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## ПОЛИТИЧЕСКИЙ ПРОГНОЗ

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# К 2030 ГОДУ НАТО ТРАНСФОРМИРУЕТСЯ В ГЛОБАЛЬНУЮ СЕТЬ ДЛЯ СОХРАНЕНИЯ ВНУТРЕННЕЙ БЕЗОПАСНОСТИ

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**Аннотация.** Сила военного объединения заключается не столько в его накопленной мощи, сколько в его ясной стратегической линии. Но политической воли зачастую не хватает, когда деятельность военной организации начинает затухать. Вот почему в настоящее время НАТО непросто спрогнозировать свое будущее вплоть до 2030 г. Даже ее собственные прогностические документы иногда бывают расплывчатыми: «НАТО может столкнуться с противниками, состоящими как из государств, так и негосударственных субъектов, которые будут работать независимо или согласованно...». Ранее утверждалось, что НАТО выживет и сможет существовать в течение следующих пятнадцати лет, поскольку она уже преодолела серьезные стратегические потрясения. На самом деле, НАТО выживет по другой причине. Нынешний геополитический контекст является настолько неустойчивым, что неповоротливые бюрократические военные организации стали совершенно неадекватными для противодействия затухающим внешним угрозам. Кроме того, способность американских и европейских государств принимать решения по вопросам внешней политики сильно ухудшилась из-за дефицита в отношении разведки. Однако сеть НАТО выживает, чтобы справиться с совершенно другой задачей: обеспечение внутреннего порядка в странах, глубоко дестабилизированных миграцией. В 2030 г. ослабленным американским и европейским странам бросит вызов возрождающаяся Россия. НАТО была парализована собственным геокультурным дефицитом. Тем не менее она еще может адаптироваться и трансформироваться, инвестируя еще больше в технологии для решения новых внутренних задач.

**Ключевые слова:** НАТО; военные организации; национальная безопасность; военные объединения

## 2030, NATO IS TRANSFORMED INTO A GLOBAL NETWORK DEDICATED TO THE PRESERVATION OF HOMELAND SECURITY

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**Abstract.** The strength of an extended military confederation lies much less in its accumulated power than in the clarity of its strategic line. Now, we must be aware that political intelligence often lacks when the imperial heart of a military organisation starts declining\*. This is why it is currently uneasy for NATO to predict its own future for 2030\*\*. Its own documents of prospective are sometimes vague: "NATO may face adversaries consisting

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\* Thomas Flichy de La Neuville and Gregor Mathias, The world in 2030, what the CIA had not foreseen, Bernard Giovanangeli, 2015.

\*\* For NATO, the main challenge of the future seems to be the technological competition, in the same time it completely denies the importance of cultural issues. NATO's "Framework for future alliance operations", published in 2015, mentions Technology 130 times and culture 15 times only.

of states as well as non-state actors, that will work independently or in concert...". They are marked, in any case, by a tremendous lack of imagination\*\*. It has been argued that NATO would survive during the next fifteen years because it had already overcome major strategic upheavals\*\*\*. In fact, NATO will survive for another reason. The current geopolitical context has become so volatile that rigid bureaucratic military organisations have become perfectly inadequate to counter evanescent external threats. Moreover, the capacity of American and European states to decide of a foreign policy has strongly diminished because of their cultural deficit in the treatment of intelligence. The NATO network survives however in order to meet a completely different challenge than the original one. Its main task has become to ensure the internal order of countries that have been deeply destabilised by migrations\*\*\*\*. In 2030, diminished American and European countries are challenged by an ascending Russia. NATO has been paralysed by its own geocultural deficit. However, it achieves to adapt and transform, investing even more in technology in order to meet the new internal challenges.

**Keywords:** NATO; military organisations; homeland security; military confederations

\* "Framework for future alliance operations", August 2015, p. 13.

\*\* The Ukrainian scenario seems to represent the ultimate horizon of the future. As a consequence, the realities of 2015 become NATO's future in 2030: "While NATO is strong in conventional capabilities and prepared for traditional territorial conflict, the Alliance will also likely face states employing non-state proxies and using hybrid means to achieve objectives. Alongside conventional warfare, future threats are likely to combine special operations and irregular forces (including mercenaries, terrorists and criminal organisations as well as offensive cyber and space activities). Dedicated adversary psychological operations will exploit social and traditional media to win the battle of the narrative". Framework for future alliance operations, August 2015, p. 14.

