

# H-Net Reviews

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**Vincent P. O'Hara, W. David Dickson, Richard Worth, eds.** *To Crown the Waves: The Great Navies of the First World War*. Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 2013. Maps, tables, illustrations. 360 pp. \$37.95 (cloth), ISBN 978-1-61251-082-8.

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Categorizing itself as a parallel comparative survey of the disposition and campaigns of the navies of the seven world powers during the First World War, *To Crown the Waves: The Great Navies of the First World War* consists of eight chapters summarizing the history and disposition of the Austro-Hungarian, French, German, British, Italian, Russian, and US navies, concluding with a glance at the Japanese and Turkish navies. Each chapter adheres to a prescribed template to create a consistent comparative base on which the authors build their analyses. Each piece begins with a backstory that provides information about a navy's past and its mission during the First World War. The authors next turn to a discussion of the navy's organization, including its command structure, infrastructure, logistics, commerce, and personnel. They then focus on the ways of war; this discussion is intended to establish the doctrine and the specific mission types for each navy's approach to surface warfare, submarine warfare, mine warfare, and the use of budding aviation technologies. Finally, they turn to war experience, through which the authors discuss the evolution of each navy through the course of the war and evaluate each navy's distinct development.

*To Crown the Waves* raises one's hackles at first blush: this is not through any real error by the editors or authors but because of the marketing methods used by the Naval Institute Press. The copy of the book I received includes an undated leaflet declaring the book "free from the national bias that infects so many other books on World War I navies." A critical examination of the book substantiates this claim somewhat, insofar that no overt nationalistic rhetoric is used expressly by any of the contrib-

utors; this success is qualified, however, by Trent Hone in chapter 7, for his discussion of the United States Navy cannot be separated from the concept of American exceptionalism. What remains is a victor's gloss on each chapter's presentation of information. This effect is subtle: because the Triple Entente (Britain, France, and imperial Russia) won the First World War, and Britain and France fought against Russia and Germany in the Second World War, and entered a cold war with Russia and a part of Germany soon after, how could there not exist an unconsciously applied chauvinism to the assessments presented? Such a gloss is applied simply through the evolution of societies as they traverse time through conflict and subsequent victory: in other words, propaganda campaigns before, during, and following each conflict alter the "flavor" of each chapter.

The editors do mention that the book does not rely on the typical referencing standard, but by making this decision, they thereby relegate a book that could be extremely useful to researchers to the status of an undersized coffee-table book: it is in general easy to read and satisfies curiosity. The co-editors, Vincent P. O'Hara, W. David Dickson, and Richard Worth, saw fit to include only a select bibliography in their final product, and in some instances, such as the brief treatment given to the Russian navy in both the bibliography and in that chapter's end-notes, readers are implicitly or explicitly expected to work harder to obtain further information than they ought to. *To Crown the Waves* offers little value to readers seeking inspiration pertaining to their own archival research, thereby reducing its value to career academics, who will find the book a useful collection of

erudite scholarly, albeit not strictly academic, trivia. This value should not be dismissed out of hand, however. The book's format offers secondary and postsecondary students an ideal example of cooperative comparative writing. The information each essay delivers is of good quality, reflecting that each author did research their work extensively, and the quality of writing shown in each contribution provides readers of any merit examples of professional-grade technique. It cannot be labeled an excellent example of academic practice, for that description was forfeited by the editors' decision to publish a volume of accessible popular history. It retains the techniques required of a scholarly text, however, allowing it to be used by inexperienced historians as a template for basic scholarly writing and research methods. It can be used by neophyte and experienced historians as a "think piece," a resource from which research questions may be formed and pursued in further research.

For me, the most intriguing and beneficial component of *To Crown the Waves* are the maps, tables, and illustrations. While they are not capable of representing all of the textual information, even a cursory look at these additions allows a reader to catch the gist of each chapter. Coupled with the expository nature of the editors' outline of each chapter, the maps, tables, and illustrations presumably equip the reader to address the material presented.

