Review of International Studies (2006), 32, 329–352 Copyright © British International Studies Association
doi:10.1017/S0260210506007054

The postcolonial moment in security studies

TARAK BARKAWI AND MARK LAFFEY*

Abstract. In this article, we critique the Eurocentric character of security studies as it has developed since World War II. The taken-for-granted historical geographies that underpin security studies systematically misrepresent the role of the global South in security relations and lead to a distorted view of Europe and the West in world politics. Understanding security relations, past and present, requires acknowledging the mutual constitution of European and non-European worlds and their joint role in making history. The politics of Eurocentric security studies, those of the powerful, prevent adequate understanding of the nature or legitimacy of the armed resistance of the weak. Through analysis of the explanatory and political problems Eurocentrism generates, this article lays the groundwork for the development of a non-Eurocentric security studies.

Security relations today are about the contradictions between old security logics and new security problematics. Traditionally, security studies has been concerned with relations between and among great powers in the international system, itself understood as composed of stronger and weaker sovereign territorial states. The history of international relations is conceived primarily in terms of successive struggles between great powers and the rise and fall of powerful states.[1] Questions of war and peace raised by great power competition are foundational for security thought and practice, and because of the primacy of security, for understanding world politics more broadly.

Recent developments in world politics challenge these verities. In the contemporary era, Western powers face an 'existential threat' from a transnational network enterprise rather than from states organised along similar lines as in the past.[2] This development represents a break with putative histories of world politics as about great power struggles. Al-Qaeda is not a state nor a great power; it is a transnational network and more importantly an idea around which resistance is organised globally and locally.[3] Thinking derived from conventional security

* For comments thanks to Duncan Bell, John Game, Geoffrey Hawthorne, Jane Hayward, Stephen Hopgood, Charles Jones, Richard Ned Lebow, Daniel Nexon, Louiza Odysseos, Glen Rangwala, Justin Rosenberg, Martin Shaw, Naveed Sheikh and especially Naeem Inayatullah and Jutta Weldes.

[1] See, for example, Robert Gilpin, *War and Change in World Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981); Paul Kennedy, *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers: Economic Change and Military Conflict from 1500–2000* (London: Fontana, 1989); John Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2003).

[2] Condoleezza Rice, 'A balance of power that favors freedom', 1 October 2002, ⟨http://www.manhattaninstitute.org/html/w12002.htm⟩, accessed 29 November 2003. See also Graham Allison, *Nuclear Terrorism: The Ultimate Preventable Catastrophe* (New York: Times Books, 2004).

[3] Anonymous, *Imperial Hubris: Why the West is Losing the War on Terror* (Washington, DC: Brassey's, 2004); Jason Burke, *Al-Qaeda: Casting a Shadow of Terror* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2003).

studies, then, is at best a poor basis for understanding and action in contemporary security environments.[4]

A major reason for this inadequacy is that security studies derives its core categories and assumptions about world politics from a particular understanding of European experience. In this article, we critique the Eurocentric character of security studies as it has developed since the Second World War. As we will show, the taken-for-granted historical geographies that underpin security studies systematically understate and misrepresent the role of what we now call the global South in security relations.[5] Eurocentrism also leads to a distorted analysis of Europe and its place in world politics. Understanding security relations, past and present, requires acknowledging the mutual constitution of Europe and the non-European world and their joint role in making history. In detailing the explanatory and political problems Eurocentrism generates, this article clears ground for the development of a non-Eurocentric security studies.

Reframing security analysis in these terms helps make sense of contemporary developments by drawing attention to the implication of the 'War on Terror' in longer histories of warfare between the global North and the global South.[6] For Osama bin Laden, 'The west's occupation of our countries is old, but takes new forms. The struggle between us and them began centuries ago, and will continue.'[7] The ability of a Southern resistance movement to inflict wounding strikes on the home territory of a leading metropolitan power is nearly unprecedented. Nevertheless, armed conflict between North and South is very old. In conventional security studies, these conflicts are understood under the rubric of 'small wars' or asymmetric conflict and conceived as peripheral to, and derived from, the main action among great powers.[8] Now, what seemed peripheral has become central. The 'natives' have struck back, and are likely to continue doing so. This marks a significant moment of postcolonial rupture in the history of security relations.[9] Previously, Southern resistance movements sought national liberation and the end of formal and informal colonial rule in their own states. The resistance movement taking shape around Al-Qaeda, and the reactions to it, are global in scope and not limited to particular states or even a particular region. For us, Al-Qaeda's spectacular intervention and ongoing role in contemporary world politics highlights the necessity of reformulating the categories we deploy to make sense of both past and present security relations.

[4] Mark Duffield, 'War as a network enterprise: the new security terrain and its implications', *Cultural Values*, 6:1&2 (2002), pp. 153–165; Robert Keohane, 'The Globalization of Informal Violence, Theories of World Politics, and ''the Liberalism of Fear'' ' in Craig Calhoun et al. (eds.), *Understanding September 11* (New York: The New Press, 2002), pp. 89–90.

[5] On the role of spatial categories and metageographies such as North-South and East-West in social inquiry, see Martin Lewis and Kärin Wigen, *The Myth of Continents: A Critique of Metageography* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1997). On North-South in particular, see David Slater, *Geopolitics and the Post-Colonial: Rethinking North-South Relations* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2004), pp. 5–10, 228–30.

[6] Derek Gregory, *The Colonial Present: Afghanistan, Palestine, Iraq* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2004), and Mahmood Mamdani, *Good Muslim, Bad Muslim: America, the Cold War and the Roots of Terror* (New York: Pantheon, 2004).

[7] Osama bin Laden, 'Resist the New Rome', *The Guardian*, 6 January 2004, p. 23.

[8] Tarak Barkawi, 'On the Pedagogy of ''Small Wars'' ', *International Affairs*, 80:1 (2004), pp. 19–38.

[9] On Postcoloniality, see Slater, *Geopolitics and the Post-Colonial*, pp. 20–21; cf. Anne McClintock, 'The Angel of Progress: Pitfalls of the Term ''Post-Colonialism'' ', *Social Text*, 31/32 (1992), pp. 84–98.

The rootedness of the current conflict in centuries of often violent interaction between North and South is difficult to see due to security studies' reliance on histories and geographies which reproduce Eurocentric conceptions of world politics. This problem is not peculiar to security studies. According to Barry Buzan and Richard Little, 'there is no doubt that I[nternational] R[elations] has been studied from a very Eurocentric perspective . . .'[10] Eurocentrism is a complex idea but at its core is the assumption of European centrality in the human past and present.[11] On this view, Europe is conceived as separate and distinct from the rest of the world, as self-contained and self-generating. Analysis of the past, present and future of world politics is carried out in terms – conceptual and empirical, political and normative – that take for granted this centrality and separation.[12] Neither the content – social, political, economic and cultural – nor the geographical location of 'Europe' are fixed. Eurocentrism is about both a real and an imagined Europe. Over time, as Martin Lewis and Kären Wigen demonstrate, the location of Europe shifts, expands and contracts, eventually crossing the Atlantic and the Pacific and becoming synonymous with the 'West'.[13] Today, the 'West' is centred on the Anglophone US – a former European settler colony – and incorporates Western Europe, North America, Japan and the British settler societies of Oceania. There are few better examples of Eurocentrism than the notion that the end-point of development and modernisation is defined by the contemporary West.

The Eurocentrism of conventional security studies takes different forms across the theoretic perspectives that constitute the field. For realists, a 'general theory of international politics is necessarily based on the great powers'.[14] In modern history those powers are overwhelmingly located in Europe and the West. Eurocentrism is therefore intrinsic to the way in which realism is constructed in International Relations (IR).[15] The great antagonists of realism, the liberals, seek to regulate conflict and alleviate its humanitarian consequences through a turn to domestic and international institutions and norms. International institutions such as the League of Nations, the United Nations and the nuclear non-proliferation regime are largely the product of interstate diplomacy dominated by Western great powers.[16] Moreover, liberal democracy and the ethical principles that inform liberal opinion are the product of purportedly European histories and intellectual trajectories, most prominently those associated with the Enlightenments.[17] Many constructivists share

[10] Barry Buzan and Richard Little, *International Systems in World History: Remaking the Study of International Relations* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 21. See, for example, Sankaran Krishna, 'Race, Amnesia and the Education of International Relations', *Alternatives*, 26:4 (2001), pp. 401–24; Arlene Tickner, 'Seeing IR Differently: Notes from the Third World', *Millennium*, 32:2 (2003), pp. 295–324.

[11] See, for example, Samir Amin, *Eurocentrism* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1989); Fernando Coronil, 'Beyond Occidentalism: Toward Nonimperial Geohistorical Categories', *Cultural Anthropology*, 11:1 (1996), pp. 51–87.

[12] Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000); John Hobson, *The Eastern Origins of Western Civilisation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), ch. 1.

[13] Lewis and Wigen, *Myth of Continents*, pp. 49–53.

[14] Kenneth Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1979), p. 73.

[15] For an important corrective, see Buzan and Little, *International Systems in World History*. On the Eurocentric nature of realist political theoretic categories, see R. B. J. Walker, 'Realism, change and international political theory,' *International Studies Quarterly*, 31:1 (1987), pp. 65–86.

[16] See, for example, Peter Gowan, 'US:UN', *New Left Review*, 24 (2003), pp. 5–28.

