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Reviews & Essays



Dreaming Europe in a Wide-Awake World

James C. Bennett

Timothy Garton Ash, *Free World: America, Europe and the Surprising Future of the West* (New York: Random House, 2004), 286 pp., \$24.95.

Thomas P. M. Barnett, *The Pentagon's New Map: War and Peace in the Twenty-First Century* (New York: Putnam, 2004), 320 pp., \$26.95.

Christopher Booker and Richard North, *The Great Deception: The Secret History of the European Union* (New York: Continuum, 2004), 474 pp., \$39.95.

Olaf Gersemann, *Cowboy Capitalism: European Myths, American Reality* (Washington, DC: Cato Press, 2004), 320 pp., \$29.95.

Jeremy Rifkin, *The European Dream: How Europe's Vision of the Future Is Quietly Eclipsing The American Dream* (New York: Jeremy P. Tarcher/Penguin, 2004), 434 pp., \$25.95.

the generally prosperous and free First World, the economically stagnant and drably totalitarian Second World, and the seemingly hopeless Third World. Today, that disturbing but fairly simple tripartite classification has been replaced by a much more complex picture. What stands out in this new picture is the way winners and losers are emerging within each of the former categories. Within the former Third World, erstwhile basket cases such as China and India have become awakened giants, economically dynamic and increasingly more assertive on the international stage, while other Third World locations have become more of a Fourth World, sinking into a Conradian heart of darkness, breeding a seemingly endless mess of massacre and terrorism. The bright lights of Prague, Budapest and Warsaw signal a reborn eastern Europe, while Belarus and Ukraine struggle, and Russia wavers in between. Even in the First World, more and more is heard of Atlantic Divides and a growing feeling that America and a uniting Europe have less in common with each other and more in common with other parts of the world. Making sense of this complexity and illuminating a path forward is the intellectual task of today, one which becomes a metric for judging all international trends and policy analysis.

THE WORLD today is a vastly different place from what it was thirty years ago. Then the picture was dominated by the stark contrast between

One of the most interesting analytical problems is that presented by the divergent paths taken by the developed nations of the First World, and their respective degrees of success. These are sometimes segmented out as Europe, America and Japan, but the more useful division is probably one of Japan, Continental Europe and what are variously called the “Anglo-Saxon” economies or, increasingly, the Anglosphere. In the early 1970s, all three of these regions were seen to be facing roughly the same set of problems: first, stagnation of a modified market economy defined by substantial economic regulation, high marginal tax rates, and a fairly high percentage of GDP captured by the public sector, as well as high wage levels and inelastic industrial structures reinforced by strong unionism; second, a declining birthrate, which promised trouble downstream for pay-as-you-go pension and benefits programs; and third, a weakening of the old sources of social cohesion, particularly religion, patriotic narratives in education and the media, and (in some countries) ethnic homogeneity.

From the end of World War II to the early 1970s, all three sectors of the developed world enjoyed a general economic expansion. Continental Europe and Japan in fact each experienced more rapid growth and development than the English-speaking nations, mainly from the spur of postwar reconstruction. However, as more and more of the Third World began adopting aggressive, export-driven industrialization strategies, the old cozy collaboration of government protection and passing wage increases on to the consumer began to fall apart.

The Anglosphere nations, led by the United States and Britain, reacted by reducing marginal tax rates, privatizing and deregulating markets, and refusing to subsidize declining smokestack industries. High levels of immigration were accepted, reversing the demographic pat-

terns of decline. Continental European nations responded by increasing European integration, thus expanding internal market opportunities but retaining and even reinforcing the “social market economy”—legislated job protection and generous social benefits, particularly for the unemployed.

A wave of European Union-mandated privatizations ended the most egregious boondoggles, and small, protected national companies were absorbed into a smaller number of EU-wide champions, which were protected more subtly by disguised subsidies and ingenious non-tariff barriers. Meanwhile, most European nations accepted “guest workers”, increasingly from North Africa and Turkey. But their assimilation into European national cultures was never aggressively pursued.

Finally, Japan addressed essentially the same set of problems through aggressive use of automation and offshore production, honing their competitive capabilities, and continuing a rather blatant policy of domestic protection. Japan also employed other labor-saving strategies and a minimal number of temporary foreign workers, though making clear that they were expected not to become permanent residents.

