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ACCESS TO THE GLOBAL COMMONS AND GRAND STRATEGIES : A SHIFT IN GLOBAL INTERPLAY

by Frédéric RAMEL

IRSEM
Institut de Recherche Stratégique de l'Ecole Militaire

ACCESS TO THE GLOBAL COMMONS AND GRAND STRATEGIES : A SHIFT IN GLOBAL INTERPLAY

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INTRODUCTION[1]

The global commons – non-terrestrial spaces accessible to all and owned by none – are currently a major concern for government administrations[2]. Maintaining an access to them is a key necessity both for the deployment of the armed forces and the functioning of the globalised economy. No State can intervene militarily while ensuring its own prosperity without being assured of its access to the international airspace[3], the atmosphere[4], the high seas[5] and cyberspace[6].

Only ten years ago, the United States had a form of monopoly over these spaces. Today, the rivalry of the emerging powers is intensifying, meaning there is a posture of "access denial" being taken, in the form of a campaign carried out over long distances. This campaign operates through the use of ballistic missiles, cruise missiles, long-range intelligence and surveillance systems, anti-satellite systems, long-range submarines, resources for cyber attacks and even terrorist action against the American forces and bases. Another aspect of the campaign is area denial to those spaces that are in close proximity to the adversary. This is implemented mainly by air assets, air defence systems, short-range missiles, submarines and naval mines. In both cases (access denial and area denial), the aim is to limit the reach of American "domination" in armed intervention.

How is the global commons concept currently approached in US doctrine? What is its role in the grand strategy that the US is attempting to implement today? How are the emerging economies approaching this issue, given that they object to America's control in this domain in recent years?

One of the goals of this study is to clarify the concept of the global commons in American defence policy and pinpoint its doctrinal development in key official documents adopted since 2010 and as part of the preparation for the QDR 2014: QDR 2010, Defense Strategic Guidance 2012, 2011 Air-Sea Battle concept, 2012 Joint Operational Access Concept (JOAC), Chairman's Strategic Direction to the Joint Force (CSDJF), Capstone Concept for Joint Operations 2012, Joint Forcible Entry Operations.

However, the approach taken will not consist in analysing the decision-making process within government departments in the US and other countries chosen for the study (identifying bureaucratic debates among the different forces or between the military and political leaders), nor

[1] The author would like to acknowledge the documentary assistance of Mathilde Boutaricq.

[2] The term "global commons" must be taken here to mean the resource domains only and not the "common goods" that may be obtained in these spaces, nor the "common heritage" that may result from their existence. The topic under study focuses on the spatial aspect rather than issues of global governance. For further information on the different aspects of the concept (from heritage to common resource pools), see Yves Schemeil, "Les biens publics premiers : Babel, côté cour, côté jardin" in François Constantin, dir., *Les Biens publics mondiaux. Un mythe légitimateur pour l'action collective*, Paris, L'Harmattan, 2002, p. 106.

[3] The main transport means for people, as well as being a space through which high-value commercial goods transit.

[4] The area in which long-distance communications are established.

[5] The high seas cover 71% of the world's surface and are the means of transport for 90% of global goods trade.

[6] The most efficient and least costly medium.

does it seek to clarify the meaning of global commons in American doctrine from a political theory perspective. It will look at the extent to which the global commons are a major military challenge in the first half of the 21st century, as the concept is a key feature in the grand strategy developed by the United States, and provokes reactions among the main emerging economies, primarily China and Russia.

The first part of this paper will take an approach guided by strategic thinking in order to reveal the attributes of these global "commons" from a military standpoint (I). The second takes a look at the US grand strategy, both as an epicentre and a disseminator of the concept of the global commons (II). The third part outlines how emerging powers such as China and Russia envisage the "global commons" as a term, as well as the resulting strategic issues (III). The final section will put forth a series of transformations that the global commons reveal on the world strategy stage (IV).

■ THE GLOBAL COMMONS FROM A "STRATEGIC THINKING" PERSPECTIVE

In political theory, the notion of the "commons" designates a space available to all but which is destined to fall into decline over time, since its users shirk the costs of maintaining it. Acting as "freeriders", each wants to consume the resources of these spaces without having to contribute to their replenishment over time. At the beginning of the 1970s, the ecologist Garret Hardin brough the concept to the international level by identifying a new tragedy: the environment is endangered due to the excessive consumption of ecological resources. Negative externalities such as pollution lead to a scenario of destruction: the depletion of the planet's natural capacities. While the author is deeply skeptical, he calls for a transformation in how natural resources are managed, which is one step in the necessary protection of the global commons[7].

While strategic thinking provides a similar definition of the commons and their purpose (spaces accessible to all), it does not seek to reflect on the establishment of global governance to protect them. The heart of the reflection is found elsewhere, in that it concerns primarily the deployment of the armed forces via, or even by use of, these spaces. Two aspects can thus be discerned: the identification of a strategic homology (emphasizing the specifics that these environments share) and the debatable nature of a strategy unique to these spaces (outlining a structure with strategic constants).

FROM THE SEA TO CYBERSPACE: A HOMOLOGY OF THE GLOBAL COMMONS

The high seas, airspace and the atmosphere, cyberspace: all are characterised by what we can refer to as a "flat" plane[8], even fluid as opposed to solid[9]. While lands are segmented and subject to

[7] Garrett Hardin, "The Tragedy of the Commons", *Science*, 162, 1968, p. 1244.
[8] Joseph Henrotin, "Géostratégie et vision de la mer dans les conflits terrestres. L'interfaçage entre le lisse et

fractures according to their topography, all four spaces of the commons are governed by the notion of flow. The aim is not to exercise territorial control over these spaces but rather to ensure the durability of the flows of goods and people through them.

However, it is important to point out that their flat or fluid nature does not prevent the presence of junction points, which are essential not only for the access to these spaces but to ensure their existence as such. These junction points may be ports or shipowners for the seas, launchers and satellites for space, the submarine cable networks and internet servers, for example.

Going beyond their "smooth" or fluid nature, these spaces have two other similar features that relate to the sea. Firstly, their functionality is dependent on the upkeep of communication instruments, considered as vital for a nation to run properly. Corbett distinguishes the marine and land environments in this report on communications:

"the control of communications, and not, like on land, the conquest of a territory. There is a fundamental difference. It is true that land strategy is said to be (and correctly so) mainly a question of communications, but the meaning of communications here is different. It concerns the military's own communications and not the signifantly greater communications network that is a vital element of a nation. (...) By occupying our maritime communications, closing the doors to where they lead, we are destroying the nation's life at sea and the nation's life on land, because one depends on the other." [10]

Today, economies cannot survive without the spatial and electronic resources that enable increasingly faster communication exchanges. We can therefore affirm that the three other spaces (air, space and cyber) follow the same logic as the marine environment, which is one based on the control of communications.

A second characteristic shared among the global commons is the role of the offensive when launched in their midst. Alfred Mahan identified a unique feature of the sea battle, which comes from its physical form. Unlike the land filled with obstacles, the sea is open. There is almost total freedom of movement. From this perspective, the nature of the marine environment, according to Mahan, wreaks havoc with the superiority of defensive action identified by Clausewitz, claiming it is an open space that favours the attacker[11]. For Liddle Hart, the control of the seas requires a nation to deny the enemy access to the area, which comes down to destroying the naval forces. He then compares naval power, not to a flash of light, but to the effects of radium: "beneficial to those who are protected, while destructive to the tissue of those who are exposed to it"[12].

This offensive component also appears with the use of the air force, but to a greater extent. The first

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le strié" in *Etudes marines,* January 2013, 3, p. 169 and s.

[9] In terms defined by Laurent Henninger, "Espaces solides et espaces fluides, nouvelles réalités stratégiques", *Revue Défense nationale*, October 2012.

[10] (Translation) Julian C. Corbett, *Principes de stratégie maritime*, Paris, Economica, 1993, p. 89.

[11] Alfred Thayer Mahan, *Mahan et la maîtrise des mers*, texts chosen and presented by Pierre Naville, éditions Berger-Levrault, 1981. This point of view is a cause for debate, however. See for example Corbett, *op. Cit.,* p. 49. According to Corbette, there is room for a defensive maneuver with the use of protected moorings.

[12] Basil Liddell Hart, *Thoughts on War*, Spellmoint, Staplehust, 1999, p. 168.

experiment dates to November 1st 1911 during the Italian-Turkish war and the bombing of the Ain-Zara camp in Libya. During a reconnaissance mission, the pilot struck a camp. The target was therefore no longer composed uniquely of combatants fighting at the front. An oasis that contributed to the functioning of the area concerned was also struck. As such, "with aviation, it is possible to strike not just the armed forces, but an entire socio-economic system"[13]. As indicated by Douhet, who identifies a real continuum between naval and air force strategic thinking, aviation oversteps the 2-D perspective in ridiculing the battlefront. It blurs the distinction between combatants and non-combatants because it "crosses lines": "everything, since the birth of humanity, that imposed the conditions of war and determined its essential characteristics, no longer plays any part in air operations"[14].

To a large extent, cyberspace also enables the development of offensive action. For Stéphane Dossé and Olivier Kempf, what has changed is the fact that offensive hostile action can now be carried out by states anonymously[15]. It is also an underlying demonstration of the term "cool war" used in the conception of cyberwar. The adjective "cool" gives the idea of being fashionable or "in", and also a posture that consists in continuously striking the adversary's system without declaring a "hot"[16] war. As such, controlling these spaces means preventing the others from accessing these communication circuits, including by offensive means.

Nonetheless, can we decide that a specific strategy is necessary for these spaces? The birth of the cyber space as a field of strategic innovation solidifies the classic reawakening of the land and sea debate. On the one hand, the disciples of the technological revolution believe that cyberspace is causing a radical transformation both in warfare (the mode of combat) and war itself. The attrition objective that characterises the clashes between industrialised powers would give way to combat that does not destroy the adversary (the aim of cyber attacks is to paralyse without spilling blood)[17] but also an absence of clear, true victories or defeats. On the other hand, many are against this idea of a decisive branching off in the sense that "cyberwar will be one of the resources that will provide more or less direct support to high-tech elements".[18]It is a weapon that supports all types of operations. In other words, "cyberwar is still war"[19]. A new environment increases the complexity of the strategy, but it does not change the nature of war as a dual relationship[20].