Chapter 1, "Austria-Hungary: Die Kaiserliche und Königliche Kriegsmarine" by Zvonimir Freivogel, argues that the Die Kaiserliche und Königliche Kriegsmarine (the Austro-Hungarian Imperial and Royal Navy [KKK]) was not given sufficient attention until the 1866 conflict between Austria-Hungary, Italy, and Prussia. This priority was informed by the popularization of the United States Navy's Rear Admiral Alfred Thayer Mahan. Freivogel uses language typical of offensive maritime strategies: the KKK's strategies against Italy (referred to as War Case I ["Italy"]), against Serbia and Montenegro (War Case B [for "Balkans"]), and possibly against a coalition of Russia, Serbia, and Montenegro (War Case R) were all predicated on the expectation that Austro-Hungarian forces would have to fight through an encircling cordon of opposing Allied forces. In other words, Austro-Hungarian maritime strategists expected to fight wars from a defensive stance, hoping to break through enemy lines in order to establish a military presence in the Balkan, Adriatic, and perhaps the Mediterranean Seas and support Austro-Hungarian troops on the ground. This was an approach supported by Britain's Sir Julian Corbett, but the KKK planned to use and win a de-

cisive fleet action to break the cordon, which was a Mahanian concept. Once war was declared, the KKK certainly operated along Corbettian lines soon after Italy joined the Triple Entente. The Austro-Hungarian navy suffered from poor funding, poor decision-making, insufficient manpower, and the misuse of strategic naval assets throughout the war, but Freivogel nevertheless argues that the Austro-Hungarian KKK proved effective in its role in coastal defense, and by assuring the continued operation of its allies' submarines in the Mediterranean. The KKK was formed through the initiative of Admiral Wilhelm von Tegetthoff, was used as an instrument of economic, exogenous politicking, and was used to defend its foreign trade initiatives. The navy collapsed soon after Emperor Franz Joseph I died in 1916, and efforts to revive the navy began in 1918, too late to be of any use. Freivogel is convinced that the Dual Monarchy was a valid and effective member of the Central powers alliance because its navy was so effective, an argument somewhat at odds with the evidence he presents.

Jean Martin argues in chapter 2, "France: La Marine Nationale," that the French navy, established by Jean-Baptiste Colbert, sat second in esteem to France's army, much as the KKK was perceived. By the time Napoleon III came into power, the navy was nearly a match for the British Royal Navy. Despite incidents of envy on both sides, France's and Britain's navies worked well together through the First World War, a success built on their cooperation during the 1853-56 Crimean War. When Germany began to threaten the European status quo, it was natural that France and Britain would join forces. France had built a navy large enough to protect its colonial interests and to counter an Italian offensive: this was an eventuality France was forced to consider once the nascent German navy began increasing its power. Britain and France implemented mutual defense pacts they had signed between January and February 1913, fearing a European war. When Germany declared war on France on August 3, 1914, a redeployment of French forces was necessary: as set down in 1912, France's naval law required twenty-eight battleships, ten scout cruisers, and ten overseas cruisers. They were to be supported by fifty-two destroyers and ninety-four submarines. Four *Courbet*-class dreadnoughts entered service in 1914, and three superdreadnoughts of the *Bretagne* class followed soon after. France's navy was technologically advanced, which meant that it would be difficult to keep all systems operational during and after battles.

By the time the armistice of November 11, 1918, was signed, France's navy had suffered nearly 19,500 casual-

ties, including 7,500 prisoners. France's naval industrial complex had not been upgraded nor adequately renewed, leaving the extant prewar machinery in a poor state of repair. Manpower had been routinely shifted from sailors' areas of expertise to completely alien weapons platforms: submariners were reassigned to sloops, for instance. Cooperative communication between all parties responsible for naval disposition, diplomacy with the British beyond sailors' pay grades, and infighting occurred over issues of authority within each nation's preassigned zones of responsibility. This conflict was not resolved until long after the Malta conference on March 2, 1916, when the convoy system was created and implemented. The French navy as a whole showed great spirit, Martin writes, but its advanced technology was complex and was hard to maintain. Ultimately, says Martin, the French navy's greatest enemy was its own ships.