So the world economy must today be considered as one vast experiment. The object of this experiment is to determine whether the developed nations might continue to enjoy at least their current levels of prosperity, while the large developing nations of India and China become major economic players and a host of smaller, newly industrialized countries acquire the capability to offer almost every sort of manufactured good and advanced service at the same quality and lower price.

Author Neal Stephenson once famously described this process ending with a global standard of living stuck at “what a Pakistani brickmaker would consider to be prosperity.” The chal-

lenge for the developed world is to avoid this fate, while not retarding the emergence of these major new players. At the same time, we must deal with those parts of the world that, for whatever reasons, are not climbing the ladder to prosperity. Engagement with these disadvantaged areas is less a matter of philanthropy than of the acute security challenges presented by the current anarchy. These areas, instead of exporting trade goods, are supplying large numbers of desperate immigrants, legal and illegal, and smaller but highly troublesome numbers of criminals and terrorists.

IT IS IN this global and historical context that we must examine Europe's present and future, and what they may mean for the United States. Any static view of Europe today, or one that merely contrasts Europe and the United States in a less-than-global context, is worse than useless. Whatever the relative standings of Europe and the United States may be today, they will be different tomorrow. For anyone seeking to understand Euro-American differences in this context, Jeremy Rifkin's and Olaf Gersemann's respective treatments of Europe relative to America provide examples of two dramatically contrasting approaches encountered in this debate.

One holds that the American approach is dynamic and responsive to competition, and thus it is progressive, and therefore good. The other holds that the European Union, by increasing the scale of its market beyond that of the United States, will overcome whatever inefficiencies remain from its social market capitalism and overtake the United States, and thus that it is progressive, and therefore good.

Gersemann's treatment is closest to the first position. Its particular distinction lies in addressing the "yes, but..." arguments made by Europeans and their admirers when addressing the visible GDP gaps between America and Continental

Europe. These run "Yes, America has a substantially lower unemployment rate ... but that's because so many Americans are in prison", or "America makes more jobs, but they are low-wage, service-sector 'McJobs.'" (Gersemann characterizes the latter argument as "We can't actually make any jobs, but if we did, they would be good ones.") Gersemann systematically and persuasively rebuts such arguments.

Rifkin's book is a strange duck. It initially seems to offer a conventional example of the second Europeanist position. And in fact, it does include the standard Euro-critiques of the American socioeconomic approach: prisons, McJobs, consumerism and so on. As usual, these arguments are used to fill in the argumentative gaps created by the shortcomings of actual, existing Europe, as opposed to the theoretically ever-more-efficient Europe beloved of the *Wall Street Journal* and the *Economist*.

Layered underneath these fairly standard approaches, however, is a deeper and more philosophical level of argument than Europeanists usually present. Rifkin argues that the European approach (*The European Dream* of his title) is precisely the abnegation of traditional progressivism in its most fundamental sense: the belief in the desirability of material and scientific progress, and the individual identity and freedom that accompany it. Thus, Rifkin's is a two-level critique of America contrasted with virtuous Europe. First, he asserts that Europe is surpassing America on the conventional criteria of prosperity. But he then adds that where economic success is absent in Europe, that's okay too, because progress is bad for you anyway.

Rifkin, therefore, requires critiquing on both levels. Gersemann, in debunking the general Europeanist criticism of America, (his book was written prior to the release of *The European Dream*) provides an excellent analysis of Rifkin's sur-

face level. The case for the coming European triumph over America is quickly refuted. Gersemann, himself a German financial journalist (currently Washington correspondent for *Wirtschaftswoche*), convincingly refutes all of the prevailing Euro-legends about America, from the supposedly collapsing middle class to medical care to income inequality. He likewise documents the growing structural and demographic crisis of a Europe that has created more unfunded obligations than it can fulfill—while producing too few children to pay the bills their parents are racking up.

Immigration, which is now hoped to be able to fill the demographic gap, remains problematic. It is exactly the postmodernist multicultural narrative so praised by Rifkin that has created an unassimilated immigrant underclass. This underclass is a poor candidate for stepping up to the greater taxes needed to fund the lavish pensions now coming due. Young, mostly Muslim families struggling under ever-increasing payroll taxes will hear calls from ethnic-based politicians to repudiate the checks that old rich white Europeans had written to themselves. To the extent that Rifkin holds up Europe as a model for Americans to emulate, he is in effect urging the purchase of a ticket on the Titanic.

