

## A study on the Assyrian Costume

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### Abstract

The Assyrians usually wore two types – the tunic and the shawl. These two types were worn alone, or in combination and changes were introduced by varying the proportions of the tunic or shawl.

The tunic appeared to be of the sleeves are short and reaching to the ankles or shortened to knee length according to the rank. Assyrian shawl pattern can be divided into five distinct styles. Many of the styles were suitable for costumes to wear in religious plays and pageants. Fringed shawls were the trademark of formal Assyrian costume. The usual badge of rank was a long fringed shawl. Intermediate rank wore shawl with short fringes and lower grade wore no shawl at all. The military costume was comparative uniformity : conical helmets was regarded as Scythic in character, short, fringed tunics, wide belts or helmet, round caps and long tunics covered in metal scales, belted at the waist.

Assyrian woman costume was the long tunic with fringed hem and a long fringed shawl or was a plaid tunic and wide belt over it.

They wore gold crown and horned Cap and tiara, ugal (head-dress) and the most ordinary earrings were the drop and the cross shape and necklace was made of the coloured stones and bracelets ended with heads of animal was regarded as Scythic style or adorned with a rosette at the centre.

**Key Words** : Assyrian, shawl, tunic, tassel, tiara

### I. introduction

The Assyrian Empire began its career of conquest c. 1100 B.C. and the characteristic costume seems to have reached its full development by that date, also the style survived practically unchanged until the overthrow of the Assyrians by the Medes and Persians.<sup>1)</sup>

We must notice that the Assyrian industry and arts were affected by the general status of the Assyrian empire at any given time; as a rule, they progressed in a parallel manner to the political and economical development of the society. It is important to know that arts served the official needs of the Assyrian empire more than anything else. Excluding some minor arts, in general they were not at service of the

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individuals or the society. The rest were linked directly or indirectly to the royal palace or the temple, particularly costumes and related items, major or minor. The elaborate study of the costume and their accessories provides the scholars with a clear idea about the human daily life at any given moment in history. The study of the Assyrian costumes is no exception. The Assyrian murals and sculptures from the referenced period provided detailed accounts of the social life in the Assyrian society then.<sup>2)</sup>

Simplicity was always resorted to in depicting fashion details, so that we tend to believe that the original costumes were more complex than displayed by the sculptor. It is difficult to know with exactitude what articles of clothing were worn in addition to outer garments—particularly those, which covered the shoulders, the limbs and the breast. Another feature overlooked by the Assyrian artist was the depiction of folds on dress. But there is no doubt that the Assyrian costumes represent a development from those of Babylonia.<sup>3)</sup>

The purpose of this study is reviewing and researching the symbolic meaning and classifying the types of the style of the Assyrian Costume.

The method of this study is deals with the characteristics of Assyrian Costume and divided into the types according to the antique records and murals, reliefs, sculptures and tomb bequests.

## **II. Historical background of Assyrian Costume**

Assyria was a civilization centered on the Upper Tigris river, in Mesopotamia (Iraq), that came to rule regional empires a number of

times in history. It was named for its original capital, the ancient city of Assur. The term Assyria can also refer to the geographic region or heartland where these empires were centered. The Assyrian conquerors invented a new policy towards the conquered: in order to prevent nationalist revolts by the conquered people, the Assyrians would force the people they conquered to migrate in large numbers to other areas of the empire. Besides guaranteeing the security of an empire built off of conquered people of different cultures and languages, these mass deportations of the populations in the Middle East, Mesopotamia, and Armenia, turned the region into a melting pot of diverse cultures, religions, and languages. Whereas there would be little cultural contact between the conquered and the conquerors in early Mesopotamian history, under the Assyrians the entire area became a vast experiment in cultural mixing.<sup>4)</sup>

The Assyrians must have had great organizational ability to have raised, equipped, and maintained such large and efficient military and governing forces. They left remains of vast building projects at Nimrud (Ashurnasirpal II, 883–859 B.C.), Khorsobad (Sargon II, 722–705 B.C.) and Nineveh (Sennacherib, 705–681 B.C. and Ashurbanipal, 668–625 B.C.), whence came the sculptures which are our chief source of information about what they wore.<sup>5)</sup>

The characteristic Assyrian art form was narrative relief sculpture. Unlike the other southern Mesopotamian peoples, the Assyrians had access to large quantities of stone, and their many carved reliefs have consequently survived well. These shallow carvings were used to decorate palaces, for example, the Palace of Ashurbanipal (7th century B.C.). Its finely carved reliefs include dramatic scenes of a lion hunt,

now in the British Museum, London. Winged bulls with human faces, carved partially in the round, stood as sentinels at the royal gateways (Louvre, Paris). Many of the artistic wall reliefs found by archaeologists show the king offering animals as sacrifices to Nergal, the sun God. This Mesopotamian god ruled the underworld and was known as the deity of war and pestilence.<sup>6)</sup>

The palace was excavated by A.H. Layard (1846–51) and by many later archaeologists. Stone panel was one of a group found, out of position, somewhere between the palace of King Sennacherib (reigned 704–681 B.C.) and the Temple of Ishtar, the principal goddess of Nineveh. The panels may have lined a bridge or corridor used by the king when visiting the temple.