Peter Schenk, Axel Niestlé, and Dieter Thomaier joined forces to write chapter 3, "Germany: Kaiserliche Marine," and discuss the curious choices Germany's maritime commanders made through the course of the First World War. The most blatant example was Germany's use of the U-boat. Although U-boats proved effective throughout the war, submarines were initially derided by the German Imperial Navy as defensive and static vessels, deployable in a manner similar to minefields. German wartime maritime strategy was based wholly on the premise that the British Royal Navy would curtail German operations in the North Sea. Neither Alfred Tirpitz, Germany's state secretary of the Reichs Marine-Amt ("Naval Administration") as of 1897, nor Admiral Friedrich von Ingenohl, commander of the German High Seas Fleet, had in May 1914 a contingency plan should Britain not appear in the "German Bight" at all; the Imperial Navy did have to acknowledge in 1910 that Germany could not compete with Britain in a naval arms race and was forced to find new ways to wage war at sea. By 1913, the U-boats were equipped with powerful diesel engines and could operate in any weather conditions for up to a week. This illustrates that unlike several other navies, the Imperial Navy was not averse to experimentation.

Even the destruction of Vice Admiral Reinhard Scheer's fleet at the Battle of Jutland, fought between May 31, 1916, and June 1, 1916, did not change German naval planning. Britain's Admiral John Jellicoe sailed into battle with Scheer's fleet fully aware of all planned German tactics and capabilities, for Britain had cracked the German wireless codes in 1915, and Germany's *Nachrichtenbureau*, the navy's intelligence and signals branch, took nearly another year after Jutland to

change its codes. It was around that time, in February 1917, that the Imperial Navy cut the reins of the U-boat fleet and placed the success of its maritime war in the hands (or, more appropriately, on the diving planes) of the previously belittled service branch. This encouraged much experimentation with the platform's design, eventually landing on torpedo-carrying U-boats as the most effective ship-sinking design of the war. Schenk, Niestlé, and Thomaier conclude that the German Empire's maritime war could have been successful had the unrestricted U-boat campaign been initiated sooner, with a construction plan to match, prior to mid-1916. Because the German Imperial Navy was permitted to expand only in late 1916, it was too late for the U-boat fleet to affect the German economy enough to construct the needed logistical structure. The sudden need for U-boats did not create sufficient upset in the government to allow Germany's economic war to keep up with Germany's maritime needs.

In chapter 4, "Great Britain: The Royal Navy," John Roberts notes that at the turn of the twentieth century, the Royal Navy (RN) was the planet's dominant naval power, and the political power the RN wielded was significant indeed. Because of its power, the RN had allowed itself to grow complacent between Horatio Nelson's victories a century before and the rise of the German Empire. While it was an effective peacetime, and colonial, fleet, it was not disposed for war: new naval technologies needed new naval theories, and Corbett rose to the challenge, as did Mahan in the United States. Britain viewed German naval expansion as a direct threat to the RN's maritime assets (and the merchant marine navy it defended): this was in contrast to the relatively benign expansion of the Royal Canadian Navy (RCN) Schenk, Niestlé, and Thomaier describe in chapter 3. Navalists with great political power, such as First Sea Lord Admiral Sir John "Jackie" Fisher, pushed the maritime agenda through all stages of the government, and by 1914 the RN's fleet was fully modernized and most had seen less than a decade of service. The concept of the all-big-gun battleship had taken the world by storm: HMS *Dreadnought* was one such example, and the first dreadnought constructed.

The Admiralty's defense strategies for the British Isles involved a waiting game in which Britain would suffer the slings and arrows of the enemy until the RN's High Seas Fleet was fully prepared for war; it would then sally forth en masse to overwhelm the enemy's forces afloat in the North Sea. Britain's Grand Fleet was tasked with mitigating enemy efforts to attack Britain, and therefore had to be ready to meet any challenge, and

any reductions to the fleet was of great interest and of concern to its leaders. As other ships entered service and were employed in trade protection, and as technical problems were resolved, the Grand Fleet felt the persistent pressures upon it ease. These pressures would arise again in the wake of the Battle of Jutland and were relieved somewhat when the United States sent a squadron of battle-ready capital ships; this, however, posed another problem. The Admiralty had a sense that despite the greater numbers of battleships it could now deploy, German ships were of a higher grade, carried greater firepower, and were crewed by better-trained sailors than those of RN fleets: the fear was that the Allied fleet at Scapa Flow could not weather the German storm. The lack of destroyers the RN could muster when needed was a case in point: most were on escort duty, some were deploying mines, and others were protecting amphibious raids on the Continent. Britain, with the guidance of Acting Vice Admiral David Beatty, who was in command of the Battlecruiser Fleet, initiated a policy of avoidance in January 1918, effectively placing the battlecruisers well beyond Germany's reach, and exercised constantly in preparation for the sortie of the German High Seas Fleet. While these measures may have been considered necessary at the time, history proves otherwise: Germany did not prepare any fleet actions between January and April 1918, and no fleet action ever occurred.