\*\*\* Bruno Tertrais, "La dissuasion nucléaire en 2030", 2006, p. 36.

\*\*\*\* A French report of 2008 was already mentioning that the scope of NATO would be enlarged and would now include operations of stabilisation and counter-insurrection. Défense Nationale, "L'environnement de la défense future 2008–2030", p. 62.

## A NEW GEOPOLITICAL CONTEXT FOR NATO

In 2030, NATO appears as a remnant of the past. In effect, the transatlantic link floats in a world divided into islands<sup>1</sup>. Having reverted to isolationism, the United States has elected their first Latino president on the motto *America to Americans*. They have disengaged from the affairs of the World. NATO thus survives, but only as a word, like the roman *respublica* under August. Marked by imperial decline, the United-States exploit their own oil. America has lost the sense of geopolitical realities. The unlimited quest for prosperity having come up against a dead end, the United States experience a religious revival, that insists upon the sacred character of the new promised land from which America has turned away in order to govern world affairs — for the better and more often the worse. The new time is marked by a return to wilderness. This isolationist withdrawal logically benefits to Americas competing powers. The Latino population now reaches 20% to 25% of the population of the United States. Spanish has become the first language spoken in the southern states. However, the implication of these changes should not be over-interpreted. Like the barbarian kingdoms willing to perpetuate the Imperium Romanum, the majority of the new American populations, see themselves primarily as "American". In any case, the internal

problems of the US or Canada are so important that waging wars outside has become a luxury they cannot afford any more. Restoring peace and order inside has become the priority. As a consequence, the size of NATO has become disproportionate to the needs of its members. Most of the civil servants recruited in 2020 have fictitious jobs.

In Europe, NATO launches periodically campaigns of communication in order to justify its presence. Competitiveness is at half-mast. Older European societies cultivate leisure as their sole purpose. Rivalled by Indian, Chinese, Russian, Iranian, Brazilian, Algerian or Mexican elites, European economic leaders carry on losing market shares. Having conditioned many export contracts to a significant transfer of technology, European industries are forced to become excellent to retain a decisive advance. The ousting of Greece from the euro area and the subsequent collapse of the monetary unit has brought about the loss of the European assets placed in Athens. An unprecedented confidence crisis in the European currency occurs. Noting the failure of all political solutions, Europeans massively turn away from politics. The democratic deficit of the European Union spawns populism and Euro-scepticism. Among the key reforms, the European Commission forces the French minister of Defence to integrate his forces into the new Eurocorps and to put in common his capacities of defence with other NATO member states in

<sup>1</sup> In its latest intelligence report, the National Intelligence Council foresaw a world divided into islands.

order to save money<sup>2</sup>. This shift masks the collapse of the national defence policies<sup>3</sup>. In the same time, the necessity of border control, in order to prevent access to illegal Mediterranean migrations, has become so strong that countries like Italy threaten to leave the Schengen Treaty. The grandpa-boomers are now in an extremely precarious situation, they have become increasingly dependent on younger generations. Germany experiences spasmodic armed riots in its old industrial valleys between the Old Germans (*Altdeutschen*) and the self-directed Islamic regions. Scotland has left the United Kingdom. In Ceuta and Melilla, Spanish forces have been overwhelmed by flows of migrants. Facing massive migrations, the European states remember that it was once a NATO intervention that involuntarily accelerated the process by destroying the Libyan regime.