The scene shows the king and his entourage in formal court dress. The two figures on this panel formed part of the king's bodyguard. The archer on the left is one of the lightly-armed soldiers who were probably drawn from the Aramaic-speaking communities in and around the Assyrian heartland, which the Assyrians had conquered. The Assyrians incorporated soldiers from all parts of the empire into their forces. The spear-man on the right wears a turban fastened by a headband with long ear-flaps, and a short kilt curving upwards above his knees. His clothing tells us that he comes from around Palestine.<sup>7)</sup>

The relief, carved on alabaster, was one of a pair which guarded an entrance into the private apartments of Ashurnasirpal II, at his palace in Kalhu, the capital of Assyria. The protection of the entrance to a building using magic was a long-standing tradition in Mesopotamia. Images of supernatural creatures were sometimes buried under doorways or set up at the entrances of

palaces and temples. Their magical strength was intended to frighten away evil demons. The figure of a man with wings may be the supernatural creature called an apkallu in cuneiform texts. He wears a tasseled kilt and a fringed and embroidered robe. His curled moustache, long hair and beard are typical of figures of this date. Across the body runs Ashurnasirpal's 'Standard Inscription', which records some of the king's titles and achievements and is repeated on many of his stone reliefs. The inscription was cut after the figure was carved, as some of the details of decoration on the dress have been chiselled through.<sup>8)</sup>

The Royal Tombs of Nimrud were first discovered in April of 1989 by an expedition of the Iraqi Department of Antiquities and Heritage. The Tomb was located in the North-West Palace of the Ancient city of Kalkhu (modern city of Nimrud). The city of Kalkhu was a capital of the Assyrian Empire for over 150 years until King Sargon moved the capital to Dur-Sharukin (modern Khorshabad) in 717 B.C. The city is located 4 miles south-west of the Christian monastery of Mar Behnam. The first dig of this ancient site was conducted by a British mission over 150 years ago which uncovered many reliefs. Many Ancient Assyrian Tombs have been found in the past, however the goods had all been plundered and stolen. Two remaining tombs exist: one in Berlin and one in its original location in the city of Ashur. The sarcophagus in the tomb chamber contained hundreds of items including jewelry, vessels, ornaments, seals and other goods.<sup>9)</sup>

### III. The style of the Assyrian Costume

Both men and women wore the same costume, but with variations. They, too, used embroidery, which became known as “Babylonian work.” These were brilliantly colored fabrics: royalty trimmed their garments with gold.<sup>10)</sup>

The usual badge of rank worn by all higher Court and State officials was a long fringed shawl or shoulder shawl, the ends of which were wound round the person. While rank was sometimes indicated by the amount of trimming on the full-length skirt, it was still more clearly shown by the shawl. The richness of the material and the length (as well, perhaps, as the colour of the fringes and the manner in which the shawl was worn—plain or crossed) indicated the station of the wearer. For example a shawl with long fringes worn crossed over the breast was the distinctive mark of the prime minister, or vizer. A double shawl with equally long fringes worn crossed indicated the master of ceremonies. The king's own personal attendant wore shawl with short fringes. Officials of still lower grade, like the parasol-bearer, wore no shawl at all.<sup>11)</sup>

The knee-length and full-length tunics with short sleeves are the commonest dresses worn to different types of headdress. There were only two types of garment generally found in the representations of ancient Assyrian costume: there were the shawl and tunic vary in size and proportion, and are worn either alone, but more generally in combination. The earliest type of costume is a rather elaborate shawl drapery worn without any tunic underneath. Later comes the tunic with various-fringed shawl draperies worn in addition, and some of the latest types

have the tunic worn alone without the shawl draperies.

The most common material for clothing was wool, although linen had been known from an early period and was often used for better-quality garments. Cotton did not become available until Sennacherib introduced it into Assyria in about 700 BC, from which time it was used for the making of cloth. Other materials sometimes used were leather and papyrus. The skins and furs of animals and metal were also in use, but chiefly for military and hunting costume.<sup>12)</sup>

Their sandals had a sole of leather with heel straps or a heel cap, a ring for the large toe and laces tied around the ankle. Soldier wore a buskin knee-high of leather laced from toe to knee. Umbrellas were used as a protection against the sun, but were permitted only to persons of rank, the same being true of fans. Both were carried by bearers.<sup>13)</sup>

#### 1. Men's costume

The representations of costume which Assyrian art has left us are almost entirely those of men's costume. The kings are shown wearing tunics and shawls completely covered with pattern, which many have been tapestry-woven or embroidered. Assyrian court costume was passed through the belt with its daggers.<sup>14)</sup>

The King's hair was adorned with gold threads, no doubt arranged in a sort of net. Carefully groomed masses of curled hair and beards give the Assyrians a heavy hirsute look. The men wore their hair and beards long, done in carefully arranged tight corkscrew mirk and are known to have powdered their hair with gold dust.<sup>15)</sup>

1) Tunic

The tunic appears to be of kimono cut; the sleeves are short and the body of the garment is tubular, reaching to the ankles among the upper class but shortened to knee length for active military duty, hunting, and day labor.<sup>16)</sup>

The tunic is typical of Assyrian clothing of the ninth century B.C. and is quite similar to the foundation Egyptian tunic. The national dress both in Assyria was a tunic with short, tight sleeves, cut very like the Egyptian kalasiris— The length varied. This was the sole garment of the lower orders for both sexes. Some wore it with and some without a girdle. Even during the time when the national prosperity was at its height the slaves of the nobles had no other dress than this, and, in their case, it was only long enough to reach to the knee.<sup>17)</sup>

