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# The new geopolitics of division and the problem of a Kantian Europe

STUART ELDEN AND LUIZA BIALASIEWICZ

Americans and Europeans are today divided by a philosophical, even metaphysical disagreement over where exactly mankind stands on the continuum between the laws of the jungle and the laws of reason.

Robert Kagan, *Paradise and Power*<sup>1</sup>

What is at risk today is nothing less than the end of the Kantian ideal of the abolition of the 'natural state' between states.

Jürgen Habermas, *Der gespaltene Westen*<sup>2</sup>

## A Kantian Europe, a Hobbesian world?

Immanuel Kant is today often invoked as an emblematic figure for Europe. In works by thinkers such as Zygmunt Bauman, Jacques Derrida, Michel Foucault and Jürgen Habermas, among others, Kant's work stands as a core reference for discussions of the European Modern and the legacy of the Enlightenment, even if this appropriation is not uncritical.<sup>3</sup> The spectre of Kant also haunts Europe in more pedestrian understandings of the ideal. Prominent politicians such as Gerhard Schroeder, Joschka Fischer, Dominique de Villepin and Romano Prodi have all paid tribute to his influence,<sup>4</sup> while in a variety of popular-academic texts Kant's 'cosmopolitical'

<sup>1</sup> Robert Kagan, *Paradise and Power: America and Europe in the New World Order* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2003), p. 91.

<sup>2</sup> Jürgen Habermas, *Der gespaltene Westen* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 2004), p. v.

<sup>3</sup> See, Zygmunt Bauman, *Europe: An Unfinished Adventure* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2004); Jacques Derrida, *L'autre cap* (Paris: Editions de Minuit, 1991), translated by Pascale-Anne Brault and Michael Naas as *The Other Heading: Reflections on Today's Europe* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1992); *Rogues: Two Essays on Reason*, trans. Pascale-Anne Brault and Michael Naas (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2004); and on the power of the Kantian imaginary in countering the 'War on Terror' see also his 'Auto-Immunity: Real and Symbolic Suicides: A Dialogue with Jacques Derrida' and 'Deconstructing Terrorism', in Giovanna Borradori, *Philosophy in a Time of Terror: Dialogues with Jürgen Habermas and Jacques Derrida* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2003). More generally, see Michel Foucault, 'What is Enlightenment?', in *The Foucault Reader*, ed. Paul Rabinow (London: Penguin, 1984), pp. 32–50; and Habermas, *Der gespaltene Westen*.

<sup>4</sup> These were particularly in evidence around the 200th anniversary of Kant's death. See 'Press Conference Following the Meeting with Federal Chancellor of Germany Gerhard Schroeder and President of France Jacques Chirac', Kaliningrad, 3 July 2005, ([http://www.ln.mid.ru/brp\\_4.nsf/0/5f9f384c3f644923c3257037002f931c?OpenDocument](http://www.ln.mid.ru/brp_4.nsf/0/5f9f384c3f644923c3257037002f931c?OpenDocument)); 'Fischer Establishes German Outpost in Kaliningrad', *Deutsche Welle*, 12 February 2004, (<http://www.dw-world.de/dw/article/>

dream has been invoked as a paradigm for Europe – if not a shorthand for the European social model *tout court*.<sup>5</sup>

The Kant that Europeans dream of today is more the Kant of the 1795 essay ‘Toward Perpetual Peace’,<sup>6</sup> than the Kant of the philosophically better known *Critiques*. What makes this love affair ironic is that Kant never set foot within the current boundaries of the ‘official’ Europe, living, working and dying in the then Prussian city of Königsberg, now the Russian enclave of Kaliningrad.<sup>7</sup> Nor would the philosopher have easily found his way into this ‘Europe’, despite Kaliningrad now being fully enclosed by the European Union, because of border restrictions which are such that only recently have the transit requirements for getting to the main part of Russia itself been eased.<sup>8</sup> But perhaps this irony is unsurprising, nothing more than a reflection of the many ambiguities – territorial and otherwise – that still mark the European project.<sup>9</sup>

The ironies do not stop with Europe, but also ghost Kant, whose religious notions of perpetual peace may both be a limitation on this model for today’s secular Europe, and certainly problematic if this is exported to the world as a whole. In addition, as Robert Bernasconi has shown, Kant’s writings on anthropology and geography demonstrate a range of racist assumptions and notions that undermine both his claims to cosmopolitanism and his appropriation.<sup>10</sup> For David Harvey, the refusal ‘to bring Kant’s cosmopolitanism into dialogue with his *Geography*’ can be seen as ‘both a moral failing and a political liability’.<sup>11</sup>

Some earlier figures in the tradition have taken on similarly emblematic status. Locke has long been a figure of reference for classical or neoliberal thought, with his

0,,1112879,00.html); Dominique de Villepin, ‘Le droit, la justice et la société internationale’, La Haye, 11 March 2004, ([http://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/fr/article-imprim.php3?id\\_article=12718](http://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/fr/article-imprim.php3?id_article=12718)); and Romano Prodi, ‘Europe and Peace’, University of Ulster, 1 April 2004, ([http://europa-eu-un.org/articles/cs/article\\_3372\\_cs.htm](http://europa-eu-un.org/articles/cs/article_3372_cs.htm)).

<sup>5</sup> By ‘popular-academic’, we intend both academic texts intended for a broader audience, as well as the writings of political figures with academic credentials. See, among others, Ralph Dahrendorf, *Perche L’Europa? Riflessioni di un europeista scettico* (Bari: Laterza, 1997); Edgar Morin, *Penser l’Europe* (Paris: Gallimard, 1990); most recently, Tommaso Padoa-Schioppa, *Europe, A Civil Power* (London: The Federal Trust, 2004); Jeremy Rifkin, *The European Dream: How Europe’s Vision of the Future is Quietly Eclipsing the American Dream* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2004).

<sup>6</sup> Immanuel Kant, ‘Toward Perpetual Peace’, in *Practical Philosophy*, ed. and trans. Mary J. Gregor (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 311–52.

<sup>7</sup> On Kant’s life, the best account is Manfred Kuehn, *Kant: A Biography* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

<sup>8</sup> See ‘EU’s Shifting Borders Problematic for Kaliningrad’, *Deutsche Welle*, 1 May 2004, (<http://www.dw-world.de/dw/article/0,1564,1186677,00.html>).

<sup>9</sup> For a discussion of some of the territorial ambiguities, see Luiza Bialasiewicz, Stuart Elden and Joe Painter, ‘The Constitution of EU Territory’, *Comparative European Politics*, 3:3 (September 2005), pp. 333–63.

<sup>10</sup> Robert Bernasconi, ‘Who Invented the Concept of Race? Kant’s Role in the Enlightenment Construction of Race’, in Bernasconi (ed.), *Race* (London: Blackwell, 2001), pp. 11–36; and ‘Will the Real Kant Please Stand Up: The Challenge of Enlightenment Racism to the Study of the History of Philosophy’, *Radical Philosophy*, 117 (January/February 2003), pp. 13–22. See Immanuel Kant, *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View*, trans. Mary J. Gregor (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1974); and *Kants Werke Band IX: Logik, Physische Geographie, Pädagogik* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter & Co, 1968).

<sup>11</sup> David Harvey, ‘Cosmopolitanism and the Banality of Geographical Evils’, *Public Culture*, 12:2 (2000), pp. 529–64, at 557. More generally, see his ‘Geographical Knowledges/Political Powers’, *Proceedings of the British Academy*, 122 (2004), pp. 87–115. Derrida has insisted, however, on the emancipatory potential of Kant’s cosmopolitan vision – see, for example, his arguments in ‘Auto-Immunity: Real and Symbolic Suicides’.

model of limited government for the protection of life, liberty and property,<sup>12</sup> as well as being traditionally seen as an inspirational figure for the American founding fathers;<sup>13</sup> Mill tends to appeal to social liberals with the distinction between self- and other-regarding actions;<sup>14</sup> and the cases of Marx and Adam Smith are well known. But of these other figures of modern thought, perhaps none has been so reduced to a few famous phrases and tropes as Thomas Hobbes. The Hobbesian war ‘of every man against every man’; the ‘general inclination of mankind’ as ‘a perpetuall and restlesse desire of Power after power, that ceaseth onely in Death’; life in the state of nature being ‘solitary, poore, nasty, brutish and short’; and on the news of the Spanish Armada’s approach his mother being described as giving birth to ‘twins at once both me and fear’, have become well-known shorthands for both Hobbes and particular representations of the world.<sup>15</sup> Indeed, in International Relations this has been longstanding with Hobbes’ appropriation by the realists,<sup>16</sup> though more recently the ‘anarchy’ of a Hobbesian world has come to be popularly invoked as the best-fitting description of the post-Cold War, and perhaps particularly post-September 11th, world.<sup>17</sup>

In many popular and popular-academic accounts of the past couple of years, however, Hobbes and Kant have become still something more: an often stereotyped (though for that no less powerful) shorthand for different *ideas* about the current international order. They have become the iconic representatives of two apparently conflicting world views, of two conflicting descriptions of the post-September 11th world – and two very different visions for its ‘proper’ ordering. But this is not simply the realist versus idealist debate replayed. And it is not simply a question of competing geographical imaginations, competing descriptions of today’s world. What is at stake here, we will argue, is nothing less than the *right* to describe the world; the (power-political) assertion of a privileged geopolitical eye. What is at question here is who in today’s world holds the ‘proper’ picture of the world – and thus the ‘proper’ recipe (and might) for the world’s perfecting.