Roberts concludes that the First World War benefited Britain in the sense that the flaws of peacetime strategic planning were revealed and largely attended to; critical flaws in battleship design were similarly addressed. The RN modernized quickly, and at the war's end it emerged as a well-developed fleet prepared for modern industrial total warfare and with minds open to technological advances. Roberts's treatment of the RN is undoubtedly the gem in *To Crown the Waves*. The extent of his research is clearly demonstrated throughout his narrative, which is clear and concise, and encompasses tremendous amounts of data. Supported by well-referenced and well-presented tables containing quantifiable data, Roberts's chapter is a resource of value to professional and armchair historians and to postsecondary and graduate students alike.

Constraining their treatment of the *Regia Marina* in chapter 5 to the observation that Italy's primary maritime preoccupation prior to and during the First World War was France, Enrico Cernuschi and Vincent O'Hara discuss the Mediterranean "swing state." Between 1861 and 1918, Italy was faced with an overwhelming number of potential enemies, and in the face of these threats,

the *Regia Marina's* disposition lay primarily in "proto-battlecruisers" built in the 1870s, and its mission was to deploy quickly against French maritime shipping and withdraw. When the proto-battlecruisers entered service in 1885, *Italia* and *Lepanto* formed the core of an integrated battle fleet. Four additional battleship classes followed soon after; the Italian ships proved more powerful than their French counterparts. This allowed Italy to follow a strategy of deterrence that lasted for more than a decade before Tirpitz applied his *Risiko* policy to Britain. Protected cruisers, sloops, and gunboats entered Italian service, as did torpedo boats and torpedo cruisers; the latter were intended to support Italian colonial enterprises in the Tyrrhenian, Ionian, and Adriatic Seas. Coast-hugging submarines followed post-1905.

Rome's maritime doctrine precluded battlecruisers, but its fast battleship strategy was bolstered with four superdreadnoughts of the *Caracciolo* class. While they would not enter service until the 1910s, three light cruisers would accompany them. These orders were timely, as Rome's attention was being drawn to the burgeoning Austro-Hungarian navy. When Italy conquered Libya in 1912, it was opposed by both France and Britain: where their threats and condemnation were intended to deter Italian aspirations, they in fact encouraged Italy to collaborate with Germany and Austria-Hungary. Germany, for instance, commissioned three *Poerio*-class large destroyers from Italian shipyards. Italy's attempts to remain neutral were ultimately in vain: Austria-Hungary's actions were no longer acceptable by Italy's leaders, and when Italy turned its back on a decades-long alliance, the Central powers were bitterly disappointed.

Its new allies were dismissive of Italy: Cernuschi and O'Hara relate an incident in which Italy was instructed to traverse mined waters patrolled by submarines in order to fight "impossible battles with the Austro-Hungarian fleet while the French fleet waited events at Corfu [Greece] and the British kept their squadron of elderly pre-dreadnoughts at Taranto" (p. 182). They conclude that Italy's role in the First World War was to constrain the Austro-Hungarian fleet within the Adriatic, to protect Allied traffic, and to interdict the enemy. Cernuschi and O'Hara conclude further that in these roles Italy fulfilled its role well. It had found a niche role and it created a method and a navy perfectly suited to fill it, a philosophy that had its origin in the principles of Admiral Paolo Thaon di Revel. Thaon di Revel, a polarizing figure in Italian wartime politics, sought to further Italy's best interests rather than the best interests of its alliance. He developed the doctrine of suiting strategy and tactics

to specific geographies and was able to get the most for Italy's navy for the least cost. He would take complete control of the navy in 1917; and when the Second World War began, his doctrines formed the core Italian naval policy, vindicating his efforts to his detractors.