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[13] Thomas Hippler, "Cent ans de bombardements aériens. Histoire d'une technique militaire et politique", *La Revue des livres*, 2, November December 2011, p. 10.
[14] Giulio Douhet, *La maîtrise de l'air*, Paris, Economica, 2007, p. 57.
[15] Stéphane Dossé, Olivier Kempf, dir., *Stratégie dans le cyberespace*, Paris, Cahier AGS, Esprit du Livre, 2011.
[16] David Rothkof, "De la guerre froide à la guerre cool", *Courrier international*, March 6, 2013.
[17] John Arquilla and David Ronfeldt, "Cyberwar is Coming!" *Comparative Strategy*, 12, 2, Spring 1993, pp. 141-165.
[18] Colin Gray, *La guerre au 21 ème siècle*, Paris, Economica, 2007, p. 282.
[19] *Ibid.,* p. 297. We must also point out that cyberwar can bring the perspectives of asymmetric warfare up to date, in that competent persons (hackers), whether acting alone or for an organization, can carry out cyberattacks targeting state powers. See Josef Schröfl, *Hybrid and Cyber War as Consequences of the Asymmetry,* Frankfurt, Peter Lang, 2011.
[20] While he believes cyberwar to considerably change strategic relationships, Klaus-Gerd Giesen considers that this type of confrontation cannot escape the principles of just war, i.e. the strategic players must bend to the rules of *jus ad bellum*, *jus in bello* and *jus post bellum* in this field. See Klaus-Gerd Giesen, "Towards a Theory of Just Cyberwar", *Journal of Information Warfare,* 12, 1, 2013, pp. 22-31.

FROM SPECIFIC STRATEGIES TO THE NOTION OF A GRAND STRATEGY

This debate between specific strategies and a single strategy is nothing other than the debate between relativists and essentialists. As Hervé Coutau-Bégarie points out: "War takes place both on land and at sea. This brings us to the key question which continues to go unanswered: is there one Strategy, with universally valid principles, or are there several strategies, the rules of which vary depending on the environment?"[21] The goal here is not to choose one over the other but rather to point out a level of analysis that leads to the formulation of two constants.

The debate between essentialists and relativists may, to a certain extent, be approached according to the operational and tactical levels. However, it can also be approached from the political-strategic perspective. If we stick to this last angle in our thinking process, points of convergence appear. This helps us identify the constants, which relativise the notion of a strategic isolate that could be applied to these environments[22].

The first of these constants aims to guarantee freedom of action. Accessing the global commons, performing operations within them or basing operations there are all aspects of this approach that seeks to enable strategic maneuvers, including recourse to armed force. The affirmation of General Abrial, who believed that "he who has the sky has freedom of action on the ground", can indeed be applied to space and cyberspace[23]. This strategic freedom of action also requires an interface between civil and military logic: lasting flows, supplies and more generally, the protection of the commons, furthers civilian freedom of action.

The corollary, which is the second constant, consists in preventing others from carrying out action in these spaces, or at least restricting their room for maneuver within them. The task is therefore to neutralise the enemy's action.

These two constants are interpreted in varying ways depending on the political-strategic objectives set out by the political leaders. This brings us back to the notion of a grand strategy. For Colin Gray, this corresponds to "managing and making use of the advantages of a community of security, including its military instruments, in order to fulfil the public action objectives set out by politicians"[24]. It involves reaching a consensus on priorities, creating coherence between the endpoints and the means to reach them, guiding the development of the state power's resources, and producing synergy between the different fields of application of its resources[25]. A grand strategy is an integral element for international power[26], even though in reality it often appears incomplete at the empirical

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[21] Hervé Coutau-Bégarie, *Traité de stratégie*, 5ème édition, Paris, Economica, 2006, p. 542.

[22] Corbett before him pointed out battle at sea is always linked to a land objective at some point. Even if a different aspect of sea combat exists, the strategists's logic does not change. It stays the same. The questions raised by the deployment of the naval forces are not unrelated. The political-strategic aim at land and at sea cannot differ.

[23] Speech by Air Force General Stéphane Abrial, Chief, Army Reserve (*CEMAR*), before the 59th session of the IHEN, Paris, March 7, 2007.

[24] Colin Gray, *The Strategy Bridge*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2010, p. 18.

[25] Franck Hoffmann, "Forward Partnership: A Sustainable American Strategy", *Orbis,* Winter 2013, p. 22.

[26] Paul Kennedy, "Grand Strategy in War and Peace: Towards a Broader Definition", in Paul Kennedy, ed., *Grand Strategies in War and Peace,* New Haven: University Press, 1991, p. 4-5. See also Liddel Hart, *Strategy,*

level[27]. However – and this is a key aspect of the analysis – there is a perceptible trend in the discourse on the American grand strategy in place today: the incorporating of the global commons as one of its cornerstones. Like the White Papers on defence studied by Lucien Poirier[28], the documents adopted by the Obama administration that report on this grand strategy act as ontological indicators at the strategic level. They highlight the ways that a political group defines its position and role in the world.

THE GLOBAL COMMONS SERVING A GRAND STRATEGY IN THE U.S.

While the very notion of the global commons is nothing new on the far side of the Atlantic, it has been reinvigorated under the Obama administration. This is not without consequence in NATO discussions on the future of the Alliance's functions. This interest is due to an ongoing global situation in which these spaces are being used for military purposes and states' attempts to seize them for their strategic value. The outbreak of cyberattacks on Estonia in 2007 and the malfunctions in the Iranian nuclear programme due to the Stuxnet computer worm are a good example of the use of the commons for military purposes. The maritime claims in Asia, in particular by China, are an example of the desire of countries to seize these spaces. How does the Obama administration see the global commons?

THE "GLOBAL COMMONS" CONCEPT AND ITS DEVELOPMENT

The concept of the global commons is first and foremost tied to the "anti-access" phenomenon, which "through military and political means, aims to hinder or prevent a force deployment operation"[29]. This means a no-fly or marine exclusion zone is established by the United States, preventing access to the "global commons"[30]. Such an approach encourages the U.S. to widen their strategic objectives in a post Cold War context[31]. But these choices are also a result of the experience gained during Operation Desert Storm in Iraq. At that time, military staff suggested a conceptual overhaul inspired by the man who would become the new Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR), Admiral Stavridis[32]. This innovative thinking was already a main feature of the Quadrennial

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New York, Meridian, 1991, p. 332.

[27] Analyses have stressed that a grand strategy is rarely effective. See Williamson Murray, Richard Hart Sinnreich, James Lacey, eds., *The Shaping of Grand Strategy*, New York, Cambridge University Press, 2011, p. 4.

[28] See in particular Lucien Poirier, *La crise des fondements*, Paris, Economica, 1994, p. 179.

[29] Corentin Brustlein, "Vers la fin de la projection de forces? 1. La menace du déni d'accès", *Focus stratégique*, April 2010, IFRI, p. 7.

[30] For Posen, "anti-access" applies to the contested zones located in close proximity to the enemy. The closer the U.S. approaches, the greater the resources of the enemy to disrupt the deployment of forces enabled by its control of the global commons. We can, however, point to the appearance of a trend of exporting anti-access actions within the global commons through the enhancement of naval or antisatellite capabilities.

[31] Todd Sandler, "After the Cold War, secure the Global commons", *Challenge*, 35, 4, July-August 1992.

[32] James Stavridis, USN, *A New Air Sea Battle Concept: Integrated Strike Forces*, Washington D.C., National

Defense Review in 2001, under the initiative of Donald Rumsfeld. However, the interventions in Iraq and Afghanistan impose another agenda, not without causing debate among military staff concerning asset employment (from counter-insurrection to interstate war)[33]. With the gradual disengagement from these two theatres, the concept of the global commons is becoming a structuring element of the American posture[34]. It is therefore less an emergence of a new concept in strategic thinking than the reawakening of an old one[35]. How can it be explained and in what does it reside?

There are two main reasons behind this renewed interest in the global commons. Firstly, the projection of the armed forces as part of expeditionary operations is no longer limited to the task organisation of the air, land and navy components. Two new fields are essential to successfully carry out these tasks: space and cyberspace. This requires greater coordination between the branches: "simultaneous access to the different dimensions of the global commons as well as freedom of action within them are essential"[36]. The success of an operation depends on the cumulated control of these different domains. Worse still, a visible weakness in one of the domains (international waters, international airspace, the atmosphere, cyberspace) has a domino effect on the others. General Michael Moseley, former Chief of Staff of the US Air Force warns: "since the air, space and cyberspace domains are increasingly interdependent, the loss of control of one can lead to a loss of control of the others...No future war can be won without superiority in the air, space and cyberspace"[37]. This diagnosis is based on the necessity to take into consideration the relevant strategic aspects (i.e. their militarisation, or the use of these spaces in support of military operations)[38]. Among the zones considered as priority, the QDR 2010 identified the Asia-Pacific

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Defense University National War College, 1992.

[33] The well-known COIN operation is becoming subject to increasingly virulent criticism. For an example of constant opposition, see Gian P. Gentile, "A Different US Military Narrative", *Politique américaine*, 17, Autumn 2010, pp. 115-121.

[34] John T. Bennett, "Pentagon Crafting Anti-Access Concept", *Defense news*, January 25, 2010.

[35] Emergence here means "the moment when an idea, which may already exist latently, becomes a specific conceptual thing, with a name and/or substance, awakening new interest". Philippe Gros, et a., dir., "Du Network centric à la stabilisation: émergence de nouveaux concepts et innovation militaire", *Etudes de l'Irsem 6*, 2011, p. 49.

[36] Mark E. Redden and Michael P. Hughes, "Global Commons and Domain Interrelationships: Time for a New Conceptual Framework?", Strategic forum no. 259, National Defense University, November 2010, p. 2.

[37] General T. Michael Moseley, USAF, "The Nation's Guardians: America's 21st Century Air Force", Chief of Staff of the Air Force, *White Paper,* Washington, DC, December 29, 2007, 2.

