SOUNDINGS

What is a Maritime Strategy?

John B Hattendorf

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Executive Summary

This discussion articulates the complexity of developing a maritime strategy. Navies are an important aspect of the strategic maritime environment but they remain only one element of a nation's strategy in the maritime domain. The article begins by briefly tracing the history of maritime strategy, which sheds light on its evolving characteristics. Following is a discourse on contemporary naval strategy. Emanating from the 'Anglo-American' and 'Young' schools of thought the debate encompassed the ideas of military strategists such as Clausewitz and Jomini. This not only laid the foundation for modern maritime strategy but also led to the identification of sea control as a priority military task within a nation's maritime strategy. Control must be established before it can be exploited, and a nation's military capacity will dictate the navy's ability to exert force not just during wartime, but also its ability to deploy influence in peacetime.

About the Author

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What is a Maritime Strategy?

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What is a maritime strategy?[1] The question is a simple and direct one, but the answer is complex. A further complication is the use of history to enlighten some of the current issues in defence strategy. We must remind ourselves about the basic problems of studying maritime strategy in history and we must know about the actual practice of maritime strategy in the past. We should also think about the history of maritime strategic thought and the way it has changed and developed. With these thoughts in mind, one can say something about the way in which we currently understand maritime strategy.

Maritime Strategy in History

History has much to tell us about maritime strategy; indeed, some of the most important works on the subject of maritime strategy are analyses of history. The study of history certainly broadens our perspective and gives us deeper insight into the reasons why we have become what we have become. To study strategy in history, one must be alert to different times, different outlooks, different ideas, different problems, different mind-sets, different capabilities, different decision-making structures, and different technologies. All of these dissimilarities show us that the past is often not a precise model to follow. Despite the contrasts between past and present, however, one can perceive some broad, recurring characteristics, issues, and problems that arise for maritime strategists in the range of action and roles that they consider. From these, one can outline a broad concept of maritime strategy, but such a concept is highly influenced, if not entirely determined, by the historical examples from which it is derived.

One's own national history and experience in maritime strategy can help to identify continuing national interests and priorities, but over time there are changes in the structure of international relations and changes in the role that a particular nation plays within that structure. Thus, in order to understand the full range of problems in maritime strategy, one's own historical experience needs to be supplemented by an understanding of other nations' experiences, in various time periods and in differing situations. Let me try to clarify this point in the context of twentieth-century maritime strategies.

Twentieth Century Maritime Strategies

Over the past half century, a variety of maritime strategies have been at work. Most recently, in the wars involving Iraq, Afghanistan, and Kuwait in the Gulf, regional crises in the Adriatic and in the blockade off Haiti, as well as in both the Vietnam and Korean wars, maritime nations concentrated on using the sea for their own purposes. They supported and carried out military actions while also imposing blockades against enemy shipping, without having to devote their

full energies to countering a concerted enemy attempt to seize control of the sea for its own use. Thus, the maritime strategy of these more recent wars was different from that of the two world wars as well as different from the maritime strategy of the Cold War.

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In the Cold War, the NATO and the Warsaw Pact nations developed opposing maritime strategies centred around two superpower navies, both armed with submarines carrying nuclear missiles, while many small—and medium—sized countries tailored their maritime contributions to fit broad alliance strategies through specialised functions such as minesweeping, air defence, or anti-submarine warfare.

By contrast, during World War II (WWII), the Allied nations faced the Axis powers, who posed a very serious threat as they sought to dominate large portions of the Mediterranean, the Atlantic, and the Pacific. Allied maritime strategy was characterised by an innovative struggle to oppose the nearly successful strategy of the Axis U-boats against vital merchant shipping in the Atlantic, by the great island-hopping amphibious campaigns in the Southwest and Central Pacific, as well as by the carrier-to-carrier air battles in mid-ocean and by coordinated surface, air and submarine actions.[2]

In both world wars, the Allies shared similar maritime strategies that required providing critical logistical support for armies by carrying vast amounts of men and materials from one continent to another through contested waters. Similarly, the Allies enforced long and tedious economic blockades in the face of determined opposition at sea. In the context of the two world wars, a series of advanced technological developments and systems in areas such as aviation, submarines, radio communications, and nuclear fission provided a range of new tools, new challenges, and differing strategies to respond to.

