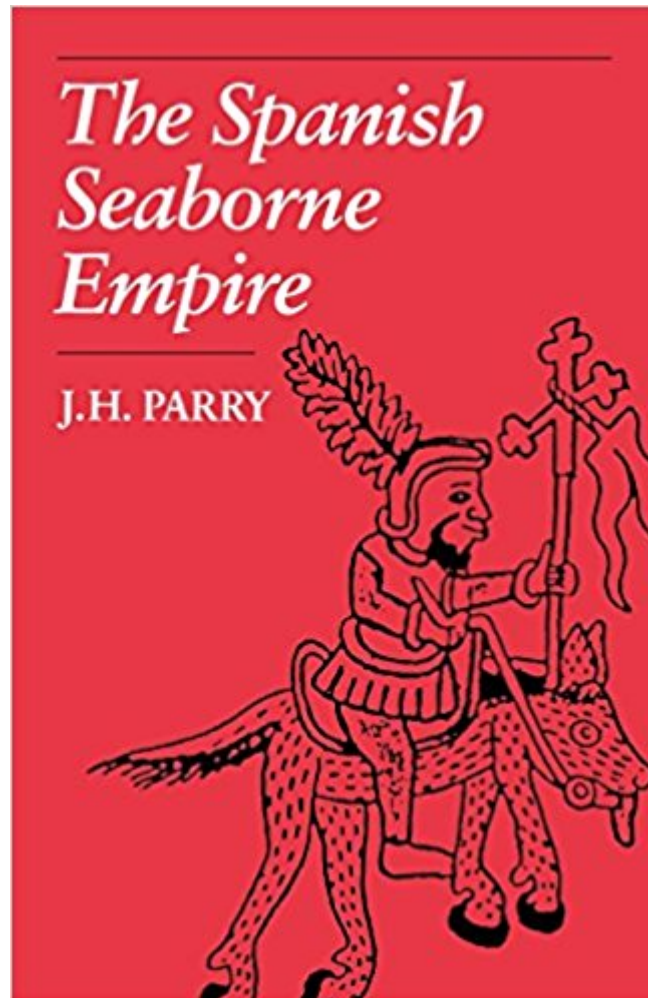




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The Spanish Seaborne Empire



Synopsis

The Spanish empire in America was the first of the great seaborne empires of western Europe; it was for long the richest and the most formidable, the focus of envy, fear, and hatred. Its haphazard beginning dates from 1492; it was to last more than three hundred years before breaking up in the early nineteenth century in civil wars between rival generals and "liberators." Available now for the first time in paperback is J. H. Parry's classic assessment of the impact of Spain on the Americas. Parry presents a broad picture of the conquests of Cortés and Pizarro and of the economic and social consequences in Spain of the effort to maintain control of vast holdings. He probes the complex administration of the empire, its economy, social structure, the influence of the Church, the destruction of the Indian cultures and the effect of their decline on Spanish policy. As we approach the quincentenary of Columbus's arrival in the Americas, Parry provides the historical basis for a new consideration of the former Spanish colonies of Latin America and the transformation of pre-Columbian cultures to colonial states.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"J. H. Parry is a meticulous scholar, and brings a wealth of information to bear. . . . He tells the long, complex story with admirable balance."--John A. Crow, "Saturday Review

J. H. Parry (1914-1984) was educated at Cambridge and Harvard, taught at the University of the West Indies, the University of Ibadan, Nigeria, and the University of Wales. He was appointed Gardiner Professor of Oceanic History and Affairs at Harvard University in 1965. Among his many

books are The Age of Reconnaissance and The Age of Discovery (California).

I had to read this book for a class regarding History of Latin America, and I found it to be both interesting and helpful. I read it quite quickly, and afterwards I decided to buy it (I had borrowed it from a friend). Parry explains how the "Americas" were colonized by Spain, and what happened in the "New World" from the XVth to the XIXth century. The task is difficult, but he pulls it off incredibly well. The reader learns, but also enjoys reading "The Spanish Seaborne Empire", probably because J. H. Parry manages to make history appealing. In my opinion, that is the trademark of really good historians. The book includes several illustrations and maps, and it is organized in five parts. Part I is about "The establishment of Empire", and part II deals with "The responsibilities of Empire" (for example, the spreading of the faith and law enforcement). Part III talks about "The cost of Empire" (demographic catastrophe, economic dependence, etc...), and part IV discusses "The endurance of Empire" (specially its growth and consequent need of reorganisation). Finally, part V considers "The desintegration of Empire". The author wraps up the book nicely with a conclusion titled "The aftermath of Empire". On the whole, I think this is a remarkably good book, that somehow ends up being both useful and readable. I can recommend it to students, but also to people who just want to read a good book about Latin American history :) Belen Alcat

Bought it a few decades ago. decided to get it as an ebook. A good read.

Very entertaining read - not a dry history.

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