Performing security: The imaginative geographies of current US strategy

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Abstract

Political geographers have recently focused their attention on the performative nature and imaginative geographies of US security strategies. This work has illuminated a number of mechanisms through which geographical knowledge has been interpreted and reformulated to support specific political agendas. This paper builds upon and develops the insights of these recent studies, arguing that current US security strategies are constructed around a policy of integration, whereby states are encouraged, through a range of measures, to mesh with attitudes and perspectives on the world. It assesses the ways in which these integration strategies are being performed, through an analysis of US National Security Strategy documents, the works of writers such as Kagan and Barnett, and the imaginative geographies and popular geopolitical representations of the US and its enemies. This paper contends that these practices combine to produce the effects that they name, bringing to life an imaginary geography that mirrors and supports the particular logics of the US-led 'war on terror'.
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Introduction: understanding performativity

In recent years there has been a growing interest in the relationship between imaginative geographies and the foreign and security policies of states (Agnew, 2003; Power & Crampton, 2005). Such policies are said to be both enabled by and productive of specific geographical imaginations. Too often, though, these analyses are understood as advocating a form of social constructivism, whereby linguistic enunciations and textual statements are (the critics maintain) determinative of material practices. This conception invites a misreading of constructivism-as-philosophical-idealism, leading to the assertion that if policy makers thought differently the world would automatically be different. Even within critical geopolitics a trace of this concern is evident when we are warned that the project of critical geopolitics "should not be condensed to a formulaic deconstructionism of the politics of identity in texts" (Ó Tuathail, 2003: 164).

In this paper we critically examine recent developments in US strategy, drawing attention to the way in which the imagination of place creates political and spatial realities (Gregory, 2004; Kuus, 2004). This argument relies, in the first instance, on an exploration of the new security texts that have been produced in the post-Cold War era and, more recently, in the aftermath of the attacks of September 11th 2001, an event which has attracted much attention in the field (see Harvey, 2003; Smith, 2005; Sparke, 2005).

However, we wish to reposition the terms of the debate by arguing that in the discursive production of imaginative geographies it is *performativity* rather than *construction* which is the better theoretical assumption. Discourse refers to a specific series of representations and practices through which meanings are produced, identities constituted, social relations established, and political and ethical outcomes made more or less possible. Those employing the concept are often said to be claiming that 'everything is language', that 'there is no reality', and because of their linguistic idealism, they are unable to take a political position and defend an ethical stance.

These objections demonstrate how understandings of discourse are bedevilled by the view that interpretation involves only language in contrast to the external, the real, and the material. These dichotomies of idealism/materialism and realism/idealism remain powerful conceptions of understanding the world. In practice, however, a concern with discourse does not involve a denial of the world's existence or the significance of materiality. This is well articulated by Laclau and Mouffe (1985: 108): "the fact that every object is constituted as an object of discourse has *nothing to do* with whether there is a world external to thought, or with the realism/idealism opposition…What is denied is not that…objects exist externally to thought, but the rather different assertion that they could constitute themselves as objects outside of any discursive condition of emergence." This means that while nothing exists outside of discourse, there are important distinctions between linguistic and non-linguistic phenomena. There are also modes of representation which are ideational though strictly non-linguistic, such as the aesthetic and pictorial. It is just that there is no way of comprehending non-linguistic and extra-discursive phenomena except through discursive practices.

Understanding discourse as involving both the ideal and the material, the linguistic and the non-linguistic, means that discourses are performative. Performative means that discourses constitute the objects of which they speak. For example, states are made possible by a wide range of discursive practices that include immigration policies, military deployments and strategies, cultural debates about normal social behaviour, political speeches and economic investments. The meanings, identities, social relations and political assemblages that are enacted in these performances combine the ideal and the material. They are either made or represented in the

name of a particular state but that state does not pre-exist those performances. As a consequence, appreciating that discourses are performative moves us away from a reliance on the idea of (social) construction towards *materialization*, whereby discourse "stabilizes over time to produce the effect of boundary, fixity and surface" (Butler, 1993: 9, 12). Discourse is thus not something that subjects use in order to describe objects; it is that which constitutes both subjects and objects.

While performativity has been embraced by some domains of geography (notably cultural geography; see Nash, 2000) it has had to date little influence in political geography, especially when compared to its deployment in critical international relations (see Campbell, 1998; Weber, 1998). The provenance of performativity – from its origins in J. L. Austin's speech act theory, through Jacques Derrida's appropriation of Austin to Butler's reworking of Derrida – establishes its utility as a set of theoretical assumptions about agency and power that can negotiate the ideal/material dichotomy without privileging on side over the other. Performativity challenges any implicit valorisation of linguistic representations within post-structuralist approaches without resorting to non-representational theory's tendency to reinstall an ideal/material hierarchy by emphasizing lived practice over and above images and texts (see the discussion in Nash, 2000). Given this, it is paradoxical that the deployment of Butler's work on performativity in cultural geography, while highlighting its challenge to notions of autonomous and wilful subjectivity, has ended up endorsing a "hyper-voluntarist gender politics where it is assumed that we can meddle at will with our gender identities, changing them as we choose" (Lloyd, 1999: 209). Likewise, it is paradoxical that some critics of cultural geography's embrace of performativity transfer the pitfalls of a particular (and flawed reading) of performativity by geographers to pitfalls in Butler's conception of performativity itself (see Nelson, 1999). Of course Butler's arguments warrant critical interrogation, but Nelson's (1999: 332) assertion that Butler "jettisons agency altogether" betrays a limited understanding of how performativity challenges the way both advocates and critics of agency approach the issue. To be sure, Butler's argument contests the idea of the autonomous subject – but she does not seek to dispense with agency *per se*. As Nash (2000: 654) argues, "for Butler the concept of performativity is an attempt to find a more embodied way of rethinking the relationships between determining social structures and personal agency." This involves a comprehensive engagement with agency rather than a presumption of pre-given subjectivity (Butler, 1992: 13).