[38] The cyber situation is quite emblematic of such a process, as can be evidenced in the formation of a US Cyber Command in 2010 within strategic command and the publication of a report in May 2011 by the Pentagon on the defense strategy for operations in cyberspace (see "*Le Pentagone pourrait assimiler les cyberattaques à des actes de guerre*", *Le Monde*, 3 June 2011). This document incorporates cyber into strategic thinking based on three complementary angles relative to the source, qualification and consequences of a cyberattack. First of all, a threat coming from the cybernetic vector can never come from a transnational source alone. Any attack, as soon as it is far-reaching, has State support. Secondly, as cyberattacks target strategic structures such as nuclear power stations or transport routes for energy sources, they are qualified as acts of war. Thirdly, and as a result, the relationship induces the notion of equivalence. By way of retaliation and reciprocity, the victim State entitles itself to respond militarily to this offensive. This appropriation is not without ambiguity, in particular from the technical aspect. Identifying the exact source of the threat is difficult as one of the characterising features of the electronic world is the opaqueness that the tool provides. This provides a shield allowing the origin of the attack to be shifted onto another player. The ratification by Congress of the National Defense Authorization Act now authorizes the DoD to launch offensive operations in cyberspace. The stances taken by Defense Secretary Panetta's stance affirm this trend: "Next Pearl Harbor we confront could very well be a cyber attack". David E. Sanger, 'Mutually Assured Cyberdestruction?', *New York Times*, 2 June 2012,

region and the Persian Gulf[39].

Furthermore, and more fundamentally, access to the global commons is increasingly contested[40]. The United States had the monopoly a decade ago. As Barry Posen pointed out at the time, the United States "controls" the global commons. This "does not mean that other countries cannot access these zones in times of peace, nor that that they cannot deploy weapons systems if the United States does not prevent them. (...) means that the United States, more than any other country, can make extensive military use of them; that they can credibly threaten to deny their use to others; and that they can overcome any State that attempts by force to prevent them from freely using them: the challenger will need time to rebuild its forces, while the United States will have no difficuly in maintaining, restoring or strengthening their hold after the battle"[41]. However, the emerging powers are no longer lagging behind thanks to the spread of technological capabilities and the relative decline of the United States. Though it is dependent in energy and exports, China is not Washington's sole competitor. Other countries also intend to participate in managing these global commons. "Countries like China, India and Russia will demand a role in the maintenance of the international system, in proportion to their perceived power and their national interests"[42]. On top of the crumbling monopoly there are increasingly prominent tensions in the cyber domain. The United States complain of cyberattacks carried out against American private companies and government agencies via Unit 61398 of the People's Liberation Army[43]. China accuses the United States of disinformation and points to the creation of an American "net army"[44].

In such a strategic context, the promotion of the global commons is borne by several think tanks, in particular the CNAS[45] – the Center for a New American Security created in 2007 by Kurt Campbell and Michele Flournoy, who was also Under Secretary of Defense from 2009 to 2012 – and the Atlantic Council. It has led to splits, however, in terms of the recognition of geographical priorities: the CNAS identifies Asia and the Pacific as a primordial zone, followed by the Middle East and Europe while the Atlantic Council defends the idea of a global power that does not create hierarchies of the different regions of the world. Think tanks attached to the military institution are also reflecting on this issue, including the Naval Postgraduate School through group studies headed by Captain Scott Jasper. A member of the Center for Civil-Military Relations and the National Security Affairs department, Capt. Jasper co-directed a publication on this concept[46].

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http://www.nytimes.com/2012/06/03/sunday-review/mutually-assured-cyberdestruction.html

[39] In the 2010 QDR, much-needed conceptual thinking is requested on this topic. Department of Defense, *Quadrennial Defense Review Report,* Washington, D.C.: Department of Defense, 2010, p. 55.

[40] Mark E. Redden and Michael P. Hughes, op. cit., p. 3. Michele Flournoy, Janine Davidson, "Obama's New Global Posture. The Logic of US Foreign Deployments", Foreign Affairs, July/August 2012, 91, 4, p. 55.

[41] Barry Posen, "La maîtrise des espaces: fondement de l'hégémonie des Etats-Unis", *Politique étrangère*, 1, 2003, pp. 42-43. Original English edition: Barry Posen, "Command of the Commons. The Military Foundation of US hegemony" , *International Security*, 28, 1, Summer 2003, p. 8.

[42] Michele Flournoy and Shawn Brimley, *The Contested Commons*, U.S. Naval Institute, Proceedings 135, No. 7 (July 2009), http://www.usni.org/magazines/proceedings/story.asp?STORY_ID_1950

[43] Thomas Rid, "The Great Cyberscare", *Foreign Policy*, 13 March 2013.

[44] The daily paper *Huanqiu Shibao*, under the control of China's Communist Party, provides the source for these declarations.

[45] http://www.cnas.org/about

[46] Scott Jasper, *Security Freedom in the Global Commons*, Stanford, Stanford University Press, 2010.

Maintaining superiority in the global commons brings about the adoption of a grand strategy that we can define as a "sustainment" strategy (in counterpoint to the "containment" strategy which was typical of the bipolar period)[47]. This strategy consists in ensuring there is an American presence in the key regions likely to require the deployment of the armed forces[48]. As such, the CNAS calls for the creation of global regimes and agreements that protect and preserve the opening of the global commons; for the commitment of prominent actors who can contribute to the longevity of these regimes; the remodeling of the American military forces in order to defend and preserve the contested global commons, maintain the freedom of manoeuvre for the forces within these spaces and outside them, in the event that they may become unusable or inaccessible[49]. Such an approach requires legitimacy, which has been lacking since the choices made by the George W. Bush administration. The transformation of the image projected by the United States is one of the fundamental elements that can act as a basis when applying the "sustainment" strategy[50].

Let us not forget that such a grand strategy should also serve as a counter-model in regard to the possibilities of entrenchment or strategic restraint aimed at protected the American territory in its strictest sense. The more the United States step back from the world, the greater the necessity to secure the global commons will become difficult, leaving in its wake nationwide vulnerability[51]. While voices are being raised in the hope of relativising the image of the United States as an "indispensable nation"[52], the Obama administration, on the contrary, spreads the idea of necessary involvement, such as the speech given at West Point in 2009, or the expression "America is back", chanted during the second presidential campaign[53]. This renewed affirmation of American leadership is moving away from the ideological messianism born by the neo-conservatism of the previous Bush administration. It is not without certain realist aspects, as it is based on the acknowledgement of emerging state powers or even the absence of a military engagement without reference to US vital interests[54].

The 2010 QDR gives form to the renewed interest in the global commons concept. It launches a phase of conceptual, doctrinal and operational enrichment. The concept is conveyed in the documents that appeared throughout the interim period between the two QDRs, in particular the Defense Strategic Guidance 2012[55]. It is also being developed from the Air-Sea Battle concept[56], the

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[47] This strategy can also be defined as "offshore balancing": maintaining access to key regions, preserving the global commons and securing critical points. For more on this grand strategy, see Franck Hoffmann, "Forward Partnership: A Sustainable American Strategy", *Orbis,* Winter 2013, p. 27 and s.

[48] Michele Flournoy, Janine Davidson, *op. cit.,* p. 63.

[49] Abraham M. Denmark, Dr. James Mulvenon, ed., *Contested Commons: the future of American power in a multipolar world*, CNAS, January 2010.

[50] Shawn Brimley, "A Grand Strategy of Sustainment", *Small Wars Journal Blog,* 25 March 2008. http://smallwarsjournal.com/blog/a-grand-strategy-of-sustainment

[51] Stephen G. Brooks, G. John Ikenberry, William C. Wohlforth, "Lean Forward: In Defense of American Engagement", *Foreign Affairs,* January 2013.

[52] See, for example, the work by Vali Nasr entitled Dispensable Nation, published in March 2013.

[53] On this point, see Corine Lesnes, "La politique étrangère de Barack Obama: la tentation du repli?" in Bertrand Badie, Dominique Vidal, *L'Etat du monde 2014*, Paris, La découverte, 2013, pp. 98-99.

[54] On the realist qualification of Obama's foreign policy, see Zaki Laïdi, *Le monde selon Obama*. *La politique étrangère des Etats-Unis*, Paris, Flammarion, 2012, p. 118 et s.

[55] US Department of Defense, *Defense Strategic Guidance*: Sustaining *U.S. Global Leadership: Priorities for 21st Century Defense*, January 2012. Among the ten key tasks identified, two concern the global commons issue: 3. Force projection despite anti-access 5. The necessity of carrying out efficient operations in cyberspace and the atmosphere. The document formalises the "pivot" concept, a term coined by Hillary Clinton in 2010 in

Joint Operational Access Concept (JOAC)[57], the Chairman's Strategic Direction to the Joint Force (CSDJF)[58], the Capstone Concept for Joint Operations 2012 (CCJO)[59], and the Joint Forcible Entry Operations concept[60].

The common theme of these documents is preparation for a future war of high intensity, against a "peer competitor" in the form of a state or another player. Another of their aims is to ensure strategic freedom of action in any deployment zone. As the JOAC indicates:
"as a global power with global interests, the United States must maintain its projection capacity for military forces within any region of the world in order to protect its own interests. This includes the entitlement to project forces both within the global commons in order to make full use of them and on foreign territories if necessary"[61]. This text corresponds to a sweeping prospective movement concerning the definition of interventions and the makeup of forces from now to 2020 (Joint Force 2020). While the Air Sea Battle concept is not yet seen as a consolidated doctrine[62], it is symptomatic of a major concern at the strategic level that clearly aims to "render the air and naval forces more interoperable in order to prevent the enemy from destroying or overcoming their anti-access or area denial capabilities"[63].

Three additional remarks can be made here. Firstly, this promotion of the Air-Sea Battle concept is in relation to the Asia-Pacific pivot logic, in that it identifies an interstate war scenario, essentially

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Honolulu and in a Foreign Affairs article ("America's Pacific Century") in 2012.

[56] Dated August 12th 2011, the Air Sea Battle concept focuses on the combining of resources of the US Navy and the US Air Force in terms of force projection. While the Cold War provided the opportunity to develop the Air Land Battle concept with the European continent as its primary concern, the modern situation gives the Obama administration the chance to give preference to the Asia-Pacific region and the Persian Gulf.

