically become regional areas of application of social and political practices, bringing a contextual approach to the structuring of time and space (David & Thomas, 2008, p. 38). Stone monuments, an element of material culture subject to the critical process for the creation of collective memory, transform traces of the past into a coherent memory pattern (Nielsen, 2012, p. 5). Since monument repairs in the modern world, which give another dimension by regulating human relations, are not only to stop the deterioration, but to return the site to how it once looked, that is, to spatial temporality (Cunliffe, 2012, p. 65), we better understand why such rocky areas were chosen in the selection of the location of Assyrian commemorative monuments resistant to the destruction caused by time. These landscapes associated with rock monuments provide a remarkable example of how human relationship with a geologically specific place results in a complex series of image-forming events in the long run. In these images, the associative geological contexts of bedrock, mountainous landscape, and ice-cold waters allow for new forms of storytelling and cultural practice (Harmanşah, 2019, p. 486). The way neighborhoods are produced and reproduced requires the continuous construction, both practical and

discursive (necessarily non-local), of an imagined ethno-landscape (necessarily non-local) in which local practices and projects take place. The production of a neighborhood is inherently colonizing, in the sense that it involves a claim to social (often ritually) organized power over places and environments seen as potentially chaotic or unruly. The concern that accompanies many settlements, occupations, or settlement rituals is recognition of the implicit violence of all such acts of colonization. Part of this anxiety remains in the ritual repetition of these moments, long after the principal event of colonization. In this sense, the production of one neighborhood is, by its very nature, an exercise of power over a kind of hostile or stubborn environment that can take the form of another neighborhood (Appadurai, 1996, p. 184).

We can easily see that the composition of the mountain and the water, as an inseparable duo, were frequently visited by the Assyrian kings with the attribution of holiness. The routes chosen in these places are not neutral; they necessarily include meaningful stages, making it possible to use the symbolism of the space (Balandier, 2021, p. 112). In the ninth century BCE, during the early period of the expansion of the Assyrian lands (Shafer, 2007, p. 134), peripheral monuments assumed their paradigmatic functions and constantly marked the outer regions as they were added to the borders of Assyria. During the reign of Asurnasirpal II (883-859 BC), the monuments mostly marked the end points of expeditions or safe political transition zones, and therefore, together they marked the perimeter of the kingdom as a whole. It was also during his reign that these monuments began to associate the tradition of revisiting places marked by earlier kings with an older, seemingly established tradition. The Assyrian monarchs developed increasingly nuanced and complex variants as the tradition grew, not just in their settlements but also in their intended messages and political purposes. In order to establish a strong Assyrian presence in the surrounding area, the royal monuments built over their three centuries of construction did so consistently and effectively. Salmanassar III (858-824 BC), who used his father's conquests as a base, influenced much more. Like his father, Salmanassar III adopted the practice of revisiting and drawing attention to sites containing the monuments of his predecessors. One of these is the Birkleyn Caves (Horowitz, 1998, p. 28, 40).

In Assyrian sources it is referred to as "Subnat/Sebene Water" (RIMA II, p. 61, 163, 171, 200, 212; Grayson, 2006, p. 252; Unger, 1913, p. 47; Liverani, 1992, p. 34; Schachner, 2009, p. 172), "The Tigris Tunnel" (Tunibuni Pass, RIMA III, 1996, p. 47; Schachner, 2009, p. 201), or "The Source of the Tigris", where the Assyrian reliefs are found, has numerous caves, rock outcrops and valleys known as the Birkleyn cave system northwest of the modern town of Lice in the north of the Diyarbakir Plain in the Southeastern Anatolia Region (Schachner, 2007, p. 232-233; Harmanşah, 2015, p. 128). The Birkleyn relief inscriptions reveal the politically homogeneous status quo of the region prior to the Assyrian conquest by listing actions among the rulers of the Nairi Kingdom (Guarducci & Laneri, 2010, p. 20). Tiglat-Pileser I (ARAB I, 1926, p. 91) and Salmanassar III (ARAB I, 1926, p. 246-249; Russell, 1986, p. 171-201) were commissioned to make rock reliefs and inscriptions (Fales, 2017, p. 19; Schachner, 2009, p. 173). A relief from the Tigris Tunnel from the Tiglat-Pileser I period and an accompanying inscription describe the king's visit to Nairi during one of three expeditions between 1104 and 1097 BC (Schachner, 2006, p. 367-368; RIMA II, 1991, p. 23). The king is viewed in profile and faces to the left towards the oncoming visitor. He raises his right hand and performs the "ubanatarashu" (extending his finger), which is one of the characteristic movements of the king in sacred environments (Schachner, 2009, p. 205). The ritual character of the depiction is accentuated by the special ceremonial dress that the king normally wears in settings where cult rites are performed (Schachner, 2018, p. 117). The fact that the Salmanassar III relief (RIMA III, 1996, p. 92) is described as Tiglat-Pileser I shows that the meaning of this place has not changed over the centuries and that the way it is described is considered in the context of a ritual framework (Schachner, 2006, p. 368-369; Schachner, 2018, p. 120). None of the reliefs are easily accessible, which requires the visitor to walk or climb the river. Moreover, neither the monuments at the top nor below can be seen with the naked eye from a distance, indicating that only those who know their location in advance are likely to visit them (Shafer, 2007, p. 141).