In addition to the politics of agency engaged through performativity, the value of this theoretical framework for a consideration of state security policy lies in the way performativity can help account for change over time. That is because performativity draws attention to "the re-iterative and citational practice by which discourse produces the effects that it names" (Butler, 1993: 2). Instead of there being a singular moment of constitution or invention that brings subjects into being, there is a process of recitation and repetition (which Butler identifies as synonymous with "the more limited notion of resignification", Osborne & Segal, 1994) that is constrained by cultural and historical practices, but which also gives rise to new formations and possibilities (Lloyd, 1999: 197).

As a result, performativity differs from construction because, as Butler has argued, constructivist arguments tend to operate in two predominant ways. In the first, discourse becomes an omnipotent force so deterministic that 'it' acts as the governing subject such that all accounts of human agency are expunged. This would produce an argument that emphasized linguistic features and paid insufficient attention to the materiality of discourse. In the second – which maintains the logic of the first, but changes the character of the subject – the volitional human agent reigns supreme and wilfully engages in construction without constraint (Butler,

1993: 4–12). In the context of international relations, this would produce an argument in which policy makers or other agents are regarded as being engaged in a sort of conscious and deliberate construction of reality. Such a position might assume, at least indirectly, that policy makers are located outside of the domain of constitution, and have intentional control over variables such as culture, history and identity.

It is, finally, important to call attention to the difference between *performativity* and *performance*. Performativity is a discursive mode through which ontological effects (the idea of the autonomous subject or the notion of the pre-existing state) are established. Performativity thereby challenges the notion of the naturally existing subject. But it does not eradicate the appearance of the subject or the idea of agency. Performance presumes a subject and occurs within the conditions of possibility brought into being by the infrastructure of performativity. This is especially important when it comes to considering the role of named individuals in the development and furtherance of security policy. Although the citation of such names gives the appearance of wilful subjects exercising agency with volition, we argue in this paper, despite calling attention to the performances of individuals or policies, that the continuities between groups of security officials and the arguments they propagate demonstrate the importance of performativity (especially recitation and reiteration as constraints on those performances) in the production of policy.

Methodologically this approach requires an alternative model of explanation, one best explicated by the argument of William Connolly (2005: 869) that classical models of explanation based on "efficient causality" — whereby "you first separate factors and then show how one is the basic cause, or they cause each other, or how they together reflect a more basic cause" — need to give way to the idea of "emergent causality". In this conception, politics is understood as a resonant process in which

> diverse elements *infiltrate* into the others, metabolizing into a moving complex — causation as resonance between elements that become fused together to a considerable degree. Here causality, as relations of dependence between separate factors, morphs into energized complexities of mutual imbrication and interinvolvement, in which heretofore unconnected or loosely associated elements *fold, blend, emulsify, and dissolve into each other*, forging a qualitative assemblage resistant to classical models of explanation (Connolly, 2005: 870. See also Connolly, 2004).

In this context, it is important to understand what an individually named subject signifies, and how we can understand the place of agency within performativity once pre-given subjectivity is contested. In his account of the contemporary American political condition, William Connolly argues that, in contradistinction to any idea of a conspiratorial cabal exercising command, the US is run by a "theo-econopolitical [resonance] machine" in which the Republican party, evangelical Christians, elements of the electronic media and "cowboy capitalists" come together in emergent and resonant, rather than efficient, relationships (Connolly, 2005: 878). This means the major public figures — like the President and prominent media commentators — need to be understood in particular ways. As Connolly (2005: 877) argues:

> It is pertinent to see how figures such as Bush and O'Reilly dramatize the resonance machine. But while doing so, it is critical to remember that they would merely be oddball characters unless they triggered, expressed and amplified a resonance machine larger than them. They are catalyzing agents and shimmering points in the machine; their departure will weaken it only if it does not spawn new persona to replace them.

To support the emphasis accorded performativity rather than construction, in this paper we are concerned with some of the people and practices operating beyond what are usually conceived as the 'official' circles of the state. What we aim to indicate in this article, by way of an outline of a broader research agenda for political geographers, are the ways in which the imaginative geographies performed by a variety of 'security advisers' and popular-academic commentators beyond the administration of George W. Bush have subsequently been invoked by the administration. We also consider, albeit more briefly, the ways in which popular geopolitical imaginaries — in particular, those circulating within current video games and in the mass media — resonate with and reinforce elements of those strategies (cf. Power & Crampton, 2005; Sharp, 2000). Our overall claim is that by identifying the citational practices that are reiterated in cultural and political sites outside the formal institutions of the state, we can begin to appreciate the function performative imaginative geographies play in leading to the expenditure of a nation's blood and treasure.

It is important to highlight the way performativity's idea of reiteration calls attention to changes in historically established imaginative geographies. While US foreign policy has been traditionally written in the context of identity/difference expressed in self/other relationships (Campbell, 1992), we detect in recent strategic performances a different articulation of America's relationship to the world. Signified by the notion of *integration* we identify elements in the formation of a new imaginative geography which enable the US to draw countries into its spheres of influence and control. We show how integration (and its coeval strategies of exclusion) has been enunciated over the last 15 years through popular-academic books, think-tank documents, policy programmes and security strategies, as well as popular geopolitical sources. This concept of integration, we argue, is enacted through a number of practices of representation and coercion that encourage countries to adopt a raft of US attitudes and ways of operating or else suffer the consequences. As such, we are witnessing the performance of a security problematic that requires critical perspectives to move beyond a simple ideal/material dichotomy in social analysis in order to account for more complex understandings of opposition, including the emergence of new, mobile geographies of exclusion.

