

**Cosmotopology: American Providence and the Geopolitical Order (2001-2008)**

Jay Joshi

A thesis submitted to  
The Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research  
In partial fulfillment of the  
Requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

Department of Geography  
Carleton University

© Jay Joshi May 2009



Library and Archives  
Canada

Published Heritage  
Branch

395 Wellington Street  
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4  
Canada

Bibliothèque et  
Archives Canada

Direction du  
Patrimoine de l'édition

395, rue Wellington  
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4  
Canada

*Your file* *Votre référence*  
ISBN: 978-0-494-58446-0  
*Our file* *Notre référence*  
ISBN: 978-0-494-58446-0

**NOTICE:**

The author has granted a non-exclusive license allowing Library and Archives Canada to reproduce, publish, archive, preserve, conserve, communicate to the public by telecommunication or on the Internet, loan, distribute and sell theses worldwide, for commercial or non-commercial purposes, in microform, paper, electronic and/or any other formats.

The author retains copyright ownership and moral rights in this thesis. Neither the thesis nor substantial extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without the author's permission.

**AVIS:**

L'auteur a accordé une licence non exclusive permettant à la Bibliothèque et Archives Canada de reproduire, publier, archiver, sauvegarder, conserver, transmettre au public par télécommunication ou par l'Internet, prêter, distribuer et vendre des thèses partout dans le monde, à des fins commerciales ou autres, sur support microforme, papier, électronique et/ou autres formats.

L'auteur conserve la propriété du droit d'auteur et des droits moraux qui protègent cette thèse. Ni la thèse ni des extraits substantiels de celle-ci ne doivent être imprimés ou autrement reproduits sans son autorisation.

---

In compliance with the Canadian Privacy Act some supporting forms may have been removed from this thesis.

While these forms may be included in the document page count, their removal does not represent any loss of content from the thesis.

Conformément à la loi canadienne sur la protection de la vie privée, quelques formulaires secondaires ont été enlevés de cette thèse.

Bien que ces formulaires aient inclus dans la pagination, il n'y aura aucun contenu manquant.

  
**Canada**

### *Abstract*

The imbrications of cosmo(logical) and geo-political categories remains an unexamined sub-genre within the field of Critical Geopolitics. The examination of the Modern Geopolitical Imagination (MGI), (emphasis on modern) for example has tended to focus upon immanent rather than transcendental claims to legitimacy. This thesis demonstrates how in the period spanning 2001-2008, a cosmo(logic) enabled the re-production of the MGI, the geo(graphing) of the American nation-state, while facilitating a new Geopolitical Order. This insight is derived through an analysis of American Providence. Since Providence is a cosmo-political claim to space/time, an analysis of space/time must take precedence in any consideration of the subject. A novel space/time dynamic is uncovered in the analysis of American Providence leading to a form of religious territoriality that I term a *cosmotopology*

In dreams my life came toward me,  
my loves that were slender as gazelles,  
But America also dreams....  
Dream, you are flying over Russia,  
dream, you are falling in Asia.

As I look down the street  
On a typical sunny day in California  
it is my house that is burning  
and my dear ones that lie in the gutter  
as the American army enters.

Everyday I wake far away  
from my life, in a foreign country.  
These people are speaking a strange language.  
It is strange to me  
and strange, I think, even to themselves.

(Louis Simpson: American Dreams)

“As the bible says: ‘He who loses his soul gains it’. The ethical ‘I’ is a being who asks if he has a right to be, who excuses himself to the other for his own existence” (Emmanuel Levinas 1995).

## Table of Contents

<i>Introduction</i> .....	1
Methodological and Theoretical Considerations.....	5
<b><i>Chapter #1: Providence, Time, and ‘American’ Exceptionalism</i></b> .....	17
Spivak and the Politics Time.....	19
Providence and American Exceptionalism.....	22
American Nationalism and Providence.....	23
Conclusion.....	28
<b><i>Chapter #2: Providence and the Presidency of George W. Bush</i></b> .....	30
Bush, Duty, and Providence.....	36
Bush, Providence, and the Premillennialists.....	42
Conclusion.....	50
<b><i>Chapter #3: The Modern Geopolitical Imagination and Providence</i></b> .....	51
Querying the Modern Geopolitical Imagination.....	52
The MGI as Ideology.....	54
Providence, Modernity, and Time.....	56
Conclusion.....	65