AT THIS POINT one must turn to the underlying level of Rifkin's critique, that of the entire complex of ideas of autonomous individuals with enforceable constitutional rights. In essence, Rifkin is saying "Okay, perhaps United Europe will after all be poor and strife-ridden. But at least you will lose your freedom and individualism in the bargain." Rifkin presents a distillation of the positions of a number of European intellectuals over the past decade or two (but with roots in a Europeanist tradition going back much further). This argument states, roughly, that the entire idea of

progress—of autonomous individuals possessing stated constitutional rights in a contract-based market society—is a historical aberration, and an unfortunate one. Rifkin traces it to the Renaissance and the Industrial Revolution and certain precursor events, including the introduction of scheduled time by the Benedictine order.

In Rifkin's narrative, medieval people lived a collective lifestyle, in which individuals were embedded in a web of connections and did not think of themselves as apart from their colleagues. It was only the introduction of the proto-capitalist mentality that shattered this comfortable universe of family, congregation and community and transformed mankind into alienated individuals. The *coup de grace* was provided by extreme Protestant sects in the English Civil War, who used the new invention of printing to shatter the last stands of community by preaching the direct link, via the Bible, between man and God. These individuals went on to develop capitalism and technology, destroy the environment, subdue the Third World, and create our current world of SUVs, beef eating, obesity, and excessive punctuality (to give some idea of the *bêtes noires* inhabiting Rifkin's earlier works critiquing the American way of life). America is of course the ultimate example of this alienated world, while Europe is on the path back to connectedness, mostly by creating vast, unaccountable bureaucracies and substituting positive rights (things the state must do *for* you) for negative rights (things the state cannot do *to* you).

What Rifkin is talking about is familiar to anyone who has studied the historiography of the Industrial Revolution: Marx and Engels on alienation, Tönnies' distinction between *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft* societies (the former Rifkin's medieval, status-based, "connected" societies, the latter modern, contract-based individualist societies), and Max Weber's famous "Protestant Work Ethic" thesis.

All these theorists posited a world characterized by universal laws of cultural evolution: Everyone was once tribal, then agricultural, then feudal, then modern (or is destined eventually to become so). The Marxists posited subsequent stages of socialism and communism, and others debated how, when and why peoples moved from one stage to another. Rifkin's novel contribution is to identify the emerging European postmodernist society as the next stage. Instead of a proletarian revolution ushering in central planning, we are to have a centralized bureaucratic revolution that will plan proletarian immobilization.

BUT WHAT if there are no inevitable stages of social evolution? What if some people have never displayed the characteristics of *Gemeinschaft* society, but have been individualists from as far back as records could show? This in fact seems to be the case. It is the English (and their cultural descendants throughout the Anglosphere) who for many centuries have been the exception. Over the past thirty years, an intellectual revolution has been taking place in historical sociology, led in particular by Alan Macfarlane (whose works deserve a more substantial treatment in this regard than is possible here).

Macfarlane and his associates have demonstrated very convincingly that English society back to Anglo-Saxon days has been characterized by individual rather than familial landholding; by voluntary contract relationships rather than by inherited status; and by nuclear rather than extended families. Individuals were free of parental authority from age 21 on, and daughters could not be denied their choice of husband (unlike on the Continent). The English nobility, regularly churned by elevation of commoners and marriage of younger sons to non-titled families, tended to mix freely with the rest of society, rather than being a

separate caste, again as on the Continent. Rather than the English Reformation being the event that caused this change, it seems to have been (for the majority of the population) the event that brought formal theology and church government more in line with the pre-existing customs of the country. So the English "peasant" that Hollywood is fond of depicting turns out to be the figment of a 19th-century Marxist's imagination.

Macfarlane's body of work represents a momentous intellectual revolution. The implications of this revolution have not yet been fully realized, or even generally understood. It suggests that modernity and its consequences came particularly easily for the already-individualistic English. Conversely, it came particularly hard for the Continental Europeans, whose societies were characterized by all the non-individualistic features England lacked. It was to these Continentals that the intrusion of individualist, market-oriented relations was particularly disruptive and shocking. With medieval traditions of representative government moribund or long vanished, it is not surprising that Continental states had a particularly difficult time adjusting to parliamentary government, experiencing instead frequent coups, revolutions and periods of authoritarian rule, spiraling down to the abyss of fascism and communism.