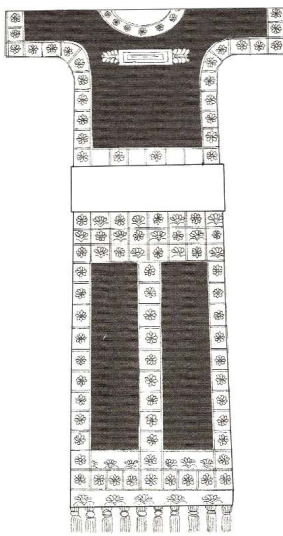
Men of the higher orders also wore this short-sleeved tunic, but with them it reached to the feet. Most of them wore girdles trimmed

with tassels, and, in keeping with the dignity of the wearers, the garments themselves were trimmed and embroidered more or less elaborately.<sup>18)</sup>

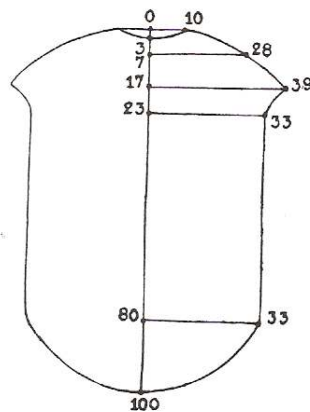
This richly embroidered tunic<Fig. 1><sup>19)</sup> is one royal Assyrian might have worn. The hem has a decorative fringe and the tunic would have been pulled in at the waist with a wide and narrow belt. The neck opening is a slit but the neckline also has buttons on the shoulder line.

Even the monarch wore tunic, and, in addition to it, on ceremonial occasions he put on tunic style cloak, whose shape and trimming underwent many changes as time went on.

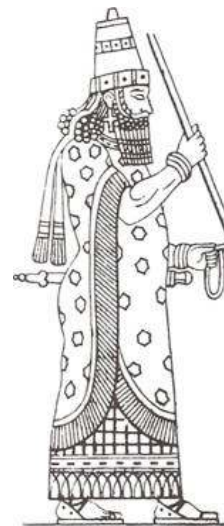
In its earliest form this garment resembled the shoulder-cape that was from primitive times worn by the nobles of the various peoples. It consisted of a large, oblong piece of material of varying colour and pattern. This was either drawn forward under one arm and fastened on the other shoulder with an clasp, or openings were made in it for the head and one arm, and



<Fig. 1> tunic  
-Assyrian Costumes and Jewelry, p.52



<Fig. 2> tunic style cloak  
-A History of Costume, p.70



<Fig. 3> tunic and tunic style cloak  
-A History of costume, p.71

it hung over both shoulders, being open of course on one side.

As time went on these tunic style cloak became richer and more elaborate. The edges were trimmed with fringes and tassels. But the only change of cut was that the shoulder parts were lengthened so as to reach the middle of the upper arm. To allow this to be done the garment was made in two pieces and sewn together at the top, a hole being left for the head <Fig. 2>. Both sides were now left open, instead of being open only at the armhole, and the front and back pieces were held together with tapes sewn for this purpose to the inside of the garment<Fig. 3>.<sup>20)</sup>

## 2) Shawl

Fringed shawls or yardage of fringe used as girdles or insignia of office are the trademark of formal Assyrian costume. Elaborately mounted tassels hang from corners of shawls and baldrics (shoulder straps from which swords were suspended).<sup>21)</sup>

Assyrian Shawl pattern consisted of five styles. Many of the styles are suitable for costumes to wear in religious plays and pageants.

### (1) Style A

The second Assyrian costume is that of the type worn by an attendant to a king such as King Assurnasirpal <Fig. 4>. The Assyrian costume consists of a simple to the knee tunic with sleeves. The outfit is made complete with 2 decorative shawls wrapped into position over the tunic. Begin with point *a* of the Small Shawl(20"X 40")<Fig. 5><sup>22)</sup> placed on the right hip. Use edge *a* to *b* of the shawl and wrap it around the abdomen front toward the left side and fully around the waist.

The excess fabric created in the Small Shawl by *b-e-f* can be tucked in at the waistline. This is all covered by a wide leather belt, which is held in position by a narrow leather contrast belt.

Then tuck end *b* of the Large Shawl( 40" X 60")<Fig. 6> into the narrow belt on the left side of the waist. The edge *a* to *b* of the large shawl is passed around the back towards the right side of the waist, upwards towards the chest. It then hangs down the back over the shoulder. This completes the drapery of the costume.<sup>23)</sup>

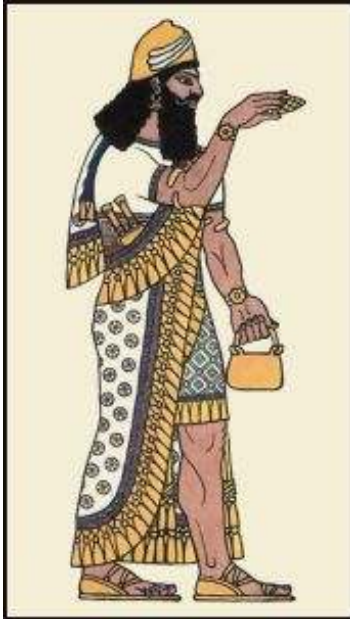
### (2) Style B

<Fig. 7> is another representation of the Assyrian King Assurnasirpal. Over the long tunic above right, the king would have worn a shawl drapery. The shawl would have measured 72" X 90"<Fig. 8>.<sup>24)</sup>

To drape this shawl, line *e* to *f* would have been folded over so that *a* to *b* hangs on the outside of the body. The cord was attached just at *e* to *g*.

