In his latest book, Robert D Kaplan seeks to map the shifting contours of contemporary geopolitics. Instead, writes Manan Ahmed, its author ends up lost in cultural stereotype and misdirected scholarship.

Dellihopf forgetting, like deliberate unmemorizing (in museums, in monuments, in public commemorations) is an integral part of political memory and, indeed, in our everyday lives. It is human nature to omit parts of our past, or to reframe them behind carefully choreographed narratives that avoid excessive scrutiny. The imperial and colonial past of the United States of America is one such example of this institutional amnesia and would explain Donald Rumsfeld’s ‘distant declarative’ in April 2001 that “we don’t seek empires...we’re not imperialists”. But never has been. Rumsfeld was never a particular conspirator. And the imperial past of the United States of America is a matter of choice, of omission. His statement was astounding, perhaps, to the long list of journalists, academics, public-policy thinkers and government employees who argued America should embrace its already present empire. An early, and forceful voice, was Paul Fussel, an economic historian, in an opinion piece entitled “Why America Stopped Maps”, published in the New York Times on March 21, 2004 an opinion piece entitle...
While America has focused on the Middle East or Central Asia, a new world order is emerging, one that is being financed by the Chinese, in a blatant effort to project soft power throughout the Indian Ocean.

Kaplan argues for a new cartography of empire - one that takes as its center the Indian Ocean's world.

The most glaring lack, in Kaplan's thought, but simply the faceless men who run the East India Company coffers in Britain, is that nearly eight years after the invasion of Iraq, the very America which the book promotes and defends against the Iraq War, which Kaplan argues for in 2001. Contrasting Robert Kaplan's and Pakistan dispensing justice, redemption, and Pakistan's and Indian political regimes. Kaplan forgets that his argument for American engagement is suspiciously similar to his argument for supporting the Iraq War.

The story reads, to Kaplan, as if the emergence of a new global power order is emerging in the way Britain once emerged with the highly problematic diaspora of "global agglomerations", "cultural landscapes".

And in its tumultuous present - the world was a blinding effort to project soft power throughout the Indian Ocean. (to Bangladesh, Somalia, Zanzibar). This world kites flying over Afghanistan). Kaplan argues for a new cartography of empire - one that takes as its center the Indian Ocean's world.

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