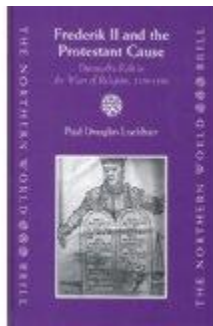


***Frederick II and the Protestant Cause: Denmark's Role in the Wars of Religion 1559-1596*, by Paul Lockhart**
Published by Brill. 340pp.
Reviewed by Rob Morgan

Given the cover price in hardback only, of 149 Euros, or \$204 US whichever you prefer, this isn't obviously, a book to nip out and buy! However, for a Renaissance Baltic naval enthusiast, it provides information about one of northern Europe's most important states during the second half of the sixteenth century.



It deals with the emergence of Denmark as a power after the accession of Christian III in 1536, and with the resources which Frederick II inherited when he succeeded in the late 1550s. Lockhart deals with military and naval forces and the structures supporting them. The Danish capability at sea looms large in this work, and in the year of the Armada, and for many years before, the Danish fleet was as large as that of England, and they were equals as Protestant naval powers. The most noticeable difference was the presence in Denmark's fleets of substantial numbers of oared fighting vessels, for Baltic use and home archipelago defence. These were rough times for the Danes, piracy was a 'thorny problem' in the North Sea, off Norway and across the Baltic. Naval power and vigorous activity at sea was central to Denmark's survival throughout the period of course, and not surprisingly, the Poles were regarded an immense threat to Denmark's ships.

Denmark could well have played a fighting role in the Campaign of the Spanish Armada, and there's a magnificent "what if" wargame there with Dutch and English ships harrying the Spaniards on their doomed way north around Scotland and Ireland. Add on to that the possibility of the Armada, still powerful and capable of giving battle to the enemy, seeking shelter in the sounds or in Norwegian harbours, with Danish protection. Drake thought there was no other logical destination for the Spanish fleet. The book provides a huge number of potential encounters and conflicts for Denmark, and most of them at sea. The post-Armada, or maybe 'Armada: Round 3' might be a better term, particularly appeals, with all those splendid oared craft for which the English and Dutch had virtually no answer.

I feel a wargame coming on!