

Strategic Studies in France: Plus ça Change...

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French strategic studies are not sufficiently developed in comparison with our major partners. This situation bears unfavourably on the diversity of research and the scientific quality of such studies. It is absolutely necessary to give new impetus to this sector.

White Paper on Defence and National Security (2008)

In most countries, strategic studies¹ are usually seen to be in a class of their own among fields of scholarship and research. Institutionalization assumes the form of think tanks, academic journals and associations. They are taught not only at military schools but also in more than a few universities. In addition, they are acknowledged in foreign affairs and defence ministries as a tool of central importance for thinking about peace, conflict and war. This is not always the case in France, however, where the status of strategic studies has historically fluctuated between official endorsement, or even occasionally promotion, by the State, and all-too-obvious disregard or disaffection – in spite of numerous reports by *ad hoc* committees all pleading for a more rational development of the field.² Such lack of consistency may sound amazing for a country such as France, still displaying the trappings of great power status (nuclear arsenal, permanent seat on the UN Security Council, G8 and G20 membership, not to mention vestiges of a long-bygone colonial empire), yet unable to grant institutional permanence to a scholarly field which would add theoretical veneer to its strategic choices.

True, that did not prevent it from developing a distinctive strategic doctrine, or from producing landmarks in the history of strategic thought, during what in retrospect looks like a golden age : the 1950s and 1960s, a time of strong (and varied) military commitments, in which French military thought prospered. In light of their experience with

* An earlier version of this paper was presented during the Workshop on European Security at the Baltic Defence College (Tartu, Estonia), 11-12 June 2012. The author would like to thank Bernard Boëne, Lars Wedin, Jean Klein and Jean-François Daguzan for their useful comments and advice.

¹ In this article, strategic studies will be understood very broadly, to include defence studies (*études de défense*), security studies (*études de sécurité*), war studies, (*sciences militaires*), peace research (*irénologie*), conflict studies (*polémologie*), military sociology (*sociologie militaire*) and military history (*histoire militaire*). The main focus is on institutionalization issues rather than on the content of strategic studies. Associations and journalistic publications are left out of account.

² Among others, the *Rapport Heisbourg* (2000) and the *Rapport Andréani-Bozo* (2004).

colonial wars,³ French soldiers were among the first to focus and theorize on the mechanisms of “revolutionary warfare”. Later, France’s choice of an independent defence, featured by its withdrawal from NATO’s integrated military command at a moment when its nuclear deterrence strike force was being erected, gave strategic research a boost : “France was the only Western country with a dissonant strategy”.⁴ Building on the foundations laid in the aftermath of World War II by Admiral Raoul Castex⁵ [1878-1968] and Raymond Aron⁶ [1905-1983], uniformed authors such as Generals Pierre-Marie Gallois [1911-2010], Charles Ailleret [1907-1968, later to become Army Chief of Staff under de Gaulle’s presidency], and Lucien Poirier acutely analyzed the implications of nuclear weapons (Géré, 1992). Research structures were set up within the ministries of Defence and Foreign Affairs, curricula and degrees mushroomed in universities, and think tanks emerged.⁷

Yet, while strategic research was in full bloom, it did not result in disciplinary and institutional recognition of its value in academia, or in political and (especially) financial support. The institutional picture has hardly improved since then. And although there is no direct, linear relationship between the two, research and publications have not remained at all times as zealous and fervid as they were in the 1950s and 1960s. The State occasionally recognizes this weakness. It was the case recently with the publication of the 2008 *Livre blanc sur la Défense et la Sécurité nationale* (White Paper on Defence and National Security). In order to cope with what that official document termed ‘strategic uncertainty’, it was decided to promote the study of strategic issues in universities and to increase the financial resources available for research purposes:

Research in social and human science on defence and security issues is relatively under-represented in university research and does not contribute sufficiently to the construction of a scientific culture in that area. Therefore a better balance must be created alongside [*sic*] scientific and technological research in strategic studies (White Paper, 2008, p.294).

³ After the Second World War, France was embroiled in two bouts of bitter armed conflict : first in Indochina (1946-1954) against the Communist Viet Minh who waged a revolutionary and popular war, then in Algeria (1954-1962) where the French Army was faced with a subversive war that, while it was not premised on Marxist thought, was similar in its strategy and methods. In a special issue devoted to revolutionary warfare of *La Revue Militaire d'Information* (February-March 1957), mid-ranking officers (among others, Majors [later Brigadiers] Maurice Prestat and Pierre Saint-Macary, writing under the pen name Ximenès) brilliantly theorized the mechanisms of this then new form of belligerence. Hervé Coutau-Bégarie (2005) reports that their analysis had so impressed American strategists that it was studied in depth in US military schools. The works of French officers (Galula, Trinquier, etc.) dating back to that period were also recently rediscovered in Washington. Some of them are quoted in the US Army's *Counterinsurgency Manual*. The famous film *La bataille d'Alger* is abundantly used in urban guerrilla warfare training and was even shown, in August 2003, at the Pentagon, to probe developments in the war in Iraq. See Wedin’s excellent synthesis on the ‘French school of counter-insurgency’ (2011, pp.345-384).

⁴ Interview with Brig. Gen Lucien Poirier, 16 January 2012.

⁵ Adm. Castex famously penned a prescient, seminal article entitled “Aperçus sur la bombe atomique” (“Insights on the Atomic Bomb”), the first in-depth analysis of the changes brought to the strategic picture by the advent of nuclear arms, published in the *Revue de Défense Nationale* in October 1945 – almost one year before the publication of Bernard Brodie’s *The Absolute Weapon*.

⁶ See: Aron, 1951, 1962 and 1963.

⁷ France, unlike Anglo-Saxon countries, has recognized the usefulness of ‘think tanks’ only very recently. See, on that score, the insightful analysis offered in Williams, 2008.

To the White Paper's more sceptical readers, it was yet another attempt to revitalize strategic studies. Indeed, the laments of government officials blaming the lack of relevant scholarly advice and the disenchantment of those few academics interested in strategic studies seem only equalled by the persistence of the status quo.

The aim of this paper is to explore the whys and the wherefores of this apparent contradiction. Why is there neither constancy nor permanence in the recognition and institutionalization of strategic studies? Why is there no 'resilience'? Why does a country such as France, which has tried, by hook or by crook, to promote a dissonant strategy with broad international implications, not have at its disposal an effective academic toolbox that could help officials in the promotion of their strategic choices? Answers to these questions will hopefully make it possible to identify key factors in the shaping of strategic studies in France.

Substance, Recognition and Uses of Strategic Research

The field of strategic studies explores issues surrounding the use of force as an instrument of politics. Studying military power and its contribution to politics is precisely the aim of strategic thought. Strategy used to have a purely military dimension: its *raison d'être* was to wage effective war. From 1945 onwards, with the advent of nuclear weapons and the onset of the Cold War, civilians began to take an interest in issues which had formerly been the military's preserve. Step by step, the range of activities associated with strategy became broader than the mere preparation and conduct of war, to include crisis management or peace support operations. It should also be noted that, in France, a ministry in charge of war preparedness no longer exists as such; nor is there is an Armed Forces Ministry anymore. Since 1974, as France had to adapt its military tool to a multifaceted, continuously evolving strategic environment, there has been a unified Ministry of Defence instead, covering all aspects previously dealt with by several agencies. In such a context, issues of analysis and applied knowledge have increasingly assumed a salient dimension.

Strategy lies between the fields of security studies (which encompass many non-military topics) and military science (which focuses on operational and tactical matters). It is also truly interdisciplinary to the extent that it welcomes historians, political scientists, sociologists, economists, geographers, etc. In English-speaking countries, strategic studies have flourished within International Relations (IR) even though it took time even there before they gained a secure footing – one recalls that Bernard Brodie, in a seminal article (1949, pp.467-488), deplored the absence of war studies in America. As the recognition of IR as a discipline or sub-discipline came very late in France (Chillaud, 2009), strategic studies long remained insignificant in French academic circles: it was in fact the case until the 1970s. There were, nevertheless, remarkable exceptions. For instance, in 1962 Raymond Aron taught on nuclear strategy at *Sciences Po*.⁸ Commenting on these lectures, he noted in the book based on them published the following year:

⁸ *Sciences Po*, the familiar name under which of the *Institut d'Études Politiques de Paris* has been known since its founding in the early 1870s, is a very prestigious higher education institution specializing in the social sciences. It has traditionally educated France's political, administrative and diplomatic elite.

[T]his course will deserve credit for one reason that cannot be denied: it will be the first of its kind in France. For years, it has been rare for academics to devote their time and thinking to purely military issues. While such a gap is part of the tradition, it is nonetheless unfortunate (Aron, 1963, translation mine).

Haunted by the trauma of France's defeat in 1940, he had understood that strategic studies were not to be the monopoly of military officers. During his stay in Germany in the 1930s, he had noted that military issues were taught at some universities (Aron, 1980):

In France, the idea of a chair of military science would have been seen as incongruous by most deans of the faculty (...) [whereas] *Wehrwissenschaft* was part of the disciplines acknowledged by German universities. (Translation mine).