[57] Dated 17 January 2012 (available at the following address: http://www.defense.gov/pubs/pdfs/JOAC_Jan%202012_Signed.pdf). Other than identifying 30 specific capabilities to be strengthened in order to manage the threat represented by anti-access/area denial, the JOAC calls for greater synergy between the forces beyond the theater of operations, i.e. at the organisational level of each corps. The document also provides for pre-positioning in order to strike deep into the enemy.

[58] Dated 6 February 2012 (available at the following address: http://www.defenseinnovationmarketplace.mil/resources/JCS%20Strategic%20Direction%20to%20the%20Joint%20Forces.pdf). The document calls for in-depth development of joint operations, reactivity, the acquisition of new capabilities in the special forces, the cyber domain, surveillance and reconnaissance.

[59] Adopted 10 September 2012 (available at the following address: http://www.dtic.mil/futurejointwarfare/concepts/ccjo_2012.pdf) . Based on the acknowledgement of a strategic paradox (global stability is accompanied by the strengthening of technology which benefits potential enemies), it formulates a new operational concept: globally integrated operations. This concept provides an overview of the modes of force projection in the future by identifying the links between the Defense Strategic Guidance and the newly drafted concepts, as well as the development of the armed forces.

[60] Dated 27 November 2012 (available at the following address: http://www.dtic.mil/doctrine/new_pubs/jp3_18.pdf).

[61] JOAC, *op. cit.,* p. 2.

[62] Joseph Henrotin, "Géostratégie et vision de la mer dans les conflits terrestres. L'interfaçage entre le lisse et le strié", *op. cit.,* p. 172.

[63] General Norton A. Schwartz, "Air-Sea Battle Doctrine: A Discussion with the Chief of Staff of the Air Force and Chief of Naval Operation" speech, The Brookings Institution, May 16, 2012, transcript available at http://www.brookings.edu/~/media/events/2012/5/16%20air%20sea%20battle/20120516_air_sea_doctrine_corrected_transcript. pdf.

against China[64]. As such, Andrew Marshall and Andrew Krepinevich alerted the Pentagon to this type of military configuration by organising a simulation entitled "Pacific Vision" for the US Air Force in October 2008[65].

Furthermore, the global commons follow on from the discussions launched in the 1990s concerning the Revolution in Military Affairs (RMA). Indeed, they fit perfectly into the movement towards improved technology that the military is currently experiencing. They are based on a "holistic approach that dissolves the separation between domains and sees the global commons not as distinct geographical entities but rather as a complex and interactive system"[66]. Taking the example of a naval operation, Captain Redden and Colonel Hughes highlight the fact that force projection requires real time delivery of electronic information by network (cyberspace support) and the use of the Global Positioning System (GPS) (by satellite). In the Defense Strategic Guidance of 5 January 2012, this holistic approach is formulated[67]. In view of adopting such a strategic posture, a bureaucratic decision was made in November 2011: an Air- Sea strategy coordination bureau was created within the Pentagon. Its aim is to prevent anti-access and strengthen the technological capabilities required to navigate the global commons[68].

Lastly, the task organisation between the global commons and trade development should be highlighted: "though generally underestimated, the military role of the United States as a guardian of the global commons, in particular the high seas, has made possible the free circulation of goods across the world, thereby facilitating both peace and prosperity"[69]. This use of force in order to ensure an access to markets and the boom of trade exchanges is one of the aspects of this grand strategy. It also aligns with the "pivot" logic, an equally extensive concept. It is not limited to the geographical dimension (from the Middle-East to Asia and the Pacific). It includes two other points where shifts have occurred since the Bush administration: the priority given to emerging powers compared to the old European powers (with the idea that the United States cannot create a hierarchy amongst these various actors, due to their "pivot power") and the shift from a military to an economic focus[70]. This second aspect is growing stronger with the new priority in Obama's foreign policy during his second mandate: trade and, in particular, the goal of doubling American exports between now and 2015. The relationship between the global commons and trade reflects an advocation of freedom in its widest sense (freedom of navigation is becoming a theme applicable to

[64] As pointed out by Frédéric Charillon, the idea of this geographical shift comes up against certain limits, in that the Middle-Eastern region will never disappear from America's strategic concerns, irrespective of the political rhetoric adopted. See Frédéric Charillon, "Triple redistribution stratégique" in Frédéric Charillon, Alain Dieckhoff, dir., *Afrique du Nord. Moyen-Orient,* Paris, La documentation française, 2013, pp.20-21.

[65] See Amitaï Etzioni, "Who Authorized Preparations for War with China", *Yale Journal of International Affairs*, Summer 2013, pp. 37-51. Amitaï Etzioni sees in the Air-Sea Battle concept a clear influence from the military in the modification of the strategic posture of the United States which makes China the new enemy.

[66] Mark E. Redden and Michael P. Hughes, "Defense Planning Paradigms and the Global Commons", *Joint Forces Quarterly*, 60, January 2011, p. 65.

[67] US Department of Defense, *Sustaining U.S. Global Leadership: Priorities for 21st Century Defense*, op. Cit., p. 9.

[68] Jim Garamone, "Pentagon Office to Coordinate New Air-Sea Strategy" , *American Forces Press Service*, Washington, 10 November 2011.

[69] Andrew Krepinevich, *Report of the CSIS International Security Program*, March 2013, p. 7. http://csis.org/files/publication/130319_Murdock_Preparing2014QDR_Web.pdf

[70] For more on this extensive concept of the pivot – inspired by sports moves, in particular basketball - see Justin Vaïsse, *La politique étrangère de Barack Obama,* Paris, Odile Jacob, 2012, pp. 14-15.

other domains, in particular the cyber domain today[71]).

The 2012 Defense Strategic Guidance insists on the necessary cooperation of the United States with its allies in order to assure effective access to the global commons. This posture is mentioned again in the preparatory documents for the defense budget 2014[72]. In other words, the drafting of a Grand Strategy for the US includes the projection of the concept onto other organisational contexts and, primarily, the Atlantic alliance.

THE INTERNATIONAL PROJECTION OF THE CONCEPT

In a context of financial crisis, the Obama administration is attempting to "share the responsibility"[73] of the strategic management of the global commons. This approach is evident first and foremost within NATO. Despite the fall of the Soviet Union, the Atlantic Alliance stands strong, defying the most pessimistic predictions since 1991. The Alliance found new functions to give reason to its existence[74] without the presence of an enemy, or, as Lucien Poirier might say, in an atmosphere characterised by "strategic waiting"[75]. Such a procedure is based on the identification of new threats and new challenges[76]. The Allied Command Transformation (ACT) produced several documents to give a new outline to NATO policies, such as the "Multiple Futures Project" published in 2009. According to General Mattis – Supreme Allied Commander Transformation at that time – the project involves strengthening "our understanding of the environment of future threats through thorough analysis of the security challenges"[77]. The report highlights that the global commons are a component of this environment both in the short and long term in the 21st century: "Our enemies will want to attack our populations, our trading centres and our globally integrated economy, including our social networks, and the global commons that we use to connect and prosper. The enemies will take the initiative and take advantage of the Alliance's weaknesses, both in the physical and virtual domains of the global commons, including the seas, space and cyberspace"[78]. Even though the new strategic concept adopted at Lisbon does not make explicit reference to the global commons, several paragraphs suggest a proactive role for NATO in this field: "All countries are increasingly connected to communication systems, transport systems and transit routes that are necessary for international trade, energy, security and prosperity. They require an extra international

[71] As an example, William J. Lynn states that "just as we need freedom to navigate the high seas, we need freedom of movement online". William J. Lynn, "Speech on Cyber Security at the Center for Strategic and International Studies", Deputy Secretary of Defense Center for Strategic and International Studies, Washington, D.C.http://www.defenselink.mil/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=1365

[72] United States Departement of Defense, *Fiscal Year 2014 Budget Request*, April 2013, p. 11.

[73] Abraham Denmark, *op. Cit., p. 170.*

[74] On the issue of change within NATO, see Bastien Irondelle, Niels Lachman, "L'Otan est-elle encore l'Otan?", *Critique internationale*, 53, October-December 2011, pp. 67-82.

[75] No threat other than that represented by terrorism is clearly identified. Lucien Poirier, *La Crise des fondements*, op. Cit., and Lucien Poirier, François Géré, *La réserve et l'attente*, Paris, Economica, Paris, Economica, 2001.

[76] Stephen Walt, "Why alliances endure or collaps", *Survival,* 39, 1, Spring 1997, pp. 156-179; or Wallace J. Thies, *Why Nato endures*, New York, Cambridge University Press, 2009.

[77] ACT, Multiple Futures Project. Navigating towards 2030, Final Report, April 2009, p. ii. https://transnet.act.nato.int/WISE/NATOACTRes/Training/MultipleFu/file/_WFS/20090503_MFP_finalrep.pdf

[78] *Ibid.*, p. 7.

effort in order to ensure they are resilient to attacks or disturbances"[79].

In 2010, ACT organised a large council to discuss the concepts and practices that concern the global commons. This council led to the drafting of a report that compares the commons to a "useful telescope to help assess key security issues"[80]. Following on from the QDR 2010, it stresses the necessary access to the global commons. Since any enemy will take the advantage by restricting the movements of NATO allies, they will attempt to block access to them. By pursuing this objective, they would paralyse NATO, and worse still, prevent it from fulfilling its tasks, which is to guarantee transatlantic security. It follows that, "in the coming decade, the Alliance will confront an adversary that will pose a series of risks concerning the use of our military forces in the four domains (sea, air, space, cyberspace)"[81]. The report ends with a series of recommendations on the capabilities of Member States[82]. Above all, the ACT proposes that NATO takes on a leading role in the defense of the global commons. This prospect fulfils a need: that of redefining the transatlantic alliance in a new political era where the enemy has taken on a new shape. This reorientation of objectives is hinged on the US' conceptual projection.