It has been usual to write the history of the past two centuries of Continental Europe as one of modernity and democracy punctuated by periods of exception, but it may be more accurate to see the period from 1789 until the very recent past (France's current political arrangement dating back to 1958, Spain's to 1976) as a long, difficult and perhaps incomplete period of adjustment to modernity. Although certainly the majority of most Continental populations made a perfectly successful transition to modernist life, a significant minority never fully bought in to the psychology or

assumptions of liberal society, and thus were easily recruited into the darker visions of fascism. That may explain why Anglosphere nations never developed significant fascist movements, despite experiencing the same traumas of postwar disillusionment and economic depression.

In this light, Rifkin's European dream becomes just one more chapter of what economist Brink Lindsey has aptly dubbed the Industrial Counter-Revolution—a diversion from the path to modernity rather than an effective alternative to it. Fortunately, this version of it lacks the fascination with violence and the cult of leadership that characterized the previous rejection of modernity in Europe (not to mention the effective military organization). Still, the Europeanist dream as articulated not just by Rifkin but by many intellectuals incorporates so many of the tropes of the authoritarian anti-Americanists from the Europe of 1921–45 that the current “Atlantic divide” (which in reality is still more of a Channel divide) may not be easily or quickly resolved.

ONE MUST then ask, if the divide between *les Anglo-Saxons* and the Continentals is genuinely deep rooted, why have Atlantic relations over most of the past fifty years been so relatively tranquil? It may be because the Cold War years, with their combination of Soviet threat and open American markets for recovering Continental industries, and with the Third World economically invisible, provided a period of unique military-political stability and economic opportunities that provided uniquely strong incentives to smooth over problems. With the end of the Cold War, the first incentive has disappeared. With the rise of the newly industrialized countries, the European share of the American export market continues to shrink. Japan now competes for the luxury markets Europe used to dominate,

India targets software, while China and the East Asian Tigers take the low-cost manufactured-goods slot from Japan. The Anglosphere nations have navigated this tightrope with a combination of maintaining the high-technology pioneer slot, aggressively combining offshore, low-cost labor with their managerial and financial talents (a strategy followed by Japan as well), and growing their domestic services sector, primarily by entrepreneurship. Continental Europe has so far proven too slow and inflexible to follow this pattern. In this environment, the Anglosphere-Eurosphere divide promises to widen, not shrink.

Rifkin's analysis either ignores or trivializes this problem, despite his frequent invocation of the term “globalization”, which in his eyes becomes primarily a justification for European-style multiculturalism. Fortunately, this global context is becoming more widely recognized. Two new books coming from the opposite sides of the British debate on Euro-Atlantic relations, Timothy Garton Ash's *Free World* and Christopher Booker's and Richard North's *The Great Deception*, provide a much more illuminating discussion, and one rooted much more soundly in current realities.

The British debate is particularly interesting, because Britain is a sort of canary in the mine for Euro-Atlantic relations. Any perturbation in those relations is usually foreshadowed by a perturbation in British politics over the same issues. This debate thus cannot be resolved without finding a consensus on exactly what “Europe” and “America”, or increasingly, “the Anglosphere” mean, and where and how Britain fits into each. This debate has been continuing unresolved for decades. As issues such as the Single Currency and the current European constitution have begun to present Britain with the prospect of an irreversible commitment to the EU, the debate has become increasingly acute and shrill.

Timothy Garton Ash, a British historical scholar of high reputation *and* a convinced Europeanist, has produced a work that promises to help move the debate toward a consensus on at least the underlying questions, if not necessarily the right answers to them. He imaginatively casts Britain as a four-faced Janus, looking simultaneously in four directions, each of which represents an aspect of British reality, and each of which calls Britain down a particular path. These four directions he identifies as Europe, the Anglosphere, the wider globalized world, and finally the inward-looking focus on the traditional Britain. The Europeanists call for the whole-hearted involvement of Britain in the European Union, the Anglospherists call for the rebuilding of institutional ties to the United States and the Commonwealth, the globalists emphasize the UN and other fully international or transnational bodies, and the Little-Englanders emphasize the recovery of traditional Britain with an unaligned, self-interested foreign policy. Resolving this “Janus dilemma” is both Britain’s problem and a wider problem of the Euro-Atlantic West.

