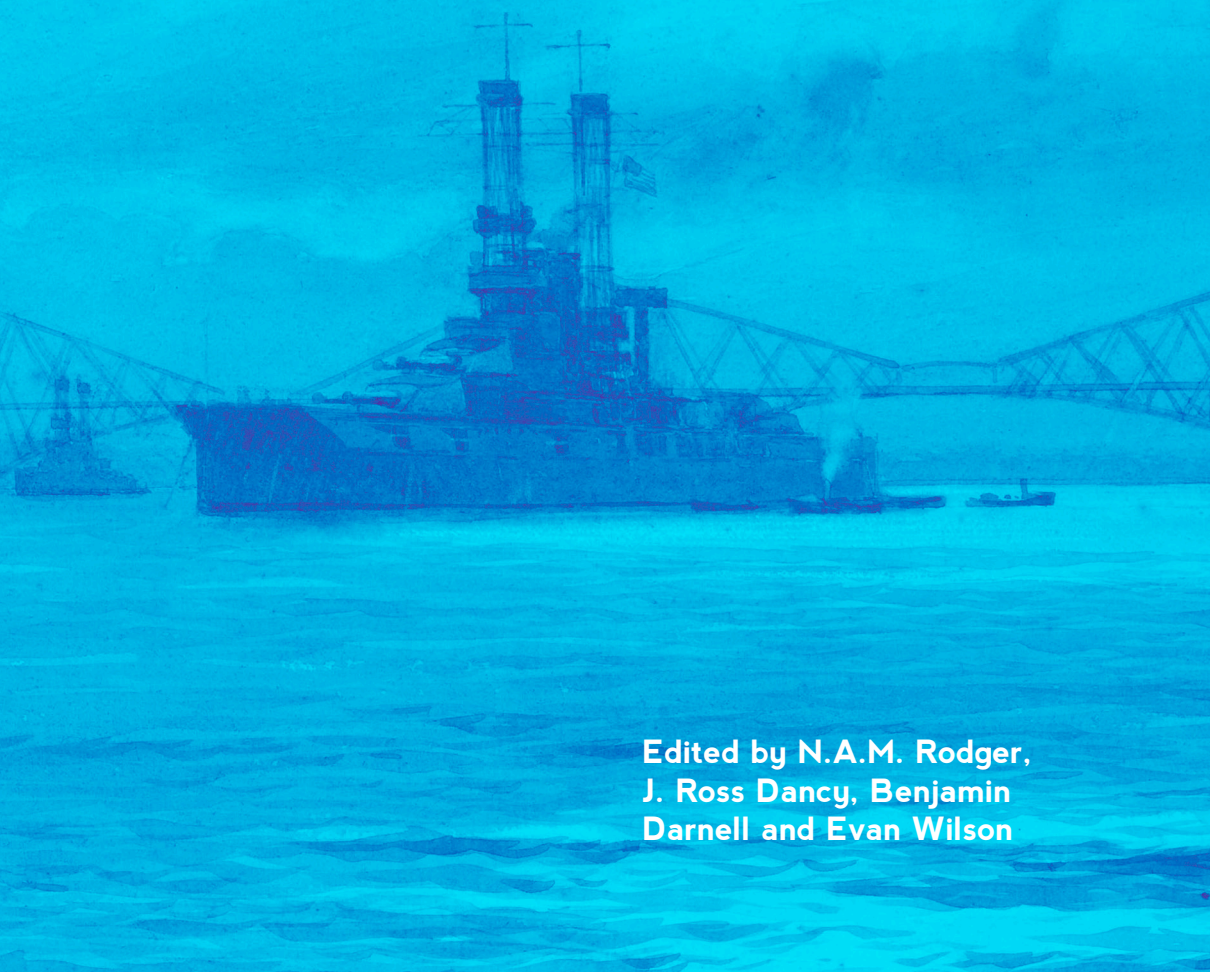


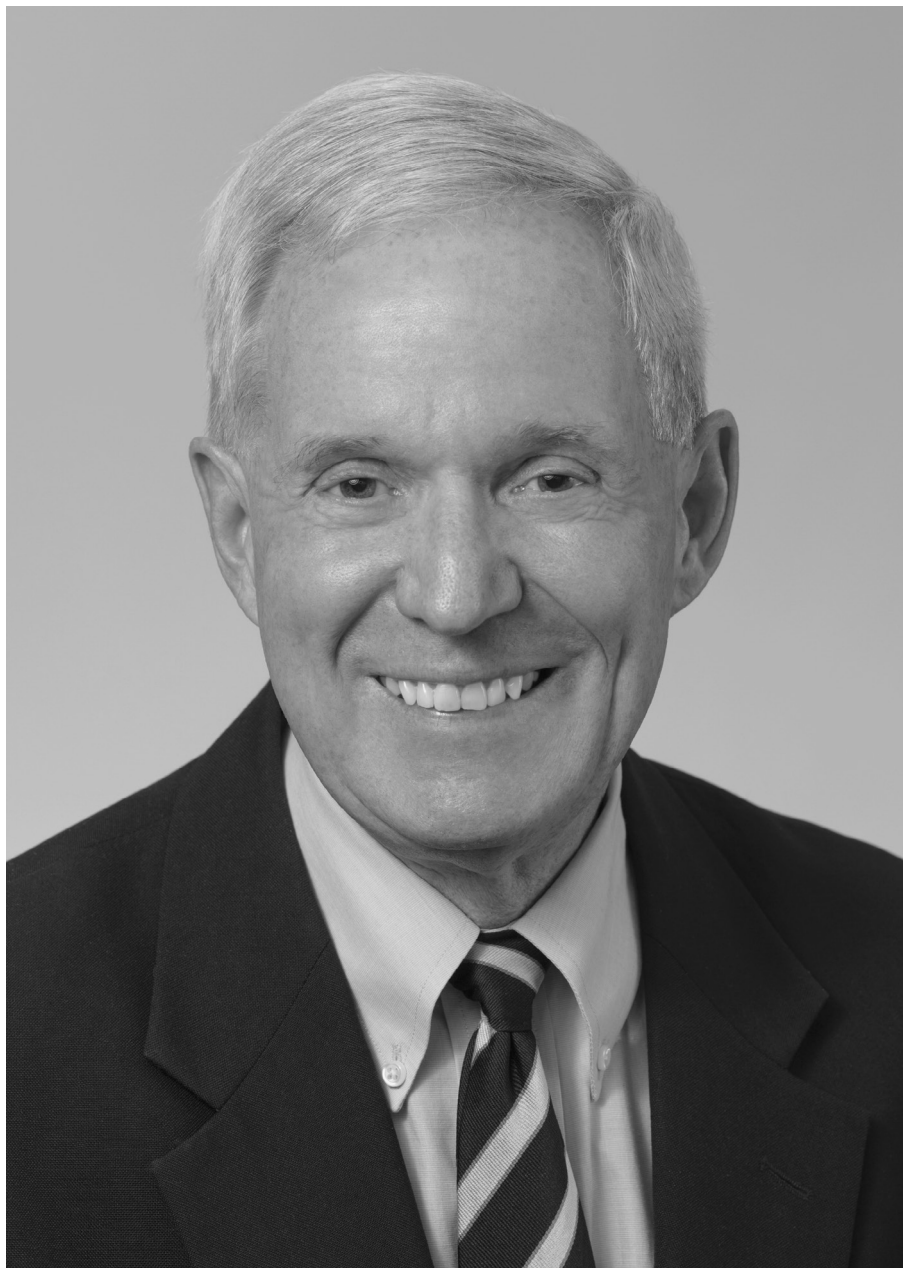
# STRATEGY AND THE SEA

*Essays in Honour of John B. Hattendorf*



Edited by N.A.M. Rodger,  
J. Ross Dancy, Benjamin  
Darnell and Evan Wilson

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THE BOYDELL PRESS

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# Contents

<i>List of Illustrations</i>	vii
<i>List of Abbreviations</i>	viii
<i>List of Contributors</i>	ix
 John B. Hattendorf – A Transatlantic Tribute <i>N.A.M. Rodger</i>	 1
 Introduction <i>Evan Wilson, Benjamin Darnell and J. Ross Dancy</i>	 5
1. Spanish Noblemen as Galley Captains: A Problematical Social History <i>Carla Rahn Phillips</i>	9
2. Strategy Seen from the Quarterdeck in the Eighteenth-Century French Navy <i>Olivier Chaline</i>	19
3. Danish and Swedish Flag Disputes with the British in the Channel <i>Jakob Seerup</i>	28
4. Reconsidering the <i>Guerre de Course</i> under Louis XIV: Naval Policy and Strategic Downsizing in an Era of Fiscal Overextension <i>Benjamin Darnell</i>	37
5. British Naval Administration and the Lower Deck Manpower Problem in the Eighteenth Century <i>J. Ross Dancy</i>	49
6. British Naval Administration and the Quarterdeck Manpower Problem in the Eighteenth Century <i>Evan Wilson</i>	64
7. The Raison d'Être and the Actual Employment of the Dutch Navy in Early Modern Times <i>Jaap R. Bruijn</i>	76
8. British Defensive Strategy at Sea in the War against Napoleon <i>Roger Knight</i>	88
9. The Offensive Strategy of the Spanish Navy, 1763–1808 <i>Agustín Guimerá</i>	98

10. The Influence of Sea Power upon Three Great Global Wars, 1793–1815, 1914–1918, 1939–1945: A Comparative Analysis <i>Paul Kennedy</i>	109
11. The Evolution of a Warship Type: The Role and Function of the Battlecruiser in Admiralty Plans on the Eve of the First World War <i>Matthew S. Seligmann</i>	138
12. The Royal Navy and Grand Strategy, 1937–1941 <i>George C. Peden</i>	148
13. The Atlantic in the Strategic Perspective of Hitler and his Admirals, 1939–1944 <i>Werner Rahn</i>	159
14. The Capital Ship, the Royal Navy and British Strategy from the Second World War to the 1950s <i>Tim Benbow</i>	169
15. ‘No Scope for Arms Control’: Strategy, Geography and Naval Limitations in the Indian Ocean in the 1970s <i>Peter John Brobst</i>	179
16. Sir Julian Corbett, Naval History and the Development of Sea Power Theory <i>Andrew D. Lambert</i>	190
17. The Influence of Identity on Sea Power <i>Duncan Redford</i>	201
18. Professor Spenser Wilkinson, Admiral William Sims and the Teaching of Strategy and Sea Power at the University of Oxford and the United States Naval War College, 1909–1927 <i>Paul M. Ramsey</i>	213
19. Naval Intellectualism and the Imperial Japanese Navy <i>Keizo Kitagawa</i>	226
20. History and Navies: Defining a Dialogue <i>James Goldrick</i>	236
21. Teaching Navies Their History <i>Geoffrey Till</i>	242
Afterword <i>N.A.M. Rodger</i>	252
A Bibliography of Books, Articles and Reviews Authored, Co-authored, Edited or Co-edited by John B. Hattendorf, 1960–2015	255
Index	285
Tabula Gratulatoria	305

# Illustrations

*Frontispiece:* John B. Hattendorf. Photograph by John W. Corbett

## Figures

5.1	Royal Navy manpower in the eighteenth century	52
5.2	Factored seamen and petty officer recruitment	55
5.3	Seamen and petty officer ratings	57
5.4	Volunteer seamen ages and rating	59
5.5	Ages of pressed men	60
6.1	Lieutenants' commissions and successful exams, 1775–1805	69
