

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

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The strength of an extended military confederation lies much less in its accumulated power than in the clarity of its strategic line. Unable to agree on a common strategy, the Holy League, created on 25 May 1571, was plagued by rivalry until Pius V clarified its limited goals while rationalizing its military command. Now, we must be aware that political intelligence is often missing when the imperial heart of a military organisation starts declining.¹ This is why it is currently difficult for NATO to predict its own future for 2030.² Its own prospective documents are sometimes vague, e.g. ‘NATO may face adversaries consisting of states as well as non-state actors, that will work independently or in concert...’³ They are marked, in any case, by a tremendous lack of imagination.⁴ It has been argued that NATO would survive the next 15 years because it has already overcome major strategic upheavals.⁵ In fact, NATO will survive for another reason. The current geopolitical context has become so volatile that rigid bureaucratic military organisations have become utterly inadequate to counter evanescent external threats. Moreover, the capacity of American and European states to decide on a foreign policy has strongly diminished because of their cultural deficit in the treatment of intelligence. The NATO network survives in 2030 however, in order to meet a completely different challenge from the original one. Its main task has become to secure the internal order of countries that have been deeply destabilised by migrations.⁶ Unlike ancient Greek military confederations (Part I), NATO has been paralysed by its own geocultural deficit but manages to adapt and transform, investing even more into technology in order to meet new internal challenges (Part II).

¹ Thomas Flichy de La Neuville and Gregor Mathias *2030, le monde que la CIA n'imagine pas* (Paris: Bernard Giovanangeli, 2015).

² For NATO, the main challenge of the future seems to be technological competition; meanwhile it considerably downplays the importance of cultural issues. Its *Framework for Future Alliance Operations*, published in 2015 (below n. 3), mentions ‘technology’ 130 times but ‘culture’ only 15 times.

³ NATO, *Framework for Future Alliance Operations* (Norfolk: Supreme Allied Commander Transformation, [August] 2015), p. 13 <<http://www.act.nato.int/images/stories/media/doclibrary/ffao-2015.pdf>> (accessed 9 September 2017).

⁴ The Ukrainian scenario seems to represent the ultimate horizon in 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’ (NATO, *Framework* (n. 3), p. 14).

⁵ Bruno Tertrais, *La dissuasion nucléaire en 2030* (Paris: Fondation pour la Recherche Stratégique, 2006), p. 36 <http://www.iaea.org/inis/collection/NCLCollectionStore/_Public/39/075/39075266.pdf> (accessed 9 September 2017).

⁶ A Canadian report from 2009 was already mentioning that the scope of NATO would be enlarged and include from then on operations of stabilisation and counter-insurgency: National Defence, *The Future Security Environment, 2008-2030*, Part 1: *Current and Emerging Trends* (Ottawa: Chief of Force Development, 2009), p. 53 <http://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection_2011/dn-nd/D4-8-1-2010-eng.pdf> (accessed 9 September 2017).

I. DO ANCIENT MILITARY CONFEDERATIONS HAVE A SECRET OF LONGEVITY?

Classical antiquity provides us with several examples of confederations, which were miniature alliances compared with contemporary military organisations. Five main cases stand out. The first is the Second Athenian Confederation, from 377 to 355 BC, 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 the 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 is the Latin League, a confederation uniting about 30 cities of ancient Latium in order to organise mutual defence against external aggressions. How can we explain the longevity of these confederations compared with the alliances of the early modern period? The scale – that of cities – is undoubtedly a major factor. However, two fundamental elements must be added. Firstly, even though egalitarian and collaborative institutions were put in place, the hegemony of the strongest city was ensured. Second, these alliances were all the more durable because they were cemented by a shared religion and culture.

