



Rome's Wars in Parthia: Blood in the Sand

Rose Mary Sheldon

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The leader of an empire invades Iraq. He has inadequate intelligence and underestimates the resistance of the locals, but he believes his overwhelming military strength will bring him a swift victory. His army overruns the area between the Tigris and the Euphrates, but as soon as he occupies the area a massive insurgency arises, made up of various ethnic and religious groups. What began as a simple conquest for dominance bogs down in deadly fighting as the once-victorious commander-in-chief now desperately searches for an exit strategy.... This scenario could be any number of Roman campaigns, not to mention America in 2003 CE. Both ancient and modern attempts to invade Iraq have been plagued with the same problems. These problems have been caused by lack of adequate intelligence gathering, both strategic and tactical, and have resulted in long drawn out wars that have been costly in both money and manpower. Ultimately, they led to little political or military gain. Could more have been accomplished through diplomacy rather than brute force? This book details Rome's military encounters with Parthia from the bumbling campaign of Crassus to the fall of the Parthian regime. America's recent war in Iraq has shown that invading Mesopotamia without proper intelligence is a bad idea, but it is not a new idea. Time after time the Romans stormed into the area between the Tigris and Euphrates thinking 'shock and awe' was all they needed to prevail. What they discovered was that it takes more than just overrunning an empire to defeat it. *** "Sheldon's analysis of the consequences of the frequent conflicts on the political, economic, and military health of both empires, is quite useful, and she observes that the occasional diplomatic solutions often proved more beneficial than any of the wars. An important read for anyone interested in ancient military history..." -- The NYMAS Review, Issue No. 59, December 2015 [Subject: History, Intelligence Studies, Military History]

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