

Touraj Daryae

The Limits of Sasanian History: Between Iranian, Islamic and Late Antique Studies

This essay discusses the position of Sasanian Studies from its inception in the late nineteenth century, to its reinvigoration at the beginning of the twenty-first century. The work also discusses the development of the field of Sasanian history and civilization vis-à-vis the three fields of Iranian, Islamic and Late Antique Studies. It is posited that Sasanians have benefited from cross-disciplinary and new historical frameworks that go beyond the traditional field of Iranian Studies, which was never as interested in the history of the period.

Keywords: Sasanian; Late Antiquity; Islamic History; Iranian Studies

Introduction

In 1875 Henry Rawlinson, the Camden Professor in Ancient History, penned the first book-length volume in English about the Sasanian Empire (224–651 CE). Titled *The Seventh Great Oriental Monarchy, or the Geography, History and Antiquities of the Sasanian or the New Persian Empire*, it brought to light, for the first time, a period in the history of Southwest Asia which previously had been the preserve of numismatists, philologists and historians of religion, who studied only aspects of this monumental civilization.¹ Rawlinson was of course writing a continuous imperial history of the Near East, as empire was very much the preoccupation of the British at the time, especially as their interest in the region was in full force. Thus, one cannot separate British imperialism from the study of older empires that had held the region. An inquiry as to how these ancient empires, from the Assyrians to the Sasanian Persians, were held together successfully was an early blueprint for the nineteenth century imperial powers that attempted to do the same. Indeed, Orientalism was born from and was very much in the service of imperialism at the time.

It is certainly amazing that this book did not spark further interest in the study of the Sasanians in the way it should have, compared with the other ancient Near Eastern empires such as the Assyrians, the Achaemenid Persians and most certainly the empire

Touraj Daryae is the Maseeh Chair in Persian Studies and Culture and the Director of the Dr. Samuel M. Jordan Center for Persian Studies and Culture at the University of California, Irvine.

This paper was delivered at the School of Oriental and African Studies at the University of London in the spring of 2014.

of Alexander of Macedon. By reading through Rawlinson's Sasanian tome, one clearly sees an Orientalist engaged in the study of a period of Southwest Asia that is neither really interesting for its author, nor is its monuments and achievements of too much excitement. This lack of interest in the subject of study further proves the imperial outlook over possible subjects whose culture was not deemed on a par with that of the "Western Civilization."

For example, in the background to the Sasanian Empire provided by the author, the Persians are described vis-à-vis the Greco-Macedonian as follows:

There is an essential antagonism between European and Asiatic ideas and modes of thought, such as seemingly to preclude the possibility of Asiatics appreciating a European civilization. The Persians must have felt towards the Greco-Macedonians much as the Mahometans of India feel towards ourselves— they may have feared and even respected them— but they must have very bitterly hated them.²

There is much more that one can state about Rawlinson's own time and his perception of the Orient by reading through his Sasanian history. However, it is not the aim here to discuss the mental outlook of this earliest Sasanian historian. All that needs to be said is that Rawlinson saw the Sasanians as immature, semi-barbarian rulers of an empire whose taste in art and culture was at best low or primitive. One should, however, always keep in mind that he was a man of the nineteenth century, with its own values and traditions.

In 1944, Arthur Christensen, professor of Iranian languages, published his magnum opus, *L'Iran sous les Sassanides* in Copenhagen.³ He had earlier published another important shorter work on the history and institutions of the Sasanians,⁴ and this seems to be a clear conclusion to that earlier work. Christensen's treatment was not as a historian such as Rawlinson, but as a full-fledged Iranist working on Iranian languages both modern and ancient, as well as philosophy, mythology and history. It was, nonetheless, is a great achievement for its time. His knowledge of Persian and his dealings with the Persian literati, having lived with them and befriended them, made him and his book drastically different from the portrait presented in the volume by Rawlinson. *L'Iran sous les Sassanides* is less political, but more importantly it is one of the best cultural studies of any period in Iran's history. This is a treatment where every available source—Arabic, Persian, Syriac, Middle Persian, Armenian and Greco-Latin—was used. The importance of this work is clear in that even today scholars refer back to this book. *L'Iran sous les Sassanides* has indeed withstood the test of time. If one was to make a criticism of the book, it would have been lack of a clear methodological criteria and prioritization of the sources. However, this was the early twentieth century and it was the work of an Iranist whose primary occupation was not history, but the study of civilizations and cultures.