<b>Chapter #4: Providence and Territoriality</b> .....	67
Founding and Fixating: The Geo(graphing) of America.....	73
The Contradictions of Christian Religious Territoriality.....	89
Providence, Sovereignty, and the MGI.....	91
Conclusion.....	97
<b>Chapter #5: Periodization</b> .....	100
Globalization(s) and Geopolitical Periodization.....	101
9/11, Representational Space and Material Practices: The Geopolitical Order.....	108
Spatial Differentiation and the Geopolitical Order.....	112
Conclusion.....	115
<b>Chapter #6: Cosmotopology</b> .....	117
Space, Time, and the Geopolitical Period.....	124
Cosmotopology.....	130
Cosmotopology and the Geopolitical Order.....	132
Conclusion.....	134
<b>Chapter #7: Conclusion and Discussion</b> .....	135
Discussion.....	139
<b>Works Cited</b> .....	146

## ***Introduction***

The imbrications of cosmo(logical) and geo-political categories remains an unexamined sub-genre within the field of Critical Geopolitics. The examination of the Modern Geopolitical Imagination (MGI), (emphasis on modern) for example has tended to focus upon the legitimacy derived from immanent rather than transcendental claims.<sup>1</sup> Instead of finding legitimacy in a sovereignty divinely derived, the MGI came to be defined and described by emerging scientific discourses and conceptualizations thereby naturalizing its consolidation. While critical geographers have been keen to deconstruct this “naturalization” of the Modern Geopolitical Imagination and thus the ontological categories upon which it is premised, the cosmological has been paid little to no attention. This is because the cosmological is believed to be of no relevance to a Modern Geopolitical Imagination since ‘modernity’ is secular, rational, and guided by science. This presupposition has had disciplinary, epistemological, and methodological consequences limiting the kinds of theses considered appropriate to any field dealing with the MGI.

For example, the recent work of Marshall Beier in the field of Critical International Relations contends that cosmologies remain under examined within the field. He notes “that our existing critiques of various ontological and epistemological commitments and positions do not reach all of our knowledges because they do not extend to an interrogation of cosmologies whence the foundation of these knowledges can be traced” (Beier 2005:3-4). In this innovate study, Beier notes that

---

<sup>1</sup> See for example Agnew (2003). *Geopolitics*

International Relations theory is constrained within the existing hegemonologue in that it refuses or is unable to acknowledge its own cosmological ‘inflections’. These ‘inflections’ include the persistence of linearity in ‘Western’ thought which delimits the ability to think through political problematics. “What cosmology dictates, then, is the field of ontological and epistemological possibilities” (Beier, 2005:45).

Moreover, this unacknowledged biased has had the “effect of shielding ‘Western’ cosmology from serious scrutiny without impeding the powerful influence it exerts over knowledge” (ibid: 45).

Closer to home, Harrison and Livingston (1980) long ago brought Beier’s concerns to the attention of geographers arguing that “cosmological, ontological and disciplinary presuppositions in turn combine to generate specific epistemological dictates which restrict the kinds of techniques that constitute a methodology” (Harrison and Livingston,1980:26). Despite their positioning of the cosmological as the primary *a priori* biasing all academic research, the discipline of geography continues to avoid this dimension. Harrison and Livingston define the cosmological as “fundamental beliefs about the origin of reality” (Harrison and Livingston, 1980:27).

Since a deconstruction of “origins” lies at the heart of the disciplinary aims of Critical Geopolitics the cosmological can no longer be omitted.<sup>2</sup> This is especially

---

<sup>2</sup> See for example David Campbell’s (1998) discussion and utilization of the work of Derrida in *National Deconstruction*

true as the sub-discipline tackles, informs, and generates post-foundational theory.<sup>3</sup>

The present and primary objective of my project is to bring a concern for the cosmological into the field of Critical Geopolitics.