By 2030, Russia has — on the contrary — strengthened its internal coherence by reviving its own identity. Thanks to sweeping reforms finalized to the defence of a territory inherited from history, but of a much smaller size than Romanov Russia, it reconfigures itself defensively around the north-east passage. The rise of maritime traffic in the Northeast route is the indirect consequence of global warming. The melting of Arctic sea ice enables the Russians to create Siberian exploitation bases of hydrocarbons and mineral deposits. Maritime transport in the Arctic Ocean has become very profitable to supply the Kara Sea bases or to get cheaper raw materials. In Western Europe, the Russian cultural centres now select qualified asylum seekers and send the best ones to the University of St. Petersburg that welcomes carefully selected researchers. The contribution of these new migrants — which can be compared to the former Prussian or French Huguenots settlers — coupled with a rebound in the birth rate, enables Russia to reconnect with population growth. In 2030, the Russian Federation counts nearly 150 million souls. By that time, Russia has managed to break the encirclement imagined by NATO, thanks to the former Soviet republics gained to Washington. Ukraine has regained its place of matrix territory of the Slavic world, under the protection of Russia. Indeed, the active lobbying of countries like Greece, Hungary, Slovakia and Austria have influenced the bigger European States to take a more measured position vis-à-vis Russia, especially as many incidents have demonstrated the reality of the doctrinal foundations of the pretended democratic Ukrainian nationalism. Abandoned by Washington on

the one hand, and the European Union on the other, Ukraine experiences a severe economic crisis that forces it to accept a compromise with Russia. Yet if the situation in Russia seems stabilized in the West and in the Caucasus, it is facing a strong Chinese migration pressure in Siberia. In effect, hundreds of thousands of Chinese workers have crossed the Amur River to settle in Russia where their cheap labour force is exploited to re-exploit abandoned collective farms or develop the industry.

### HAVE ANCIENT MILITARY CONFEDERATIONS A SECRET OF LONGEVITY?

Classical antiquity provides several examples of confederations that figure as miniature alliances compared to contemporary military organizations. Five main cases stand out. The first is the Second Athenian Confederation, from 377 to 355 BC J-C, a maritime league of Aegean cities aimed at countering the expansion of Sparta. The second is the League of Corinth, which designates several confederations of Greek cities allied to the kingdom of Macedonia. The third is the Peloponnesian league, an alliance of Greek cities dominated by Spartan power between the 6th and 4th centuries BC. The fourth is the League of Delos, a military alliance founded in 478 BC, in order to repel the Persian enemy. The fifth one is the Latin league, a confederation uniting about thirty cities of ancient Latium in order to organize a mutual defence against external aggressions. How can we explain the longevity of these confederations compared to the alliances of the early modern period? The scale — which is that of the city — is undoubtedly at stake. However, two fundamental elements must be added: even though egalitarian and collaborative institutions are put in place, the hegemony of the strongest city is ensured. Secondly, these alliances are all the more durable that they are cemented by a common religious and cultural integration.

The ancient military alliances function as a hegemon, guaranteeing the domination of the imperial centre despite the existence of representative institutions. The first League of Corinth is founded in 337 BC. This is apparently a simple treaty of “common peace”. The cities are represented by their respective delegates, who sit on a Council. However, these delegations do not have equal votes. This alliance quickly became a *symmarchy*, obedient to a man. The Peloponnesian league, controlled by Sparta, resumes the same mechanism. It is controlled by a council of allies, which consists of two bodies. The first is the assembly of the Spartans, and the second, the Congress of the Allies, in which each allied

<sup>2</sup> *Le monde vu en 2030 par la CIA*, éd. des Équateurs, 2013, p. 175.

<sup>3</sup> *Horizons stratégiques*, ministère de la Défense, introduction, p. 24.

City-State has one vote. However, Sparta is not obliged to comply with all the resolutions of the League. The Delos League provides another example of a military alliance which ensures the hegemony of Athens under an egalitarian outlook. This hegemon could not have been established without the monetary power of the imperial heart, founded on its silver mines. The links between Athens and its allies are from the middle of the century the relations of a mother city to vassal cities. Thus, in 454 BC, AD, the treasure of Delos is transferred to Athens. The history of the League is punctuated by the revolts of allies contesting the Athenian tribute and the conquests carried out for the sole benefit of Athens. Finally, let us mention the Latin League, directed in principle by a *Concilium Latinorum* but placed under the tutelage of Rome from 493 BC J-C. The *Foedus Casianum* renews the alliance between the Romans and the Latin, but this *foedus æquum* gives Rome as much weight as all the thirty cities of the league. In theory, the treaty stipulates that the command of the federal army will be alternating, but in practice, this command is given to the Romans. The Greek and Latin confederations have therefore in common that the so-called egalitarian forums of discussion serve as a screen for the exercise of hegemony. They also combine military and cultural dominations.

