



Decline and Fall of the Sasanian Empire: The Sasanian-Parthian Confederacy and the Arab Conquest of Iran

Parvaneh Pourshariati

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Decline and Fall of the Sasanians has already been praised as one of the most intellectually exciting books about ancient Persia to have been published for years. It proposes a convincing contemporary answer to an ages-old mystery and conundrum: why, in the seventh century CE, did the seemingly powerful and secure Sasanian empire of Persia succumb so quickly and disastrously to the all-conquering Arab armies of Islam? Offering an impressive and exhaustively-documented appraisal of the Sasanians' nemesis at the hands of the Arab forces which scythed through their enemies, sweeping all before them, the author suggests a bold solution to the enigma. On the face of it, the collapse of the Sasanians-given their strength and imperial power in the earlier part of the seventh century-looks startling and inexplicable. But Professor Pourshariati explains their fall in terms of an earlier deep-seated corrosion and decline, and as a result of their own internal weaknesses. The decentralised dynastic system of the Sasanian empire, whose backbone was a Sasanian-Parthian alliance, contained the seeds of its own destruction. This confederacy, whose powerbase relied on patronage and preferment, soon became soft and corrupt, and its degeneration sealed the fate of a doomed dynasty.

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