In this depiction (Figure 3), which is also depicted on the Bronze Balawat Gate, sacrifices are slaughtered and offerings are offered (Schachner, 2007, p. 176) and the person in the back gives instructions to the person holding the tool in his hand (Unger, 1913, p. 44, 47). The memorial writings demonstrate how rituals affected rebirth or regeneration at periods when the military might of past kings was both honoured and relived by later generations, analogous to how Balawat paintings portray the construction of the monument. The ideal visitor to the place, who represents this revival of tradition, is a direct descendant of the dynasty. In this sense, the monument would symbolize and have an impact on king-to-king contact, explicitly referencing Assyrian history and legacy. The Assyrian Empire that the monument served to represent would be understood as continually being re-established in this continuing process of communication (Shafer, 2007, p. 147).



**Figure 3.** *Birkleyn scene over the Bronze Balawat Gate.*

Source: (Schachner, 2007, p. 176).

The rock reliefs in the Birkleyn Caves must be related to the long-term strategies used by the empire to consolidate and legitimize authority and control collective memory. These rock monuments were places of remembrance in mighty places in the border regions, where the Assyrian king and his army had a deep relationship with local landmarks of cultural significance and natural wonders through the making of indicational inscriptions. Given the extremely modest scale and arrangement of these rock inscriptions and reliefs, it makes more sense to suggest that the inscription-writing actions were for votive purposes rather than creating a monument or stamping the seal of Assyrian power on foreign lands (Harmanşah, 2018, p. 267). Similarly, in some religious traditions today, the path to the religious site can be as enlightening and spiritually moving as reaching the sanctuary.

The water supply can be thought of as particularly symbolic of the king's ability to rechannel the benefits of the Assyrian conquests, so to speak, a theme underlying his accounts of booty and foreign tribute. For example, Salmanassar III, in his account of his visit to the Tigris spring, vividly describes the memorial site as "the place where the waters gush." When creating such an image, the king evokes not only the great power and abundance of waters, but also his own perseverance and strength. The king, a powerful military leader, places his image where the river begins, likening himself in the process to the source of Assyrian abundance. It was the moment when the king's central role in Assyria's growth and prosperity literally transformed a landscape into the land called Assyria (Shafer, 2007, p. 145). Long after Salmanassar III, we see this 9th-century BCE tradition revived during the reign of Sennacherib, who created his own version of the same phenomenon in the place of Khinnis. For this reason, the reliefs point to a new kind of water "source" that is the creation of the king himself.

Power has the opportunity to demonstrate the truth of self-assertion by performing various rituals at regular intervals. In these representations, in which the king plays the leading role, there is a political and cosmic drama (Balandier, 2021, p. 72). In these landscapes we can see that in the creation of Assyrian spatiality, the artist satisfactorily creates what he is trying to depict. Sumerian artists focused on a very abbreviated form of action, while Assyrian artists generally adopted a broader framework, avoiding depictions of close events. In the creation of complex compositions, the framing rules reach such a dimension that in these plots, the artists of the Sargonian II period depict the answer to the "what" action, and the artists of the Sennacherib period depict the answer to the "how" action. However, since the real perception of the subject has changed, it is instead represented not what the person sees, but what he thinks about the field. By doing this, the artist brings temporality to the reliefs on two levels. Action and its consequences: the depiction of the "now" and "then" (Gillmann, 2015, p. 269-271).

