

CONTINENTAL POWERS VERSUS MARITIME POWERS: A GENERAL COMPARISON

Continental Powers/Military Powers/"Tigers":

Tend to be physically big

Tend to be resource rich, (farmland, agricultural surpluses, mines of precious/industrial metals, etc.), thus motivating other states to want to take those resources

Tend to be landlocked or to have comparatively short coastlines with comparatively poor harbors

Tend to have long, indefensible borders, and are therefore easy to invade

Therefore need large (and expensive) standing armies and fortifications to defend themselves and their borders

Therefore need large centralized governments to impose and collect taxes, to conscript troops, to deter subversive activity, etc.

Their governments therefore tend to be authoritarian, with little regard for civil liberties

Tend to have far more force available than a maritime power in the short run

Maritime Powers/Naval Powers/"Sharks":

Tend to be comparatively small

Tend to be resource-poor, which encourages or require trade with other states/communities to procure food and other raw materials

This promotes development of market capitalism and economic individualism

This also promotes colonial and imperial expansion, leading to greater wealth and worldwide influence than that of continental powers

Tend to have excellent harbors with easy access to the world's oceans

Thus leading to the construction of large merchant fleets, which require navies to protect them from predation by enemies

Tend to be insular, i.e., isolated from neighboring states by strong natural borders (oceans, rivers, mountains)

Therefore have little need for large expensive standing armies or fortifications

Therefore develop smaller, less authoritarian government that is less concerned with central planning and more tolerant of civil and economic liberties

Can draw on the wealth of overseas colonies/empire, so can usually defeat continental powers in a protracted war, as long as no invasion of the homeland occurs