

on a single page as well, showing design reconfigurations for use as “a special transport ship” (123). Precious few Second World War combat images are included, but there are some interesting views of Russian vessels taken during the Russo-Japanese War showcasing battle damage and conditions from that conflict.

As previously mentioned, the work depicts vessels beyond its title focus as well. It includes 16 ocean defense/escort ships, eight pre-London Naval Treaty torpedo ships, five post-treaty “new” torpedo ships, eight submarine chasers, and four patrol boats. Less commonly encountered than destroyers, these vessels are also often reduced to a single image, but their often-unique nature contrasts starkly with the earlier sections. The pre-London Naval Treaty torpedo ships, for example, offer some of the oldest images of almost archaic boat design, while two of the selected Patrol Ships, *No. 101* (formerly HMS *Thracian*) and *No. 102* (formerly USS *Stewart*), offer views of captured allied vessels modified and impressed into Japanese service (204-205).

As with the other volumes of this series, a Technical Specifications section serves as the primary text. Due to the number of vessels involved, however, it requires 22 pages divided into three columns per page to cover 55 ship classes rather than individual vessels. Each class is described by ship type, length, beam, draught, displacement, speed, armament, propulsion, boilers, and power. Following this, a table lists all vessels of the class, detailing name, completion date, shipyard, and brief service notes, the latter often listing dates of decommissioning or combat loss. War prize vessels are also listed in tables after each vessel type, expanding the standard class table to include country of origin, original name and

class, displacement, Japanese refitter, and refitting completion date. There are no photographs for a number of vessels, primarily in the non-destroyer sections.

There are a few possible improvements. As is common in this series, image captions are kept to a minimum, which leads to unnecessary omissions. For example, the caption of the Third Class Destroyer *Akatsuki* fails to mention that it was originally the Russian destroyer *Ryesitelni*, and two photos of the *Shiranui* in dry dock with the hull forward of the main funnel missing merely refer to the vessel as being in “for repairs” (94-95, 157). Given the minimal use of images for each vessel, expanded captions could greatly improve effectiveness. With so many vessels under discussion, the use of only one image is likely due to the need to keep the series’ page count under 200 pages per volume. Expanding this allowance would allow the authors to showcase more vessels and more fully illustrate modifications to certain ships throughout their service lives.

Like the rest of the Kure Maritime Museum series, *Destroyers* is a solid visual guide to the majority of destroyers fielded by Japan during the early- to mid-twentieth century, along with a good representation of select early torpedo vessels, late Second World War escorts, and patrol vessels. The clear profile views offered make the work quite useful as a recognition manual when dealing with images of Imperial Japanese support craft and the specifications sections offer good introductory information for both general classes and individual ships.

Charles Ross Patterson II
Yorktown, Virginia

Milan Vego. *General Naval Tactics: Theory and Practice*. Annapolis, MD:

U.S. Naval Institute Press, www.usni.org, 2020. 464 pp., illustrations, maps, figures, notes, bibliography, index. US \$55.95, cloth; ISBN 978-1-68247-541-7. (E-book reviewed.)

Professor Milan Vego is a well-known name in the field of naval/maritime studies. Currently teaching at the US Naval War College, Professor Vego has extensive experience as both a naval officer and academic, which informs all his works, but especially his current book *General Naval Tactics*. According to the information from the Naval War College, Professor Vego is a native of Bosnia and Herzegovina, where he served as an officer in the former Yugoslavian Navy between 1961 and 1973, and where he graduated as a torpedo specialist and obtained a degree in Naval Science. In 1973, he earned a master's degree in US/Latin American History at the Belgrade University, and later, in 1976, worked in the West German Merchant Marine. After obtaining political asylum in the United States, he concluded a PhD in Modern European History at George Washington University in 1981. His many books and articles have been very influential, and it is no surprise that this new work follows the elegance and substance of his former works, such as *Naval Operations in Narrow Seas*, published in 2003 by Routledge (reviewed in *TNM* XV, no. 3, 138-139).

Yet, *General Naval Tactics* is a very particular book for it captures the interest of both naval officers and naval scholars at the same time. It highlights the fundamental importance of the conjunction of theory and practice to the naval/maritime field of study. In this latest work, Vego ultimately presents a brilliant compilation of his perceptions on all aspects of naval tactics – theory and practice. The reader cannot help

but feel the weight of his experience and knowledge on the elaboration and development of every concept throughout the book. Certainly, his ideas in this volume will be further studied and explored for years to come.