Art historical approaches that focus on stylistic and iconographic aspects have been the basis for pictorially defining rock reliefs, the chaotic heterogeneity of monuments with their widespread visual structures (Harmanşah, 2019, p. 488). As Balandier notes (Balandier, 2021, p. 10, 12) all reigns remark a space, a site, a public space. In line with the needs of the economic and social relations they preserve, they also arrange, modify and organize this space in order not to be abandoned to oblivion and to create conditions that will enable them to be remembered in the future. At the heart of the illusions produced by power is the ability to avoid the attacks of time. Since it wants to appear as inevitable as natural necessities and to be an element of continuity, it erects evidence of its own permanence before passing generations and dying people—subjects. Therefore, political power wants to express itself through creations that show their character and glory in order to be immortalized in a substance that does not disappear. A place and monumental works carry out politics. Thus some spaces express power better than all explanations and impose its sanctity far better than any verbal expression.

Hauser says that monumental works were produced as votive offerings of kings to gods and kings to ensure that they would be remembered for future generations (Hauser, 1973, p. 165). Power makes it present and maintains itself by changing form and meaning, producing images, manipulating symbols and the arrangement of symbols in a ceremonial framework. These procedures are put into effect in varying ways, detachable and attached, in order to present the society and legitimize its governing positions. The collective past, processed in such a way that it becomes a tradition, a custom, thus becomes the source of legitimacy and allows an idealized past to be used in the service of present power. Power, on the other hand,



governs through the staging of a legacy and guarantees its privileges (Balandier, 2021, p. 5). These practices, which represent constituent hierarchies that have become instruments of power (Figures 4-5), make it possible to dramatically reverse historical events, to transfer political and social relations symbolically, and to transform the dominant ideology into spectacle (Balandier, 2021, p. 22).



**Figure 4-5.** General Robert E. Lee and his troops, depicted on horseback accompanied by waving flags and playing bands, set out to join the Civil War. Bronze Balawat Gate detail/Birkleyn relief on a horse of Salmanassar III.

Source: (Todras, 2010, p. 15; Unger, 1913, p. Tafel III).

From an ethnographic point of view, caves and rock shelters are considered symbolic wombs, while the way they are marked is considered to be the process of belonging to a penis. In other words, the fact that the landscapes where people socialized them in the process of marking and mythologizing landscapes here are marked with stone suggests that a group of people were interested not only in the 'present' but also in the 'past' and 'future' (Tacon, 1994, p. 117). Monuments are often shaped as stelae at conquered city gates, in public spaces, and as rock reliefs in symbolically loaded, local areas in the countryside, such as at the Tigris River Source in the Birkleyn Caves, which we will exemplify in detail here (Harmanşah, 2019, p. 497). Thus, the importance of the Upper Tigris Region for the Assyrian kings was important not only for economic gain, but also for its religious and spiritual meaning, which represented the source of the Tigris in Assyrian religious topography (Guarducci & Laneri, 2010, p. 20; Fales, 2017, p. 19). Imaginary productions take shape and gain body in institutions and practices; at the same time, they are manipulated in favor of the social order and power that preserves them. The ceremonial arrangement makes them part of a spectacle in which the strictest ritual and unbridled improvisation can coexist. In this way, the staged procession becomes a sacred and sometimes savage drama in some of its manifestations (Balandier, 2021, p. 36). In this context, the kings of the Middle and Neo Assyrian Periods made some reliefs in the Birkleyn Caves (Tigris Tunnel) at the source of the Tigris (Harmanşah, 2018, p. 267; Düring, 2020, p. 85).

