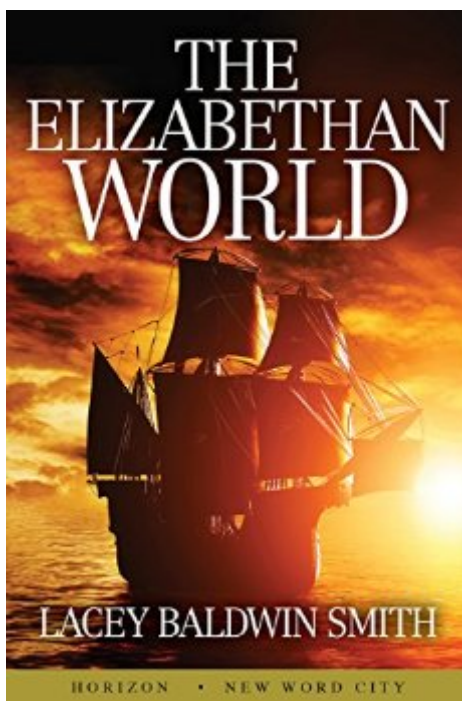


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The Elizabethan World



Synopsis

The Elizabethan World was a world remade. At the dawn of the sixteenth century, Europe was emerging from an age of ignorance and uncertainty. New lands were being discovered and old ones revitalized. People abandoned the ideals of medieval times to make startling advances in technology, science, and art. Here, award-winning historian Lacey Baldwin Smith vividly brings to life the story of Queen Elizabeth - perhaps the most influential sovereign in England's history - and the age she created. During her reign, Queen Elizabeth, last of the Tudor monarchs, presided over developments that still shape and inform our lives and culture today, including her patronage of William Shakespeare, the formation of the Church of England, victory over the Spanish Armada, even the execution of Mary Queen of Scots. Smith's keen eye for detail and sense of how those details have echoed through the centuries make this book essential reading for anyone who wants to understand how history works.

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Customer Reviews

I happened to pick this book up at the library to answer a couple curiosity questions about the movie

of the Golden Age. The Elizabethan World could fill volumes for all that went on. This book is only 280 pages and does a good job giving the reader the core information of events surrounding England, France, Spain and the rest of Europe and the new world. The chapters are thus: Introduction: The Elizabethan Age, Medieval Twilight: The Odour of Despair, Medieval Twilight: The Scent of Optimism, Sin and Schism, The 'Calm and Quiet Season', Rage in Heaven, Catherine de Medici and the Ordeal of France, Philip of Spain and God's Obvious Design, Plot and Counterplot, The Great Enterprise, A Decade of Heroes, New Horizons, Epilogue: 'Dead But Not Buried'. The author covers many areas. The rise of Calvinism, the problems of Religion, the royal houses, the problems of Virgin Queen, the run in with Spain and the Armada, the heroes and what followed after her reign. Many personalities are mentioned. In particular: John Calvin, Francis II, Henry III, Charles IX, Henry IV, Henry, Duke of Guise, Catherine de Medici, Raleigh, Drake, Grenville, Gilbert, The Earl of Essex, Walsingham, Philip II, and Mary Queen of Scots. Since this book focuses on the geopolitics of the age, other aspects such as Shakespeare are lightly mentioned. What was interesting is the chapter on the Heroes as the author goes about pointing out their faults as a counterpoint to the legends that sprang up around them. Drake and his puritan views, the egomaniacs Raleigh and Essex, mentioned that Sir Richard Grenville was better put to a padded room than command of men. Overall, it's a decent book for a quick coverage of the politics of the time.

The publishers of Horizon are well known for their large format pictorial essays on history and art. Lacey Baldwin Smith's book is a very good example of their work. It is broad in its approach and includes descriptions of the world both inside and outside of Elizabeth I's England. Although few of the plates are in color, the black and white images are large and clear. The etchings and woodcuts lose little for being monochromatic. The author makes good use of first hand accounts and narratives, and supports them with background commentary. These accounts are annotated with the name of the author and work. This is not a scholarly work, but as "coffee table" reading it is quite good. I would recommend it to anyone who would like a good general reading of the Elizabethan era.

I love books that tell me more about things I think I know. Usually, as in this case, I find that I didn't "know" what I thought I knew. Sometimes it is because there are different interpretations of the records, and sometimes it's because the "world" I was looking at was really only a small part of the world. This book expands the Elizabethan world beyond the shores of England, and is my first real

look at some of the religious and political events taking place at the same time in France, Spain, and the Low Countries. It addressed a lot of questions I had and was very useful in my attempts to understand the world of my ancestors.

This was a very good history read. The author covers the Elizabethan times from several national perspectives. We learn what is occurring in Spain, Italian city states, The Holy Roman Empire, and England. The interaction between these political entities is explained and is also intriguing.

A text book - novel combined. I read a lot of this period material. This book fills in the blanks and I highly suggest it for both the scholar and to the interested layman.

This is a well written book or not just England but also France and Spain. The author provides an excellent overview of the political and religious world in Western Europe. The author is primarily concerned with how the schism between Catholicism and Protestantism affected the political world during the times of Elizabeth. While the author covers the important political and religious figures of the age, the book only goes into detail on the most important ones and only gives interesting details and anecdotes on a few. The author spends almost no time going into the economics of the period or talking about the major literary figures of the age with the exception of a few sentences or quotes. Missing is the minutiae that makes these books so much fun to read. It was good but it felt like the textbooks I read in college.

I couldn't get into it. His style is too flowery. Some parts were more like gossip. There was no feeling of being on a journey. I gave up after 30 pages. For some this may be a good book so if you are on the fence, you might try a sample.

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