[17] Recent scholarship argues there was not one but several Enlightenments. See, for example, J. G. A. Pocock, *Barbarism and Religion*, vols 1–3 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999–2003).

similar commitments as in attempts to make sense of international order in Hobbesian, Lockean or Kantian terms.[18] Recent efforts to move beyond the realist-liberal debate, such as Critical Security Studies, draw their core concept of human emancipation from these same intellectual traditions.[19] Each of these traditions, as postcolonial thinkers take pains to point out, rest on profoundly Eurocentric and racist assumptions.[20] As Immanuel Kant, a figure dear to both liberal and critical scholars, observed, 'Humanity achieves its greatest perfection with the White race'.[21]

Eurocentrism generates a variety of difficulties for the analysis of security relations, and world politics more generally.[22] Two in particular motivate our argument here. First, as we have noted, questions of war and peace raised by great power competition are foundational for security thought and practice. As a result, security studies provides few categories for making sense of the historical experiences of the weak and the powerless who comprise most of the world's population. By default, these experiences are conceived in categories derived from great power politics in the North. Consequently, national liberation struggles in the post-World War II era were thought of in Cold War terms by many US policymakers and defence intellectuals.[23] Today, this categorical error is repeated in a new form. Armed resistance to Northern domination of the international system is subsumed largely under the category of 'terrorism'. In contemporary usage this term legitimates state power and delegitimates the use of force by non-state actors.[24] It assumes in advance that 'terrorist' acts are always illegitimate and unjustified. Understanding why the weak resist and the forms their resistance takes is not aided by calling them names.

Second, and related, to the extent it addresses them at all, a Eurocentric security studies regards the weak and the powerless as marginal or derivative elements of world politics, as at best the site of liberal good intentions or at worst a potential source of threats.[25] Missed are the multiple and integral relations between the weak and the strong. Across diverse fields of social inquiry, it is taken for granted that the weak and the strong must be placed in a common analytic frame, as together constitutive of events, processes and structures.[26] In contrast IR, and security studies

[18] Alexander Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

[19] Ken Booth (ed.), *Critical Security Studies and World Politics* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 2005).

[20] Uday Singh Mehta, *Liberalism and Empire: A Study in Nineteenth Century British Liberal Thought* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1999); Naeem Inayatullah and David Blaney, *International Relations and the Problem of Difference* (London: Routledge, 2004).

[21] Immanuel Kant, *Geographie (Physiche Geographie)*, trans. M. Cohen-Halmimi et al. (Paris: Bibliotheque Philosophique, 1999); quoted in David Harvey, 'Cosmopolitanism and the Banality of Geographical Evils', *Public Culture*, 12:2 (2000), p. 533. Cf. Sankar Muthu, *Enlightenment against Empire* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2003).

[22] Mohammed Ayoob, *The Third World Security Predicament: Statemaking, Regional Conflict and the International System* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1995); cf. Sankaran Krishna, *Postcolonial Insecurities: India, Sri Lanka and the Question of Nationhood* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1999).

[23] Gabriel Kolko, *Confronting the Third World: United States Foreign Policy 1945–1980* (New York: Pantheon, 1988).

[24] Alexander George (ed.), *Western State Terrorism* (New York: Routledge, 1991).

[25] For examples, see respectively Mary Kaldor, *New and Old Wars: Organized Violence in a Global Era*, 2nd edn. (Cambridge: Polity, 2001) and Steven R. David, 'Why the Third World Still Matters', *International Security*, 17:3 (1992/93), pp. 127–59.

[26] See, for example, Barrington Moore, *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy: Lord and Peasant in the Making of the Modern World* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1993); Eric Wolf, *Europe and the*

in particular, mainly proceed by attending to the powerful only. As Stanley Hoffmann notes, IR takes an 'Athenian' perspective on the world.[27] For realism, with its focus on great powers, one-sided analysis of this kind is foundational. For liberal and some critical approaches to security studies, the weak are of interest but primarily as bearers of rights and objects of emancipation, that is, for their normative value in Western political theoretic terms.[28] Failing to study the weak and the strong together, as jointly responsible for making history, hamstrings IR and security studies' ability to make sense of world politics generally and North-South relations in particular.

That the weak play an integral role in shaping world politics is harder to deny when a Southern resistance movement strikes at the heart of Northern power. In the wake of those attacks, a series of developments transformed international and domestic politics around the world in diverse ways. Wars are being fought; alliance relations reconfigured; security forces redeployed; borders reworked; civil liberties curtailed; departments of state created; and identities remade. Understanding security relations now requires that we discard Eurocentric assumptions about the world and how it works.

In the next section, through analysis of several moments in the evolution of the field, we show that conventional security studies rests on and reproduces Eurocentric histories and geographies of world politics. The second section addresses the problems for social scientific inquiry posed by Eurocentrism and begins to map out an alternative basis for security studies. In the third, we critique the politics of Eurocentric security studies. A brief conclusion identifies the character and wider implications of our argument.

Security studies and Eurocentrism

Especially in the last decade or so, security studies has become a vibrant and diverse field of inquiry.[29] Despite this diversity, as with any well-developed body of disciplinary knowledge, debates take place on ground that, if not entirely common, is at least recognisable amongst competing perspectives. Security studies in its modern form emerges in the wake of World War II and was originally organised around the familiar realist problematic of great powers and their relations.[30] Much of the debate in security studies, then and now, is concerned with either elaborating this problematic or challenging it. Familiar historical episodes and new ones, such as the Concert of Europe, the origins of World War I, the appeasement of Nazi

People Without History (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1997); C. A. Bayly, *The Birth of the Modern World, 1780–1914: Global Connections and Comparisons* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2004).

[27] Stanley Hoffmann, 'An American Social Science: International Relations', *Daedalus*, 106:3 (1977), p. 58.

[28] See, for example, Tim Dunne and Nicholas Wheeler (eds.), *Human Rights in Global Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999); Ken Booth, 'Security and Emancipation', *Review of International Studies*, 17:3 (1991), pp. 313–26.

[29] See, for example, Ronnie Lipschutz (ed.), *On Security* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995); Peter Katzenstein (ed.), *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996); Barry Buzan and Ole Waever, *Regions and Powers: The Structure of International Security* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

[30] John Vasquez, *The Power of Power Politics: From Classical Realism to Neotraditionalism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

Germany, and the end of the Cold War are analysed, interpreted and reinterpreted.[31] Divisions and disagreements over the meaning of these episodes aside, the competing paradigms and divergent political persuasions that characterise contemporary security studies occupy a shared Eurocentric historical and geographic terrain.[32]

Security studies after 1945 is defined largely by heated disputes between realist and liberal positions, broadly conceived. Later, the constructivists joined the fray.[33] These disputes presuppose and reproduce, separately and together, a specific set of historical periodisations and spatial assumptions. By historical periodisations we mean the taken-for-granted chronologies of key actors, central processes and significant events that structure the field. By spatial assumptions, we mean the frameworks that organise the world in spatial terms and locate these actors, processes, and events, both in relation to each other and to world politics more generally. Taken together, these temporal and spatial assumptions produce Eurocentric historical geographies.[34] In turn, a security studies rooted in this ground inevitably expresses a particular politics, in terms of those actors and concerns that are seen as most important. The Anglo-American character of IR is well-established.[35] Unsurprisingly, conventional security studies, the core of IR, is also shaped by the politics of a particular time and place – the post-1945 Anglo-American world – even as it presents itself in the seemingly neutral and timeless language of social science.[36]

Eurocentric historical geographies and periodisations are very much in evidence in the common narratives of world history that underpin security studies. For example, the wars of Revolutionary and Napoleonic France give way to the nineteenth century Concert of Europe, which in turn leads to the half-century conflict to prevent German hegemony. The period after 1945 is seen as one of 'East-West' struggle, that is, between competing coalitions organised around the US and the USSR. In terms of spatial assumptions, what is most evident about these very conventional and widely accepted periodisations is that world politics is taken to be happening almost exclusively in Europe, or latterly in the Northern hemisphere.[37] To the extent that world politics is seen as taking place elsewhere, as in the Third World during the

[31] See, for example, Richard Ned Lebow and Thomas Risse-Kappen (eds.), *International Relations Theory and the End of the Cold War* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995); Glenn Snyder, *Alliance Politics* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1997); Stephen Van Evera, *Causes of War: Power and the Roots of Conflict* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1999).

[32] Even a 'post-positivist' critique of security studies has no index entries for imperialism, colonialism, or postcolonialism. See Terry Terriff et al., *Security Studies Today* (Cambridge: Polity, 1999).

[33] Katzenstein, *Culture of National Security*; cf. Jutta Weldes et al. (eds.), *Cultures of Insecurity: States, Communities and the Production of Danger* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1999).

[34] On the spatial turn in social theory, see Edward Soja, *Postmodern Geographies: The Reassertion of Space in Critical Social Theory* (London: Verso, 1989). On historical geography, see John Agnew and Stuart Corbridge, *Mastering Space: Hegemony, Territory and International Political Economy* (New York: Routledge, 1995); Arjun Appadurai, *Modernity at Large* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press); Derek Gregory, *Geographical Imaginations* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1993); and David Harvey, *Spaces of Capital: Towards a Critical Geography* (New York: Routledge, 2001).