More prominent in the popular memory of World War I (WWI), the naval battle of Jutland brought back memories of the great sea battles of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. While naval officers of the day saw the connections to a great naval tradition and had planned, and even hoped, for such a battle, others had expected a different kind of war than that which emerged in 1914. They had incorrectly predicted that their immediate future would hold no world-engulfing wars, but rather the confined crises and limited warfare that they had seen in the Spanish-American War in 1898, the Anglo-Boer War of 1899-1902, or the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-05. All of these wars required major navies to move men and equipment great distances and to fight or support wars for limited objectives and to deal with crises in distant waters.

Such thoughts seem to resonate with recent American discourse. Perhaps the experience and ideas of that time contain some valuable maritime lessons and insights for the major naval powers in the present and the future.[3] Today, we all share an interest in the general problems of limited wars and regional crises. We also share an interest with another set of problems that maritime nations faced in the peacetime periods of 1898-1914 and 1919-39: the challenge of developing adequate naval forces and maintaining them while costs increase, technology rapidly changes, and international law increasingly imposes restraint on the use of force. Here, the identification, selection and development of new technologies are interwoven with complex issues of national finance, bureaucratic decision making, personalities, and legislative politics.[4]

Despite similarities in recent times, we must also remember the differences. The period leading up to WWI was quite different from ours. It was a world of imperial rivalry and colonial expansion, a time of rising military and naval budgets, and a period in which regional tensions in Europe had immediate and world-wide impact. Similarly, the period leading up to WWII, a time of unresolved issues left from WWI, was equally different from ours.

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[2] Paul Kennedy, *Engineers of Victory: the Problem Solvers Who Turned the Tide in the Second World War*, Random House, New York, 2013, pp. 71-73, 348-351, 359, 363-373.

[3] See, for example, Sir Julian S Corbett, *Maritime Strategy in the Russo-Japanese War, 1904-1905*, Introduction by John B Hattendorf and Donald M Schurman, Naval Institute Press, Annapolis, 1995, Vol. 1, p. 41.

[4] See Jon T Sumida, *In Defence of Naval Supremacy: Finance, Technology, and British Naval Policy, 1889-1914*, Unwin and Hyman, Boston, 1989.

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In searching for provocative ideas, studies of the maritime experience of Great Britain in the years between 1815 and 1851 might, for the moment, be more useful to American naval thinking today while America's own experience during the War of 1812 and afterwards might even be useful to some countries today.[5]

In the decades following the long and exhausting Napoleonic wars, nearly all nations reduced their armaments. Among them, Great Britain retained a relatively large navy, although it was, in fact, drastically reduced from what it had been. In this period, there was a tendency to deal with conflict through collective security and various national navies found themselves operating in multilateral actions.

However instructive this period can be, one cannot press the parallels too far. The Congress system for collective security and the multilateral naval actions of the period, such as those at Navarino in 1827, at Acre in 1840, and even the Black Sea operations in the Crimean War at mid-century, were far less sophisticated than the approaches available today.

We can deepen our understanding of the problems involved in multilateral naval operations by studying these events, but the experience of the twentieth century has already shown us that the additional technical aspects of logistics, communications, command and control as well as detailed planning and standardised procedures are central to success in modern multilateral operations. The failure of the Australian-British-Dutch-American (ABDA) squadron in the Java Sea in 1942 provided a salutary lesson that was not lost on the survivors.[6] By 1943-44, the Allied landings in North Africa and in Italy were remarkable feats of international and inter-service cooperation. With further insights from the experience of the war in the Pacific, only the success at Normandy in June 1944 surpassed these achievements. After months of detailed planning, British and American admirals commanded a fleet that included not only vessels of the Royal Navy, the US Navy, and Commonwealth navies, but also Polish, Norwegian, and Free French ships.