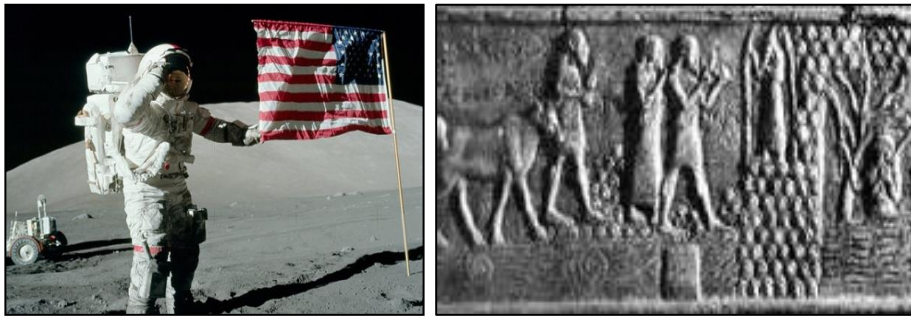
### Analogical Landscapes

R. Ascher, in his work *"Analogy in Archaeological Interpretation"* (Ascher, 1961, p. 319), states that when comparing the societies of the Old and New World, it is possible to reach maximum similarities from minimum similarities in the model in which a large temporal and spatial structure emerges, which he calls the "new analogy", as opposed to the analogy in which historical continuity is assumed and proved in the present. This model provides the theoretical basis for some of the examples we have given here. There is no historical continuity in these examples. The new model of analogy is strikingly compatible with the understanding of comparative history of the French historian and co-founder of the Annales school, March Bloch. Accordingly, comparative studies have been one of the methods used in recent years (Tenu, 2015, p. 82). According to Marc Bloch's understanding of comparative history, the stages of historical development can be determined by examining the similarities and differences between distant and close societies. It has also been mentioned by Liverani that comparing Assyria with today's reality can yield useful results and that these studies can be described as "Ethno-Assyriology" (Liverani, 2016, p. 247). If we approach the subject in this direction, it is possible to make Ethno-Assyriological inferences by establishing the right analogies.

Today, as in the past, there are large state formations that benefit from the political and cultural balance of the former empires. They have now transcended regional power and have become the representatives of the global power of their time thanks to their military technologies. The collapse of the USSR in the 1990s left the United States in an unprecedented position. It became the world's first and at the same time truly global power. Nevertheless, America's global supremacy, though not based on more limited regional activities, is in some ways reminiscent of older empires. These empires based their power on a hierarchy of guided states, subjects, protectorate states, and colonies, and viewed all others as barbarians. To a certain extent, this outdated terminology is not entirely inappropriate for some states in America's orbit. As in the past, the use of America's "imperial" power derives in large part from its superior organization, its ability to rapidly mobilize its vast resources in the field of economics and technology for military purposes, the vague but still distinct cultural appeal of

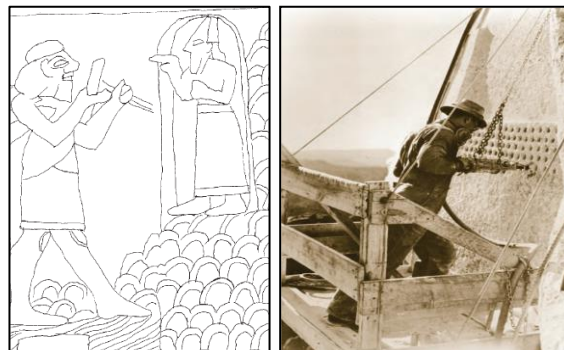
American-style life, the poor dynamism of the American social political elite, and its inherent sense of competition (Brzezinski, 1998, p. 7). In 1969, the Apollo 11 astronauts planted an American flag on the lunar surface as one of their first activities after landing (Figure 6). This behavior and flag has been interpreted as a symbol of territorial assertion and victory set by historical precedent. The depictions in Birkleyn were reworked at the Bronze Balawat Gate and officially manifesto was provided (Harmanşah, 2007, p. 84). The inscriptions that add meaning to the degree and quality of knowledge and contain much more information than the non-verbal material culture and allow us to know about the environment to which we belong are silent monuments that distinguish temporality. Such sacred sites were deliberately chosen, creating a strong link between the written space and the content of the writing (Figure 7).