The issue of the approach to the use of sources for Sasanian history was brought to the fore with Philippe Gignoux's sharp critique⁵ of Michael Morony's work on the late Sasanian, early Islamic administration of Iraq.⁶ Rika Gyselen also began to discuss this

issue, criticizing previous works and the way histories have been written and their shortcomings. She noted that their analysis is based on a tripartition of the available sources for Sasanian history, where the material culture is of utmost importance, and rightly so. Thus, the inscriptions, coins and seals and bullae are considered of primary importance, while the histories written in late antiquity take on secondary importance, and the later Islamic history and such are tertiary. However, one cannot really provide a complete picture of Sasanian history solely based on the remaining material culture. Indeed, if one is to provide a more sober view approaching Sasanian history, one must include the literary sources, such as Ṭabarī and others, for the outlines of its history.⁷ Otherwise we are stuck with fragments of an empire without the whole. It was only by the use of these narratives, Ṭabarī being the main source of Sasanian narrative, that music, art, history and literature, as well as a history of the Sasanian Empire, were all presented by Christensen in a masterful and readable manner. As a result, this book remains the most single most important book that scholars and laypeople go back to in order to learn about Sasanian history. Now we can update Christensen as we have better methodological tools to tackle the difficult texts from late antiquity and the early medieval period, but no one has been able to supplant his work.⁸

Of course some seventy years had passed since Rawlinson's time and sensibilities, when politics were far different. Rawlinson's political stance is not clear, but it must have been very different from that of Christensen, who came from a middle class family of civil servants, and whose country's relations vis-à-vis the East were far different from those of the United Kingdom. Christensen provided a very positive view of the Persians, and for this reason his work resonated with the Persian literati and with friends, such as the late Rashid Yasami, who translated the Sasanian book into Persian.⁹ The third book covering the Sasanians in the twentieth century was written in German by the archeologist Klaus Schippmann.¹⁰ Here a rather short but much more up to date treatment of Sasanian political history was presented, while its treatment of culture and economy was rather brief, and its political history received the lion's share of the work.

Thus, a book in 1873 in English, one in French in 1944 and one in German in 1990 have been the main texts on Sasanian history for the nineteenth and the twentieth century. An ancient historian, an Iranist and an archeologist provided the treatment for more than four centuries of Iranian and Near Eastern history. Compared to the eastern Roman Empire where hundreds of articles every year and tens of books were published, the Sasanians appeared to be insignificant. The Sasanians seemed to need to be placed on the map and the chronology of Near Eastern history. The Sasanians needed a field or other fields to save them from oblivion.

The problem was that the Sasanians were not enough of an ancient Near Eastern empire in the sense of the Assyrian or the Achaemenid empires. They were not Hellenic enough to receive the attention of the Classicists and ancient historians, who sometimes dealt with the East. The Sasanians were somewhat alien to the historians with their particular regional and chronological settings and fell in between the periodization of western academia. While their coins were of interest to numismatists, and their texts and inscriptions were of interest to philologists, the Sasanian Persians

appeared, to use Eric Wolf's book title, to be another group of "People without History."¹¹

