



Membre de Sorbonne Paris Cité

Historical Approaches to Nuclear and Security Issues during the Cold War and beyond

NUCLEAR HISTORY WORKSHOP (2012-2013)

University of Paris III – Sorbonne Nouvelle, EDEAGE, ICEE

<http://ahn.hypotheses.org/>

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LE MIRACLE ATOMIQUE
= Auparavant, on m'ignorait. Maintenant... =

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Historical Approaches to Nuclear and Security Issues during the Cold War

The evolution of nuclear issues in their military dimension featured among the major concerns of international relations all along the Cold War. Far from being a mere residue of the past and of the East-West confrontation, military nuclear programmes still lie at the very heart of international relations. Suffice to mention, among others, the Iranian crisis to be reminded of how deeply nuclear proliferation, be it actual, forthcoming or merely feared, can alter the political and military balance in a region. The end of the bipolar system is far from having taken atomic questions off the international diplomatic agenda.

The work that has been and is still being conducted by political scientists and experts is fruitful, but putting military nuclear programmes into historical perspective, through their evolutions and crises, would be highly profitable. By putting them into their own political and diplomatic context, history sheds a new light onto the most contemporary nuclear and proliferation issues (format of the American forces and nuclear posture of the United States, future of the British and French deterrent forces, Iranian crisis, emergence of Asia as a “nuclear New World,” etc.).

The 2012-2013 Young Researchers’ **Nuclear History Workshop** attempted to develop this “broad” approach to nuclear issues and to encompass all security issues at stake. Nuclear issues were examined in a comprehensive way through their integration within a diplomatic and political approach, with a particular focus on the evolution of the architecture of security systems in conjunction with the nuclear dimension.

This historical, academic undertaking was completed by a projection into the present time: the aim was to highlight how relevant the historical approach is to the analysis of the contemporary nuclear issues. Moving from past to present was therefore a pivotal aspect in the project.

In this respect, the workshop monthly alternated between:

- Historical sessions during which a speaker analysed the role of nuclear issues within the larger framework of his/her own research; this analysis was followed by a discussion which also tackled any potential methodological issues that might have arisen (availability and processing of the sources, narration, chronology, conceptual issues, etc.), and

- Sessions organised around an external guest, either an expert or a historian, specialised in nuclear issues.

The workshop was open to any researcher interested in the evolution of nuclear military programmes (Master's and doctoral students, Professors, etc.) and, more broadly, in European and global politico-strategic issues.

Historical Approaches to Nuclear and Security Issues during the Cold War

2012-2013 Sessions

Session #1 (November 14, 2012) – A critical Reading of Marc Trachtenberg’s *A Constructed Peace. The Making of the European Settlement, 1945-1963.* (Dr Guillaume de Rougé)

Trachtenberg’s work is a major contribution to the history of the Cold War, but also a great testimony of the many transatlantic misunderstandings, some of them being still well alive today. Through a very detailed analysis of the decision-making process and a sophisticated articulation of technical and strategic issues related to nuclear deterrence, Trachtenberg tells the story of a “Constructed peace,” a web of linkages emerging from the Berlin and Cuba crisis in 1963. Retracing the main Transatlantic debates on deterrence, Trachtenberg demonstrates that most of the doctrinal and operational decisions made by the US and NATO were mostly driven by long term visions embedded in a deep scepticism regarding European integration and autonomy. Through the analysis of the nuclear sharing and delegation process, as well as through the flexible response, the Multilateral Force project etc., Trachtenberg’s work reminds us of the utmost importance of history in our understanding of the dilemmas related to nuclear deterrence, including extended deterrence. His methodology also testifies to the mutual benefits that history and political science can draw from a regular dialogue. But one must also keep a critical distance with Trachtenberg’s preference for the realist approach and the conclusions he draws from this theoretical framework, at least as far as the Transatlantic relation is concerned.

Session #2 (December 12, 2012) – The Shadow Theatre of Anglo-French Nuclear Relations during the de Gaulle-Macmillan Era (1958-1963). (Frédéric Gloriant)

After the Suez crisis, France and Britain progressively engaged in a radical recasting of their respective foreign policies. Macmillan’s Britain chose to rebuild the “nuclear Special Relationship” that had existed with Washington during the Second World War, whereas de Gaulle obstinately pursued a policy of independent deterrence and used the “force de frappe” concept as a diplomatic tool to challenge the Cold War bipolar order. Eventually, this evolution led to a strategic Franco-British schism in 1963. This presentation attempted to show that Franco-British nuclear cooperation

never really emerged, during the post-Suez period, as a credible alternative both to the nuclear Anglo-American partnership for Britain, and to independent deterrence for France, because of both nations' diverging ways of conceptualising sovereignty, nuclear independence and their nation's role in the Cold War era.