[35] Hoffmann, 'An American Social Science'; Steve Smith, 'The Discipline of International Relations: Still an American Social Science?' *British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, 2:3 (2000), pp. 374–402.

[36] Compare Ido Oren, *Our Enemies and Us: America's Rivalries and the Making of Political Science* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2003).

[37] Cf. Sankaran Krishna, 'Race, Amnesia, and the Education of International Relations', pp. 404–6.

Cold War, it is derivative of European developments and driven by great-power competition and the diffusion of European ideas and institutions.[38]

Below, through analysis of a set of key moments in the evolution of security studies as a field, we begin to map the shared terrain on which debates take place. Specifically, we examine the historical geography of world politics as expressed in a conventional account of the genealogy of war and strategy, the Cuban missile crisis, World War II and the Holocaust and show it to be deeply Eurocentric. These moments represent, respectively and together, important dimensions of Eurocentrism in security studies: the Orientalism expressed in and structuring key texts; the assumption of great-power agency in empirical inquiry; the often unacknowledged Anglo-American politics shaping the definition of key events; and the presumed ethical character of the West. Our discussion should be interpreted symptomatically, that is, as identifying some of the exclusions and hidden infrastructure that make possible security studies.[39]

Makers of Modern Strategy *and the 'national-political approach'*

An initial sense of the ways in which Eurocentric histories and geographies shape and inform the field of security studies can be gleaned from the tables of contents of canonical texts, such as the two main editions of *Makers of Modern Strategy*.[40] The first was the result of a seminar at Princeton University in 1941 organised by Edward Mead Earle. This edition, a modern classic, was a standard in the field until it was substantially revised and expanded in 1986 by Peter Paret. For Earle, modern war emerges and is theorised as a distinctively European experience beginning in the sixteenth century. All of the chapters except two concern either European wars or Western theorists of war. As Jeremy Black observes, military history 'concentrates on Western history and is very much Euro-centred even when it considers developments elsewhere in the world'.[41]

Accordingly, of the two exceptions, one chapter concerns Japanese naval strategy, obviously a pressing matter for American strategic thinkers in 1941. The other discusses the development of French colonial warfare from the perspective of France as an imperial power. From this perspective, colonial war 'aims not at the destruction of the enemy but at the organization of the conquered peoples and territory under a particular control . . . because the conquered country is to be integrated immediately after the conquest into the ''imperial'' whole, politically as well as economically.' The point of colonial warfare, then, is not simply to defeat the enemy but 'to subordinate him at the lowest cost and in a way to guarantee permanent pacification'.[42]

[38] See, for example, Robert Jackson, 'The Weight of Ideas in Decolonization: Normative Change in International Relations', in Judith Goldstein and Robert Keohane (eds.), *Ideas and Foreign Policy: Beliefs, Institutions and Political Change* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1993), pp. 111–138.

[39] On symptomatic reading, see, for example, Robert Paul Resch, *Althusser and the Renewal of Marxist Social Theory* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1992), pp. 174–8.

[40] Edward Mead Earle (ed.), *Makers of Modern Strategy: Military Thought from Machiavelli to Hitler* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1948 [1943]); Peter Paret (ed.), *Makers of Modern Strategy: From Machiavelli to the Nuclear Age* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986).

[41] Jeremy Black, *War and the World: Military Power and the Fate of Continents, 1450–2000* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1998), p. 1.

[42] Jean Gottmann, 'Bugeaud, Galliéni, Lyautey: The Development of French Colonial Warfare', in Earle, *Makers of Modern Strategy*, pp. 234–5.

Taking an imperial perspective on war in the colonies highlights the politically interested character of security studies. The entire text takes for granted and expresses the point of view of Western great powers in a world they dominate and compete over. Peter Paret claimed in his 1986 introduction that the 'wartime origin and mission' of Earle's volume 'did not compromise its scholarly objectivity' – none of the chapters was 'marred by chauvinism' – specifically mentioning in this context the chapter on Japanese naval strategy.[43] That chapter begins, however, with the observation that 'From a military standpoint the Japanese mind may be described as being subjective rather than objective'.[44]

Whereas an American or a British analyst has no difficulty discussing naval strategy in an abstract and disinterested manner, a Japanese has 'difficulty eliminating the national-political approach'.[45] In a standard Orientalist manoeuvre, rationality and objectivity are attributed to the Anglo-Americans, while the Japanese remain bogged down in parochial concerns. In Mead's introduction, he makes clear his volume is intended to teach 'Anglo-Saxon' readers about the nature of war so they may defend their liberty, and to inform American policymakers about how to use their 'great power', which will be 'momentous for ourselves and for the world'.[46] This too, it seems to us, is a 'national-political approach', consistent with the Anglo-American character of the field. As Edward Luttwak remarks, 'strategy is not a neutral pursuit and its only purpose is to strengthen one's side in the contention of nations'.[47] The 1986 edition retains substantially the same coverage of Western military theorists and European military history, while adding concerns that had arisen since the end of World War II such as Soviet strategy and nuclear weapons. One significant addition is John Shy and Thomas Collier's fine discussion of revolutionary war.[48] That revolutionary war, particularly in the Third World, had by 1986 become a major issue for Western policymakers, goes without saying.

The Cuban Missile Crisis and the location of agency

One place where revolutionary war became a concern was Cuba, the site of a paradigmatic moment in the evolution of security studies. The Cuban Missile Crisis is central to debates concerning, among other things, the nature of deterrence, rational decision-making and the Cold War itself. Indeed, as an object of analysis, crisis management emerges out of scholarly and policy efforts to come to terms with the Cuban Missile Crisis. In standard accounts, the crisis is an affair of the superpowers only: 'For thirteen days in October 1962, the United States and the Soviet Union stood ''eyeball to eyeball'', each with the power of mutual annihilation in hand'.[49] Cuba is conceived either as a client state of the Soviet Union, whose

[43] Paret, *Makers of Modern Strategy*, p. 5.
[44] Alexander Kiralfy, 'Japanese Naval Strategy,' in Earle, *Makers of Modern Strategy*, p. 459.
[45] Kiralfy, 'Japanese Naval Strategy', p. 459.
[46] Edward Earle Mead, 'Introduction', in *Makers of Modern Strategy*, p. viii.
[47] Quoted in Philip K. Lawrence, 'Strategy, the State and the Weberian Legacy', *Review of International Studies*, 13 (1987), p. 307.
[48] John Shy and Thomas Collier, 'Revolutionary War', in Paret, *Makers of Modern Strategy*.
[49] Graham Allison, *Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis* (Boston: Little Brown, 1971), p. 39.

actions are an extension of Soviet policy, or as simply the location of a dispute between the US and the USSR. As Jutta Weldes comments, both in the ExComm discussions and most subsequent scholarship, 'Cuba appeared . . . merely as a place, and a ''little pipsqueak of a place'' at that'.[50]

A basic difficulty with this Eurocentric construction is that in writing Cuba out of the Cuban Missile Crisis, important dynamics and variables were overlooked by policymakers at the time and by most subsequent scholarship. US officials meeting in the ExComm failed to recognise the role of their own past policies towards Cuba in generating the crisis. Despite US perceptions of Soviet allies in the Third World as mere puppets, nuclear missiles could never have been placed in Cuba without Cuban agreement.[51] Castro, realistically fearful of another invasion after the Bay of Pigs, turned to the Soviet Union for help in defending Cuban sovereignty and the Cuban revolution. Without these Cuban motivations, it is unlikely there would have been a crisis; the missiles were placed onto Cuban territory in part to defend it. Overlooking Cuban agency prevented participants and scholars from realising, until quite recently, that Castro also played a significant role in the actual crisis. When Fyodor Burlatsky, one of Khrushchev's advisors, was asked by Theodore Sorensen in 1989 'what outside influences were brought to bear on the Kremlin's decision making' during the crisis, he responded, 'the first influence was from Castro'.[52]

The failure to recognise the Cuban role in the crisis, both at the time and subsequently, reproduces the Eurocentric assumption that agency – real, historically significant agency – only resides in the great powers. Even well-resourced scholarship of the highest quality took several decades to begin to uncover the significance of the Cubans in their own crisis. This explains why, in 1993, Bruce Allyn, James Blight and David Welch found it necessary to argue that 'The Cuban missile crisis was very much a *Cuban* affair'.[53] In the late 1980s a series of scholarly meetings were set up to bring together the key participants in the crisis.[54] It was not until the third such meeting, held in Moscow in January 1989, that Cuban representatives were even invited, and then only at Soviet insistence. American representatives resisted Cuban participation on the grounds that this would turn the meeting into a 'political circus'.[55] Like Japanese naval strategists, it was assumed that Cubans would be incapable of stepping outside a 'national-political approach'. At this meeting, and a subsequent one attended by Castro in Havana in January 1992, evidence of the Cuban role, some of which we mention above, began to emerge. The crisis, for

[50] Jutta Weldes, *Constructing National Interests: The United States and the Cuban Missile Crisis* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1999), p. 75, quoting USMC Commandant David Shoup.

[51] Weldes, *Constructing National Interests,* pp. 80–3.

[52] James Blight and David Welch, *On the Brink: Americans and Soviets Reexamine the Cuban Missile Crisis*, 2nd edn. (New York: Noonday Press, 1990), p. 266.