Non-state scribes

To understand the power of the imaginative geographies guiding current US strategy it is important to look back at the recitation, reiteration and resignification of previous strategic formulations. During the Clinton years, a number of figures who had been involved in various guises in previous Republican administrations wrote widely on the geopolitical opportunities and threats of a post-Cold War era. From specifications of the threat posed by international terrorism, 'failed states' and 'rogue regimes', to the dangers posed by cultural/civilisational conflicts. The individuals and institutions we choose to examine in this section are those whose geographical imaginations have been central in laying the ground for some of the securitizing strategies of the current Bush administration and, specifically, whose work has been key in specifying the importance of "integrating" a chaotic world where conflict is inevitable.

The writers whose work we highlight here occupy a liminal position within policy circles. While not paid members of the administration, they have either occupied such positions in the past or were aspiring to them in the future. They do not, therefore, directly speak for the state (a position that grants them a veneer of "objectivity"), and they navigate in the interstices between academic and "policy-oriented" research: a location that, in turn, absolves them from the rigors of a scholarly discipline, including disciplinary critique. By the term 'non-state

scribes' we wish to indicate those who occupy a liminal zone between academic and non-academic work, working in a range of governmental and private research centres, think-tanks and study groups. What we would like to highlight are some of the ways in which their influence problematises simple, secure understandings of the state and the constitution of 'state-interest'. While these individuals appear as impartial commentators-cum-advisers-cum-analysts, their access to policy circles is open, if not privileged. To the extent that their geographical imaginations are invoked by state power, they are also today's consummate "intellectuals of statecraft": those who "designate a world and 'fill' it with certain dramas, subjects, histories and dilemmas" (Ó Tuathail & Agnew, 1992: 192).

Certainly the most prominent self-styled 'community of experts' intersecting with the Bush administration is the Project for a New American Century (for critical analysis see Sparke, 2005). The PNAC, founded in the spring of 1997, defines itself as a "non-profit, educational organization whose goal is to promote American global leadership" (see PNAC, 2006). Putatively lying outside "formal" policy networks, the Project from its inception has aimed to provide the intellectual basis for continued US military dominance – and especially the willingness to use its military might.

As sole hegemon, PNAC argued, the US could not "avoid the responsibilities of global leadership". But it should not simply "react" to threats as they present themselves: it should, rather, actively shape the global scenario *before* such threats emerge: "the history of the 20th century should have taught us that it is important to shape circumstances before crises emerge, and to meet threats before they become dire" (PNAC, 2000: i).

The resonance of these views with those of the Bush administration should come as no surprise: among the Project's founders were individuals who had held posts in previous Republican administrations and went on to serve in Bush's cabinet: Vice-President Dick Cheney, former Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld and his deputy and now World Bank President Paul Wolfowitz, along with the former ambassador to Iraq (and soon to be US Ambassador to the UN) Zalmay Khalilzad, in addition to well known neoconservatives shaping policy debates in the US today, including Francis Fukuyama, Norman Podhoretz, and William Kristol (see Fukuyama, 2006; Williams, 2005). Unsurprisingly, the most explicit formulation of what would become goals of the Bush administration can be found in the PNAC's manifesto *Rebuilding America's Defenses*, which appeared in the election year of 2000. Here and in subsequent documents, the PNAC envisages the US military's role to be fourfold: "Defend the American Homeland"; "fight and decisively win multiple, simultaneous major theatre wars"; "perform the 'constabulary' duties associated with shaping the security environment in critical regions"; and "transform U.S. forces to exploit the 'revolution in military affairs'" (PNAC, 2000: iv, 5; cf. The White House, 2002b: 30).

It is telling just how spatialised some of these specifications become when worked through in detail. Already in 2000, PNAC argued that the major military mission is no longer to deter Soviet expansionism, but to "secure and expand zones of democratic peace; deter rise of new great-power competitor; defend key regions; exploit transformation of war" (PNAC, 2000: 2). They suggested that rather than the Cold War's "potential global war across many theatres", the concern now is for several "potential theatre wars spread across the globe" fought against "separate and distinct adversaries pursuing separate and distinct goals" (2000: 2, 3). To counter such threats, the US needs to station its troops broadly, and their presence "in critical regions around the world is the visible expression of the extent of America's status as a superpower and as the guarantor of liberty, peace and stability" (2000: 14). They claimed that while US security interests have "expanded", and that its forces "provide the first line of defense in what may be

described as the 'American security perimeter'", at the same time "the worldwide archipelago of U.S. military installations has contracted" (2000: 14, 15). Because the security perimeter "has expanded slowly but inexorably" since the end of the Cold War, US forces – "the cavalry on the new American frontier" – "must be positioned to reflect the shifting strategic landscape" (2000: 14, 15). Equally, their use of the term 'homeland' drew strongly on its use in the Clinton administration – and prefigured the creation of the Office for Homeland Security under G.W. Bush, with the concept strengthened by both the PATRIOT acts and the establishment of U.S. Northern Command.