This projection can be traced to two levels. The first is the ACT's boosted appeals to concept entrepreneurs in the US by organising workshops. A notable contribution during the consultation with the expert community came from the Atlantic Council. The Council's International Security Program hosted one of the meetings organised by ACT on February 3, 2011 and was a partner for other workshops from July 2010[83]. The second level is at the heart of the organisation, because the main defenders of the concept in the ACT are military personnel or American functionaries. They are the ones who are in favour of the promotion of the global commons, acting as intermediaries between experts and academics[84]. Furthermore, when he completed his appointment as Supreme Alllied Commander Europe, Admiral Stavridis once again stressed the importance of the global commons in the organisation's activities, whether in the positive result of missions undertaken in the combat against maritime piracy or in identifying the context of wars to come[85]. Such a strategy of internationalisation faces a rather significant obstacle, however: the lack of appropriation by the other Member States, in particular Britain[86].

This conceptual and doctrinal development along with the NATO projection under the Obama

[79] Strategic Concept For the Defence and Security of The Members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, 2010, 13. http://www.nato.int/lisbon2010/strategic-concept-2010-eng.pdf
[80] ACT, *Assured Access to the Global Commons,* Final Report, March 2011, p. 4.
[81] *Ibid.*, p. 3.
[82] ACT, *Assured Access to the Global Commons*, op. cit., p. 7. In order to enhance the reflection process, a programme was undertaken through the Multinational Experiment 7 (MNE 7) from 2011 to 2013. It brought together several Member States of the organisation as well as the Republic of Korea and Switzerland. The objective was to better understand the dynamics that characterise each domain, the links between them and the establishing of propositions in order to ensure national and multinational capabilities are developed.
[83] For the presentation of the meeting, see the Atlantic Council website: http://www.acus.org/event/nato-global-commons-global- perspectives
[84] Several contributors of the group directed by Scott Jasper work at ACT (all of them members of the US military).
[85] Donna Miles, "Stavridis Reflects on NATO's Accomplishments, Future", 7 May 2013. *American Forces Press Service*. http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=119948
[86] Informal interview with a senior British functionary within NATO, May 2011.

administration has received a certain amount of criticism in the academic community[87]. This criticism is even stronger among the leaders of emerging states.

OBJECTION TO A GRAND STRATEGY

Faced with the reformulation of American strategy, the emerging powers have not coordinated their response despite that fact that they are all driven by the same opposition to Western powers[88]. Furthermore, the creation of regular fora, and even the birth of a unique diplomatic system such as IBSA (India, Brazil, South Africa) has not led to the creation of an institutionalised alliance. The States in question prefer a strategic partnership with a much more flexible format[89]. Even though certain structures created have led to common military manoeuvres such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), their goal is not to form an alliance strictly speaking; in other words, according to Stefan Bergsmann's definition, "an explicit agreement between States in the field of national security" through which "the partners promise mutual assistance in the form of substantial contributions of resources in the event of a situation arising that may become unstable"[90]. These structures, while aiming to standardise relations by providing extra mutual surveillance or neutralisation instruments (in the case of the SCO), the different perspectives of risks and threats prevent the formation of a strategically coherent unit that could lead to the birth of an international security community. The territorial anchoring is far too varied. This absence of strategic structure renders comparisons to a "new Cold War" or the "balance of power" system of pre-1914[91], inaccurate. It also generates multiple objections[92] to the American posture, as evidenced in the Chinese and Russian examples. Such stances share a common feature, in that they are embedded in the regional environment of the two powers in question.

CHINA'S AFFIRMATION

The very term "global commons" is little used in Chinese speeches, be they political, in media coverage or academic. It does not have the status of a strategic concept represented in doctrine.

[87] The concept is also criticised because of the dual hesitation it expresses in relation to the localisation and identification of threats. On this point, see Gabriel Scheinmann and Raphael Cohen, "The Myth of Securing the Commons", *Washington Quarterly*, Winter 2012, 35, 1, pp. 115-128.

[88] Sebastian Santander, « Les puissances émergentes », in Dario Battistella, *Relations internationales. Bilan et perspectives*, Paris, Ellipses, 2013, p. 538.

[89] On the absence of any real integration of the BRICS, see Zaki Laïdi, Op. cit., p. 338.

[90] 22 Stefan Bergsmann, "The Concept of Military Alliance", In Erich Reiter and Heinz Gärtner, ed., *Small States and Alliances*, Heidelberg, Physica-Verlag, 2001, pp. 25-39.

[91] Chris Brown, "The Emerging Shape of 21st Century International Politics" in Chris Brown and K. Ainley eds., Understanding international relations, 4th ed. Basingstoke, UK, Palgrave Macmillan, 2009. Online version available on the London School of Economics website: http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/31250/, p. 14.

[92] For an example of the lack of coordination in the cyber domain, see for example Hannes Ebert and Tim Maurer, "Contested Cyberspace and Rising Powers", *Third World Quarterly,* 34, 6, 2013, pp. 1054-1074.

However, behind this relative discretion hides a strategic concern in terms of the "protection of" and the "access to" these spaces. This concern can be seen in the discourse, the analysis and a refocusing effort.

The discourse does not reside in the use of the "global commons" as an expression but rather in the taking up of several specific positions. China is opposed to the weaponization of space[93], promotes greater cooperation in the field of computer and electronic networks[94], and raises questions over the development of military capabilities in these areas[95]. All of these elements are in line with the peaceful development that China advocates: "China will not engage in invasion, plundering, war or expansion that Western powers used to practice. Our strength will be harnessed to serve world peace and integrate development with peace". [96]

Nonetheless, a dual diagnosis appears when interpreting these strategic trends. The U.S. interest in the global commons is seen as a desire to increase the American stronghold over them[97]. Meanwhile, the consideration for this strategic concern pertaining to the global commons is essential in order to ensure Chinese prosperity. This is closely tied to the connecting points through which Chinese products travel[98]. More generally, the development of the country also depends on energy resources, in particular the oil necessary for the rapid growth of the world's second-largest economy. In September 2013, China became the world's leading importer with 6.3 million barrels bought every day[99]. Securing the sea routes between the Middle East and the Gulf of China has therefore become a strategic priority which has resulted in the strengthening of Chinese naval capabilities and also the control of the Straits of Malacca, through which 85% of imports pass.

Lastly, the People's Republic of China is beginning to refocus in its head-on approach to the global commons, in relation to the United States. This refocusing is first and foremost limited to the Asia region[100]. It is part of the development of a "total" power – i.e. the consolidating of material and non-

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[93] Permanent Mission of the People's Republic of China to the United Nations "Statement by H. E. Mr. Wang Qun, Ambassador for disarmament affairs of China, at the Thematic Debate on Outer Space at the First Committee of the UNGA," October 17, 2011, http://www.china-un.org/eng/hyyfy/t868417.htm

[94] Permanent Mission of the People's Republic of China to the United Nations "Statement by H. E. Mr. Ambassador Wang Qun at the First Committee of the 66th Session of the GA on Information and Cyberspace Security, "Work to Build a Peaceful, Secure and Equitable Information and Cyber Space," October 10, 2011, http://www.china-un.org/eng/hyyfy/t869445.htm

[95] China's National Defense 2010: China's National Defense in 2010," http://news.xinhuanet.com/english2010/china/2011- 03/31/c_13806851_3.htm

[96] Dai Bingguo, "Adhere to the path of peaceful development", 2010/12/06, Chinese Minister of Foreign Affairs, http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/fra/zxxx/t784931.htm English translation proposed by the University of Southern California's US-China Institute, available at http://china.usc.edu/ShowArticle.aspx?articleID=2325&AspxAutoDetectCookieSupport=1

[97] Li Yan, "The Global Commons and the Reconstruction of US-China Military Relations", *Asia Paper*, March 2012, p. 16.

[98] Richard Weitz, "China, Russia, and the Challenge to the Global Commons", *Pacific Focus*, Vol. XXIV, No. 3 (December 2009), p. 277.

[99] China's shifting ahead of the US can also be explained by the increase in American production of non-conventional sources of energy (shale oil and gas). The US has abundant resources in the Rocky Mountains and North Dakota.

[100] Actions in other areas are also carried out, such as the building up of Unit 61398 of the People's Army (a unit considered to be the centre of cyberattack operations) or the destruction in January 2007 of one of its meteorological satellites (showing its destruction capabilities in space). Nonetheless, we believe that the core

material resources – the primary aim being stability in its immediate neighbouring areas[101]. However, three significant sources of friction between China and the US clearly indicate the regional rivalry for the global commons for over a decade.

The first is due to a collision between a Navy plane (EP-3) and a Shenyang J8 from the Chinese navy, resulting in the death of the pilot in April 2001 close to the island of Hainan (Chinese naval base with nuclear submarines), which is just above the PRC's Exclusive Economic Zone in the South China Sea. The twenty-four members of the EP-3 crew were forced to carry out an emergency landing for interrogation. The Bush Administration had to give a public apology in order to end the diplomatic crisis.

The second issue arose in the same zone but at sea (120 km from Hainan Island). On 8th March 2009 the "Impeccable" ocean surveillance ship (with a civilian crew employed by the US Navy) was approached by five Chinese ships that ordered it to leave the zone in question. The distance between the ships was so close that the Impeccable used its fire hoses to effectively perform the manoeuvres.

The last of these friction factors concerns cyberspace access. On 13 January 2010, Google announced it had been subjected to several massive attacks coming from China. Using classic phishing methods and malware, several accounts belonging to Chinese militants for human rights in China and abroad were targeted. Following the creation of Google.cn in 2006, this episode was seen by the company's directors as well as Secretary of State Hillary Clinton as an attack on freedom of expression.

In the three cases, the US exercises the right to freedom of navigation, both in the Exclusive Economic Zone or in cyberspace. However, China responds by asserting its sovereign rights in this field[102], in particular through the application of the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, for the first instance. Indeed, this reference to the law reflects a form of normative socialisation of China, as it adheres to a series of principles and rules that have their origin in modern Europe and are today enshrined in international conventions[103].

Such claims do however have a purpose: assert and even extend the Chinese security perimeter in relation to the United States, whose presence in the Asia-Pacific region is considered even more worrying than a nuclearised North Korea... It is a strategic response[104]. The priority is to dissuade or

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strategic concerns are in the region and neighbouring regions of China.

[101] China's primary concerns relate to Tibet, Taïwan, the South China Sea and its military capabilities are designed to strengthen its power in East Asia. See Amitai Etzioni, "Accommodating China, Survival: Global Politics and Strategy", *Survival*, 55, 2, 2013, p. 46.