Then hold *g* at the right side of the waist in front<Fig. 10>, throwing the rest of the shawl backwards over the right shoulder. Edge *e* to *f* was then drawn around the back of the neck and formed a sling over the left arm. To finish draping, the edge *e* to *f* was passed around the waist towards the right, under the right elbow, then on around the back until it reached about 6 inches in front of the left side waist. The remainder of the fabric swathe was folded underneath as seen in the drawing. Finally *a* cord was tied around the waist to keep the draped shawl firmly in position.

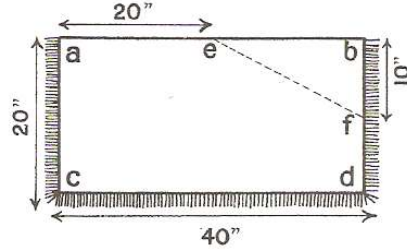
If cord *e* to *g* is pulled down so that *e* touches the waist, then both the shoulders will be covered by the drapery. Model A<Fig. 9> is one method of arranging the shawl as seen at



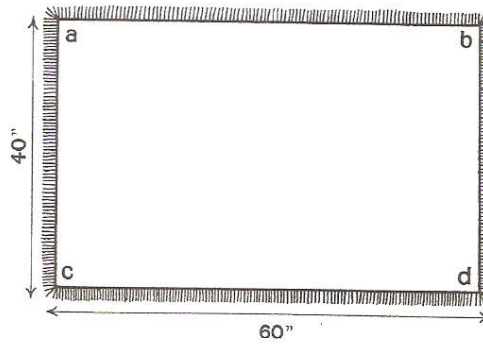
<Fig. 4> King Assurnasirpal  
-<http://www.fashion-era.com>



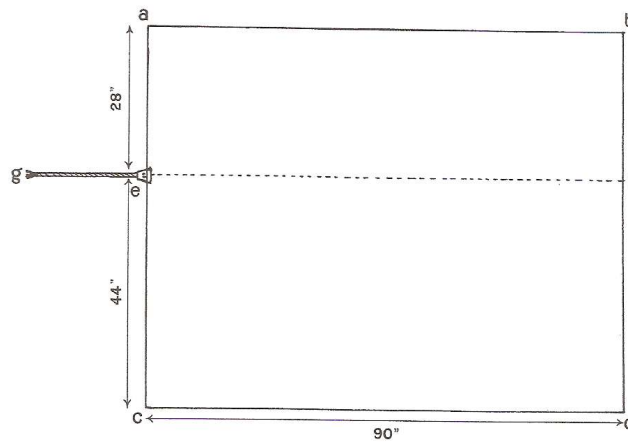
<Fig. 7> King Assurnasirpal  
-<http://www.fashion-era.com>



<Fig 5> Shawl pattern Style A  
-*Ancient Egyptian, Assyrian and Persian Costumes*,  
p.139



<Fig. 6> Shawl pattern Style A'  
-*Ancient Egyptian, Assyrian and Persian Costumes*,  
p.139



<Fig. 8> Shawl pattern Style B  
-*Ancient Egyptian, Assyrian and Persian Costumes*,  
p.137



<Fig. 9> Model A –Ancient Egyptian,  
Assyrian and Persian Costumes, p.137



<Fig. 10> Model B –Ancient Egyptian,  
Assyrian and Persian Costumes, p.137

<Fig. 7>, but the effect can also be achieved without the added waist-cord or small attached cord, *e-g.* To drape as at Model B<Fig. 10>, take the same shawl and make a somewhat deeper fold-over. The point *e* should be pinned or knotted to the waist-cord of tunic. Then, while arranging the remainder of the drapery after previous method, keep rolling it at the waist while it is being adjusted. When worn thus, with a roll of itself; the drapery will remain in position, but it is not quite so secure as when confined with an added waist-cord. On the whole, this drapery with the large shawl or shawls must have been reserved for occasions of ceremony where movement was slow and dignified.<sup>25)</sup>

### (3) Style C

King Ashurbanipal II<Fig. 11><sup>26)</sup> is dressed for religious ceremonies, with the shawl arranged in a special way, fold in two lengthwise, so as to form two tiers of fringes, then wound round the body like a skirt and held on the left shoulder.<sup>27)</sup>

Crook and dagger are symbols of his office. The heavy bracelet is typical of Assyrian jewelry.<sup>28)</sup> The costume pattern is based on a small statue of that King in the British Museum, which uses a simple under tunic plus two shawls—a square shawl and a half circle shawl.

Model C<Fig. 12> looks a little more like the costume plate of King Assurnasirpal. First the wearer must wear a tunic foundation. Next use the Square Shawl.

The square shawl<Fig. 13> must measure 60" by 60" as shown in the diagram. Fold about one third of the square shawl over and outwards. Tie a waist cord on the top of the tunic. Now tuck the corner of the shawl at *f* deeply into the waist cord at the left side. Next draw the folded shawl tightly around the body to the front. Take it around again across the back of the waist until the left side is reached once more. Now double about 6 inches of the square shawl inwards and tuck into the waist cord.