The academic and defence worlds only ceased to ignore each other as from the early 1970s. Masters' degrees began to be offered here and there,⁹ and a few research institutes emerged within universities.¹⁰ Increasing numbers of social science doctoral dissertations were undertaken on some problematic issue in strategy. More and more academics – irrespective of their initial disciplinary affiliation – were drawn to strategic studies.¹¹ However, that welcome change was pregnant with a serious downside: such

⁹ The *Secrétariat Général de la Défense Nationale* – SGDN (Office of the Secretary General for National Defence, whose name changed slightly to SGDSN when an *s* for 'security' was added recently) is in charge of assisting the Prime Minister in fulfilling his responsibilities in defence and security matters. In 1977, it established a task-force (*Mission pour les études et les enseignements de défense*, MEED) in charge of coordinating and financing defence studies. Its fruitful influence ended when the *Institut des Hautes Études de Défense Nationale* – IHEDN (the *Institute for Advanced National Defence Studies*, founded in 1936 and based in Paris at the *École Militaire*, a public institution designed to foster civilian expertise and civil-military relations at elite level) took over in the late 1990s.

¹⁰ Many of these academic research centres were often hollow shells whose main purpose was to provide doctoral students with effective administrative support. The short list of remarkable exceptions includes the *Centre d'Histoire Militaire et d'Études de la Défense* (University of Montpellier) [1968], the *Centre d'Étude des Politiques de Défense* – CEPODE (Paris I, Sorbonne) [1971-1982], the *Centre d'Études et de Recherches sur l'Armée* – CERSA (Toulouse) [1974-1999], the *Centre Lyonnais de Sécurité internationale et de Défense* – CLESID (Lyon) [1975] and the *Centre d'Études de Défense et de Sécurité Internationale* – CEDSI (Grenoble) [1976-2000].

¹¹ A far from all-inclusive list of names is as follows. In political science, academics who developed an interest in defence issues were mainly those who tried to establish international relations as a recognized curriculum in academic social science. Worth mentioning in that regard is Pierre Dabezies [1925-2002], a pioneer in the field of strategic studies. He was remarkable in that he was a former Army colonel who later became a professor of public law and political science. His testimony is extremely enlightening about his role in the establishment of the subject in France (Dabezies, 2002). Jean Klein, a specialist in arms control and disarmament, collaborated with him in running strategic studies at the Sorbonne. He was, for a long time, a research fellow at the French Institute of International Affairs and co-edited an impressive *Dictionnaire de Stratégie* (de Montbrial & Klein, 2000). In economics, Jacques Fontanel, of the University of Grenoble, initiated research and teaching on disarmament and military spending (Fontanel: 1994; Coulomb & Fontanel: 2003). Jean-Paul Hébert [1946-2010], of the Paris-based *École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales*, worked extensively on the issue of economics and defence industries (Hébert & de Penanros, 1995). A few law scholars dedicated their works to defence issues. The most well-known is probably Bernard Chantebout, a professor of public law, who defended his doctoral dissertation on the general organization of national defence in France in 1966 (Chantebout, 1967). At that time, working on defence issues was extremely risky for academics, as the French military establishment was unwilling to accept criticisms. His testimony in the fascinating document edited by the *Centre d'Études sur l'Histoire de la Défense* on the relationships between defence and universities is very instructive (Chantebout, 2002, pp.40-45). Another name is Jean-Christophe Videlin who wrote a very interesting manual on defence law (2009). In sociology, Bernard Boëne became a leading player in military sociology, and helped establish a strong social science tradition at the military academy Saint-Cyr (2008). Probably because he is a former English professor and has published extensively

eclecticism may be tricky. Serge Sur, one of the most prominent scholars in IR and strategic studies, pointed out (1995) that “*academic research has more recently got organized and still suffers from a degree of fragmentation, as suggested by the lack of a homogeneous status for the discipline*” (translation mine). Indeed, there is no discipline of strategic studies *per se* and those scholars who are willing to study the subject take the risk of being marginalized in their primary academic discipline. French academia suffers from administrative rigidity and disciplinary compartmentalization.¹²

Another French problem is that most strategic research institutes have neglected, if not straightforwardly given up, fundamental research. In their study on national peculiarities in the field of International Relations, Friedrichs and Wæver (2009, pp.267-268) argue that:

Policy-oriented scholars do empirical or policy work without feeling an obligation to explicitly engage in theory or justify themselves by pointing to theoretical implications. French IR theory is probably even more divorced from policy than in most other countries.¹³

The same applies to strategic studies: a major difficulty is that even if all French strategic studies scholars were willing to engage in theoretical work, few would actually do so, for a simple reason: the kind of research output that the State – very often their sole paymaster – expects is empirical and of immediate interest. Strategic research centres, whether public or semi-private, are usually underfunded and looking for ways to earn

in that language, his work is quite well-known abroad. The University of Toulouse (notably its Institute of Political Studies, where Lucien Mandeville, Michel Martin and Jean-Pierre Marichy taught) was for over two decades a productive high altar of military studies. Several historians graced the field early on, too (Kennett, 1978). André Martel, of the University of Montpellier, announced in the *Revue Historique* (Martel, 1971) that in France the field of military history was undergoing something of a renaissance. He traced this development to the post-war era, when a handful of books appeared which stirred interest and fired the imagination: notable among them was Raoul Girardet's *La société militaire dans la France contemporaine, 1815-1939* (1953). Worth mentioning is Colonel Eugène Carrias' book, *La pensée militaire française* (1960, published anew in 2010) even though he was not an academic. Last but not least, in geography, Yves Lacoste, the pioneer of the French school of geopolitics, rehabilitated that sub-discipline. A former radical-left specialist on underdeveloped nations, he shocked a number of his peers in 1976 by publishing *La géographie, ça sert d'abord à faire la guerre* (“*The main use of geography is in warfare*”). The same year, he launched the French geopolitical journal *Hérodote*. His first work got a frosty reception, though, particularly among his colleagues on the left, most of whom feared a rehabilitation of Nazi *Geopolitik*. In the first issue of *Hérodote* – bearing the subtitle *Stratégies, Géographies, Idéologies* –, he did not even use the word geopolitics. The violence of the arguments following Yves Lacoste's publications within the academic community led to an extremely rare negative sanction: in 1980, the Minister of Research, Alice Saunier-Seïté – who was originally a geographer –, decided to demote him from Full to Associate Professor). The anecdote is reported by G. Minassian in “La révolution géopolitique inachevée”, *Le Monde*, 3 August 2010.

¹² The functioning of the *Conseil National des Universités* (CNU) illustrates this disciplinary compartmentalization. The CNU, entirely made up of academics (some elected by their peers, others appointed by the Ministry of Higher Education) is the State body in charge of preselecting Ph.D holders who intend to launch into a career in the academic world soon after they defend their doctoral dissertation. It also assesses the merits of professors eligible for a promotion. Without the ‘passport’ granted by the CNU, it is not possible to apply for a position in a university (and though a promotion can be secured locally, the recognition gained at national level by a CNU recommendation is greater). The CNU is divided into 77 different sections covering all manner of disciplines and fields – but strategic studies are not among them.

¹³ Ole Wæver had already noted this much in the very same terms a decade earlier in his seminal article on the development of IR in America and Europe in the journal *International Organization* (1998, p.709): “*Most French IR scholars do empirical or policy work without the obligation felt by American scholars to locate themselves theoretically or to justify an article by referring to theory implications*”.

money. The dangerous conclusion would be to assume that as theory cannot demonstrate its immediate utility, it is bound to be confined to a secondary role or bluntly condemned to disappear. France – probably like more than a few other countries – finds it difficult to define the proper place and contribution of ideas and theories when it comes to the choice of its strategic options.¹⁴ Overstating the case, one could argue that a major divide separates supporters of pragmatic action and empiricism – inclined to think that nothing would be more dangerous than the quest for a general rule applicable to all problems since doctrines and principles create the illusion that it is possible to protect oneself against surprises – and those who contend, on the contrary, that it is impossible to think strategically without recourse to theories. The former increasingly seem in a position to carry the day. Senior civil servants, not least at the Quai d’Orsay, often do not see the point of theory. International issues are still seen, to a certain extent, as a State prerogative. Hence, French diplomats – usually described as obsessed with logic and principles at the expense of practical results – often try to be their own theorists, which leaves little room for academics normally fulfilling that role in other fields (Chillaud, 2009, p.244). Most courses taught at the *École Nationale d’Administration* (ENA) only deal with theory at the margins (Friedrichs & Wæver, 2009, p.267). Yet, as argued by Stephen Walt (1998, p.29), theory is important even for policymakers and practitioners:

Those who conduct foreign policy often dismiss academic theorists (...), but there is an inescapable link between the abstract world of theory and the real world of policy. We need theories to make sense of the blizzard of information that bombards us daily.

The problem is comparable where the media are concerned. Pundits are supposed to enlighten the public. They must be clear and should avoid jargon; failing this, their toolbox of theories may become mumbo jumbo. In such a context, ‘empirical-descriptive’ approaches may better match what is expected of the media, even though such work has no conceptual content.

At all events, as Friedrichs and Wæver (2009, p.263) again note, IR scholars tend to be less visible in the French media than “intellectuals”. France has a long tradition which may surprise foreigners in that regard. French intellectuals have been expected to intervene in the political debates of the day, and have considered themselves to be entitled (and obliged) to. Very frequently, this extends beyond mere debate to advocacy of strong policy initiatives. For instance, ‘philosopher’ Bernard-Henri Levy played a significant role in prompting President Sarkozy to intervene in Libya. It would be almost unthinkable for a regular academic – however brilliant and diplomatic he or she may be – to play a similar

¹⁴ A similar, though reverse, problem is apparent in the US. In a recent *Washington Post* column, Joseph Nye lamented the growing gap between theory and practice in the field of IR. “*Scholars are paying less attention to questions about how their work relates to the policy world, and in many departments a focus on policy can hurt one’s career. Advancement comes faster for those who develop mathematical models, new methodologies or theories expressed in jargon that is unintelligible to policymakers*”. One of the reasons is that there is a persistent chasm between what ‘suppliers’ of social research offer and what the prospective ‘users’ of this research seek. Joseph Nye, “Scholars on the Sidelines”, *Washington Post*, 13 April 2009.

role as adviser to the Prince. In any case, his or her political theories would likely have less effect than any kind of allegedly ‘philosophical’ theories.