In spite of these remarkable successes, some naval leaders in the postwar period were naturally doubtful about the prospects for peacetime, multilateral naval cooperation. Much of the doubt came from ingrained habits of thought, not from a dispassionate examination of historical experience. The major stumbling block came from the fact that navies are nearly always thought of in national terms. We all tell our citizens and our sailors that the navy represents the nation. Everything about navies is organised in national terms. We have fought on the decks of our ships for our own nation. For this, we fly our national flag and our ships often carry evocative national names: the names of heroes, battles, symbols, or places that link our ships and sailors to our national heritage. Sometimes it can seem improper, even sacrilegious, to think of our navy operating in another context.

In the mid-1960s, when some naval officers in NATO first suggested the idea of the Standing Naval Force Atlantic, senior NATO leaders were extremely sceptical that it could succeed. Yet, over the following thirty years and more, STANAVFORLANT (or SNFL as it is alternatively known) has shown itself to be a model multilateral force, with command rotating among all national participants, each on an equal footing with ships and shipmates from other countries; the smaller countries' contributions not being dominated by the larger. Over the years, within the context of NATO, common naval tactics, publications, communication equipment, and procedures evolved while working toward greater standardisation in logistics and repair parts. While the Standing Naval Force went on to see its first combat action in the Adriatic, NATO maritime procedures also became models for maritime operations in the Persian Gulf and off Haiti. These wider experiences in the early 1990s showed that multilateral naval operations

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[5]   John B Hattendorf, 'The Third Alan Villiers Memorial Lecture: The Naval War of 1812 in International Perspective', *Mariner's Mirror*, Vol. 99, No. 1, February 2013, pp. 5-22.
[6]   John B Hattendorf, 'Admiral Richard G. Colbert: Pioneer in Building Global Maritime Partnerships', *Naval War College Review*, Vol. 61, No. 3, Summer 2008, pp. 109-130.

could effectively take place outside a strongly structured alliance through the use of the United Nations, regional organisations and even ad hoc arrangements.

As defence budgets decline and navies grow smaller, the range of their responsibilities remains unchanged and may even grow. One effective way of dealing with these facts is to develop multinational maritime strategies. In 1995, to meet requests from many parts of the world, the US Naval Doctrine Command distributed a draft manual to facilitate multilateral naval operations for this purpose in various parts of the world.[7]

Taken overall, the experiences of the twentieth century clearly show that there is no one maritime strategy that is valid for all situations. Maritime strategy changes with the context, structure, national purposes, technologies, and equipment available. Our abstract understanding of maritime strategy has also changed. As we examine strategy in history, particularly for the twentieth century, we need to be aware of these changes and know that the theory of maritime strategy has been evolving over time, even if the actors in history may or may not be aware of the changes.

The Development of Maritime Strategic Thought

Nations have practiced maritime strategy for centuries, but historians, political scientists, and theoreticians have only examined it analytically for a relatively short period of time. It was nearly 125 years ago that Alfred Thayer Mahan pointed out the role of sea power in wartime national policy, and it has been a century since Sir Julian Corbett first provided a more complete theoretical statement of the principles for establishing control of the sea in wartime.[8]

During the period of the naval wars in the age of sail, few people looked at any kind of strategy as a separate concept or area of practice; together, admirals and statesmen practised the craft of maritime strategy as if it were part of one great continuum, rarely putting the reasons for their actions on paper.

Although some historians object that leaders in this period did not think strategically, others have countered that point by demonstrating how they acted strategically. At the very end of the period of naval wars under sail only a few people, men such as Carl von Clausewitz and Antoine-Henri Jomini, were beginning to think more abstractly about military strategy—although not maritime strategy.[9] Sailors continued to practice the craft of maritime strategy pragmatically until the last quarter of the nineteenth century without worrying about this subject. Both seamen and statesmen knew, from long practice, the characteristics and capabilities of their ships and men; with that knowledge, they could easily calculate a maritime strategy.

