



The Gods of Diyala: Transfer of Command in Iraq (Williams-Ford Texas A&M University Military History Series)

Caleb S. Cage, Gregory M. Tomlin

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In March 2004, Caleb S. Cage and Gregory M. Tomlin deployed to Baquba, Iraq, on a mission that would redefine how conventional U.S. military forces fight an urban war. Having led artillery units through a transition into anti-insurgent rifle companies and carrying out daily combat patrols in one of the region's most notorious hotspots, Cage and Tomlin chronicle Task Force 1-6 Field Artillery's year on the ground in Iraq and its response to the insurgency that threatened to engulf their corner of the Sunni Triangle.

Rather than presenting a snapshot dominated by battle scenes, *The Gods of Diyala* presents a wide-angled view of the experiences of Cage and Tomlin and their comrades-in-arms. They assess the implications of their experiences, starting with their pre-deployment training in Germany and ending with the handing over of duties to their replacement brigade at the close of their tour of duty. They discuss frankly their impressions of the benefits and liabilities of working with embedded journalists and relate both their frustrations with and their admiration for the fledgling Iraqi security forces. From chaotic security planning to personal debates on the principles of democracy, both authors discuss how Iraqis perceived the value of their first post-Saddam elections and the political future of their country as it tries to reinvent itself in the wake of a dictator's fall.

The Gods of Diyala gives a new and personal perspective on the second stage of the ongoing war in Iraq. Students and scholars of military history will find its insights meaningful and informative, and general readers will enjoy its thoughtful, well-measured narratives of a year spent trying to protect a fragile nation as it struggled toward democracy.

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