The Institutionalization of Strategic Research

There are a handful of institutions within the ministries of Defence and Foreign Affairs which serve as interface between research and policy-making.¹⁵ On the academic side, while research centres have multiplied from the 1960s onwards, very few of them have been able to make their mark lastingly. Similarly, scientific journals in strategy have suffered from a lack of resilience.

Strategic Research within the Ministries of Defence and Foreign Affairs

In the early 1960s, after France put an end to a politically hopeless war in Algeria, General de Gaulle, the then newly elected President, wanted not only to wipe the slate clean of the ‘old’ doctrines but also to put more than a veneer of strategic rationale on the development of France’s nuclear strike force. There was a strong need for strategic analysis. The aim was especially to ‘sell’ the nuclear arsenal to French soldiers traumatized by the retreat from Algeria.

In 1964, the Armed Forces Minister, Pierre Messmer, set up the *Centre de Prospective et d’Évaluation* – CPE (Centre for Prospective Assessment). A genuine think tank within the ministry – the references were to both the Rand Corporation (chiefly in terms of interdisciplinary, inter-service approaches and openness to hiring outside experts) and the American Policy Planning Staff (in charge of identifying the long-term changes affecting defence issues) –, its 25 members,¹⁶ by working directly for the office of the minister, enjoyed a fair measure of freedom. Its purpose was “*to assess long-term strategic issues and challenges facing the country as well as the evolution of the international scene, in aid of decision-makers*” (Frison-Roche, 2005, p.298, translation mine). Its heyday came soon afterwards when it devised the famous doctrinal concept of ‘nuclear deterrence by the weak against the strong’ (“*du faible au fort*”).¹⁷ It worked on an *ad hoc* basis with some research institutes,¹⁸ chiefly the *Institut Français d’Études Stratégiques* (IFDES),¹⁹ the *Institut Français de Polémologie* (IFP),²⁰ the *Centre d’Études de Politique Étrangère* (CEPE : Centre for Foreign Policy Studies)²¹ as well as with leading companies in the

¹⁵ I shall not deal here with the very faddish *Délégation à la Prospective et à la Stratégie* installed within the Ministry of the Interior [i.e. Home Office] between 2007 and 2009.

¹⁶ It is worth mentioning that they were recruited by co-optation only.

¹⁷ It is the capability of inflicting more damage on a more powerful foe than the complete destruction of the French population would represent. Because of a negative expectancy of gain, the foe would therefore – so the theory goes – refrain from proceeding any further.

¹⁸ It also established some informal contacts with some English-speaking institutes such as the *Hudson Institute* and the *IISS*.

¹⁹ See below, p.9.

²⁰ See p.11.

²¹ Set up in 1936 thanks to funding by the *Carnegie Endowment*, the CEPE was comparable to the *Council on Foreign Relations* in New York and the *Royal Institute of International Affairs* in London (Chatham House).

French military-industrial complex.²² Nevertheless, the opening of CPE to civilians was rather limited, mainly for two reasons: (1) it was not in the spirit of the French services to work with civilians (especially if they came from outside of the Ministry of Defence); (2) there was still a strong antimilitarist tradition within the academic world. Increasingly marginalized within the Ministry of Defence, CPE disappeared in 1982, and was replaced by the *Groupe de Planification et d'Études Stratégiques* – GroupES (Strategic Planning and Studies Group) with a broader mandate. Yet, that attempt failed, too, for the same reasons: it was in competition with the General Staff, and remained outside of academic networks. Unable to find its bearings, and confined to technical studies, it was eventually amalgamated with the *Délégation aux Études Générales* – DEG (Directorate of General Studies) in 1988. At the end of the 1980s, as more and more civilians (*énarques*,²³ diplomats, but also, for the first time, civilians who were not public servants) joined it, the military's monopoly on strategic studies began to weaken. The DEG was renamed *Délégation aux Affaires Stratégiques* – DAS (Directorate of Strategic Studies) in 1992, just after the first Gulf War, at the request of Pierre Joxe, the then Minister of Defence.²⁴ The idea – as usual – was to have at his disposal something closely resembling a think tank which could provide him with broad perspectives in order to facilitate policy decisions. Unlike CPE, GroupES and DEG, all led by a general officer or *Ingénieur Général de l'Armement*, DAS has a civilian director, in this case an *énarque*. Its creation was to meet multiple needs, *inter alia* the development of prospective studies and the advancement of strategic research within institutes.²⁵ At the same time, it constitutes a kind of 'diplomatic offshoot' of the Minister's office (Frison-Roche, 2005, p.306), a source of recommendations to the Minister when French stances in international negotiations have to be defined. While the General Staff remains in charge of the military decision-making process, DAS deals with diplomatic options. In addition, it works on related doctrinal issues (e.g., it drafted the 1995 Defence White Paper, planned the shift to an all-volunteer organisational format, etc.). Finally, its missions include stimulation of strategic research in think tanks. Traditionally, it is seen as a breeding ground for young experts in IR and strategy. It has recently allowed foreign research institutes to bid under the tender procedure.²⁶

Success in harnessing the power of intellect to serve policy needs was quicker to achieve at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In 1973, the then new Minister, Michel Jobert, decided to set up a study group on foreign policy issues: the *Centre d'Analyse et de Prévision* – CAP (Centre for Analysis and Prospective Assessment). As was the case with its counterpart (CPE) in the Armed Forces Ministry, the idea was to set up a body similar

²² For an in-depth analysis of the role of CPE, see Poirier (1997, pp.257-265).

²³ That is the name given to graduates of the *École Nationale d'Administration*.

²⁴ He became Minister of Defence after the resignation of Jean-Pierre Chevènement, who opposed French participation in the allied coalition against Iraq during the First Gulf War.

²⁵ If this writer seems to be so fond of DAS, it may well be because that was where he served during his conscript tour of military service in 1999-2000 (and where he developed his keen interest in strategic issues).

²⁶ In order to combat ethically dubious drifts – some unprincipled researchers contracted out some work and took all the funding, others regarded these studies as 'cash cows' –, it was decided in 2003 (in addition to the adoption of new, much stricter, budget rules) no longer to favour domestic suppliers of studies over foreign institutes.

to the American *Policy Planning Staff*. The first director and deputy-director, respectively Thierry de Montbrial and Jean-Louis Gergorin (both known familiarly as the ‘*Joboys*’), deeply influenced by their experience in the US – the former had earned his doctoral degree from Berkeley whereas the latter had worked for a time at the *Rand Corporation* – wanted to make CAP a genuine think tank within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In the context of the 1970s energy crisis, its promoters wanted to instil more reactivity and inventiveness in a then almost helpless ministry. CAP’s mission was to undertake technical and prospective studies on certain aspects of the international environment and to present the Minister with recommendations or strategic orientations (Bloomfield, 1978 ; Cohen, 1982 ; Kessler, 2005). Beside in-house research, it relies on external researchers and think tanks for short studies conducted on a contractual basis. Unlike its successive opposite numbers in the Defence establishment, it did not go through repeated bouts of restructuring or name changes.²⁷

Strategic Research within Think Tanks

The first attempt to set up a French centre for strategic studies came from the United States. The Ford Foundation expressed the idea to set up a clone of the London-based *International Institute of Strategic Studies* (IISS). General Gallois was asked to be the linchpin of the project. After intensive preparatory work was completed, he became aware that the backers wanted the new institute to echo an American thesis hostile to the *force de frappe*. Consequently, the project was aborted (Gallois, 1999, pp.397-398).

Gen. André Beaufre²⁸ [1902-1975] set up *IFDES* in 1962 with support from the Ministry of Defence. The idea was to develop an institution similar to American and British think tanks (the *Rand Corporation* and IISS were both used as models) : an independent provider of ideas and expertise for official institutions. Supported by the Armed Forces Ministry, the institute was to combine civilian and military personnel. Initially, Beaufre was to run the military side and Raymond Aron, the civilian component in cooperation with *Sciences Po*, but the project collapsed since neither of them could accept the idea of sharing ultimate decision-making power (Malis, 2005, p.734). The new institution, still experiencing teething troubles, suffered from a handicap : it had no links to academic institutions. In addition, IFDES was a mere sub-division of the *Centre d’Étude*

²⁷ Though it recently became the *Direction de la Prospective*.