6.2	Ratio of number of officers to positions available	72
12.1	Percentage shares of total defence expenditure in financial years	149
12.2	Expenditure (£ 000s) in financial years	153

## Tables

6.1	Estimate of lieutenants' positions by rate	71
7.1	The numerical strength of leading navies in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries	80
12.1	DRC and New Standard fleets compared	156
12.2	New construction programme for New Standard Fleet	156



## Abbreviations

AMN	Archivo del Museo Naval
ANM	Archives nationales de France
BNE	Biblioteca Nacional de España
CCC	Churchill College, Cambridge
CID	Committee of Imperial Defence
DNI	Director of Naval Intelligence
DRC	Defence Requirements Sub-Committee of the Imperial Defence
FCO	Foreign and Commonwealth Office
<i>FRUS</i>	<i>Foreign Relations of the United States</i> (see ch. 15, n. 5)
IWM	Imperial War Museum
<i>KTB/Skl</i>	<i>Kriegstagebuch der Seekriegsleitung 1939–1945, Teil A</i> , ed. W. Rahn and G. Schreiber (Herford and Bonn, 1990)
LHCMA	Liddell-Hart Centre for Military Archives, King's College, London
MoD	Ministry of Defence
NID	Naval Intelligence Department
NMM	National Maritime Museum
NMRN	National Museum of the Royal Navy
NWC	Naval War College
PME	Professional Military Education
RAF	Royal Air Force
RN	Royal Navy
TNA	The National Archives, Kew

## Contributors

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**Evan Wilson** is the Caird Senior Research Fellow at the National Maritime Museum. He completed his doctorate at the University of Oxford in 2015. He has published a number of articles on naval officers' careers and social backgrounds in the late eighteenth century. His first book, *A Social History of British Naval Officers, 1775–1815*, will be published by Boydell & Brewer later this year.



## John B. Hattendorf – A Transatlantic Tribute

John Hattendorf was born in Hinsdale, Illinois on 22 December 1941, a fortnight after the Imperial Japanese Navy had flung the United States abruptly into the Second World War. The next few years were to contribute a great deal of naval history to the United States and the world, but few would have searched for a future naval historian in the outer suburbs of Chicago, nor in Gambier, the small town amidst the peaceful Ohio cornfields where John studied as an undergraduate at Kenyon College. But Kenyon, though far from the sea, was not isolated from the wider world, and certainly not from the scholarly world. Charles Ritcheson, the noted historian of the American Revolution, was then a professor at Kenyon. His experience included wartime service in the US Navy, and a DPhil at Oxford, while his private interests ranged from the Paris Opera to the Beefsteak Club. John also had close contact with the distinguished German medievalist Richard G. Salomon, driven from his chair in Hamburg in 1934, who retired from Kenyon in 1962 aged seventy-eight but remained an active scholar. At one period when he was housebound after a fall, John fetched books for him from the library: a new parcel every week, a book for every day, each in a different language. Salomon introduced John to the scholarly tradition of the *Monumenta Germaniae Historica*, and aroused in him an enthusiasm for archives highly unusual in an undergraduate. Over two years' voluntary work, John listed and organised the college archives, and he edited *A Dusty Path*, an anthology of documents and photographs drawn from them.<sup>1</sup> Salomon almost lured him into medieval church history – but not quite.