Chapter 5 contrasts sharply with chapter 1 in tone. Freivogel's treatment of the Austro-Hungarian perspective is almost petulant, describing Italy's control of the Mediterranean in language that invokes the mental constructs congruent with total domination. Cernuschi and O'Hara present the *Regia Marina* as alternately a backward and borderline obsolete fleet or as a fleet planned deliberately to fulfill a specific role: the narrative supports both views equally well. Chapter 2, discussing France's navy, is dismissive of the Italian navy, which is consistent with Cernuschi and O'Hara's portrayal. The contrast between chapters 2 and 5 is represented with great clarity and is a good example of fundamental techniques of comparative writing in undergraduate essays and useful template for other writers to hone their own technique.

Researching and writing chapter 6, "Russia: Rossiiskii imperatorskii flot," could not have been easy for author Stephen McLaughlin, if only for the profusion of source material available to him. Through the judicious use of maps, tables, and the occasional photograph, McLaughlin illustrates successfully and comprehensively the fiasco that was the Russian Imperial Navy during the First World War. The imperial practice of promotion favoring seniority over military merit, called *tsenz*, was instituted under the rule of Tsar Nicholas II, destroying the cautiously respectable reputation the Russian fleet had built since its creation in 1696. Social upheavals between 1905 and 1907, including several mutinies, caused further disruption. It took time, but the importance of the *tsenz* diminished somewhat toward 1910, and the Naval General Staff was tasked with the eradication of logistical and bureaucratic failures. This development was necessary following Russia's embarrassing and total defeat in the Russo-Japanese War of 1905.[1] Having lost faith in their leaders, many Russians abandoned their posts and defected; poor funding and worse infrastructure caused many ship building projects, such as the four *Sevastopol*-class ships, to be characterized by start-and-stop work periods.

Real reform did not begin to affect the navy until Admiral Ivan Konstantinovich Grigorovich was appointed naval minister: his willingness to work cooperatively with the government helped to turn widespread disap-

proval of the navy into cautious optimism. Positive relations between the Russian legislature, the *Duma*, and the naval minister began shortly after the admiral's appointment, and by 1911 the *Sevastopol*-class ships were finally allocated enough funds to facilitate their completion. This progression was witnessed at the operational level by the commander of the Baltic Fleet, Admiral Nikolai Essen, and, until its destruction, the Black Sea Fleet's commander, Admiral Andrei Augustovich Ebergard. When war came, they shouldered command of all naval assets in their areas of responsibility.

Russia's wartime maritime planning was predicated upon two assumptions: that land battles would decide the ultimate outcome of the war (a Corbettian attitude) and that future wars would be short. In other words, Russia was not at all prepared to fight a total war. The Baltic Fleet, deployed around a massive minefield in the Gulf of Finland, was to guard against German landings and to prevent German sorties against St. Petersburg. Any invasion was predicted to permit Finnish dissidents to rise up against the Russian occupation. At worst, the Baltic Fleet was expected to delay the enemy for fourteen days, giving the army two weeks to prepare defenses. The Black Sea Fleet had no established structure, due in part to the conflicting priorities of the fleet command and of the Naval General Staff. Again, causing confusion and delaying the enemy's landing was the priority. The Siberian Fleet had been virtually annihilated by the Japanese in the Russo-Japanese War, and Japan refused to allow Russia to have anything but a token fleet operating out of Vladivostok. The Soviet Fleet consisted of two cruisers, a handful of destroyers, and obsolete submarines. They would soon be redeployed in the Baltic Sea, and what remained merely patrolled the Caspian Sea and the Amur River for sovereignty protection.

McLaughlin concludes that the combined Russian navy in August 1914 was competent but not stellar. The quality of its officers was overshadowed by the quality of its equipment: hardware would not defect. The Naval General Staff and the military as a whole considered Nicholas II and his compatriot Grigori Rasputin laughable; when the provisional government forced Nicholas II to abdicate, the Red Service was favorable to imperial service. All the lessons Russian officers had learned during the war were eradicated by the effluvium of Red Russia's ideologies.

Chapter 6 delivers an image of the Russian Imperial Navy that is as positive as McLaughlin could display. His final analysis of the Imperial Navy reflects the metaphor

of a lone candle sputtering out in the darkness of Red Russia: the efforts of the provisional government to repopulate the navy's officer corps with competent leaders that could use the technologies and floating assets they were given is discussed well, and it is equally clear that when the Bolsheviks seized government in the aftermath of the February Revolution of 1917, it triggered a civil war in "White" Finland, and all progressive efforts to reform the navy were destroyed. As is appropriate when presenting and assessing fluctuating datasets—which occur frequently through even short periods in the history of the Imperial Navy—McLaughlin employs explanatory prose to add significance and context to his tables. This has the effect of normalizing the convoluted information he presents. While the awareness and employment of this technique can be expected of doctoral and postdoctoral researchers and writers, I have to date not encountered a more skillful application of this technique, which is fully in keeping with the demonstrative value of the book.