²⁸ Beaufre famously defined strategy as ‘*the art of the dialectic of two opposing wills using force to resolve their dispute*’ (1965, p.22). He was a most privileged witness to all the events which had structured France’s strategic choices. In this capacity, he was obviously most qualified to set up such an institution. A member of the *Mission Doumenc* (the French military delegation sent to Moscow in 1939 in order to negotiate a military treaty with the USSR), he noted that the Soviets, who were about to sign a treaty with Germany, had a political-strategic vision that was far superior in clarity and level of elaboration to anything the French and British had come up with. He was also a participant observer of the rivalry between Giraud and de Gaulle while in Algeria during the Second World War. Afterwards, he was a member of the French staff sent to Washington in order to secure US technical help for the French Army. Later, he was chief of the land component of the Anglo-French Suez expedition in 1956. He saw a military victory fizzle out for political reasons. He had seen combat service in both Indochina and Algeria. He was a witness to the first manifestations of subversive warfare, and had occasion to ponder over the powerlessness of a conventional army against foes for whom the military dimension was only one of the ingredients of a larger enterprise, unified in its aims but diversified in its means.

de Politique Étrangère – CEPE (Centre for Study on Foreign Policy Studies) and had no legal status of its own, which rendered its structure very fragile.²⁹ Beaufre's attempt to set up a more richly endowed institute at the European level (*Centre Européen de Recherche Stratégique* – European Center of Strategic Research) came up against German opposition (Coutau-Bégarie, 2005). Well-known by American strategists,³⁰ he led IFDES energetically during its 13 years of activity. Besides, he edited the journal *Stratégie*. Both IFDES and *Stratégie* disappeared in 1976 after Beaufre died while on a lecture tour in Yugoslavia. Beaufre's heirs tried to perpetuate his legacy as part of a new institute, the *Centre d'Études de Stratégie Totale* – CESTE (Centre of Studies on Total Strategy). Jean-Paul Pigasse, a civilian who had worked with Beaufre, launched the *Centre Défense et Sécurité* in 1975/1976. Unfortunately, neither came to enjoy the same level of recognition.

Before Beaufre passed away, French officials became aware that IFDES was too flimsy a structure to stimulate strategic studies. In 1972, the Minister of Defence, Michel Debré, reluctant to funnel research funds directly to researchers, decided to set up the *Fondation pour les Études de Défense Nationale* – FEDN (Foundation for National Defence Studies), a structure designed to spur and federate defence studies, and meant to compensate for the absence of private patronage.³¹ According to Michel Debré, FEDN was to be...

a place for permanent debate and at the same time an independent though official body, intended to probe deeper into the notion of national defence. While we do not mean to copy foreign countries, we had to be aware of our backwardness if only compared to Britain and more generally to English-speaking countries.³²

According to its statutes, the new foundation was expected to...

invite, encourage and conduct research and studies on issues of military doctrine, strategy and defence; facilitate public access to classic or modern writings related to military thought by securing publication of these works; contribute to a wider influence of teachings on defence issues; organize meetings and conferences.

General Georges Buis [1912-1998], who headed the *Institut des Hautes Études de Défense Nationale* – IHEDN (Institute for Advanced National Defence Studies), was appointed as the first director of FEDN. Its establishment occurred as the first Defence White Paper (*Livre blanc* de 1972) was being published. In a context where France was no longer a member of NATO's integrated military command, there was a need to create a

²⁹ Besides, IFDES was so closely identified with Beaufre that it impeded its development and confined its influence to small circles. As previously seen, the (few) research contracts entrusted to IFDES were commissioned by CPE.

³⁰ See, for instance, Brodie (1965) and Kolodziej (1967).

³¹ The contribution of the Ford foundation to the launch of IISS was looked at enviously. The problem was that France, unlike other countries, had no tax-exempt endowments which could proactively stimulate research. In many ways, this is still the case today. On that score, see Jacques Hubert-Rodier, "Enquête: le pays manque de laboratoires d'idées en matière de relations internationales", *Les Echos*, 25 Avril 2007 (<http://archives.lesechos.fr/archives/2007/LesEchos/19906-41-ECH.htm>).

³² Letter from Michel Debré, 1972, quoted by Woignier (1985, p.439).

consensus in the country on nuclear deterrence. In addition, it was necessary to block the influence of mushrooming ‘alternative doctrines’ on the radical left.³³

The new foundation sponsored contractual research at universities,³⁴ in the hope of a multiplier effect. Some of the output was published in a new series called *Les 7 épées* (‘Seven swords’) launched in 1973, on the broad model of the famous IISS *Adelphi* series.³⁵ Six years later, a new journal by the name of *Stratégique* was launched within it to substitute for *Stratégie*.

FEDN boasted some prominent in-house researchers: Brig. Gen. Lucien Poirier was one of them. Besides, it made possible the emergence of a substantial community of civilian scholars specializing in defence issues. The initial idea was indeed to facilitate dialogue and cross-fertilization between civilians and officers. During the 20-odd years of its existence, strategic thought bloomed at FEDN, as its numerous publications³⁶ suggest.

Furthermore, the Foundation had supervision authority over three other institutes – the *Institut français de Polémologie* (French Institute of Polemology), the *Institut d’Histoire Militaire Comparée* (Institute for Comparative Military History) and the *Institut d’Histoire des Conflits Contemporains* (Institute for Contemporary Conflict History).

The *Institut Français de Polémologie*³⁷ (IFP) had been set up independently by Gaston Bouthoul [1896-1980] in 1945. The institute – located in Bouthoul’s small Parisian flat – remained until 1965 a one-man enterprise. Actually, his project to create a new discipline met with a harsh reception in universities. Neither Marxist nor totally in line with the orthodox approach to sociology – so many ‘handicaps’ that kept him from taking up a regular academic career –, he was confined to the fringes of the academic world.³⁸ It was by a stroke of luck that Bouthoul was ‘discovered’ by officials: during a meeting with his Dutch counterpart, Pierre Messmer, de Gaulle’s loyal Minister of Armed Forces, was questioned about the influence of Bouthoul’s works in France. Pleading ignorance, he later asked the director of CPE if it was in the ministry’s interest to work with Bouthoul. Lucien

³³ See, for instance, André Glucksmann, *Le discours de la guerre* (1967), and Régis Debray, *La critique des armes* (1974).

³⁴ Funding went to independent researchers or associations, too. There was also in-house research even though its statutes did not really authorize it. Foundation or research institute? The uncertain answer to that question was probably FEDN’s main weakness: it paid a high price for its status ambiguity.

³⁵ Beyond publication of the *Les 7 épées* series, it financed the republication of old books (for instance: Comte de Guibert, *Stratégiques*, with an introduction by Jean-Paul Charnay, *Écrits militaires. 1772-1790*, Paris, Éditions de L’Herne, 1977, 728 pages) or foreign studies (for instance, Maréchal Sokolovski, *Stratégie militaire soviétique*, Paris, Éditions de L’Herne, 1984, 522 pages).

³⁶ The narrow market for strategic studies (at its peak, *Stratégique* had an average run of 1,200 copies), the absence of advertisements, circulation of the publications (*Stratégique* and *Les Cahiers*) by subscription only, explain why sponsorship – in the French case, public sponsorship – was necessary.

³⁷ The term ‘polemology’, a neologism created by Bouthoul, means the ‘science of war’ (from the Greek ‘polemos’ and ‘logos’). Polemology met with great success in the Netherlands thanks to the works of Bert Röling who had set up a Polemology Institute within the University of Groningen. The project of polemology, for its promoters, was to prevent war via a more profound understanding of its causes. Nonetheless, the works of Bouthoul and Röling turned out to be very different: for the former, it was necessary to leave aside value considerations – he distrusted pacifism – whereas the latter saw polemology as of necessity value-laden and action-oriented.

³⁸ Deprived of a regular academic career, he became a business lawyer.

Poirier, then a lieutenant-colonel serving with CPE, knew him personally, and was in a position to tilt the balance in Bouthoul's favour. Nevertheless, it was necessary to tread lightly: according to French law, involvement of non-government individual partners in public service was a breach of the State's monopoly on such activities. Eventually, a solution was found and a partnership established when in 1965 a research contract was signed between CPE and IFP (interview with Poirier, 2012). Bouthoul hired a handful of research associates, mobilized a network of foreign correspondents, and launched a new review named *Guerres et Paix* in 1966 (renamed *Études polémologiques* in 1971). Soon after it got into its stride, IFP had to cope with financial problems. In the late 1970s, its very existence was in jeopardy. A few months before the death of its founder, FEDN leadership agreed to take it over, continue its tradition and keep its journal alive after Bouthoul's demise. The only change was a stronger influx of strategy into polemology.

The field of military history, broadly defined, saw the launch in 1980 of the *Institut d'Histoire des Conflits Contemporains* run by Professor Guy Pedroncini [1924-2006] (Carlier & Allain, 2006).

In 1979, the old CEPE became the *Institut Français des Relations Internationales* – IFRI (French Institute of Foreign Relations). Richly endowed thanks to political support from the President and the Prime Minister, and led by Thierry de Montbrial who previously headed the *Centre d'Analyse et de Prévision* (CAP) at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, IFRI developed a strong activity in terms of strategic studies.

The *Centre de Recherche et d'Études sur les Sciences et Techniques* – CREST (*Centre for Research and Studies on Science and Technology*) was set up in 1988 by Jean-François Delpéch³⁹ after he had chaired a committee charged with assessing Ronald Reagan's *Strategic Defence Initiative* at President Mitterrand's request. The idea was to set up a research centre which would be able to undertake similar studies. Hosted by *Polytechnique*⁴⁰ (and established as one of its research labs), CREST worked mainly on a contractual basis for the Ministry of Defence, especially for the *Délégation générale pour l'Armement* (DGA).⁴¹ Its contributions to the literature on strategy were slight even though some of its researchers published quite a lot as individual authors.

The *Centre d'Études et de Recherches Internationales* (CERI), one of *Sciences Po's* research centres, is an International Relations as well as area study institute. In that regard, it only marginally devotes its research agenda to strategic studies.⁴²

³⁹ He set up the US-based US-CREST (<http://www.uscrest.org/experts.html>).