The book is divided into 12 chapters, each one dealing with one aspect of naval tactics. The first four chapters are more introductory and explain the concepts of naval tactics, while the following chapters deal with more complex subjects such as combat support, tactical doctrine, and tactical leadership. There is no concluding chapter to wrap up the book, which is the weak point of the volume. This reader hopes, however, that the work does not stop here, and that there may be more on this aspect of naval tactics in forthcoming works.

Throughout the book, Vego presents complex subjects in a comprehensive way that can be understood by all audiences, whether they have a military background or an academic one. In each chapter, he systematically details his ideas and main concepts illustrating them with factual examples in a very delightful manner. Anyone eager to understand better the tactical and strategical implications of historical naval battles and modern naval operations will enjoy his insights and conceptualizations.

Another merit of the book is the discussion of tactical perspectives from Clausewitz and Jomini, as well as Mahan and Corbett, without dragging the reader into the endless elaboration of which one is the better, pitting one author against the other. Instead, Vego combines the best of both worlds, highlighting the key aspects of each one's ideas for understanding the tactics of naval warfare. He also references the perspectives of forgotten thinkers, like René Daveluy, an early-twentieth-century French Admiral who fought in the First World War and published a series

of books about naval strategy and tactics. His work has been largely overlooked, although it was used by great authors like Bernard Brodie.

The influence of Clausewitz is readily observable as Vego elaborates on his core arguments. For example, in Chapter 4, *Elements of Naval Tactical Actions*, the author brings the concept “center of gravity” to the discussion, examining the origins and meaning of the term as he explains the “tactical center of gravity” in naval action. It is very refreshing to see Vego apply Clausewitzian concepts with objectivity and clearness, while creating his own approach to naval tactics.

This is a must-have book for anyone who is interested in or more deeply researching the topic. It might, however, require several readings to absorb the ideas Vego presents in order to comprehend the full picture. This is a book to lean on, study, and explore. Naval tactics are an art, requiring years of comprehensive reading to command and depth of experience to execute. *General Naval Tactics* contributes to the never-ending mission of improving naval thought, while also providing the tools for enhancing experience at sea.

Andrea L. F. Resende de Souza
Belo Horizonte, Brazil

Jamin Wells. *Shipwrecked. Coastal Disasters and the Making of the American Beach*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, www.uncpress.org, 2020. xiii +242 pp., illustrations, maps, notes, bibliography, index. US \$29.95, paper; ISBN 978-1-4696-6090-5. (E-book available.)

Shipwrecked presents several new perspectives on the changing history of the American east coast, focusing on the mainly sand shorelines between the Carolinas and Cape Cod. Chapters are

devoted to telling a story of the taming of the American beach in the nineteenth century and presenting a fresh application of the frontier thesis to the area of contact between land and sea, far from the standard view of a steadily westward moving border between the settled and the wild.

Identified by the publisher as “Environmental History,” this is indeed a volume about place but is environmental only in as much as the human action takes place in a defined locale. In reality, most of the chapters are about very specific activities in defined parts of the coastline. The approach allows for a detailed treatment of marine and near-marine activities over time which Wells then generalizes across the whole area. An overview of the history of the coast opens the volume with a view of the shore as “an isolated, parochial, pre-industrial space on the margins...” (36). The rest of the book deals with how and why that view changed over the century. The first of the stories to be examined is the history of wreckers and wreck law on the Jersey Shore which looks at the perceptions, and more importantly, the reality of shipwreck and salvage through the first half of the century. Wells traces the pragmatic and gradual application of regulation to balance private and community interests. The theme of transformation carries over to the examination and development of lifesaving mechanisms on the shoreline of Rhode Island and it is in this chapter that the idea of coastal tourism and its association with wrecks is more fully explored.

However, rather than looking at the rise of the seaside resort, the linkage here is to the federal presence of the US Life Saving Service. A chapter on the salvage activities in the coastal areas adjacent to the Port of New York extending from Cape Cod to Cape May concentrates on the gradual shift away