Ash’s formulation is a welcome advance for the Euro-Atlantic debate. One of the principal obstacles to a useful discussion of Euro-Atlantic issues and Britain’s options therein has been the insistence by the Europeanist side that Britain is entirely a European power and that its Anglospherist side is either defunct or irrelevant. Ash states forthrightly that “the Anglosphere is an economic reality”, both in the sense that the economies of the English-speaking nations share a recognizable and distinct profile compared to others, and that they do a very substantial amount of business with each other. He cites also the “Inglehart Human Values and Beliefs” study, which found that English-speaking nations form a separate and distinct cluster from other world cultures. So for Ash,

the question becomes, “what formulation of interests balances Britain’s European, Anglosphere, global and inward sides?”

His question is useful because it proceeds primarily from his awareness of the new global situation: one in which the need for the poorest of the Earth to catch up, the need for the newer developed nations to prosper, and the need for the old developed nations to preserve their prosperity each gets due attention. His answer is, basically, for the developed nations, and particularly the Euro-Atlantic West, to set aside whatever differences they have, renew the mutually advantageous working relationships they enjoyed between 1945 and 1989, and focus on creating a genuinely global prosperity.

In pursuit of this goal he makes a remarkable plea for mutual understanding, reaching out to Americaphobes in Europe and Europhobes in America. His attempt at explaining the actions of the United States since September 11, 2001 from the American point of view for the benefit of Europeans is fascinating to read. If it had been written by any literate American other than a convinced internationalist, it would seem like an unremarkable statement of reality. In fact, it represents a stupendous feat of imaginative reconstruction on Ash’s part, comparable to Anthony Burgess’s writing a first-person novel-length narrative from a homosexual viewpoint in *Earthly Powers*.

Given this recognition of the genuine case for an Anglosphere identity and dimension, two questions for Britain regarding Europe arise. First, is Britain a European nation with a special relationship to the United States, or is it an Anglosphere nation with a special relationship to Europe? Second, given that it must interact with both spheres, what should the exact nature of the institutional ties with each be? Ash does not really answer the first question, although his presentation gives plenty of evidence for the idea that its Anglosphere identity is

primary, while his stated conclusions imply that the European predominates. Ash's answer to the second question is essentially that Britain must fulfill its destiny by participating fully in the European Union and embracing further integration. But it must also attend to its Anglosphere side by pursuing larger Euro-Atlantic integrative structures, such as a trans-Atlantic free-trade area and a revived NATO integration.

Laudable as such structures are, Ash at the last minute weakens his argument by shying away from the difficult points. His diagnosis is convincing, his prescription less so. The question comes back to this: Are the structures of the EU the best vehicle for resolving Britain's need to maintain both cross-Channel and intra-Anglosphere ties? And are the structures of the European Union adequate to the task of maintaining the integration of Europe in the wider Euro-Atlantic world, and in the world in general?

BEFORE ATTEMPTING to answer this question, it would be highly advisable to read Booker's and North's *The Great Deception*. These authors, experienced journalists and committed British Euroskeptics, have written a history of how the EU came to be and what the consequences of its peculiar genesis have been. The book is a substantial achievement. It meticulously documents the origins and development of the Union, and in the process destroys a number of common myths, including ones beloved of Euroskeptics and Europhiles alike. For example, although they write from a Euroskeptic perspective, the authors dispel the charges made by many Euroskeptics, including historian John Laughland, that the EU derives primarily from wartime Nazi plans for a *Europäische Wirtschaftsgemeinschaft* (European Economic Community, also the original name of the EU). They demonstrate that such plans were never much more than a pro-

paganda exercise to permit collaborationists to rally local support in occupied countries, and that there was no significant continuity between this planning and postwar Europeanist activity.

On the other hand, they re-examine the myth that the EU was the product of gallant anti-Nazi resistance fighters who wished to make sure that war and tyranny would never trouble Europe again. In fact, Booker and North demonstrate that the Europeanist idea dates back to the experience of Paul Monnet and a handful of European bureaucrats in the First World War. They first glimpsed that the way to achieve intra-European economic (and ultimately political) integration was through the same kind of unelected international technical organizations, such as the World War One Inter-Allied Maritime Transportation Board, in which they routinely made decisions that affected the economies of a third of the globe.

It was these experiences that led Monnet and a few partners to set up a series of economic bodies during the chaos of postwar reconstruction, beginning with the European Coal and Steel Community. Having once established them, they relentlessly expanded their reach. The underlying pretense—that the move toward European integration was primarily an economic rather than political exercise—is the “Great Deception” of the book's title. Like a miser hoarding his coins, Europeanists never missed an opportunity to shift power away from nation-states. This strategy led to the European Union, but also became its Achilles' heel. For in gathering power by stealth and exercising it without effective accountability, a substantial “democracy gap” arose—alas, not entirely to the creators' dissatisfaction.

