



[home](#) > [expertise](#) > [faculty spotlight](#) > geoffrey parker

Faculty Spotlight

[Use of Force and Diplomacy](#)

[Ideas, Identities and Decisional Processes that Affect Security](#)

[Institutions that Manage Violent Conflict](#)

[Graduate Student Research](#)

Geoffrey Parker

Geoffrey Parker is Andreas Dorpalen Professor of History at The Ohio State University, as well as an associate of the Mershon Center for International Security Studies.

Parker is author or editor of 36 books, almost 100 articles, and almost 200 book reviews on the social, political, and military history of early modern Europe. His best-known book is *The Military Revolution: Military Innovation and the Rise of the West 1500-1800* (Cambridge, 1988), translated into eight languages and winner of the best book prize from both the American Military Institute and the Society for the History of Technology.

One of Parker's major projects this year is to thoroughly revise *The Military Revolution*. The book argues that three key innovations in the 16th century -- ships capable of firing a broadside, the artillery fortress, and volley fire by infantry -- transformed the nature of European warfare, and that these innovations led to a decisive shift in the balance of power between the West and the rest of the world over the next two centuries.

Since it was published 20 years ago, Parker's book has provoked ongoing discussion including publication of *The Military Revolution Debate: Readings on the Military Transformation of Early Modern Europe*, edited by Clifford Rogers, an Ohio State Ph.D. This debate has spurred Parker to do additional research that has appeared in other books and articles but has not yet been integrated with the material in the original book. He also plans to include new research on 16th century military tactics in the Ottoman Empire and Japan.

Parker's other current book project is *The World Crisis: Climate, Catastrophe, and State Breakdown in the 17th Century*, which looks at why the period between 1640 and 1660 saw more wars and state breakdowns around the world than



Geoffrey Parker

Andreas Dorpalen

Professor of History

The Ohio State University

any other before or since.

Parker explains this global crisis as an interaction of five factors: a sudden episode of “global cooling”; the emergence of vulnerable areas of economic specialization; a sharp increase in religious and fiscal pressure by many governments; the crumbling of the prevailing demographic regime; and the emergence of radical new ideologies. He examines not just ecological adversity, but also the varying human responses, especially noting the differences between states and communities that survived and those that perished.

Parker is a fellow of the British Academy, the highest honor open to scholars in the humanities. He is also a fellow of the Royal Historical Society, the Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences, the Spanish American Academy of Arts and Sciences, and the Royal Academy of History (Madrid). Parker is recipient of the Samuel Eliot Morison Prize from the Society for Military History, as well as two Guggenheim awards.

Parker’s work has also been recognized at Ohio State. In 2007 he received the Harlan Hatcher Memorial Award for Excellence in Teaching, Research, and Service. He also was named Distinguished University Professor, one of only 35 Ohio State faculty members who hold this title, the university’s highest honor.

© 2006-08 Mershon Center for International Security Studies
1501 Neil Ave.
Columbus, OH 43201
Phone: 614.292.1681
Fax: 614.292.2407
Email: mershoncenter@osu.edu