Instead, on leaving Kenyon in 1964, John joined the US Navy, and the following day, as he remembers, 'someone started a war in a place called Viet Nam'.<sup>2</sup> In February 1965 he was commissioned as an ensign, and before the end of the year he was at sea off that coast as an officer of the destroyer USS *O'Brien*. In 1967 he was mentioned in despatches for his 'skill and judgement' under fire. From the *O'Brien* he went to the Naval History Division in Washington, where he found himself in danger of a different sort. The USS *Constellation*, then as now preserved at Baltimore, was widely identified as the frigate of 1797 rather than the sloop of 1854 which she in fact is. Much emotional and political capital had been invested in the 'frigate *Constellation*' by the US Navy and the city of Baltimore, on the basis of wishful thinking and what subsequently proved to be

<sup>1</sup> T.B. Greenslade, *Kenyon College: Its Third Half Century* (Gambier, OH, 1975), pp. 188–9 and 202–3. *Kenyon College Alumni Bulletin*, xx, no. 1 (1997), pp. 12–13 and 55, printing John's speech on accepting an honorary doctorate in 1997.

<sup>2</sup> 1997 speech cited in n. 1 above.

forged documents; Rear Admiral Ernest M. Eller, the Director of Naval History, was a warm partisan of the theory. Looking for something else in the archives, John found the log of the yard which had built the sloop: conclusive evidence, but not what the admiral wanted to hear. All John's characteristic combination of rigorous integrity and emollient diplomacy was needed to get out of this awkward position.<sup>3</sup>

After the Naval History Division, John spent a summer studying at the Munson Institute of Mystic Seaport under the great maritime historian Robert G. Albion, and then was released for two years (1969–71) to do an MA in History at Brown University under the noted historian of science and technology A. Hunter Dupree. His subject was 'Technology and Strategy: A Study in the Professional Thought of the US Navy, 1900–1916'; he had to fight to get the Brown faculty to accept that warfare could be a legitimate subject of scholarly research, and indeed (the emotions generated by the Vietnam War then running high) that a serving officer could be an acceptable student. Returning to active service, John studied at the Naval Destroyer School and then became Operations Officer of the destroyer USS *Fiske*, based at Newport (and by coincidence named after a noted naval reformer of the late nineteenth century). For his next job John moved across the harbour (as it now seems inevitable he would) to join the staff of the Naval War College as research assistant to the President, the former Rhodes Scholar Vice Admiral Stansfield Turner. Few Lieutenants work directly for a vice admiral, and very few indeed can have been recommended for immediate promotion on the grounds of being 'superbly qualified for independent historical research'. The admiral hoped indeed that the navy would send John to Oxford to do a doctorate, but to Turner's dismay the Washington bureaucracy was prepared to approve only a 'useful' subject such as nuclear physics. 'He is an outstanding officer,' Turner wrote, 'who has the potential of becoming an outstanding naval historian, and I regret that he cannot continue to be both officer and historian, in the tradition of our own Admiral Alfred Thayer Mahan and of the Royal Navy's Admiral Sir Herbert Richmond.'<sup>4</sup>

So the die was cast, John resigned his commission and in Michaelmas 1973 started at Pembroke College, Oxford, as a DPhil student, supervised by Norman Gibbs, Chichele Professor of the History of War at All Souls. His subject was 'England in the War of the Spanish Succession: A Study of the English View and Conduct of Grand Strategy, 1701–12'. It was entirely characteristic that he at once rejected any narrowly naval or narrowly English view of the war, but considered allied grand strategy as a whole from the sources of all the participants. Since Gibbs was no specialist in the subject, John had much to do with Professor Ragnhild Hatton, who encouraged him to read widely in foreign languages, and

<sup>3</sup> The tortuous story of the *Constellation* affair is explored by D.M. Wegner et al., 'Fouled Anchors: The Constellation Question Answered' (Bethesda, MD, 1991), available at [http://www.navsea.navy.mil/nswc/carderock/docs/fouled\\_anchors.pdf](http://www.navsea.navy.mil/nswc/carderock/docs/fouled_anchors.pdf).

<sup>4</sup> Quoting John's official 'Report on the Fitness of Officers' for 1972–73, written by Turner himself.

interested him particularly in Swedish history. He also profited greatly from the friendship and counsel of the military historian Dr Piers Mackesy of Pembroke. The thesis was submitted in 1979, passed and subsequently published. By then John was already back at the Naval War College as Assistant and then Associate Professor of Strategy between 1977 and 1981. He then spent two years as Visiting Professor of Military and Naval History at the National University of Singapore, returning to Newport as Professor of Naval History in 1983. He has been there ever since, apart from a year on exchange with the Militärgeschichtliche Forschungsamt (the German armed forces historical office) in 1990–91. In 1984 he was appointed to the chair named after Fleet Admiral Ernest J. King – linking him, somewhat incongruously, with one of the US Navy's less intellectual and least likeable senior officers. He also served first as Director of the College's Advanced Research Department, and then Chairman of the Maritime History Department and Director of the Naval War College Museum. In all this he has been supported by Berit Sundell, whom he married in 1978 on his return to Newport. With their three daughters and six grandchildren all living within five miles, the Hattendorf family forms a united core, surrounded by the widespread circles of John's professional friends, colleagues and associates all over the world.

John's distinguished career in the service of the US Navy and the worldwide intellectual community of naval historians and strategists has now lasted fifty years and shows no signs of running out yet. His list of publications is all the more extraordinary coming from someone who did not start academic life until his mid-thirties, and has never enjoyed the research opportunities available to university post-holders. John's unusual career has been shaped by his experience of the sea and sea fighting, his unshakeable commitment to the highest standards of research, and his skilful adaptation to the situation of the Naval War College, which has given him the opportunity to produce numerous smaller pieces of work, but not the big books which he could have written so well. In a military establishment somewhat outside the usual academic circuits, John has avoided isolation by organising a notable series of international conferences which brought together leading historians from all over the world. 'The Influence of History on Mahan', held at the College in 1991; followed in 1992 by 'Mahan is not Enough' on Sir Julian Corbett and Sir Herbert Richmond; 'Ubi Sumus? The State of Naval and Maritime History', held at Yale in 1993; and 'Doing Naval History', also at Yale the following year, were particularly influential in drawing together diverse viewpoints and setting research agendas. As a natural diplomat, discreet, efficient, calm under pressure, a skilful navigator of naval bureaucracy, John has repeatedly found himself at the centre of international collaborative ventures, interpreting the navy to the scholarly world and vice versa. He was one of the authors of the massive single volume *America and the Sea: A Maritime History* of 1998, and editor-in-chief of the four-volume *Oxford Encyclopedia of Maritime History* in 2007. He made numerous contributions to other historical dictionaries and encyclopedias, including twenty-two biographies for the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. He has edited the proceedings of all but one of the US Navy's biennial International Seapower Symposia between 1991 and



2011. Following the example of Salomon, he has made notable contributions to scholarly infrastructure by editing documentary collections, listing archives and writing bibliographies and research guides – essential but unfashionable work which is undervalued in American universities. A generous but judicious reviewer, he has often drawn important works in foreign languages to the attention of English-speaking scholars, and has himself published in French, German, Swedish and Spanish in addition to English. Amongst a long list of honours and awards he has been given the Alfred Thayer Mahan Award by the US Navy League, a Superior Civilian Service Award by the Secretary of the Navy, the Admiral of the Navy George Dewey Award by the Naval Order of the United States, the Dudley W. Knox Award by the Naval Historical Foundation, the Dartmouth Medal of the American Library Association, and the Caird Medal of the National Maritime Museum. In 2011 he achieved a sort of apotheosis by becoming a medal himself, when the Naval War College created the Hattendorf Prize for Maritime History. He serves on numerous editorial and advisory boards – and it is by no means over: he is at present working on at least thirteen books and articles. The conference at which the papers gathered in this volume were originally delivered was held to mark John's announced retirement, but at the time of writing the US Navy has not yet released him. Battleships may be paid off and carriers scrapped, but the navy cannot do without John Hattendorf.