Populations in many European countries repeatedly found their governments making decisions that went against their explicit wishes, and finding, like the Irish, that when they voted the

“wrong” way on European matters in referenda, they were told in effect to “vote again until you get it right.” This democratic deficit, inherent in this model of transnational governance, threatens to weaken support for European solutions just when the pressures of demography demand they be strengthened and reformed. For the British, who have an escape hatch in the form of their Anglosphere and global connections, this may not be fatal. But for the Continental Europeans, their pressing problems require a realistic assessment of their global situation.

Draw a circle on the map of a thousand miles radius, centered on Brussels. Within that circle the states are free and democratic, and military conflict is virtually unthinkable. Now draw a similar thousand-mile circle centered on Tokyo. Within that circle or very near lie a half-dozen states. Three of them have nuclear weapons and the rest are close. These states are rising economic, technological and industrial powers. In contrast to Europe, it is highly conceivable that such weapons, or other weapons of mass destruction, could be used at any time. The transnational institutions and agreements that preclude war in democratic Europe have little purchase in this region.

Europeanists have maintained that Europe’s model is the world’s future, but while Europeans were combining nation-states into a wider entity after World War II, northeast Asians were taking an existing single-market area (pre-war Japan, which integrated Korea, Taiwan and Manchuria) and turning it into separate nation-states, with equally prosperous results. Even today there is no visible movement to a Northeast Asian Union, although many writers automatically assume that other regions will imitate European structural models. Both *Free World* and *The Great Deception* suggest the conclusion that the EU is

probably a one-off happenstance from unique historical circumstances. Once one leaves the immediate neighborhood of Brussels, transnationalism does not seem so inevitable.

America faces both Brussels and Tokyo, and must act in both of these universes. It deploys troops and nuclear weapons in both theaters. Is it any wonder that America cannot wholeheartedly adopt the Europeanist outlook?

YET IT IS this global environment that we must consider as we contemplate Thomas P. M. Barnett’s *The Pentagon’s New Map*. Barnett describes a world in which the historically industrialized nations are the Old Core, the new industrial powers are the New Core, and the bulk of the old Third World that has not achieved takeoff is the Gap. He sees the task of the 21st century as stabilizing the Gap enough for it to adhere to the Core through “connectivity”—flows of capital, people and trade goods. In order to sustain these flows in a stable world, he would combat anti-globalization jihadis (not all of them radical Muslims) with a combination of hard military power, “soft” economic-political power, and a new synthesis of the two: a “nation-building” capability which he calls the “System Administrator.” This last would have been called a colonial constabulary and colonial civil service in the 19th century. Its mandate today, however, would not be an imperial one, but would emanate from the web of transnational institutions that have sprung up, and the bulk of its power would be provided by the United States.

Many of Barnett’s basic assumptions—the generally beneficial effects of globalization, the utility of connectedness in fighting the anti-globalization jihadis, and the stake that the Core nations, old and new, have in seeing globalization defeat the jihadis—will meet with general agreement. He is also to be commended for

realizing that the entry of India and China as first-rank players is a major development of our era, and for constructing a worldview that integrates this fact fully rather than treating it as an afterthought. But his worldview and analytical framework still deserve closer scrutiny.

It makes sense to focus on connectivity as a factor in Gap-state failure, for instance. But Barnett goes further, maintaining that lack of connectivity is the most useful predictor of Gap-state failure and violence inviting outside military intervention. He originally defined the Gap by observing the clusters of U.S. military interventions during the 1990s and then trying to define what these areas had in common. One of these four clusters was the Balkans, specifically the former Yugoslavia and Albania. Yet although Yugoslavia was less “connected” by Barnett’s criteria than, say, Austria or Italy, it was certainly far better connected by almost any definition than Bulgaria or Romania, both now candidate countries for EU accession. It seems his “connectivity” metrics might actually be markers for something else. Perhaps the “strength of civil society” is a more reliable underlying predictor of a state’s ability to lift itself out of the Gap than connectivity *per se*.