⁴⁰ The *École Polytechnique* was, from the time of its creation (1794) until World War II, a military school catering for the officer training needs of the Army's 'learned' arms: Artillery and Engineers (Saint-Cyr was its opposite number for Infantry and Cavalry). After 1945, its elite professional engineers mostly shunned military careers, though the school has retained its old military status to this day. The reason for such a major change resided then in the country's reconstruction needs. Today, *Polytechnique* remains one of the most privileged routes to elite positions in both the civil service and private sector.

⁴¹ The *Délégation générale pour l'Armement* ('General Directorate for Armaments') is the French Government's defence procurement agency responsible for the development, project management, and purchase of weapons systems in behalf of the French military.

⁴² A quick glance at its website (<http://www.ceri-sciences-po.org>) indeed shows that its epistemology is transdisciplinary. It seems as if nobody has taken over from Pierre Hassner on strategy.

FEDN abruptly came to an end in 1993 when the Defence minister decided to dissolve it without warning. The new *Fondation pour les Études de Défense* which substituted for it was to be financed *inter alia* by private capital. It shed all the theoretical aspects of its predecessor's research and decided to focus on policy-oriented work. However, the controversy which followed FEDN's undoing and the political infighting that surrounded the subsequent appointment of FED's president⁴³ severely hampered its functioning. Finally, when after only a few years FED experienced budget problems⁴⁴ on top of personal rivalries, it was merged with CREST (1998) to form the *Fondation pour la Recherche Stratégique* – FRS (Foundation for Strategic Research). Run successively by Paul-Yvan de Saint Germain (previously director of CREST and DEG), François Heisbourg (the well-known international scholar who was previously director and chairman of the International Institute for Strategic Studies in London and president of the Geneva Centre for Security Policy), Guillaume Schlumberger (a senior civil servant specializing in nuclear weapons) and finally Camille Grand (one of the main French specialists on arms control).

When FEDN was disbanded, some of those associated with it set up the *Institut de Stratégie Comparée* (recently renamed the *Institut de Stratégie et des Conflits* – *Commission française d'Histoire Militaire*) under the leadership of Hervé Coutau-Bégarie

⁴³ The procedure used to disband FEDN seemed legally dubious, and gave rise to a written question in the Senate. Pierre Joxe, the then Minister of Defence, justified his position in a written answer (see “Dissolution de la Fondation pour les études de défense nationale”, 9^e législature. Question écrite n°24652 de M. Yvon Bourges publiée dans le J.O. Sénat du 11/02/1993 and “Réponse du ministère publiée dans le J.O. du 18/03/1993” – <http://www.senat.fr/questions/base/1993/qSEQ930224652.html>). The legal controversy was in fact but one element in a wider, political power struggle. Pierre Dabiezies, FEDN's last President, was a left-wing Gaullist, and as such a loyal supporter of Jean-Pierre Chevènement, the previous Defence Minister who had resigned in protest over the participation of France in the allied coalition in Iraq (1991). See “Une initiative de M. Pierre Joxe. Des sociétés d'armement financeront la réflexion sur les problèmes stratégiques en France”, *Le Monde*, 26-27 December 1992 and “La dissolution de la FEDN. M. Pierre Dabiezies dénonce l'abus de pouvoir de M. Joxe”, *Le Monde*, 13 January 1993. Shortly thereafter, the Left lost the March 1993 general election. What ensued was so incredible (and especially so tell-tale of typically French bad habits) that it is well worth relating in some detail. Pierre Joxe had wanted to emulate the system of appointments to key positions in use at the *International Institute of Strategic Studies* (IISS), and asked the new chairman of FED's board, Thierry de Montbrial – who was also director of IFRI (i.e., its direct competitor !!) – to advertize far and wide and organize the selection process for the position of director. The idea of resorting to a jury in order to appoint a director was new in France, where all such appointments are usually decided upon unilaterally by the minister concerned. (See “Le directeur de la FED recruté par petite annonce ‘Recherchons penseur stratégique’”, *Le Monde*, 3 April 1993). However, the new (right-wing) defence minister ruined the process and imposed Charles Zorgbibe, a prominent professor of International Relations at the Sorbonne, as the new director – though he was initially not even a candidate. (See “Universitaire et spécialiste de droit international Charles Zorgbibe est pressenti pour diriger la Fondation pour les études de défense”, *Le Monde*, 16 December 1993). Nor was that the end of the story : the new director had barely found his feet when a crisis erupted with the chairman and the deputy-director. Eventually, Charles Zorgbibe had to resign. (See “Après une série de démissions, la Fondation pour les études de défense doit remanier son état-major”, *Le Monde*, 8 September 1994). Maj. Gen. Éric de la Maisonneuve who was the deputy-director became the *de facto* director.

⁴⁴ Those budget woes were blamed on an invitation extravagantly extended to Samuel Huntington to lecture in Paris on the ‘clash of civilizations’. Yet, the cost of that invitation (\$20,000 plus expenses) was out of proportion with its alleged consequences, and it seems as if the reasons for FED's bankruptcy were much more complicated. See the interview given by the general Éric de La Maisonneuve in the issue of *Défense Nationale* dedicated to French strategic thought (2009).

[1956-2012].⁴⁵ A quick glance at its website⁴⁶ reveals an astonishing level of activity, chiefly in terms of publications, for an institute which was in fact a one-man enterprise.⁴⁷

The *Institut de Relations Internationales et Stratégiques – IRIS* (Institute of International and Strategic Relations) was established by Pascal Boniface in 1990 as an independent research centre – remarkably the only research centre of its kind created by private individuals. After a hectic period during which its very existence seemed in jeopardy, IRIS succeeded in becoming a serious research institute run with precious few resources. Its director's main difficulty resides in his incongruent status as an academic lacking in scholarly recognition (he never made it to full professor) and IR expert whose opinions are often solicited by the media.⁴⁸

Some other institutes have been the outcome of private initiatives. For instance, the *Centre d'Études de Sécurité Internationale et de Maîtrise des Armements – CESIM* (Centre for Studies on International Security and Arms control) was launched in 1999 by Bernard Sitt, a former official of the *Commissariat à l'Énergie Atomique*, in order to probe disarmament issues.⁴⁹

Yet, the most important recent development took place on the public side when an ambitious initiative merged a number of existing institutions based at the *École Militaire* in Paris – the *Centre d'Études et de Recherche de l'École Militaire* (CEREM: Centre for Study and Research at *École Militaire*), the *Centre d'Études en Sciences Sociales de la Défense* (C2SD⁵⁰: Centre for Defence Social Science Studies), the *Centre d'Études d'Histoire de la Défense* (CEHD⁵¹: Centre for Defence History Studies) and part of the *Centre des Hautes Études de l'Armement* (CHEAr⁵²: Centre for Advanced Armament Studies) to form the *Institut de Recherche stratégique de l'École Militaire* (IRSEM: Institute for Strategic Research at *École Militaire*), headed by a civilian academic. The idea of merging these small research institutes, at the risk of restricting the diversity of doctrinal viewpoints more than is advisable in strategic thinking, was implicit in the 2008 Defence White Paper when it stated that...

⁴⁵ Hervé Coutau-Bégarie was undoubtedly the most prominent actor in the field of strategic research in France. A professor of strategy at both the *École Pratique des Hautes Études* (Sorbonne) and *École de Guerre*, he was certainly one of the most brilliant experts on strategy. He was probably one of the last academics to defend vehemently a strictly military approach to strategy – see his incredibly rich and penetrating treatise on the subject (Coutau-Bégarie, 1999, 7th ed. 2011). Nevertheless, because he belonged to a political movement close to the French radical right, he never enjoyed the prestige and career he deserved.

⁴⁶ See : www.stratisc.org.

⁴⁷ For a synthesis of his activities, see Coutau-Bégarie (2010, pp.5-9).

⁴⁸ Pascal Boniface (2010) recounts the incredible difficulties that he encountered in order for 'his' research institute to survive.

⁴⁹ See www.cesim.fr.

⁵⁰ The C2SD, set up in 1995, was the successor to the *Centre de Sociologie de la Défense Nationale* (Centre for National Defence Sociology). We are extremely well-informed on its activities thanks to Jankowski and Vennesson's chapter (2005).

⁵¹ Created in 1994, CEHD is at the heart of the field of military history, in which it plays an interface role between the worlds of Defence and Academia (see Penez, 1996). In spite of limited means, its small team managed to give military history a new impetus after a difficult initial period.

⁵² The CHEAr is *mutatis mutandis* IHEDN's equivalent in the field of armament studies.

[I]t is therefore urgent to establish a multidisciplinary, high-quality university centre that could be recognized as such and that would federate the existing research capabilities.

While, like the late FEDN, it outsources much research, it also conducts studies of its own. Its publications – most of them are downloadable from its website⁵³ – seem to pay attention to both theoretical and empirical issues.

Last but not least, there are several service-specific strategic research centres, also based at the École Militaire (Paris): the Army's *Centre de Doctrine d'Emploi des Forces* (CDEF), the Air Force's *Centre d'Études Stratégiques Aérospatiales* (CESA), and the Navy's *Centre d'Enseignement Supérieur de la Marine* (CESM). Each is tasked with elaborating its service's doctrinal documents.

The Elusive Durability of Journals

Until the early 1960s, there were strong intellectual debates in military reviews. Nevertheless, against the background of the Algerian War's ultimate phase and the return to strict political control, the government wanted to get rid of 'old' doctrines and demanded that officers comply with the new doctrinal orthodoxy. As a result, most of these journals disappeared (Coutau-Bégarie, 2005) : only *Défense Nationale*⁵⁴ subsisted.

