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Political and Cultural Relations
between Greeks and Parthians

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Foreword

The studies collected in this volume came about over the space of almost 20 years. They are linked by a common theme: Greek-Parthian relations in their various manifestations and aspects. While a great deal has indeed been written on this subject, most scholars have concentrated mainly on the political dimension. Other aspects of these relations, and particularly the effects of the influence of Greek culture on Parthian culture, have to date rarely been the subject of analysis and in-depth reflection. At the same time, a large number of researchers from various academic centres have for many years been attempting to establish how much and in what areas the models and traditions of the Achaemenids influenced the way in which Alexander the Great and the Seleucids governed in Mesopotamia, Iran and Central Asia. Without questioning the value of the conclusions made from these studies, we must be aware that the question of the cultural heritage of the Achaemenids in fact represents only a fragment of the significantly broader problem of the transmission, adaptation or assimilation of the civilizational values found in the lands of the Middle East, Mesopotamia, Iran and Central Asia by the states and empires that formed one by one there. It is from this perspective that the articles collected here were written. In writing them I tried to find the answers to a series of questions, such as what the Parthians, governed by the Arsacid dynasty, adopted in the broad area of cultural heritage from their Greek predecessors?; how did they adapt the Greek heritage for their own needs and what was the place of this heritage in Parthian culture and what survived it? However, the lack of historical sources meant that this aim could not always be fully achieved.

Some of these articles were presented during academic conferences, others published in various periodicals, and two are previously unpublished. By collecting them in one volume I hope to make them accessible to a greater number of researchers, whether they are interested in the history of Iran under Arsacid rule, the history of the Seleucid empire, or the Hellenistic era. The texts are ordered by the date when they were written, which allows the reader to follow the evolution of the author's views on the topics in question as well as the progress of research over time. An inevitable consequence of bringing these articles together is repetition, as well even as certain differences in the dates of rule of some of the Parthian rulers; this is difficult to avoid as over the years scholars have on numerous occasions revised these dates. To make it easier to find the cited passages in these texts, to which I myself refer on more than one occasion, the original pagination has been marked in order to render a concordance with their new edition easier. Only in one of the texts, because of the number of stylistic and orthographical corrections to comply with the language rules now in force, has the rule of preserving the original pagination been abandoned. In the remaining articles only spelling and stylistic errors have been corrected, along with standardisation of spelling of geographical and people's names and the introduction of a common style of bibliographical references for the whole publication. In order to avoid extensive repetition of the same bibliographical descriptions, and with

the reader's convenience in mind, a joint bibliography has been compiled for the whole book.

Many people and institutions contributed to the production of this volume. My thanks go to Prof. Dr. Robert Rollinger, who encouraged me to put the texts together and included the volume in the "Philippika" series which he co-edits. I am especially grateful to Prof. Henry I. MacAdam for checking texts written in English and to Prof. Carlo Lippolis for making available and permitting the usage of archaeological plans of Old Nisa. I also thank Prof. Dr. Andrzej Banach, the Dean of the Faculty of History of the Jagiellonian University for providing the funding which has allowed this book to be published. My gratitude to all Publishers and Publishing Houses under whose aegis these articles were first printed for agreeing to their republication, and to the Harrassowitz Verlag for publishing this book.