N.A.M. Rodger

*All Souls College, Oxford*

## Introduction

This *Festschrift*, made up of papers given at a conference held at All Souls College, Oxford, in April 2014 to mark Professor John B. Hattendorf's impending retirement from the Naval War College, is meant to reflect the respect and affection in which he is held by a great number of scholars and naval officers from all over the world. It is also meant to reflect the nature and breadth of his studies, which present a challenge to the editors as we attempt to draw out some common themes. It is tempting to side-step the topic and declare 'Strategy and the Sea' to be nothing more than a sufficiently generic label for Professor Hattendorf's career. But as Lawrence Freedman identifies in his recent survey of all things strategic, '[S]trategy remains the best word we have for expressing attempts to think about actions in advance, in the light of our goals and our capacities.'<sup>1</sup> The difficulty in defining and discussing strategy is not, therefore, a hurdle to be overcome but rather a characteristic to be embraced. The contributions to this volume encompass all three elements of Freedman's definition: how to think about actions in advance, how to define goals and how to understand capabilities.

Often the most straightforward decision, at least in the abstract, for leaders on the eve of war is to determine whether their navy's actions will be primarily defensive or offensive. Roger Knight and Agustín Guimerá both question the perceptions of the eighteenth-century British and Spanish navies as being primarily offensive and defensive strategic tools, respectively. When considered together, Knight and Guimerá demonstrate the significance of a strong defensive perimeter as a prerequisite for effective offensive operations. Paul Kennedy picks up on the same theme in discussing naval strategy in terms of contested space. The statesmen responsible for the grand strategy in each of the three wars he discusses defined their goals this way. How could Britain make inroads into Napoleon's continental space? What was the use of a battle fleet in the First World War when faced with new asymmetrical technologies that limited its ability to patrol the enemy's coast? How could the Allies realise the goals of the Casablanca Conference and take control of the vital contested space of the North Atlantic? All three wars were ultimately won on land, and so one of the key questions for strategists both before and during these wars concerned the role of sea power. Thinking about naval actions in advance and defining naval goals therefore required not only an understanding how naval power could form the foundation for a successful campaign, but also an understanding of their navy's capacities.

<sup>1</sup> L. Freedman, *Strategy: A History* (Oxford, 2013), p. x.

The most significant argument put forward by the collective effort of the contributors to this volume involves that last part of Freedman's definition: capacities. Freedman emphasises that strategy is often determined more by the starting point than by the end point.<sup>2</sup> In other words, the constraints imposed on a state matter more than leaders' goals. The contributors to this volume have broadened the categories of historical analysis of a state's capacities.

In existing studies of strategy, geography and economic strength are frequently considered fundamental constraints on a state's capacities; nevertheless, a number of contributors have approached these topics in innovative ways. The maritime geography of the Netherlands and Britain is often cited as the impetus for their strong navies. What Knight and Jaap Bruijn show is that their navies were fundamentally defensive tools constructed to prevent invasion. To do so effectively, Britain insisted on dominating the English Channel, which was both the logical path for an invader and the shortest route to the North Atlantic and the Mediterranean for Denmark, the Netherlands and other northern European states. As a result of Britain's insistence on an aggressive defensive strategic stance, the strategic choices available to Britain's rivals were: fight their way through; avoid the Channel by sailing around the British Isles; or lower their flags in honour of the British domination of the Channel. The latter option was, as Jakob Seerup's chapter demonstrates, not palatable; both the Dutch and the Danish moved between the other options instead. Pride, combined with geography, constrained those states' strategic options.

The enormous financial resources necessary to sustain an effective navy required a sustained commitment from the state. Prior to space exploration, a navy was the state's most technologically advanced, financially demanding and logistically complex organisation. The challenge of building a sustainable system to develop and supply naval forces tended to place significant constraints on strategists; Napoleon's failure to understand the unpredictability of naval operations and the logistical complexity of building and supplying a fleet are often cited as significant reasons his naval war was generally unsuccessful.<sup>3</sup> Louis XIV's problem was related but slightly different, as Benjamin Darnell shows. When a state's resources were strained, the decline in a navy's capacities could be steep. France's attempts to co-opt private industry failed to produce a coherent and manageable fiscal foundation for the navy's huge expenses. It was not just early modern states that depended on private industry to meet the challenge of naval operations. Similar constraints can be found in George Peden's analysis of the British Navy on the eve of the Second World War, when shipbuilding firms struggled to meet ministers' demands. When the interests of the private sector and the state are mismatched, strategists face difficult choices.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. xi.

<sup>3</sup> N.A.M. Rodger, *The Command of the Ocean: A Naval History of Britain, 1649–1815* (London, 2004), pp. 536, 562.

Social issues can also influence strategy, a conclusion reached by a surprising number of contributors. Whereas it is common to find studies exploring how statesmen grappled with geographic and economic constraints, it is far less common to find studies exploring how they managed their human resources. Carla Rahn Phillips and Evan Wilson argue that keeping officers happy, well paid and employed in the necessary areas of naval life presented difficulties to both British and Spanish statesmen in the early modern period. Throwing money at the problem was one solution, but more astute administrators realised that officers valued intangible status symbols even more highly. Without willing captains or experienced navigators or competent surgeons, navies struggle to meet the goals laid out by strategists. These two chapters are useful reminders that strategy can be shaped by factors usually ignored or seen as irrelevant by both statesmen and historians.

J. Ross Dancy's chapter also addresses social issues. He asks the most fundamental question for any navy, particularly in the age of sail: how do you find enough experienced sailors to deploy an effective naval force? Sufficient manpower is an essential precondition for projecting sea power. Britain's manpower recruitment system balanced positive incentives and coercion; it was never simple or easy to man the fleet, and manning issues became fraught political topics not only for contemporaries, but also in the historiography. Naval administrators' options for manning the fleet were constrained by practical concerns, such as the pool of available experienced deep-sea sailors, and also by cultural factors, such as the traditional idea of the liberty of Englishmen. Duncan Redford's chapter picks up on a similar theme, noting that non-material and political issues such as national identity can be drivers of strategy. No statesmen operate in a sterile environment, free from cultural and social biases. Peter John Brobst notes that a fundamental question for British, American and Soviet strategists concerned their nations' identities as land or maritime powers. Projecting power into the Indian Ocean presented not only financial and logistical challenges, but also hit directly at the heart of questions such as: was Britain still a world-spanning imperial maritime power? Should projecting naval power be a priority for an Asiatic land power like the Soviet Union?

Other contributors explore whether states were able to keep their internal affairs in order, beyond the foundational concerns of fiscal and logistical health. Service rivalries feature in a number of contributions. One explanation for the collapse of French naval finances during the Nine Years' War is that Louis XIV, when faced with difficult budget choices, tended to fund the army before the navy. No state was immune from these concerns, particularly when, as Bruijn notes, there were compelling reasons to argue that both the army and the navy were essential for national defence. The advent of air power added a third dimension to the long-running funding feuds between armies and navies. Redford narrates the challenge that the RAF posed to the Royal Navy: Britain's status as a 'maritime nation' no longer seemed so essential to national identity, and, as a consequence, to strategy. Peden's description of the RAF's dominant funding position on the eve of the Second World War was one result of that cultural shift.

After the war, as Tim Benbow highlights, both military leaders and historians debated the lessons to be drawn and the implications for funding and strategy. Their views were, and continue to be, heavily influenced by institutional and cultural pressures and biases.