Session #3 (December 19, 2012) – The Historical Role of Nuclear Weapons in America's Asian Alliances, Implications for the Future: An Australian Perspective. (Guest: Dr Christine M. Leah)

Dr Christine M. Leah is a post-doc at MIT. Previously, she was a research intern at the Observer Research Foundation, New Delhi, and before that a summer associate at the RAND Corporation, a research assistant for the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS London), a research analyst at the Australian Strategic Policy Institute, an intern at the French Ministry of Defense and IISS Singapore. Christine is also an alumnus of the Woodrow Wilson Center Nuclear Boot Camp (NPIHP), and the University of California Institute on Global Conflict and Cooperation Nuclear Boot Camp.

This presentation is intended to provide and examine findings about the history of Australian thinking about nuclear weapons and strategy, and the implications for how states that "rely" on U.S. extended nuclear deterrence, in various forms; how and to what extent history can inform our thinking about the future evolution of strategic thinking about nuclear weapons and extended nuclear deterrence in Japan, South Korea, and Australia, in an Asia-Pacific theatre currently undergoing transformational geopolitical change.

Session #4 (January 30, 2013) – The CSCE – Implementation of General de Gaulle's PanEuropean Conceptions. (Dr Nicolas Badalassi)

During the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, which gathered, from November 1972 to July 1975, delegations from thirty-two European countries, the USSR, the United States and Canada, France sought to multilateralise the principles of national independence, economic and cultural co-operation, and European unity, which General de Gaulle kept promoting in the second half of the 1960s. Paris defended the idea that political détente must precede military détente, and contested the Americano-Soviet projects of nuclear and conventional disarmament. In this regard, the French diplomacy as conducted by Georges Pompidou and Valéry Giscard d'Estaing endeavoured to turn the CSCE into an extension of de Gaulle's "détente, understanding, co-operation" policy, as opposed to the SALT and MBFR agreements, symbolic of the American wish to cut their troops in Europe.

Session #5 (February 13, 2013) – The Euromissiles crisis or Flexible Response put to the Test, 1977-1987. (Ilaria Parisi)

This session was devoted to the analysis of the military and diplomatic issues which emerged during the 1977-1987 Euromissiles crisis. In the perspective of transatlantic relations, it endeavoured to show how the deployment in Europe, from 1983, of Pershing II and Cruise theatre nuclear systems met a military requirement from the Alliance. In that respect, the deployment of the Soviet SS20 has only accelerated a process which was stranded but already set up.

The internal debate on the flexible response, adopted in 1967, within the Atlantic Alliance revolved around the “decoupling” issue: the European countries feared that this strategy might have been conjured up by the United States in order to make sure that, should a conflict erupt in Europe, the American strategic systems might be spared. The progress of the SALT negotiations in the 1970s only emphasised this idea: the neutralisation of the American and Soviet strategic arsenals made the engagement of American ICBM highly unlikely in the first phases of any potential conflict.

The modernisation of the theatre nuclear systems in Europe then enabled NATO to acquire an additional notch in nuclear escalation and the possibility to ask for the engagement of the American central systems, which allows for the reassertion of the Euro-Atlantic coupling. This explains the European scepticism regarding the “double zero deal” put forward in 1987: should all nuclear weapons with a 500- to 5,000-kilometre range disappear, the United States’ interest would then consist in maintaining a purely conventional strategy, with the resort to the nuclear weapon as an *extrema ratio* within the context of a devastation quite similar to what had happened at the end of the Second World War. As far as the Europeans were concerned, this was an unacceptable solution.

Session #6 (April 3, 2013) – The Expansion of the British Nuclear Sector from Thatcher to Cameron: Dependence, Independence and Interdependence. (Guest: Lucie de Carvalho)

A qualified English teacher, **Lucie de Carvalho** is an ATER and third-year PhD student at the University of Paris III-Sorbonne Nouvelle under the supervision of British Politics and Society Professor Emmanuelle Avril. Her research covers nuclear energy policies in the UK from 1980 to 2012, and mainly focuses on the links between science and politics and on the role of the state within the policy-making process. Lucie previously graduated from the ENS Cachan.

