

Book Reviews

Japanese Sea Power: A Maritime Nation's Struggle for Identity by Naoko Sajima and Kyoichi Tachikawa, Canberra: Sea Power Center – Australia, 2009, 202 pages, appendices, ISBN 978-0-642-29705-1.

Reviewed by Matt Gillis

Few states have experienced as many naval transformations as Japan. Its navy has transformed from a coastal force in the seventh century translating land warfare tactics to the sea, to a regional power triumphant through the Sino-Japanese and Russo-Japanese wars, to an oceanic world power and pioneer of carrier aviation, to its present state as a contemporary self-defence force.

This tumultuous history is catalogued by Naoko Sajima and Kyoichi Tachikawa in *Japanese Sea Power: A Maritime Nation's Struggle for Identity*, the second in a series from the Sea Power Center in Australia examining national case studies of sea power. Sajima and Tachikawa divide their book into four sections. The first section provides a brief introduction, offering a condensed maritime history of Japan and an outline of the geographical features that define it as a 'maritime nation.' The second section discusses Japan's maritime history from around 600 CE to the Second World War. The third section covers the last 50 years of Japanese maritime history, including the birth of the Japanese Maritime Self Defence Force (JMSDF) and Japanese-US relations during the Cold War. The final section – actually a series of appendices – includes supplementary items such as interviews, maps, the Japanese Constitution of 1947, photographs and charts comparing Japanese maritime strength with other Pacific states.

Japanese Sea Power does not offer a particular prescriptive argument; instead, the authors maintain that Japan, with its population and industries in close proximity to and dependent upon its coasts, is a maritime nation. Sajima and Tachikawa argue that "a Japanese nation without sea defences would be extremely vulnerable." Hence, "coastal defence is critically and eternally important for the defence of Japan" (67). They maintain that the JMSDF is limited not only legally, through the constitutional condemnation of force that may be perceived as offensive, but also through underfunding and personnel deficits compared to its regional neighbours. If there is a lesson in this book for Canadian policy-makers and military professionals, it is likely here, through an analogy to Canada's own naval budgetary and personnel woes, as well as the challenges in building popular and political appreciation for a navy.

While Sajima and Tachikawa underline the necessity

of Japanese maritime security today, they fall short in satisfactorily identifying the threats and concerns in the maritime domain for Japanese interests. They point to "the defence of Japan from an invasion by the USSR" (73) as a significant concern during the Cold War, but only a few contemporary cases are offered, including a deployment of JMSDF minesweepers to the Persian Gulf in 1991 and domestic disaster relief after an earthquake in 1995.

Japanese Sea Power is small in size. The actual text by Sajima and Tachikawa is 93 pages including diagrams, which means that the evolution of Japanese sea power over 1,400 years is greatly condensed. Details are scant, with pivotal naval action during the Russo-Japanese War and Second World War receiving only passing mention. At the same time, however, this is a highly readable and accessible account of a long period of naval transformation. Sajima and Tachikawa make no pretence about providing an exhaustive study of the functions of Japanese sea power, but rather aim to provide a survey of doctrinal or strategic shifts and the perceptions of the navy in Japanese society and politics. In this they are successful.

While the authors avoid discussion of minutiae, the text is buttressed by the numerous appendices. The appendices help to plug gaps in the discussion by providing discussion of a variety of topics, from Japanese mythology to a comparison of Japanese military strength relative to Australia and New Zealand. Among the most interesting inclusions are American interrogations of Japanese flag officers conducted in late 1945, offering first-hand accounts of engagements at Midway, Coral Sea and Leyte Gulf.

Overall, Sajima and Tachikawa present a comprehensible survey of several centuries of Japanese naval history and transformation. *Japanese Sea Power* is an informative entry-level discussion of the topic. Those seeking tactical and operational details or a more critical and prescriptive consideration of contemporary Japanese maritime security may be obliged to look elsewhere. Still, this is a valuable 'first stop' book for learning about the long and turbulent maritime history of Japan. 🍵

The Royal Navy Officer's Pocket-Book, 1944, compiled by Brian Lavery, London: Conway, 2007, 144 pages, \$16.95 (hardcover), ISBN 978-1-844860548

Reviewed by Colonel P.J. Williams

In this centenary year of Canada's naval service, it is appropriate to review the actions of those who came before us and who established the proud legacy we enjoy today. During the Second World War, the Royal Canadian Navy (RCN) played a leading role, having expanded to become the third largest Allied navy by the end of that conflict.