While Kant’s figure has been positively invoked by European scholars and politicians alike, in recent years he has also come to stand as an emblem of all that is ‘wrong’ with Europe, a marker of Europe’s inability (if not unwillingness) to correctly perceive – and deal with – the dangerous, Hobbesian, post-September 11th

<sup>12</sup> John Locke, *Two Treatises of Government*, ed. Peter Laslett (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1960), see particularly pp. 286–8.

<sup>13</sup> See particularly Alexander Hamilton, James Madison and John Jay, *The Federalist Papers*, ed. Clinton Rossiter (New York: Signet, 1999). For discussions – which tend to play down the importance of Locke – see George Mace, *Locke, Hobbes, and the Federalist Papers: An Essay on the Genesis of the American Political Heritage* (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1979); Garry Wills, *Explaining America: The Federalist* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1981); and his *Inventing America: Jefferson’s Declaration of Independence* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1978).

<sup>14</sup> John Stuart Mill, *On Liberty*, ed. Gertrude Himmelfarb (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1974).

<sup>15</sup> Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, ed. Richard Tuck (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), pp. 88, 70, 88; and his *Autobiography*, cited in *Leviathan*, ed. Edwin Curley (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1994), p. liv.

<sup>16</sup> See, for example, Laurie M. Bagby, *Thucydides, Hobbes, and the Interpretation of Realism* (DeKalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press, 1993); and Charles Covell, *Hobbes, Realism and the Tradition of International Law* (London: Palgrave, 2004).

<sup>17</sup> See, for example, Jack Straw, ‘Failed and Failing States’, European Research Institute, Birmingham UK, 6 September 2002, ([www.eri.bham.ac.uk/events/jstraw060902.pdf](http://www.eri.bham.ac.uk/events/jstraw060902.pdf)); and Prodi, ‘Europe and Peace’.

world. In the work of a variety of neo-conservative writers, the Kantian-Hobbesian divide has repeatedly been invoked as a descriptor of (and explanation for) transatlantic differences of opinion. Most crudely put, Europeans, stuck in a Kantian 'paradise', are *existentially* unable to understand the realities of US foreign policy which is forced to operate in a Hobbesian world.

In this article, we undertake a close reading of what have been perhaps the two most widely popularised accounts invoking the Kantian-Hobbesian divide: Robert Kagan's *Paradise and Power* (developing the ideas popularised in his 2002 essay 'Power and Weakness') and Thomas Barnett's *The Pentagon's New Map*.<sup>18</sup> Kagan is much more explicit in his summoning of political theory to understand today's world; Barnett makes more passing reference to it in his broad account of a new cartography of power and fear. While both authors have already received significant attention in popular and academic discussions – Kagan's characterisations, in particular, have sparked extensive debates – we believe there is much more to be said about their use of political theory and their own politics.<sup>19</sup> In particular, we would like to note how both illustrate a new and extremely troubling geographical imagination: a geography that is at once a description of today's world – and a prescription for its (only) proper ordering. At root, Kagan and Barnett's theorisations invoke and call for a geopolitics of division; a geopolitics of absolutes and certainties guided not by international law but *moral right*.

### Rethinking the post-Cold War world

Before proceeding to an examination of Kagan and Barnett's ideas, a brief contextualisation of their work is in order. These writers need to be placed within a wider community of 'non-state scribes', that broad community of 'experts' who are not necessarily altogether removed from (state) institutions, but who belong to that which historian of science Peter Galison terms a 'trading zone' of specialists;<sup>20</sup> individuals and institutions that straddle the boundaries of academic/non-academic work, spread across governmental and private research centres, think-tanks and study groups. They appear as impartial commentators/advisers/analysts, as their

<sup>18</sup> Kagan, *Paradise and Power*; Thomas P. M. Barnett, *The Pentagon's New Map: War and Peace in the Twenty-first Century* (London: Putnam, 2004). Both presented their ideas first in shorter form in popular outlets: see Kagan, 'Power and Weakness', *Policy Review*, 113 (June and July 2002), pp. 1–19; and Barnett, 'The Pentagon's New Map', *Esquire*, March 2003, (<http://www.thomaspmbarrett.com/published/pentagonsnewmap.htm>). Barnett has recently extended the claims in *Blueprint for Action: A Future Worth Creating* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 2005).

<sup>19</sup> On Kagan, see Etienne Balibar, 'Whose Power? Whose Weakness? On Robert Kagan's Critique of European Ideology', *Theory & Event*, 6:4 (2003); Bauman, *Europe: An Unfinished Adventure*; Habermas, *Der gespaltene Westen*; Mark Young, 'Of Power in Paradise: An Answer to Kagan', *Theory & Event*, 8:1 (2005); and the special issue of *Blätter für deutsche und internationale Politik* 'Gulliver vs Liliput: Robert Kagans "Macht und Schwache" in der Debatte', 47:11 (2002). On Barnett, see Susan Roberts, Anna Secor and Matthew Sparke, 'Neoliberal Geopolitics', *Antipode*, 35:3 (2003), pp. 887–97; and Mark Monmonier, 'Cartography: Distortions, World-Views and Creative Solutions', *Progress in Human Geography*, 29:2 (2005), pp. 217–24. Both writers are also discussed in Matthew Sparke, *In the Space of Theory: Postfoundational Geographies of the Nation-State* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2005), ch. 5.

<sup>20</sup> See Peter Galison, *Image and Logic: A Material Culture of Microphysics* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1997).

book jackets testify – but, to the extent that their geographical imaginations are invoked by state power, they are today's *de facto* 'intellectuals of statecraft', to use O'Tuathail and Agnew's characterisation.<sup>21</sup>

Both Kagan and Barnett inhabit what are apparently liminal positions in relation to the networks of US government, having spent time 'on the inside' but now occupying more external roles. Kagan served in the State Department from 1984 to 1998, subsequently acting as political commentator for the Washington Post and a number of conservative monthlies; between 1998 and 2004, Barnett was Director of the 'New Rule Sets Project' at the US Naval War College, and is now a self-described 'independent consultant'. Kagan's influence in foreign policy circles has also been marked by his role as co-founder of the Project for the New American Century. The Project, founded in the spring of 1997, defines itself as a 'non-profit, educational organisation whose goal is to promote American global leadership'.<sup>22</sup> Putatively laying outside 'formal' policy networks, the Project from its inception has aimed to provide the intellectual foil for continued US military dominance – and especially the willingness to use its military might. The resonance of these views with those of the current US Administration should come as no surprise: among the Project's founders were later leading figures in the Bush Cabinet: Vice-President Dick Cheney, Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld and key adviser Paul Wolfowitz, along with the who's who of the neo-conservative ideologues shaping policy debates in the US today, including Francis Fukuyama, Norman Podhoretz, and William Kristol.

Barnett and Kagan's ideas also deserve some contextualisation, however, within a broader set of attempts on the part of US 'intellectuals of statecraft', from the early 1990s on, to understand – and map – the post-Cold War world. As O'Tuathail has argued, for the institutions and intellectuals that had held up the Cold War security discourse, the end of the blocs was experienced as a condition of 'geopolitical vertigo, a state of confusion where the old nostrums of the Cold War were redundant and new ones had not yet been invented, issued and approved'.<sup>23</sup> The need to inscribe, to map this condition of geopolitical flux, became an urgent institutional imperative. What is more, the collapse of the Soviet Union – the disappearance of the 'Other' against which the dominant postwar understanding of international (and internal) politics had been constructed – evoked a variety of attempts to reterritorialise the identity of the West, of Europe, and of the United States. Such a reterritorialisation entails the remaking of spatial and geographical relations rather than the deterritorialisation that globalisation is often supposed to be.<sup>24</sup>

Into the post-Cold War condition of 'geopolitical vertigo' stepped in a number of 'scribes', armed with a ready-made set of geographical imaginaries able to map the 'confusion' of a world without blocs. They did so in two distinct ways: first, by

<sup>21</sup> See Gearoid O'Tuathail and John Agnew, 'Geopolitics and Discourse: Practical Geopolitical Reasoning in American Foreign Policy', *Political Geography*, 11 (1992), pp. 190–204.

<sup>22</sup> See (<http://www.newamericancentury.org/>), in particular their 1997 'Statement of Principles' and the 2000 report 'Rebuilding America's Defenses'; and Robert Kagan and William Kristol (eds.), *Present Dangers: Crisis and Opportunity in American Foreign and Defense Policy* (New York: Encounter Books, 2000).

<sup>23</sup> Gearoid O'Tuathail, 'New World Order Geopolitics', in *The Geopolitics Reader* (London: Routledge, 1997), p. 103; see also the discussion in his *Critical Geopolitics: The Politics of Writing Global Space* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press), pp. 225–56.

<sup>24</sup> For a longer form of this argument, see Stuart Elden, 'Missing the Point: Globalisation, Deterritorialisation and the Space of the World', *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 30:1 (March 2005), pp. 8–19.

rewriting the collapse of the communist world as a triumph of the West, a natural and logical triumph of the Western values of liberal democracy and market capitalism; and secondly, as O'Tuathail has argued, by inscribing 'the very formlessness of the post-Cold War world [as] a threat'.<sup>25</sup> Two key early figures in these reimagination were Francis Fukuyama and Samuel Huntington. Fukuyama's thesis of 'The End of History' was adopted by the US foreign policy community (and not only by them) as *the* defining philosophical statement of the post-Cold War era,<sup>26</sup> and his affirmation of the triumph of market capitalism and liberal democracy continues to resonate in present-day discourses of democracy-promotion, from Afghanistan to Iraq.<sup>27</sup> A second key ideological statement inscribing the 'New World Order' was undoubtedly Huntington's thesis of 'The Clash of Civilisations': another early attempt at 'making sense' of the chaos of the post-Cold War world that continues to be wielded as both an explanation of and justification for geopolitical decision-making today.<sup>28</sup> It is notable that while both posed their initial pieces as questions – 'The End of History?' and 'The Clash of Civilisations?' – the question marks were dropped for the book-length treatments.