[53] James Blight, David Welch and Bruce Allyn, *Cuba on the Brink: Castro, the Missile Crisis and the Soviet Collapse* (New York: Pantheon, 1993), p. 5. See also Scott Armstrong and Philip Brenner, 'Putting Cuba and Crisis Back in the Cuban Missile Crisis,' in Philip Brenner, William M. LeoGrande, Donna Rich, and Daniel Siegel (eds.), *The Cuba Reader: The Making of a Revolutionary Society* (New York: Grove Press, 1989), pp. 336–9.

[54] Reports and transcripts of the meetings are contained in Blight and Welch, *On the Brink*; Allyn, Blight and Welch (eds.), *Back to the Brink: Proceedings of the Moscow Conference on the Cuban Missile Crisis, 27–28 January 1989* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1992); and Blight, Welch and Allyn, *Cuba on the Brink*.

[55] David Welch, quoted in Jutta Weldes and Mark Laffey, 'Decolonizing the Cuban Missile Crisis', unpublished ms., p. 20.

example, could not end until Castro permitted the missiles to be removed, in exchange for a Soviet brigade to defend Cuba.[56]

Even so, US scholars still had difficulty granting the possibility of objectivity to Cuban policymakers and scholars. The editors of *Back to the Brink* state that whereas the Americans and the Soviets 'came mainly to give and hear testimony regarding the story of the crisis . . . for the Cubans . . . the more they learned and shared, the more profoundly embedded they inevitably became in the overriding issues of their present situation: their highly abnormal relations with their near neighbour and their far away ally'.[57] This depiction of politicised Cubans and apolitical Americans (and Soviets) is unsustainable. Narrowly construed, as the study of rational crisis decision-making, US scholarly interest in the Cuban Missile Crisis also betrays a 'national-political approach', one that takes US concerns for granted. The claim to rational decision-making is frequently used by great powers to justify the possession of nuclear weapons. Conversely, the purported lack of rationality on the part of other states, particularly revolutionary regimes like Cuba or Iran, is routinely invoked to explain why they cannot be trusted with nuclear weapons.[58] Scholarly attention to 'rational decision making' – learning the lessons of the Cuban Missile Crisis – serves to reproduce this demonstrably Orientalist characterisation. In any case, 'abnormality' arises not only from the actions of Cuba. The US has maintained economic and other sanctions against Cuba long after the expiry of the Cold War strategic context. Cuba is a live issue in US politics, particularly in Florida, home to a large and well-organised expatriate Cuban community and a key battleground in US presidential elections. These facts of US policy and politics show that the causes and significance of the 'highly abnormal relations' between Cuba and the US are not confined to Cuba alone. Indeed, locating 'abnormality' on Cuba effectively obscures the long history of US imperialism in Cuba and the Caribbean.

World War II: one or many?

Even more significant for security studies than the Cuban Missile Crisis are the various tropes, debates, lessons and theories derived from the origins, course and aftermath of the Second World War. The discipline of International Relations remains profoundly marked by its engagement with that conflict. The core debate between realists and liberals regarding the amelioration of great power conflict – realpolitik versus international institutions – takes shape and rests upon competing accounts of the origins and aftermath of World War II.[59] In turn, these discussions led to the development of a set of claims regarding the relative war-proneness of different regime types, subsequently formalised in the democratic peace debates.

Perhaps more important for the field of security studies is the shared standard interpretation of World War II as the 'good war'. Across otherwise starkly divergent

[56] Blight and Welch, *On the Brink*, pp. 266–7.
[57] Allyn, Blight, and Welch, *Back to the Brink*, p. 202.
[58] Hugh Gusterson, *People of the Bomb: Portraits of America's Nuclear Complex* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2004), ch. 2.
[59] See, for example, E. H. Carr, *The Twenty Years' Crisis 1919–1939* (London: Macmillan, 1946); David Mitrany, *A Working Peace System* (Chicago, IL: Quadrangle Books, 1966).

points of view, the war is seen as a struggle between democracy and totalitarianism, freedom and tyranny, good and evil, in which the 'good guys' won. Despite the decisive significance of the Soviet contribution to victory, the taken-for-granted view in the Anglo-American world is that the war was won by the US and its Western allies.[60] This victory enabled and justified US leadership of the postwar world and the centrality of the US and its concerns in security studies. US 'victory' in World War II also confirmed a shift in the West's centre of gravity from Europe to North America.

For many in the colonised world, the meaning and significance of that conflict appeared starkly different. From these points of view, World War II was an inter-imperial war.[61] Although the third point of the Atlantic Charter emphasised the rights of all peoples to self-government, Winston Churchill interpreted this pledge as applying only to peoples living under Nazi occupation.[62] As a consequence, Indian nationalists, for example, were understandably sceptical of the Allies' purported war aims. They were afraid, as after World War I, that self-government was intended only for Europeans. As one scholar of the mass uprising against British rule that began in August of 1942, known as 'Quit India', puts the point, 'In spite of professing different ideological shibboleths, both the blocs [i.e., the Allies and the Axis] were essentially imperialist and colonialist in character. It was mainly for imperialist gains – either for acquiring them or for preserving them – that they got involved in this world-wide conflagration'.[63]

Such sentiments – equating the Allies with the Axis, the good guys with the bad guys – perhaps sound morally confused to some Western ears.[64] But the war in the Far East was in no small measure fought between Japan, the US, and Britain for control over China and Southeast Asia. It was for this reason that opposition to Japanese imperialism amongst Indian nationalists and others did not translate automatically into support for the British. While India did achieve independence after World War II – primarily because Britain realised it could no longer hold the sub-continent militarily – the larger point is that victory for the allies in both World Wars meant freedom for some but not for others, and on terms defined by the victors. In Southeast Asia, the aftermath of World War II saw the reimposition or the attempted reimposition – sometimes with US support – of Dutch, British and French colonial rule, with catastrophic results in Vietnam. In other territories, where the US operated more independently, it developed forms of indirect rule and patron-client relations. In South Korea, for example, it established a regime based on those who had collaborated with the Japanese.[65] It was this set of diverse and recognisably

[60] Cf. Richard Overy, *Why the Allies Won* (New York: Norton, 1995).

[61] Contemporaries on the European left also saw the war in these terms. See, for example, Ernest Mandel, *The Meaning of the Second World War* (London: Verso, 1986), pp. 45–6.

[62] Christoper Thorne, *Allies of a Kind: The United States, Britain and the War Against Japan, 1941–1945* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978), p. 102.

[63] Arun Chandra Bhuyan, *The Quit India Movement: The Second World War and Indian Nationalism* (New Delhi: Manas, 1975), p. 1.

[64] But not all: 'We do not choose sides between imperialists . . .' Ernest Mandel, *Revolutionary Marxism Today* (London: NLB, 1979), p. 168. Albert Camus, who like Mandel participated in the resistance to Nazi occupation, was more charitable to the West, observing that ' ''We were fighting a lie in the name of a half-truth'' '. Albert Camus, *Resistance, Rebellion, and Death* (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1961), p. 248, quoting Richard Hilary.

[65] Bruce Cumings, *Origins of the Korean War*, Volume 1: *Liberation and the Emergence of Separate Regimes, 1945–1947* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1981), ch. 5.

imperial arrangements that in part constituted the 'free world'. The self-determination the US offered was conditional, both in Western Europe and in the non-European world, shaped amongst other things by Orientalist and racist assumptions about the relative capacity of different peoples for self-government.[66]

These points demonstrate the politically interested character of the standard historical geography of World War II as a 'good war' and its role in shaping the field of security studies. The Second World War is multi-vocal, subject to diverse and competing interpretations, depending on social and political location. Even the standard periodisation of 1939–1945 is a peculiarly Anglo-Saxon one. For the Japanese and the Chinese, the Italians and the Ethiopians, the Czechoslovaks and the Austrians, the war started some years earlier. 'For most Chinese . . .', for example, 'the Second World War has been above all the Anti-Japanese Resistance War, whose beginnings by no means coincided with the start of the world war as viewed from Europe or the United States, and whose ending cannot be precisely dated at 1945'.[67] For Indonesians, Vietnamese, and Koreans, as for Ukrainians, Yugoslavs and Greeks, the war carried on for some years after 1945. There is not one World War II – in the sense of a single authoritative interpretation – but many, fought over different times and spaces.

In a similar manner, Russian and Cuban accounts of the 'Cuban Missile Crisis', which refer to the Caribbean and the October crisis respectively, rest on chronologies and spatial frames very different to the '13 days' of US mythology.[68] For those who lived in Nazi-occupied Western Europe, 1945 did mark a moment of freedom and liberation, albeit within terms defined by the US; those in Eastern Europe had to wait until 1989 to join the free world, and then on even less advantageous terms.[69] World War II represents something quite different for them, as it does for the much greater portion of the world's population living in the global South. Naturally, for these peoples, the meaning and political significance of World War II, like the Cuban Missile Crisis, is not easily encompassed in the standard Eurocentric readings.