The factors that can shape a state's capacity to realise its strategic goals are wide-ranging and often surprising. Geography, economic strength and the significance of leaders' world-views are familiar topics for strategists. The dominant theme of this book is that humans devise and execute strategies carried out by other humans; recruiting, managing and deploying human resources are necessarily messy and subject to human concerns. Strategy is difficult to define, but that makes it all the more important for historians to recognise the variety of topics that can shape it.

Professor Hattendorf is of course well aware that historians need to be willing to look beyond the immediate and the concrete: his career exemplifies that approach. His study of the War of the Spanish Succession was, as N.A.M. Rodger says in his tribute, an excellent example of a multinational and wide-ranging approach to strategic studies. Subsequent publications have been similarly ambitious and encyclopedic, from *America and the Sea: A Maritime History* to his lead editorship of *British Naval Documents, 1204–1960*. We hope that this volume is a suitable homage.

The editors were the organisers of the conference, and they are glad to take the opportunity to thank those who helped to make it possible. Foremost among them must be named All Souls College and the Guy Hudson Memorial Trust, which supported the conference financially and practically, and E-Graphics, which designed the conference website. Among the many people in the College who contributed, the organisers especially wish to thank Professor Ian Maclean the Fellow Librarian, Dr Norma Aubertin-Potter the then Librarian Gaye Morgan, Helen Green and Demelza Shaw. Midshipmen Aaron Edwards and Darren Twort of the Oxford University Royal Naval Unit efficiently convoyed the delegates around the College. The volume itself appears in print thanks to the tireless support of Peter Sowden of Boydell & Brewer.

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## Spanish Noblemen as Galley Captains: A Problematical Social History

CARLA RAHN PHILLIPS

Sailing vessels formed the vast majority of the ships in Spanish military service in medieval and early modern times. Nonetheless, Spain also used galley fleets in the Mediterranean in the late Middle Ages,<sup>1</sup> and later expanded their use wherever Spain had a presence in the world, including the coastal waters of the Americas and South-East Asia. Unlike the Republic of Venice in its heyday, Spain used galleys exclusively for military purposes. In the Mediterranean, they formed a crucial element of Spain's defensive and offensive strategy during the confrontation with the Ottoman Empire and its satellite states in North Africa in the sixteenth century.<sup>2</sup>

Because Spanish galleys performed well at the Battle of Lepanto in 1571, King Philip II sought to increase their numbers. However, the government had difficulty finding enough men to pull the oars and enough captains and other wage-earning officers with the necessary skills to organise and command multinational crews. There were a number of reasons for the difficulty, in part because mariners and naval officers had more attractive choices than the galleys. Spain's transatlantic fleets were approaching their peak in the late sixteenth century, with some two hundred vessels involved in the trade each year.<sup>3</sup> Moreover, the military needs of the crown increased in the same period, spurred by English and French incursions into Spanish America in the late 1570s and Philip II's contested claim to the Portuguese throne after 1578. The naval build-up preceding the armada sent against England in 1588 also increased the demand for mariners at all ranks. The recruitment of captains for Spain's Mediterranean galleys required particular care. By the late sixteenth century, most of the galley oarsmen were slaves, prisoners of war or convicted criminals. Keeping order on board, as well as encouraging the best performance from all hands, required more than the usual skills of a

<sup>1</sup> L.V. Mott, *Seapower in the Medieval Mediterranean: The Catalan Fleet and the War of the Sicilian Vespers* (Gainesville, FL, 2003).

<sup>2</sup> J.F. Guilmartin, *Gunpowder and Galleys: Changing Technology and Mediterranean Warfare in the Sixteenth Century*, 2nd edn (London, 2003), devotes considerable attention to Spanish galleys.

<sup>3</sup> For tables of ships and tonnages employed in Spain's transatlantic trade, see P. Chaunu and H. Chaunu, *Séville et l'Atlantique, 1504–1650* (8 vols in 12, Paris, 1955–59), vols 3 and 4.

competent naval officer.<sup>4</sup> For noblemen, serving the king as a galley captain challenged not only their abilities as leaders, but also their sense of honour.

Considerable documentation regarding galley service by Spanish noblemen exists in the Archivo General de Simancas (AGS), the Archivo del Museo Naval (AMN) and the Biblioteca Nacional de España (BNE), both in Madrid, and in other depositories. By all accounts, it is clear that some Spanish noblemen served in the galley fleets willingly and with distinction, certainly until Lepanto. Thereafter, it appears that many Spanish noblemen decided that the disadvantages of such service far outweighed the benefits.

One extraordinary summary of those disadvantages is contained in a lengthy letter of advice to an unnamed correspondent who wanted to become a galley captain. The author of the letter argues strongly against serving the crown in the galleys and indirectly criticises Philip II for failing to provide adequate support for such service. The manuscript covers seven double-sided folio pages in a volume of copied documents from the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Its title translates as the 'Discourse of García de Toledo Regarding the Disadvantages of High-Ranking Positions in the Galleys'.<sup>5</sup> If the attribution is correct, and internal evidence suggests that it is, the discourse provides a stunning repudiation of one kind of service that the nobility owed to their monarch. The author's full name was García Álvarez de Toledo y Osorio (1514–77). He was the grandson of the II Duke of Alba (Fadrique Álvarez de Toledo y Enríquez de Quiñones), and the nephew and contemporary of the III Duke of Alba (Fernando Álvarez de Toledo), the distinguished general who served the Spanish monarchy in numerous venues.<sup>6</sup> Don García's father (Pedro Álvarez de Toledo y Zúñiga) was Viceroy of Naples for two decades (1532–53), and his mother (Juana Pimentel) held a noble title in her own right as the II Marquise of Villafranca del Bierzo. Don García's sister, Leonor de Toledo, married Cosimo d'Medici, I Grand Duke of Tuscany, bringing prestige and Spanish noble connections to the Medici line.<sup>7</sup> In other words, García de Toledo came from the highest ranks of the Spanish nobility.

At the start of his career, Don García continued a family tradition by owning two galleys and serving with them in the Squadron of Naples under Andrea Doria. By 1535, at the age of twenty-one, Don García commanded (and presumably

<sup>4</sup> The qualities desired in military officers featured in European treatises since ancient times. In the sixteenth century, Niccoló Machiavelli, *Discourses on the First Ten Books of Livy*, Book III, dealt at length with those qualities, as did numerous other treatises. Current scholarship has shown a renewed interest in the topic, including the recent edition of N. Elias, *The Genesis of the Naval Profession*, ed. René Moelker and Stephen Mennell (Dublin, 2007).

<sup>5</sup> 'Discurso de García de Toledo sobre los inconvenientes que tienen los cargos de galeras', in Juan Martínez de Burgos, 'Miscelánea literaria de los S. XV–S. XVI', Biblioteca Nacional de España (BNE), Madrid, MS 19164, fols 100r–107v.

<sup>6</sup> For the family's tradition of military service, especially in the Mediterranean, see W.S. Maltby, *Alba: A Biography of Fernando Álvarez de Toledo, Third Duke of Alba, 1507–1582* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1983), ch. 1.