Then use the semi circular shawl<Fig. 14> edge *g* to *h*, and attach the cord at the end, to another waist cord and throw backwards over

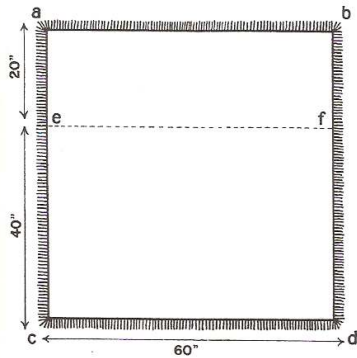




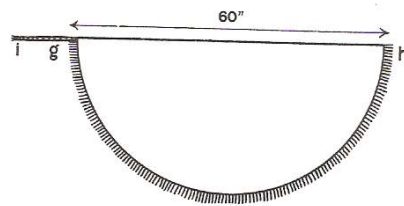
<Fig. 11> King Ashurbanipal II  
-20000 Years of Fashion, p.46



<Fig. 12> Model C -Ancient Egyptian,  
Assyrian and Persian Costumes, p.135



<Fig. 13> Shawl pattern Style C  
-Ancient Egyptian, Assyrian and Persian  
Costumes, p.135

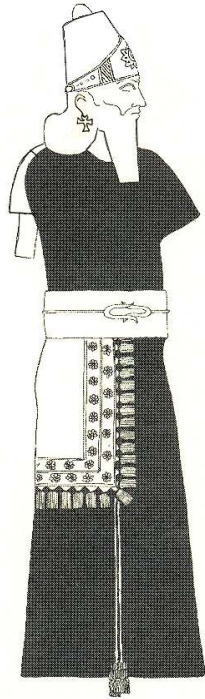


<Fig. 14> Shawl pattern Style C'  
- Ancient Egyptian, Assyrian and Persian  
Costumes, p.135

the right shoulder and arrange it as a sling over the left arm. The corner *h* of the semi circular shawl hangs in front about 8 inches towards the left and below the waist. Over this shawl the second waist cord should be tied very tightly to keep everything in position.<sup>29)</sup>

(4) Style D

The Assyrian king Ashurnasirpal<Fig. 15><sup>30)</sup> in a ceremonial costume after returning from a victory for his troops. He wears a similar outfit to his attendant above, but his tunic is longer to the ankle. A tasselled small 20" square shawl has been tied around his waist to add decorative value to his outfit.<sup>31)</sup>



<Fig. 15> king Ashurnasirpal  
-*Assyrian Costumes and Jewelry*, p.36



<Fig. 16> Assyrian king  
-*A History of Costume*, p.74

(5) Style E

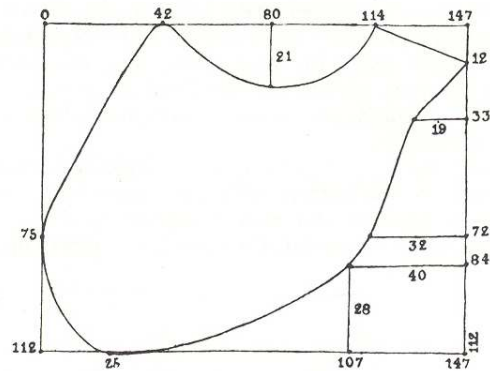
The high priests, the head of whom was the king himself, wore over this a cloak-like garment cut all in one piece. <Fig. 16,17>

It was drawn through under one arm and fastened on the opposite shoulder in such a manner that the front fell back over the upper arm.

On the open side the back of the cloak-like garment was tied to the front with cords sewn to the inside, their tasseled ends hanging low down. This arrangement caused the garment to fit fairly close over breast and back.<sup>32)</sup>

3) Military costume

The Assyrians' warlike nature manifested itself in military costume. From the tenth century B.C on, infantry and cavalry soldiers were dressed with comparative uniformity : short, fringed tunics, wide belts, conical helmets lined with leather. Horseback archers, who fought in pairs,

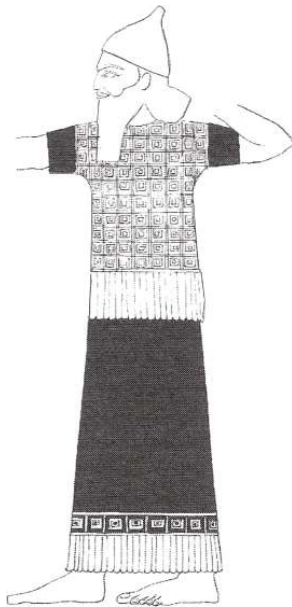


<Fig. 17> Shawl pattern Style E  
-*A History of Costume*, p.74

wore helmet or round caps ; chariot archers wore long tunics covered in metal scales, belted at the waist, and hooded helmets. The common Assyrian pointed helmet was regarded as Scythic in character. That cap appears, whether we follow the foreign, or the native representations of it, to have been of felt, whereas the Assyrian pointed helmet was made of metal: it was much taller than the Assyrian head-dress, and it was less upright.<sup>33)</sup>