While Fukuyama's ideas lent support to the first 'pillar' of the new geopolitical imagination – a New World Order where (a certain brand of) democracy had triumphed, or was made to triumph – Huntington's geography laid the ground for the second: the imagination of a chaotic, perilous world of uncertain and unpredictable threats, threats implicit in the very 'nature' of the different 'civilisational forces' unleashed by the demise of the Cold War blocs. It is here that we find the earliest soundings of the Rogue State doctrine,<sup>29</sup> and the first intimations of the security-conundrum posed by a variety of deterritorialised threats. But the imagination of a chaotic, anarchic world – and of the inevitability of conflict – was also fed, throughout the 1990s and beyond, in a variety of fictional and fictionalised accounts, in movies and literature (see, for example, the depiction of the 'new wars' in films such as *Black Hawk Down* or *Behind Enemy Lines*),<sup>30</sup> as well as by a variety of popular and popular-academic commentators, such as Michael Ignatieff and Robert Kaplan. Although Ignatieff has had a distinguished academic career, both he and Kaplan came to more general prominence through their journalism and, in particular, their

<sup>25</sup> O'Tuathail, 'New World Order Geopolitics', p. 104.

<sup>26</sup> Francis Fukuyama, 'The End of History?', *The National Interest*, 16 (Summer 1989), pp. 3–18; *The End of History and the Last Man* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1992).

<sup>27</sup> On this see, among others, Noam Chomsky, *The New Military Humanism: Lessons from Kosovo* (London: Pluto Press, 1999); and Derek Gregory, *The Colonial Present: Afghanistan, Palestine, Iraq* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2004).

<sup>28</sup> Samuel P. Huntington, 'The Clash of Civilisations?', *Foreign Affairs*, 72:3 (1993); *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996).

<sup>29</sup> For a discussion, see Noam Chomsky, *Rogue States* (London: Pluto Press, 2000); Robert S. Litwak, *Rogue States and US Foreign Policy* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000); Raymond Tanter, *Rogue Regimes: Terrorism and Proliferation* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999). On the echoes of Huntington in the 'rogue state' imaginary, see Claudio Minca, 'Rogue State', in *Rivista Geografica Italiana*, 110 (2004), pp. 425–69.

<sup>30</sup> On *Black Hawk Down*, see Paolo Palladino, 'On Film, the Political Animal and the Return of Just War', *Theory & Event*, 8:2 (2005); also Debbie Lisle and Andrew Pepper, 'The New Face of Global Hollywood: *Black Hawk Down* and the Politics of Meta-Sovereignty', *Cultural Politics*, 1:2 (July 2005), pp. 165–92. On *Behind Enemy Lines* see Gearoid O'Tuathail, 'The Frustrations of Geopolitics and the Pleasures of War: *Behind Enemy Lines* and American Geopolitical Culture', *Geopolitics*, 10:2 (2005), pp. 356–77. This was a Special Issue on the theme of cinema and geopolitics.

accounts of the Balkan wars.<sup>31</sup> The picture of a 'disintegrating' world traced within such accounts anticipated, in many ways, the understandings of today's world and its proper 'ordering' evoked by Kagan and Barnett: a world inevitably at war and, moreover, a world within which the 'old' rules of conflict (and conflict resolution) 'no longer apply' – or they certainly do not apply to large swathes of it.<sup>32</sup>

The stories recounted by commentators such as Kaplan also presaged, however, the notion of the 'globalisation' of danger, a fundamental trope in Barnett's 'New Map'. In the post-Cold War world, Kaplan argued, 'war-making entities will no longer be restricted to a specific territory . . . loose and shadowy organisms such as Islamic terrorist organisations suggest why borders will mean increasingly little and sedimentary layers of tribalistic identity and control will mean more'.<sup>33</sup> With such a deterritorialisation of conflict and threat, 'it will be hard for states and local governments to protect their citizens physically'. The map of international politics will change fundamentally, once and for all:

Imagine a cartography in three dimensions, as if in a hologram. In this hologram would be the overlapping sediments of group and other identities atop the merely two dimensional colour markings of city-states and the remaining nations, themselves confused in places by shadowy tentacles, hovering overhead, indicating the power of drug cartels, mafias and private security agencies. Instead of borders, there will be moving 'centres' of power, as in the Middle Ages. Many of these layers would be in motion. Replacing fixed and abrupt lines on a flat space would be a shifting pattern of buffer entities . . . To this protean cartographic hologram one must add other factors, such as migrations of populations, explosions of birth rates, vectors of disease. Henceforward the map of the world will never be static. *This future map – in a sense, the 'Last Map' – will be an ever mutating representation of chaos* [emphasis added].<sup>34</sup>

What we find here has distinct parallels to today's imagined geographies of al-Qaeda and the variety of 'terrorist networks' that are seen to blur the boundaries between a (national) outside and inside. They pay unconscious tribute to Kaplan's representation of a world of 'shadowy tentacles' where cartographies of security are forever challenged by the 'ever mutating representations of chaos'. There remains much work to be done on al-Qaeda's own territorial strategies, which are far from the straightforward deterritorialisation they are often assumed to be. This would have to take into account their use of the uncontrolled territories of failed states; the 'spaces of exception' that are terrorist training camps; their creative use of the network; and the geographical imagination of a 'new Caliphate' that informs their public pronouncements.<sup>35</sup>

<sup>31</sup> See, for example, Michael Ignatieff, *Virtual War: Kosovo and Beyond* (New York: Chatto & Windus, 2000); Robert Kaplan, *Balkan Ghosts: A Journey Through History* (New York: St Martin's Press, 1993).

<sup>32</sup> Robert D. Kaplan, 'The Coming Anarchy', *The Atlantic Monthly*, 273:2 (1994), pp. 44–76. Kaplan suggests, indeed, that 'we are entering a bifurcated world', part of which is inhabited by Fukuyama's Last Man, and part by Hobbes's 'first man' – see p. 70. See also his *The Coming Anarchy: Shattering the Dreams of the Post Cold War* (New York: Vintage, 2001); and most recently *Imperial Grunts: The American Military on the Ground* (New York: Random House, 2005), a book whose geopolitical imaginary is evoked by its chapter titles, bearing the names of US geographical commands, such as CENTCOM and SOUTHCOM.

<sup>33</sup> Kaplan, 'The Coming Anarchy', p. 70.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 71–2.

<sup>35</sup> For some indications, see Daniel Benjamin and Steven Simon, *The Age of Sacred Terror: Radical Islam's War Against America* (New York: Random House, 2003); and Jason Burke, *Al-Qaeda: The True Story of Radical Islam* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 2004).



There are many aspects of these geographical imaginations that are new; many, however, are not. Indeed, what we would like to argue is that part of the power of these new 'global visions' lies precisely with the fact that they draw on existing, well-consolidated stereotypes and imaginaries, *all the while asserting a fundamental break in the international order, a fundamental turning point in the conduct of international relations*. As Simon Dalby argued in the mid-1990s in his critique of Robert Kaplan's oeuvre, with its evocations of 'wild zones' and 'tribal' warfare, Kaplan's geopolitical imagination neatly reproduced earlier Imperial-geographic tropes of 'primitive savagery', while appealing to heavily Orientalised notions of animal-like Others who (unlike those of us in the civilised West) still find 'liberation in violence'.<sup>36</sup> Kaplan's – just as Huntington's – imaginaries of the naturally-violent Other also presaged a variety of present-day popular depictions of suicide bombers; those whose lives 'have a different value'.<sup>37</sup>

What is more, geographical imaginations such as those advanced by Kaplan stressing the growing role of flows that 'transgress' the frontiers of sovereignty (thus unsettling the possibilities of political order constrained in the spatial imaginations of the modern state system) have a very precise effect, as Michael Shapiro argued over a decade ago.<sup>38</sup> For while the affirmation that traditional military protection of borders is no longer efficacious (indeed, powerless) against the 'loose and shadowy organisms' evoked by Kaplan induces fear – disorder and chaos will spread *despite* the spatial demarcation of boundaries – it also, as Dalby has suggested, 'ironically draws on traditional thinking to suggest that if current efforts are inadequate then what is needed is redoubled actions in the military sphere to reassert control'.<sup>39</sup> These putatively deterritorialised threats, paradoxically, thus call for an even more pervasive *territorialisation* of the 'security state': an understanding that, post-September 11th, has come to make part of the taken for granted.<sup>40</sup> It is within this discursive economy, then, that the imaginations of the most recent scribes such as Kagan and Barnett must be located.

<sup>36</sup> Simon Dalby, 'The Environment as Geopolitical Threat: Reading Robert Kaplan's "Coming Anarchy"', in *Ecumene*, 3:4, pp. 472–496; see also his *Environmental Security* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2002).

<sup>37</sup> See the critique in Gregory, *The Colonial Present*; also in Dag Tuastad, 'Neo-Orientalism and the New Barbarian Thesis: Aspects of Symbolic Violence in the Middle East Conflict(s)', *Third World Quarterly*, 24 (2003), pp. 591–9, as well as the Special Issue of the journal *Antipode*, 36:4, dedicated to the question of Palestine. For a discussion of the ways in which the figure of the 'Islamic terrorist' draws on longstanding, Orientalised tropes of the 'abnormal' and 'monstrous', see Amit Rai, 'Of Monsters: Biopower, Terrorism and Excess in Genealogies of Monstrosity', in *Cultural Studies*, 18:4 (2004), pp. 538–70; and more generally Richard Devetak, 'The Gothic Scene of International Relations: Ghosts, Monsters, Terror and the Sublime after September 11', *Review of International Studies*, 31:4 (2005), pp. 621–43.

