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The Parthians are a fascinating but little-known ancient civilization. In the mid-third century BCE a bold and ambitious leader called Arshak challenged Hellenic rule and led his armies to victory. The dynasty which he founded ruled over what became a mighty empire and restored the glory of Iran following the region's conquest by Alexander the Great. This imperial eastern superpower, which lasted for 400 years and stretched from the Hindu Kush to Mesopotamia, withstand the might of Rome for centuries. The Parthians were nomadic horse-warriors who left few written records, concentrating rather on a rich oral and storytelling tradition. What knowledge we have of this remarkable people derives primarily from their coinage, which mixed Hellenism with Persian influences. In this book, distinguished scholars examine - from a variety of perspectives - the origins of the Parthians, their history, religion and culture, as well as perceptions of their empire through the lens of both imperial Rome and China.

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