In the 1870s and 1880s, something happened in navies. Suddenly, the maritime world seemed different. Over the previous half-century, ships, weapons, and propulsion systems had changed. These innovations changed the capabilities and characteristics of ships so dramatically that people began to think that the old ways of practice had no relevance at all. Soon people saw

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[7]   See Michael Johnson, Peter Swartz and Patrick Roth, *Doctrine for Partnership: A Framework for US Multinational Naval Doctrine*, Center for Naval Analyses, Alexandria VA, 1996, CRM 95-2-2/March 1996; Michael Johnson with Richard Kouhout and Peter Swartz, *Guidelines for the World's Maritime Forces in Conducting Multinational Operations: An Analytical Framework*, Center for Naval Analyses, Alexandria VA, 1996, CRM 95-119/March 1996. The Naval Doctrine Command was established in 1993 and disestablished in 1998; its functions were assumed by the Naval Warfare Development Command, established in 1998.

[8]   AT Mahan, *The Influence of Sea Power Upon History, 1660-1783*, Little Brown, Boston, 1890. His related ideas on naval strategy are summarised in John B Hattendorf (ed), *Mahan on Naval Strategy*, Classics of Sea Power series, Naval Institute Press, Annapolis, 1991. See also Jon Tetsuro Sumida, *Inventing Grand Strategy and Teaching Command: The Classic Works of Alfred Thayer Mahan*, Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, 2000. Julian S Corbett, *Some Principles of Maritime Strategy*, Classics of Sea Power series, Eric Grove (ed) originally published London, 1911; annotated edition with appendices Naval Institute Press, Annapolis, 1988. Corbett's role and influence on the development of maritime strategy is examined in James Goldrick and John B Hattendorf (eds), *Mahan is Not Enough: The Proceedings of a Conference on the Works of Sir Julian Corbett and Admiral Sir Herbert Richmond*, Naval War College Press, Newport, 1994. See JJ Widén, *Theorist of Maritime Strategy: Sir Julian Corbett and his Contribution to Military and Naval Thought*, Ashgate, 2012.

[9]   See Azar Gat, *The Origins of Military Thought: From the Enlightenment to Clausewitz*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1989.

that maritime technology had not just changed once but was changing continually, as is the case today.

The maritime world of the late nineteenth century was at the beginning of the phenomenon of technological change we have come to experience every day. As people came to grips with this phenomenon, many argued that the best choice was to run with the change, go wholeheartedly for the new technology and the new capabilities. The reactionaries, of course, dreamed of a return to the old days and dug in their heels to change of any kind. Some pragmatic naval officers, however, began to struggle with the same issues that we deal with today, asking the pertinent questions: Do we really need the new equipment? What new and essential capabilities will it give us? How much will it cost? How much is enough?

To provide a firm basis to answer this range of questions, some naval men began to ask a series of even deeper questions: What are the functions of a navy? What are the requirements for maritime power? What is the relationship between a navy and other aspects of national power?

The pioneer thinkers in this area (men such as Sir John Knox Laughton, Vice Admiral Sir Philip Colomb, and Sir Julian Corbett in Britain; with Rear Admiral Stephen B Luce and Captain Alfred Thayer Mahan in the United States) turned to two areas of established thought to begin to work out their answers: military theory and historical study. This effort paralleled the spread of ideas and procedures used by the German General Staff to develop war plans, to train staff officers, and to advise senior military commanders. This was the foundation of modern maritime strategic theory.

Initially, maritime strategy focused largely on the role of the navy in wartime. In the first stages, several of the pioneer writers turned to the historical example of the Anglo-French naval wars in the years 1689-1815, seeing in that period some parallels to the imperial rivalry and great-power clashes of the late nineteenth century.