These ancient military alliances functioned as a hegemon, guaranteeing the domination of the imperial centre despite the existence of representative institutions. Thus, the first League of Corinth was founded in 337 BC: this was apparently a simple treaty of ‘common peace’, with cities represented by their respective delegates sitting on a Council. However, these delegations did not have equal votes. The alliance quickly became a *symmarchy*, obedient to one man. The Peloponnesian League, controlled by Sparta, followed the same mechanism. It was controlled by a Council of Allies consisting of two bodies. The first was the Assembly of the Spartans and the second the Congress of the Allies, in which each allied City-State had one vote. However, Sparta was not obliged to comply with all the resolutions of the League. The Delian League provides another example of a military alliance which ensured the hegemony of a centre, Athens, under an egalitarian outlook. This hegemon could not have been established without the financial power of its imperial heart, grounded in its silver mines. The links between Athens and its allies were from the middle of the 5th century BC the relations of a mother city to its vassal cities. Thus, in 454 BC, the treasure of Delos was transferred to Athens. The history of the League was punctuated by the revolts of allies contesting the Athenian tribute and by 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. The *Foedus Cassianum* renewed the alliance between the Romans and the Latins, but this *fœdus æquum* gave Rome as much weight as the 30 cities in the League together. In theory, the Treaty stipulated that the command of the federal army would alternate but, in practice, this command was invariably given to the Romans. The Greek and Latin confederations therefore had this in common, that the allegedly egalitarian forums of discussion served as a smokescreen for the exercise of hegemony. They also combined military and cultural domination.

The domination of Athens on the League of Delos is reflected in the wide diffusion of the Athenian model and the obligation for the allies to use Athens’ currencies and units of weights and measures. In 440 BC, a decree forced the allies of the League of Delos to provide a sacrifice for the Panathenaea. In 425 BC, another decree indicated that the allies had to march to the Panathenaeas as colonies of Athens. Athens behaved like the metropolis of these allies, as if it had colonized the whole Aegean Sea. In addition, the allies had to go to Athens

for the Great Dionysia in early spring each year. In the same way the cult of Athena, protective goddess of the Athenians, spread. It is attested in the Greek archipelagos, Samos, Kos and Evia. The same evolution is to be noted among the 30 members of the Latin League, where each city tried to establish a sanctuary dedicated to federal worship in order to establish its legitimacy. The Latin cities celebrated federal cults, the most important being that dedicated to Jupiter Latiaris, the deified form of King Latinus, thought to be the common ancestor of all the Latins. For the celebration of this cult, the Latins gathered once a year in Alba during the *feriae Latinae*. A joint sacrifice was made at the top of Mount Albinus in honour of Jupiter Latiaris. Thus, in ancient military confederations, the longevity of alliances can be explained by the existence of a military hegemon carefully masked by *representative* institutions, combined with deep cultural and religious influences. The domination of the mother city over its vassals naturally generated resistance. This is where Sophocles' Antigone assumed a political significance: if Antigone decided to conform to the laws desired by the gods, because these were superior to human laws, the lesson was to be equally valid for the subjugated cities of the Empire, who sometimes wondered if it was necessary for them to conform to Athenian decisions when other, more divine, laws existed.

II. COORDINATING INTERNAL TRANSITIONS: A NEW ROLE FOR NATO

For NATO, the two most relevant historical precedents are the Delian League (478-404 BC), transforming Athens into an imperial power, and the Confederation of the Rhine (1806-13), enabling Napoleon to grant virtual sovereignty to small 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 respectively in Athens and Paris). The history of these two leagues was punctuated by revolts challenging the tribute imposed. Their existence was therefore accompanied with perpetual negotiations. 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 on the collapsing imperial power. As a matter of fact, heavy coalitions tend to put in place rigid and brutal procedures, even though the diplomatic atmosphere in which they evolve remains intrinsically volatile. They are therefore infinitely less efficient than bilateral alliances,⁷ whose longevity is far superior.⁸ They are also less flexible than a succession of