[102] As outlined in China's 2010 National Defence, the following objectives are stressed: preserve national sovereignty, security and national development interests and furthermore: "defend the Chinese territories, domestic waters, territorial waters and airspace, preserve its maritime rights and interests, maintain its security interests in space, the electromagnetic environment and cyberspace". China's National Defence, 2010 (p. 6) Available at the following address: http://news.xinhuanet.com/english2010/china/2011-03/31/c_13806851.htm

[103] This gives credit to the notion of an extension of international society, championed by the English school of international relations.

[104] This notion of response is defined as defensive, alongside American behaviour deemed aggressive. See Li Yan, "Securing the Global Commons, a New Foundation for the Sino-US Relationship", 19th March 2012, http://www.chinausfocus.com/peace-security/securing-the-global-commonsa-new-foundation-for-the-sino-us-

neutralise the American forces nearby or deployable in the region[105].

The creation of C4ISR (Command, Control, Communications, Computers, Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance), designed to render defense system components more interoperable and increase submarines, or the construction of Type 054A frigates and rocket-launching Type 022 catamarans, reflect the development of such a strategic posture[106]. The idea of "offshore active defense" developed by Admiral Liu and which could extend much further than the region should not be startling. China's key ambition would appear to be the preservation of its leadership in the region[107] and therefore "push back any American military presence from its borders"[108].

Beyond the move towards capability reinforcement or this notion of strategy, we must also highlight the extension of China's "fundamental interests" in 2010. While its "core interests" were limited to Taiwan and Tibet in 2002 according to Wang Jisi (a close friend of Hu Jintao), they now include claims to the regional maritime zone[109]. The national borders have therefore become a domestic policy concern, with certain military leaders unhesitant to declare "Chinese rights to an oceanic territory of three million km2"[110].

The creation of a "red telephone line", a direct line for emergencies between the two States (whether on the diplomatic level since 1998 or the strategic level between the People's Liberation Army and the Pentagon since 2007) will not prevent this clearly defined Chinese objective from waning: total priority is given to sovereignty[111], conceived of in an extensive perspective.

RUSSIAN ASSERTION RENEWED

With Vladimir Putin's coming to office, from the year 2000 the Russian Federation's foreign policy was marked by a reassertion of Russian power in the "near abroad" – the region of preferential interests – but also beyond this region[112]. The strategic issues concerning the global commons come

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relationship/

[105] Despite the emergence of new sources of insecurity deemed non-traditional such as hygiene, health and energy issues, the United States', alongside its Japanese ally's strategic posture, takes prime position on the strategic agenda.

[106] For a list of other possible measures, see Roger Cliff, Mark Burles, Michael S. Chase, Derek Eaton, Kevin L. Pollpeter, *Entering the Dragon's Lair. Chinese Antiaccess Strategies and Their Implications for the United States,* Santa Monica, Rand, 2007. Available at: http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/monographs/2007/RAND_MG524.pdf).

[107] On this point, see the interpretation of Alexandr Burilkov and Torsten Geise: « Maritime Strategies of Rising Powers: developments in China and Russia", *Third World Quarterly*, 34:6, 2013, pp. 1051-1052.

[108] Jean-Pierre Cabestan, *La politique internationale de la Chine. Entre intégration et volonté de puissance*, Paris, Presses de Sciences po, 2010, p. 245.

[109] Jean-Pierre Cabestan, *La politique internationale de la Chine. Entre intégration et volonté de puissance*, Paris, Presses de Sciences po, 2010, p. 245.

[110] François Godement, *Que veut la Chine ?,* Paris, Odile Jacob, 2012, p. 208.

[111] François Godement, op.cit., p. 235. Indeed, the decisionmaking process based on collective deliberation at the head of the Chinese State Party and the absence of a reflex to use it tends to weaken the "red telephone". On this point, see Jean-Pierre Cabestan, op. cit., p. 246.

[112] Maria Raquel Freire and Roger E. Kanet, ed. *Russia and its Near Neighbours*. Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2012, p. 2.

under this policy[113] all the same, and just like in China, the concept itself does not appear stricto sensu in official documents, such as the Military Doctrine of the Russian Federation of 5 February 2010. The US policy in Russia's neighbouring region, and globally, is considered a threat to international security[114]. As such, the primary external military threat identified by Russia is the enlargement of NATO in its "near abroad" as well as the Alliance's intention to become a strategic actor with global functions[115]. This is fully coherent with the analyses formulated in the Foreign Policy doctrine adopted in 2008[116].

Based on this strategic assessment, Russia has adopted measures that aim to strengthen its military capabilities deployed in the global commons, an anti-access strategy (at the conventional or dissuasion levels) and an appropriation posture in the Arctic Ocean.

In terms of capability development, it is essentially in the naval and cybernetic domain that the most significant progress is being made. In October 2008, Russia provided a frigate in the anti-piracy combat in Somalia, but it simultaneously organised exercises with the Venezuelan navy (the first in the Western hemisphere since the end of the Cold War). Between 2007 and 2015, the Russian weapons programme has allocated 25% of its 4.9 billion rouble defense budget to the building of new warships. In the cyber domain, Russia is strengthening its assets and their usage, as demonstrated in the war in Georgia, defined as "hybrid combat", as a series of cyberattacks accompanied force deployment. It also seeks to support "hacktivists" (politically active hackers) by making them "information soldiers"[117].

As for the anti-access strategy, it was put to use in the war in Georgia, as Russia threatened to sink a NATO ship suspected of providing military support to the enemy under cover of a humanitarian aid operation. In the spatial domain, Russia can rely on its know-how and experience from the Soviet era, in particular since 1968 with the first anti-satellite capability test[118]. This skill is used for dissuasion, as it bolsters its strategic credibility (an essential component for perceptions).

Lastly, in 2007, several Russian explorers descended to a depth of over 4,000 metres in the Arctic Ocean. The planting of a titanium Russian flag at its bottom is considered as an extension of the continental shelf, and therefore a form of appropriation of the Arctic commons by Russia.

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[113] For an image of the academic debates on foreign policy in Russia, see Andrew C. Kuchin, "Russia's Contested National Identity and Foreign Policy", in Henry R. Nau and Deepa Ollapally, ed., *Worldviews of Aspiring Powers: Domestic Foreign Policy Debates in China, India, Iran, Japan and Russia*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2012. The author identifies three distinct trends: the pro-liberals (favourable to the West), the "Great powers balancers", and the nationalists.

[114] The official Foreign Policy Concept stresses this analysis.

[115] President of the Russian Federation, *The Military Doctrine of the Russian Federation,* 5 February 2010, §8a., p. 3. Available at: http://isn.ethz.ch/Digital-Library/Publications/Detail/?ots591=966c9813-6e74-4e0b-b884-8ed9f3f0978c&lng=en&id=154906

[116] Mariya Omelicheva, "Russian Foreign Policy: A Quest for Great Power Status in a Multipolar World", in Ryan K. Beasley, Julet Kaarbo, Jeffrey S. Lantis, Michael T. Snarr, ed, *Foreign Policy in Comparative Perspective. Domestic and International Influences on State Behavior*, London, Sage, 2013, p. 103.

[117] Brian Krebs, "Lithuania Weathers Cyber Attack, Braces for Round 2," Security Fix, *WashingtonPost.com*,http://blog.washingtonpost.com/securityfix/2008/07/lithuania_weathers_cyber_attac_1.html

[118] On this point, see Richard Weitz, *op. Cit.*, p. 284.

The positions adopted by China and Russia can therefore be interpreted as responses to the actions undertaken by the United States, if we accept the classic rules of strategy. By accumulating resources of power which are both economic and military in nature, any actor will come up against forms of resistance, more or less in the long term. As such, a rise will suffer a setback which may be partial or whole depending on the reactions it causes[119].

A CONCEPT REVEALING STRATEGIC TRANSFORMATIONS: A SHIFT TOWARDS NEW GLOBAL INTERPLAY

Protecting and preserving freedom of action in the global commons requires evading the adversary's technological assets[120], and using powerful instruments provided by the information revolution[121]. This way, the global commons can even be compared to a catalyst that subsumes all technological innovation in order to give it a strategic purpose.

Nonetheless, this change is merely the tip of the iceberg. A new global interplay is beginning to take form. It no longer follows the "grand chessboard" concept developed by Brzezinski, which consisted, for the United States and any of it rivals, in controlling Eurasia. This new interplay has other characteristics. It focuses on freedom of movement in the global commons. This grand interplay is not without consequences, in that it expands the possible areas of military clashes while simultaneously risking the militarisation of spaces that were not originally militarised.

AN EXTENSIVE NOTION OF THE STRATEGIC "SANCTUARY"

The interplay within the global commons involves firstly identifying the elements that are a part of them. The United States' idea of what composes the global commons is rather vast. China is stricter when it involves regional spaces, which implies the development of patrols, surveillance and military exercises within them. In those areas, China accepts the movement of goods or civilian air transport as well as shared use of resources. It does not, however, tolerate military presence or use of these spaces by the United States.

These two different positions tend to give rise to an opposition in the great global interplay: between freedom of movement on the one hand, and the "Balkanisation"[122] of the global commons on the other. This "Balkanisation" is perceived both negatively and critically as an unacceptable

[119] In return, these reactions can provoke responses of the same nature. On this point, see Edward N. Luttwak, *La montée en puissance de Chine et la logique de la stratégie*, Paris, Odile Jacob, 2012.
[120] Scott Jasper, Paul Giarra, "Disruptions in the Commons", in Scott Jasper, *op. cit.,* p. 11.
[121] Marco Fiorello, Donald McSwain, "Advanced Technology Enablers", in Scott Jasper, *op. cit.,* pp. 173-198.
[122] Bryan McGrath, "Towards a new Maritime Strategy", Information and Dissemination, 5 June 2011. http://www.informationdissemination.net/2011/06/toward-new-maritime-strategy.html

violation of the circulation of goods and persons. The two antagonist perspectives nonetheless reflect a similar trend: an extensive notion of the "strategic sanctuary". This is no longer limited to the territory where the heart of national identity lies[123].

