

Reinterpreting the DEQ Tattoo in the Context of the Body, Identity, and Cultural Memory: An Interdisciplinary Review

İbrahim Mavi |  0000-0002-8268-6899 | ✉ ibrahimmavi01@gmail.com

Independent Researcher, İzmir, Türkiye

Abstract

This study aims to examine Deq, a traditional tattooing practice originating in Mesopotamia, from an interdisciplinary perspective focusing on the body, identity, and cultural memory. The research was conducted as a narrative review, with books, journal articles, postgraduate theses, and other academic publications from the Turkish and international literature analyzed using document analysis method. The study demonstrates that Deq is not merely an aesthetic body adornment practice but also an element of cultural heritage that embodies multiple layers of meaning, including belonging, identity, protection, fertility, and cultural transmission. The theoretical framework draws on Michel Foucault's approach to the body and power, Pierre Bourdieu's concepts of habitus and social capital, Maurice Halbwachs' theory of collective memory, Clifford Geertz's approach to cultural interpretation, and Edward Said's critique of Orientalism. The findings show that Deq is a symbolic practice through which not only individual identity but also collective memory, social belonging, and gender norms are made visible through the body. Furthermore, it has been determined that studies on deq in Turkey have largely been concentrated in the fields of folklore, anthropology, and sociology of religion, while interdisciplinary research integrating the sociology of the body, cultural memory, and identity theories remains limited. Consequently, the study emphasizes the need to reassess deq as a living element of cultural heritage from a multidimensional perspective.

Keywords

Deq, Sociology of the Body, Cultural Memory, Identity, Gender

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