Since that time, both the practice and the theory of naval and maritime strategy has progressed, widening perceptions. Today there is a much larger theoretical understanding that builds, expands, and modifies these earlier ideas for wartime strategy. New technologies, new situations and new experiences brought wider practice, and stimulated further development of theory. WWII, for example, brought home the need for the navy, and for all the separate armed services, to work together more closely. Among theorists, Rear Admiral JC Wylie was the first to attempt to integrate the main, Service-oriented theories into a general theory of power control.[10] Additionally, the Cold War stimulated wide thinking about the uses of military power for deterrence, in particular, and a navy's diplomatic and persuasive uses in peacetime. These broadened perspectives have extended the foundations of theory for modern, and peacetime, maritime strategies.[11]

Schools of Naval Strategy

Beginning in the late nineteenth century, clusters of naval thinkers and writers developed similarly-minded approaches to thinking about the broad roles and functions of navies. Rarely associated with particular institutions they were more commonly associated with and followers of specific thinkers, and typically involved particular weapons and individual national interests and navies during specific periods. These groupings may be called 'schools of naval strategy'. The Anglo-American school of naval strategy is associated with the cumulative writings of John Knox Laughton, Stephen B Luce, Alfred Thayer Mahan, Sir Julian Corbett and Sir Herbert Richmond. In its early days, some referred to them collectively as the 'historical school', since

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[10]   JC Wylie, *Military Strategy: A General Theory of Power Control*, Classics of Sea Power series, introduction by John B Hattendorf and postscript by JC Wylie, Naval Institute Press, Annapolis, 1989.

[11]   See the more detailed outline of these and the following developments in John B Hattendorf and Robert S Jordan (eds), *Maritime Strategy and the Balance of Power: Britain and America in the 20th Century,* Macmillan, London, 1989, Part II: Theory.

an analytical study of historical experience played such an important role in the underpinning of their thought. In this, the main figures were grappling to develop an approach that Carl von Clausewitz had also promoted in using historical study as the best means for experienced officers to learn how to exercise high command.[12]

Quite in opposition to this approach was the French Jeune École, or 'Young School', which involved a range of approaches including strategy, operations, and tactics based around newly developing concepts for a single specific new technological system then under development: the torpedo boat.[13] These ideas became deeply entwined in internal political debates as well as controversies over the ethical and international law aspects involved in using torpedoes to attack merchant shipping.

Other schools of naval strategy developed in other countries, such as Germany, Japan, Italy, and the Soviet Union. However, such 'schools' often dealt in operational and tactical doctrine rather than in broad maritime strategy.[14] In another nuance to the subject, the United States and other countries in the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries developed extensive statements (sometimes in forms similar to governmental 'white papers' or 'green papers') of their naval strategy which were designed to serve multiple internal and external purposes. These purposes could range from declaratory deterrent warnings to an international rival to the basis for allied diplomacy, or even to parliamentary, procurement, and budgetary issues.[15]

Strategy in Modern Warfare

The experience of the recent conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan as well as terrorism, piracy, and military activities involving the activities of ideologically motivated groups is gradually leading to a more nuanced understanding of conflict in the modern world. Some aspects are useful to keep in mind when thinking about the maritime sphere. While some are new aspects, others are aspects that have been there in other periods but have not been emphasised the way they might have been. This gives us another reason to examine past conflicts in history to gain new insights as well as to think more innovatively about what the future might hold.

The interdependence of the global economy in the modern world has long roots in its maritime development, but it brings into question some economic aspects of warfare between states. For example, one traditionally thought about attacks on merchant shipping in terms of the national flag merchant vessels flew, and drew from the effects of those attacks a direct corollary to the national economy of the vessels.