Kennedy (Kennedy, 2009, p. 194, 277, 611) supports these ideas with maps by identifying striking similarities between the expansionist Britain of the 19th century and the Assyrian Empire in the same direction as R. Bernbeck (Bernbeck, 2010), who presents a number of similarities about the structure of the Assyrian Empire and the United States. Kissinger (Kissinger, 2008, p. 10) likens Assyria's mission to spreading civilization throughout the world in the transformation of chaos into the cosmos to being an illuminating searchlight. Assyria, unlike the United States, faced a sudden destruction because it could not achieve ideological acculturation. The biggest trump card in the hands of the US in this regard is Hollywood cinema. Western culture has succeeded in creating a consumer base of a popular culture dependent on it (Logan, 2002, p. 52). But since we don't see this in Assyria, the applicability of World Systems Theory, by contrast, to Assyria is debatable. For this reason, if we evaluate it in its own periods, we will see that the definition of American admiration is more meaningful than an Assyrian admiration.



**Figure 6-7.** *The planting of the American flag on the moon and the drawing of the relief of the king at Birkleyn, which expresses the symbol of belonging.* Source: (Unger, 1913, p. Tafel III).

The presence of local landscapes with a high concentration in Assyrian visual representations, which have taken place in the pre-modern and non-western orbit of Earth history (Liverani, 2017), has been highly embraced (Jhonson, 2012, p. 271). Visuality activates emotions more easily, strengthening memory more effectively than words. The cultural/collective memory and imagination through which centuries-old landscape landscapes are experienced reflect the subconscious level of Assyrian and perhaps Middle Eastern people (Figure 8). Sometimes, we can also see very obvious parallels between the past and the present in the formation of a common cultural memory. The Mount Rushmore Memorial in the formation of American national identity is an example of this (Figure 9). These faces, which belong to four different American presidents at the Mount Rushmore Memorial in the US state of South Dakota, are George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Theodore Roosevelt and Abraham Lincoln, from left to right, who have become icons for America. The four presidents were elected respectively to represent the birth, growth, development and preservation of the country (Thomas, 2010, p. 5).



**Figure 8-9.** *The production of space at Birkleyn and the construction of the Rushmore Monument.* Source: (Shafer, 2007, p. 157; Thomas, 2010, p. 23).

Over the years, archaeologists have put forward various ideas about why to know about an environment. Such environmental mechanisms, which link environmental knowledge and social practice, in which patterns with natural characteristics are transformed, also meant a lot to the Assyrians. The lived experience we have seen in the depiction of the Balawat Gate (Curtis & Tallis, 2008) mediates the pictorial depiction in the Birkleyn written relief through the discursive way of language. In fact, as a result of the interaction between historically determined structures and conditional processes, the world, which is problematized in these depictions in multidimensional landscapes, is tamed from the Assyrian point of view and the documentation of the formation of legitimate identity is passed on to other generations. This phenomenology is also referred to the future as the origins of the celebration from the past. One of the reasons behind Assyrian imperialism is the desire to interact with geographies that are not its own. But whether the application here can serve practical functions, i.e. whether social structure will serve as a result of social action, is open to debate. In the process of restructuring local settings and creating new landscapes, a holistic link has been created with the fluidity of water, the processing of stone and the domestication of wild geographies. Here, the sounds and textures coming from various senses, as well as the stimuli and emotions they produce in a desired atmosphere are much more important than desired to be realized in experiencing the landscape and providing the formation of mental images (Darvill, 2005, p. 109).