⁷ The military alliances to which France has participated over the centuries are, in 85% of cases, bilateral treaties. Their efficiency has not been proportional to their morality: for example, the sacrilegious union of the lily flower and the crescent lasted between 1536 and 1799 because of the long-term interests of the two parties. It is noteworthy that a military agreement encountering the strong hostility of the General Staff is bound to fail. Let us consider, for example, the Franco-Soviet Treaty of Mutual Assistance of 2 May 1935, which – confronted with uncomprehending general officers – was never applied. Furthermore, alliances with more than two partners are comparatively rare. In France's case, they have generally included between three and eight members and have not stood the test of time. Can be mentioned here: the Triple Alliance concluded at The Hague on 4 January 1717 between the United Provinces, Great Britain and France; the Pacte de Famille signed on 15 August 1761, at the instigation of the Duke of Choiseul, between the Kings of France and of 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; 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 outlive the narrow objective they set out for themselves. We may legitimately wonder, therefore, what the point is of making an alliance with more than two members. Paradoxically, even if multinational alliances do not have high military efficiency, they can be very advantageous as long as war has not broken out. Let us recall, for example, the Franco-Indian alliance, binding

coalitions with short-term objectives.⁹ With hindsight historians have situated the climax of NATO interventions in 2003, when the pressure exerted by the imperial heart on its allies-vassals was at its apex. 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 that the Italian President would describe it as a ‘lost citadel in the Tartar steppe’.¹⁰

In Europe, mass migrations have spawned violence in major cities. They have forced public authorities to take effective measures in order to ensure law and order. Local authorities have been obliged to scale back individual freedoms in favour of security. As individuals have become increasingly mobile, a central unit for the treatment of individual data becomes necessary. Now, NATO has invested during the last twenty years into cyber-warfare. This is why one of its branches has become increasingly important: the Central Unit for the Treatment of Individual Data (CUTID). This unit was strongly criticised by Serguey Pratovich, a professor from Saint Petersburg University, who declared on 3 June 2030 to his students:

In a way, the evolution of Western states towards *authoritarian liberalism* recalls the reign of Augustus who had been able to give the illusion that he was restoring the Republic. This enigmatic man, who had taken 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*. The 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 following his victories in Africa on 15 July 46 BC. But, at that time, no one really took him seriously. Augustus took advantage of this to gain the trust of some 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 the master of crowds. During the festivities marking the death of Caesar, Augustus was able skilfully to make use of the apparition of a comet in order to make people believe that it was the manifestation of Caesar’s soul joining the domain of the gods before designating him as his heir. This is how the 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, between 13 and 9 BC; yet no man ever devoted himself to war like him. During his reign, a permanent state of emergency was established. Augustus claimed to restore liberty within the Republic but all he did was gut the institutions. In a Rome deeply divided between *Optimates* and *Populares*, Augustus established a disguised dictatorship deceiving most citizens. It is not within reason that we recall Montesquieu’s phrase about him: ‘while under Augustus tyranny was fortified, all that was spoken of was liberty’.

Even though the comparison with Augustus is open to question, we must admit that the silent metamorphosis of republics into empires has often followed a similar path: 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 simultaneously the liquidation of the representative institutions of the regime. This double transformation ultimately enabled control of the masses, all the more so because it was spurred on by very strong political instability as well as rampant corruption. It should be noted that historians most often seek to justify the legitimacy of such political transitions, which they construe *a posteriori* as necessary for the establishment of a progressive regime. These times of metamorphosis also appear as periods of intense military activity: dying republics will strive to prolong their existence thanks to

France with various Amerindian nations, which enabled the French and the Indians to form a haven of peace in the Middle Ohio Valley before the conflict broke out and ruined French ambitions.

⁸ The Anglo-Portuguese alliance – which lasted from the 14th century to the 1890’s – can be mentioned here.

⁹ It took seven successive coalitions to defeat Napoleon.