Hone is clearly concerned with relating the detailed disposition of the United States Navy (USN) both prior to and during the First World War in chapter 7, "United States: The U.S. Navy." His meticulous illustration of the myriad complexities of US prewar planning, politics, and wartime implementation is impressive. He spends an amount of effort discussing construction, redesign, and policy disproportionate to that invested by the other contributors to the book. His approach to chapter 7 is similar to McLaughlin's in chapter 6: he uses tables and charts to group aggregate data into manageable pieces. He shows his interest in armaments is greater than his interest in chronology and the discussion of causal progression through the use of said tables. This does have a benefit to readers that is unique to chapter 7. Hone's approach illustrates the influence of "American exceptionalism" on USN wartime and peacetime policy alike. For students studying the US military, Hone provides, solely through the context of his essay as a component of the larger project, a clear example of the manifestation of nationalistic bias in academic work, benign as it is. He does refer to US military and foreign policy development as progressing "a newly developed brand of American imperialism," setting the reader on a clear tack concerning his agenda (p. 258).

The end of the Spanish-American War in 1898 heralded the United States' arrival on the scene as a global power. The US relied on its navy to defend the Monroe Doctrine, a policy that, grossly simplified, allowed the United States to assume defense over North America

should it feel its sovereignty from foreign powers was being challenged or threatened. Other nations (such as Canada), colonial powers (such as Spain), and want-to-be colonial powers (such as Germany) found this attitude troubling, and the United States refined its policy somewhat, but the Monroe Doctrine remained the foundation upon which US massive maritime expansion was built. The Hay-Pauncefote Treaty between Britain and the United States led to the construction of the Panama Canal. The United States' Open Door Policy toward China allowed the US to consider Japanese imperial expansion a potential threat to the US West Coast. The USN was designed to be considered a navy consisting of a single fleet: the intent was to make it possible for all of the United States' naval assets to be concentrated in one place, in pursuit of victory through overwhelming power. This preference made the division of the USN into an Atlantic Fleet and a Pacific Fleet unacceptable, and the Panama Canal made it possible for naval components to transit from either side of the continent by shaving nearly fourteen thousand miles; the transit around Cape Horn was nearly nineteen thousand miles.

An ardent admirer of naval theorist Rear Admiral Mahan, President Theodore Roosevelt had brokered a peace agreement ending the Russo-Japanese War in 1905, was aware of the value of a decisive fleet action, found he was justified in his belief that Japanese imperial expansion could threaten the United States. The Atlantic Fleet numbered twenty-two fully modern battleships by December 1907, and Roosevelt sent sixteen of them, the legendary Great White Fleet, around the globe to illustrate to potential enemies the power the US could bring to bear. By-products of this tour, beyond providing a comprehensive, two-year "shake-down" of the new ships, were that it allowed naval engineers to refine their designs and to gain detailed intelligence about the other navies it encountered. By the end of the cruise, detailed assessments of the military situation across each great ocean were underway: the Atlantic Fleet was designed to protect the Monroe Doctrine (and later the Roosevelt Corollary) along the North American East Coast and the Caribbean, in part by providing stabilizing aid to republics in Central America; and the US Navy had to be prepared to bring its power to bear on the Pacific Rim, far from continental North American shores.[2]

Dubbed "War Plan Black," alternating years of students at the United States Naval War College (USNWC) in Annapolis, Maryland, created scenarios in which war between Germany and the United States were to occur. A defensive strategy was recommended. Considering that a

German fleet would be unlikely to bring battle directly to US shores after a transatlantic cruise, the most likely scenario was that a German fleet would build a base of operations in the Caribbean and work its way up the coast. Consistent with Mahanian maritime war theory, a decisive fleet action would inevitably occur in the western Atlantic and would decide the result of the war. After the First World War, Allied examination of Germany's Operation Plan III showed that the Germans had come to the same conclusions. In the Pacific, "War Plan Orange," the puzzle other alternating years of USNWC students worked on, suggested that the most efficacious manner of defending US interests was to use Hawai'i, the Philippines, and Guam as stepping stones to bring a decisive fleet action to the Japanese.