In a globalised world under the regime of the *United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea 1982*, with the additional and widespread use of flags of convenience, the calculation must be very different.[16] While such aspects of globalisation immediately come to the minds

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[12]   For an insightful exposition of Clausewitz's thinking on this, see Jon Tetsuro Sumida, *Decoding Clausewitz: A New Approach to On War*, revised, paperback edition, University of Kansas Press, Lawrence, 2011.

[13]   Arne Røksund, *The Jeune École: The Strategy of the Weak*, Brill, Leiden, 2007. To see this school of strategy in broader historical perspective, consult Martin Motte, Une Éducation Géostratégique: la Pensée Navale française, de la Jeune École à 1914, Economica, Paris, 2004.

[14]   See John B Hattendorf, 'Naval Doctrine' in Hattendorf, *Naval History and Maritime Strategy: Collected Essays*, pp. 241-251; James J Tritten and Vice Admiral Luigi Donolo, *A Doctrine Reader: The Navies of United States*, Great Britain, France, Italy, and Spain, Naval War College Press, Newport, 1995. See also, Milan Vego, *Operational Warfare at Sea: Theory and Practice*, Taylor & Francis, London, 2009.

[15]   To trace the US Navy's use of this approach with its 'capstone strategy' statements, see John B Hattendorf (ed), *U.S. Naval Strategy in the 1970s: Selected Documents*, Naval War College Press, Newport, 2007; John B Hattendorf and Peter M Swartz, *U.S. Naval Strategy in the 1980s: Selected Documents*, Naval War College Press, Newport, 2009; John B Hattendorf and Peter M Swartz, *U.S. Naval Strategy in the 1990s: Selected Documents*, Naval War College Press, Newport, 2006; and John B Hattendorf, *The Evolution of the U.S. Navy's Maritime Strategy, 1977-1986*, Naval War College Press, Newport, 2004.

[16]   John B Hattendorf, 'Globalization and Navies: Some Considerations for Naval Theory', in Ravi Vohra and Devbrat Chakraborty (eds), *Maritime Dimensions of a New World Order,* Anamaya Publishers on behalf of the National Maritime Foundation, New Delhi, 2007, pp. 32-51 (reprinted in John B Hattendorf, *Talking About Naval History: Collected Essays*, Naval War College Press, Newport, 2011, pp. 305-316).

of a sailor, globalisation combines also with the information revolution that connects warfare to much broader audiences, going far beyond the armed forces involved and the peoples that they represent. This means that modern warfare involves many more dimensions than the traditional two-sided clash of armed forces fighting against one another. In the past, we have tended to view each of those two sides as each having a distinctive and cohesive national—or alliance—oriented strategy. The recent wars have underscored the fact that this is not necessarily the case. There are a range of core strategic views within each side that are increasingly understood in the modern world, and there are multiple audiences that view and judge the legitimacy of the opposing strategies used in an armed conflict. There are a variety of domestic audiences that range from lawmakers to the press, specific interest groups, and the general public; internationally these audiences may stretch from small rival tribal groups to regions or even the entire global community.

There are many subtle issues about strategy that need to be understood with greater clarity than we presently do. In a particular conflict, there may be a difference between the use of military force and fighting a war. A war is more than just the employment of armed force; it extends to all methods that impact domestic and international politics.[17] Deeper understanding of maritime strategy requires a move beyond our current understanding of the subject in order to deal with the full range of possible future challenges.

Modern Maritime Strategy

Both our experience of practicing maritime strategy and our historical examination of other maritime strategies during the last hundred years show that maritime strategy is a subset of a nation's grand strategy because it touches on the whole range of activities and interests at sea. In its broadest sense, grand strategy is the comprehensive direction of power to achieve particular national goals. Within those terms, maritime strategy is the direction of all aspects of national power that relate to a nation's interests at sea. The navy serves this purpose, but maritime strategy is not purely a naval preserve. Maritime strategy involves the other functions of state power that include diplomacy; the safety and defence of merchant trade at sea; fishing; the exploitation, conservation, regulation and defence of the exclusive economic zone at sea; coastal defence; security of national borders; the protection of offshore islands; as well as participation in regional and world-wide concerns relating to the use of oceans, the skies over the oceans and the land under the seas.

