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978-1-107-13465-2 - Water Histories and Spatial Archaeology: Ancient Yemen and the American West

Michael J. Harrower

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WATER HISTORIES AND SPATIAL ARCHAEOLOGY

This book offers a new interpretation of the spatial–political–environmental dynamics of water and irrigation in long-term histories of arid regions. It compares ancient Southwest Arabia (3500 BC–AD 600) with the American West (2000 BC–AD 1950) in global context to illustrate similarities and differences among environmental, cultural, political, and religious dynamics of water. It combines archaeological exploration and field studies of farming in Yemen with social theory and spatial technologies, including satellite imagery, Global Positioning System (GPS), and Geographic Information Systems (GIS) mapping. In both ancient Yemen and the American West, agricultural production focused not where rain-fed agriculture was possible, but in hyper-arid areas where massive state-constructed irrigation schemes politically and ideologically validated state sovereignty. While shaped by profound differences and contingencies, ancient Yemen and the American West are mutually informative in clarifying human geographies of water that are important to understandings of America, Arabia, and contemporary conflicts between civilizations deemed East and West.

Michael J. Harrower is Assistant Professor of Archaeology in the Department of Near Eastern Studies, Johns Hopkins University and has over fifteen years of archaeological experience exploring the remote desert-highlands of Ethiopia, Jordan, Yemen, and Oman. He is a leading expert in spatial technologies, and is co-editor, with Douglas C. Comer, of *Mapping Archaeological Landscapes from Space* (2013).

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Water Histories and Spatial Archaeology

Ancient Yemen and the American West

MICHAEL J. HARROWER

Johns Hopkins University



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Acknowledgments

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