Hone concludes his chapter by remarking that the USN entered the First World War with little practical battle experience and that the nation's reluctance to accept that adopting new methods of waging war was necessary indicated a "lack of imagination" (p. 306). The only reason the USN could adjust to anti-submarine efforts as quickly as it did, says Hone, was because organizational changes prior to 1917 had been developed in such a way as to support such rapid changes in doctrine. In other words, the United States recognized that it could be necessary to plan for rapid changes in doctrine and cleared the way for the implementation of policies that would enable that action. He states categorically that the establishment of the Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) was the key change made immediately prior to US entry into the war: the CNO could act in the navy secretary's name to coordinate global USN maritime strategy and activity. The general board allowed the CNO to coordinate USN assets effectively.

Hone praises Secretary of the Navy Josephus Daniels for his generally progressive and positive changes, namely, the reformation of the USN's promotion schedule to one of merit rather than seniority; changes in industrial management with regard to size, capability, and efficiency reflected this policy as well. Cooperative anti-submarine operations between the British Grand Fleet and the USN ensured the latter would gain tremendous experience quickly and introduced the "demands and rigors of war" to USN and general US bureaucracy (p. 307). For Hone, the First World War exposed the navy system's flaws in time for their repair and trial in the next war. If Hone's words were stated another way, the USN entered the First World War as a trial phase for, and in anticipation of, "the next war."

O'Hara and Worth combine their talents to discuss other navies in chapter 8, skipping lightly over the Japanese navy and the Ottoman navy. Although it is mentioned, the Brazilian navy is dismissed in a single paragraph; the Hellenic navy (Greece) is not given even that much treatment, being used to illustrate a case of operational humiliation the Ottomans suffered.

Reformed in some fifty-odd years, both Japanese society and its navy changed its tack suddenly, steering away from a technological level similar to the age of sail toward the age of steam. Its leaders learned the lessons the West offered quickly and well: by the end of the nineteenth century and just as the twentieth century was dawning, Japan handily defeated the national fleets of China and Russia, despite their arguably superior disposition. Because of its distance from Western Europe, Japan had little to do with the First World War. The British did invoke the Anglo-Japanese Treaty of 1911, and Japan gained experience in overseas deployment and in convoy protection as a result. Tensions between Britain and Japan were high, for the Admiralty had begun to restrict the technical advances they had been sharing with Japan, ceasing the practice altogether as early as 1909, viewing Japan as a potential threat. The Japanese mirrored this attitude: although Japan and the United States were allies in June of 1918, the Imperial National Defence Policy reviewed in that year specified that the United States remained Japan's most likely maritime opponent. Japan's wartime and peacetime preparations led ultimately to its campaign against the United States in the Second World War, triggered by the 1922 Washington Conference. Many influential Japanese officials and interest groups equated national security only through the lens of unrestricted military development and deployment of its assets without the interference of other nations. The eventual test of Japanese independence was possible only through a decisive battle with the most powerful navy in the world: the USN.

The Ottoman Empire's navy was never a particularly powerful one, and it became a laughingstock in the 1800s. Massive debt crippled reform and naval construction programs, and Italy used the ships Turkey was sending to Germany for modernization hostage, in order to collect money owed. When a single Greek cruiser outfought a much larger Turkish Battle Division, which included three capital ships, it became apparent that the fleet Constantinople could deploy was useless in modern war. Over time, Turkey was able to acquire a dreadnought from Brazil; two more dreadnoughts were commissioned from the Vickers and Armstrong shipyards in

Britain, but the British government seized these vessels before war was declared. This diplomatic faux pas crippled Anglo-Turkish relations in decades to come. Turkey threw its lot in with Germany, and received both capable warships and naval officers in return. It was not enough to make Turkey competitive, but German-Turkish cooperation forced Russia to count the Ottoman fleet as a strategic wildcard. O'Hara and Worth argue that Ottoman Turkey's most effective maritime units were in fact coastal guns and a maritime air arm the French had helped Turkey create in 1913.