Again, it is essential that we conceptualize these strategies as both containing and making imaginative geographies; specifying the ways "the world is" and, in so doing, actively (re)-making that same world. This goes beyond merely the military action or aid programmes that governments follow, but indicates a wider concern with the production of ways of seeing the world, which percolate through media, popular imaginations as well as political strategy. These performative imaginative geographies are at the heart of this paper and will re-occur throughout it. Our concern lies specifically with the ways in which the US portrays – and over the past decade has portrayed – certain parts of the world as requiring involvement, as threats, as zones of instability, as rogue states, "states of concern", as "global hotspots", as well as the associated suggestion that by bringing these within the "integrated" zones of democratic peace, US security – both economically and militarily – can be preserved. Of course, the translation of such imaginations into actual practice (and certainly results) is never as simple as some might like to suggest. Nonetheless, what we wish to highlight here is how these strategies, in essence, produce the effect they name. This, again, is nothing new: the United States has long constituted its identity at least in part through discourses of danger that materialize others as a threat (see Campbell, 1992). Equally, much has been written about the new set of threats and enemies that emerged to fill the post-Soviet void – from radical Islam through the war on drugs to "rogue states" (for a critical analyses see, among others, Benjamin & Simon, 2003; Stokes, 2005; on the genealogies of the idea of "rogue states" see Blum, 2002; Litwak, 2000).

What is crucial in the rendering of these strategies, rather, is how those perceived threats are to be dealt with. PNAC, for instance, urged Clinton to take a more hawkish line on Iraq in a 1998 letter (signed by many who would later populate the Bush administration), which concluded with an exhortation: "We urge you to act decisively. If you act now to end the threat of weapons of mass destruction against the U.S. or its allies, you will be acting in the most fundamental national security interests of the country. If we accept a course of weakness and drift, we put our interests and our future at risk" (PNAC, 1998).

Yet another of PNAC's co-founders chose to remain on the 'outside', however – and it is to his work that we now turn. The 'scribe' in question is Robert Kagan, who in June 2002 published a highly influential piece in the foreign policy journal *Policy Review*, later expanded as a book (Kagan, 2003). At the time, Kagan was a political commentator for the *Washington Post* and a writer for a number of conservative monthlies, and had served in the State Department from 1984 to 1998. In the early 1980s he was a member of the Department's policy planning unit, and worked in the first Bush Administration as Secretary of State George Schultz's speechwriter.

Entitled "Power and Weakness", Kagan's essay detailed what he argued was the increasingly evident disparity between American and European worldviews, particularly with regard to the conduct of international affairs. But his analysis, as we will argue here, constituted above all a justification for American power, and its exercise wherever and however necessary. Kagan's analysis – as part of a wider "understanding" of the ways in which the post-Cold

War world "works" developed by neoconservative intellectuals – would prepare the ground, indeed, make "indispensable", US unilateralism and its doctrine of pre-emptive action.

Kagan's article was highly influential, just as Fukuyama's (1989, 1992) "The End of History?" had been 13 years before, because of his profile within the foreign policy establishment, and because Kagan (as Fukuyama) was speaking to friends and colleagues – and, in many ways, reiterating a set of shared understandings. Kagan's claims have been widely discussed, lauded and refuted by academics and political leaders alike (see, for example those referenced in Bialasiewicz & Elden, 2006), so we will present them here only in brief. Kagan's central claim was that Europeans and Americans no longer share a common view of the world and, moreover, that in essential ways they can be understood as *occupying* different worlds: "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". And while Europe has withdrawn into a mirage of Kantian 'perpetual peace', the US has no choice but to act in a Hobbesian world of perpetual war. This state of affairs, for Kagan, is not the result of the strategic choices of a single administration, but a persistent divide and the reflection of fundamentally different perspectives on the world – and the role of Europe/the US within it (Kagan, 2002: 1).

Kagan spends a significant part of his paper (and later book) analyzing 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 because they are "weak": "Europeans oppose unilateralism […] because they have no capacity for unilateralism" (Kagan, 2002: 7). What is more, he claims, the construction of the European "paradise", the "geopolitical fantasy [of] a postmodern system [where] the age-old laws of international relations have been repealed; [where] Europeans have stepped out of the Hobbesian world of anarchy into the Kantian world of perpetual peace" (2002: 11) was made possible only by American power which assured the Cold War peace. America continues to hold this role because "post-historical Europe" will not – and cannot; the US is forced to remain "stuck in history, left to deal with the Saddams and the ayatollahs, the Kim Jong Ils and the Jiang Zemins, leaving the happy benefits to others" (2002: 16). As we have argued elsewhere, the US is thus invoked into a number of positions: as global leader (faced with Europe's failings/withdrawal), but also 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. It is thus, at once, the world's geo-politican and its geo-police; the only state with the 'knowledge' but also the capability to intervene.

Such attitudes clearly inform and reinforce the notion of 'pre-emptive action' articulated in the 2002 National Security Strategy. What is more interesting is that these ideas are also to be found in other contemporary calls for a proper ordering of the world that have issued from the broader community of 'non-state' experts previously described. As we have suggested, what constitutes the force of such understandings is their performative – citational and reiterative – nature. These understandings echo and speak to each other, resonate with one another, thus reinforcing their validity as a faithful description of 'the way the world is'. Of these perhaps one of the most remarkable, and certainly the most explicitly geographical, is Thomas Barnett's "The Pentagon's New Map" (Barnett, 2004). Barnett's vision has not escaped political geographers' scrutiny: Roberts, Secor, and Sparke (2003) have called attention to the power of Barnett's "binary spatial model" and what they termed its "neoliberal geopolitics". More recently, Monmonier (2005) has traced the possible uses of Barnett's cartographies in justifying current and future US interventions.