Freedom of movement in the global commons for the United States is based, for example, on another strategic depiction. This manner of perceiving threat goes beyond that which reigned when the European states were formed, summed up in Charles Tilly's famous words: "War made the state, and the state makes war". These European states were formed through the accumulation of two types of resources: subjugation (control of the civilian population and weapons manufactured in order to assert the central power) and capital (institutionalisation of taxes and resorting to credit in order to create an armed force). This accumulation may assume certain unique features depending on the proportion of these resources: Venice has taken a highly capitalised route; Russia meanwhile relies on a high concentration of restrictive methods while states such as France or the United Kingdom are characterised by the constraints of capital. These three routes align with a unique structural trend: "seeking to create and utilise warmaking capabilities to their advantage"[124]. Definitively, "the structure of the State seems to mainly be a by-product of the governing power's efforts to acquire warfare assets" and "the relationship between States, especially during war and preparation for it, strongly affected the entire State-creating process"[125]. Such state-building results in two consequences, from the viewpoint of modern strategic thinking. Firstly, war is the incarnation of a state-to-state relationship and not a man-to-man relationship. Rousseau puts this into words in the fourth chapter of Book 1 of The Social Contract: "a State can only have other States as its enemies, and not men"[126]. Secondly, war systematically results in the defining and protecting of borders, since the basis of international principles is keeping the enemy at bay. The territory relationship embodies a major element of the state-building process, which is driven by the refusal of a European empire, irrespective of who would benefit from it (the Habsburgs or the Bourbons). The development of military and strategic skills is based on a number of models, like that of geometry or even "psychology"[127] but it remains rooted in the soil: taking control of the territories in order to assert and strengthen the State. To cite Elias's terminology, the State seeks to build itself as a survival unit[128]. To put it plainly, defence policy is a keystone of the state as an entity[129].

Today, these two corollaries are subjects of debate. A number of sociologists depict the

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[123] The term "sanctuary" is used here figuratively speaking, as there is one aspect that is missing from this enveloping process, which is the relationship to nuclear defense. Strategic thinking as it developed in the 20th century with the emergence of the atom implied a nuclear response if the sanctuary was attacked. However, the expansion of the "sanctuary" does not necessarily lead to the "nuclearisation" of the global commons, even if nuclear weapons carriers circulate within the spaces. Here we are simply pointing out the tendency to include territorial aspects in the idea of a sanctuary, aspects that seem to be key in the functioning of the "political body" in question.

[124] Charles Tilly, *Contrainte et capital dans la formation de l'Europe, 990-1990,* Paris, Aubier, 1992, p. 230.

[125] 124 *Ibid.,* p. 38.

[126] Rousseau, *Du contrat social*, Paris, GF Flammarion, 1966, p. 47.

[127] On these models, see Christophe Wasinski, *Rendre la guerre possible*. *La construction du sens commun stratégique*, Bruxelles, Peter Lang, 2010.

[128] Norbert Elias, *La société des individus*, Paris, Fayard, 1991, p. 267 et s.

[129] As such, modernity is making a radical break with Greek political thinking, which, on the contrary, prioritises interior politics to foreign affairs. See Leo Strauss, *Qu'est-ce que la philosophie politique?*, Paris, PUF, 1992, p. 85.

transformation of the State under the effects of a second modernity (Beck) or a radicalisation of modernity (Giddens). In both cases, the territorial relationship undergoes significant transformation. According to Beck, globalisation gives rise to a new definition of the characteristics of sovereignty and renders the control of space illusory, as a world of danger and risks has gradually replaced a world of adversaries[130]. For Giddens, keeping a distance has increasingly less sense, politically, due to the disconnect between time and space: "the intensifying of planetary social relations brings distant places so much closer that local events are influence by events that occur thousands of kilometres away and vice-versa"[131].

Beyond anti-access and area denial, it is the idea of an expansion of the "sanctuary" which is at work in US defence policy today. The idea is to remove the territorial constraints[132]. A number of projects in the cyber domain illustrates this quite well, such as "commotion", created by Sacha Meinhart (former hactivist). It involves generating fully standalone wifi networks with no physical infrastructure. The State Department is financing the project with over two million euro: "there are three objectives: re-establish a connection in areas hit by natural disasters or war, distant areas that are difficult to access, and of course, evade the censorship imposed by certain dictatorships. This last aspect pushes the objectives of digital diplomacy (or e-diplomacy) even further, seeking to defeat other powers"[133].
Integrating the global commons as a component of a grand strategy transmitted to a military alliance and with a different relationship to territory as an objective could also be compatible with the notion of "hegemonic stability". This idea of expansion is hinged on a qualification: the United States is a "liberal hegemon"[134] that seeks to maintain its status[135].

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[130] Ulrich Beck, *World Risk Society*, London, Polity Press, 1999. On his idea of a "cosmopolitanist" modern State, see *Pouvoir et contre-pouvoir à l'ère de la mondialisation*, Paris, Flammarion, 2003, p. 467 and s.
[131] Anthony Giddens, *Les conséquences de la modernité*, Paris, L'Harmattan, 1996, p. 57.
[132] This idea is not however a foreign concept to the strategic position of the United States since its founding. As highlighted by Olivier Chopin: "The young Republic is surrounded by two countries that must become and remain friends, in the North and the South, and which are grand in size. He who would invade it must first cross an ocean or a vast territory. The United States will have time to anticipate it. A surprise attack is not envisageable. What is necessary is not fortifications or the protection of borders, but the capacity to project the military power in advance and preventively when encountering the adversary, before the latter can reach the national territory. The projection of power outside the country is therefore in a way the fundamental framework for defence and security policies. It is as if inscribed in the genetic code of the United States as a power on the international stage": Olivier Chopin, "La démocratie américaine et la guerre à la terreur (2001-2011)" in Jean-Vincent Holeindre, Geoffroy Murat, dir., *La Démocratie et la guerre au XXIème siècle*, Paris, Hermann, 2012, pp. 116-117. The global commons concept provides ample room for the development of this idea.
[133] Pierre Alonso, "Internet, les réseaux et la puissance sur la scène international", in Bertrand Badie, Dominique Vidal, dir., L'Etat du monde 2014, Paris, La découverte, 2013, p. 87.
[134] Barry Posen, "Pull Back. The case for a less activist foreign policy", *Foreign Affairs*, January-February 2013, 92, 1. For works regarding hegemony, see G. John Ikenberry, *Liberal Leviathan: The Origins, Crisis, and Transformation of the American World Order*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2011 ; Carla Norrlof, *America's Global Advantage : U.S. Hegemony and International Cooperation*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2010 ; David P. Calleo, *Follies of Power : America's Unipolar Fantasy,* Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2009 ; Davis B. Bobrow, *Hegemony Constrained : Evasion, Modification, and Resistance to American Foreign Policy*, Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh University Press, 2008. In relation to the preservation of the United States' pre-eminence on the international stage as a key objective of the grand strategy of the administrations that followed the end of the Cold War, see Charles-Philippe David, Julien Tourreille, "Théories de l'hégémonie américaine", in Charles-Philippe David, dir., *Théories de la politique étrangère américaine. Acteurs, concepts, approches*, Montréal, Presses de l'Université de Montréal, 2013, p. 167.

FROM MILITARISATION TO WEAPONISATION ?

The promotion of the global commons concept results in a form of militarisation of these commons. That is, the employment of assets placed in these spaces in order to support military operations. These spaces thereby allow telecommunication lines to be maintanined, navigation assured and thus the deployment of armed forces, as well as the capacity to observe the manoeuvres of other states. Nevertheless, the grand interplay may eventually set in motion a more threatening process in the form of a weaponisation of these spaces, i.e. the installation of convetional weapons. As an example, even though the United States, Russia and China signed the 1967 treaty banning weapons of mass destruction in the atmosphere, they may however envisage installing anti-missile defense systems or anti-satellite weapons. Another possible scenario is the martialisation of these spaces, consisting in placing objects that are inoffensive on their own, "but which make up a combat system (for example: space mirrors for reflecting aggressive laser beams)"[136]. The militarisation, weaponisation or martialisation of the global commons revives the hypothesis of a state war in which these spaces provide the context as well as the target.

While essentially a state-related phenomenon in modern times, war is changing shape due to the diminishing role played by the nation-state: the confrontation between two state armies is no longer the main model of contemporary wars (rise of non-governmental actors as key figures, development of private security companies and hiring of mercenaries). On top of this we can also mention what Jean Joana described as the "autonomisation" of war, which escapes the initial rationale that presides at the outbreak of hostilities[137]. However, the increasing militarisation of the global commons tends to disprove the hypothesis of a growing demonopolisation of the military element at the states' expense.

Not only is the building up of military resources a priority, including for the U.S which is experiencing a period of budgetary sequestration, but the collision zone with the other states is at risk of reaching new dimensions. This is the reason why Chinese thinkers have come up with the concept of a war without limits, which blurs the usual distinguishing lines in terms of strategic thinking. There is no longer a refuge or preserved space because "for war without limits, the distinction between the battlefield and the combat-free zone does not exist. The natural spaces embodied by the land, the sea, the air and space are battlefields; the social spaces incarnated by the military, political, economic, cultural and psychological fields are battlefields"[138]. This configuration leads to the emergence of "omnidimensional combat"[139], in that "the theory of operations integrated in the real world, (...) through its vastness, goes far beyond what had been initially envisaged and covers a vast field that includes land, sea, air, space and cyberspace"[140].

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[135] For an interpretation of Obama's foreign policy in terms of reformulation of American leadership, see Justin Vaïsse, op.cit., p. 65.

[136] Jean-Luc Lefebvre, *Stratégie spatiale. Penser la guerre des étoiles: une vision française,* Paris, Editions L'Esprit du livre, 2011, p. 368.

[137] Jean Joana uses the example of total warfare but this perspective can be transposed to other types of confrontations. See Jean Joana, *Les armées contemporaines*, Paris, Presses de Sciences po, 2012, p. 60 et s.

[138] Qiao Lang et Wang Xiangsui, La Guerre Hors Limite, Paris, Payot et Rivages, 2003, p. 288.

[139] *Ibid.,* p. 112.