After the seventh century B.C, we can note the extension on cavalry and heavy infantry of the scaled cuirass, completed with trousers and shin-guards worn inside high boots. Light infantry replaced the cuirass with a metal disk fixed to the front of the chest ; archers, used in dispersed order, protected their chests with a folded cloak and wore only a short skirt and an ordinary scarf rolled round their heads.<sup>34)</sup>

King Tiglath-Pileser III<Fig. 18> are represented

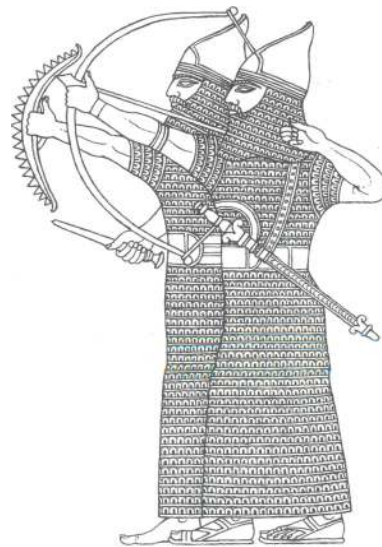


<Fig. 18> King Tiglath-Pileser III  
-*Assyrian Costumes and Jewelry*. p.56

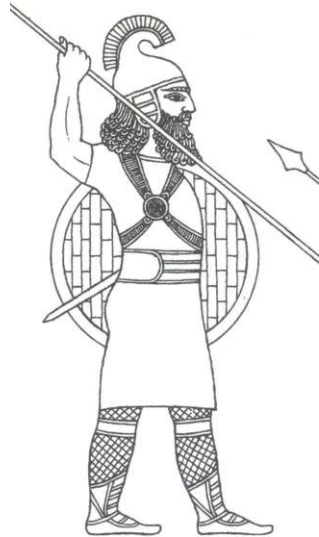
in long garments reaching to the ankles, the tasseled, short-sleeved and non-decorated tunic, over which a tasseled armored vest made of leather is usually worn.<sup>35)</sup>

Two heavily armed warriors<Fig. 19> will be seen that a carries a shield and dagger while one is armed with a bow and sword, also one is bare-footed while the other has sandals. The conical helmets are characteristic and with their pendant curtains of mail from a very complete protection for the head. The mail itself most probably consists of small metal plates sewn on to a foundation of leather or stoutly woven cloth.

Two military costumes<Fig. 20 and 21> wear footwear, where it would certainly seem as if the earlier Assyrian sandal was superseded by high laced boots from some outside source. Again, the helmets at <Fig. 20, 21> differ from the conical type seen at <Fig. 18, 19>. Indeed <Fig.



<Fig. 19> armed warriors -*Ancient Egyptian, Assyrian and Persian Costumes*, p. 141



**<Fig. 20> military costume**  
-Ancient Egyptian, Assyrian and Persian  
Costumes, p. 147



**<Fig. 21> military costume**  
-Ancient Egyptian, Assyrian and Persian  
Costumes, p. 147

20> has a helmet which is not unlike a certain type worn by the warriors of Ancient Greece in a later age.<sup>36)</sup>

## 2. Women's costume

<Fig. 22> is the Queen of King Assur-bani-pal who ruled in the seventh century B.C. She wears a long fringe-trimmed tunic similar to that of her husband but with longer sleeves. Her shawl would be 50" by 130" and was wrapped once around her lower body, covering the lower part of her tunic and then wound up and around her upper body with the shawl draped over her shoulder. She wears a dog collar, which had been fashionable as far back as Akkadian times, jeweled coronet, and bulky earrings and bracelets. Her low shoes completely cover her feet, the front part being patterned, the back appearing to be shaped and held in place by a thong such as is seen on primitive moccasins.<sup>37)</sup>

The Assyrian working woman<Fig. 23> of about 700 B.C. wears a long tunic with a long fringed shawl. The fringed shawl measure 50" x 80". The instructions to wear this style effectively, suggest first placing one corner of the shawl under the left armpit. Then the shawl should be drawn across the back under the right armpit, wrapping it once around the body.

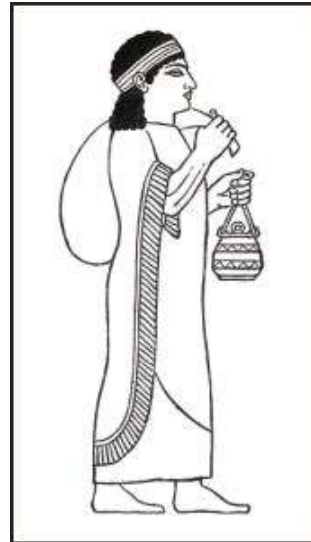
Then it should be drawn across the back and up over the right shoulder, so that a corner of the fringed shawl hangs down in front of the right shoulder.