What we will do here is focus more narrowly on the ways in which the concept of "integration" is deployed in Barnett's work and the specification of the US's role in assuring such integration — at home, abroad, and by all means necessary. Barnett's cartography of international relations is of a disarming simplicity, rendered in map form as a globe divided into a "Functioning Core" and a "Non-Integrating Gap": the Core torn by the "Gap", figured as a dark stain spreading from the equator, spanning most of Latin America, Africa and Asia, and leaching into the Balkans and Central Asia.

"Non-Integrating" areas are those which are, in the words of Barnett (2004: 8), "disconnected from the global economy and the rule sets that define its stability". But disconnection is not only a "problem" for these societies alone: "In this century, it is disconnectedness that 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" (Barnett, 2004: 8).

Disconnection from the global community — or, as Roberts et al. (2003) argue, the global economy — also brings with it disconnection from the "rule sets" governing "proper" international behaviour: "enunciating that rule set is the most immediate task in this global war on terrorism, and promoting the global spread of that security rule set through our use of military force overseas (e.g. pre-emptive war against regimes that openly transgress the rule set) is our most important long-term goal in this struggle" (Barnett, 2004: 25). As noted above, the American role in the enunciation of a new "global rule set" has been the guiding preoccupation of the Project for the New American Century since its inception: a preoccupation which has been materialized within a number of the National Security Strategies (including the most recent iteration issued in March 2006).

It is far from a selfish task, however; Barnett argues that it is America's "moral responsibility" to "share" the rule set: "[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 into the essentially lawless Gap" (Barnett, 2004: 7, 40).

As for Robert Kagan, for Barnett the United States' role is predicated upon, above all, a privileged knowledge of the rule sets (the ability to define "good" and "bad" states), a privileged understanding of "the ways the world works", but also the willingness to enforce those rule sets. America is the Gap's Leviathan: "if other Core powers want a greater say in how we exercise that power, they simply need to dedicate enough defense spending to develop similar capabilities. Absent that, America earns a certain right for unilateralism in the Gap" (Barnett, 2004: 173, 174). Similarly echoing Robert Kagan's dismissal of Europeans' "Kantian illusions", Barnett is even more resolute in affirming that such "illusions" have no place in today's chaotic and dangerous world. In justifying the United States resistance to the International Criminal Court, Barnett suggests that it is not a question of American "exceptionalism" but rather the fact "that 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 behavior inside the Hobbesian Gap" (Barnett, 2004: 174). Barnett suggests that the stakes are high — "One of us must die. Either the Core assimilates the Gap, or the Gap divides the Core" — and that the only response is to exterminate the "cancer"; shrink the gap and thus face up to the reality of the new world situation (Barnett, 2004: 249, 250). As Roberts et al. (2003: 888) suggest, this geopolitics of absolutes is at play beneath the talk of global integration and "neoliberal world vision".

Conflict is therefore inevitable: it is a foundational truth confirmed by the severed map. Barnett's cartography thus serves as both a description of today's world and a prescription for its proper ordering. As Roberts et al. (2003: 890) 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". Insecurity comes not from a specific threatening other but from all those unwilling to integrate; all those refusing their (prescribed) place on the map. As Monmonier puts it, the map's "lines and labels not only rationalize the current [Iraqi] occupation…but also argue for future interventions throughout the Gap" (Monmonier, 2005: 222). This understanding was clearly articulated in Barnett's first book (Barnett, 2004), but is even more explicit in the follow-up volume, revealingly entitled *Blueprint for Action* (Barnett, 2005). US interventions are thus presented as inevitable, until the messiness of the world is made to match the geometries of the Pentagon's New Map.

National security strategies

The concept of integration, invoked in different ways and in different measures by both Kagan and Barnett, is similarly at the heart of the current administration's foreign and domestic policies. The former Director of Policy at the US State Department, Richard Haass, articulated the central tenets of the concept when he wondered:

> Is there a successor idea to containment? I think there is. It is the idea of integration. The goal of US foreign policy should be to persuade the other major powers to sign on to certain key ideas as to how the world should operate: opposition to terrorism and weapons of mass destruction, support for free trade, democracy, markets. *Integration* is about locking them into these policies and then building institutions that lock them in even more (Haass in Lemann, 1 April 2002, emphasis added).

That the US is no longer prepared to tolerate regimes that do not mirror its own democratic values and practices, and that it will seek to persuade such major powers to change their policies and behaviours to fit the American *modus operandi*, is not without historical precedent (Ambrosius, 2006). Nor does the differently imagined geography of integration replace completely previous Manichean conceptions of the world so familiar to Cold War politics. Rather, the proliferation of new terms of antipathy such as 'axis of evil', 'rogue states', and 'terror cities' demonstrate how integration goes hand in hand with − and is mutually constitutive of − new forms of division. Barnett's divide between the globalised world and the non-integrating gap is reflected and complemented by Kagan's divide in ways of dealing with this state of affairs. Much of this imagined geography pivots on the idea of 'the homeland'. Indeed, in the imaginations of the security analysts we highlight here, there is a direct relationship and tension between securing the homeland's borders and challenging the sanctity of borders elsewhere (see Kaplan, 2003: 87).