This theoretical objective must, however, be empirically applied in order to demonstrate its relevance to the field as a whole. This will first be achieved through an analysis of American providential discourse as related to American exceptionalism and the persistence of the MGI. The MGI is a state-centric, or rather, a nation-state centric conceptualization of geopolitics. It is considered “ideological, if ideology is defined as an amalgam of ideas, symbols and strategies for promoting or changing a social and cultural order...” (Agnew, 2003: 102). This social order manifests geopolitically. Tackling the persistence of the MGI means accounting for its characteristic. The first characteristic is the belief that states possess

exclusive power within their territories as represented by the concept of sovereignty; second that ‘domestic’ and foreign affairs are essentially separate realms in which different rules obtain; and finally, that the boundaries of the state define the boundaries of society (Agnew, 2003:51).

This analysis, however, must take account of the context or rather the geopolitical period (i.e. deterritorialization /globalization) in which providentialism proliferates, and to which it contributes. Understanding the proliferation of providentialism requires consideration of the global political economy.

---

<sup>3</sup> See for example Matt Sparke’s (2005) discussion and utilization of Derrida and Spivak in *In the Space of Theory*

Agnew (1983) makes a similar point in his article examining America's expansionary foreign policy. He finds that legitimacy is most often derived from the ideology of American exceptionalism. Agnew's approach problematizes American exceptionalism and expansion and places it in the larger context of the world political economy. One of Agnew's major points is that America's 'original' nationalism grew out of specific economic and political conditions. It did not arise as a 'transcendental ideal' according to a *telos*. Instead,

It was the ideas and action forged under the circumstances of a revolutionary situation, therefore, that created the Revolution rather than the Idea of Liberty working superorganically. It is not then that ideas are without consequences but that they do not descend from an Idea and they do develop in socio-economic contexts (Agnew 1983:155).

His last point is of specific interest to this project. Providentialism is at least as old as the texts that decree the Sovereignty of God over all time and all space. However, the use of providentialism has been manipulated throughout history to suit specific political circumstances. In this case it is used to buttress the notion of American exceptionalism. The point is that providentialism as an Idea (with a capital 'I') has held great sway over the actual unfolding of events and not just the interpretation of events after the fact. For this reason, Agnew is careful to note that some "so-called Revisionists have added the ideology of exceptionalism as an important cause of expansion in its own right" (Agnew 1983:155). It can therefore be construed as an ideological tool, or in Agnew's language, a "domestic capability" leveraging American material expansion at certain crucial phases in the development of the global political economy.

This is no doubt true. However, Agnew's overemphasis on political economy often subsumes the ideological and the social. This project consequently follows the logic of Agnew's latter thought which posits that the

...connections between religious thought and language, on the one hand, and material interests, on the other, depend on interpenetration or metabolizing between them rather than an efficient causality subordinating one to the other...(Agnew, 2006:1).

That being said the manner and materialization of this metabolism is different in different socio-economic contexts. This project explores the cosmo(logic) of providentialism bound up in the geo-political<sup>4</sup> logic of American exceptionalism in the period of the presidency of George W. Bush. The context in which it has proliferated is deterritorialization while the consequence is a discourse and a practice of re-territorialization where Providence provides the ultimate justification. Moreover, contrary to Agnew's assertion that "'transcendental idealism' offers no means of accounting for the changed political geography" (Agnew, 1983:151), Providence as the ultimate form of transcendental idealism, when understood as generative political discourse, does in fact shape the political geography under examination.

### ***Methodological and Theoretical Considerations***

This last point brings makes it necessary to outline and preface the following

---

<sup>4</sup> A hyphenated "geo-politics" refers to the "politics of writing space" following Toal 1996

analysis with some theoretical points apropos the method being employed and the theoretical position being advocated. Following Crang's (1997) chapter entitled "Analyzing qualitative materials", I will apply an amalgam of research approaches since "...there is no single or mandatory way that materials have to be understood or used..." (Crang, 1997:195). For example, I have previously discussed the political economic dimension of the project. However, from a different vantage my emphasis is also upon semiotics since I am "concerned with the way words, things, pictures, and actions come to be 'signs', that is to convey meanings in particular times and at particular places" (Crang, 1997:191).

In this case when providential language is applied to the events of 9/11 and to the geo-political unit of the American nation-state both come to represent a 'sign' that codes or categorizes information in cosmological terms.

Codes are highly complex patterns of association that are common for a particular society at a particular time. They affect the way we interpret signs and symbols found in all forms of texts. To be socialized into a culture means, in effect, to be taught a number of codes. Many codes are specific to a person's social class, geographical location, race, ethnic group and so forth. Semiotics is intent upon deciphering these codes so as to bring them to the forefront of consciousness (Aitken 1997:205).