However, it was the early Islamic historians who first became interested in the Sasanians and late antique Iran. There was a good reason for this: if one looks at the institutions, structures and conduct of the Abbasid Caliphate, one sees important connections with the past, specifically sixth century Iran at the time of Khusro I, as it came to be known in the Perso-Arabic literature. No doubt the translation of the Pahlavi texts by such people as Ibn Muqafa' and others at the *Bayt al-Hikma*, the building of the round city of Baghdad—typical of Sasanian cities and only a few miles away from the Sasanian capital, Ctesiphon—and the interest of the Abbasids in the history of the Sasanian kings and their conduct and manners—from eating, to being hidden behind a silk curtain and their state craft and wisdom literature or *Mirror for Princes*—certainly mandated a thorough study of history of the region from the time of Khusro I to Harun al-Rashid. For many of these historians, there seems to be much more continuity between Khusro I and the Abbasids than between Ardashir I in the third century and Khusro I in the sixth. No doubt these similarities were reason enough for al-Jahiz to call the Abbasids an Iranian (*'ajamiyya*) dynasty, because of their emulation of the former empire.¹²

We should not forget that with the gradual breakup of the Abbasids in terms of political control on the Iranian Plateau and Greater Khurasan, successive dynasts connected themselves to the Sasanian kings, courtiers or generals.¹³ The Sasanians loomed large in memory, and, to use Marshal G. Hodgson's terminology, became known as the Perso-Islamicate, or more accurately the Persianate World of Oxus to Euphrates.¹⁴ Now if the Sasanians were responsible for the Persianization of the area or if the Samanids created their own vision of the "Persianate" is a matter of discussion, but one cannot assume a complete absence of Sasanian influence on the regions with the spread of Middle Persian as the administrative languages for this area. In fact, one can suggest, as Richard N. Frye did, that from the reign of Ardashir I, the founder of the Sasanian dynasty, an effort was made to create a clear and uniform Middle Persian writing system and orthography, and also to spread the language throughout the empire, from the Euphrates to the Oxus.¹⁵

The early scholars of Islamic studies, such as Francesco Gabrieli, Vasilii Vladimirovitch Barthold, Vladimir Minorsky, Marshall G. Hodgson and others all dealt with the Sasanians in one way or another, especially when it related to the end of Sasanian history and the rise of Islam. But with scholars such as Michael G. Morony the interest in regressing and bypassing the artificial boundary of the pre-Islamic and Islamic worlds was made clear.¹⁶ It became clear that in order to understand early Islamic institutions and traditions, the Sasanian institutions were as important as understanding pre-Islamic Arabia.¹⁷ That is to say, development and traditions in Ctesiphon were as important as Mecca in understanding the history of the region and the period.

The problem was that the Islamic historians only dealt with parts of the Sasanian history, namely the time of Kawad and Mazdak (sixth century CE), in the case of Patricia Crone,¹⁸ or the conquest in the case of Michael Morony¹⁹ and Parvaneh

Pourshariati.²⁰ The Pahlavi language and texts, the most important tool for understanding the inner logic of the Sasanian Empire, was of less interest or less known, although Arabic was of utmost importance for them. In fact the field of Islamic history privileged Arabic over other languages, while Middle Persian and Syriac took a back seat for their inquiry. Today it is clear that however important Arabic is for understanding the skeleton of the Sasanian Empire, Middle Persian is also important for understanding the administrative structure, mores and values,²¹ while Syriac and Armenian gave a Christian view on the society of late antique Iran.²²

The field of ancient Iranian studies has particularly been captivated by the philological endeavor, which of course provides the important means for understanding the Sasanian Empire. However, two reasons have been an impediment to better study of Sasanian history. The first is that philology by its nature is not interested in the larger questions with which historians deal, such as the study of the society, economy, etc. Secondly, the discipline of Iranian philology has been waning worldwide (Harvard, Berkeley, Michigan, Minnesota have all closed their positions in ancient Iranian languages and cultures). Consequently the study of Sasanian history has become less and less noticed in the traditional field of Iranian studies, driving it almost to the brink of extinction, while Islamic historians had annexed the Khusro I to Yazdgerd III period. Philologists presented us with texts, inscriptions and ideas about the Zoroastrian religion, but not a coherent history of the period. The Iranian philologists who had held Sasanian history “captive” were now themselves on the decline, taking the dynasty to oblivion with them.