<sup>38</sup> Michael Shapiro, 'Sovereignty and Exchange in the Orders of Modernity', in *Alternatives*, 15:4 (1991), pp. 447–77; also his 'Moral Geographies and the Ethics of Post-Sovereignty', in *Public Culture*, 6 (1994), pp. 479–502.

<sup>39</sup> Dalby, 'The Environment as Geopolitical Threat', p. 496.

<sup>40</sup> On this, see for example, Heriberto Cairo, 'The Field of Mars: Heterotopias of Territory and War', *Political Geography*, 23:8 (2004), pp. 1009–36; and Amy Kaplan, 'Homeland Insecurities: Reflections on Language and Space', *Radical History Review*, 85 (2003), pp. 82–93. On new reterritorialisations of security and identity see also Luiza Bialasiewicz, 'The Death of the West: Samuel Huntington, Oriana Fallaci and a New 'Moral' Geopolitics of Births and Bodies', *Geopolitics* (2006, forthcoming).

## Paradise, power and impotence

Robert Kagan's analysis of the increasing disparity between American and European world-views was first published in June 2002, as an essay in the foreign policy journal *Policy Review*. Having gathered considerable attention and acclaim, the essay was subsequently expanded into a short volume in 2003, this time entitled *Paradise and Power: America and Europe in the New World Order*. The book was lauded as a prescient analysis of the state of international relations today, and crowned with praise by Francis Fukuyama and Henry Kissinger, among others, as 'the essential account of the times in which we live'.<sup>41</sup>

Kagan's argument was a relatively simple one – but no less potent for that. It centred, above all, upon the emergence of a fundamental break between European and American world-views and related perceptions regarding the proper conduct of international affairs:

It is time to stop pretending that Europeans and Americans share a common view of the world, or even that they occupy the same world. On the all-important question of power – the efficacy of power, the morality of power, the desirability of power – American and European perspectives are diverging. Europe is turning away from power, or to put it a little differently, it is moving beyond power into a self-contained world of laws and rules and transnational negotiation and cooperation. It is entering a post-historical paradise of peace and relative prosperity, the realization of Kant's 'Perpetual Peace'. The United States, meanwhile, remains mired in history, exercising power in the anarchic Hobbesian world where international laws and rules are unreliable and where true security and the defense and promotion of a liberal order still depend on the possession and use of military might.<sup>42</sup>

This state of affairs, Kagan argued, is 'not transitory' however, but the product of deep philosophical and political-philosophical differences. It is not simply 'the product of one American election or one catastrophic event. The reasons for the transatlantic divide are deep, long in development, and likely to endure.'<sup>43</sup> This divergence was manifest *both* in different understandings of 'the way the world is' – especially, different *perceptions* of the dangers that sign the post-September 11th world – but also different *responses* to such perceived dangers. Kagan noted, indeed, that Europeans' preference for 'peaceful responses to problems' and their 'appeals to international law, international conventions and international opinion to adjudicate disputes' were increasingly at odds with the Americans' predisposition 'to seek finality in international affairs: they want problems solved, threats eliminated. And, of course, Americans increasingly tend toward unilateralism.'<sup>44</sup>

The metaphors adopted by Kagan to capture this divergence were nothing short of caricature: '[American] Power and [European] Weakness' (in his original essay); '[European] Paradise and [American] Power' (in the 2003 book); or, equally crudely, a Kantian Europe and a Hobbesian United States. Similarly caricatured (if not disparaging), however, were the explanations given for this state of affairs. For not only was Europe's supposed enamourment with the 'Kantian' mirage reduced to an almost mechanistic preoccupation with international legalism, it was also presented

<sup>41</sup> Kagan, *Paradise and Power*, jacket blurb.

<sup>42</sup> Kagan, 'Power and Weakness', p. 1.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1.

<sup>44</sup> Kagan, *Paradise and Power*, pp. 4–5.

as a grave *failure*: a failure to step up to its international obligations but also (and even more gravely) *a failure to correctly perceive the current international situation*.

This failure, according to Kagan, was to be understood as in great part influenced by Europe's present international position and world role: that of relative weakness. Kagan spends a significant part of his article (and later book) analysing, indeed, what he terms 'the psychology of power and weakness'. It is a deeply troubling argument for Kagan claims, at base, that Europeans believe in diplomacy and multilateralism – that they want international norms and regulations – simply because they are militarily weak; in other words, 'Europeans oppose unilateralism . . . because they have no capacity for unilateralism'.<sup>45</sup> Etienne Balibar, in his critique of Kagan's thesis notes how the European position is thus presented as, at the same time, '*powerless . . . and illegitimate*, since it disguises a historical regression as moral progress, misrepresenting its real weakness as an imaginary strength'. But what is more, it is presented as '*self-destructive* since it undermines the defensive capacities of the Western democracies, everywhere under attack in the world'.<sup>46</sup> We will say more about this rhetorical framing of the European position in the closing paragraphs of this piece.

In Kagan's eyes, Europeans' 'psychology of weakness' also influences, however, their perception of *what constitutes threat* in the international arena. Such calculations, Kagan argues, are simply dictated, again, 'by the disparity of power'. Americans should therefore not begrudge Europeans' 'greater tolerance for threats', if not even their apparent 'appeasement': it is 'perfectly normal human psychology'.<sup>47</sup> But such differing perceptions of threat are not only 'matters of psychology'; not simply driven by Europeans' 'understandable' reluctance to counter threats. They are also grounded 'in a practical reality that is another product of the disparity of power. Iraq and other "rogue" states objectively do *not* pose the same level of threat to Europeans as they do to the United States . . . It is precisely America's great power that makes it the primary target, and often the only target.'<sup>48</sup> And, the author caustically adds, 'Europeans are understandably content that it should remain so'. Indeed, Europeans' different perception of threats brings with it a willingness to 'appease' (if not seduce or buy off)<sup>49</sup> threatening Others.

Why has this divergence of opinion and purpose only become visible – and problematic – now? The power disparity (and its accordant psychologies) analysed by Kagan has been in place for quite some time: after all, the US has been a hegemonic power since World War II. According to the author, until recently '[European] weakness has been obscured. For a half-century after WWII, [it] was masked by the unique geopolitical circumstances of the Cold War.'<sup>50</sup> It is precisely the Cold War peace that also allowed for the development of what Kagan characterises as the European 'paradise'; Europe's 'geopolitical fantasy'. Under the

<sup>45</sup> Kagan, 'Power and Weakness', p. 7.

<sup>46</sup> Balibar, 'Whose Power? Whose Weakness?', p. 4, emphasis in original.

<sup>47</sup> As Kagan suggests, the man armed only with a knife may decide that 'a bear prowling the forest is a tolerable danger', whereas the man with a rifle 'will likely make a different calculation' – Kagan, 'Power and Weakness', p. 8.

<sup>48</sup> Kagan, 'Power and Weakness', p. 8, emphasis in original.

<sup>49</sup> 'Europeans . . . try to influence others through subtlety and indirection'; they are 'most worried about issues that have a greater chance of being solved by political engagement and huge sums of money' – Kagan, *Paradise and Power*, pp. 5, 32.

<sup>50</sup> Kagan, 'Power and Weakness', p. 3.

American security umbrella, Europeans 'pursued their new order, freed from the brutal laws and even the mentality of power politics'.<sup>51</sup> The end of the Cold War only further accentuated this 'splendid isolation': 'by removing even the external danger of the Soviet Union, [it] allowed Europe's new order, and its new idealism, to blossom fully. Freed from the requirements of any military deterrence, internal or external, Europeans became still more confident that their way of settling international problems now had universal application'.<sup>52</sup> Europeans could thus dream up a Kantian paradise because, in blunt terms, someone else was doing the 'dirty work'. As Kagan argues, 'by providing security from outside', the United States 'solved the Kantian paradox for the Europeans'.<sup>53</sup>

Yet most Europeans, Kagan suggests, do not realise that 'their passage into post-history has depended upon the United States not making the same passage'.<sup>54</sup> The United States thus cannot enter the paradise it has helped make possible, it is, despite 'its vast power . . . stuck in history, left to deal with the Saddams and the ayatollahs, the Kim Jong IIs and the Jiang Zemins, leaving the happy benefits to others'.<sup>55</sup> The US has no choice, then, but to assume the role of global leader because 'post-historical' Europe cannot – and will not. For Europe, those which are deemed to be global threats ('the Saddams and the ayatollahs') by the Americans are simply 'a distraction'. Europeans, Kagan alleges, are unable to 'think globally' – *they lack the geopolitical imagination of a great power*.<sup>56</sup> Their concerns are 'local', not 'geopolitical': 'Europeans often point to American insularity and parochialism, but Europeans themselves have turned intensely introspective . . . For most French voters, security has little to do with abstract and distant geopolitics. Rather, it is a question of which politician can best protect them from the crime and violence plaguing the streets and suburbs of their cities'.<sup>57</sup>

America thus becomes the world's geopolitician: *the only state able, due to its power-position, to perceive threats clearly; the only one with a God's-eye view of international affairs*,<sup>58</sup> and the only one with the magnanimity – and capability – to intervene. In this (self-ascribed) position, they have the *perfect picture* of the world and the recipe for the world's *perfecting*, all the while recognising 'the necessity of power in a world that remains far from perfection'.<sup>59</sup> Marked by a mixture of *noblesse oblige* and the *mission civilisatrice*, the United States has become, in the post-Cold War world, truly 'the world's indispensable nation', to recall Bill Clinton and Madeline Albright's famous phrase.<sup>60</sup> Indispensable – and thus exceptional, in every way: 'The problem is that the United States must sometimes play by the rules

<sup>51</sup> Ibid., p. 10.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., p. 11.