Launched in 1939, that review is still considered a pillar of French strategic literature. In a class of its own among journals dedicated to strategic studies, "*its purpose is to tackle all political, economic, social, national and international scientific issues from a defence perspective*".⁵⁵ Probably because it routinely hosts official statements, stances and speeches (President, Prime minister, Minister of Defence, service Chiefs of staff, etc.), it is sometimes said to be the French government's mouthpiece. Moreover, some of the articles are trial balloons before the adoption of a new doctrine (Coutau-Bégarie, 2008, pp.199-200). Yet, it also carries genuine doctrinal debates, and articles written by academics, journalists, diplomats, officers, etc. In principle, the editorial line of the journal is meant to be open to whomever – including active-duty officers – wants to submit a manuscript, though cases of self-censorship are not unknown.

Gen. Beaufre launched the *Stratégie* review in 1964, at a time when publication of his famous trilogy⁵⁶ was under way, and ran it until his death. The journal disappeared when Beaufre passed away. In spite of a modest, almost purely military readership,⁵⁷ its editorial output, premised on his concept of *stratégie totale*,⁵⁸ was considerable (47 issues,

⁵³ Only available in French (<http://www.defense.gouv.fr/irsem/l-institut/presentation/l-institut>).

⁵⁴ It has assumed various names since 1939. It was first known as the *Revue des Questions de Défense Nationale*. In September 1945, it became the *Revue de Défense Nationale*, and in 1973 *Défense Nationale*. Its current name *Défense Nationale et Sécurité Collective* was adopted in January 2005.

⁵⁵ See : http://www.defnat.com/site_fr/rdn/revue.php.

⁵⁶ *Introduction to Strategy* (1963), *Deterrence and Strategy* (1965), and *Strategy of Action* (1967).

⁵⁷ At its peak, *Stratégie* had an average print run of 1,200 copies.

⁵⁸ War is total, and therefore strategy must be total. That means that it should be political, economic, diplomatic and military. Military strategy is therefore one arm of strategy. See Woignier, 1987.

more than 200 articles and over 4,000 pages). FEDN, for its part, started a new review in 1979: *Stratégique*, whose mandate was to stimulate fundamental research in strategy and become a journal of record (which it soon was, and remained for the next twelve years). Commenting on defence journals in the editorial of its inaugural issue (1979, pp.5-6), General de Bordas [1921-2011] argued that they provided...

...news – assessment, analysis and critical comments concerning facts, phenomena, and current events, either in the form of snapshots or seen as bearing consequences for the foreseeable future. While these studies incorporate theories and strategic doctrines whose ambition is to clarify and guide action, they also too frequently sacrifice conceptual rigour and the coherence of their principles on the altar of expediency. (...) The journal *Stratégie*, as the mouthpiece of the French Institute of Strategic Studies founded in 1964 by General Beaufre, partly fulfilled that expectation. Since its disappearance, the absence of a French periodical oriented to fundamental research and in-depth studies on defence and strategy has been deplored. In keeping with its mandate, the Foundation for National Defence Studies is determined to fulfil that major role. It therefore intends to publish a review entitled *Stratégique* – a noun borrowed from 18th century French theorists who used it before the word ‘strategy’ caught on and came in general use among their successors (translation mine).

If *Stratégique* articles were very eclectic (armaments and technology, arms control, geopolitics and geostrategy, international relations, military history, etc.),⁵⁹ all of them were geared to FEDN’s mandated purpose of stimulating fundamental research. The journal played a significant role along those lines as long as FEDN ran it. When the latter was replaced by the new *Fondation pour les Études de Défense*, whose leaders chose to discontinue its publication, a new team, led by Hervé Coutau-Bégarie, purchased it. Publication thus resumed, however sporadically due to scant material support, until Coutau-Bégarie’s death in 2012.

As already noted, in 1966 Gaston Bouthoul, the creator of the new ‘discipline’ of ‘polemology’, launched *Guerres et Paix*, renamed *Études polémologiques* in 1971. In its first issue, the aims of the Institut Français de Polémologie and of its new journal were summarized (in English) in the following words:

The Institute was founded in 1945 by Professor Gaston Bouthoul, creator of the word ‘polemology’ as well as of the method which considers the war phenomenon as a sociological fact to be studied scientifically. The aim of the institute is to carry out basic research related to the causes of armed conflicts and to the conditions required to prevent war as well as to establish a lasting peace. If mankind is to live one day in a world of peace, such hope can only rest upon precise information and scientific knowledge, since traditional pacifism, exclusively political and moral, has failed to succeed so far in spite of the good will and idealism exerted by so many. The knowledge of war, of its forms, of its demographic, economic and social functions, of its variations and changes enables prospective views leading to consider the said knowledge as an active

⁵⁹ Contributors were mainly academics, though officers and civilian public servants were known to submit manuscripts at irregular intervals. The absence of English abstracts suggests that it was primarily geared to a French-speaking audience.

prevention of armed conflicts. (...) Every issue of *Wars and Peace*, the quarterly review on peace research of the Institute contains original articles on the psychology of the individual and collective aggressiveness, analysis of past and present conflicts, and publishes abstracts of French and foreign works connected to polemology.

When the IFP was integrated into FEDN, the journal was rescued by the new team.⁶⁰ The aim was to pursue Bouthoul's ambition⁶¹ even though the editorial line gradually lost its original spirit. However, it did not get the success that it used to have during its golden age under Bouthoul's editorship.⁶² *Études polémologiques* was eventually absorbed by *Stratégique* after issue n°52 in 1990.⁶³

Among other journals dedicated to strategic issues, one should mention *L'Armement*, in many ways the house organ of the *Délégation Générale à l'Armement. Les Champs de Mars*, launched in 1997, hosts articles in political sociology applied to defence. It was published by the *Centre d'Études en Sciences Sociales de la Défense* (C2SD) and survived when the latter became part of the new *Institut de Recherche Stratégique de l'École Militaire* (IRSEM). In 1999, Maj. Gen. (Ret.) Éric de La Maisonneuve (former head of FED) launched the very inconspicuous journal *AGIR* as the mouthpiece of his *Société de Stratégie*.⁶⁴ Alongside those, other journals sometimes deal with strategy : *Cultures et Conflits* (launched by Didier Bigo in 1991),⁶⁵ *Hérodote* (run by geopolitician Yves Lacoste),⁶⁶ *Arès* (published from 1978 to 2000 by the University of Grenoble thanks to the tenacity of Jean-François Guilhaudis, a specialist in disarmament who made that journal a reference despite limited resources). In addition, some International Relations reviews occasionally host 'strategic' articles. *Politique Étrangère*,⁶⁷ the oldest IR journal (launched in 1936 as the house organ of the *Centre d'Étude de Politique Étrangère* and published by its successor organization, IFRI), is of course one of them. Though it defines itself as a policy-oriented journal, it does carry contributions which pay attention to theoretical strategic issues. Another is *La Revue Internationale et Stratégique*,⁶⁸ launched in 1991 (under a slightly different title) by Pascal Boniface as the mouthpiece of IRIS. A third worth mentioning is *Sécurité Globale* launched in 2007 by Pascal Lorot, head of the *Institut Choiseul*. There are also a handful of yearbooks which deal *inter alia* with strategic issues : *Ramsès*, published by IFRI since 1980, the *Annuaire Stratégique et*

⁶⁰ It became half-yearly in 1982, quarterly in 1984 and thematic in 1986.

⁶¹ The introduction to the first issue of the 'new' *Études polémologiques* (n°25/26) defined that ambition by stating that the journal was to be "a crossroads, a place of exchange, an interdisciplinary forum for research on war and peace".

⁶² If the 'old' *Études polémologiques* had a circulation of 3,300 issues (it claimed 1,000 subscribers), the 'new' one ran off 400/500 copies, half by subscription, half by copy sales.

⁶³ Until 1992, *Stratégique* hosted two or three articles which were to be more in line with 'polemology' rather than with 'strategy'.

⁶⁴ Cf. <http://www.societe-de-strategie.asso.fr/organisation.php>.

⁶⁵ Cf. <http://conflits.revues.org/index3853.html>.

⁶⁶ Cf. <http://www.herodote.org/index.php>.

⁶⁷ See: http://ifri.org/?page=pe_presentation&&lang=uk.

⁶⁸ Cf. <http://www.iris-france.org/publications/ris-presentation.php>.

Militaire, by FRS since 2003, and the *Annuaire Français de Relations Internationales*,⁶⁹ by the Centre Thucydide since 2000, and *L'Année Stratégique* (Pascal Boniface, 1986) which until 1996 contained French translations of excerpts from the IISS *Military Balance*.

An Attempt at Assessment

When it comes to the institutionalization of strategic studies, most striking at first glance is the stranglehold of the State, and consequently the power of networks within its machinery. To boot, France is characterized by a myriad features which indirectly fuel the system's weaknesses.

The State's Ambiguous Stranglehold over Institutions

The country as a whole has been marked by a long tradition of pervasive public authority and influence. Unlike the US where think tanks can count on foundations to support their work, there is no such system in France. In 1840, Alexis de Tocqueville already noted that...

Everywhere that, at the head of a new undertaking, you see the government in France, and a great lord in England, count on it that you will perceive an association in the United States.

Patronage in France can only be exercised by the State. In such conditions, the strong links that bind research institutes to it are apt to be somewhat ambiguous. One cannot help but feel at times that the Executive hates the idea of debates that might deviate from doctrinal orthodoxy. Hervé Coutau-Bégarie (2008, pp.200) sums it up in the following words:

The strategic debate, in France, has always been on probation, with significant variations between ministers. Some of them are rather lenient or quite simply indifferent, others much more interventionist.