But earlier, in the 1970s, another discipline was being established which had an eye on the Sasanians and was beginning a process to make this Persian dynasty its own. Peter Brown published his book *The World of Late Antiquity* in 1971.²³ With this book and under his tutelage a field called “Late Antiquity” became one of the most important means of understanding the history of the Mediterranean world between 200 and 750 CE, mainly based on the development of Christianity. But Brown also gave attention to the Sasanians, not merely as the nemesis of the eastern Roman Empire, but as a period in which the Sasanians themselves merited study in order to understand the larger picture of the field. For these scholars, not only Greek, but also Syriac became the language of choice for understanding and studying the East, namely the Roman Near East, but also by extension the Sasanians. This was mainly due to the fact that, first and foremost, the interest was in the development of Christianity in the East—that is, the Sasanian Empire.

There have been two commentaries on the nature of late antiquity when it comes to Iran. First, Teresa Bernheimer and Adam J. Silverstein, in their work *Late Antiquity: Eastern Perspectives*,²⁴ gave a full treatment of the scholars who were intending or were believed to have brought the Persianate world into the fold of the late antique discipline. What they state is that while late antiquity slowly acknowledged the Sasanians as an important empire, perhaps on an equal status with that of the Romans, it rarely received proper treatment. Bernheimer and Silverstein point to the fact that the important publication *Interpreting Late Antiquity*, edited by Glen Bowersock, Peter Brown and Oleg Grabar,²⁵ while acknowledging the centrality of the Sasanians,

only marginally gave attention to the Sasanians, and it even lacked the presence of someone who was a full-fledged Sasanian scholar; Islamists were chosen for editors.

Of course, one cannot disagree with what they say, but one can also respond by stating that the field of late antiquity has been dominated by the history of Christianity and the development of the eastern Roman or Byzantine Empire, to what may be called an early Medieval European world. So the attention to the late antique Near East is really for another reason, namely how Islam and the Arabs came on the scene and provided the world of the Umayyad and Abbasid Caliphate, which annexed the eastern Mediterranean world and, to use Henri Pirenne's idea, provided a break with the past.²⁶ The Sasanians and Zoroastrians in this scheme are less valued or given attention to, as they are seen as irrelevant in the new world of eighth century Eurasia. Furthermore, there are two groups of late antique historians with two different world views. The first group still believe that only the Mediterranean world should be treated under the rubric of late antiquity, and the Sasanians should be left out. One can point to the recent edition of the *Oxford Handbook of Late Antiquity* of 1,247 pages, edited by Scott F. Johnson, which deals with such distant places as the Silk Road and Armenia, and even Ethiopia and Arabia, but does not include the Sasanians in a chapter by itself.²⁷

But there is another group of late antique historians, such as J. Walker, Richard Payne, M. Canepa and Geoffrey Greatrex, who have a genuine interest in the Sasanians as a late civilization and/or empire. They are the ones who should be lauded for their work, because they are bringing to light important aspects of Sasanian social and religious history in a wider context, so that Sasanian history survives the demise of Iranian philology. However, it is again Christianity in the East that is the main driving force for some of these authors. Thus, the methodological heritage of the late antique field with its central attention to bishops and saints has taken over the focus of the Sasanian Empire. It cannot be missed that in such a scheme, Syriac texts and literature become the main tool for understanding the history of late antique Iran. That is in fact quite important, as these sources have been little used, but their significance has been mainly for understanding Christianity in the East. I would agree with them in that here we are able to gain a view of Sasanian society, albeit from a Christian perspective which would not otherwise be possible.

