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Mahan on Sea Power

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the traditional Navy; and two, the nuclear, or Rickover Navy. And it appears that the nuclear Navy is very much in the ascendancy, both materially and personnel-wise. The authors say that Rickover hated the Navy, its institutions, its traditions. About 1951, he set about changing the system, and he succeeded. The Navy saw the reactor as a mechanism in the evolution from sail to improved propulsion; what counted was the warship, not the machinery that moved it. Rickover saw his machinery as the centerpiece of the ship, if not the whole Navy. In the nuclear Navy, weapons and the many associated equipments needed to fight a ship are definitely secondary to the propulsion plant.

The book is the story of a very controversial, a very self-serving, a brilliant manipulator of people, a zealous visionary, a bitter man—truly, an odd officer with odd talents whose impact on the Navy for over a quarter century has been uncanny. Rickover's ultimate effect on the Navy lies in the future. The Nucs of the Navy have no fear but many old-timers, in and out of the Navy, are deeply concerned about the fighting capabilities that a latter-day Machiavelli has wrought.

ELI REICH
Vice Admiral, U.S. Navy (Ret.)

Livezey, William E. *Mahan on Sea Power*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1982. 427pp. \$15.95

The revision of William Livezey's excellent work, first published in 1947, is timely and worthy of consideration by all students of the use and influence of sea power. His intent was to meet a definite need "for appraisal of Mahan's ideas, a correlation of them with the climate in which they took shape and an estimate of their influence upon the course of events." The original work did

fulfill this purpose and was well received by historians and navalists. Neither an unabashed hymnal for Mahan, as the Puleston biography, nor abrasively critical as Seager, Professor Livezey of the University of Oklahoma provides a scholarly, readable interpretation of the "influence of Alfred Thayer Mahan on American Sea Power." His thesis was that Mahan's primary value and role was as an advocate and annunciator of America's place in the world, a world of competition and force provided by a mighty fleet of capital ships, remains unchanged in this revised edition.

Livezey examines Mahan, the period in which he wrote, and his influence on the men and nation-states of his era. The industrial revolution, creation of world markets, colonialism, and expansion were all forces that required a framework for nation-states use. Mahan's conversion to imperialism and the need for "colonies, commerce and bases" were the trinity of necessary factors in his argument for the United States to become a great power. History "proved" that nations possessing sea power would be the great powers. The biology theories of Darwin were transferred to the arena of society where competition for a "disproportionate" amount of the world's resources was the "natural" order. Men and nations were destined to compete, competition fostered conflict, and conflict which was "justified" would resolve in the favor of those nations that were sea powers.

The somewhat circular argument of commerce, a merchant marine, and the resultant requirement for a large navy of capital ships to defend them, was the central theme espoused and defended by Mahan in his thirty-year writing career. Livezey's treatment of Mahan's theory of naval warfare is particularly sound, bringing an order to the rules and principles which are scattered, randomly, throughout Mahan's voluminous writings. The final chapter, Chapter 15, is new and looks at the concepts of

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"command of the sea," nuclear technology, and a world vastly different from that which Mahan or anyone could have envisioned in 1914.

Livezey, writing in the aftermath of World War II, originally concluded that the doctrines of conflict and force propounded by Mahan were no longer sound as a basis for international action. "The atomic age has shown conclusively that the only guarantee of civilization is a society of nations." He assessed Mahan's doctrines of naval warfare as applicable, though modified by the tremendous impact of the carrier, submarine, and land-based aircraft, and concluded "there is little to justify the belief that naval strategy as enunciated by Mahan will be basically altered."

Writing again in 1980, he significantly revises his original conclusion: "It seems safe to conclude that the impact of technology . . . has so altered naval warfare from the days of Mahan that the erstwhile dean of naval strategy . . . is no longer the leading authority in current naval strategic thinking." He bases this argument on the concept of command of the sea, claiming that as overall command is no longer attainable, local sea control and denial are the more useful and obtainable objectives. With this view I must disagree and argue that though more difficult and at much greater risk and cost, a nation which by geographic and economic circumstances is dependent on the sea must, ultimately, be able to command the sea or, in the final analysis, lose its position of world leadership.

Overall, Professor Livezey's final chapter provides us with an update of U.S. and, to a lesser degree, Soviet thought on the use of navies and sea power. His carefully documented and annotated pages show thorough study of the authors who write and study the international scene, evaluate the use and importance of sea power and attempt to predict its importance for the future. No

serious student of military history and the influence of Alfred Thayer Mahan on U.S. naval thought past and present should be without this study.

T.A. FITZGERALD
Captain, U.S. Navy

Kennedy, Paul M. *The Rise of the Anglo-German Antagonism, 1860-1914*. Winchester, Mass.: Allen and Unwin, 1980. 604pp. \$60

As the author of the superb book, *The Rise and Fall of British Naval Mastery* (1976), Paul Kennedy is no stranger to readers of this journal. Kennedy is, without a doubt, one of the world's most highly regarded historians and one of the leading, if not the leading expert on the subject of Anglo-German relations. Thus, the publication of *The Rise of the Anglo-German Antagonism*, which is the fruit of more than ten years of concentrated research, is a major event.

The title notwithstanding, this is a book about the origins of World War I. Ultimately, Kennedy wants to determine why Britain and Germany went to war against each other in 1914. There are two well-known explanations with which Kennedy wrestles, each of which points to Germany as the *bête noire* and interestingly, each of which has the same root cause. The first is the domestic structure or primacy of domestic politics argument. Industrialization came late to Germany; and when it arrived with all its fury, it turned what had been an agrarian society on its head. Unlike the British case, modernization was not a gradual process in Germany. This wholesale disruption led to significant domestic instability, which ultimately manifested itself in an adventurous foreign policy. The outbreak of the war can be best explained by focusing on the domestic sources of conflict. Since the appearance