The Holocaust and the character of the West

World War II is significant for security studies, and in particular liberal and critical approaches, in another way as well. Realist approaches to security studies are Eurocentric in that they locate agency and history with the great powers. Liberal approaches partake of this kind of Eurocentrism as well, but in addition they define the West in ethical and progressive terms. The Holocaust is central to these efforts. Across a range of positions, the Holocaust sets the standard for what is considered unacceptable behaviour in international society and invokes the category of 'humanity' in a Eurocentric fashion by ignoring previous Western imperial genocides

[66] Michael Hunt, *Ideology and US Foreign Policy* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1987).
[67] T. Fujitani, Geoffrey White and Lisa Yoneyama, 'Introduction', in Fujitani et al. (eds.), *Perilous Memories: The Asia-Pacific War(s)* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2001), p. 3.
[68] Weldes, *Constructing National Interests*, pp. 22–37.
[69] Peter Gowan, *The Global Gamble: Washington's Faustian Bid for World Dominance* (London: Verso, 1999), ch. 9.

in the colonies.[70] Simultaneously, it reinforces narratives of the 'good war' as central to the self-fashioning of the West as a collective actor in world politics. After all, it was the Allies who liberated the camps and prosecuted those responsible for the genocide. The turn to humanitarian intervention as a defining feature of a liberal, law-governed, and civilised 'international community', particularly since 1989, draws on and reinforces this image of the West as the preventer of genocides and the punisher of violators of human rights, as for example in Kosovo.

Zygmunt Bauman argues, however, that the Holocaust is a modern, Western phenomenon.[71] The Holocaust thus poses difficulties for liberal understandings of the West and its role in world politics. 'Whoever takes seriously the history of violence in the twentieth century will find it hard to believe in myths of progress'.[72] In order to retain liberal faith in Western myths of progress and ethical superiority, in which the West and humanity are collapsed into one another but the West nevertheless also leads humanity, the Holocaust must be 'othered' from the West. In defining the West against the Holocaust, an imagined geography is invoked which displaces 'the sins of Western civilisation onto an intrusive non-European Other in our midst'.[73] In the process, Germany, that quintessentially Western society, somehow becomes not Western.[74] As Lewis and Wigan comment, 'By the mid-twentieth century, historians across Europe were echoing the refrain that Germany was – in its ''soul'' – a non-Western country'.[75] It is in this context that we should read the otherwise incomprehensible remark of Chancellor Gerhard Schröder that Germany has recently completed its 'long journey to the West.'[76] This manoeuvre, othering mass slaughter from the West and from modernity, is a standard one. It serves to preserve, in the face of any evidence to the contrary, the ethical character of the West and, in turn, underpins claims in liberal and critical security studies that the West is a force for good in the world.

For example, one site of mass slaughter was the Soviet Union. There, the excesses of the Soviet regime were often interpreted in terms of Oriental despotism.[77] This

[70] As David Chandler comments, 'Today's human rights advocates tend to portray every ''ethical'' intervention against selected pariah states as on a par with the Allied war effort against Nazi Germany, the template for a moralised view of conflict. This ethical connection is mythologised through the human rights teleology that connects ''ethical foreign policy'' to the Genocide Convention of 1948 and the 1949 Geneva Conventions, which ''were intended to establish a fire break between civilization and barbarism''.' *From Kosovo to Kabul: Human Rights and International Intervention* (London: Pluto, 2002), p. 77, quoting Roy Gutman and David Rieff. Specialist scholarship is more attentive to the continuities between colonial genocides and the Holocaust. See, for example, Mahmood Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers: Colonialism, Nativism, and the Genocide in Rwanda* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001). Other scholars mention colonial genocides in passing but marginalise them in practice. See, for example, Andrew Bell-Fialkoff, *Ethnic Cleansing* (New York: St. Martin's, 1999).

[71] Zygmunt Baumann, *Modernity and the Holocaust* (Cambridge: Polity, 2002).

[72] Hans Joas, *War and Modernity* (Cambridge: Polity, 2003), p. 1.

[73] Lewis and Wigen, *Myth of Continents*, p. 68.

[74] David Blackbourn and Geoff Eley, *The Peculiarities of German History: Bourgeois Society and Politics in Nineteenth Century Germany* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1984).

[75] Lewis and Wigen, *Myth of Continents*, p. 59.

[76] Quoted in John Vinocur, 'For the Germans, the war's ambiguities persist', *International Herald Tribune*, 7 June, 2004, p. 1.

[77] Patrick Thaddeus Jackson, *Civilizing the Enemy: Postwar German Reconstruction and the Invention of the West* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, forthcoming 2006). See also Karl Wittfogel, *Oriental Despotism: A Comparative Study of Total Power* (New York: Vintage, 1981 [1957]).

reinforced the association of communism, a modern European ideology of progress, with the East. But as John Gray comments, 'Soviet Communism and Nazism were each animated by ambitions that derive from the Enlightenment'.[78] To acknowledge this obvious fact is to contradict historical geographies that locate global progress and emancipation in the West and its ideas. When mass slaughter takes place in locales seemingly more removed from the West, as in Africa, it is also attributed to non-Western factors such as the absence of modern political, economic and social arrangements, as in discourses of quasi- and failed states and of 'underdevelopment as dangerous', or to the peculiarities of local ethnic identities, as in the 'new barbarism' thesis.[79] Similarly, Mary Kaldor in part attributes 'new wars', located in the global South or in 'ambiguous' border zones like the Balkans, to the absence of 'cosmopolitan political consciousness'.[80] The hierarchical relation between the West and the rest is explicit: 'Cosmopolitanism tends to be more widespread in the West and less widespread in the East and the South. Nevertheless, throughout the world, in remote towns and villages, both sorts of people are to be found'.[81] Europe and the West show to the rest of the world its cosmopolitan and peaceful future. Moreover, to the West is assigned the leading role in making that future real, through force if necessary. There are striking parallels between analyses couched in these terms and accounts of colonial war which, as Gottmann observed in 1943, is 'by its very nature, fought between adversaries of strikingly different levels of civilization'.[82] Meanwhile, histories of cosmopolitanism in non-Western sites are forgotten.[83]

As with the Cuban Missile Crisis and World War II, Eurocentrism generates substantial difficulties for understanding genocide and mass slaughter. Liberals seek to erect effective international legal and political structures for the prevention and eradication of mass slaughter. Such a task requires what we might term a natural history of genocide, that is, an account of the development and evolution of the modalities and practices of mass slaughter.[84] Such a history is impossible if we begin from the kind of Eurocentric assumptions that mark liberal understandings of genocide. As Bauman demonstrates, 'every ''ingredient'' of the Holocaust . . . was normal . . . in the sense of being fully in keeping with everything we know about our civilisation, its guiding spirit, its priorities, its immanent vision of the world – and of the proper ways to pursue human happiness together with a perfect society'.[85] Another site of mass slaughter central to any serious attempt to construct such a

[78] John Gray, *Al Qaeda and What It Means To Be Modern* (London: Faber and Faber, 2003), p. 14.
[79] See, for example, Robert Jackson, *Quasi-States: Sovereignty, International Relations and the Third World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993); cf. Siba N'Zatioula Grovogui, *Sovereigns, Quasi-Sovereigns: Race and Self-Determination in International Law* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1996). On 'underdevelopment as dangerous' and 'new barbarism', see Mark Duffield, *Global Governance and the New Wars: The Merging of Development and Security* (London: Zed Books, 2001), ch. 5.
[80] Kaldor, *Old Wars and New Wars*, pp. 76–89. On the Balkans, see Lewis and Wigen, *Myth of Continents*, pp. 67–8.
[81] Kaldor, *Old Wars and New Wars*, p. 89.
[82] Gottmann, 'Bugeaud, Galliéni, Lyautey', pp. 234–5. Cf. Roxanne Doty, *Imperial Encounters* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1996).
[83] See, for example, Sami Zubaida, 'Cosmopolitanism in the Middle East', in Roel Meijer (ed.), *Cosmopolitanism, Identity and Authenticity in the Middle East* (London: Curzon, 1999), pp. 15–34.
[84] Compare Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers*, p. 7.
[85] Baumann, *Modernity and the Holocaust*, p. 8.

natural history lies in Europe's colonies. For Hannah Arendt, European colonial genocide is the progenitor for the Holocaust.[86]

Mass slaughter and loss of life amongst the 'natives' was a normal and routine feature of European expansion into and rule over the non-European world. As Sven Lindqvist observes, 'the Holocaust was unique – in Europe. But the history of Western expansion in other parts of the world shows many examples of total extermination of whole peoples.'[87] So normal was mass death in the colonies that even as the Allies were fighting the 'good war', 3.5–3.8 million Bengalis – more than 'half a Holocaust' – died in 1943–44 as a predictable result of war-time exigencies and the grain market in British India.[88] Despite urgent requests from British officials in India, London refused to reallocate shipping space from military purposes. 'Churchill expressed serious objection to the use of such a huge volume of transport for grain supply at the cost of military supply to India and civil supply to England'.[89] The Viceroy of India, Lord Wavell, observed bitterly towards the end of the war that there was a 'very different attitude towards feeding a starving population when the population is in Europe'.[90] This was not the first time that large numbers of Indians had died as a direct result of British policies designed to produce a particular vision of the good life and the perfect society, organised around property rights, markets and free trade.[91] The Irish too suffered from decisions made in London and the workings of liberal institutions.[92] In the colonies, near and far, it was impossible to forget that the West was murderous. Questioning Eurocentric historical geographies – through recovery of these and other moments in the natural history of genocide and mass death – puts in serious doubt liberal and critical understandings of World War II as a good war and of the West as a force for good in world politics.