<Fig. 24> is an Assyrian woman costume dating to the late Assyrian era taken from a clay vessel found in Ashur city. It shows the long tunic with fringed hem and a long fringed shawl.<sup>38)</sup>

<Fig. 25> is another woman costume taken from a religious ceremony representing the transfer of gods by soldiers. It is known that



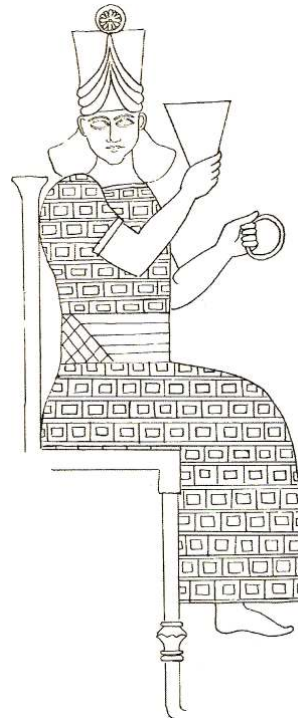
<Fig 22> Queen of King Assurbanipal  
-<http://www.fashion-era.com>



<Fig 23> working woman  
-<http://www.fashion-era.com>



<Fig 24> woman costume  
- *Assyrian Costumes and Jewelry*. p.64



<Fig 25> woman costume  
- *Assyrian Costumes and Jewelry*. p.68

when the Assyrians raided the Babylonians and in revenge, transferred god Marduk to their kingdom as a pillage.<sup>39)</sup> She wears a plaid tunic and wide belt over it.

### 3. Accessory

The tiara, symbol of office, was a high fez-shaped headdress formed by alternating rows of patterned and plain bands. An inverted cone on top provided extra height. Infulae, or ribbon-like streamers, fell from the headdress down the back. Large earrings, bulky bracelets, and armlets harmonize with the heavy, muscular, masculine forms. Swords and sheaths were handsomely wrought. Sandals with functional counters are typical of Assyrian design.<sup>40)</sup>

Many of the Assyrian costumes are richly decorated and worn with a lavish display of jewellery. Assyrian ornament has become known to us through representations on bas-reliefs and on enamelled tiles and bricks where royal personages and their gods are shown in great magnificence.

The Assyrians, who prized rich jewels, wore long ring-walnut-shaped earrings, at the neck, necklaces of several strands, composed of talismanic motifs, while on their arms they wore

wide bracelets, generally decorated with rosettes.<sup>41)</sup>

#### 1) Headgear

Around 1990, Iraqi archaeologists found three very rich Assyrian tombs, dating to about 750–700 B.C., under the floors of rooms in Ashurnasirpal's harem. One contained this extraordinary gold crown<Fig. 26>, it has a trellis vine on top, with bunches of lapis-lazuli grapes hanging below it, supported by four-winged robed figures, similar to what is often described as angel, standing on rows of pomegranates and rosettes.<sup>42)</sup>

The headgear represents an important complimentary element of the Assyrian attire. In general, it points to divine and religious symbols in accordance to the ancient Mesopotamian myths. The fabric headgear was among the royal symbols placed before the gods during the Festive God Assembly in the sky. Therefore there is a strong connection between god and these holy symbols. For example, the crown that is placed over the king's head during coronation is considered the great and the magnificent crown of god Ashur, the grand Assyrian god.<sup>43)</sup>

<Fig. 4, 16, 28> is the horned Cap of power.<sup>44)</sup>



<Fig 26> gold crown

-<http://jewelry-products-online.com/Jewelry-in-Ancient-Mesopotamia.html>



<Fig 27> ugal(headdress)

-<http://www.bible-archaeology.info/jewelry.htm>

God Sin– the god of the moon– is the god of the crown, and the moon light is the body of the crown. When the moon is crescent, it is viewed as a face with two horns, the face of a small strong bull with tough and solid horns. they were considered the symbols of divinity. The horns were essential elements for the crown along with the shiny and glittering beams. Thus, light and gutter held an important place among Assyrians, and became fundamental elements of divinity and monarchy.<sup>45)</sup>

The special royal head–dress was a tall mitre or tiara<Fig. 3, 7, 16> which at first took the shape of the head, but rose above it to a certain height in a gracefully curved line, when it was covered in with a top, flat, like that of a hat, but having a projection towards the centre, which rose up into a sort of apex, or peak, not however pointed, but either rounded or squared off. The tiara was generally ornamented with a succession of bands, between which were commonly patterns more or less elaborate. Ordinarily the lowest band, instead of running

parallel with the others, rose with a gentle curve towards the front, allowing room for a large rosette over the forehead, and for other similar ornaments. In the early sculptures the tiaras more depressed than in the later, and it is also less richly ornamented. It has seldom more than two bands, viz., a narrow one at top, and at bottom a broader curved one, rising towards the front. To this last are attached two long strings or lappets, which fall behind the monarch's back to a level with his elbow.<sup>46)</sup>

This ugal (head–dress)<Fig. 27> once worn by an Assyrian queen was recovered from the tomb of Nimrud.<sup>47)</sup> Also the Assyrian king Ashurnasirpal <Fig. 15> was worn a headgear that is not as high as those of the succeeding ere. The large gold flower that is decorating the front of the crown, which ends by two bands that dangled on the back.<sup>48)</sup>

## 2) Earrings

The most ordinary form of the royal earrings in the more ancient times was a long drop, which



<Fig 28> The Man–Bull  
Lamassu  
–British Museum



<Fig 29> pine cone earrings  
–<http://www.collection-gbornhauer.li/114401.html>



<Fig 30> earrings  
–*History of Western  
Costume*, p. 72

was sometimes delicately chased another common kind was an incomplete Maltese cross, one arm of the four being left out because it would have interfered with the ear. In later times there was a good deal of variety in the details; but the drop and the cross were always favorite features.