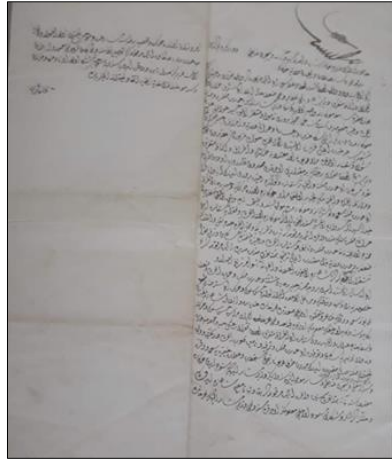
An environment of untouched quality, deliberately selected reliefs are made conscious with discursive rhetoric and mapped in the mind. In the context of the perception of setting the environment and the need for exotic ontologies, the distinction between the Assyrian and the local is deliberately given very drastically. Such monuments, in which nature is spatially experienced as a more decisive force in intersectional landscapes, illuminate the socio-political microcosm and can never be understood as singular, except for reasons of internal dynamical formation. "Environment" usually implies the concepts of "constraints", while "landscape" refers to the concepts of "structures". Therefore, there are implicit hierarchies implied in various concepts. "Space" is a neutral category in archaeology, and as such does not mean any specific meaning. However, the concept of "space" itself is social, since space is distributed among communities that exploit territories or appropriate natural resources. "Nature" is not domesticated and controls humans, "environment" is a contentious area of relationship between man and nature, where human beings are mostly the lower part, and "landscape" refers to the environment that has been culturally conquered by man. The starting point in archaeology is that "monuments take over the importance of important landmarks in the landscape and take control of them". Mankind has built monuments, and therefore natural spaces have meaning in people's minds (Oestigaard, 2004, p. 30).

The ritualistic activities that surround it, including the building of the monument, might be seen as essential to the "construction" of the Assyrian Empire site. Although it is believable that these monuments represent Assyria's geographic imprint in literal terms, there is still more to learn. We may change our attention from the physical description of monuments to a better comprehension of how they were initially perceived if we take the time to examine monument iconography in more depth. In general, we modern viewers overlook to imagine the complete possible range of significance of a monument, especially with regard to its contextual presence, because of the immense distance in time and place that separates us from the ancient world. The surrounding Assyrian structures appear to have more importance in the creation and celebration of power than in the actual physical object itself. Additional iconographic parallels with a number of other Assyrian images offer insight into how the nearby monuments — and maybe as extensions of Assyrian monuments in general — were perceived and experienced (Shafer, 2007, p. 148).

The orientation of the past through monuments has been reshaped by the combination of empiricism. Such monuments, which play an important role in the creation and understanding of their own sociality as spaces of interaction with the past, create a contrast between the different cognitive roles of the mind in their functionality, social content and components. This consists of the totality of practices in the visual cortex that will translate fields of activity into action in terms of how to characterize different worlds. The practices of exchange from such social institutions functionalized the role of people and led to the formation of cultural imagination over time. Far from establishing a social and religious facility in terms of recording the processes experienced, the cultural capital formed in our subconscious makes us question why we need to know this.

In this direction, Asurnasirpal II (882-853 BCE), who started the fashion of changing the capital in the Neo Assyrian Period and received the title of builder king, also gave great importance to the establishment and renewal of the provinces and influenced the formation of the next administrative powers. The human need for agricultural areas belonging to the Ottoman administration policies that prevailed much later in both Assyrian and the same lands (Rosenzweig, 2014, p. 108) corresponds exactly with the record of Asurnasirpal II's expedition of 882 BC with the records of the Ottoman Governor of Diyarbakir in 1795. The Assyrian king's expedition of 882 BC to the Upper Tigris Region (Köroğlu, 2011, p. 13), the provincial center of Tushan (in today's Diyarbakir province) was established (Rosenzweig, 2014, p. 4; Yakar, 2007, p. 403). In the Kurkh Monoliths in Diyarbakir/Üçtepe (Kerh-i Kiki/Kikan), the king records that those who migrated from here due to hunger and famine were resettled in Tushan (RIMA II, 1991, p. 242-243). In a very similar way, Numan Pasha, the Ottoman Governor of Diyarbakir at

the time, records the same sentences in the document containing the decree dated March 19, 1759 that he resettled those who migrated from the region due to hunger and famine (Figure 10). Such royal proclamations not only defend the historical role of the provinces of the empire as an administrative center; it is also important in that it presents a specific worldview of imperial environments (Rosenzweig, 2014, p. 107).



**Figure 10.** Document dated 1759.

Source: (OBD, 2013, p. 203).