To sum up, then, security studies – across a range of prominent positions in the field – rests on and reproduces a variety of Eurocentric assumptions. As in *Makers of Modern Strategy*, a Western political perspective is taken for granted. In analysis of key events, as in the Cuban Missile Crisis, agency is assumed to reside in the great powers. Eurocentric imagined geographies and histories, such as those through which the Second World War is known, provide the very foundation of security studies. In and through this mutually reinforcing set of claims, assertions, and presuppositions the oft-murderous West fashions itself as *the* ethical actor in world politics.

If security studies as presently constituted is overwhelmingly Eurocentric, why is this a problem? First, Eurocentrism in security studies produces basic difficulties in understanding the course and nature of events, that is, in empirical analyses of

[86] Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (San Diego, CA: Harcourt, 1985), esp. ch. 7; See also Aimé Césaire, *Discourse on Colonialism* (New York: New York University Press, 2000).

[87] Sven Lindqvist, '*Exterminate All the Brutes*' (London: Granta Books, 1996), p. 158. See also Adam Hochschild, *King Leopold's Ghost: A Story of Greed, Terror and Heroism in Colonial Africa* (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1998); Ward Churchill, *A Little Matter of Genocide: Holocaust and Denial in the Americas 1492 to the Present* (San Francisco, CA: City Lights, 1998); Mike Davis, *Late Victorian Holocausts: El Nino Famines and the Making of the Third World* (London: Verso, 2001).

[88] Paul Greenough, *Prosperity and Misery in Modern Bengal* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982), p. 309.

[89] Johannes Voigt, *India in the Second World War* (New Delhi: Arnold-Heinemann, 1987), p. 207.

[90] Penderel Moon (ed.), *Wavell: The Viceroy's Journal* (London: Oxford University Press, 1973), p. 123. Wavell was referring to ample food supplies sent to Holland in early 1945.

[91] Davis, *Late Victorian Holocausts*, esp. ch. 10.

[92] James Donnelly, Jr., *The Great Irish Potato Famine* (Stroud: Sutton Publishing, 2003).

security relations. Whether we wish to understand crisis decision-making or the causes of genocide, adopting a Eurocentric set of assumptions – about agency, objectivity, and morality – gets in the way and hinders our efforts. Second, Eurocentrism in security studies also means that analysis winds up expressing a taken-for-granted politics that sides with the rulers, with the powerful, with the imperialists, and not with the downtrodden, the weak, the colonised, or the post-colonised. For many scholars and analysts, whose concern it is to shore up and defend the interests of the powerful, this may not be an issue. For others, however, the concern may be to support and defend the weak. Whatever the knowledge interests of individuals, we can and should be self-conscious of our presuppositions, something precluded by failing to recognise the political implications of our categories. This means there is both a social science problem and a political problem. We discuss these intimately interconnected problems in more detail in the next two sections.

Security studies and the significance of the weak

Barry Buzan and Richard Little observe that '[a]t first sight, it might appear that there is nothing untoward about the familiar Eurocentric account of how the contemporary international system emerged. It seems to be almost self-evidently true that Europeans created the first global international system by bringing all parts of humankind into regular economic and strategic contact with each other.'[93] Despite our concerns regarding Eurocentrism, it is not surprising that Western, or Anglo-American, security studies is by and for Western powers. Equally, there would not have been a Cuban Missile Crisis at all were it not for the worldwide rivalry of the superpowers; in this sense they were the key agents. While there were a variety of conflicts in and around World War II, at its core was a titanic struggle between the great powers, a struggle that left the US in a position to dominate the postwar order. And for all its crimes and misdemeanours, errors and oversights, perhaps the West *is* the best hope for a fair, just and peaceful world through its promotion of international institutions, rules, and humanitarian norms. Whether or not one agrees with this last, liberal interpretation of the West and its role in world politics, that the claim is made is unsurprising. As any classical realist would observe, the powerful always prefer to think well of themselves.[94]

Taken together, these observations seem to support Waltz's view that theories of international politics are of necessity primarily concerned with great powers. Given that for the past several centuries those powers have been overwhelmingly located in the West, analyses of world politics, and therefore security studies, are rightly Eurocentric. That is just the way the world is. 'It would be as ridiculous to construct a theory of international politics based on Malaysia and Costa Rica as it would be to construct an economic theory of oligopolistic competition based on the minor firms in a sector of an economy.'[95]

[93] Buzan and Little, *International Systems in World History*, p. 20.
[94] E. H. Carr comments: 'British writers of the past half-century have been particularly eloquent supporters of the theory that the maintenance of British supremacy is the performance of a duty to mankind'. *The Twenty Years' Crisis*, p. 76.
[95] Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, p. 72. Cf. Tickner, 'Seeing IR Differently', p. 301.

Waltz is updating in the language of neoclassical economics a truism of *realpolitik*, first and best expressed almost two and half thousand years ago by the Athenian general Thucydides: 'the strong do what they have the power to do and the weak accept what they have to accept'.[96] Taken from the dialogue between the Athenian ambassadors and the Melian magistrates and oligarchs, this injunction is often presented in realist accounts as a description of the essential character of international politics.[97] Occurring at the height of a ruinous war between the great powers of the day, the dialogue seems to us to highlight the fragility and complexity of power rather than its simple efficacy.[98] According to Donald Kagan, the statement was part of a strategic ploy to 'convince the Melians to surrender without fighting'. Indeed, the Athenians 'may have hoped to achieve this more readily by menace than by any other device'.[99] Why, if the Athenians were so powerful, and the Melians so weak, was it necessary to resort to such ploys? The dialogue occurred during the second Athenian attempt to subdue Melos in the Peloponnesian War. The first expedition was limited to laying waste Melian farmland because 'the capture of Melos was a far more difficult and expensive task and was not worth the strain on Athenian resources' at the time.[100] In the second expedition, Melos only capitulated after a protracted siege, involving successful Melian sallies into the Athenian lines, requiring further Athenian reinforcements and only brought to a conclusion through treachery inside the city.[101]

Placed in its strategic context, the Melian dialogue takes on rather different meanings than those commonly attributed to it. As Daniel Garst comments, the second Athenian expedition to Melos highlighted 'a new and urgent anxiety about their control over their allies and empire.'[102] The Melians, like many another small power then and since, proved a hard nut to crack, requiring precious resources in men, material and treasure. Exercising agency, they decided not to 'accept what they had to accept'. Athenian power, in common with many other great powers, was imperial in nature and required the effective organisation of tributary allies who submitted to the extent necessary and resisted where possible. In the Melian dialogue the Athenians remark that they fear *their own* subject peoples the most: 'One is not so much frightened of being conquered by a power which rules over others as Sparta does . . . as of what would happen if a ruling power is attacked and defeated by its own subjects.'[103] Melian brigandage was disrupting Athens' shipping and communications with its allies, while its independence was threatening to Athens' control over other cities. The subjection of Melos was intended to maintain Athenian prestige, an indication of the continuous and demanding nature of producing and maintaining imperial power.

In our view, the Melian dialogue reveals the mutually constitutive nature of world politics, the numerous and diverse ways in which the weak and the strong are bound

[96] Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War* (London: Penguin, 1972), p. 402.
[97] See, for example, Robert Keohane, 'Theory of World Politics: Structural Realism and Beyond', in Keohane (ed.), *Neorealism and Its Critics* (New York: Columbia, 1986), pp. 158–203.
[98] See, for example, Richard Ned Lebow, *The Tragic Vision of Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).
[99] Donald Kagan, *The Peace of Nicias and the Sicilian Expedition* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1981), p. 150.
[100] Donald Kagan, *The Archidamian War* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1974), p. 198.
[101] Kagan, *Peace of Nicias*, pp. 148–53; Thucydides, *History*, pp. 407–8.
[102] Daniel Garst, 'Thucydides and Neorealism,' *International Studies Quarterly*, 33:1 (1989), p. 15.
[103] Thucydides, *History*, p. 402.

up together. The Athenian expeditions to Melos also draw attention to the many ways in which the resistance of the weak profoundly shapes events and outcomes. Like conventional interpretations of the Melian dialogue, Eurocentric accounts of great-power competition tend to take the weak – the 'natives', the colonies, the periphery, the Third World, the global South – more or less for granted. They do so in the specific sense that agency, rationality, power and morality, as well as the fundamental dynamics of world order, are assumed to reside in the global North. Alternatively, these various others are assumed to be just like us, only weaker. This generates a different problem, inasmuch as it denies them their own history, their difference.[104] For us, in contrast to both of these perspectives, the Melian dialogue and the course and character of the Peloponnesian War draw attention to the dependence of Athens on its periphery, just as Sparta needed its helots and their labour. As centres of power, what Athens and Sparta *were* depended crucially on an ongoing set of relations with their peripheries. The terms 'Athens' and 'Sparta', seemingly identifying discrete and concrete entities, too easily occlude this complex network of power relations and the processes through which they were maintained, or not.