Of particular concern to the Royal Navy (RN) and its Commonwealth partners was the training of officers, and so during the war, the RN produced an extensive series of manuals on a variety of subjects, to complement training delivered at installations in Britain and overseas. Brian Lavery has compiled seven wartime manuals into this slim, highly readable volume, which provides some insight into what it meant to be and what was expected of officers aboard His Majesty's Ships in wartime. The manuals are as follows:

- The Officer's Aide Memoire;
- Notes for Medical Officers;
- The Treatment of Battle Casualties Afloat;
- HMS Duncan-Captain's Standing Orders;
- Your Ship: Notes and Advice to an Officer on Assuming His First Command;
- The Home Fleet Destroyer Orders; and
- Dealing with Mutiny.

Many of the subjects covered would have been included in the curriculum of HMS *King Alfred*, the RN officer training school, through whose gates passed some 204,562 officers during the war. The peacetime RN, and one assumes by extension its cousin the RCN, gave scant attention to leadership training, as it was assumed that the young men destined to command HM ships had gained the requisite leadership training at school or through other life experiences. Thus, we are treated to an entertaining chapter in which subjects as diverse as "Firmness and Fairness," "Smartness" and "Forethought" are covered.

The fact that many officers were new to the service also extended to "Higher Ratings," of whom the young officer was told to "not expect too much ... as large numbers are at present being made and many are of very limited experience." Medical officers are told that "[n]aval Officers are extraordinarily polite," and that when proceeding to training they could take their golf clubs, tennis rackets and favourite books, but were not to expect compensation from the Crown in the event "of loss of any articles which are not essential to enable you to perform your naval duties." Considerable detail is given on how casualties were to be treated onboard ship, with the book making it clear that peacetime ("centralized") measures had to give way to a more decentralized system during hostilities.

I found the chapter entitled "Your Ship" to be the most interesting. Meant for a more experienced audience, this part of the book gives advice and guidance that would not be amiss in today's navy. For example, the authors point out that it is at the six-month point of command that a new Captain has to be at his most vigilant, as it is at this point that "[t]he forethought you originally put into going

alongside no longer seems necessary.... Then the crash comes." The chapter also describes what are referred to as "The Three Grades of Order," in decreasing order of immediacy, "The Imperative," "The Volitive" and "The Admonitive." While an Imperative order such as, "Paint the whaler today," is meant for immediate execution, an Admonitive, such as "Isn't it time the whaler had a fresh coat, Number One?" is meant "for voluntary execution, disregard of which may be a little tactless." As to the matter of addressing the ship's company, the book strongly encourages Captains to rehearse their words beforehand, following the example of Winston Churchill. Wartime Captains were clearly busy men and despite their primary responsibility to fight their ship, they were still responsible for many administrative matters: on a weekly basis they had to review a number of ship's books, including three related to alcohol: Wine Book, Gangway Wine Book and the Spirit Stoppage Book!

The final chapter on mutiny is of a much more serious tone, and in its original version was classified "Confidential" and was to be kept under the Captain's control. The chapter describes both internal and external factors which may give rise to mutiny. When addressing the men, Captains were advised to do so from the opposite direction to that expected as it was believed that ringleaders often tried to hide in the rear of an assemblage. The book also states that "[s]hooting to kill should only be resorted to as a last extremity."

Each year the ranks of Canada's veterans who fought in the Second World War continue to dwindle. As a supplement to first-hand accounts, books such as this serve to give us a better feel for the doctrinal foundation and the training of those who went before us in a highly worthy cause. On that basis alone, the book is strongly recommended. 🍷

Small Boats, Weak States, Dirty Money: Piracy and Maritime Terrorism in the Modern World, by Martin N. Murphy, New York: Columbia University Press, 2009, 288 pages, \$60 (USD), ISBN 978-0-231-70076-4

Reviewed by Dave Mugridge

This book is both timely and relevant as the threats of piracy and terrorism have catapulted maritime security into the public arena and made an international cadre of politicians and their military vassals uneasy. Whether you believe that failing security in the maritime domain is a significant threat or just a spasmodic irritation, Martin Murphy's comprehensive work is highly recommended.