The conclusions the editors draw from each chapter are presented only briefly at the end of *To Crown the Waves*. No navy was prepared for a maritime war in August 1914. New technologies and evolving maritime theory cast a jumbled mess to naval planners, because the decisive fleet actions witnessed at the Yalu River, Santiago, and Tsushima were not to be the norm in applied warfare, despite expectations. Germany created an unforeseeably useful blockade-breaker out of the ill-understood submarine, and convoy practices were employed to stymie unrestricted submarine warfare in turn. Italy proved to be a wildcard, which helped win the maritime war in the Mediterranean. The Russians were relatively ineffective and unaffected by maritime war beyond their demonstrated success with naval mines. Japan was a spectator to the European total war and learned from it; the naval revolutions underway in 1914 were resolved and honed globally by 1918. The United States had primed its navy for "the next war," and the French relied on its fleet after the German invasion on the Continent. O'Hara, Dickson, and Worth remark that the most significant development of the First World War was the demonstrated integration abilities of the Allied forces, particularly with regard to the speed with which this integration occurred.

Mass production was tested. Junior naval officers directed the tack of the maritime war in the 1940s. The United States flourished postwar, and it left both world wars in good condition, while dreadnoughts faded to make way for aircraft carriers, and the much-maligned submarine weapons platform supplanted the sheer destructive powers in the open sea that the dreadnoughts had once promised. O'Hara, Dickson, and Worth conclude that the retroactively created premise of the First World War was to posit, present, and develop revolutions in technology and theory, not to mention the organization and use of manpower in preparation for a greater war to come.

O'Hara, Dickson, and Worth have assembled an effective combination of cooperative method, specified conclusive desiderata, authors, and ultimately a topic that lends itself to clear comparison. This latter feature is what makes it possible for the precepts of *To Crown the Waves* to succeed. The editors have made it possible for readers, independently of the context provided by adjacent chapters, to understand the relative power distribution of a given fleet to its allies and opponents. As a result, this book provides a reference text for a reader that clearly delineates the differences and similarities between the navies discussed. Secondary and post-secondary students can use *To Crown the Waves* to develop a panoramic understanding of the maritime situation of the First World War. The broad, "bullet-point" presentation of the information in each chapter can be used in an inspirational manner for students seeking essay topics. Each chapter provides insufficient information for readers to use to answer questions that require deeper analysis of available reference material: O'Hara, Dickson, and Worth fail both the reader and the authors in the respect that they severely curtailed citations and bibliographies. While this ought to be a minor issue for advanced readers, it may prove daunting to those with less-advanced research skills. The book is nevertheless an excellent resource for instructors, as each chapter and each author offer different qualitative and quantitative challenges for students. Ideally, critical reading abilities should be instilled in students, and the careful formatting of this book encourages readers to exercise this skill.

To reiterate, if readers wish to use *To Crown the Waves* as a springboard into a mass of archival and primary documentation, they should expect to be disappointed. As a teaching tool, however, O'Hara, Dickson, and Worth have created a volume ideal for inspiring the delivery of many different, but related, examples of methodology. They make it easy for educators to illustrate skill sets and to create exercises that will help instill them in students. This is manifested in a different manner for advanced readers: because the book does not lend itself to providing *answers* to questions, it *does* provide advanced readers with a *source* of questions. For very advanced readers, the opportunity to practice skills fundamental to their discipline with interesting, if not inspired, content is readily available.

#### Notes

[1]. See the short article, Aidan Clarke, "The Decisive Fleet Engagement at the Battle of the Yalu River," *Center for International Maritime Security* (October 10,

2018): <http://cimsec.org/the-decisive-fleet-engagement-at-the-battle-of-the-yalu-river/38397>. I strongly recommend this piece, which offers a “short and dirty” look into the Russo-Japanese War.

[2]. See Ambjörn L. Adomeit, “Alfred and Theodore Go to Hawai’i: The Value of Hawai’i in the Maritime Strategic Thought of Alfred Thayer Mahan,”

*International Journal of Naval History* 13, no. 1 (April 2016): <http://www.ijnhonline.org/2016/05/26/alfred-and-theodore-go-to-hawaii-the-value-of-hawaii-in-the-maritime-strategic-thought-of-alfred-thayer-mahan/>, for a discussion of the role Hawai’i played in the USN’s increasing defense of the Pacific from the Japanese.

If there is additional discussion of this review, you may access it through the network, at:

<https://networks.h-net.org/h-war>

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