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*Front cover: Rock carving at Naqsh-e Rostam, Iran: Ardashir I (left) tramples the defeated Parthian king Artabanus IV and receives  
his symbol of kingship from Ohrmazd, the Wise Lord, © G. Herrmann; Sasanian silver coin, showing bust of Ardashir I (AD 224–240)  
and the Zoroastrian fire, © Trustees of the British Museum.*

# Contents

<i>Introduction</i>	vii
HISTORICAL	
1. Some Aspects of Political History: Early Arsacid Kings and the Seleucids <i>Jérôme Gaslain</i>	3
2. The Arsacids and Commagene <i>M. Rahim Shayegan</i>	8
3. Dynastic Connections in the Arsacid Empire and the Origins of the House of Sāsān <i>Marek Jan Olbrycht</i>	23
4. From Terror to Tactical Usage: Elephants in the Partho-Sasanian Period <i>Touraj Daryaee</i>	36
5. Remarks on the Location of the Province of Parthia in the Sasanian Period <i>Mehrdad Ghodrat-Dizaji</i>	42
6. The Birth of the Sasanian Monarchy in Western Sources <i>Andrea Gariboldi</i>	47
7. Kirdēr and the Re-organisation of Persian Mazdeism <i>Antonio Panaino</i>	53
LINGUISTIC	
8. The Parthian Language in Early Sasanian Times <i>Rika Gyselen</i>	61
9. From Aramaic to Pahlavi: Epigraphic Observations Based on the Persis Coin Series <i>Khodadad Rezakhani</i>	69
10. Parthian Studies: Two New Notes <i>Daryoosh Akbarzadeh</i>	76
ARCHAEOLOGICAL	
11. A Note on Architectural Traditions in Arsacid Parthia: The Round Hall at Nisa <i>Antonio Invernizzi</i>	83
12. Women, Dance and the Hunt: Splendour and Pleasures of Court Life in Arsacid and Early Sasanian Art <i>Barbara Kaim</i>	90

## NUMISMATICS

- |  |     |
|--|-----|
| 13. Quantifying Monetary Production: Ecbatana and Media in Parthian Times                      | 109 |
| <i>Pierre-Yves Boillet</i>   |     |
| 14. The Coinages of Paradan and Sind in the Context of Kushan and Kushano-Sasanian Numismatics | 123 |
| <i>Nikolaus Schindel</i>   |     |