Since 2005/6, the UK government has launched an ambitious programme of “Nuclear New Build”, while renewing its TRIDENT programme. This project reveals how the UK is intent on preserving and strengthening its fully-fledged nuclear sector with on the one hand, its own nuclear arsenal and on the other hand, an energy industry which spans the full nuclear life cycle. As the revival of nuclear power or Nuclear Renaissance is gathering momentum in the UK, this presentation aims at exploring how the expansion of the UK nuclear energy sector has always been tightly intertwined with the development of its nuclear weapons.

In the aftermath of the Second World War and the gradual loss of its colonial empire, the development of the UK nuclear sector was first and foremost a strategy to regain supremacy on the international scene. To that end, the UK quickly became a pioneer in nuclear research as they carried out their first nuclear tests in 1952 while opening the first nuclear power station in the world at Calder Hall in 1956. In the Cold War context however, the UK rapidly ended up encouraging the development of their nuclear energy sector only, while relinquishing their dreams of an independent nuclear deterrence, thereby becoming utterly dependent on US technology. We therefore understand the current UK nuclear enterprise as a means not only to become independent in terms of energy supplies - as gas and oil resources are running scarce - but also to take on an alternative international role in order to compensate for their complete loss of independence in the defence area. As far as nuclear energy is concerned, the UK industry has always been strongly influenced by the immediate economic and political context, what actually accounts for its current weaknesses but which remains in keeping with its rather pragmatic political tradition.

Session #7 (April 24, 2013) – Prospects on the US Debate on Nuclear Deterrence. (Dr Guillaume de Rougé)

In reviving the horizon of a world without nuclear weapons, the first Obama administration has sought indirectly to increase the involvement of the two other major nuclear powers, Russia and China, in the fight against proliferation, primarily in the context of the Iranian and North Korean crises. But the second Obama administration encounters increasing difficulties to reconcile the logic of the Global Zero with the preservation of American nuclear primacy. On the one hand, the United States seeks to establish some sort of strategic stability with Russia and China through the recognition of mutual vulnerabilities. But on the other hand, Washington believes that the conditions of stability can no longer, if ever, be confined to the nuclear field. Two factors seem to indicate the limits of this concept, and play an increasing role in the American debate on deterrence. These two factors are firstly the developments in Asia, particularly the prospects for Sino-US relations, and secondly the uncertainties about the militarisation of cyberspace.

Final Session #8 (May 15, 2013) – Italy and the Euromissiles Crisis.

Guest: Professor Leopoldo Nuti

Leopoldo Nuti (Siena, 1958), is Professor of History of International Relations and Coordinator of the International Studies Section of the Doctoral School in Political Science at the University of Roma Tre. Since March 2006 he is Director of CIMA. A graduate of the Universities of Florence (laurea), George Washington U. (M.A. in International affairs) and Rome (Ph.D. in History of International relations), Prof. Nuti has been a Fulbright student, NATO Research Fellow, Jean Monnet Fellow at the European University Institute, Research Fellow at the CSIA, Harvard University, Research Fellow for the Nuclear History Program, Senior Research Fellow at the Norwegian Nobel Institute, and Visiting Professor at the Institut d'Etudes Politiques in Paris.

He has published extensively in Italian, English and French on US-Italian relations and Italian foreign and security policy. His books include: L'esercito italiano nel secondo dopoguerra, 1945-1950. La sua ricostruzione e l'assistenza militare alleata, (Roma: Ufficio Storico dello Stato Maggiore Esercito, 1989), I missili di ottobre. La storiografia americana e la crisi cubana del 1962 (Milano: LED, 1994), Gli Stati Uniti e l'apertura a sinistra. Importanza e limiti della presenza americana in Italia (Roma: Laterza, 1999). His latest book is a history of nuclear weapons in Italy during the Cold War, La sfida nucleare. La politica estera italiana e le armi nucleari, 1945-1991, (Bologna: Il Mulino, 2007)

By providing a detailed analysis of the governmental decision-making during two turning points of the Euromissiles Crisis in Italy – in 1979, when the decision to participate in the deployment of the US missiles was first made, and in 1983, when it was confirmed by Benedetto Craxi's Socialist-led coalition in spite of massive pacifist protests –, Professor Nuti highlighted the complex interaction of three kinds of factors, which determined the role of Italy during this key period of the Cold War:

1. The domestic scene, i.e. coalition politics as well as internal debate within each party were all the more crucial that it was the first time that the Italian nuclear posture was publically and nationally debated – by contrast with the period when the US Jupiter missiles were deployed in Italy, in the late 1950s; this domestic factor helps explain why each step of the deployment decision-making was accompanied by a new attempt by Italian diplomats to promote arms control measures;
2. The long-standing Italian complex of marginalisation among Allies played a central role as well; after the quadripartite Guadalupe Summit, which the Italians deeply resented as they felt excluded again from the core of the Western Alliance, a participation in the deployment of US missiles appeared as an indispensable lever to raise the strategic profile of Italy within NATO – revealing here a strong continuity with the hosting of Jupiter missiles; the specific request by the Germans (Chancellor Schmidt in particular) not to be

alone in hosting US missiles also contributed to increase the significance of the Italian decision to deploy;

3. At last, the strategic rationale was important: the fear of a strategic decoupling between Europe and the US, the perception of a renewed Soviet aggressiveness were key motives in determining the Italian posture.

The Italian case in the early 1980s is particularly interesting as it reveals the inescapable contradiction in which both the US and its NATO allies were trapped, by the internal tension of the strategic situation itself, where non-nuclear Allies in particular had to rely upon the US extended nuclear deterrence: indeed, during the negotiation with the Americans about missiles deployment, the Italians tried to reopen the question of the dual-key control of the missiles and went as far as to call into question their participation in the NPT to obtain greater control. Thus, from a US point of view, non-proliferation on the one hand, and alliance management and inter-allied solidarity on the other hand, were not easily reconcilable objectives.

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The Team

Frédéric Gloriant is a PhD student in History of International Relations at the University of Paris III-Sorbonne Nouvelle under the supervision of Frédéric Bozo. His focus is on Franco-British relations during the de Gaulle-Macmillan era (1957-1963) and how the two countries developed divergent visions of the Euro-Atlantic security architecture during this key period.

Frédéric studied humanities (Classics and Philosophy) at the Ecole Normale Supérieure and at the Sorbonne, and graduated from the Institut d'Etudes Politiques in Paris as well as from the University of Newcastle (MA in Politics – 2007).

In 2008 Frédéric also had the opportunity to work as an intern at the French Mission to NATO for six months, specifically working on missile defence and non-proliferation issues.

Ilaria Parisi holds a degree in history from the Roma Tre University (Rome, Italy) and a Master's degree in European Studies from the University of Paris III-Sorbonne Nouvelle. She wrote her master's thesis about "France and the Euromissile crisis, 1977-1987," a topic she keeps exploring within the frame of a PhD. She has specialised in French foreign and security policy during the Cold War, in transatlantic relations, and in European security issues.

A qualified history teacher, **Dr Nicolas Badalassi** obtained his PhD in Contemporary History in December 2011, with the dissertation *Adieu Yalta? La France, la détente et les origines de la Conférence sur la sécurité et la coopération en Europe, 1965-1975*, supervised by Prof. Frédéric Bozo. He is a Postdoctoral Researcher at the University of Paris III-Sorbonne Nouvelle where he also teaches history of Franco-German relationships. He published various articles about French foreign policy during the Cold War. He has a chapter in *Détente in Cold War Europe. Politics and Diplomacy in the Mediterranean and the Middle East* (Elena Calandri, Daniele Caviglia, Antonio Varsori, eds., 2012).

Dr Guillaume de Rougé holds a doctorate in Contemporary History from the University of Paris III-Sorbonne Nouvelle (2010), and now is a Lecturer at the Institut d'Etudes Politiques in Paris and at the University of Paris 8 Vincennes – Saint-Denis. Guillaume is also a Policy advisor at the Directorate for Strategic Affairs (DAS), Ministry of Defence.

Dr Juliette Desplat holds a doctorate in British Studies from the University of Paris III-Sorbonne Nouvelle (2011) and a master's degree in Strategic Studies and Defence Policies from the Ecoles des Hautes Etudes Internationales (2007). She has taught Business English, Imperial history, and British Common Law for five years, after which she worked as a consultant for a leading communication consultancy firm. She has been appointed as Head of Foreign and Contemporary Records at The National Archives, London.