The codes and categories to be brought to the fore are, in this study, cosmological. Furthermore, I am interested in what is included or excluded by these codes and categorizations and thus to comprehend what is "not specifically prohibited and not specifically prescribed" (Crang 1997: 192), when the geo-political unit of America is described in Christian cosmological language-providentialism.

This brings up the subject of religious territorialization. Though religious territorialization has been given some attention in the literature (Hervieu-Leger, 2002; Sturm, 2006; Wallace, 2006; Dittmer, 2008), its cosmological correlates are never addressed. This point is explored in relation to the cosmologically oriented language that preceded 9/11 which served to justify the military invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq. The coding and categorization of the geo-political in cosmological terms, it is argued, represents a 'turning point' though not a novelty. Providentialism has at many times served to justify American exceptionalism. The period following 9/11 simply marks a return to tropes utilized when national 'crisis' is perceived. However, the frequency and intensity of providential language as exemplified in the language of George W. Bush and the popularity of premillennialism does constitute a shift in the geo-political coding found both during the Cold War period and during the period of the consolidation of the 'New World Order'. An examination of the speeches, actions, and policies of the Bush administration, when compared and contrasted with the beliefs of premillennialist preachers, reveals an obvious intertextuality between religious texts and geopolitical discourse. However, following hermeneutics there are "several layers of meaning which accrue in a particular text" (Aitken 1997:206). In this case, providentialism requires an implicit cosmological imaginary that must also be elucidated. The emphasis on language, text, and social production may be said to denote a postmodern approach. From this vantage point,

All forms of text are produced through discursive practices which structure the flow of our understanding. Discursive practices imply intertextuality rather than rambling chaos. Discursive practices are

also always embedded in social relations of power and ideology which give authority to some texts while subverting others. For this reason, postmodern textual analysis takes a lead from hermeneutics and problematizes the story teller as well as the receiver of the text (Aitken, 1997:211).

Occupation of the office of the presidency of the United States brings with it obvious power relations. Bush Jr. as author and narrator of the geopolitical script must therefore be himself problematized in parallel with the codes and categories posited by providentialism as obvious. This leads to the notion of *performativity*. Following Butler's work on the construction of identity, providential discourse should be interpreted as *performative* in the sense that it brings "into being or enact that which it names ... To the extent that a *performative* appears to "express" a prior intention, a doer behind the deed, that prior agency is only legible as the effect of that utterance" (Butler, 1995:134). From this vantage point, the use of providential discourse in relation to the nation actually produces the nation. It does not exist *a priori* but instead requires continual rejuvenation. This is an important point because as McAlister notes, in a deterritorializing world "we need to remain conscious of the ways in which powerful discourses" such as American nationalism, "appropriate, and are revitalized by, challenges that require them merely to expand their definitions" (McAlister, 2000:274). Equally important is how American nationalism is revitalized in order to foreclose its definition. Providential discourse applied to the American nation-state is one manner in which this is achieved. I therefore argue that renewed religious vigor within the United States as represented by Bush and the premillennialist bounds a specific form of the nation though done so within a wider cosmological imaginary.

The substantive material for this project will include the speeches, actions, and policies of the Bush administration compared, contrasted, and understood in conjunction with the research of scholar Nicolas Guyatt (2007b) whose interviews probe premillennialist providentialism. In addition the theo-geo-political logic of scholar and teacher S.H. Webb (2004) will be applied to the analysis. This triad of formal, popular, and academic geo-political material is then utilized to explore and discuss territoriality and sovereignty in relation to the American nation-state leading to a discussion of the geopolitical order/periodization. The trajectory is as follows.

The project will first explain Providence as a cosmological conceptualization that is both temporal and spatial. Providentialism argues that God is responsible for the creation, order, history, and *telos* of the earth and its inhabitants. The geo-historical as well as the geo-political are both subsumed and muted within this conceptualization. To understand this process I invoke the work of Gayatri Spivak (1999) and Jacques Derrida. Both scholars have formulated critical insights that have been found to be especially useful in the field of Critical Geopolitics and both are relevant to the present argument. Matthew Sparke (2005), David Campbell (1998), and Gerard Toal (1996), for example, demonstrate how the geo(graphic) and the geo-political lie at the very heart of the critical positionalities of these two scholars, even if it is never fully explicated. As I will demonstrate, the cosmological in relation to the geographical is never far off in this discussion. Generally, however, it has been overlooked in the sub-discipline of Critical Geopolitics.