<sup>53</sup> Kagan, *Paradise and Power*, pp. 57–8.

<sup>54</sup> Kagan, 'Power and Weakness', p. 15.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid., p. 16.

<sup>56</sup> Certainly the case in the past decade: 'most Europeans took the end of the Cold War as a holiday from strategy' – Kagan, *Paradise and Power*, p. 25.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid., pp. 67–8; also Kagan, 'Power and Weakness', p. 13.

<sup>58</sup> The expression comes from O'Tuathail, *Critical Geopolitics*, p. 42.

<sup>59</sup> Kagan, *Paradise and Power*, p. 95.

<sup>60</sup> The phrase was first used by Bill Clinton – see the press conference announcing Albright as Secretary of State, 2 December 1996, ([http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/white\\_house/december96/cabinet\\_12-5.html](http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/white_house/december96/cabinet_12-5.html)) – although it was picked up in that conference, and is usually associated with, Albright. Clinton also used the phrase in his second inaugural address of 20 January 1997, (<http://elsinore.cis.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/presiden/inaug/clinton2.htm>).

of a Hobbesian world, even though in doing so it violates European norms. It must refuse to abide by certain international conventions that may constrain its ability to fight effectively . . . It must support arms control, but not always for itself. *It must live by a double standard.* And it must sometimes act unilaterally, not out of a passion for unilateralism but, given a weak Europe that has moved beyond power, because the United States has no choice *but* to act unilaterally'.<sup>61</sup> The leap from here to the doctrine of 'pre-emptive action' articulated in the 2002 National Security Strategy is, indeed, brief.

The specification of a 'just' double-standard as the only possible response to a world 'outside' marked not by Kantian norms but by Hobbesian chaos underpins Kagan's argument. Managing this 'double standard' is, indeed, to his eyes, the dominant security challenge of our age: citing one of Tony Blair's foreign policy gurus, Robert Cooper, Kagan affirms that 'the challenge of the postmodern world . . . is to get used to the idea of double standards . . . Among ourselves, we keep the law, but when we are operating in the jungle, we must also use the laws of the jungle'.<sup>62</sup> And it is the United States 'that has the difficult task of navigating between these two worlds, trying to abide by, defend, and further the laws of advanced civilised society while simultaneously employing military force against those who refuse to abide by such rules'.<sup>63</sup>

### **A cartography of fear, or, the stain and the lasso**

The specification of a world divided in two – and the necessity of ordering such a 'dangerous' world – also forms a fundamental part of the argument made by Thomas Barnett in 'The Pentagon's New Map' – first published as an article in 2003, and subsequently expanded into a book-length version in 2004. Barnett's vision is summarised within a 'New Map' of the world, one where:

Disconnectedness defines danger. Disconnectedness allows bad actors to flourish by keeping entire societies detached from the global community and under their control. Eradicating disconnectedness, therefore, becomes the defining security task of our age.<sup>64</sup>

The cartography of international relations proposed by Barnett depicts a world divided into a 'Functioning Core' and a 'Non-Integrating Gap'; in short, those countries which share American values and can be seen as part of a globalised world, and those which do not. The project is unabashed in its pretensions to trace a 'new geography' of today's world: Barnett claims his moment of insight arrived when he realised that security was now a geographical rather than ideological issue: 'the danger isn't a *who* but a *where*'.<sup>65</sup> The contours of this spatial imagination are hardly

<sup>61</sup> Kagan, 'Power and Weakness', p. 17, emphasis in original.

<sup>62</sup> Kagan, *Paradise and Power*, p. 74; see also Robert Cooper, 'Why We Still Need Empires', *The Observer*, 7 April 2002, (<http://observer.guardian.co.uk/worldview/story/0,11581,680117,00.html>).

<sup>63</sup> Kagan, *Paradise and Power*, p. 75. Tony Blair's solution to this quandary, in Kagan's eyes, has been to 'lead Britain into the rule-based Kantian world of the European Union' – while also attempting to lead the European Union 'back out into the Hobbesian world'. For a discussion of these tensions in relation to Iraq, see Stuart Elden, 'Blair, Neo-Conservatism and the War on Territorial Integrity', *International Politics*, 44 (2007).

<sup>64</sup> Barnett, *The Pentagon's New Map*, p. 8.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 154.

new, echoing many similar cartographies, from Mackinder's Heartland (and its associated inner and outer crescents), to Spykman's and later Cohen's rimlands, arcs, crescents and outer and inner circles of stability and instability.<sup>66</sup> What is new, however, are the prescriptions associated with this description of the world.

In the book version of this argument, Barnett provides two maps: one is a picture of the globe in two halves, showing the largely physical geography, but with a dark 'stain' spreading over the centre, across the equator and running north and south to various distances. The second map is of US interventions in the post-Cold War world, including both traditional military operations such as combat, show of force, contingent positioning and reconnaissance, but also evacuation, security and peace-keeping.<sup>67</sup> Around these interventions is drawn a line marking out the stain of the previous map, but which on this version appears more like a lasso thrown around the problems, or a noose that can be pulled tight around them. Yet it is a far from perfect cartography: North Korea and Northern Ireland are excluded, for instance, as they would risk complicating the symmetry of the map.<sup>68</sup>

Although Barnett tries to suggest that his point is not party-political, he is critical of Clinton's geopolitical strategy, as he suggests that it provided the 'financial and technological architecture' for globalisation and the post Cold War period, but did not properly consider the military consequences.<sup>69</sup> It is notable, he suggests, that the US:

Engaged in more crisis-response activity around the world in the 1990s than in any previous decade of the Cold War, yet no national vision arose to explain our expanding role. Globalization seemed to be remaking the world, but meanwhile the U.S. military seemed to be doing nothing more than babysitting chronic security situations on the margin.<sup>70</sup>

He argues that there was no strategic coherence to Somalia, Haiti, Bosnia and Kosovo, and that a new overarching – and we would add *spatial* – strategy needed to be thought out. While containment had been coherent, 'chaos was not'.<sup>71</sup> The strategy to take its place, for Barnett and for others that share his views, is that of 'integration', of spreading the US values that are finding purchase under economic globalisation. All of these problem countries, Barnett argues, are 'largely disconnected from the global economy and the rule sets that define its stability'. It is this lack of connection that is precisely the problem: it is 'disconnectedness that defines danger . . . [that] allows bad actors to flourish'.<sup>72</sup> The deployments of the 1990s were concentrated in regions of the world isolated from the Core, in the hole in the global

<sup>66</sup> For a discussion of the persistence of such geographical imaginaries in American foreign policy discourse, see O'Tuathail, *Critical Geopolitics*; as well as Robert Schulzinger, *The Wise Men of Foreign Affairs: The History of the Council on Foreign Relations* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1984); also his *US Diplomacy since 1900* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998).

<sup>67</sup> Barnett, *The Pentagon's New Map*, pp. 144–5.

<sup>68</sup> See also the 2004 *National Military Strategy of The United States of America: A Strategy for Today; A Vision for Tomorrow*: 'There exists an 'arc of instability' stretching from the Western Hemisphere, through Africa and the Middle East and extending to Asia. There are areas in this arc that serve as breeding grounds for threats to our interests. Within these areas rogue states provide sanctuary to terrorists, protecting them from surveillance and attack'. (<http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/library/policy/dod/d20050318nms.pdf>).

<sup>69</sup> Barnett, *The Pentagon's New Map*, p. 3.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 3.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 23, also see p. 167.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 8.

ozone layer, its 'Non-Integrating Gap'.<sup>73</sup> What we then find is a conveniently double logic: military intervention may be used to confront danger, and thereby spread economic globalisation; economic globalisation will help to spread 'peace and prosperity' as the countries that conform to its rules are less likely to be 'problem' states.<sup>74</sup> Integration will thus benefit the US economy at the same time as it exports peace.<sup>75</sup> For Barnett, therefore, it is essential that current US strategy – 'this new strategy of pre-emption and this new global war on terrorism' – keeps this in mind, and recognises it as the means, rather than an end in itself. Barnett is clear here: 'I am proposing a new grand strategy on a par with the Cold War strategy of containment – in effect, its historical successor'.<sup>76</sup>

Barnett's conditions of a good state are very close to some of the Bush administration's claims about contingent sovereignty: that is, sovereignty is not an absolute state right, but something conditional on adhering to certain rules of behaviour. For Barnett the definition of a good state is 'a government that plays by the security rules we hold dear – like "Don't harbor transnational terrorists within your territory" and "Don't seek weapons of mass destruction"'.<sup>77</sup> The US should have two goals, therefore, in the war on terrorism: 'enuciating that rule set' and 'through our use of military force overseas (for example, pre-emptive war against regimes that openly transgress the rule set)' encouraging its global spread.<sup>78</sup>

Given the spatial imaginary of Barnett's work, one might wonder if a similar logic to containment might be a possibility. In Barnett's cartography it is not so much that there is an inside and an outside, but that *there is a gap inside*. Bush seemingly-unconsciously declared that 'the doctrine of containment just doesn't hold any water',<sup>79</sup> but for Barnett too the question is not merely of ordering the status quo. Rather, it is of creating the means by which new members of the Core can be incorporated, in a way he sees as parallel to the EU, which will allow not merely 'growing the Core but shrinking the Gap as well'. If the Core does not welcome ex-members of the Gap, problems will come to the Core, as happened on September 11th 2001. Indeed, Barnett claims that al-Qaeda can be understood precisely as a reaction against the rules of globalisation: 'in short, we cannot simply put a long fence around the Gap and assume that it can be contained, as the old Soviet threat was'.<sup>80</sup> (Barnett wrote these words before Pakistan's President Pervez Musharraf made the US an offer of fencing the border with Afghanistan.)<sup>81</sup>

Echoing commentators such as Robert Kaplan, Barnett argues that there has been a demise of state-on-state wars since the end of the Cold War. In their place have

<sup>73</sup> Ibid., p. 4.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid., p. 8.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid., p. 82.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid., p. 7.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid., p. 25. This has particular parallels to claims made by Richard N. Haass, formerly of the State Department, and his ex-colleagues like Stewart Patrick. For a discussion, see Stuart Elden, 'Contingent Sovereignty, Territorial Integrity and the Sanctity of Borders', *SAIS Review of International Affairs*, 26:1 (2006), pp. 11–24.