[140] *Ibid.,* p. 111. We might consider such a description to reflect the radicalisation of the new *nomos de la terre* identified by Carl Schmitt. See in particular Carl Schmitt, "Terre et mer. Eléments de politique mondiale.

Etzioni offers a similar conclusion. For him, the Air-Sea Battle Concept takes the form of "a major strategic change" as an "intellectual pivot"[141]. Its purpose is not to accommodate China but encourage tensions with it[142]. According to Etzioni, the concept serves an American posture that creates conditions conducive to the outbreak of war with Beijing, since it favorises the perception of increasingly hostile encirclement[143]. He sees it as a reflection of an impossible convergence of views between the two States, and a way of formalising a war scenario (absence of belief in peacefully resolving their differences). As such, the state of bilateral relations is more of a "collision course"[144] than strategic cooperation, despite the fact that several experts call for the latter to be strengthened or even a new "relationship between great powers"[145].

This expansion of the nature of war is also due to the fact that the security dilemma is no longer limited to a strictly material and territorial component. The security dilemma in terms of the global commons comes from the perception of the possibility to access them (or not). The motivation comes from the fact that these spaces are vital for States to function, or to cite Rousseau, for their "political bodies", irrespective of the nature of the regime. The United States, Russia and China draw elements from these spaces that are fundamental to their own economic development, i.e. vital for the functioning of the political body itself.

Of course, the current configuration raises questions over both the necessity and the suitability of resorting to armed force, which may weaken the national cohesion of States as well as their economic development. As Chris Brown points out, "whereas in the past it was common for rising powers to feel that they had to define their new status by challenging existing power-holders, building empires and "co-prosperity" spheres, (...) this is no longer necessary, and indeed may be even more counterproductive than previously"[146]. Nonetheless, we cannot simply sweep aside the possibility of an interstate clash caused by friction in the global commons unresolved diplomatically. This type of confrontation may take on a latent aspect (absence of a declaration of war or outspoken protest) whilst infiltrating the civilian and private sector fields[147]. The term "sub rosa warfare" in the

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1951" , in Carl Schmitt, *Machiavel. Clausewitz. Droit et politique face aux défis de l'histoire,* Parisl, Krisis, 2007, p. 220 et s.

[141] Amitai Etzioni, "Accommodating China, Survival: Global Politics and Strategy", Survival, 55, 2, 2013, p. 46.

[142] We must stress here that "accommodation" is unrelated to unilateral concession or appeasement, but closer to the notion of an action that satisfies the interests of both parties according to Etzioni.

[143] Amitaï Etzioni, "Preparing to Go to War with China" , *The Huffington Post,* 07/02/2013. Etzioni laments the bureaucratic enlistment practised by the Pentagon, and in particular by the military, as it contributes to stripping civilians of their part in the decisionmaking process. See Amitaï Etzioni, "Who Authorized Preparations for War with China", Yale Journal of International Affairs, Summer 2013, pp. 37-51.

[144] Amitai Etzioni, "Accommodating China, Survival: Global Politics and Strategy", Survival, 55, 2, 2013, p. 46.

[145] Abraham M. Denmark, "Forging a New Type of Great Power Relations in the Global Commons", *American Foreign Policy Interests: The Journal of the National Committee on American Foreign Policy*, 2013, 35, 3, pp. 129-136. See also Li Yan*, op. cit.,* p. 27. See also Zhiqun Zhu, "Foreign Policy of the People's Republic of China", in Ryan K. Beasley, Julet Kaarbo, Jeffrey S. Lantis, Michael T. Snarr, ed, *op. cit.*, pp. 133-134.

[146] Chris Brown, "Rules and norms in post-western world", in Kessler, O., Hall, R.B., Lynch, C. and Onuf, N. (eds.), *On rules, politics and knowledge: Friedrich Kratochwil, international relations, and domestic affairs.* New York, USA, Palgrave Macmillan, 2010. Available on the London School of Economics website: http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/31279/ p. 8.

[147] Pierre Hassner, "L'avenir de la guerre. Entre la bombe humaine et le drone », *Histoire,* Hors-Série, novembre-décembre 2012, p. 125.

cyber domain is a part of this strategic trend which goes beyond intelligence or special operations. It involves confidential and secret combat, as none of the parties declare themselves to be at war[148].

CONCLUSION

Three conclusions may be drawn from this study.

While the global commons are homologous, as they each serve a means of communication, **there are no ramifications in terms of strategic thinking, which remains oriented by a need for the greatest freedom of action possible** when deploying armed forces within the commons. While on the tactical level, these spaces render offensive operations easier to implement, including under cover (i.e. cyber), they do not call into question the freedom principle as the common core of any strategic action.

Furthermore, **the Obama administration is reawakening the concept of the global commons, making them a cornerstone of a new grand strategy** in order to show that 1. These spaces are essential for future interventions (global commons as a strategic asset) and 2. That they are thus becoming a new site for clashes (global commons as a strategic target).

Lastly, **the global commons have not risen to the status of structural concept in the Grand strategies of China or Russia**. Nonetheless, they are very much taken into consideration as symptoms of present-day American behaviour. As such, the grand strategies drawn up consist in incorporating a response to this American posture by considering the assets that would prevent or neutralise the military or civilian resources in close proximity to the states concerned. While the global commons have left no conceptual traces in the grand strategies of these two emerging powers - for the most part already "emerged" or "re-emerged" – the issues linked to access to the commons are clearly manifested.

Analysts today stress the reactivation of the maritime element on the strategic stage, following a decade of armed force deployment to combat insurrection (such as in Iraq and Afghanistan)[149]. More generally, however, a new, major global interplay is emerging, with the specific notion of freedom of movement in the global commons. Such interplay may become the basis for a militarisation, even weaponisation, of domains that had been preserved from such phenomena until now. These trends contribute to the steady establishment of a "state of war", which is not limited, however, to a "state of violence"[150], which is evidenced through the proliferation of combat methods within civilian or private spaces. This state of war is due to the way the political bodies themselves function.

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[148] Libicki, M. C., "Sub Rosa Cyber War" in C. Czossek & K. Geers, eds., *The Virtual Battlefield: Perspectives on Cyber Warfare,* Amsterdam, Netherlands, IOS Press, 2009, pp. 53-65.

[149] "The central role of the sea in the conduct of land affairs will inevitably grow stronger in coming years. Its traditional role as the "hallowed route" – both for the deployment of the main forces or for logistic support – will undoubtedly be reinforced". Joseph Henrotin, *op. cit.,* p. 174.

[150] Expression used by Frédéric Gros in *Etats de violence*. *Essai sur la fin de la guerre,* Paris, Gallimard, 2006.

Modern rules of strategy were based on the idea of a territory to protect or expand. They originated, according to Rousseau, in the fact that countries did not have a naturally defined greatness. Forced to compare themselves to one another in order to discover their limits, they found themselves in a constant state of war. Armed clashes were also given a purpose according to Rousseau: it held citizens together, like the muscles of a single body[151]. **Today, the risks of war are no longer due to this need for comparison, or "ostentation" in Rousseau's words[152], but rather the desire to access the global commons, considered to be vital for the existence and even the social and economic viability of the political bodies in question**. With such a setup, an even more extensive "all against all" state of war could develop[153].

Consequently, a new tragedy arises for the commons. During the 1970s, the use of natural resources in the global commons caused these resources to diminish, justifying the remark made by Garret Hardin who believed that "freedom in a commons brings ruin to all"[154]. Today, it is the states' attempts to control the commons that is contributing to another tragedy: controlling the commons militarily would appear to bring ruin for all. While a lack of interest was what characterized the dilemma described by Hardin in his time, today's dilemma is quite the opposite, with the desire to control and even appropriate these spaces becoming increasingly apparent[155].

[151] Jean-Jacques Rousseau, 2008, *Principes du droit de la guerre. Ecrits sur la paix perpétuelle, textes et commentaires*, Paris, Vrin, p. 77.

[152] In Rousseau's writings, war can have two distinct origins. It can come from an ostentation rationale (which corresponds to self-esteem) that is found in an excessive tendancy for patriotism fuelled by fanatism, and the idea of protecting against a threat (which is the result of a love of the self). On this point, see Florent Guénard, "Puissance et amour de soi. La théorie de la guerre dans la pensée de Rousseau » dans Rousseau J.-J., 2008, *Principes du droit de la guerre. Ecrits sur la paix perpétuelle,* textes et commentaires, Paris, Vrin, pp. 209 et s.

[153] See Pierre Hassner, "Postface", in Gilles Andréani, Pierre Hassner, dir., *Justifier la guerre*, Paris, Presses de Sciences po, 2013, 2e ed., p. 473.

[154] Garret Hardin, *op. cit.,* p. 1244.

[155] On the normative aspect of this dilemma, see Frédéric Ramel, "Postface. Au-delà de la politique étrangère : vers l'éthique du milieu mondial", in Ryoa Chung, Jean-Baptiste Vilmer, dir., *L'éthique des relations internationales,* Paris, PUF, 2013, pp. 447-461.

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ETUDE DE L'IRSEM N°30

ACCESS TO THE GLOBAL COMMONS AND GRAND STRATEGIES : A SHIFT IN GLOBAL INTERPLAY

The global commons – defined as areas that are accessible to all and free from ownership by any one state – such as the international airspace, the atmosphere, the high seas and cyberspace, are no longer "controlled" by the United States.
Today, the rivalry between emerging powers is growing, reflected by an "anti-access" posture at the expense of the U.S. Armed Forces; it is essentially a long-distance campaign that could result in area denial.
Such a setup is giving rise to a new "grand strategy" in the U.S., with the aim of maintaining flows within these spaces, but especially keeping the access to them open. The purpose of this study is to analyse the conceptual and doctrinal characteristics of the global commons in the documents produced under the Obama administration (from the 2010 QDR to the preparatory documents for the 2014 edition) as well as identifying how China and Russia deal with this issue in their own strategic positioning. We can therefore confirm that a new global interplay is at work in the first half of the 21st century, and it is far removed from the classic perspective of a great chessboard with Eurasia as the target. The main aim is freedom of movement in the global commons; there are consequences, however, such as the militarisation of these spaces. The study also highlights two other aspects for consideration in strategic thinking: a homology among the commons that would be conducive to offensive operations, and the extensive concept of the "state of war".

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