The critics of the late antique field in relation to Sasanian history have stated that while the prestige language, namely Middle Persian, which was first acknowledged from the time of Ardashir I to the end of the Sasanian dynasty, survived as the literary language of the Zoroastrian church and until the ninth and even tenth centuries CE, was sidelined by Syriac. The critics of the late antique field in relation to Sasanian history have stated that the danger of such an approach creates a wrong perception about the Sasanian Empire, making it much more Christian than it might have been. Thus, while the Islamic historians slice off the latter part of Sasanian history, the late antique historians take the entire Sasanian history, under a different set of methodological and linguistic questions and considerations.

In recent decades the work of Yaakov Elman,²⁸ followed by Geoffrey Herman,²⁹ Shai Secunda³⁰ and now Jason Mokhtarian,³¹ have also provided a new understanding

of the Sasanian world through the Talmud and Babylonian Judaism. Their works build on and provide a corrective to older work, by the likes of Jacob Neusner.³² Indeed, one can learn much from their works, which are also important for understanding the religious life and interaction between religious groups and connections between Jews and the Sasanian Empire. Here we are looking at not only Babylonian Judaism, but also how the reading of the Talmud aids us in understanding the Sasanians themselves. Legal, religious and royal mentions of the Sasanians all provide important information for us in looking at an empire that whose internal sources are scarce.

Thus, the question is whether we try to understand the Sasanian Empire through the prism of Iranian studies, which is philologically armed with Middle Iranian languages, and can also provide the deep ideological and cultural understanding which has its roots from the Achaemenids to Islam, or whether we take up the Islamic view of the Sasanian Empire—that its history can be broken up into two slices, the first part 200-500 CE—and make Khusro I part of Islamic cultural history and the background to the Islamic institutions and traditions. Or are we to follow the late antique scholars who are now increasingly paying attention to the Sasanian world, but with a focus on Christianity, and Judaism, and less interest or knowledge of Middle Persian for the Sasanian Empire itself? It should also be noted that Zoroastrian studies is the weakest link and has produced the least scholarly interaction. Among the few are Albert de Jong³³ and Yuhan S.-D. Vevaina have attempted to engage in dialogue with others, providing a historical view of the period.

Most recently, Classical and Byzantine historians who have numerous sources at their disposal, and who indeed have armed themselves with important methodological tools, have rescued Sasanian history from oblivion. Some of them have even become more widely known among those who deal with Iranian history and are praised for being responsible for reviving Sasanian history. For the early part of Sasanian history, for example, E. Kettenhofen, for the middle, G. Greatrex, and, for the late Sasanians, James-Howard Johnston come to mind, while J. Wieschofer, an ancient historian who places the ancient Iranian world in its proper context, treats all of Sasanian history. Others, like Giusto Traina, have looked at the Sasanians from the edge and placed them again in the context of the ancient world, but also from the perspective of the Caucasus.³⁴ And now the important work of Stephen Rapp³⁵ and Greg Fisher³⁶ from the Arabian Peninsula, among others, are making important strides in our understanding of the Sasanian Empire and its history.

I think one can conclude that the study of the Sasanian Empire has come alive, but in a sense, to use W. B. Henning's statement on Avestan studies, at the cost of the "disintegration" of Sasanian studies, from the point of view of an Iranist.³⁷ However, the Sasanians not being firmly placed in any one discipline has not been altogether bad. The Iranists will continue to publish editions of texts, inscriptions and epigraphical material, while the late antique historians will connect the Sasanian Empire to a larger framework and ask questions and approach the empire in a way that is far more advanced than anything done so far for ancient Iranian history. Islamic historians can demonstrate and bring understanding to late Sasanian history and a

reasoning as to why the Sasanians are important for the history of Southwest Asia, as the foundation for the medieval history of the Near East. That is, situating Sasanian history between these disciplines and within them will be more beneficial than what had existed before. It is only in this way that one may be sure that interest in the Sasanians, an empire to which only a few monographs were dedicated in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, would be studied, understood and become a part of larger discourse in historical studies and in academia.