<sup>7</sup> The Florentine artist known as Bronzino painted a well-known portrait of Leonor/Eleanor and her first-born son (Florence: Uffizi Gallery).



owned) six galleys and soon distinguished himself in various Mediterranean battles during the reign of Charles I of Spain (otherwise Charles V of the Holy Roman Empire).<sup>8</sup> The king named Don García as General of the Squadron of Naples and in 1544 as Captain General of the Sea, after he had defeated the pirate Barbarossa. During the reign of Charles's successor, Philip II, Don García served as Colonel General of the Infantry of the Kingdom of Naples, Viceroy of Catalonia (1558–64) and Viceroy of Sicily (1564–66). In the latter position, he reconquered the Peñón de Vélez in North Africa in 1564 and the following year sent relief to the island of Malta, which was under siege by the Ottoman Turks. Before the Battle of Lepanto, Philip II dispatched Don García, by then a member of his Council of State, to advise his young half-brother, Don Juan of Austria.<sup>9</sup> Don García's advice presumably contributed to the Christian victory over the Ottomans in that battle, and he carried on a warm correspondence with Don Juan thereafter.<sup>10</sup>

After decades of serving the crown on land and sea, however, Don García wrote his discourse about the negative aspects of galley service. The discourse dates from about 1575, just as Spain's Mediterranean galley fleets reached their peak, with some 150 vessels in service. In part, Don García's disillusionment may have had a financial basis. The Spanish crown preferred to negotiate contracts (*asientos*) to administer one or more galleys for a set fee, rather than running them directly. For example, Don Álvaro de Bazán, the Marquis of Santa Cruz, ran the forty galleys of the Squadron of Naples from 1575 to 1577 for a fee of 1,046.3 Neapolitan *ducatos* per year for each galley.<sup>11</sup> For that fee, Don Álvaro was expected to pay all the costs of the squadron, including food for all ranks, the clothing worn by the unfree oarsmen and the purchase of slaves when the squadron needed to replace oarsmen who died, suffered injuries or had otherwise become unable to serve. With careful management and the booty from captured enemy vessels, contractors such as Don Álvaro could earn profits as well as military glory, presuming the crown paid the contracted fee in a timely fashion.

Like Don Álvaro and other Spanish noblemen, García de Toledo often had to advance his own funds to carry out official duties on land and sea. Given the myriad demands on royal finances, reimbursement sometimes proved difficult. According to one estimate, King Philip owned Don García 130,000 Spanish *ducados* by the late 1560s.<sup>12</sup> Instead of paying the debt, the king created the Italian titles of Duke of Fernandina and Prince of Montalbán for him in 1569. Upon

<sup>8</sup> The battles included La Goleta (Tunis), Algiers, Sfax, Calabria and Mebredia.

<sup>9</sup> BNE, MS 20210, 71–1.

<sup>10</sup> See, for example, letters from 1574 in BNE, MS 20212, 36–9, 12, 13, 15.

<sup>11</sup> BNE, MS 10433. According to J.A. Marino, *Pastoral Economics in the Kingdom of Naples* (Baltimore, 1988), p. 69, the Neapolitan *ducato* = 0.833 Spanish *ducado* in the late sixteenth century. Both words are translated as ducat in English which can lead to confusion, so the original words are used here.

<sup>12</sup> From the genealogical website: [http://www.fcmedinasidonia.com/archivo/casa\\_villafranca.html](http://www.fcmedinasidonia.com/archivo/casa_villafranca.html).



the death of his brother that same year, Don García became IV Marquis of Villafraanca del Bierzo, a Spanish title that carried grandee status. Curiously, however, he used only his Italian titles until his own death in Naples in 1577.<sup>13</sup> His choice of titles, and his discourse against the galley service in which he had spent most of his career, suggest that towards the end of his life he distanced himself from Spain and from his king.

Directing his discourse to the unnamed correspondent who had asked for his advice, Don García begins by noting his own difficulties in withdrawing from galley ownership and command. To discourage his correspondent from becoming a galley captain, he promises to discuss all the disadvantages of galley service to 'one's person, finances, life, honour and perhaps even one's soul'.<sup>14</sup> Adding to the perils inherent in seafaring, he complains about the poor character of the men serving in the galleys. By this, he does not seem to mean the enslaved or felonious oarsmen, known collectively as the *chusma*,<sup>15</sup> but the free wage-earners. 'Instead of dealing with men who are well-born and virtuous, you have to deal with men characterised by vileness, self-interest and evil, and a large proportion of the king's service depends on these persons'. Don García's disdain may reflect a prejudice against lesser-born naval officers, an attitude common among noblemen who went to sea.<sup>16</sup> Nonetheless, many of his other complaints cut across the boundary between nobles and non-nobles. For example, he notes:

that a man's honour is more affected by fortune at sea than in any other circumstance. In many instances, neither good judgment nor experience will help you – though you have them – and in infinite other instances, the lack of good judgment and experience will destroy you. It is like holding a wolf by the ears; if it is dangerous to hang on, it is no less dangerous to let go.<sup>17</sup>

He adds that in his experience:

there were only two galley captains who might be envied, but many more who came to grief in various ways, some by drowning, others by having their ships smashed to pieces on land, others by dying at the hands of their enemies, others ending their labours as slaves of the Turks, others having their ships burned, others being rowed to Barbary by their own crews, and others who, in maintaining their ships, destroyed their limited finances. ... Their names are so familiar that even a 4-year-old child could recite them.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Some sources date his death as 1578, but that seems to be an error.

<sup>14</sup> 'Discurso de García de Toledo', fols 100r–100v.

<sup>15</sup> The word *chusma*, from Greek and Genoese, referred to the chant used to synchronise the strokes of the oars and came to denote the oarsmen as a group. By the late sixteenth century, the word could also mean a rabble, mob or riffraff, which indicates the general reputation of the oarsmen by then.

<sup>16</sup> For example, see Elias, *Genesis of the Naval Profession*, pp. 33–40.

<sup>17</sup> 'Discurso de García de Toledo', fols 100v–101r. This well-known saying is usually attributed to the Roman emperor Tiberius.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, fols 100r–101v.

Don García speculates that the only reason God had spared him from most of the ills afflicting his cohort was that he had left the sea when he did.

The discourse gives considerable attention to financial matters. According to Don García, wage-earning mariners are loyal and competent only if they are paid regularly. 'If you do not have the payments in hand because they have not been consigned to you, the men turn against you, fail to do their jobs at sea, and commit outrages on land that damage your reputation and honour.' Even when money is provided at the start of a voyage, if the payments are later suspended, 'because many times the needs of kings require this', the consequences are even worse.<sup>19</sup>

Don García warns that his correspondent's two principal reasons for wanting to become a galley captain – to gain honour and wealth – will be very difficult to achieve. Spanish galleys in the past were much more secure, he argues, because the paid crew members were all experienced hands, and their ships could easily outdistance 'the Turks and Moors' who opposed them as predators or prey, 'and from this they gained honour and profit'. He states that more recently the Turks had acquired more and better ships, while Spanish forces had become weaker in all categories, 'so that they can neither flee nor overtake an enemy. And if you say that one does not always encounter enemies, I would respond that unless you encounter them, there is no way to achieve the honour and wealth that you wish to gain.'<sup>20</sup>

Don García returns repeatedly to the difficulties of finding good experienced officers to manage the ship and the oarsmen. Even a new ship will not function well without good leadership, he notes, and incompetent officers will make the whole crew dispirited, which is a crucial disadvantage in battle.<sup>21</sup> Moreover, the scarcity of good subordinates can damage a captain's reputation in many ways:

If you decide not to take inexperienced crews out in bad weather, some will call you a coward. If you stay near port for some months until the sailors and the *chusma* learn to work together efficiently, some will accuse you of being too fond of life in port, wasting the king's wages, and will argue that it would be better for the king not to have galleys at all.<sup>22</sup>

He also complains that dishonour results when the general of a fleet interferes with matters that properly pertain to each captain, for example:

assigning *patrones*,<sup>23</sup> *cómitres*,<sup>24</sup> or officers to your galleys, which will cause your own men, who hoped to be promoted to such jobs, to grumble and complain against

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., fols 102r–102v.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., fols 103r–103v.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., fol. 104r.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., fols 104v–105r.