<sup>78</sup> Barnett, *The Pentagon's New Map*, p. 25.

<sup>79</sup> George W. Bush, 'President Bush Meets with Prime Minister Blair', 31 January 2003, (<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2003/01/20030131-23.html>).

<sup>80</sup> Barnett, *The Pentagon's New Map*, p. 56. On al-Qaeda, see pp. 83, 94.

<sup>81</sup> See, for example, Barry Schweid, 'Pakistan Offers Afghanistan Border Fence', *The Washington Post*, 12 September 2005, (<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2005/09/12/AR2005091200701.html>).

exploded internal wars, 'where some subsection of a state wishes to break off from the whole or where social violence between groups within a state erupts into full-blown war'. Leaving aside the way in which many of these wars have been unleashed *precisely* by the end of the Cold War (and therefore the way in which a supposed marker is, in effect, a cause), Barnett conveniently ignores conflicts that do not fit his script: for instance, those between Israel and Palestine, India and Pakistan, and Ethiopia and Eritrea, to cite but a few. Barnett thinks that it is notable that the only wars that do not fit his pattern have been US-led – Iraq 1991, Afghanistan 2001, and Iraq 2003 – but he claims that to describe 'these three wars as interstate conflicts is entirely misleading', because the US was representing the international community. In Barnett's analysis these were actually 'wars between the system and renegade states, with the United States-led coalition serving as the system's proxy or representative. The goal of each war was not to conquer a state for particularistic gain but rather to readmit that disconnected state back to the system – or community – of peaceful states'.<sup>82</sup> In this narrative, the United States figures, again, as world-maker; it does not only represent the 'international community' – it *is* the international community, by virtue of its power-political position, but also its privileged geopolitical eye.

### From Hobbes to Kant: 'more Locke'

Hobbes plays a key role in Barnett's argument. The US in its world-making role is forced to work within a world where human life is 'solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short':<sup>83</sup> this allows for and legitimates a series of actions that cause European nations to balk. Barnett is, in fact, firm in his conviction that the US must function as a global cop, with unilateral freedom of action and legitimacy for pre-emptive action. America is thus called upon to play Hobbes' Leviathan in the Gap: 'We are the world's Leviathan. We decide under what conditions wars will be fought between states – except when we can be trumped by nuclear weapons.'<sup>84</sup>

Why and how is this role justified? Quite simply, because 'might makes right': 'if other Core powers want a greater say in how we exercise that power, they simply need to dedicate enough defence spending to develop similar capabilities. Absent that, America earns a certain right for unilateralism in the Gap'.<sup>85</sup> The US is similarly legitimised in enforcing globalisation, Barnett claims, because this economic system originated with it as it is 'globalization's godfather, its source code, its original model':

But we cannot abandon our creation now that we have already picked all the low-hanging fruit and only the toughest cases, such as terrorism, remain. This gift of global connectivity generating peace is one we must keep on giving, [it is] a benefit that must be made universal.<sup>86</sup>

<sup>82</sup> Barnett, *The Pentagon's New Map*, pp. 85–6. Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri make unusual agreement here, suggesting that the war on terrorism is a civil war within Empire. See *Multitude: War and Democracy in the Age of Empire* (New York: The Penguin Press, 2004).

<sup>83</sup> Barnett, *The Pentagon's New Map*, pp. 161ff.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 299.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 173–4.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 301



Like Kagan, Barnett argues that the Kantian vision of Europe is blind to the realities of large parts of the world outside. While ‘inside the Core we have achieved something awfully close to Kant’s perpetual peace – not just inside the Old Core but likewise inside the New Core of Russia, India and China’,<sup>87</sup> in the chaotic and dangerous world beyond, the US is forced to operate by different rules. There are thus two rule-sets, and previous models of thinking such as ‘Mutually Assured Destruction, deterrence, and collective security inside the Core are not altered one whit by the Bush Administration’s new strategy of pre-emption, because it simply does not apply to the Core – only to the Gap’.<sup>88</sup> This contrast justifies US resistance to institutions such as the International Criminal Court. Barnett claims this is not merely US stubbornness or ‘exceptionalism’, but recognition of ‘geopolitical reality’: ‘America needs special consideration for the security roles it undertakes inside the Gap. In effect, we don’t want fellow Core members applying their Kantian rule sets to our behaviour inside the Hobbesian Gap’.<sup>89</sup> Barnett thus applauds the bilateral agreements the US has negotiated with countries aimed at protecting US troops from prosecution for actions taken in interventions within their borders: ‘It’s a sort of ‘pre-nup’ in this global war on terrorism’.<sup>90</sup> Barnett’s ideas regarding the malleability of the rules of international engagement and international obligations echo Richard Haass’ and Richard Perle’s invocations of an ‘à la carte multilateralism’, as well as the ideas advanced by many other prominent neo-conservatives.<sup>91</sup> Such ideas are also well evidenced in the actions of recently appointed US Ambassador to the UN John Bolton, who captured headlines with his open disdain for international law – and international institutions (Bolton proposed 750 changes to the outcome document of the 2005 World Summit, essentially emasculating the agreed text).<sup>92</sup> Bolton’s inclinations are nothing new, however, and have formed part of a much broader shift in the neo-conservative wings of the American foreign policy establishment from the mid-1990s on: already in 1997, as Senior Vice President of the American Enterprise Institute, Bolton argued that ‘treaties are “law” only for US domestic purposes. In their international operation, treaties are simply “political”, and not legally binding.’<sup>93</sup>

There is an interesting – and very potent – rhetorical play here. On the one hand, international rule-making and international rules are discounted as ‘merely political’ (and thus lesser than the ‘realities’ of world politics). On the other, the dangers of the current international situation are located *beyond the political* (implicitly conceived as

<sup>87</sup> Ibid., p. 169.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid., pp. 170–1.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid., p. 174. The invocation of an ‘objective’ ‘geopolitical reality’ that necessitates, indeed takes for granted, a certain US role also underpins the arguments made by Kagan in *Paradise and Power*, p. 39.

<sup>90</sup> Barnett, *The Pentagon’s New Map*, p. 176.

<sup>91</sup> Robert Kagan is similarly dismissive of international institutions: ‘the UN Security Council is [simply] a substitute for the power that [Europeans] lack’, *Paradise and Power*, p. 40.

<sup>92</sup> [http://www.un.org/ga/59/hlpm\\_rev.2.pdf](http://www.un.org/ga/59/hlpm_rev.2.pdf).

<sup>93</sup> John R. Bolton, ‘US Isn’t Legally Obligated to Pay the UN’, [http://www.aei.org/publications/pubID.17649,filter./pub\\_detail.asp](http://www.aei.org/publications/pubID.17649,filter./pub_detail.asp). Bolton goes on to argue that ‘there may be good and sufficient reasons to abide by the provisions of a treaty; in most cases one would expect to do so because of benefits treaties provide, not because the U.S. is “legally” obligated to do so’. He has made similar arguments in ‘Is There Really ‘Law’ in International Affairs?’ *Transnational Law and Contemporary Problems*, 10 (Spring 2000), pp. 1–48. See Philippe Sands, *Lawless World: America and the Making and Breaking of Global Rules* (London: Allen Lane, 2005), p. 20.

a sphere of compromise and negotiation, of uncertain outcomes) and projected into the realm of (metaphysical) absolutes:

One of us must die. Either the Core assimilates the Gap, or the Gap divides the Core. Either the forces of connectivity prevail or the dictators of disconnectedness thrive. This cancer either spreads or we exterminate it. There is no exiting the Gap; there is only shrinking the Gap.<sup>94</sup>

The medical-military metaphor of a 'cancer' that must be exterminated, of a stain that must be shrunk, is indicative here for it marks many popular descriptions of the terrorist threat and al-Qaeda more specifically.<sup>95</sup> As one unnamed Pentagon official described the organisation: 'they keep likening it to a snake, but it's more like a deadly mold'.<sup>96</sup> George W. Bush has also frequently made recourse to similar metaphors in his evocations of the 'fight ahead': as Rhodes has argued, the 'Evil' evoked by Bush 'cannot be cured. It must be excised. These human pathogens must be eliminated'.<sup>97</sup> It is this illness that 'infected' the US in Washington DC, Pennsylvania and New York City on September 11th 2001, where the Gap came to the Core and the two rule-sets collided. As Barnett puts it, this means 'that although deterrence still holds in the Core's Kantian peace, the reality of the Gap still being a Hobbesian world means deterrence is not enough'.<sup>98</sup> The US must thus recognise that the severed map makes conflict inevitable; that the 'reality' of the world is one of a necessary clash between the Core and the Gap's 'forces of disconnectedness'. The 'Pentagon's New Map' therefore does not merely explain why Afghanistan and Iraq were invaded, but also signs the spaces of the future stages of the war on terror. As Roberts, Secor and Sparke argue, the map is 'both that which is to be explained and the explanation itself, descriptive of the recent past and predictive of future action'.<sup>99</sup> This aim is quite explicit in Barnett's own account of the key briefing he gave to the US Defense Department, presenting his strategic vision: 'What you are looking at are the battle lines in this war. This is the expeditionary theatre for the U.S. military in the twenty-first century . . . Suddenly their eyes light up . . . and the Pentagon has a new map.'<sup>100</sup> (Barnett has also offered more specific comments to the Bush administration on how to 'make sense of our Iraq strategy' in a follow up piece in *Esquire* magazine;<sup>101</sup> a campaign that, in Barnett's logic, was waiting to happen.)<sup>102</sup>

Intervention can, in this vision, quell conflict but especially aid in 'integration': in bringing all those 'dis-connected' parts of the world into the Core. Indeed, Barnett

<sup>94</sup> Barnett, *The Pentagon's New Map*, pp. 249–50; also see p. 153.