Issues may include expanding the scientific and technological understanding of the entire maritime environment, working with the full range of national organisations (navy, army, air force, customs, coastguard, commerce and trade, to name but a few of the ministries, bureaus, and departments that touch on these issues) in order to bring forth a truly national concept and plan for the maritime aspects of national life.

The fundamental focus of the military element in maritime strategy centres on the control of human activity at sea through the use of armed force in order to contribute to the broad ends established in a national maritime policy. There are two parts to this: establishing control against opposition; and using control, once it has been established.

In the effort to establish control and, along with it, to deny control to an enemy, there are gradations that range from an abstract ideal to that which is practical, possible, or merely desirable. In this, one can consider whether control is to be general or limited, absolute or merely governing, widespread or local, permanent or temporary.

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[17]   For a thoughtful examination of the wide range of issues involved, see Emile Simpson, *War from the Ground Up: Twenty-First-Century Combat as Politics,* Columbia University Press, New York, 2012, see especially, 'Conclusion: Contemporary Strategic Thought', pp. 227-244.

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Following the establishment of control is the use of the control in order to achieve specific ends. The effort to achieve control, by itself, means nothing unless that control has an effect. In the wide spectrum of activity that this can involve, the most important aspect is the use of maritime control to influence and, ultimately, to assist in controlling, events on land. In this, the fundamental key is to have an effect on those places, times, or routes of travel to which an adversary is sensitive, and which are critical and essential enough to cause an adversary to alter plans or actions so as to accommodate one's own objectives.

The fundamental characteristics of these two, broad elements of maritime strategy stress the sequential and cumulative relationship between them. One needs to obtain some degree of control at sea before being able to use it to obtain the important ends that one seeks. This sequential nature does not exclude the possibility of simultaneously pursuing these objects, but the nature of the relative and temporal control that is achieved, affects the nature of the end-result that is attained.

In many past wars, fighting decisive battles between great opposing fleets or blockading an enemy battle fleet in port to prevent it from getting to sea were the two principal means by which one nation prevented an enemy from establishing maritime control or from interfering with one's own use of the sea. In these ways, one navy could remove another as a threat. Today, there are additional means to achieve these wartime objects: submarine attack, missiles, mines, and air attack.

In examining the role of navies in maritime strategy, many people tend to over-emphasise the effort to achieve control, focusing particularly on battles, and to ignore the less glamorous, but far more important, ways in which maritime forces use the control they obtain.

After obtaining some degree of control in wartime, the most important wartime functions of naval forces are:

- protecting and facilitating one's own and allied merchant shipping and military supplies at sea
- maintaining safe passage for shipping through restricted waters as well as access to ports and harbours
- denying commercial shipping to an enemy
- protecting offshore resources
- moving and supporting troops and advanced bases
- gaining and maintaining local air and sea control in support of air and land operations.[18]

From a narrow perspective, all of these seem to describe a navy operating in its own unique element—the sea—independently using its specialised skills and equipment. But, in a wider context, all of these functions are closely related to other aspects of national power. In many cases, they are also parallel and complementary to the wartime functions of the other armed services.

Maritime strategy prescribes a variety of other considerations for navies in peacetime, in naval operations short of open warfare, and in the non-war functions of naval power that continue even during wartime. One theorist, Ken Booth, has placed these activities under three general categories: the military role, the policing role, and the diplomatic role.[19]

The military capacity of a navy to use force in the event of war is the foundation upon which the diplomatic and the policing roles rest. However, there are additional features of the military role in peacetime. These include both nuclear and conventional deterrence to prevent war.

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[18]   Frank Uhlig Jr, *How Navies Fight 1775-1991*, Naval Institute Press, Annapolis, 1994, summary of chart on pp. 416-417.
[19]   Ken Booth, *Navies and Foreign Policy*, Croom Helm, London, 1977.