Peter Brown, in his piece "Recovering the Submerged Worlds"³⁸ in the *New York Review of Books*, has eloquently pointed out the importance of works on the period which place the eastern Roman Empire in relation to the Sasanians and others. He states that in fact for people like him and those who work on the period of late antiquity, the Sasanian Empire has usually been treated as the dark side of the moon.³⁹ I believe that now the Sasanians are slowly beginning to come out from the dark side and into the light. The question though is how they are being presented.

If Sasanian Iran was a very different place from how it was represented before Islam, the question is how legitimate can Arabic sources be, which were written two centuries after the fall of that empire, with a different worldview? But by the same token, how much information can the Syriac sources, contemporaneous with the empire, but enamored with the Christianity of the empire, give us about the Sasanian world at large? Of course, each of these sources has its own shortcomings and benefits. What is important is to try to bring what may be seen as the Sasanian Empire, the "venerable dinosaur," to use Brown's words, out of oblivion and into the larger framework of historical studies. Study of four centuries of the Oxus to Euphrates region does not need justification, but the connections will help make the Sasanian Empire matter in our present connective world.

Notes

1. Rawlinson, *The Seventh Great Oriental Monarchy*.
2. Ibid., 2-3.
3. Christensen, *L'Iran sous les Sassanides*.
4. Christensen, *L'empire des Sassanides*.
5. Gignoux, "Problemes de distinction et de priorite des sources."
6. Morony, "The Effects of the Muslim Conquest on the Persian Population of Iraq."
7. Tabari still remains as the single most important cohesive narrative for writing Sasanian history. We now possess important translations and commentaries which makes the work even more invaluable. These include:
 8. Daryaei, *Sasanian Iran*; and Daryaei, *Sasanian Persia*.
 9. Most of Christensen's work has been translated into Persian, whether his scholarly works or his memoirs and travelogues. For his memories between 1939 and 1949, see, for example, *Farāsū-ye Daryā-ye Khazar*, translated by Ahani and Tahuri.
10. Schipmann, *Grundzüge der Geschichte des sasanidischen Reiches*.
11. Wolf, *Europe and the People without History*.
12. Jahiz III: 366. See Yarshater. "Re-emergence of Iranian Identity after Conversion to Islam," 8.
13. Bosworth, "The Persistent Older Heritage in the Medieval Iranian Lands."
14. The term was first used to define the Iranian civilization in the Islamic world by Toynbee, *A Study of History*, 67-71; Hodgson, *The Venture of Islam*, 294.

15. Frye, "Methodology in Iranian History," 66.
16. Morony, "Sasanids."
17. For example, one can provide examples from religious sphere, de Menasce and Waqf, and temporary marriage, Macuch, "Pious Foundations in Byzantine and Sasanian Law"; and "The Function of Temporary Marriage in the Context of Sasanian Family Law."
18. Crone, "Kavad's Heresy and Mazdak's Revolt."
19. Morony, *Iraq after the Muslim Conquest*.
20. Pourshariati, *Decline and Fall of the Sasanian Empire*.
21. Gyselen's groundbreaking work for administration, *La géographie administrative de l'Empire Sassanide*.
22. For the Syriac sources see now Payne, *A State of Mixture*.
23. Brown, *The World of Late Antiquity*.
24. Bernheimer and Silverstein, *Late Antiquity*.
25. Bowersock, Brown, and Grabar, *Interpreting Late Antiquity*.
26. Pirenne, *Mohammed and Charlemagne*. Pirenne's 1930s ideas have now been criticized and discussed in such works as Hodges and Whitehouse, *Mohammed, Charlemagne and the Origins of Europe*, and also Scott, *Mohammed and Charlemagne Revisited*.
27. Johnson, *Oxford Handbook of Late Antiquity*.
28. For the many contribution of Elman, see *Shoshannat Yaakov*, edited by Secunda and Fine.
29. Herman, *Jews, Christians and Zoroastrians*, 17.
30. Secunda, *The Iranian Talmud*.
31. Mokhtarian, *Rabbis, Sorcerers, Kings, and Priests*.
32. Neusner, *Israel's Politics in Sasanian Iran*.
33. For example see de Jong, "Zoroastrian Religious Polemics and their Contexts"; and "Zoroastrian Self-Definition in Contact with Other Faiths."
34. Traina, *428 AD*.
35. Rapp, *The Sasanian World through Georgian Eyes*.
36. Fisher, *Between Empires*; and, more recently, *Arabs and Empires Before Islam*.
37. Henning, "The Disintegration of the Avestic Studies."
38. Brown, "Recovering the Submerged Worlds," which is a recent review of recent review of three books: *The Throne of Adulis: Red Sea Wars on the Eve of Islam*, Oxford, 2013, by G. W. Bowersock, *Empires in Collision in Late Antiquity*, UPNE, 2012, by the same author, and *The Nativist Prophets of Early Islamic Iran: Rural Revolt and Local Zoroastrianism*, by Patricia Crone, Cambridge, 2012.
39. Brown, "Recovering the Submerged Worlds," 4.