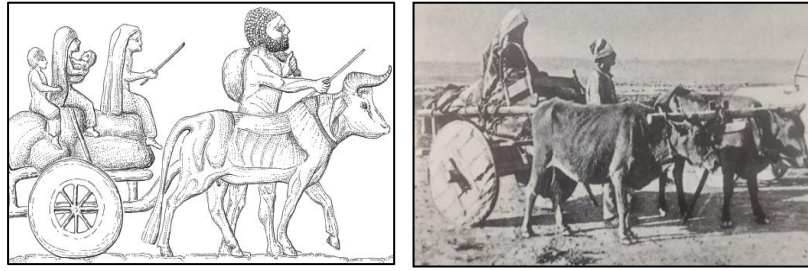
### Result and Discussion

The combination of the global and the local has given rise to a brand-new word, which is what the term "glocal" means. Since 1990, use of the new phrase has gradually expanded across a range of areas and specialties (Roudometof, 2016, p. 1, 48). It is incorrect to think of local and global as binary opposites. The two are interconnected or intertwined. In terms of how the global-local relationship is "reconstructed" over time intervals, globalization takes place in local and concrete forms.

The rock reliefs, which were created in accordance with the rules of the local source but which had reached the global dimensions of their own periods, made the kings independent of the conditions specific to their own times and made them a living being in every period as if defying time and made them a symbol of truth in an infinite perception. What is most important here is not the specific details, interpretations, and meanings that contemporary people have about the landscape, signs, or the past (Tacon, 1994, p. 127), but rather the processes and forms of landscape marking behavior that people have or continue to practice. Because by identifying these processes, we can better understand how landscapes around the world are marked and socialized and some of the reasons why. Much of this concerns the expressions of time, space, human experience, and cultural identity, which are the building blocks of all human cultures, past and present.

If we were to combine and evaluate the material elements in the areas where the Assyrian presence is seen in the north and west, the question we would ask is: Can we think in the context of an Assyrian pattern in places where the Assyrian presence is seen? In line with our global knowledge, how will the data so far and what will be found next affect our perspective? We would also like to discuss whether the postcolonial concepts used in the Assyrian ontology of existence, such as "expansion, exploitation, interest/s", which have found a place in modern literature, are correct for that period. Contrary to the common belief put forward by Liverani on this subject, the "obsidional complex", which is not cause-oriented but result-oriented (Liverani, 2014, p. 358), can explain this situation very well. Here, Liverani considers the Assyrian presence in different geographies as a consequence rather than a spread and states that in this structure where the borders of the state are ideologically cognitive, the transfer of the commodity is provided by a network of communication corridors. He calls this model the "empire of networks" that has become the global structure of his era.

For the first time in this study, will the existence and management system of Assyria in the direction of the "obsidional complex", which is the model we will use to determine the operational theory required for archaeological interpretation, be shaped according to our decision, or will we decide according to the shape taken by Assyria? Was the region shaped according to Assyria, or was Assyria shaped according to the region? If our point of view is to influence this, then our role will shift from the status of purely observing the excavation data to the status of a participant, and subjectively our decisions will influence this. As a matter of fact, the tendency to generalize the Nineveh history, which has global effects, to the spreading local areas has caused the excavators who excavated in geographies far from the Assyrian core to ignore or recognize the indigenous and different cultures (Figures 11-12) and to report that excavations were still needed despite significant excavations.



**Figure 11-12.** *The Sennacherib Period and Diyarbakır 1904.*

Source: (Düring, 2018; MŞK Archive, 1999).

In this regard, according to the "Schrödinger's Cat Thought Experiment" proposed by Erwin Schrödinger in 1935 to the Uncertainty Principle in quantum mechanics put forward by Werner Heisenberg in 1927, which was designed to move quantum mechanics from the microscopic world to the macroscopic world, the momentum (velocity) and position of a particle cannot be measured simultaneously with complete accuracy. Accordingly, the more we know one of them, the more obscure the other becomes. In this theory, where we cannot observe anything as it really is, and we change everything we observe, the more you try to make a thing certain, the more ambiguous it becomes. What we already know about Assyria brings with it a dialectical problematic of how we should understand Assyrian existence in the relevant places, including the global complexity and entanglement that takes hold in the minds of whether Assyria is a cause or an effect. Is material culture potentially active in a social sphere? In this perspective, do objects and material culture interfere with human actions?

**Hakem Değerlendirmesi:** *Dış bağımsız.*

**Çıkar Çatışması:** *Yazar, çıkar çatışması olmadığını beyan etmiştir.*

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