The domination of Athens on the League of Delos is reflected by the wide diffusion of the Athenian model, and the obligation for the allies to use the currencies, units of weight and measures of Athens. In 440, a decree forces the allies of the League of Delos to provide a sacrifice for the Panathenaea. In 425, another decree indicates that the allies must march to the Panathenaea as the colonies of Athens. Athens behaves like the metropolis of these allies as if it had colonized the whole Aegean Sea. In addition, the allies must go to Athens for the Great Dionysia in early spring. In the same way, the cult of Athena, protective goddess of the Athenians, spreads. It is attested in the Greek archipelagos, at Samos, Cos and in Evia. The same evolution is to be noted among the thirty members of the Latin League where each city tries to establish a sanctuary dedicated to a federal worship in order to establish its legitimacy. The Latin cities celebrate federal cults, the most important being that dedicated to Jupiter Latiaris, the deified form of King Latinus, perceived as the common ancestor of all Latin. For the celebration of this cult, the Latin gather once a year in Alba, during the *Feriae Latinae*. A common sacrifice is made at the top of Mount Albinus in honour of Jupiter Latiaris. In the ancient military confederations, the longevity of alliances can thus be explained by a

military hegemon carefully masked by *representative* institutions, combined with a deep cultural and religious influence. The domination of the mother city over its vassals naturally generates resistance. In this sense, the Antigone of Sophocles assumes a political significance: if Antigone decides to conform to the laws desired by the gods, because they are superior to human laws, this lesson is equally valid for the subjugated cities of the Empire, which sometimes wonder if it is necessary to conform to the Athenian decisions when other and more divine laws exist.

### A LOST CITADEL IN THE TARTAR STEPPE: THE PARALYSIS OF NATO

For NATO, the two most relevant historical precedents are the Delos League (478–404), transforming Athens into an imperial power, and the Confederation of the Rhine (1806–1813), enabling Napoleon to give a virtual sovereignty to the little German states while imposing on them a heavy military tribute for his Russian campaign. It should be noted in both cases that the alliances were based on a financial burden guaranteed by a treasure (located in Athens or Paris). The history of these two leagues was punctuated by revolts challenging the imposed tribute. Perpetual negotiations thus accompanied their existences. The historical evolution of these alliances was marked by an increasing pressure from the imperial matrix on its vassals while the constraints imposed on them became more rigid. In reality, it was only at the very end that the small Greek cities or the German states turned their backs from the collapsing imperial power. In effect, heavy coalitions tend to put in place rigid and bruising procedures, even though the diplomatic atmosphere in which they evolve remains intrinsically volatile. They are therefore infinitely less efficient than bilateral alliances<sup>4</sup> whose

<sup>4</sup> The military alliances to which France participated over the centuries are, in 85% of the cases, bilateral treaties. Their efficiency is not proportional to their morality: for example, the sacrilegious union of the lily flower and the crescent lasted between 1536 and 1799, because of the rational interests of the two parties. It is noteworthy that a military agreement encountering the strong hostility of the General Staff is always liable to fail. Let us consider, for example, the Franco-Soviet Treaty of Mutual Assistance of May 2, 1935, which — confronted with the incomprehension of the general officers — was never applied. Alliances with more than two partners are relatively marginal. For France, they have generally included between three and eight members and have not lasted in time. We can quote here the Triple Alliance concluded at The Hague on January 4, 1717, between the United Provinces, Great Britain, and France, the Family Pact signed on August 15, 1761, at the instigation of the Duke of Choiseul, between the Kings of France, Spain and the Duke of Parma, the quintuple alliance formed at the congress of Aix-la-Chapelle in 1818, the eight-nation alliance which crushed the Boxer revolt in 1900,

longevity is far superior<sup>5</sup>. They are also less flexible than a succession of coalitions with short-term objectives<sup>6</sup>. Retrospectively, historians situated the climax of NATO interventions in 2003, when the pressure exerted by the imperial heart on the allies-vassals was at its maximum. During the following decades, NATO interventions continued but were increasingly questioned by its members. Strongly criticised by the United States from 2021 onwards, NATO started behaving as an independent body. By 2030, its military inactivity had fuelled its bureaucratic expansion. No surprise why the Italian President described it, as a *lost citadel in the Tartar Steppe*<sup>7</sup>.