Bibliography

- Bernheimer, Teresa and Adam J. Silverstein. *Late Antiquity: Eastern Perspectives*. Cambridge: Gibb Memorial Trust, 2012.
- Bosworth, Clifford E. "The Persistent Older Heritage in the medieval Iranian Lands." In *The Idea of Iran, The Rise of Islam*, edited by V. S. Curtis and S. Stewart, 33-41. London: I. B. Tauris, 2009.
- Bowersock, Glen W., Peter Brown, and Oleg Grabar. *Interpreting Late Antiquity: Essays on the Postclassical World*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001.
- Brown, Peter. "Recovering the Submerged Worlds." *New York Review of Books* 60, no. 12 (2013).
- Brown, Peter. *The World of Late Antiquity*. London: Thames and Hudson, 1971.
- Christensen, Arthur. *Farāsū-ye Daryā-ye Khazar*. Translated by M. Ahadzadegan Ahanī and A. Alfonūn Tahūrī. Tehran: 1385.
- Christensen, Arthur. *L'empire des Sassanides, le peuple, l'état, la cour*. Copenhagen: Bianco Lunos Bogtrykkeri, 1907.
- Christensen, Arthur. *L'Iran sous les Sassanides*. Copenhagen: E. Munksgaard, 1944.

- Crone, Patricia. "Kavad's Heresy and Mazdak's Revolt." *IRAN* 29 (1991): 21-42.
- Daryaei, Touraj. *Sasanian Iran: A Portrait of a Late Antique Empire*. Costa Mesa, CA: Mazda Publishers, 2008.
- Daryaei, Touraj. *Sasanian Persia: The Rise and Fall of an Empire*. London: I. B. Tauris, 2009.
- De Jong, Albert F. "Zoroastrian Religious Polemics and their Contexts: Interconfessional Relations in the Sasanian Empire." In *Religious Polemics in Context. Papers presented to the Second International Conference of the Leiden Institute for the Study of Religions (Studies in Theology and Religion 11)*, edited by Teo L. Hetteema and Arie van der Kooij, 48-63. Assen: Royal van Gorcum, 2004.
- De Jong, Albert F. "Zoroastrian Self-Definition in Contact with Other Faiths." In *Irano-Judaica V*, edited by Shaul Shaked and Amnon Netzer, 16-26. Jerusalem: Ben Zvi Institute, 2003.
- Fisher, Greg. *Arabs and Empires Before Islam*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015.
- Fisher, Greg, ed. *Between Empires: Arabs, Romans, and Sasanians in Late Antiquity*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011.
- Frye, Richard N. "Methodology in Iranian History." In *Neue Methodologie in der Iranistik*, edited by R. N. Frye, 46-58. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1974.
- Gignoux, Philippe. "Problèmes de distinction et de priorité des sources." In *Prolegomena to the Sources on the History of Pre-Islamic Central Asia*. Edited by J. Harmatta. Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1976.
- Gyselen, Rika. *La géographie administrative de l'Empire Sassanide: les témoignages géographiques*. Paris: Peeters, 1989.
- Henning, W. B. "The Disintegration of the Avestic Studies." *Transactions of Philological Society* 41 (1941): 40-56.
- Herman, Geoffrey, ed. *Jews, Christians, and Zoroastrians: Religious Dynamics in a Sasanian Context*. Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2014.
- Hodges, Richard, and David Whitehouse. *Mohammed, Charlemagne and the Origins of Europe*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1983.