Appreciating this dynamic requires us to trace some of the recent articulations of US strategy. Since September 11th 2001 the US government and military have issued a number of documents outlining their security strategy. Each recites, reiterates and resignifies both earlier strategic statements as well each other, creating a sense of boundedness and fixity which naturalizes a specific view of the world. Initially there was The National Strategy for Homeland Security (Office of Homeland Security, 2002), and then the much broader scope National Security Strategy (The White House, 2002b; see Der Derian, 2003). These were followed by the "National Strategy for Combating Terrorism" and particular plans for Military Strategy, Defense Strategy and the

"Strategy for Homeland Defense and Civil Support" (Department of Defense, 2005a, 2005b; Joint Chiefs of Staff, 2004; The White House, 2002a). These are seen as an interlocking whole, where "the National Military Strategy (NMS) supports the aims of the National Security Strategy (NSS) and implements the National Defense Strategy (NDS)" (Joint Chiefs of Staff, 2004: 1); and the "Strategy for Homeland Defense and Civil Support" builds "upon the concept of an active, layered defense outlined in the National Defense Strategy" (Department of Defense, 2005b: iii; see also diagram on 6). The updated National Security Strategy (The White House, 2006) presents a further re-elaboration and re-stating of these principles.

As with the understandings we highlighted previously, it should be noted that key elements of these strategies pre-date September 11. Significant in this continuity is the link between the Bush administration's strategic view and the 1992 "Defense Planning Guidance" (DPG). Written for the administration of George H. W. Bush by Paul Wolfowitz and I. Lewis 'Scooter' Libby, the DPG was the first neoconservative security manifesto for the post-Cold War; a blue print for a one-superpower world in which the US had to be prepared to combat new regional threats and prevent the rise of a hegemonic competitor (Tyler, 8 March 1992; see Mann, 2004: 198ff, 212).

Initial versions of the DPG were deemed too controversial and were rewritten with input from then Defense Secretary Cheney and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs General Colin Powell (Tyler, 24 May 1992). Nonetheless, Cheney's version still declared that, "we must maintain the mechanism for deterring potential competitors from even aspiring to a larger regional or global role" (Cheney, 1993: 2).

What we find in this is the kernel of the policies implemented in the administration of George W. Bush, reworked through the Clinton period by such organizations as PNAC (discussed above). The assemblage of individuals and organizations – both inside and outside the formal state structures – running from the DPG, through PNAC to the plethora of Bush administration security texts cited above (all of which draw upon well-established US security dispositions in the post-World War II era) demonstrates the performative infrastructure through which certain ontological effects are established, and through which certain performances are made possible and can be understood.

As we argue throughout this paper, the distinctive thing about recent National Security Strategies is their deployment of *integration* as the principal foreign policy and security strategy. It is telling that Bush's claim of "either you are with us, or you are with the terrorists" (Bush, 2001) relies not on a straightforward binary, as is sometimes suggested, but a *process of incorporation*. It is not simply us versus them, but *with* us, a mode of operating alongside, or, in the words of one of Bush's most enthusiastic supporters, "shoulder to shoulder" (Blair, 2001; see White & Wintour, 2001). This works more widely through a combination of threats and promises, as in this statement about the Palestinians: "If Palestinians embrace democracy and the rule of law, confront corruption, and firmly reject terror, they can count on American support for the creation of a Palestinian state" (The White House, 2002b: 9). Likewise, it can be found in some of remarks of the British Prime Minister Blair (2004) about the significance of democracy in Afghanistan, Africa and Iraq. Equally Bush's notorious 'axis of evil' speech did not simply name North Korea, Iran and Iraq as its members, but suggested that "states *like* these, and their terrorist allies, constitute an axis of evil, arming to threaten the peace of the world" (Bush, 2002a, emphasis added). A comparison of the *like*, alongside the "*with* the terrorists" is actually a more complicated approach to the choosing of sides and the drawing of lines than is generally credited. Simple binary oppositions are less useful to an understanding here than the process of incorporation and the policy of integration.

These examples indicate the policy of integration or exclusion being adopted by the US and followed by certain allies. It warns those failing to adopt US values (principally liberal 'representative' democracy and market capitalism), that they will be excluded from an American-centric world. The place of US allies in these representations is not unimportant. Indeed, the strength of the US discourse relies also on its reflection and reiteration by other key allies, especially in Europe. Above and beyond the dismissive pronouncements of Rumsfeld about Europe's "Old" and "New" — a conception that was inchoately articulated as early as the 1992 DPG — the dissent of (even some) Europeans is a problem for the US in its world-making endeavours (see Bialasiewicz & Minca, 2005). It is not surprising, then, that following his re-election, George W. Bush and Condoleeza Rice embarked almost immediately on a "bridge-building" tour across Europe, noting not trans-Atlantic differences but "the great alliance of freedom" that unites the United States and Europe (Bush, 2005).

For although the United States may construct itself as the undisputed leader in the new global scenario, its "right" — and the right of its moral-political "mission" of spreading "freedom and justice" — relies on its amplification and support by allies. The construction of the United States' world role relies also on the selective placement and representation of other international actors who are "hailed" into specific subject positions (see Weldes, Laffey, Gusterson, & Duvall, 1999). Of course, different actors are granted different roles and different degrees of agency in the global script: the place of key European allies is different from that bestowed upon the peripheral and semi-peripheral states that make part of the "coalition of the willing". Both, however, are vital in sustaining the representation of the US as the leader of a *shared* world of values and ideals. Indeed, the 'lone superpower' has little influence in the absence of support.

Another important dimension of integration as the key strategic concept is its dissolution of the inside/outside spatialization of security policy. The concluding lines of the "Strategy for Homeland Defense and Civil Support" are particularly telling. It contends that the Department of Defense can "no longer think in terms of the 'home' game and the 'away' game. There is only one game" (Department of Defense, 2005b: 40). In part this is directed at the previous failure to anticipate an attack from within: indeed, the Strategy remarks that the September 11th 2001 attacks "originated in US airspace and highlighted weaknesses in domestic radar coverage and interagency air defense coordination" (2005b: 22). In other words, the US needs to ensure the security of its homeland from within as much as without, to treat home as away. In part, however, such rhetoric also reflects a continuity with and reiteration of broader understandings with a much longer history, promoted by a range of US "intellectuals of statecraft" since the end of the Cold War: understandings that specified increasingly hard territorialisations of security and identity both at home *and* abroad to counter the "geopolitical vertigo" (see Ó Tuathail, 1996) of the post-bipolar era.