¹⁰ A reference to Dino Buzzati, *The Tartar Steppe (Il deserto dei Tartari)*, published in 1940.

ultramarine military successes. Thus, in 48 BC, Caesar waged a short but effective campaign in Egypt then Asia. Before his fall, Cromwell took Jamaica away from the Spaniards. As for the Directory, it nearly declared war on the sea against the United States before conquering Egypt. Such conquests served to reinforce the role of generals who sought to play a key role in political transitions, Marcus Agrippa, George Monck and Jean-Charles Pichegru being living examples of this. As a consequence, when troubles reach their 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 specific identities. The 2030's will therefore be marked by a return to microscopic groups endowed with strong and sometimes subversive cultural values. 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 turned out to be a fairy tale.¹¹ 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'.¹² In fact, liberal micro-spaces have become rare in 2030. A group of researchers named *Disputatio* decides to draw up a map, pinpointing universities where public contradictory debates are still being organised. To the surprise of many, this map contradicts all pre-established and ready-made classifications.

In 2015 NATO analysts had, however, correctly anticipated certain evolutions. They had foreseen that military operations would in the future 'likely occur in un-governed or under-governed regions, in large urban areas'.¹³ 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'.¹⁴ NATO also anticipated at that time that it would need to support civil authorities which had become overwhelmed in a crisis. They were quite right in this respect.¹⁵ 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'.¹⁶ However, the cyberwarfare projects are quickly distracted from their original aim. In 2030, the world is organized in such a way that each individual creates as much data as possible. This harvest of information – already gathered mostly free of charge – has created a colossal market. The largest digital data broker in 2030 is American: Acxiom, which holds

¹¹ The recent history of the Internet could be compared to that of the French press at the end of the 18th century. Censorship, which had been gradually scaled back from 1774, was abolished by decree in January 1791. In the following months, a prodigious number of pamphlets sprang up. This liberal parenthesis, during which opinions freely clashed, only lasted for a brief period of time. Censorship was restored by a decree of 2 August 1793, which made provision for the closing down of theatres and the arrest of directors found guilty of staging uncivic-minded plays. We are witnessing a similar evolution in the field of high technology today. In a few years' time, the Internet will be both commercialised and standardised. Alternative websites will be kept up only so as to enable robots to control the segment of the population still searching for meaning. Consequences should not be overlooked by intelligence services: the more time passes, the more the insipid flows of the web lose their interest. In order to regain an understanding of the world, it is therefore increasingly necessary to bypass the black hole of the Internet and rediscover a forgotten habit, namely, to draw on classical sources by reading books, and also on living sources by talking to people.

¹² Atlantic Council, *The Shared Perspective of the World in 2030 and Beyond: Security Implications* (2012), p. 3 <http://www.act.nato.int/images/stories/events/2012/fc_ipr/final_report_ws3.pdf> (accessed 9 September 2017).

¹³ NATO, *Framework* (n. 3), p. 14.

¹⁴ NATO, *Framework* (n. 3), p. 50.

¹⁵ NATO, *Framework* (n. 3), p. 9.

¹⁶ NATO, *Framework* (n. 3), p. 9.

detailed information on 700 million citizens worldwide, decides to sign a contract with NATO to protect European governments from subversive individuals. Abyssal perspectives thus open up, as 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 instead of large-scale and costly military campaigns. In 2007, the US Department of Homeland Security had launched a research project to identify potential terrorists, who were innocent at the time but potentially guilty in the future. Named *Future Attribute Screening Technology* (FAST), the programme consisted in sifting through all data 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.

In conclusion, the geopolitical context of the 2030's will likely paralyse the traditional military branches of NATO while giving 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 Saint Martin's summer-like respite. This quiet period is usually followed by a desperate offensive. Such a move will bring about a brutal collapse if it fails but, if it happens to succeed, then a spectacular recovery can be expected. Indeed, this remote possibility underpins the violence of the last effort. The Battle of Alesia (52 BC) illustrates, for example, the final military effort of the confederation of Gallic tribes against the Roman offensive. Their defeat accelerated 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 entertained. In fact, the final rally of the last troops will sometimes force the hand of destiny. Will the NATO machinery succeed in launching such a desperate offensive? The probability is remote but it cannot be entirely ruled out.