Murphy's academic credentials are very impressive and this work attests to that scholarly authority. Potential

readers should not be deterred by the fact that this is a book written from an academic perspective because it offers a well-rounded review of current open source material. This book clearly benefits from the author's links with the shipping industry and UK Ministry of Defence, and these links generate a welcome breadth of perspective.

The book is divided into six chapters which address the various issues of terrorism and piracy. It would make excellent reading for military personnel deploying to an area where these threats exist. The statistics and assessments are pertinent and well laid out but illustrate the difficulty of establishing contemporary baseline figures as they predominantly reflect the situation to 2005. Murphy works hard to show the legal complexity of the definitions which pertain to and differentiate between acts of organized crime, piracy and terrorism. This endeavour becomes a fundamental foundation to his conclusions and findings.

Throughout the book the author seeks to answer three pivotal questions:

- What form does piracy take in the contemporary world?
- What is maritime terrorism?
- Are piracy and maritime terrorism similar or linked?

I believe that rephrasing the third question into two separate questions would better inform the reader. I would, therefore, instead ask:

- Are piracy and maritime terrorism similar?
- Are piracy and maritime terrorism linked?

By so doing the author could have tackled the issues of modus operandi and connections more thoroughly.

The title articulates an interesting trinity but is missing another consideration – failed international response or misdirected strategy. It is this that illustrates the wholesale malaise of contemporary maritime security. The futility of a multi-million dollar Canadian warship engaged in a game of cat and mouse with a handful of Somali pirates and delivering an end result of 'float-testing' a few AK-47s and an RPG is readily apparent. Yet the failure to address this issue in a coherent and comprehensive manner is not purely Canadian but international in its scale, a point which Murphy makes very clearly. Futile gestures in security are seldom welcome and HMCS *Winnipeg's* deployment was just that, representing the failure of Canada, amongst others, to develop a sustainable maritime security strategy reflective of Ottawa's (defence, development and diplomacy) security mantra.

It seems to me that Murphy has developed the ideas expressed by many Canadian academics (in particular at the University of New Brunswick and Dalhousie University) about the symbiotic relationship between crime and terrorism as well as the likely nexus between the two.¹ To my mind, he over-states the difficulties of overcoming the operational and technical issues required to graduate from being a low-level threat to delivering a marine-based atrocity. This stems from his academic as opposed to operator's approach to the maritime security issue.

Despite these criticisms, Murphy's conclusions are well made and make sobering reading. They contain a timely warning about the current threats to maritime security and by default the global maritime transport system. Of particular import is his clear and unequivocal statement that piracy is a highly organized form of criminality and as such requires close attention. As well, ideology and differing objectives are a thin veneer to preventing collusion and cooperation between pirates and terrorists.

This book will be a standard reference book for many years. Those with a professional or academic interest in this subject must read it, complementing as it does the valuable work being done at both the Gregg Centre at UNB and Centre for Foreign Policy Studies at Dalhousie University. 🍷

Notes

1. David A. Charters and Graham F. Walker (eds), *After 9/11: Terrorism and Crime in a Globalised World*, Halifax: Centre for Foreign Policy Studies/ Centre for Conflict Studies, 2004.

The Ironclads: An Illustrated History of Battleships from 1860 through to the First World War by Peter Hore, London: Southwater Books, 2006, 96 pages, glossary, index, ISBN 978-1-84476-99-6

Reviewed by Commander Mark R. Condeno

When we hear the word 'Ironclads,' the most likely event that comes into mind is the 1862 encounter between the USS *Monitor* and CSS *Merrimack* during the US Civil War. The type also includes armoured warships of the late nineteenth century and those of the pre-Dreadnought era. In this highly illustrated treatise, retired Royal Navy Captain Peter Hore chronicles the development and evolution of these vessels as well as their impact on naval warfare and the transition of the naval forces of the period.