<sup>23</sup> In the context of Spain's Mediterranean galleys, a *patrón* was second in command to the captain and often more knowledgeable in nautical matters.

<sup>24</sup> A *cómitre* was the officer charged with directing the work of the crew, whether oars or sails propelled the galley at any given time.

you. Even so, in the face of such interference, it is better not to absent yourself to do other tasks, because at least you can defend yourself in person before the general.<sup>25</sup>

Towards the end of his discourse, Don García returns to the career of Andrea Doria, who – his correspondent had argued – became famous only after he shifted from land warfare to the sea. Although acknowledging that Doria was one of the two men whose career one might envy, Don García notes that ‘those were other times, ... and he was also sustained by a great master (*amo*), despite the perils that assailed him from the sea and from shifts in fortune’.<sup>26</sup> Doria served Charles I, as did Don García at the start of his career, so the remark can be taken as an indirect criticism of Philip II. Don García continues in that same vein, noting the threats to honour and fortune in commanding a large fleet, and the even greater difficulties involved in trying to disengage from a principal command in the galleys.<sup>27</sup> He seems to write from bitter personal experience, arguing that whatever reasons you have for leaving naval service, ‘you will be accused of putting your own particular interests above service to the king, and you cannot be freed from blame without shifting the blame to your master’.<sup>28</sup>

In his final paragraph, Don García urges his correspondent to stay at home and manage his estates, which provide a steady and secure source of income and honour, rather than risking everything by seeking a career in the galleys. ‘That choice will expose you to financial ruin and an early death, leaving your children not only fatherless, but penniless.’<sup>29</sup> Whether or not Don García’s sentiments represented many members of his social class, they help to explain why the crown found it difficult to recruit noblemen into galley service after Lepanto.

From the king’s point of view, the most convenient course of action was to continue contracting the administration of the expanded galley fleets in the 1570s to trusted and experienced individuals such as Don Alvaro de Bazán, the Marquis of Santa Cruz. With so many other opportunities, however, there were not enough noblemen willing to serve as galley captains. The Committee on Galleys (*Junta de Galeras*) of the Council of War (*Consejo de Guerra*) was well aware of the problem. During the summer and autumn of 1584, the committee had a series of discussions regarding how to attract more noblemen to galley service. The general context of those discussions was the belief that noblemen could be trusted to govern and administer the galleys well, because of their military training and their honour and loyalty to the crown. The members of the committee agreed that noblemen serving as galley captains would increase the discipline and effectiveness of the crews, as well as ensuring more humane treatment of all the men on board. They noted, however, that the noblemen recruited would have to be knowledgeable about maritime matters. In other words, without

<sup>25</sup> ‘Discurso de García de Toledo’, fol. 105r.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, fol. 105v.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, fols 105v–106r.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, fols 106v–107r.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, fol. 107v.

seafaring experience their upbringing as leaders with military skills would not ensure that they could command at sea.<sup>30</sup> To attract men with the necessary qualities and skills, the government would have to provide adequate compensation. An unstated but obvious hope of the committee was that young noblemen who established a career on the galleys would be more likely to take on the management of whole squadrons as they matured.

In short, the members of the committee seem to have decided that the crown could no longer rely as heavily on contractual arrangements to run the galleys, and that financial incentives were the best way to attract a new generation of noblemen to galley service. Financial incentives were central to their 1584 discussions, including concerns that recruiting noblemen might substantially increase the cost of running the galleys. The committee estimated that the total cost would not necessarily rise, because a higher base rate of pay for captains would eliminate the need for the supplements that traditionally accompanied their wages.<sup>31</sup> After preliminary discussions in August 1584, the committee asked the king to request opinions (*pareceres*) from the Marquis of Santa Cruz and other senior officials. The committee noted that there were already many excellent men among the non-noble officers in the galleys, including captains. They requested their opinions as well, presumably to demonstrate that the crown would continue to value their services, even as more noblemen joined the ranks of galley captains. The committee also collected data on the total compensation for officers already serving.

Having gathered this information, the Committee on Galleys resumed discussions in early October 1584.<sup>32</sup> By then, the king had agreed that the government needed a new approach to attract more noblemen to the galleys. Each member of the committee gave his opinion about wages for captains in the meeting held on 6 October 1584. Don Francisco de Álava proposed 35 *escudos* per month and ten daily rations – the extra rations for members of each captain's entourage, including servants.<sup>33</sup> Ordinary captains on the galleys were served by men from the *chusma*; to allow personal servants for the noble captains would mark a major deviation from standard procedures. The Marquis of Aguilar suggested a wage of 30 *escudos* per month and six daily rations. Aguilar thought that the crown should not pay wages for any personal servants, but he urged the king to reward a nobleman who performed well with appointment to one of the military orders. The Commendador of Castile agreed with Aguilar on the monthly wage but preferred an allowance of twelve rations per day for each nobleman's entourage, which would attract 'persons of quality and satisfaction' as galley captains.

<sup>30</sup> Their insistence on seafaring competence contradicts Elias, *Genesis of the Naval Profession*, pp. 33–40.

<sup>31</sup> Archivo del Museo Naval (AMN), Madrid, Colección Sanz Barutell, MS 389, fol. 164r.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., fol. 186r.

<sup>33</sup> The value of an *escudo* varied between 10 and 15 silver *reales*. A *ducado* was officially valued at 11 *reales*.

The non-noble members of the committee held less generous views.<sup>34</sup> The Royal Accountant Francisco de Garnica proposed giving new noble captains 30 *escudos* and six rations, with extra benefits if a man served well but no personal servants permitted. Juan Fernández de Espinosa agreed that the new captains should be 'gentlemen and principal persons', but he argued that they should not receive a wage at all until they had proven worthy; at that point, they should earn between 30 and 35 *escudos* per month, with twelve daily rations. The last to give his opinion was the committee's president, Rodrigo Vázquez. He agreed that it would be suitable to appoint noble gentlemen as captains of the galleys, but 'not excluding from [their ranks non-noble] persons who were apt [for the job] and good mariners'. According to Vázquez, the new recruits should be selected on the basis of reports from the official known as the Governor of Castile (*Adelantado de Castilla*)<sup>35</sup> and the Marquis of Santa Cruz. Vázquez thought that those chosen should earn 40 *escudos* per month and eight to ten rations per day, but with no personal servants permitted.<sup>36</sup>

The basic wage of galley captains in the late sixteenth century was 10 *escudos* per month, though competent galley captains generally received sizeable supplements – sometimes two or three times as much as their basic wage. By comparison, the principal officer on a transatlantic merchant vessel earned the equivalent of 8.8 *escudos* per month from 1567 to 1623.<sup>37</sup> Officers on Spain's Atlantic fleets had the opportunity to supplement their basic wages through trade; officers on the galleys did not. The committee's recommendations would have raised the basic wage for galley captains to a level that could attract noblemen and lessen or eliminate the need for supplementary pay for exemplary service. It was not clear, however, whether higher wages alone would be sufficient to counter the myriad disadvantages of galley service discussed by García de Toledo.

