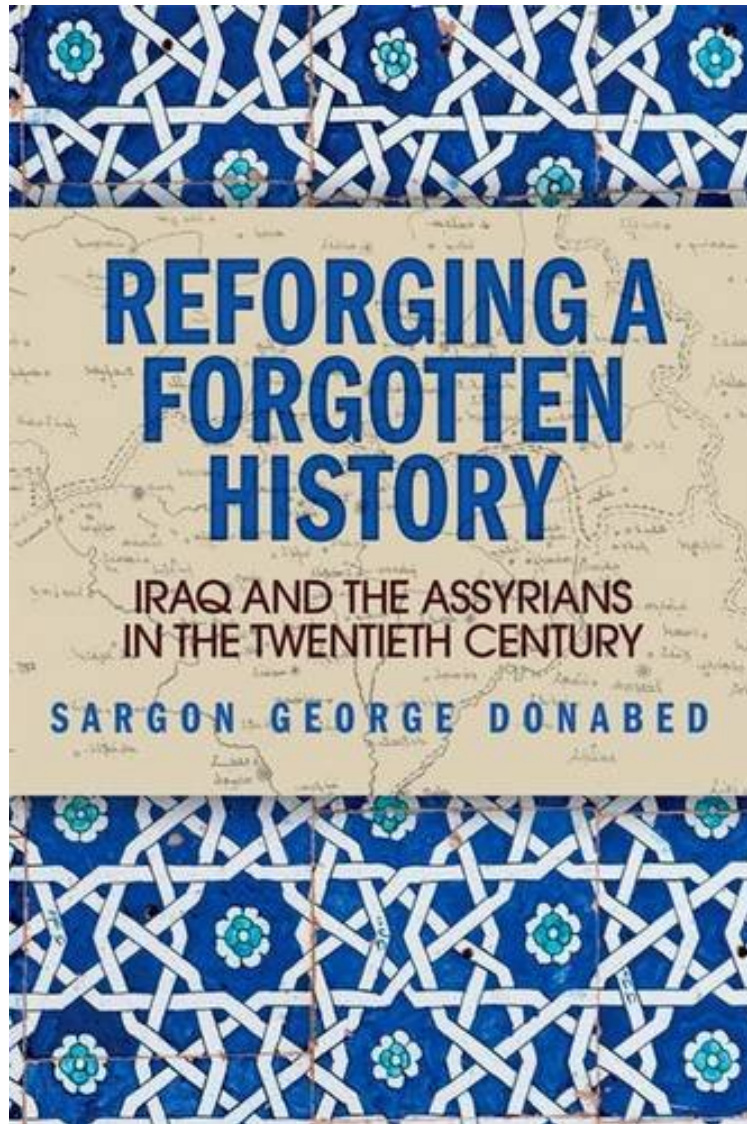


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Reforging a Forgotten History: Iraq and the Assyrians in the Twentieth Century

Sargon Donabed

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Assyrians in the 20th century, multidisciplinary accomplishment which encompasses elements of philosophy and psychology as well as basic information with regard to several genocides of this little-known minority. It emphasizes the lack of attention given to the people of this minority, the indigenous people of Iraq, as well as their many struggles. The information with regard to villages, families, and cultural institutions which are damaged or completely eliminated by deliberate attempts at genocide is extremely detailed, including numbers of victims as well as an appendix listing many villages, and helps delineate the reasons for the worldwide diaspora of the members of this group. This book is also important in that it illustrates the wide-ranging ways in which any fascist/nationalist government attempts to eliminate an ethnic group, particularly ones which are minorities, including physical (through genocide) and cultural means as well as by forcing assimilation into the dominant group through threats, both implicit and explicit. It underlines that some governments commit violence in a variety of ways, including approaches which may not typically be considered violence in the narrow sense of the word; for example, by utilizing propaganda (which creates truth out of lies--AKA, alternative facts) and by damaging meaning. By emphasizing the process of otherisation which creates the backdrop for imagining the inferior minority, Donabed points out that the plight of the Assyrians in the 20th century is similar in that regard to the offenses committed against other minorities, and that the repeated genocide episodes deserve, at the very least, attention to the issue which has been, by and large, sorely lacking. Far from being nationalistic---at least in the context of promoting a superior, homogenous, and exclusive group this book proactively encourages inclusivity. The conclusion urges a new way of looking at the world and peoples such that inclusivity is promoted; in some areas of the book, even animals and the environment are considered in the context of belonging. As such, he proposes a new way of looking at the world and all peoples. True to the spirit of Roger Williams, the name of the university at which he teaches, Dr. Donabed promotes individual thought and inclusivity and applies it, in great and effective measure, specifically to the minority population of Assyrians and generally to all. Very highly recommended!

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By Customer A great read, very informative on the often ignored plight of Assyrians in Iraq. The book has many eyewitness accounts on events like the Simele massacre in 1933 and the Anfal campaign that took place in the late 1980s, and other events in between.

Were they simply bystanders, victims of collateral damage who played a passive role in its history? Furthermore, how have they negotiated their position throughout various periods of Iraq's state-building processes? This book details a narrative of Iraq in the twentieth century and refashions the Assyrian experience as an integral part of Iraq's broader contemporary historiography. It is the first comprehensive account to contextualize a native experience alongside the emerging state. Using primary and secondary data, this book offers a nuanced exploration of the dynamics that have affected and determined the trajectory of the Assyrians' experience in twentieth-century Iraq.

"Sargon Donabed provides a comprehensive overview of the modern Assyrian story, merging emic and etic perspectives of their struggle to attain sovereignty over the past century and beyond. His work offers both an informative source for Assyrian ethnic history and an alternative reading for Mesopotamian regional history as a whole." -- Nabil Al-Tikriti, University of Mary Washington

"In telling the story of modern Assyrian responses to a history of tragedy, Sargon Donabed helps us understand them as actors in their own right. He thereby rewrites Iraqi history from the perspective of the oppressed. No longer may we ignore the plight of this misunderstood minority." -- Paul S. Rowe, Trinity Western University

About the Author Sargon George Donabed is Assistant Professor of History at the Department of History and American Studies at Roger Williams University in Bristol, Rhode Island. He is co-editor of *The Assyrian Heritage: Threads of Continuity and Influence* (Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis, 2012), *Religion and the State: Europe and North America in the 17th and 18th centuries* (Lexington Books, 2012) and *The Assyrians of Eastern Massachusetts* (Arcadia Publishing, 2006).