The book commences with an introduction in which the author discusses the origins of the type, the development changes and campaigns in which they were notable. He also looks into the pre-Dreadnought battleships of the major navies. He discusses two important battles in which the type is prevalent – the battle of Lissa in 1866

and the battle of Tsushima in 1905. The former is an engagement between the Austrian and Italian Navies in which the Austrian Navy emerged victorious. The battle also gave light to the tactic of ramming. The encounter on the Tsushima Straits marked the rise of the Imperial Japanese Navy as it proved its prowess in gunnery over the Russian Navy. Captain Hore also provides an overview of subjects such as the Swedish influence on the US Navy, the voyage and impact of the Great White Fleet, and the development of HMS *Captain*, a ship which capsized in 1870 and provides a perfect example of an unsuccessful warship design.

Similar to his earlier works, *Battleships of World War I & II*, the book opens with a country by country listing of the eight navies that possessed the type. This forms the core of the book. For the Royal Navy 12 classes are covered, from HMS *Royal Sovereign* to HMS *Lord Nelson*. The ships took part in the naval campaign on the Dardanelles, Zeebrugge and Gallipoli. The section on the US Navy follows, and covers from the launching of USS *Vermont* in 1906 to the USS *Mississippi*-class. The latter's history was eventful as these ships were the only American battleships to be sold to a foreign navy – Greece. Greece acquired the ships in 1914 and they served until they were sunk in the opening days of the Second World War. Next, Hore discusses the Imperial Japanese Navy, focusing on three of its pre-Dreadnought class (mostly British built). The remaining sections focus on the types that were in the order of battle of the German, French, Italian, Russian and the Austro-Hungarian Navies.

The book is well written and well researched. In addition to its impressive illustrations and magnificent photographs, construction, refits and operational histories for each class are provided along with specification details. The author deserves a commendation in bringing light to this rarely covered topic as only a few authors have ventured into this era of naval revolution. *The Ironclads* is a valuable and welcome contribution in the historiography of pre-Dreadnought warships. 🍷

Somalia ... From the Sea, by Gary J. Ohls, Naval War College Papers 34, Newport, RI: Naval War College Press, July 2009, 244 pages, ISBN 978-1-884733-59-8

Reviewed by Dave Mugridge

If one should learn lessons from recent history then Somalia is one place from which we could learn. Somalia's descent into chaos dates back to the events recorded in Gary Ohls' analytical digest of US involvement there in the early 1990s. The US Navy-led intervention came at a global watershed, when the world was adjusting to the end of the

Cold War and 'enlightened' elements of the international community repaved the Somali road to hell with their good intentions. For both the United States and Canada, Somalia remains unwelcome military baggage. Despite the universal recognition of the need to intervene if a lasting solution is to be found, the events documented by this book have been so distorted by Hollywood and the North American media that they have transformed this troubled place into a military 'no go' zone.

Ohls recognizes the destructive power of hindsight as a lens and is to be commended for his objective description of how modern-day Western humanitarian idealism was broken on the anvil of warlordism, mass violence and systemic corruption. Although today's militaries are different beasts from those who went before, the learning culture for this type of operation remains strangely steadfast. Unfortunately, the lessons Ohls describes from operations in Somalia in the 1990s are equally applicable to the Iraq and Afghanistan campaigns of today.

Although this book documents an ultimately unsuccessful campaign, it contains a timely reminder of the flexibility, employability and capability of maritime forces to shape events ashore. For the Canadian military audience, its lessons are pronounced. They illustrate the need for maritime forces to possess a balance of littoral and blue-water capabilities. Lord Palmerston's gunboat diplomacy had no place in Somalia in the 1990s and has proved to be of limited value off Haiti or against piracy in the Horn of Africa.

The intervention in Somalia continues to influence foreign policy. Could we learn something from this about how the Afghanistan campaign will influence Canadian security policy post-2011? I believe the answer here is yes – premature withdrawal from combat operations and a failure to deliver enduring security for the Afghan people will ultimately mean that this international foray, as viewed by analysts and voters alike, is a strategic failure.

Ohls reminds the reader of the value of fully appreciating the mission to which you are committing your forces. The questions raised by this book make sobering reading, particularly when considered in the context of current military operations. Many of today's political leaders would feel uncomfortable if asked how their decisions rated against this sort of acid test.

In summary, this book won't rival J.K. Rowling for shelf space in Chapters nor will it compete with Tom Clancy for airport reading. What it does do is provide readers with a credible historic insight into the roots of today's Somali mire, reminding them that the principles of statesmanship are timeless and not set by election cycles or public opinion polls. 🍷