<sup>95</sup> Metaphors of disease and infection are certainly not new in American foreign policy rhetoric and, indeed, have pervaded Cold War geopolitical discourse (we can recall Truman's 'rotten apples', for one). See the discussion in O'Tuathail, *Critical Geopolitics*, but also Schulzinger, *The Wise Men of Foreign Affairs and US Diplomacy since 1900*. For a valuable discussion see Alan Ingram, 'The New Geopolitics of Disease: Between Global Health and Global Security', *Geopolitics*, 10:3 (2005), pp. 522–45. On the invocation of illness and disease more generally, see Susan Sontag, *Illness as a Metaphor* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1978).

<sup>96</sup> Quoted in Benjamin and Simon, *The Age of Sacred Terror*, p. 453.

<sup>97</sup> Edward Rhodes, 'The Good, The Bad, and The Righteous: Understanding the Bush Vision of a New NATO Partnership', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, 33:1 (2004), pp. 123–43.

<sup>98</sup> Barnett, *The Pentagon's New Map*, p. 261.

<sup>99</sup> Roberts, Secor and Sparke, 'Neoliberal Geopolitics', p. 890.

<sup>100</sup> Barnett, *The Pentagon's New Map*, p. 154.

<sup>101</sup> Thomas P. M. Barnett, 'Mr. President, Here's how to Make Sense of our Iraq Strategy', *Esquire*, June 2004, (<http://www.thomaspmbarrett.com/published/esquire2004.htm>); see *The Pentagon's New Map*, pp. 204–5.

<sup>102</sup> Barnett, *The Pentagon's New Map*, p. 155.

argues that an expansion of the Core will not only have economic advantages, but also political ones. The trajectory towards Kant's 'perpetual peace', in Barnett's eyes is marked by 'more Locke'.<sup>103</sup> A sequence of names in political theory is thus replayed, in almost evolutionary fashion, to underwrite a new geopolitics: Hobbes to Locke to (perhaps, eventually) Kant. Just as with the simplified binary of an anarchic pre/post-political Hobbesian world opposed to an impossible Kantian political utopia, the deployment of Locke is similarly reductionist. For Barnett, Locke marks nothing other than a model of a particular neoliberal economic model of the good society – limited government for the protection of life, liberty and property. With the introduction of free markets, private property and a minimal state, so the story goes, political and social reform will follow. In a key section of the book, entitled 'Mapping Globalisation's Frontier' Barnett argues, for instance, how Russia ceased to be a threat when it 'ended its disconnectedness', and how China's move through economic and legal, and limited political reform has had a similar outcome.<sup>104</sup> The solution is thus an apparently straightforward one: connection or 'integration' will necessarily yield a dividend of markets and peace – not only to the United States as global 'integrator', but also to the newly integrated states.

Globalisation, in Barnett's vision, is thus invoked as the lens for understanding today's world – but also for transforming it. This is the category Matthew Sparke has described as *geo-economics*: 'a globalist *geo-economics* that both builds on and buttresses the metanarrative of globalization's integrative inexorability'.<sup>105</sup> The globalisation story is inherently contradictory, however: on the one hand, globalisation is seen as having allowed for the emergence of new threats, whether de-territorialised terrorist networks, or failed/'rogue' states. On the other, globalisation is invoked as the 'solution' – the means through which to combat and neutralise such threats. But the globalisation story as told by Barnett (and, in part, also by Kagan) has a further twist: it is a globalisation with a guiding hand, and a guiding model – that provided by the United States. As Barnett argues throughout his book, the US is globalisation's 'source code'. As such, however, it is also (and necessarily) the frontline country in the global battle against the 'forces of disconnectedness' – and thus most at risk (for, to cite Robert Kagan's argument, 'outlaws shoot sheriffs, not saloon-keepers').<sup>106</sup>

And here we come to another possible way in which the invocation of Locke can be understood. The 'transition' envisioned through Locke perhaps marks also the right to revolution, to the overthrow of authority, to the forcible reordering of states – signalling also the right to pre-emptive action. As Adam Wolfson has suggested, 'a Lockean mode of politics is almost hypervigilant against tyranny'.<sup>107</sup> Indeed, Barnett stresses that it is crucial that as:

America seeks to export this new security rule set called pre-emptive war, we are very careful in making sure this strategic concept is correctly understood. In short, pre-emptive war is not a tool for reordering the Core's security structure as some fear. Rather, it is an instrument by which the Core should collectively seek to extend its stable security rule set

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 166.

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 129.

<sup>105</sup> Sparke, *In the Space of Theory*, pp. 244–5, see also pp. 354–5, n. 16.

<sup>106</sup> Kagan, 'Power and Weakness', p. 9.

<sup>107</sup> Adam Wolfson, 'Conservatives and Neoconservatives' in *The Neocon Reader*, ed. Irwin Stelzer (New York: Grove Press, 2004), pp. 215–31, at p. 229.

into the essentially lawless Gap. Our goal should be nothing less than effectively killing transnational terrorism for all time.<sup>108</sup>

A mission, again, 'naturally' granted the United States due to its power-political position (as also Kagan asserts) and its role as globalisation's 'godfather' – but also and perhaps especially as *the only state able to properly perceive the nature of the current geopolitical situation and its dangers*. For Barnett, then, this is the 'creation of a new international security order', in which the 'global war on terrorism' is not 'the twisted creation of a warmongering Bush Administration', but part of a 'global conflict between the forces of connectedness and disconnectedness'.<sup>109</sup>

We might note here that Barnett (just as could be suggested of Kagan and, more broadly, of neo-conservatism and the Bush administration), demonstrates what we could term a residual idealism. This is a realism that attempts to operate with an ideal in mind; or, an idealism tempered by a dose of realism. This is an ideal that purports to transcend narrow state interest and is marked instead by a political and economic belief in freedom: specifically, the transformative political effect of the free market. Barnett has recognised that this fusion led many to criticise his book, suggesting that a Chinese interlocutor noted that he would be expected to be one or the other: 'If you try to balance both', I was warned, 'everyone will assume that one is your false face and the other is your real one'.<sup>110</sup> Yet this conflation/confusion is in itself neither novel – nor unrecognised. From Blair and Bush, to Fukuyama's recent second thoughts,<sup>111</sup> to the British Henry Jackson Society and its 'Project for Democratic Geopolitics',<sup>112</sup> the 'new internationalism' has often defined itself through opposition to *both* realism and idealism.<sup>113</sup>

### Conclusions: the abuses of political theory?

Just as Kagan, then, Barnett stresses both the self-evidence – and the permanence – of the state of 'global war'. In both authors' eyes, the 'war on terror' is not simply the product of specific policies pursued by the Bush administration but, rather, 'the way the world is'. Operating in tandem with the evocation of the naturalness and inevitability of conflict, it makes for a very potent argument. But there is more to Barnett's and Kagan's line of reasoning. For while evoking the *exceptionality* of the moment (and thus justifying a series of exceptional measures), both authors at the

<sup>108</sup> Barnett, *The Pentagon's New Map*, p. 40.

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 45–6.

<sup>110</sup> Barnett, *Blueprint for Action*, p. 72.

<sup>111</sup> Francis Fukuyama, *After the Neo-Cons: Where the Right Went Wrong* (London: Profile Books, 2006).

<sup>112</sup> (<http://www.henryjacksonsociety.org/>) and Douglas Murray, *Neoconservatism: Why We Need It* (London: Social Affairs Unit, 2005).

<sup>113</sup> For a general analysis, see Michael C. Williams, 'What is the National Interest? The Neoconservative Challenge in IR Theory', *European Journal of International Relations*, 11:3 (2005), pp. 307–37. It is also interesting to note that many commentators sympathetic to the current administration have selectively evoked the 'Wilsonian idealism' that supposedly underpins the Bush Doctrine, thus affirming its historical continuity with the mainstream of US diplomatic history, rather than its 'exceptionality' – for a critical discussion, see Lloyd E. Ambrosius, 'Woodrow Wilson and George W. Bush: Historical Comparison of Ends and Means in Their Foreign Policies', *Diplomatic History*, 30:3 (2006), pp. 509–43.

same time deploy an *evolutionary* narrative to recount a parable of global geopolitical 'progress' through a succession of stages, each marked by its iconic political philosopher. Within this trajectory, it is the United States that stands as beacon and model – and helping hand for those states that have yet to make the 'transition' to a proper understanding of today's world; that are yet to be 'enlightened'.

Certainly, such arguments contain echoes of many similar understandings that have emerged in the years since the end of the Cold War – most notably Fukuyama's 'End of History' thesis – but also many ideas found in the arguments made by advocates of the 'diffusion of democracy'.<sup>114</sup> What is qualitatively different about Barnett's and Kagan's arguments, however, is that in their vision not only does the US claim the role of global 'sheriff' (à la Kagan or, earlier, Richard Haass)<sup>115</sup> or global 'rule-maker' (in Barnett's parlance), including the right to pre-emptive action; it also claims the right – the *exclusive* right – to theory, and to *spatial theory* in particular. Within both these imaginations, the United States stands as the only state able to properly perceive – and thus properly map – today's dangerous world. A very powerful affirmation indeed.

