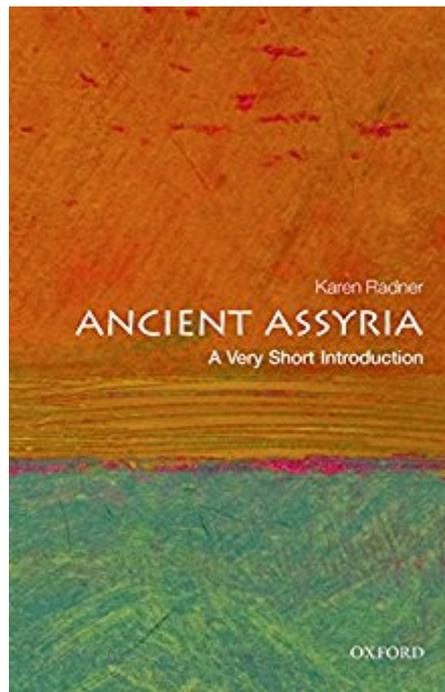


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Ancient Assyria: A Very Short Introduction (Very Short Introductions)



Synopsis

Assyria was one of the most influential kingdoms of the Ancient Near East. In this Very Short Introduction, Karen Radner sketches the history of Assyria from city state to empire, from the early 2nd millennium BC to the end of the 7th century BC. Since the archaeological rediscovery of Assyria in the mid-19th century, its cities have been excavated extensively in Iraq, Syria, Turkey and Israel, with further sites in Iran, Lebanon, and Jordan providing important information. The Assyrian Empire was one of the most geographically vast, socially diverse, multicultural, and multi-ethnic states of the early first millennium BC. Using archaeological records, Radner provides insights into the lives of the inhabitants of the kingdom, highlighting the diversity of human experiences in the Assyrian Empire. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

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Customer Reviews

Years ago I somehow acquired the idea that the Assyrians were a fierce and brutal warrior society whose military had conquered much of the ancient Near East that lay between the kingdoms of Ur and the mighty Hittite Empire of Anatolia. This idea was reinforced when I visited such museums as the Walters Art Museum in Baltimore, Maryland, the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, the Oriental Institute in Chicago and the British Museum in London and viewed the awesome reliefs and monumental winged Lammasu, an Assyrian protective deity usually depicted with the body of a lion or ox, the head of a human and the wings of a raptor, that once adorned the palaces of Assyrian kings like Ashurnasirpal II. Recently, though, Oxford Press sent me a review copy of a small book by Karen Radner entitled "Ancient Assyria: A Very Short Introduction" and I finally had a chance to explore this culture in greater depth. What I discovered was the Assyrians had a very sophisticated culture, enjoying fine wines, a fresh water supply, indoor toilets and a well-functioning sewage system. Sounds rather Roman doesn't it? But the Assyrian culture was founded in the 3rd millennium BCE although it didn't reach its apex until the 1st millennium BCE. I learned the Assyrians enacted consumer protection for the buyers of their goods and even offered extended warranties although we usually don't think of these extending to the sales of human beings (slave sales were subject to a 100-day guarantee against epilepsy and mental instability!) They were rather protective of some of their inventions, though. Assyrians invented the foldable parasol but its use was restricted to royalty on pain of death!

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