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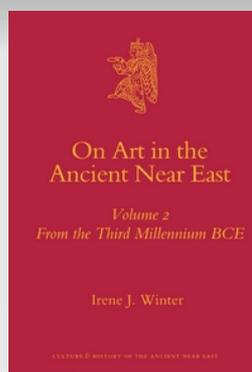
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The Eyes Have It: Votive Statuary, Gilgamesh'S Axe, And Cathected Viewing In T



Author: [I.J. Winter](#)

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Overview

Chapter Summary

The enlarged, staring eyes of Mesopotamian votive statues have often been remarked upon as a characteristic style, particularly in poetic literature, we are given a glimpse of visual experience through direct speech. In an early section of the Gilgamesh epic dated to the Old Babylonian period, for example, one is able to step outside of the official corpus of inscriptions. Using the literary device of direct speech, Gilgamesh relates a dream to his mother, describing his vision of an unusual appearance. The relationship between being on view and appreciative visual assessment is well established and imputed to deities in the literature. The chapter cites a Babylonian text in which people, once having seen god's lot, that is, they focused upon the god himself, as well as cathecting to the image.

Keywords: cathected viewing; Gilgamesh's axe; Mesopotamian votive statues; staring eyes



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