The State has the capacity to make and break careers.⁷⁰ Interestingly, most directors of major think tanks are known to have been advisers to Cabinet ministers at one time or another. With only a few rare exceptions, all of them have 'friends in high places'; while

⁶⁹ Cf. <http://www.afri-ct.org/-AFRI.16-?lang=en>.

⁷⁰ It was particularly the case with FEDN. The umbilical cord which linked it to the Ministry of Defence could give the impression that it was the government's mouthpiece. Some of its studies were (self-) censored when the minister considered they were detrimental to the national interest. Additionally, an unspoken rule was that FEDN and the Ministry had to speak with one voice. In 1979, the then Minister, Yvon Bourges, who did not like General Buis' autonomous stance, successfully managed to have him dismissed and replaced him by another Gaullist, General de Bordas, who was more in line with the official position of the government. On the other hand, it also happened that the Minister of Defence was tempted to use FEDN in order to strengthen his dissonant voice within the Executive. It was the case when Jean-Pierre Chevènement, the then Defence Minister (1988-1991), increasingly ill-at-ease with President Mitterrand's policies, chiefly as regards the German question and the Gulf War, tried to use FEDN as a sounding board in order to promote his own position. This was all the easier as Pierre Dabezies, FEDN's head, was his protégé. Lucile Desmoulin's doctoral dissertation (Desmoulin, 2005, pp.99-109) provides detailed information on that episode.

academic credentials often seem beside the point,⁷¹ belonging to the right political network seems indeed to be an almost *sine qua non* condition in order to run a think tank.⁷² Because of such quasi-osmosis between political officials and the heads of research institutes, the latter are sometimes collateral victims of a settling of political scores.⁷³ It is not seldom that, over the course of political elections, allegations of cronyism are exchanged. At stake are the chances to secure government subsidies, research contracts, or support from major armament firms with strong links to government circles. According to Serge Sur (2002), professor of international public law who set up a strategic research center, the *Institut Thucydide*, at the University of Paris-II, one of the main problems with the perennial state of strategic studies is precisely...

...the absolute lack of transparency in the way diverse subsidies and research contracts are granted, which only benefit a handful of *beati possidentes* clinging to their monopoly and the *de facto* rent it provides. (Translation mine).

In principle, no think tank can have a single client and be certain to produce objective analysis: it would be too vulnerable to the displeasure of that client, in this case the State. Yet, the situation has slightly improved on that score recently, as more and more research institutes have managed to diversify their sources of funding through private fundraising. It is too early to say whether that positive trend will persist.

Additionally, on various occasions, the State has tried to reorganize the landscape of strategic think tanks by merging some of them in order to set up one big institution: the idea of a single, all-inclusive, labyrinthine system – the “*tentation de l’usine à gaz*” as Jean-François Daguzan (2004) aptly termed it – has long held sway over government and research circles as the solution to all problems. For instance, in 2007, a plan emerged, sponsored by Alain Bauer – President Sarkozy’s unofficial adviser on security issues –, to amalgamate all existing think tanks into a ‘huge’ institute⁷⁴:

⁷¹ Doctoral degrees are not a requirement, and Ph.D. holders are not always a majority among heads of think tanks, more often than not high-ranking civil servants or officers whose only academic credential is their port-of-entry education at one elite professional school (ENA or Polytechnique chief among them).

⁷² For instance, Thierry de Montbrial had close contacts in the 1970s with the centre-right political parties and President Valéry Giscard d’Estaing (1974-1981). IFRI was created in 1979 thanks to the help and support of Prime Minister Raymond Barre (1976-1981). Montbrial managed to stay at the head of IFRI after the 1981 elections (which brought the Left back to power for the first time in a quarter-century) by diversifying his collaborators and funding sources. Raymond Barre’s failure in the 1988 presidential elections deprived him of the high political responsibilities for which he was slated in case of electoral victory. Another example is François Heisbourg, an *énarque* with close links to the Socialist Party, whose rise started when he became a key aide to Charles Hernu, Mitterrand’s first Minister of Defence.

⁷³ A good example is Pascal Boniface. Shortly after his promotion to *Maître de conférences* (associate professor) in 1985, he became assistant to an MP, then technical adviser to Socialist Defence ministers Jean-Pierre Chevènement and Pierre Joxe. According to his critics, it was *inter alia* thanks to the mobilization of his unofficial networks that, after trying to supplant Pierre Dabiezies, he persuaded Pierre Joxe to disband FEDN.

⁷⁴ Piotr Smolar, interview with Alain Bauer, “Études sous haute sécurité. ‘Il est temps de fusionner tous ces machins’”, *Le Monde*, 1 February 2007.

[I]t is time to merge all these very expensive, insufficiently productive outfits: INHES,⁷⁵ IHEDN, the Foundation for Defence Studies (FED),⁷⁶ the French Institute of International Relations (IFRI), even the Institute of International and Strategic Relations (IRIS). (...) What we need is one big national, or even European, research centre on the model of RAND in the US. (Translation mine).

Some of the plans advocated by his report (Bauer, 2008) based on that idea have been implemented. The most significant is the setting up of the *Conseil Supérieur de la Formation et de la Recherche Stratégiques* – CSFRS (High Council for Strategic Education and Research).⁷⁷ The idea, expressing the spirit and mood of the times,⁷⁸ was that security studies and strategic studies should henceforth be amalgamated.

An indirect consequence of the existence of an ‘almighty’ State is that a number of prominent scholars have preferred to remain on the fringes of official institutions in order to carry out their research unhindered by official pressures. Gen. Gallois, the author of numerous remarkable books on nuclear strategy, provides a good example of someone who, probably because he was considered a ‘loose cannon’, was extremely rarely associated with ‘major’ research centres.⁷⁹ Alain Joxe, who had worked with Gen. Beaufre early in his career and subsequently wrote a few important books,⁸⁰ was content to carve out a niche for himself and his followers at the *École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales*.⁸¹ Well-known for positions highly critical of US policies, he has remained on the margins of the strategic community. Though he was the brother of Pierre Joxe, a former

⁷⁵ The *Institut des Hautes Études de la Sécurité intérieure* (IHESI – Institute of Advanced Studies on Internal Security), renamed *Institut National des Hautes Études de la Sécurité et de la Justice* (INHESJ – National Institute of Advanced Studies on Security and Justice) in 2009, is the equivalent of IHEDN when it comes to expertise and awareness on internal security issues.

⁷⁶ He obviously meant *Fondation pour la Recherche stratégique*: as previously mentioned, the *Fondation pour les Études de Défense* had disappeared from the scene in 1998.

⁷⁷ According to its website, its aim “is to support, coordinate and manage efforts made in terms of strategic research and education in the fields of security and defence, in order to enable international-level reference instruments to be drawn up and updated. To this end: It contributes to the development of research and education activities, by promoting interactions between, on the one hand, different disciplinary fields or areas relating to security, defence and justice, and on the other hand, the public or private bodies in charge of them; It funds research programmes and welcomes top-level foreign researchers and experts; It helps to implement partnerships with bodies and institutions in charge of similar issues in Europe and beyond; It fosters the pooling of resources and helps to build on the results of research; It promotes a culture of assessment of the studies and results obtained; It promotes national strategic thinking abroad and takes initiatives of all kinds to improve French participation in strategic research projects launched by the international community or the European Union”. (See : <http://www.csfrs.fr/en/about-us.html>).

⁷⁸ See, for instance, the editorial of Jean-François Daguzan and Pascal Lorot in the new journal *Sécurité globale* (2007) in which they argue that security issues have to be studied in a comprehensive way. That journal is edited in the framework of the *Institut Choiseul* which works *inter-alia* on geo-economic issues. It is worth mentioning *Géoéconomie* which is another review that both have edited since 1997 even though it is not *sensu stricto* a journal in strategy. See its website: <http://www.choiseul.info>.

⁷⁹ One knows that he worked for a while in Marie-France Garraud’s *Institut International de Géopolitique* created in 1982. Her aim, by setting up this institute, was to warn the public opinion of the Soviet threat.

⁸⁰ Among others, *Le cycle de la dissuasion*, Paris, La Découverte, 1990 ; *Voyage aux sources de la guerre*, Paris, PUF, 1991 ; *L’Amérique mercenaire*, Paris, Stock, 1992 ; and *L’Empire du chaos*, Paris, La Découverte, 2003.

⁸¹ *Centre interdisciplinaire de recherches sur la paix et sur la stratégie* (CIRPES, recently renamed GRISP – Interdisciplinary Research Group on Security and Peace) : cf. <http://www.cirpes.net/index.php3>.

Defence minister, his works have not exerted substantial influence on policy. Mention should also be made of François Géré, a disciple of Brig. Gen. Poirier's. After occupying various official positions in public bodies and think tanks, he preferred to work as an 'independent writer'. He now leads a small research institute, the *Institut français d'Analyse Stratégique*,⁸² and holds a new chair on 'cybersecurity' at the *École Militaire*.