In July 2025, NATO senior civil servants were hoping that the shift of hegemony between the United States and China would give a second life to the military organisation, however, no thirty-years war ever broke out again<sup>8</sup>. In the same time, NATO headquarters had been unable to cope with the military challenges of the Middle-East and Africa. From 2020 to 2030, the Middle East had been deeply destabilized by the new American isolationism. Having become less dependent on Saudi Arabia because of the exploitation of their own shale gas, the United States had left the country sink into chaos once the dollar had lost its function of global currency reserve. The support of the United States to Israel had become increasingly discreet as American entrepreneurs started investing again into Iran. Because of the vacuum left by the United States, the Middle East underwent a profound reconfiguration. In the north, Turkey, humiliated by the delaying tactics of the EU, had created its own competing model: the Turkic Union. Having become an average economic and military power, Turkey had hoped to regain geopoliti-

cal influence from the Mediterranean to the borders of China and Siberia. In the South, the Arab States had divided and were getting poorer. In the East, Iran had recovered its central geopolitical role through a clever policy of balance between China, India, Europe and the United States. Thanks to its stability, Iran had become one of the largest exporters of liquefied gas. As for NATO, whose image had been associated with former western interventions, it had retreated from the Middle-East to the benefit of a new American diplomacy of influence.

Within NATO headquarters, the number of specialists of Africa had sharply diminished. The black continent had become a *terra incognita* for the transatlantic organisation whose drones carefully monitored migrants in order to regulate the flows of fresh labour force entering into Europe. By 2030, Africa had discarded for a long time the legacy of the European colonization. The last infrastructures established by the former colonial powers had collapsed. Africa was poorer than ever: the exploitation of its resources didn't benefit its own population. Indeed, the new settlers, followers of an unscrupulous capitalism, only reinvested the bare minimum on site (just enough to keep them safe). New Africa was thus comparable to a panther skin: small spots of wealth in a sea of poverty. The continent, more urbanized than today, suffered more than ever from malnutrition. In effect, its agricultural or mineral wealth had been meticulously taken away. Periodically, riots flared up in order to protest against rising food prices. Looters attacked bakeries and department stores. Agricultural productivity remained low. The arable land had indeed shrunk because of global warming and land grabbing for the production of exported biofuel. To meet the growing arable land demand, some African states did not hesitate to transform parking buildings into irrigated fields. Perceived at first as a curiosity, these vertical urban areas had spread like wildfire in African cities. Millions of Nigerians continued to pile up in huge megacities that produced nothing but insecurity. In South Africa, the climate of inter-ethnic violence involved a permanent mobilization of the army. Once destined to a great future, the rainbow Republic had gradually sunk into chaos. Facing these major crises, the NATO military organisation remained paralysed, all the more so that internal problems had deeply destabilised its member-states.

#### COORDINATING THE INTERNAL TRANSITIONS: A NEW ROLE FOR NATO

In Europe, mass migrations have spawned violence in major cities. They have forced public authorities

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the triple agreement that bound France, the United Kingdom and Imperial Russia in 1892, and finally NATO, which is an exception because of the disproportionate number of its members. Most of these alliances had very limited effects. In any case, they did not survive the limited objective they set for themselves. In these circumstances, we may legitimately wonder what is the point of making an alliance with more than two members. Paradoxically, even if the multinational alliances do not have a high military efficiency, they can be very advantageous as long as the war has not broken out. Let us remember, for example, the Franco-Indian alliance, which bound France to the various Amerindian nations. This enabled the French and the Indians to form a haven of peace in the middle Ohio valley before the conflict broke out and ruined the French ambitions.

<sup>5</sup> To this respect, the Anglo-Portuguese alliance — from the 14th century to the 1890s — can be quoted.

<sup>6</sup> Seven successive coalitions were necessary to defeat Napoleon, but eventually succeeded.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Dino Buzzati, *The Tartar Steppe*, 1940.