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The military role also includes development of the necessary and basic shore facilities and procedures that are prudent to develop in peacetime, in case war should break out. Additionally, the military role involves protecting the lives, property, and interests of one's national citizens on the high seas, in distant waters, and in other offshore locations in time of natural disaster. Most important for all of us in the coming century, the military role includes compliance with, and active assertion of, the international law of the sea regime.

Based on its military capacity, a navy has a policing (or constabulary) function within a maritime strategy. A large country, with adequate resources and wide geographical scope and responsibility, might choose to centralise these functions and assign them to a separate and specialised coastguard service. Other states, by tradition or for other reasons, may choose to share these activities among several governmental agencies. Since the policing role involves military force, it is logically a naval role. Nevertheless, it is one that involves a whole range of civil responsibilities which extend to a different realm, often involving specialised procedures and legal knowledge. This is one reason for exercising such a naval role through agencies other than the navy itself.

In a period of extended peace and international stability, when legislatures will not provide for a war fleet, the agency that exercises the policing role is the one through which wartime capabilities and sea-going experience can be preserved in a contingency force while, at the same time, performing an important naval task. Another role related to the policing function in a maritime strategy, navies can contribute to internal stability and development. This peaceful use of naval force is limited by geography for most countries, but can be considerable in nations made up of island groups.

In case of emergencies, navies can, sometimes more readily than other agencies, supply electrical power, provide hospital facilities, and transport heavy equipment to communities on islands, along navigable rivers, and in distant coastal regions where other types of transportation are limited. In addition to ship visits, naval shore facilities and active bases in distant areas serve as symbols of a nation for the peoples of those regions, contributing to a local solidarity as well as to the local economy.

An additional peacetime role for navies within a maritime strategy is the diplomatic and international role. In this role, navies can play an important part in terms of reassuring and strengthening bilateral alliances, as well as regional and worldwide international organisations through mutually supportive cooperation. From a position of moderate naval strength, nations can in this way contribute to international stability and maintain a nation's presence and prestige on the international stage, while at the same time cooperating with others to achieve collective security. Building upon the natural links and mutual experience that bind professional officers of all nations together, naval men and women can create ties between navies, even though they serve under different flags. Through such ties - nurtured through personnel exchanges, language, and cultural training as well as operational exercises - navies can help to reduce tensions and avoid misunderstandings.

Unlike other types of military force, navies offer a quality that is not readily apparent in an army, an air force, or a marine assault force. While soldiers and warplanes always appear to be menacing, ships and seamen can appear in ports around the world in ways that easily allow them to be ambassadors and diplomats - or even benign helpers in times of catastrophe.[20] The traditional and fundamental relationship of navies to national economies, through the international freedom of the seas and its common heritage, gives maritime forces a unique character that distinguishes them from other types of forces. Traditionally, navies have found their capabilities and functions derive from two complementary, but quite different spheres of tradition, one civil and one military, providing important resources for contributing to maritime

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[20] JC Wylie, 'Mahan: Then and Now' in John B Hattendorf (ed), *The Influence of History on Mahan,* Naval War College Press, Newport, 1991, p. 41.

strategies in both peace and war.

In conclusion, one must underscore the point that a maritime strategy involves much more than a navy. While the terms 'naval' and 'maritime' are not synonymous, navies are clearly an integral part of the maritime world. Within it, their work is linked in two directions. On the one hand, the navy is linked to the full range of activities in national defence; on the other, it is tied to the entire spectrum of civil activities relating to the sea. A maritime strategy is the comprehensive direction of all aspects of national power to achieve specific policy goals in a specific situation by exercising some degree of control at sea. In understanding the general concepts underlying maritime strategy, there are no absolute dicta, only a constantly evolving theory that is ever in need of modification and correction through our understanding of maritime history, our changing experiences and challenges, and our own reflective analysis on history in the light of those experiences.

SOUNDINGS