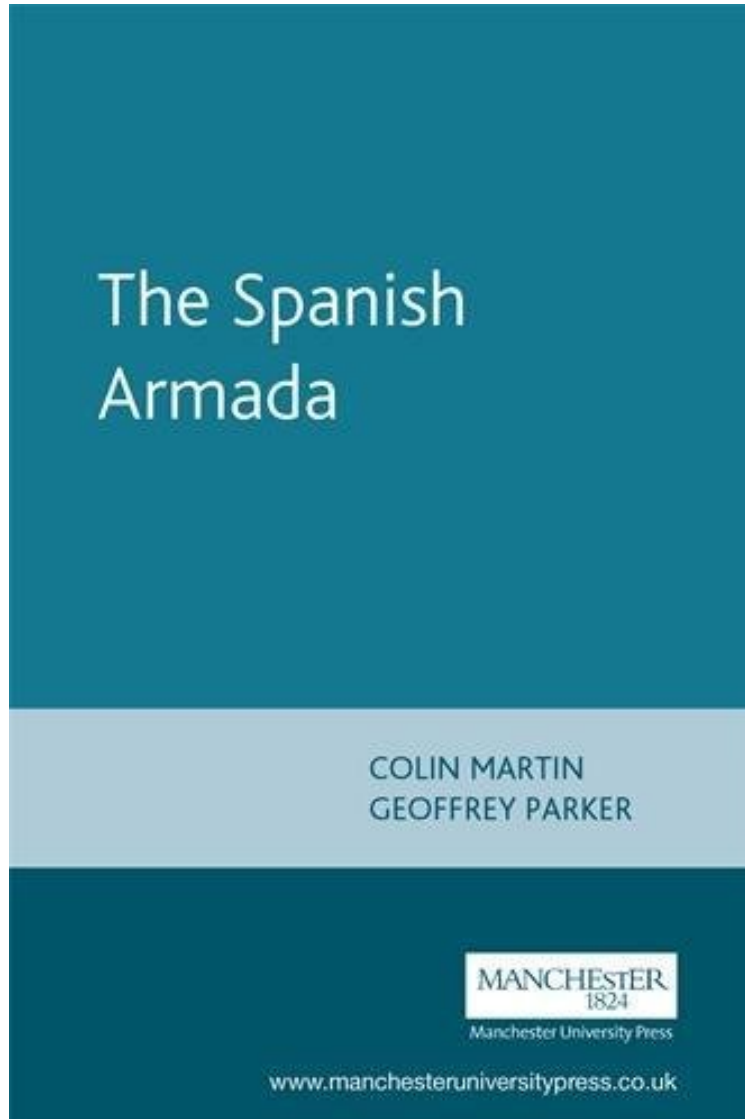


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The Spanish Armada: Revised Edition

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Colin Martin, Geoffrey Parker : The Spanish Armada: Revised Edition before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Spanish Armada: Revised Edition:

16 of 16 people found the following review helpful. The Spanish ArmadaBy Mithridates VI of PontusColin Martin (underwater archaeologist) and Geoffrey Parker's (historian) The Spanish Armada is an impressive and groundbreaking piece of multi-disciplinary scholarship. The causes and the eventual result of the Armada have never been that open to interpretation but the reasons for the extraordinary failure have been. It is in this field that Colin

Martin's excavations contribute vital information. Philip II's plan for the Armada was as follows: the fleet must sail up English Channel and rendezvous in the Straits of Dover with the Spanish 'Army of Flanders' under the command of Parma (Philip II's cousin). Then, the fleet would escort a substantial part of the army on special boats to Kent. From here, then it was supposed to capture the weak English forces (an entire chapter deals with the deficiencies of the English army and Coastal Defenses and potentially what would happen if the army had landed) and capture London with the Armada sailing along side up the Thames. Philip planned to restore the country to Catholicism, set up some sort of puppet ruler, and have the pope pay for a chunk of the extreme cost. His motives were primarily religious (sent by God to remove heretics) but also he wanted to prevent English aid from helping the Dutch independence movement that was busy fighting the Spanish, and secure newly captured Portuguese empire and its sprawled possessions from pretenders to the Portuguese throne (supported by the English) and legal pirates (Drake and others supported by the Queen). The most fascinating part of the book by far is not the political build up (sadly, slightly brief in this text) not the reasons for launching, but the reasons for its spectacular failure. The authors propose that the Spanish tactics, that concentrated on grappling and boarding, had not prepared the soldiers for reloading their unwieldy guns as fast as the English since they expected to fire only once. Secondly, the English had professional sailors who did nothing else but fire cannons. Thirdly, the communication in this period was dismal and although Parma had started to prepare his army it was unable to link with Medina Sidonia and his Armada because he thought the fleet would arrive much later. An entire chapter looks at all the causes of the failure (many more than the ones I have listed above). Most of the blame seems to lie with Philip since the individual commanders did their utmost. He relied on the virtually impossible link up between fleet and army to achieve victory which is at once the weakest and most important part of the entire plan. This book analyzes and dismisses commonly held myths and theories, delves into the fleets with great yet understandable detail, looks at the treatment disparity between the English and Spanish sailors after the war (Elizabeth treated hers VERY poorly in comparison to Philip), and provides multiple helpful images and diagrams. My only important qualm was the fact that the preparation of the Armada itself, overlooked by Medina Sidonia, was only given a cursory look. This book is definitely worthwhile to the scholar and casual historian alike who wants a good look at this fascinating time period. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. One of the best history books I've read.... By R. G. Steen What had been mysterious and unexplainable was clearly and concisely explained. This is history as it should be written! 17 of 18 people found the following review helpful. Excellent chronicle By Jorge Reyes This book provides an excellent chronicle of the actual engagement between the English and Spanish fleets. All the details of war (like the number of ships, men, even the quality of food carried on board) are here. The book does provide an account of the geopolitical events surrounding battle, but I have the impression that the authors were more concerned with describing the battle itself. For a more detailed picture of the diplomatic and political causes and consequences of the Armada, I would refer you to yet another book by Geoffrey Parker: "The Grand Strategy of Philip II").

At the end of July 1588, Philip II's Armada of 130 ships set sail against England. Within a month they were condemned to defeat. The authors spent 13 years reassessing the profusion of untapped documents, diaries and private papers lying forgotten in Spanish and Dutch archives. This material has been augmented by underwater discoveries from the Armada wrecks.

From Publishers Weekly In the summer of 1588, the Spanish Armada of 130 ships was soundly defeated, not by the English so much as by weather. Drawing on historical documents and newly discovered Spanish shipwrecks, Martin (an underwater archeologist) and Parker (Philip II) here write a concise history describing the power struggles and political intrigues of Europe that led to the launching of the armada. They write of the commanders and the commanded, the weapons, rations, ships and supplies of 16th century naval warfare. They trace the horrible journey of the limping armada around Ireland and back to Spain. They blast several myths: "The invincible armada" was a phrase penned by an Englishman, Lord Burghley, after England's victory; the Spanish had never used it. Francis Drake's alleged comment about finishing his game of bowls when the armada was first spotted was not particularly nonchalant; he had hours to wait for the turn of the tide. The armada actually succeeded, argue the authors: the Spanish ships reached Calais their objective largely intact. Here, they were to rendezvous with the Duke of Parma and his Army of Flanders to invade England. It was Parma's unreadiness (because of poor communications) that foiled Spanish plans to place a Catholic ruler on the English throne. Illustrations. Copyright 1988 Reed Business Information, Inc. About the Author Colin Martin is Reader in Maritime Archaeology at the University of St. Andrews. Geoffrey Parker is Professor of History at Ohio State University.