It is important to note here, moreover, that the 2002 National Security Strategy's affirmation that "today, the distinction between domestic and foreign affairs is diminishing" (The White House, 2002b: 30) also involves the US treating away as a home, or at least, as a concern. From this we can see how the pursuit of integration enables the territorial integrity of other sovereign states to be violated in its name, as specific places are targeted to either ensure or overcome their exclusion (see Elden, 2005). As an example, consider this statement, which recalls the late 1970s enunciation of an 'arc of crisis' stretching from the Horn of Africa through the Middle East to Afghanistan: "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" (Joint Chiefs of Staff, 2004: 5).

In his foreword to the 2002 National Security Strategy, Bush declared that "We will defend the peace by fighting terrorists and tyrants. We will preserve the peace by building good relations among the great powers. We will extend the peace by encouraging free and open societies on every continent" (Bush, 2002b: i). This notion of extension is crucial in understanding the explicitly spatial overtones of this strategy of integration: more than merely about values, democracy and capitalism, it is about a *performative geopolitics*. Put crudely, it is about specifying the geographies of world politics; it is about specifying "the ways the world (now) is" — a presumably descriptive "geopolitical exercise" but that, as all such exercises, also implicitly contains the prescription for putting the world "right".

Imaginative geographies and popular geopolitics

As we have tried to argue, such elaborations of security rely upon the affirmation of certain understandings of the world within the context of which the strategies and understandings advanced by them are rendered believable. What is more, we have tried to highlight how such performances invoke earlier articulations, even as their reiteration changes them. More broadly, we stressed how such articulations provide the conditions of possibility for current — and future — action. Integration thus marks a new performative articulation in US security strategy, but it reworks rather than replaces earlier formulations. One of the ways in which this operates is that the ideal of integration, as we have seen, necessarily invokes the idea of exclusion. The imagined divide between the US 'homeland' and the threatening 'frontier' lands within the circle of Barnett's 'Non-Integrating Gap' thus recalls earlier iterations of 'barbarism' even if their identity and spatiality are produced by more than a simple self/other binary. In the final section of this essay, we will make some brief remarks regarding the disjuncture between the theory and the practice of the enactment of such imaginations. First, however, we would like to highlight some other ways in which these deployments of categories of inclusion and incorporation, on the one hand, and exclusion and targeting, on the other, are also performed in the popular geopolitical work done by a wide range of textual, visual, filmic and electronic media supportive of the 'war on terror' at home and abroad. These cultural practices resonate with the idea of fundamentally terrorist territories, whilst, at the same time rendering the 'homeland' zone of the continental US as a homogenous and virtuous 'domestic' community. Such wide-ranging and diffuse practices that are nonetheless imbricated with each other are further indications that we are dealing with performativity rather than construction in the production of imaginative geographies.

The first example — that of media cartography — concerns the consumption by Western publics of the US urban bombing campaigns that have been such a dominant feature of the 'war on terror'. These involve representations in which the regions and metropolitan areas that were bombed have been constructed as receiving points for the dropping of murderous ordnance. Verticalized web and newspaper maps, for example, have routinely displayed cities like Baghdad as little more than impact points where GPS-targeted munitions are envisaged as landing along flat, cartographic surfaces (Graham, 2006; Gregory, 2004). Meanwhile, the weapons' actual impact on the everyday life for the ordinary Iraqis or Afghanis who are 'collateral damage' has been both marginalized and repressed by the US military through the denial of media access and a refusal to record civilian casualties (see Gregory, 3 May 2004).

The spatialization of good and evil that results from these reinscribed binaries is in stark contrast to the imaginative geographies of other US global discourses, especially that of the

accelerating flows of globalization, which inevitably undermine such simplistic moral cartographies. The challenge of this tension is to be found both 'home' and 'away'. The September 11th 2001 attacks themselves provided a perverse reminder of the stark geopolitical tensions between the diasporic formation of contemporary US cities and efforts to construct simple imaginative geographies of national communities who are purportedly under threat from externalised, terroristic people and places (see Watson, 2003).

Abroad, one contradiction between the moral cartography of terror and the spatiality of globalization can be found in the attention US national security discourse pays to the deepening connectivity between domestic US space and burgeoning circuits of computer communication, electronic transaction, and organized criminal activity. Significant here is the US military's discussion of the risk of cyber-terrorism; their efforts to clamp down on transitional financial dealings of alleged terrorist sympathizers; or their analyses of the biological pathogens which routinely flow around the world's airline and shipping systems (The White House, 2002a). These bring into being a world in which "everything and everywhere is perceived as a border from which a potentially threatening Other can leap" (Hage, 2003: 86). Such a world of porosity, flow and rhizomatic, fibrous connectivities is deeply at odds with the imaginative geographies of exclusion and their moral cartography.

Other examples of popular geopolitics that sustain the exclusive binaries of the 'homeland's' imaginative geography can be found in the recent proliferation of urban warfare video games; cinematic representations of events in the war on terror such as *United 93* and the forthcoming *No True Glory: The Battle for Fallujah*; the latter being based on one of the many popular books to have been written on Iraq (West, 2005). The video games, such as *America's Army* and *Full Spectrum Warrior*,[1] are produced by media corporations in partnership with the US military, inscribing the geopolitical demarcation of 'homeland' from the US military's battle for freedom in Iraq. Indeed, the video game industry seems to have "assumed a posture of co-operation towards a culture of permanent war" (Deck, 2004). The popularity of electronic simulations in which participants command military units to pacify and destroy terrorists in the wild zones of Middle Eastern cities, provides evidence of the popular geopolitical resonance of imaginative geographies promulgated by the formal security institutions of the United States.