What is true of Athens and Sparta is generally true of modern great powers; they were embedded in and dependent upon imperial relations of diverse kind. There is now a large and sophisticated historical and sociological literature tracing the mutual constitution of metropole and colony in the era of European imperialism. The key claim is that metropole and colony cannot be understood one without the other, they comprise a 'single analytic field'.[105] That is, 'what we now call Europe, Africa, the Americas and Asia were constructed together in the midst of a relationship, at once economic and cultural, military and political'.[106] Eurocentrism in International Relations, the view that Europe is separate and self-producing, renders invisible this mutual constitution of core and periphery characteristic of great powers.[107]

Once vision is shifted from a fixation on the politics and policies of great powers to the ebb and flow of the social relations through which great powers – their societies, economies, cultures and armed forces – are constituted, reproduced and transformed, the imperial and the non-European world more generally take on equivalent importance. Throughout the era of European great-power politics, the source of many of security studies' archetypal categories, European politics and society were complexly interpenetrated with an imperial periphery. To cite one fact of a type central to any realist account of world politics, for much of its existence as a great power, Britain's leading strategic reserve was the *Indian* army.[108]

What was true of European economic and military power was also true of the constitution of European identities, which required an imaginary non-Western

[104] Inayatullah and Blaney, *International Relations and the Problem of Difference*.
[105] Frederick Cooper and Ann Laura Stoler, 'Between Metropole and Colony: Rethinking a Research Agenda', in Cooper and Stoler (eds.), *Tensions of Empire: Colonial Cultures in a Bourgeois World* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1997), p. 4.
[106] Richard Drayton, 'The Collaboration of Labour: Slaves, Empires and Globalizations in the Atlantic World, c. 1600–1860', in A. G. Hopkins (ed.), *Globalization in World History* (London: Pimlico, 2002), p. 103.
[107] Tarak Barkawi and Mark Laffey, 'Retrieving the Imperial: *Empire* and International Relations', *Millennium*, 31:1 (2002), pp. 109–27.
[108] Black, *War and the World*, p. 178.

'other'.[109] The West is defined through a series of contrasts regarding rationality, progress, and development in which the non-West is generally found lacking. To take an example from the initial period of European expansion, Western thinkers used the notion of the 'state of nature' to distinguish between their civilisation and those they encountered in the Western Hemisphere after 1492. The 'state of nature' was itself a Eurocentric interpretation of these peoples which located civilisation and law in Europe even as Europe set about destroying these peoples and their civilisations. This metaphor, a core notion in Western political thought, only became possible as a result of Europe's imperial encounter with aboriginal peoples.[110] At the same time, it enabled and legitimated European dispossession and appropriation of land, resources and populations. In this way, the 'state of nature' played its role in producing a world sharply divided between Western have-lots and non-Western have-nots. This idea has continuing significance in political theory and in discussions of contemporary security issues such as failed states and new wars, discussions which reproduce Eurocentric understandings of world politics.[111] Contemporary violence in Africa is often explained in terms of a lack of those institutions and attributes associated with European modernity, such as sovereignty, rather than as a consequence of long histories of colonial and postcolonial interaction with the West.

Part of the significance of the postcolonial rupture signalled in the attack on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon on 11 September 2001 is that it forces us to recover these processes of mutual constitution and their significance for how we make sense of security relations and world politics more generally. For many, the War on Terror is a clash between the West and the Islamic world. Al-Qaeda, bin Laden and his allies are conceived as 'Islamic fundamentalists' with a passionate hatred of everything Western. The problem with this way of framing the conflict is that it ignores the long history of interconnection and mutual constitution out of which bin Laden's ideas and organisation were produced. Currents of Western, Arab and Islamic cultures and histories, modern technologies and communications, and the policies of various regimes and great powers combined to form crystallisations, amongst them bin Laden's and Al-Qaeda's particular way of being modern. Attempting to disaggregate these phenomena and squeeze them into boxes marked 'Islam' and 'the West' will not aid understanding of the dynamics of the War on Terror. More importantly, policies derived from such binary understandings may create the very conditions that crystallise future bin Ladens and Al-Qaedas.

Bin Laden's 'Islamic fundamentalism' and the Al-Qaeda organisation are in fact modern, hybrid creations of Islam's encounter with the West.[112] Two of the key figures behind contemporary Islamic thinking, Sayyid Qutb and his brother Muhammad, who was bin Laden's teacher at King Abdul Aziz University in Saudi Arabia, viewed the West as suffering from a 'great spiritual famine'.[113] Much of their thought is a reaction against Western modernity and an attempt to outline a new,

[109] Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Pantheon, 1978); cf. Fernando Coronil, *The Magical State* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997), pp. 13–15.
[110] Beate Jahn, *The Cultural Construction of International Relations: The Invention of the State of Nature* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2000).
[111] See, for example, Stathis N. Kalyvas, ' ''New'' and ''Old'' Wars: A Valid Distinction?', *World Politics*, 54:1 (2001), pp. 99–118.
[112] Oliver Roy, *Globalised Islam* (London: Hurst, 2004).
[113] Gray, *Al-Qaeda*, p. 77.

Islamic modernity, for they did not want the same fate to befall their societies. The West was not only an initial impetus to their ideology, they also utilised a variety of quintessentially Western ideas. Qutb was influenced in particular by Marxism-Leninism, taking the concept of a revolutionary vanguard and the idea that the world could be remade through an act of will, both important intellectual bases of Al-Qaeda. His notion that Islam could serve as a universal ideology of emancipation in modern conditions is a distinctive combination of Islamic and Enlightenment thinking.[114]

The Al-Qaeda organisation itself is even more obviously of the modern world, rather than simply a product of 'Islam'. It is a contemporary, global and networked enterprise, with a flattened hierarchy and cellular structure. It is comfortable with computer technology and modern communications. Al-Qaeda also has direct debts to US foreign policy. Bin Laden's central role and his organisation developed out of the US supported resistance to the Soviet-backed regime in Kabul.[115] It is through diverse forms of interaction between peoples and places around the world that 'Islamic fundamentalism' and Al-Qaeda came into existence; they were mutually constituted out of hierarchical relations of interconnection.

Our point here is not to provide a full account of Al-Qaeda but rather to highlight in an initial way the kinds of research questions as well as the larger research agenda opened up for security studies by a focus on the mutual constitution of the strong and the weak, amid relations of domination and subordination. For security studies after Eurocentrism, the history and politics of warfare and struggle between what we now call the global North and the global South must become a major focus for inquiry. Especially in the age of the War on Terror, with its avowedly colonial projects and rhetorics in Iraq, Afghanistan and elsewhere, there needs to be greater attention to the histories and processes of imperial subjugation and the resistance it has so regularly generated. The imperial character of great powers – in all its dimensions – directs inquiry to the constitutive relationship between core and periphery, and in so doing to a reconceptualisation of what a great power is in security studies. This involves explicit recognition and analysis of the many ways in which political, economic and military power is produced out of relations between the strong and the weak, relations that are as necessary as they are contested. The insight of mutual constitution is no less applicable to the character and nature of the weak themselves, as for Al-Qaeda. They too are formed out of their relations with the powerful.

Recognition of the mutually constitutive character of world politics has implications for the nature of explanation. There is a strong tendency across the social sciences to divide up the world into a series of discrete spaces and locate the causes of events and processes in one site or another. Security studies, as we have shown, privileges the agency of great powers, while area studies often emphasises local factors.[116] In contrast, we wish to highlight the significance of the relations between spaces and populations, and their role in driving events and processes, as well as in constituting seemingly discrete spaces and entities in the first place. Methodologically, this means that it cannot be assumed in advance that events and their

[114] Mamdani, *Good Muslim, Bad Muslim*, pp. 56–60.
[115] Gabriel Kolko, *Another Century of War?* (New York: The New Press, 2002).
[116] Compare Masao Miyoshi and H. D. Harootunian (eds.), *Learning Places: The Afterlives of Area Studies* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2002).

explanation are always to be found in the same place, even in the case of large and powerful states.[117] 'Contrapuntal studies' that analyse events, developments and processes in core and periphery together, offer one example of what is required.[118]

For purposes of critiquing security studies, we have deployed a set of categories, such as North-South and strong-weak, that we are not fully able to develop here.[119] A key feature of these alternative categories is that they are relational in nature; you cannot have the North without the South. Relational processes connect the world. In so doing, they remake and interconnect spaces; they have a geographic expression. For example, as Sidney Mintz shows, Eastern techniques of sugar production, African slave labour, English capital, and Caribbean land together remade Europe and the New World.[120] The global North and the global South were co-produced through processes of imperial expansion and neocolonial domination. Relational thinking provides inherent defences against Eurocentrism because it begins with the assumption that the social world is composed of relations rather than separate objects, like great powers or 'the West'. Explanation is then centred on the relations rather than apparently discrete entities. To be sure, there is no direct correlation between analytic categories like strong and weak and spatial categories like North and South. Nonetheless, relations between the strong and the weak have geographic consequences, some of which are captured by the categories of North and South. The spatial categories of security studies, such as the Third World, territorial states, great powers, failed states, and now civilisations, are typically conceived in non-relational terms, as separate and discrete. A security studies conceived in these terms is inadequate. The social context of armed conflict is a world of relational processes, a world which must be studied in relational terms.