<sup>8</sup> B. Wicht, *Guerre et hégémonie. L'éclairage de la longue durée*, 2002.

to take effective measures in order to ensure law and order. The local authorities have been obliged to reduce private liberties to the benefit of security. As individuals have become increasingly mobile, a central unit for the treatment of individual data becomes necessary. Now, NATO had invested during the last twenty years into cyber-warfare. This is why one of its branches became increasingly important: the central unit for the treatment of individual data (CUTID). This unit was strongly criticised by Sergey Pratoitch, a professor from Saint-Petersburg University, who was declared on 3 June 2030 to his students: "In a way, the evolution of western states towards *authoritarian liberalism* recalled the reign of August who had been able to give the illusion he was restoring the Republic. This enigmatic man, who had taken a jealous care never to define the new regime he had established, was described later by Julian the Apostate as a *chameleon, changing colour, alternately pale, red, black, and then charming Like Venus*. Son of a banker, Augustus had been introduced gradually by Caesar into the public arena. He had appeared riding at his side during his triumph for his victories in Africa on the 15<sup>th</sup> of July 46. But at that time, no one really took him seriously. Augustus took advantage of this to gain the confidence of certain followers of Caesar, who saw in him only a young heir who was fragile and easy to manipulate. Undoubtedly they did not know that Augustus could make himself master of the crowds. During the festivities marking the death of Caesar, Augustus succeeded in using skilfully the apparition of a comet, in order to make people believe that it was the manifestation of the soul of Caesar joining the domain of the gods before designating him as heir. It is thus that this eternal thirty-year-old took power never to return it. He claimed to be a friend of Concord, having built the temple of peace at great expense from 13 to 9 BC, yet no man ever gave himself up to war. During his reign, a permanent state of emergency was established. Augustus pretended to restore liberty within the republic but only to empty the institutions of their substance. In a Rome deeply divided between *Optimates* and *Populares*, Augustus, restored a disguised dictatorship in which most citizens were deceived. It is hence not useless to recall a word of Montesquieu on him: "*while under Augustus tyranny was fortified, all that was spoken of was liberty*".

Even though the comparison with August is disputable, we must admit that the silent metamorphoses of republics into empires often follow similar paths: at the end of the Roman republic, the English republic, or the French Directory, the transition was facilitated by the deification of a strong man and the simultane-

ous liquidation of the representative institutions of the regime. This double transformation ultimately enabled the control of the masses, all the more so than the very strong political instability, as well as the galloping corruption, acted as a spur. It should be noted that historians most often justify the legitimacy of this political transition, conceived *a posteriori* as necessary for the establishment of a progressive regime. These times of metamorphosis also present themselves as periods of intense military activity: the dying republics strive to prolong their existence thanks to ultramarine military successes: in 48, Caesar wages a short but efficient campaign in Egypt than in Asia. Before his fall, Cromwell takes Jamaica away from the Spaniards. As for the Directory, it almost declares war on the sea against the United States before conquering Egypt. These conquests reinforce the role of the generals who try to play a key role in the political transition: Marcus Agrippa and George Monck as Jean-Charles Pichegru are both living examples of these evolutions. As a consequence, when troubles will reach a climax in Europe, it is very possible that former NATO generals will try to play a political role. But the social context in which they are likely to operate will have completely changed.

Contrary to what one might think, the spectacular development of social networks will have confined individuals to their selected identities. The 2030s will, therefore, be marked by the return of microscopic groups, bearer of strong and sometimes subversive cultural values. On the web, the competition between competing for propaganda networks will exacerbate. In the formerly developed countries, the consequences of the use of new communication mean on innovation will clearly appear: broken to pieces by the power of immediate messaging, time for individual creative thinking will have become the exception. In this sense, the explosion of communication will further reduce any form of free thought. Within the Crypto-democratic countries, the illusion of a government by the people will have shattered long ago. Having been reduced to use violence in order to compensate for their inability to diffuse creative emotions, dead bureaucratic elites will have given way to new leaders. More than ever, the need for political action in the long term, guided not by self-interested lobbyists, but by the common good, will be felt. In short, the dream distilled by the media of a future world in which individuals would be freed by the opening of borders and the inevitable progress of democracy will have appeared as a fairy tale<sup>9</sup>. Now,

<sup>9</sup> The recent history of Internet could be compared to that of the French press at the end of the 18th century. Progressively

this evolution is currently neglected by NATO analysts, who imagine that in 2030, “a growing democratic deficit along the borders of Nations will threaten the stability and cohesion of the Alliance”<sup>10</sup>. In fact, the liberal micro-spaces have become rare in 2030. A group of researchers named *Disputatio*, decides to draw their map, pinpointing Universities where public contradictory debates are still being organised. To the surprise of many, this map contradicts all pre-established and ready-to-made classifications.