A much more significant weakness is that Barnett’s focus on the Core-Gap dichotomy leads him to minimize the importance of the existing links that connect particular Gap countries with particular Core nations. Given cheap air transport and telecommunications rapidly moving to a worldwide flat rate, the old paths of empire and emigration have given rise to a series of fluid, overlapping worldwide network civilizations. In the place of the British Empire there is now a demotic Anglosphere of Birmingham curry houses and Indo-American software engineers, a son of Jamaican emigres becoming Secretary of State, and Filipino immigrants commanding British, Australian and American troops together. The

cocked hats and pith helmets these days are only seen over the faces of hometown boys made good and appointed Governor-General in Kingston or Belmopan. In much the same way, the former realm of the conquistadors is now a demotic Hispanosphere, the old French empire is now a Francophone network, and so on.

The key point here is that these new constructs all cut across Core-Gap lines, yet they are almost always the most effective lines along which the money, people, goods and services will flow to bring connectivity from the Core to the Gap. Rather than striving for universality of approaches, we would do better to work with the grain and maximize the use of these existing channels.

This applies also in matters of grand strategy. Bismarck famously remarked that the most important reality of the 20th century would be the fact that the United States spoke English. The most important fact of the 21st century may be the fact that the educated and ambitious of India have made of English not merely a useful foreign tongue, as have the Chinese, but a language they have taken into their homes and their literature, and into their heads and hearts by creating their own version of it. The new rising generation of well-educated, tech-savvy Indians increasingly regards this intertwining of India and the Anglosphere not as a colonial relic, but as a valuable card that history has dealt to their country, and one that should be played. Evidence that it *is* being played can be seen in both the quietly accelerating Indo-American military cooperation and the rapidly accelerating economic interpenetration between India and America.

THE ALL-CORE alliance against the anti-connectivity actors in the Gap that Barnett and Ash in effect advocate has the nature of a grand coalition—that is, one that enlists all significant actors. Typically, however, grand

coalitions do not last. Sooner or later, one or more players decide that they can do better outside the system, and a new oppositional alignment emerges. Some Core nations are already in the business of pimping their Core status to Gap states to achieve narrow national goals—the role of France in providing militarily useful technologies to Gap states being a particular example. So even if the grand coalition can be assembled, we must consider who might be tempted to bolt.

Continental Europe in general, but especially “Old Europe”, has tended to see this emerging world as a game in which they are dealt a progressively worsening hand with every shuffle of the cards. Thus they have concentrated on cashing in chips for short-term gain, while trying to trip up stronger players when the opportunity strikes. At present, the costs of being in the coalition would probably include making major and painful structural adjustments to their economies. Domestic European electorates might therefore be tempted by the alternative of a Euro-Islamic alliance, in which Middle Eastern oil states would prop up unreformed European economies in return for international support, high-tech weaponry and open access to Europe for Islamic economic migrants. The growing “Eurabian” bloc of Islamic voters would thus combine with anti-reform pensioners to veto any other political alignment, driving politics in the direction of the Euro-Islamic solution.

This alignment might then attempt to pick off one other major player from the grand coalition. Russia would probably find this unattractive, given their problem with radical Islamic separatists, and Japan would gain little from it. China might be tempted by access to energy, European weapons technology and the European market, so long as their access to the

American market was not entirely precluded. China might not be so much a partner as a semi-detached fellow-traveler, careful never to fully alienate either side. Russia might well try to play a similar semi-detached role to the Anglosphere-India-Japan group.

Under this scenario, we might see the world gradually align into several loose competing politico-economic alliances whose elbow-jostling would not rise to the level of war, or even cold war. The above scenario may in fact be emerging now, with an Anglosphere-plus-India-plus-Japan-plus-Russia team contending with a Euro-Islamic-Chinese bloc. Within such a framework there would still be a need for high-level international agreements and organizations to bind the major players together within a limited framework—to facilitate world trade and prevent any major conflagration among the major powers. But a new world order it would not be, and the transnational elements in it would probably wield about the same amount of influence as during the Cold War.

All in all, the European model is unlikely to be replicated on the world stage—and it may be scaled back and even dismantled in Europe itself when the evidence that India and China are overtaking it becomes too embarrassingly clear. As for the really big picture, instead of problematic schemes for transnational governance on the European model, we are likely to see the gradual rise of associated commonwealths, achieving more modest goals more effectively on a basis of cultural, legal and linguistic affinity. Rifkin’s “European Dream” is likely to remain exactly that. □

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