

### MAHAN AND THE IMPORTANCE OF SEA POWER



- Alfred Thayer Mahan (1840 – 1914) was the American naval officer and considered one of the foremost experts on naval military strategy
- He disagreed with MacKinder, who stressed the important of land transport (given his focus on the Eurasian Heartland)
- Mahan argued that the most powerful states are those with the strongest navy

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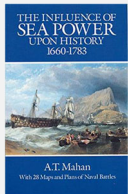
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### THE ROLE OF NAVY IN EXPANSIONISM



- "Looking back at Anglo-French naval rivalry in the 17th and 18th centuries, Mahan recommended that the acquisition of naval power was the single most important factor in determining a nation's geopolitical power. Sea power was the 'handmaiden of expansion' and an expansionist United States would need to be able not only to project its power across the vast Atlantic and Pacific Oceans but also to have the capacity to deter and/or defeat any rivals. The main threat, according to Mahan, lay with the German and Russian Empires and their maritime ambitions."
- Dodds, Geopolitics: A Very Short Introduction

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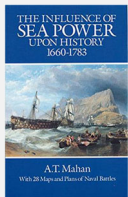
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### MAHAN'S INFLUENCE



- For Mahan, the navy is key for both military and commercial success
- Any country which depends on world economy must have secure unrestricted to the seas and so the enemy's navel power must always be contained
- Mahan had a great influence on US strategy but was also closely read in the UK and Germany of the inter-war period, when Hitler was focused on challenging the British naval dominance through developing an ambitious German navy programme

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