

Part II

Anglo-American Maritime Theory in the Twentieth Century

‘Theory does not pretend to solve problems; it sheds light on problems and thus can provide guidance for those who have the responsibility for solving them.’—H. E. Eccles

Theory provides the intellectual framework from which practical activity can be planned and understood. This section traces the changing nature of naval theory in the twentieth century as theorists have attempted to respond to the changing strategic and technical nature of warfare. In the process, it identifies a tradition of thinking about the broad uses of naval power which is shared by Britain and the United States. While there have been policy differences between the two countries, their basic, theoretical understanding is similar. This tradition of naval thought is one which is different from that which other nations have developed. It has largely been formed by the similar circumstances which both Britain and the United States have shared in the way in which they have employed their navies as Great Powers.