However as well as performing new frontiers in the permanent 'war on terror' under the guise of fiction, urban warfare video games also blur into news reports of the Iraq war. For example, Kuma Reality Games – whose slogan is "Real War News. Real War Games" – have sponsored Fox News's openly supportive coverage of the 'war on terror'. They have used this sponsorship to promote a range of urban combat games which simulate all of the key military engagements of the Afghanistan and Iraq campaigns. One game, in their words, centres on US Marines fighting "militant followers of radical Shiite cleric Muqtada al-Sadr in the filthy urban slum that is Sadr city" (KumaWar, 2006). Another recreates the 1982 Iraqi massacre at Dujail that is the basis for Saddam Hussein's war crimes trial. And *Mission 58*, released in September 2005 but foreshadowing a disturbing possibility, allows the player to be part of the special forces operating against Iran's nuclear program. All in all, it is not surprising that the company is able to state that, "KumaWar simulates the dangers US and allied soldiers face with courage on a daily basis. We are honored that active duty US troops play KumaWar regularly, and we invite you to connect with them in our forums to give them your support" (KumaWar, 2006). These games perform the imaginative geography of the war on terror by drawing on what Deck

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[1] See http://www.fullspectrumwarrior.co.uk/index.php for details.

(2004) calls "a cult of ultra-patriotic xenophobes whose greatest joy is to destroy, regardless of how racist, imperialistic, and flimsy the rationale" for the simulated battle.

Conclusions

In the aftermath of September the 11th it has become commonplace to argue that the world has fundamentally changed. President Bush claimed as much when he declared the attacks of that day meant "the doctrine of containment just doesn't hold any water" and the strategic vision of the US had to shift dramatically (Bush, 2003). As a result, *integration* – into a western and American set of values and *modus operandi* – has become the new strategic concept. Distinct from the superficial binaries of the Cold War, integration nonetheless involves its own set of exclusions, with forms of violence awaiting those who are either unwilling or unable to be incorporated.

This paper has traced the emergence of integration as the basis for the imaginative geography of the 'war on terror'. It has done so by maintaining that the production of this imaginative geography should be understood in terms of performance rather than construction. That is because we are dealing with an assemblage of practices – state policy, 'non-state scribes' and the representational technologies of popular geopolitics – which together produce the effect they name, stabilizing over time to produce a series of spatial formations through the performance of security. Given the manner in which this emergent imaginative geography has materialized in the invasion and occupation of Iraq – which was carried out in the name of terror and has created the very terror it named – it is clear when we speak of performance we are dealing with much more than just thinking, writing or speaking differently.

Yet in practice the materialization of such strategies and imaginations has rarely been straightforward. In fact, in many instances the opposite of the intention has been created. We could point, for example, to the ways in which 'territorial integrity' was repeatedly mobilized as a war-aim in the invasion of Iraq and yet the consequence has been the creation of a state which is unable to protect its borders, cannot project its power effectively within them and is in danger of fragmentation into ethnically or religiously created regions (Elden, 2007). The self-serving apologetics of many of those integrally involved in the framing of such policies – Barnett (2005) and Fukuyama (2006), for two – indeed indicate the resilience of the imaginaries we describe, clear and present failures notwithstanding; it is not that they got things wrong, for the basic analysis still holds – it only needs to be enacted more effectively.

In the latest incarnations of these understandings – both in Barnett's new *Blueprint for Action* and within the pages of the 2006 National Security Strategy – we find a re-playing of the basic chain of claims being made. Countries integrated into the global economy playing by American rules are less dangerous than those that do not; US security therefore depends on integrating those countries into that rule set; US policy should be directed towards that goal. This, it is claimed, has benefits beyond merely military security and forms the foundation of economic security. Indeed, the first is often mobilized as the rationale when the second is more clearly the aim. Seemingly unconsciously, the 2006 National Security Strategy proclaims this as a key goal: "Ignite a new era of global economic growth through free markets and free trade" (The White House, 2006: 1, 25). That the strategies in practice have often produced a process of disintegration, of a falling apart and a rending of connections previously made is beside the point in the pure idealism of this new realism. While Bush claims that "like the policies of Harry Truman and Ronald Reagan, our approach is idealistic about our national goals, and realistic about the means to achieve them" (Bush, 2006; see National Security

Strategy, 2006: 49), it may well be that it is unrealistic about the first precisely because it is idealistic about the second.

Yet, as much as this emergent imaginative geography is new and specific to its time and place, so too does it recall a much earlier formulation, as we would expect of a performative geopolitics produced by recitation, reiteration and resignification. When the Spanish conquistadores landed in the New World they were tasked with reading out *The Requirement* each time they encountered indigenous people. Although based on the ideal belief that the Amerindians were people descended from God like the Spanish, this proclamation nonetheless threatened war, forcible conversion and enslavement against the indigenous should they decide against the Holy Catholic Faith once they had been informed of it. Voluntary integration and violent exclusion were thus two modes of the same disposition towards the other, lodged within the same hierarchy of identity/difference (Campbell, 1992: 112–118). Nearly five centuries on, the challenge remains very much the same – can the security performances of the major power of the day relate to others in ways less violent and more ethical?

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