Some Structural Weaknesses

Several peculiarities of the French system have hindered the development of strategic studies. First, though the situation has improved in that regard following upgrades of academic standards in officer education over the last three decades, there was the anti-intellectual bias of many officers, who long held military thinkers in fairly low esteem. The latter were indeed often regarded as 'useless mavericks' by their peers, and even, when it came to career advancement, as unfair rivals who did not play by the rules. This was particularly the case with the officers serving at CPE in the 1960s, who had trouble establishing their legitimacy in a context marked by competition with the General Staff in the formulation of policy recommendations. Some brilliant 'military intellectuals', such as Lucien Poirier, because of their special skills and unconventional careers, did not enjoy the genuine professional opportunities that they could legitimately have aspired for.⁸³

Besides, it would be a mistake to overlook the difficulties involved in collaboration between service members and civilians – not least academics ! It took time before a fruitful exchange of ideas became possible between academia and the military. Civilian scholars often used to arouse suspicions on the part of officers: were they not driven by the atavistic antimilitarism of the university world? Were they really legitimate in carrying out research in the military field? The issue was raised by the creation of FEDN which, for that reason among others, experienced serious teething problems. Even if according to its statutes, it was supposed – in order to strengthen the *esprit de défense* – to host both uniformed and civilian researchers, for over a decade its recruitment was *de facto* military-only: the institution began to open to civilians in the mid-1980s. Cooperation between the two groups was still quite challenging, as cross-accusations of 'rigid indoctrination' and 'incompetence on military issues' or 'lack of realism' flew from either side. In 1986, Admiral Pierre Lacoste, the newly-appointed FEDN president, commissioned more and more civilian research work, which for a while heightened tensions. Eventually, Pierre Dabezies, his successor, decided in 1989 to get rid of any service member who complained of the presence of civilian researchers.

A related issue is the degree to which military officers can be said to enjoy freedom of publication. France, in that regard, has long suffered from acute ambiguities: on the one

⁸² Cf. <http://www.strato-analyse.org/fr>.

⁸³ Lucien Poirier was promoted, at the last minute, to Brigadier General in 1974 on the Minister's recommendation. That ultimate promotion was conditional upon his opting for retirement within the next six months. A career marked by several tours in a strategic research institute could be risky even if it is "necessary to make a distinction between the services. A posting to CPE was not an advantage, in career terms, for those from the Army and Air Force. (...) On the other hand, some naval officers who had seen service there subsequently secured the highest promotions" (Coutau-Bégarie, 2005, translation mine).

hand, service members are invited to think and publish ; on the other, they are at times stiffly reminded that a legal duty of confidentiality is imposed on them by their military status. This double bind was already sensitive in the late 19th century : one recalls Marshal Lyautey's famous barb – “*when I hear heels clicked, I see brains shutting down*”. Yet, the duty of confidentiality, in those days, applied to such an extent that the French Army earned the nickname of “*The Great Mute*”.⁸⁴ As a consequence, strategic thinking, and the culture it implies if it is to flourish, have long been hindered. It was only very recently that the State finally granted service members a carefully measured freedom of expression – more measured in fact than in most comparable countries.

A further factor is the close identification of certain scholars with the institute they founded and have run from the beginning. Prominent cases in point are Pascal Boniface and Thierry de Montbrial,⁸⁵ the heads of IRIS and IFRI, respectively. Such ‘founding fathers’ so tightly identify with ‘their’ institute, ‘their’ journal, ‘their’ concepts and theses, not to say ‘their’ epistemology, that little is likely to survive their initiator's departure, or death (as was the case with Beaufre and Bouthoul earlier).

Yet another problem may lie in the State's inconstancy when it comes to defining priorities as regards the kind of support it can provide or the influence it can exert: should it stimulate fundamental or policy-relevant research (it hardly ever stimulates both at the same time)? More than ten years ago, in a seminal article where he recounted the ups and downs of French strategic research, Hervé Coutau-Bégarie suggested that its main problem was not necessarily the lack of financial resources but, above all else, a confusing mix of genres that equates research with parallel diplomacy (Coutau-Bégarie, 2000). This lies at the heart of the issue: what, among the various options facing them – policy-oriented work, advocacy, theory for theory's sake, applied theory –, should the central vocation of researchers be?

The answer to this question remains uncertain – and apt to change over time. But another issue shares centre stage as a structural weakness: that of the ‘delivery means’. As we have seen, there are very few journals in the field of strategy. Most ‘scientific’ journals deal with international relations as a whole rather than with strategic studies narrowly defined. Besides, precious few publications (whether journals or books) in the field of French strategic studies come out in other languages than French. Exceptions include *Défense Nationale*, which has recently launched an English version (alongside Arabic and Russian versions) ; *Arès*, which sometimes carries articles in English ; IFRI's *Focus stratégique* (English/ French) series⁸⁶ ; IRSEM's (all-English) *Paris Papers*⁸⁷ ; and *Res*

⁸⁴ It concerned mainly the Army (for historical reasons, the Navy has always enjoyed a larger freedom of expression) even though astonishingly officers did not hesitate to be critical of existing policies in strategic debates. General de Gaulle, himself a ‘rebel’ in the 1930s, paradoxically decided to force servicemen to toe his doctrinal line when, in the early 1960s, he discarded the ‘counter-insurgency’ doctrine of colonial war days and replaced it by the nuclear deterrence doctrine at the heart of his vision of the place and role of France on the international scene. Being critical of that dogma cost some officers their careers.

⁸⁵ Responding to the criticism contained in a report commissioned by the Prime minister on the functioning of IFRI, Thierry de Montbrial bluntly said “*if I leave, IFRI will collapse*”. See: “Rapport sur l'état de l'IFRI”, *L'Express*, 23 May 2005 [http://www.lexpress.fr/actualite/politique/rapport-sur-l-etat-de-l-ifri_485828.html].

⁸⁶ Cf. http://ifri.org/?page=nos-e-notes&id_pubcategorie=6.

⁸⁷ Cf. <http://www.defense.gouv.fr/irsem/publications/paris-papers/paris-papers>.

Militaris, a fully bilingual (English/French) online journal. The rest of the literature on strategy published year after year by French authors is entirely in French. This consigns the ‘French touch’ in strategy to a linguistic ghetto, and threatens to make it more inward-looking than it should be. Worse still : a quick glance at the editorial boards or at the contents of the main English-speaking strategic journals will reveal a rather weak presence of French names. This compares very unfavourably with earlier periods : Gen. Beaufre used to publish in *Survival*, and all of Raymond Aron’s books on strategy were available in English. Whatever lever of influence on the international strategic community through academic publications may have existed in the not-too-distant past seems to have been considerably weakened.

The root cause of such an unfortunate situation may well lie in the ambiguous – love-hate – relationship between strategic think tanks and academia, or the former’s failure to fully identify with the latter. Nothing illustrates this better than the variable status, from one think tank to the next, of publishing in academic journals. Some see ‘publish (seriously) or perish’ as the norm ; others (or the same at different periods, depending on who is in charge⁸⁸) find it a waste of time, and assiduously cultivate the media (turning strategic studies into sheer punditry), their paymaster (the State, or the relevant subdivision in it), and their political networks instead.

To compound matters further, academia has its own phobias, though there again the situation seems to be improving. Not only do strategic studies find it difficult to find a secure footing in the university world, but some of their subfields are definitely off limits and thus condemned to exist – barely – on the fringes. The best example is probably supplied by intelligence studies, which only recently became an object of academic research. Jackson (2006, p.1061) notes in that regard that

despite the efforts of relatively small number of scholars to make the study of intelligence a legitimate area of academic enquiry, the subject has usually been left to journalists and writers of popular history.

Of late, some Sorbonne and Sciences Po historians broke the taboo by placing the subject squarely at the heart of their research interests, and produced works of reference on it.⁸⁹ Another initiative came from Admiral Lacoste – former head of the external intelligence agency, DGSE, and a pioneer in the field – when he set up a small research centre and sponsored a Master’s degree at the University of Paris-Est (Marne-la-Vallée) in the mid-1990s. That unlikely graft has borne interesting fruit⁹⁰ there since then (Chopin, 2011).

⁸⁸ The great divide among heads of think tanks seems to be between senior civil servants, who as a rule do not bother to earn a Ph.D. and are alien to academic culture, and those who come from academia. There are, however, brilliant exceptions: Louis Gautier, President of Orion (*Observatoire des Relations Internationales*), is an ENA graduate, senior magistrate at the Court of Accounts, and former adviser to the Prime Minister on strategic matters (1997-2002) ; he earned a Ph.D. and habilitation in political science, produced three books and is a part-time extramural professor at the University of Lyon-III.

⁸⁹ See: Forcade & Laurent, 2005 ; Forcade, 2007 ; Forcade, 2008.

⁹⁰ Lacoste, 1997 ; Kahn, 2008.

Conclusion

What overall assessment can be drawn from this cursory overview of strategic studies in France? The thesis outlined in the introduction is amply borne out: with very few exceptions, continuity is badly lacking. Such instability hinders development. Amid the winds of political change (wars, changes of political majority, recurrent temptations on the part of the State to interfere in research to maintain doctrinal orthodoxy, etc.), all kinds of research institutes, journals, official bodies, new curricula in universities, etc., appear and disappear in rather quick succession. There have been ceaseless mergers, takeovers, and launches of new programmes or think tanks. It is striking indeed that of the long list of acronyms of research institutes and organizations listed in this article, only a handful match groups still existing today. Likewise, among the postgraduate degrees dedicated to strategic studies that emerged in the 1980s and 1990s, only a few have survived. Lack of continuity is extremely detrimental to research, which by definition can only bear fruit in the long term when critical mass is reached.

Though the lustre and international prestige of earlier eras owed more to individual authors than to institutions, the comparison of the present with a more glorious past is certainly somewhat depressing. After decades of trial and error, one can only wish that what the 2008 White Paper hopes and prays for – that strategic studies *à la française* eventually manage to carve out a niche of their own in the field's Hall of Fame – will at long last become reality.

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