In 2015, NATO analysts had correctly imagined certain evolutions, however. They had foreseen that the military operations of the future would “likely occur in un-governed or under-governed regions, in large urban areas”<sup>11</sup>. According to this forecast, NATO forces would “need to understand, train for, and operate in complex urban environments with mass populations that would be networked and mobile”. NATO also imagined at that time that it would need to support civil authorities, which had become overwhelmed in a crisis. In this respect, they were quite right<sup>12</sup>. So were some of the conclusions drawn from this hypothesis: the Alliance would “need to maintain access to resilient and robust cyber systems hardened against attack and develop alternative systems that would be impervious or less vulnerable to cyber-attack”<sup>13</sup>. However, the cyber warfare projects are quickly distracted from their original aim. In 2030, the world is organized in such a way that each individual emits as much data as possible.

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reduced from 1774 onwards, censorship is later abolished by a decree of January 1791. In the following months, a prodigious number of pamphlets develop. This liberal parenthesis, during which opinions clash, only lasts only a moment however. Censorship is in fact restored by the decree of 2 August 1793, which orders the closure of theatres and the arrest of the directors guilty of playing uncivil pieces. We are witnessing a similar evolution in the field of high technology. In a few years, the Internet will be both commercial and standardized. Alternative websites will be maintained only so as to enable robots to control the fringe of the population in search for meaning. The consequences are not to be neglected for the intelligence services: the more time passes, the more the treatment of the insipid flows of the web loses all interest. In order to regain an understanding of the world, it is therefore necessary to bypass the black hole of internet by recovering a forgotten reflex: to draw on classical sources by reading books, then on living sources by talking to men.

<sup>10</sup> Atlantic Council, “The shared perspective of the world in 2030 and beyond”, p. 3.

<sup>11</sup> Framework for future alliance operations, August 2015, p. 14.

<sup>12</sup> Framework for future alliance operations, August 2015, p. 9.

<sup>13</sup> Framework for future alliance operations, August 2015, p. 9.

This harvest of information — already gathered mostly free of charge — has created a colossal market. Now the largest digital data broker is currently American: Acxiom which holds detailed information on 700 million citizens worldwide decides to sign a contract with NATO in order to protect European governments from subversive individuals. Abyssal perspectives thus open up like Microsoft, Google or Facebook hold 80% of the digital personal information of humanity. This memory becomes the new black gold of the alliance, now able to launch individualised operations rather than large and costly military campaigns. In 2007, the US Department of Homeland Security had launched a research project to identify potential terrorists, who were innocent today but potentially guilty in the future. Named *Future Attribute Screening Technology* or FAST, the program consisted in sifting through all the elements relating to the behaviour of an individual. FAST was strongly modernised in the 2020's. As a consequence, algorithms capable of detecting abnormal behaviour in urban environments became extremely efficient.

As a conclusion, the geopolitical context of the 2030's will likely paralyse the traditional military branches of NATO while giving a new life to its more innovative departments, to the benefit of the homeland security of member states. However, we cannot entirely rule out an alternative. Before collapsing, declining empires often give themselves a respite in the form of a Saint Martin's summer. This quiet period is usually followed by a desperate offensive. This movement brings about a brutal collapse if it fails, but if by chance it succeeds, then a spectacular recovery can be expected. This remote possibility conditions the violence of that last effort. The Battle of Alesia (52 BC) illustrates, for example, the ultimate military effort of the Confederation of Gallic tribes against the Roman offensive. This defeat accelerates the collapse of the Celtic tribes. Let us also remember the desperate offensives of Western coalitions, during the last crusades, to regain the Christian kingdom of Jerusalem that had cracked under the blows of the Arabs. None of these desperate attacks would have taken place if the possibility of a victory had not been considered. Indeed, the ultimate gathering of the last troops sometimes forces destiny. Will the NATO machinery be capable of launching a desperate offensive? The probability is scarce but cannot be entirely excluded.