



Strategic Land Power

military-Earth thinking notebook

le Colonel Patrick TEISSERENC

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Expériences alliées

Traditionally the most advanced in the Western world in terms of anticipatory thinking, be it conceptual, doctrinal, technological or of any other nature, the American military is already drawing lessons from the Iraqi and Afghan conflicts and international developments for the next thirty years. In this context, the US Army is not to be outdone, with, in particular, thinking centred on the concept of "strategic land power".

This is what Colonel Patrick Teisserenc, Head of the Liaison Detachment in the United States, describes in this briefing note, and what the US Army is doing in the field of "strategic land power". Colonel Philippe Roux, liaison officer at TRADOC, gives us a detailed account of the progress made in the discussions and the way to proceed.

In these times of severe budgetary constraints, strategic reorientation and changing times (from war to peace) it is almost a survival reflex for services to show the extent to which they participate in the national strategy. Last year, under pressure from the Navy and Air Force, as well as industry, the Air Sea Battle concept was published, which promotes technological responses to the threats of access and area denial in the Pacific region. In turn, based on the observation of the effectiveness of joint work between conventional and special forces, the Army is trying to position itself in relation to services considered to be more strategic by committing itself to "Strategic Land Power".

The aim is to answer the question: how does land power contribute to strategic victory? This question, which is, after all, a banal one, takes on its full meaning when one recalls the criticisms levelled at the Army for seeking and obtaining tactical victory at the expense of the strategic objective, whether after the Vietnam War or, more recently, during the Iraq and Afghanistan campaigns.

The reflection has only just begun, but the answer, for the moment, revolves around understanding and controlling the human domain. This domain extends to all the actors in a conflict. Historically, for example, successful strategies have had human objectives (morale, will of the enemy). It is also a question of better understanding the land actors within which one is fighting, of knowing how to establish constructive relationships with partners, and even of improving the cognitive capacities of a combat group. In order to act on human objectives, certain vectors of influence are put forward, such as cyberwarfare or Military Information Support Operations.

Reflection is being organised. Within the Army, this theme is now included in the annual TRADOC: Unified Quest reflection campaign (see the article by Colonel Roux). More recently, the Chief of Staff of the US Army, the Commander of the US Marine Corps and the Commander of the US Special Operations Command have created a Task Force to explore the subject in greater depth .

The American intellectual arsenal is thus mobilized. There is no doubt that it will produce concrete actions and capabilities. There is already talk of the birth of a new operational function that would be added to the classic Mission Command, Intelligence, Movement and Maneuver, Fires, Protection and Sustainment . However, the fact that it has not managed to give it a name shows how difficult the coming exercise will be.

When he left Saint-Cyr in 1985, Colonel Patrick TEISSERENC chose the armoured cavalry and served in various units. A graduate of the Collège interarmées de Défense and of the École nationale supérieure des techniques avancées, he is a graduate of the École nationale supérieure des techniques avancées. He then turned to information and communication systems, and held important positions in this field within the Ministry of Defence and NATO. A graduate of the US War College, he has been a liaison officer at the US Army's Combined Arms Center in Fort Leavenworth since 2011 and, since 2012, head of the Land Liaison Detachment in the United States.

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