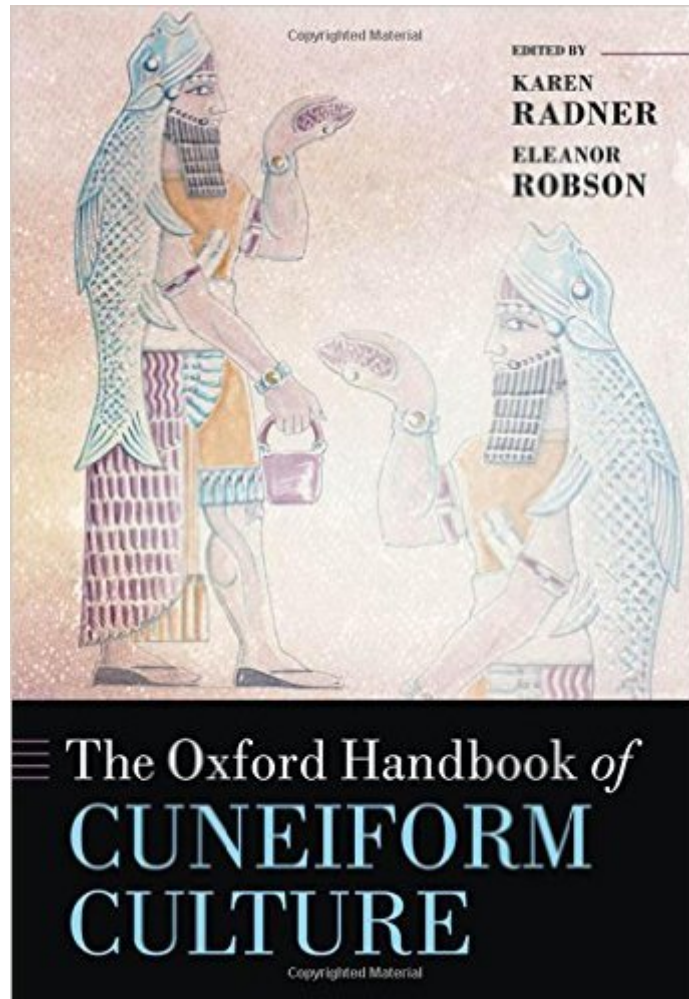


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# The Oxford Handbook Of Cuneiform Culture (Oxford Handbooks)



## Synopsis

The cuneiform script, the writing system of ancient Mesopotamia, was witness to one of the world's oldest literate cultures. For over three millennia, it was the vehicle of communication from (at its greatest extent) Iran to the Mediterranean, Anatolia to Egypt. The Oxford Handbook of Cuneiform Culture examines the Ancient Middle East through the lens of cuneiform writing. The contributors, a mix of scholars from across the disciplines, explore, define, and to some extent look beyond the boundaries of the written word, using Mesopotamia's clay tablets and stone inscriptions not just as 'texts' but also as material artefacts that offer much additional information about their creators, readers, users and owners.

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## Customer Reviews

I'm no where near having read this. I'm just a handful of chapters in. At best I have flipped through it and looked at all the pictures and read all the major headings. This is a collecting of what appear to be somewhat authoritative papers on various aspects of ancient life in cuneiform society. The cuneiform writing that the papers are based on is what groups them all together. What that means is that this is the best book I've read on what life in Mesopotamia was like. And not just overall, but in specific to each topic as well. Before this book, I thought I had a basic understanding of the sexigesimal numbering system they used. Unfortunately, cuneiform covers millenia of use across many languages and vast amounts of open land. The theory and knowledge of the school setting contrast with the reality of uneducated people spread across a vast land that carries clay letters on

the backs of men. Values drift across geography, and they drift across time. Different cultures use the writing differently. It makes it difficult to believe that anyone has ever actually deciphered any of these things. And now I know that I don't understand any of it at all, and I need to start over and try again. I presume, from having paged through it, that the majority of the book I haven't read will be just as amazing as the small part I have. And the English language of the book is impressive too. Popular culture aims low when it comes to writing. Newspapers, magazines, and even books, slide along the gutter of literacy afraid to peek their head up too high lest they alienate someone who encounters a word they've never heard before. No danger of that in this book. They do a good job of defining the meaning of all the ancient words, but the authors all have good vocabularies, so an English dictionary is a helpful addition to this book. And I think that is a good thing. Words are important. The more of them you know, the better of a person you are.

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