The juxtaposition of Don García's discourse and the Council of War's efforts to attract more noblemen to the galleys raises some interesting questions. Did the king implement the recommendations of the Committee on Galleys? Did they have the desired effect? How many noblemen served on the galleys in the seventeenth century, and how did their numbers change over time? The questions are difficult to answer in the current state of my research, and they are complicated by the decline in the importance of galleys in Spain's Mediterranean strategy during the seventeenth century. Although the galleys continued to use the Mediterranean port of Cartagena as a winter base, their main focus of operation shifted to the Atlantic port of Cádiz to protect Spanish commercial fleets returning from

<sup>34</sup> Noble members of the committee were invariably referred to with the honorific 'Don' before their names; non-nobles were not. Although the honorific later came into more generalised use, in the late sixteenth century it was a reliable marker of noble status.

<sup>35</sup> The *Adelantado de Castilla* was the highest royal official in the galley administration.

<sup>36</sup> AMN, Colección Sanz Barutell, MS 389, fols 186r–187r.

<sup>37</sup> E.J. Hamilton, 'Wages and Subsistence on Spanish Treasure Ships, 1503–1660', *Journal of Political Economy* (1929), pp. 430–50.

America, which reached a peak around 1600.<sup>38</sup> With the decline of those fleets later in the seventeenth century, and encroaching sandbars near Cádiz, the galleys were officially shifted back to Cartagena in 1668. By then, galleys no longer held primacy in Spain's Mediterranean strategy, but they remained important to combat North African piracy, and *grandees* and titled noblemen held the exclusive right to command galley squadrons.<sup>39</sup>

Some of the best available records for noblemen serving on the galleys come from the late seventeenth century. Compiled in Cartagena, the records include separate double folio books for galley slaves (*esclavos*), condemned criminals (*condenados*) and free wage-earners (*gente de cabo*). Each man is identified by name, parentage, place of birth, age and significant physical characteristics, followed by his service record. Historians in the early twentieth century were still able to consult the books,<sup>40</sup> but the humid climate on the Mediterranean coast caused significant deterioration in the paper over time. In the last several years, conservation teams working with the Naval Museum in Madrid have begun to restore the twenty-five books that remain.<sup>41</sup>

Noblemen represent a significant proportion of the men listed in one book of free wage-earners.<sup>42</sup> Of the 373 men whose records are legible, 142 (or 38 per cent) were noblemen, designated by the honorific 'Don' before their names and other indications of high status. In the individual listings for each man, a few are identified as the son of a titled nobleman. Others are simply identified as a known person (*persona conocida*), rather than by the details of their parentage; their families were sufficiently prominent to make further information unnecessary. Among the 142 noblemen, 47 served as galley captains – 59 per cent of the total captains listed from 1649 to 1681.<sup>43</sup> Judging from the registers, noblemen serving as galley captains received the same compensation as their non-noble counterparts. The starting pay was 44 *escudos* per month, rising to 55, and then 66 *escudos* with experience. Two other noblemen were in charge of the body of craftsmen (*maestranza*) that maintained and repaired the galleys. In those two cases, the post seems to have been largely honorific, bestowed on men who were not fit for sea duty. The other noblemen were soldiers with the military contingents serving on

<sup>38</sup> See Eufemio Lorenzo Sanz, *Comercio de España con América en la época de Felipe II* (2 vols, Valladolid, 1980) for a detailed analysis of Spain's Atlantic trade in the late sixteenth century.

<sup>39</sup> *Restaurando el testimonio del pasado. Los libros generales de galeras* [exhibition catalogue], with text by Carmen Torres López, María del Carmen Hidalgo Brinquis and Rebeca Benito Lope (Madrid: Órgano de Historia y Cultura Naval, Subsistema Archivístico de la Armada, 2010), pp. 14–16.

<sup>40</sup> For example, Félix Sevilla y Solanas, *Historia penitenciaria española (la galera)*. *Apuntes de archivo* (Segovia, 1917).

<sup>41</sup> AMN, *Libros Generales*, uncatalogued. Many of the pages have blank spaces where there were holes in the original, so that it is impossible to recover full information for every entry. Moreover, some pages could not be salvaged and are missing from the restored books.

<sup>42</sup> AMN, *Libros Generales – Gente de Cabo, 1654–88*. The book was originally foliated, but many of the folio numbers do not survive on the restored pages. Unless otherwise noted, the following preliminary analysis comes from this source.

<sup>43</sup> Although the official dates for the book are 1654–88, a few records date from the 1640s.

the galleys, including one man identified as the proprietary captain of an entire infantry unit (*tercio*).

The highest ranking noblemen listed – eleven in all – received the highest compensation from the crown, ranging from 100 to 330 *escudos* per month. Four of the eleven received their compensation as wages for unspecified duties, presumably as soldiers during sea battles. One received 100 *escudos* per month in wages and another 100 as a maintenance allowance (*entretenimiento*; lit., entertainment). The other six received a maintenance allowance alone, which was standard practice for members of the entourage of the chief naval officer on a Spanish vessel. Among them was the man who received 330 *escudos* per month, after only four years' service. In fact, he was the son of the captain general – the highest official for all Spanish galleys.<sup>44</sup> Rank had its privileges, but the presence of the captain general's son no doubt encouraged other noblemen to fulfil their duty to the crown in the galleys.

The records for the late seventeenth century suggest that the crown had some success in attracting noblemen to serve in the galleys far beyond the era of Lepanto. Financial incentives played a part in that success. The wages for galley captains in the late seventeenth century were considerably higher than the figures suggested by the Committee on Galleys a century earlier. Monetary deflation made those wages even more appealing, particularly for younger sons who had to find a socially acceptable source of income. The dire analysis of galley service by García de Toledo in 1575 described the disadvantages of that service, but later generations of noblemen evidently continued to see the galleys as a potential venue for their military careers.

<sup>44</sup> The captain general was the II Marquis of Bayona, Enrique de Benavides y Bazán. His son was Don Francisco de Benavides y Pimentel.



## Strategy Seen from the Quarterdeck in the Eighteenth-Century French Navy

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It is a truth universally acknowledged that historians are prophets of the past. Reporting on naval campaigns whose results are known, historians enjoy a comprehensive understanding of events that enables them to produce a clear and logical narrative. However, this narrative does not necessarily correspond with the seamen's experiences of the same campaigns. Historians have too often taken for granted that those who served on board, from the quarterdeck to the lower deck, were more or less aware of the strategic issues at hand and that they knew the fleet's destination and its objectives. This can be truly illusory and even misleading. I would like to assess the degree of knowledge that captains had about their missions when they set sail and the extent to which admirals were more informed than everyone else on board.

Not unexpectedly, the term strategy was never used in its modern sense. However, a clear, if not necessarily accurate, definition of objectives and means of action did exist at the level of the *Conseil du Roi*, where operations were decided year after year. What remains to be ascertained is what was communicated or explained to the admirals and captains. What did the officers on the quarterdeck know about what they were expected to do? Had someone at Versailles consulted them prior to ordering naval operations? To answer these questions, we must investigate the instructions given to flag officers or captains, official and individual logbooks, letters and memoirs.

Let us first examine how officers understood the concept of strategy as being something they carried out. However, the lack of being in on the secret did not prevent some officers from expressing their views, and many of them tried to understand the purpose of their missions.

### Strategy in Theory and Practice

It should be observed that in France naval officers left behind many treatises on naval tactics or shipbuilding, but not on what we would define today as strategy. This is hardly surprising given that decisions on matters of war and peace – the heart of politics at the time – were made exclusively by the *Conseil du Roi* at Versailles and were consequently shrouded in mystery. Secrecy and surprise were the mainsprings of victory. Thus the quarterdeck was frequently not kept