- Hodgson, Marshall G. *The Venture of Islam: The Expansion of Islam in the Middle Periods*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1961.
- Johnson, Scott F. *Oxford Handbook of Late Antiquity*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012.
- Macuch, Maria. "Pious Foundations in Byzantine and Sasanian Law." In *La Persia e Bisanzio Convegno Internazionale*, edited by G. Gnoli, 181-196. Rome: Accademia nazionale dei Lincei, 2004.
- Macuch, Maria. "The Function of Temporary Marriage in the Context of Sasanian Family Law." In *Proceedings of the Fifth Conference of the Societas Iranologica Europea. Vol. II of Ancient and Medieval Iranian Studies*, edited by A. Panaino and A. Piras, 585-597. Milan: Edizioni Mimesis, 2006.
- Mokhtarian, Jason S. *Rabbis, Sorcerers, Kings, and Priests: The Culture of the Talmud in Ancient Iran*. Oakland: University of California Press, 2015.
- Morony, Michael G. *Iraq after the Muslim Conquest*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984.
- Morony, Michael G. "Sasanids." *Encyclopaedia of Islam* 9 (1997): 70-83.
- Morony, Michael G. "The Effects of the Muslim Conquest on the Persian Population of Iraq." *Iran* 14 (1976): 41-59.
- Neusner, Jacob. *Israel's Politics in Sasanian Iran*. Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1986.
- Payne, Richard E. *A State of Mixture: Christians, Zoroastrians, and Iranian Political Culture in Late Antiquity*. Oakland: University of California Press, 2015.
- Pirenne, Henri. *Mohammed and Charlemagne*. Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, 2001.
- Pourshariati, Parvaneh. *Decline and Fall of the Sasanian Empire: The Sasanian-Parthian Confederacy and the Arab Conquest of Iran*. I. B. Tauris, London, 2008.
- Rapp, Stephen. *The Sasanian World through Georgian Eyes: Caucasia and the Iranian Commonwealth in Late Antique Georgian Literature*. Farnham: Ashgate, 2014.
- Rawlinson, George. *The Seventh Great Oriental Monarchy: or the Geography, History and Antiquities of the Sasanian or the New Persian Empire*. New York: Dodd, Mead, 1882.
- Schippmann, Klaus. *Grundzüge der Geschichte des sasanidischen Reiches*. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1990.

- Scott, Emmet. *Mohammed and Charlemagne Revisited: The History of a Controversy*. Nashville, TN: New English Review Press, 2013.
- Secunda, Shai. *The Iranian Talmud: Reading the Bavli in its Sasanian Context*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014.
- Shoshannat Yaakov: Jewish and Iranian Studies in Honor of Yaakov Elman*. Edited by Shai Secunda and Steven Fine. Leiden: Brill, 2012.
- Toynbee, Arnold. *A Study of History*. London: Oxford University Press, 1934.
- Traina, Giusto. *428 AD: An Ordinary Year at the End of the Roman Empire*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2011.
- Wolf, Eric R. *Europe and the People Without History*. Berkeley: UC Press, 2010.
- Yarshater, Ehsan. "Re-emergence of Iranian Identity after Conversion to Islam." In *The Idea of Iran, The Rise of Islam*, edited by V. S. Curtis and S. Stewart, 1–9. London: I. B. Tauris, 2009.