In affirming this truth, both Kagan and Barnett trace a fundamental political divide. Barnett inscribes a connected world necessarily opposed to a disconnected gap; Kagan, the division between European and American responses to this new 'reality' of international politics. Their geopolitics of division, while not entirely congruent, are thus certainly complementary. Barnett's disconnected gap is a Hobbesian state of nature – and it is only the America evoked by Kagan that is willing/able to take on the role of Leviathan. But let us return to the question posed at the outset of this piece: that is, why is Europe a problem in this portrayal? And, more specifically, why are Barnett and Kagan so troubled by Kant's ghost? We would like to argue that the neo-conservative allergy to Kant is revealing of a much broader set of attitudes and of the generalised 'war on law' waged by the Bush administration.<sup>116</sup> (Although, as Derek Gregory has noted, there is an interesting slippage in current US tactics, given that at times they are very willing to use the law and, in particular, lacunae within it, for political purpose.)<sup>117</sup>

Let us quickly summarise again the accusations levelled against Europe and its 'Kantian mirage' in particular. The argument is somewhat contradictory: on the one hand, Europe is accused of having abandoned its ('true') power-political past – on the other, it is accused of having failed to modernise, to properly perceive – and react to – the new world order, marked by international terrorism and the globalisation of threat more broadly. Much could be said about the gross reductionism of Kagan's representation of the (supposed) European Kantian ideal as a project of 'world government', marked by the presumption of extending to the rest of the world the model of the 'union' now realised in Europe. Indeed, Kagan says little if anything of

<sup>114</sup> See, among others, Stanley Kurtz, 'Democratic Imperialism: A Blueprint', *Policy Review*, 118 (April 2003), (<http://www.policyreview.org/apr03/kurtz.html>); and Niall Ferguson, *Colossus: The Rise and Fall of the American Empire* (London: Allen Lane, 2004).

<sup>115</sup> See Richard N. Haass, *The Reluctant Sheriff: The United States after the Cold War* (New York: Council on Foreign Relations Press, 1997).

<sup>116</sup> The expression comes from Sands, *Lawless World*, p. xii, although similar arguments are made in Bauman, *Europe: An Unfinished Adventure* and in Habermas, *Der gespaltene Westen*.

<sup>117</sup> See Derek Gregory, 'Vanishing Points: Law, Violence and Exception in the Global War Prison', unpublished manuscript; more broadly see his *The Colonial Present*, n. 27 above.

Kant's idea of 'cosmopolitical right',<sup>118</sup> focusing largely on the misplaced European 'idealism', in Kagan's eyes marked by a naïve belief in the continued validity of the laws and norms governing international behaviour; by a naïve 'legalism'. Such characterisations are far from innocent: as Etienne Balibar has argued, by describing 'the blindness of European consciousness . . . as an "idealism", to which is opposed the "materialism" of history', European and American perspectives are placed in different rhetorical fields 'since on the one side there is *misrecognition* and on the other *recognition* of what constitutes the reality of international relations . . . There is a point of view of the 'real world', *outside ideology*, which allows it to be understood and judged without falling into the trap of an ideological symmetrical'.<sup>119</sup> European 'ideology' is thus opposed to American 'realism' – but also international law itself is defined as an 'ideology',<sup>120</sup> one of many possible ideologies but also inherently 'out of touch' with today's 'realities'.

But the gravest accusation levelled at Europe and its 'idealism' is not simply its attachment to international laws and norms and its failure to recognise the new (and necessary) American world role in the transformed global security condition. It is, above all, *its failure to recognise that the world is 'at war'*.<sup>121</sup> In particular, Europe stands accused of *failing to recognise the 'existential' nature of the 'fight'* which, by its very character, necessitates the suspension of the accepted rules of international behaviour.

This characterisation of Europe serves a double function, for not only does it attempt to rewrite Europe's place in the world (as well as its geopolitical role), but by replacing Europe such imaginaries also implicitly serve to redefine the United States – and the international order – more broadly. Europe has long been a vital foil, a vital mirror to the US' own processes of self-constitution:<sup>122</sup> the attempts to redefine Europe today have been strongly marked by the need to affirm a new, altered US self-image – and the need to redefine the Euro-Atlantic order.<sup>123</sup> As Pierre Hassner, among others, has argued, the need to redefine Europe and the transatlantic partnership speaks to a much broader need to redefine the role of allies and alliances in the new global *temperie*. Today's 'state of emergency', marked by unbounded, omnipresent threats, calls for measures that go beyond established procedures and

<sup>118</sup> Etienne Balibar has suggested that Kagan's critique is levelled not at Kant but, rather, at Habermas' (and other European intellectuals') invocations of the Kantian project; in particular, the idea of the European project as 'an approximation and an intermediary moment in the construction of a Global Juridical Order in which international politics would become a "world domestic policy"'. See Balibar, 'Whose Power? Whose Weakness?', p. 10.

<sup>119</sup> Balibar, 'Whose Power? Whose Weakness?', p. 7.

<sup>120</sup> See also the arguments made in Habermas, *Der gespaltene Westen*.

<sup>121</sup> See the comments in Balibar, 'Whose Power? Whose Weakness?'; Pierre Hassner, 'Puissance et légitimité', *Commentaire*, 100 (Winter 2002–3), pp. 773–805; Pertti Joenniemi, 'Europe "New" and "Old": On the US Power of Altercasting', Paper presented at the Pan-European International Relations Conference, The Hague, 9–11 September 2004. On the power of the constatation that 'we are at war', see also Derrida, 'Deconstructing Terrorism'.

<sup>122</sup> For a discussion, see Michael H. Smith, 'European Integration and American Power: Reflex, Resistance and Reconfiguration', in David Slater and Peter Taylor (eds.), *The American Century: Consensus and Coercion in the Projection of American Power* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1999), pp. 136–48.

<sup>123</sup> This is a process that Joenniemi (following Alexander Wendt) has termed 'altercasting': 'an attempt to induce alter to take on a new identity'. See his 'Europe "New" and "Old" '; and Alexander Wendt, *Social Theory of International Relations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999). For similar arguments, see also Joenniemi, 'America's Old/New Meets Russia's True/False: The Case of Europe's North', *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, 18:2 (2005), pp. 229–41.

alliances; measures that may even question the consolidated organisational frameworks of international relations.<sup>124</sup> The characterisation of a 'Kantian' Europe, weak, complacent, and 'out of touch' with current global realities, therefore tells us more about the United States and its imagined world role than it does about Europe.

As both Kagan and Barnett's geographical imaginations suggest, the governance of the current world (dis)order requires, above all, the ability to properly perceive – and respond to – (properly perceived) threats; in other words, to 'do the right thing', as George Bush has echoed on numerous occasions. In such an understanding, international relations are depicted as 'underpinned by a set of given, non-negotiable and rather absolute criteria that do not lend themselves to politics, dialogue, consultation and compromise'.<sup>125</sup> Those who do not fit the reconfigured moral landscape of international relations, those who do not answer the 'call of duty', or show themselves to be 'people of faith', are accused of everything from complacency, 'waffling' and lack of determination to 'moral relativism'. They are placed on the opposing side of an evolutionary geopolitical divide: stuck with an outdated, out-of-touch vision of international relations that no longer corresponds to global realities – and needs. In such an understanding of the world, ambiguity, negotiation, indeed *politics itself* are as great a danger to the neo-conservative world-view premised on absolutes as the 'evil' to be combated. Diplomacy, compromise, those which Paul Wolfowitz has derided as the 'old relativist policies',<sup>126</sup> all these are no longer relevant in today's world: a world where 'great evil is stirring'.<sup>127</sup>

Certainly, the Hobbes invoked in such readings is a very partial one: the political theorist would, most likely, have seen current US strategies as part of the problem, not its solution (indeed, Hobbes' model of collective security would be not dissimilar to a Kantian one).<sup>128</sup> Moreover, as Michael Williams has persuasively argued, Kant was a far more rigorous and realistic proponent of international order than idealist or realist caricatures paint him to be.<sup>129</sup> But Kagan and Barnett's oversimplifications of such multifaceted thinkers are, in a sense, neither surprising, nor particularly unusual. What is dramatically more significant is the political purpose to which these characterisations are today put. In Kagan and Barnett's geopolitics of division, Europe's 'mis-recognition' of current global realities, marred by its 'Kantian mirage', becomes just as threatening as 'rogue' regimes.

<sup>124</sup> See Hassner, 'Puissance et légitimité', as well as other essays in that issue of *Commentaire*.

<sup>125</sup> Joenniemi, 'Europe "New" and "Old"', p. 10.

<sup>126</sup> See Radek Sikorski, 'Interview: Paul Wolfowitz', *Prospect*, 105, December 2004.

<sup>127</sup> The expression was first used by George W. Bush, 'Remarks to Prague Atlantic Student Summit', Prague, 20 November 2002, (<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2002/11/20021120-4.html>) and later evoked by Vice-President Dick Cheney in his much-publicised 'Address to the Air National Guard Senior Leadership Conference', Denver, CO, 2 December 2002, (<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2002/12/20021202-4.html>).

<sup>128</sup> See Michael C. Williams, *The Realist Tradition and the Limits of International Relations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005); Benjamin R. Barber, *Fear's Empire: War, Terrorism, and Democracy* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2004), p. 89; and Habermas, *Der gespaltene Westen*.

<sup>129</sup> See, for example, Michael C. Williams, 'Reason and Realpolitik: Kant's "Critique of International Politics"', *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, 25:1 (1992), pp. 99–119; and 'The Discipline of the Democratic Peace: Kant, Liberalism and the Social Construction of Security Communities', *European Journal of International Relations*, 7:4 (2001), pp. 525–53.