Assyrian earrings varied according to the social status and the costume worn by both males and females.<sup>49)</sup>

The huge guardians<Fig. 28> were standing in front of assyrian palaces, to protect them against evil spirits. Lamassu has the body of a bull with five legs, wings and a bearded head with the crown of the gods on his head and exactly pine cone earrings<Fig. 29><sup>50)</sup>

Gypsum wall panel relief: a beardless attendant, the Keeper of the King's Bow, who wears over his garment a fringed wrap enriched with a border of rosettes and concentric squares. His earring has three knob-like projections<Fig. 30>.<sup>51)</sup>

### 3) Necklace



<Fig 31> Necklace  
-"From Baghdad With Gold"

Necklace<Fig. 31> from the tomb at the ancient city of Nimrud, in Iraq is joined by a clasp in the shape of entwined animal heads, this finely worked gold necklace is one of six retrieved from a tomb containing the personal items and remains of two Assyrian queens. A total of 157 objects, including a gold anklet weighing more than two pounds, were found in the tomb, one of three discovered during an excavation at a palace in the ancient city of Nimrud in Iraq. The tombs, which are thought to date from the eighth century B.C., contained an astonishing amount of riches—more than 50 pounds of gold and semiprecious stones.<sup>52)</sup>

Assyrian jewellery was not simply pretty adornment. Necklace with Coloured stones (and glass)<Fig. 32> were considered to have beneficial properties: they warded off evil and protected against harm.<sup>53)</sup>

### 4) Bracelet

The monarch wore a variety of armllets. The most common was a plain bar of a single twist, the ends of which slightly overlapped each other.



<Fig 32> Necklace  
-<http://knp.prs.heacademy.ac.uk/essentials/medicinehealing/>



A more elegant kind was similar to this, except that the bar terminated in animal heads<Fig. 33> carefully wrought, among which the heads of rams, horses, and ducks were the most common. The style of the terminated in animal heads was regarded as a usual Stythic in character.

A third sort has the appearance of being composed of a number of long strings or wires, confined at intervals of less than an inch by cross bands at right angles to the wires. This sort was carried round the arm twice, and even then its ends overlapped considerably. It is probable that all the armllets were of metal, and that the appearance of the last was given to it by the workman in imitation of an earlier and ruder armllet of worsted or leather. <Fig. 34> is armllets inlaid with semiprecious stones.<sup>54)</sup>

The bracelets of the king, like his armllets, were sometimes mere bars of metal, quite plain and without ornament. More often, however, they were ribbed and adorned with a large rosette at the centre<Fig. 35>. Sometimes, instead of one simple rosette, we see three double rosettes, between which project small points, shaped like the head of a spear. Occasionally these double rosettes appear to be set on the surface of a broad bar, which is chased so as to represent brickwork. The bracelets were fastened; perhaps

they were elastic, and were slipped over the hand.<sup>55)</sup>

#### IV. Conclusion

The Assyria costume was become accomplished in two types of usual tunic and shawl.

The tunic appears to be of the sleeves are short and the body of the garment is tubular, reaching to the ankles among the upper class but shortened to knee length for active military duty, hunting, and day labor.

Assyrian Shawl pattern consisted of five styles. Many of the styles are suitable for costumes to wear in religious plays and pageants.

Fringed shawls are the trademark of formal Assyrian costume. The usual badge of rank was a long fringed shawl or shoulder shawl, the ends of which were wound round the person. The richness of the material and the length indicated the station of the wearer. The shawl with long fringes worn crossed over the breast was the distinctive mark of the prime minister, or vizer. A double shawl with equally long fringes worn crossed indicated the master of ceremonies. The king's own personal attendant wore shawl with short fringes. Officials of lower grade wore no shawl at all.



<Fig 33> bracelets  
-<http://www.bible-archaeology.info/jewelry.htm>



<Fig 34> armllets  
-"From Baghdad With Gold"



<Fig 35> bracelets  
-*History of Western Costume*, p.73

The military costume was comparative uniformity : conical helmets was regarded as Scythic in character, short, fringed tunics, wide belts or helmet, round caps and long tunics covered in metal scales, belted at the waist.

Assyrian woman costume was the long tunic with fringed hem and a long fringed shawl or the plaid tunic and wide belt over it.

Many of the Assyrian costumes are richly decorated and worn with a lavish display of jewellery.

The headgear represents an important complimentary element of the Assyrian attire. They wore gold crown and horned Cap and tiara, ugal (head-dress).

The crown that is placed over the king's head during coronation is considered the great and the magnificent crown of god Ashur, the grand Assyrian god. The horned Cap of power was fundamental elements of divinity and monarchy. The tiara was generally ornamented with a succession of bands, between which were commonly patterns more or less elaborate. the ugal (head-dress) was among the royal symbols placed before the gods during the Festive God Assembly in the sky. Therefore there is a strong connection between god and these holy symbols.

Assyrian earrings varied according to the social status and the costume worn by both males and females. The most ordinary earrings were the drop and the cross features. Necklace with Coloured stones were considered to have beneficial properties: they warded off evil and protected against harm. The most common bracelets were a plain bar terminated in animal heads that was regarded as a usual Scythic in character of a single twist, the ends of which slightly overlapped each other or were ribbed and adorned with a large rosette at the centre.

The bracelets were fastened; perhaps they were elastic, and were slipped over the hand.

We notice the types of costumes for daily living of the royal society, the costumes of religious festivals, costumes for hunting and war, costumes for the kings to wear when sick or when they want to drive evil spirit away, or to uncover relations, etc.

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