



ABSTRACT SUBMISSION

Embodiment of human sacrifice in the Ancient Near East: a case study on the 'Royal tomb' at Arslantepe

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Abstract

Sacrifice is integral to the study of human behaviour and ritual theory as a means of social construction; however, the sacrificial body has largely been ignored. This research will examine the role of the body in human sacrificial rituals in the Ancient Near East, particularly the 'Royal Tomb' at Arslantepe, using embodiment theory. Embodiment recentres the materiality of the sacrifice through the body, while alive and after death. This has become an important perspective when it comes to concepts of the body and constitutions of personhood that are in constant renegotiation and sacrificial context are prime arenas for this. This research will emphasise the significance of the individual's embodiment and how the ritual changed the body in the process. Results from the application of embodiment on data from osteology and material culture from within sacrificial contexts will show how concepts of the body inform and are manipulated by sacrificial rituals. The project aims to fill the gap of the previous academic work and provide a data set in which embodiment can be applied to 4th to 3rd millennium Near Eastern contexts to illuminate variations in the practice and attitudes to the body.

Keywords

Sacrifice, Mortuary, Embodiment, Materiality, Ritual

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