Security studies and the right to bear arms

Making sense of security relations requires putting the weak and the strong in a common analytic frame. But more is at stake in our critique of Eurocentrism in security studies than the adequacy of social scientific analyses. In conventional form, security studies takes the perspective of the powerful, of those who have colonised, dominated and competed over the world. There is a politics to security studies and it is the politics of the strong. As E. H. Carr remarked in 1977, '[t]he study of international relations in English speaking countries is simply a study of the best way to run the world from positions of strength. The study of international relations in African and Asian Universities, if it ever got going, would be a study of the exploitation of the weaker by the stronger.'[121] These considerations take on

[117] See, for example, Thomas Bender (ed.), *Rethinking American History in a Global Age* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2002).
[118] Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Knopf, 1993).
[119] For example, with Sherry Ortner we recognize that the categories of weak and strong are multiple, not unitary: 'Resistance and the Problem of Ethnographic Refusal', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 37:1 (1995), p. 175.
[120] Sidney Mintz, *Sweetness and Power: The Place of Sugar in Modern History* (London: Penguin, 1985).
[121] Quoted in Jonathan Haslem, *The Vices of Integrity: E. H. Carr 1892–1982* (London: Verso, 1999), pp. 252–3.

additional significance when security studies informs a strategic studies, the rational use of force in pursuit of objectives.

It is a common observation that security studies is overwhelmingly done in and for the most powerful states in the international system. As a problem-solving discourse, conventional security studies is produced out of an extensive and well-developed set of institutions and personnel located at the intersection of the state and the academy.[122] From the initial systemisation of general staffs in the nineteenth century to the contemporary galaxy of university departments, think tanks, and security and defence policy planning staffs, there has emerged an extensive and sophisticated, albeit Eurocentric, body of knowledge.

That said, much contemporary writing in the field of security studies is explicitly and self-consciously critical of the policies of Western states. How can we then claim that security studies as a whole exhibits a Eurocentric politics? The politics of critical and human security approaches revolve around the concept of emancipation, an idea derived from the European Enlightenments. In this literature, the agent of emancipation is almost invariably the West, whether in the form of Western-dominated international institutions, a Western-led global civil society, or in the 'ethical foreign policies' of leading Western powers.[123] Critics of Western states find themselves in the position of relying on Western armed forces for humanitarian interventions, especially when actual fighting is required, as Paul Hirst demonstrates in his incisive critique of Mary Kaldor's *New and Old Wars*.[124] Even when the concrete agents of emancipation are not themselves Westerners, they are conceived as the bearers of Western ideas, whether concerning economy, politics or culture.

In our critique of the politics of conventional security studies, what we wish to emphasise is the everywhere taken-for-granted assumption that it is the powerful, most prominently the West, other great powers and their clients, who have the right to bear arms. A strong distinction is drawn in international law and state practice regarding war between the conventional armed forces of sovereign states and the kind of armed resistance the weak are generally able to mount. Such resistance often takes the form of insurgency, ambush, raids, banditry, hostage-taking, assassination, bombings, and other tactics which reflect the exigencies of asymmetric warfare. Violent resistance, however justified and for whatever purpose, is often ugly. Unsurprisingly, this violence, often rational and effective for the weaker party, is systematically delegitimated by the West. This is evident in the terms used publicly to identify those who resort to violent weapons of the weak. For example, four years into the Malayan Emergency, the British dropped the term 'bandit' for the insurgents and adopted 'Communist Terrorist'.[125] In the wake of 9/11, the military historian Sir John Keegan drew a distinction between Western and Oriental traditions of warfare: 'Westerners fight face to face, in stand-up battle . . . [observing] rules of honour. Orientals . . . shrink from pitched battle . . . preferring ambush, surprise, treachery

[122] In a US context, see, for example, Bruce Cumings, 'Boundary Displacement: the State, the Foundations, and Area Studies during the Cold War', in Miyoshi and Harootunian (eds.), *Learning Places*, pp. 261–302; Ellen Herman, *The Romance of American Pyschology: Political Culture in the Age of Experts* (Berkeley, CA: University of California, 1995).

[123] See, for example, Chandler, *From Kosovo to Kabul*, pp. 218–219.

[124] Paul Hirst, *War and Power in the 21st Century* (Cambridge: Polity, 2001), pp. 86–8.

[125] Susan Carruthers, *Winning Hearts and Minds: British Governments, the Media and Colonial Counter-Insurgency 1940–1960* (London: Leicester University Press, 1995), pp. 84–5.

and deceit.'[126] President G.W. Bush referred to the tactics used by the militias opposing the invasion of Iraq in the Spring of 2003 as 'cowardly' and 'terrorist'.[127] As Victor Davis Hanson observes, 'we in the West call the few casualties we suffer from terrorism and surprise ''cowardly'', the frightful losses we inflict through open and direct assault ''fair'' '.[128]

In armed conflict between the global North and the global South, Western use of force is legitimated in terms of a civilising mission of one kind or another. Whether 'white man's burden', humanitarian intervention in the 1990s, or the post-9/11 invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq, the assumption is that it is the right of the West to bear arms to liberate the 'natives'. This is and has always been the primary justification of imperialism in all its forms; it is about civilising the barbarians.[129] Viewed from the global South, the results of the civilising mission over the last several centuries are at best mixed. Setting aside the mass die-offs of the initial stages of European expansion, nineteenth-century imperialism worked to divide humanity. As Mike Davis observes:

> [W]hat we today call the 'third world' (a Cold War term) is the outgrowth of income and wealth inequalities – the famous 'development gap' – that were shaped most decisively in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, when the great non-European peasantries were initially integrated into the world economy . . . By the end of Victoria's reign . . . the inequality of nations was as profound as the inequality of classes. Humanity had been irrevocably divided.[130]

In such conditions, and in the world of profound inequalities they produced, armed and other resistance is only to be expected. For us, the 'natives' have a right to bear arms for purposes of their own liberatory projects, even those we profoundly disagree with.

The politics of a non-Eurocentric security studies, a Melian security studies as it were, necessarily stands on the other side of this divide, with the weak against the strong, with the many against the few. To advise the weak that they should not take up arms but instead await liberation at the hands of the West is wishful thinking given the historical record of the West in this regard. Most recently, the West has delivered neoliberalism and the War on Terror to the global South rather than emancipation. In contrast to those today who place their hopes upon Western use of force under the auspices of the UN or the international community, generations of Southern resistance movements instead put faith in their own use of force. For Frantz Fanon, Mao Zedong and others the use of force *by the weak themselves* was an inherent and useful dimension of liberatory projects. Force indeed has had some significant successes in the global South, as in China, Indonesia, Algeria, Cuba, Vietnam and Nicaragua.

To be sure, the ultimate achievements of these liberation struggles were contestable, ambiguous, and more or less overturned, in no small measure because of the hostility of the international environment into which they emerged. Our point here is

[126] Quoted in Gregory, *Colonial Present*, p. 58.
[127] See, for example, 'Operation Iraqi Freedom', President's Radio Address, 5 April 2003, ⟨http://www.whitehousegov/news/releases/2003/04/20030405.html⟩, accessed 7 January 2005.
[128] Victor Davis Hanson, *Carnage and Culture: Landmark Battles in the Rise of Western Power* (New York: Anchor, 2002), p. 97.
[129] Mark Salter, *Barbarians and Civilization in International Relations* (London: Pluto, 2002).
[130] Davis, *Late Victorian Holocausts*, pp. 15–16, footnote omitted.

not to make definitive normative judgements concerning the relative merits of these efforts. Rather, the purpose is to draw out the political implications of our critique of Eurocentrism in security studies. There are legions of scholars in the Anglo-American academy who devote themselves to a security studies for the strong, one which informs the security and defence policies – including those involving the direct use of force – of the leading powers and the putative 'international community'. This is considered a normal, legitimate, and even patriotic career choice.

We consider it equally legitimate for Western scholars and others to work in Melian security studies, including its strategic and problem-solving dimensions. In this way, the critique of Eurocentrism in security studies opens up space for scholars to analyse the strategic and security dilemmas confronting the weak and their use of force. If it is acceptable for scholars to work in and for the Pentagon, the National Security Council and the UK Ministry of Defence, should it not also be acceptable for scholars to advise the Palestinians, the Tamils, the Chechens, the Iraqi resistance and others in their armed struggles? Equally, a security studies for Third World or Southern states, of the kind initially mapped out by Mohammed Ayoob, is also a legitimate arena for inquiry.[131] The critique of Eurocentrism leads to greater pluralism in security studies for both the topics we study and the knowledge interests we serve.

Conclusion

The attacks of 9/11 and the subsequent War on Terror prompt efforts to rethink security relations. We too have used 9/11 as an incitement to discourse. For a long time, security studies mostly relied on realism. In political theoretic terms, realism is a richer and more diverse tradition than its instantiation in the field of IR, one concerned with stripping power of its illusions. It is in this sense that the work of figures as diverse as Karl Marx, Max Weber and Michel Foucault can be characterised as realist. This article relies on such a sensibility to expose the Eurocentrism of security studies. Viewed in this light, conventional security studies sits at the intersection of power and knowledge. Whether in terms of the historical geographies that inform its empirical analyses, the taken-for-granted politics that structure its questions and theories, or the role of the state in shaping its research agendas, conventional security studies as a field of knowledge is a product of Western power. The knowledge produced out of such a field is inadequate even to its own clientele. It is even less adequate at addressing the security and strategic concerns of the weak, the vast majority of the people living on the planet. Security studies, and the policies it informs, have a lot to gain by waking up to the significance of the Melians and their kin. We all have a lot to lose if it fails to do so.

[131] Ayoob, *The Third World Security Predicament*.