Sparke's post-foundational approach will be especially important to this project, informing my reading of Spivak.

The basis for Sparke's deconstructive readings lies in the mark of the hyphen and the neologism: hyphen-nation-states. The hyphen is the trace of the abstraction of space, without which the co-figuration of the nation and the state would not be possible; it is "the unthought-of-nation-state territoriality" (177). *In the Space of Theory* is, in fact, an exploration of two hyphens. The first hyphen inscribes the much discussed proximity of nation and state (nation-state), while the second hyphen marks the "latent," absent presence of the hyphen within the term geo(-)graphy, insofar as the "the geo is constantly being graphed" (xiv). It is within the function of this second hyphen that Sparke develops his deconstruction of spatial abstractions. (Bonura, 2008)

Providentialism as cosmology represents one critical manner in which the "geo is constantly being graphed" (Sparke, 2005). In fact providentialism assumes a graph of time where space unfolds according to a designated *telos*. Simultaneously the metaphysical realm is folded into temporal space. This indicates that time and space are co-constitutional within a providentialist cosmology.

Chapter one will explore the temporal/*Time* aspects of this co-constitution with an elucidation of how *Time* serves as ideology and operates in some contexts as political discourse. To elucidate, we turn to the work of Spivak (1999). Spivak develops a critique of *Time* as political discourse and then applies her insights to the context of present day Hindu nationalism; a nationalism derived from the pages of the '*Gita*' and more importantly from Hindu cosmology. However, Spivak contextualizes this development in the wake of colonialism and post-colonialism

where/when the culture of Imperialism remains salient and active. Spivak's insights are found to be transposable to the context of American exceptionalism, American nationalism, and their relation to Protestant Christian cosmology, though contextualized in light of post-colonialism's true manifestation as deterritorialization. Providentialism is representative of this dynamic. It is therefore understood as political discourse. Guyatt (2007a) is then engaged to demonstrate how providentialism has served as political discourse throughout American history in relation to changing material conditions to expand or confine the definition of the American nation. Chapter one concludes with the notion that the 'hyphen' that is the abstraction of space which 'co-figures' the nation with state is in context of providentialism a cosmological abstraction of space/time. It secures the hyphen between nation and state while geo(graphing) a specific form, purpose, and direction for this abstracted and consolidate geopolitical unit.

Chapter two demonstrates how this is achieved, probing the speeches of George W. Bush apropos providentialism. Max Weber (1958) is engaged in order to place Bush within a wider sociology of protestant Christianity. The insights gained from this inclusion are then compared and contrasted with premillennialist providentialism while a theological elaboration of Bush's policies are provided by juxtaposing Bush against Webb (2004). Chapter two demonstrates how the state informs how the nation is to be understood and understands itself. Secondly, it demonstrates how non-state actors such as churches re-affirm, extend, or deny the notion of the nation propagated by the state. The suggestion of extension is especially important. The

chapter demonstrates how social networks connect religious institutions with the state, insinuating and at times blatantly propagating notions of American nationalism that are too politically inflammatory to resonate from the White House itself. Secondly, it is shown that the actions and double-speak of president Bush belie the inclusive tone of his national rhetoric. Finally, this chapter elaborates the providential disposition of Christian Americans as represented by the work of Webb (2004). Webb is representative of a community where providentialism is thoroughly entwined with both American nationalism and the American MGI. His book *American Providence: A Nation with a Mission* demonstrates how providentialism shapes an understanding of both geopolitical categories and geopolitical change. We return to his work throughout in order to demonstrate how the 'latent hyphen' between nation and state (Sparke, 2005) in a providentialist understanding of America relies on a spatial abstraction that is cosmological, founding America within this dimension.

Chapter three traces the connections between cosmology and the MGI with a specific focus on American exceptionalism and its relation to Providence. This cursorily touches upon the related themes of sovereignty and territoriality to be discussed in the following two chapters. Providence and the MGI are then examined as a co-mingling ideology informing the understanding of the American nation-state and American exceptionalism. Weber, Spivak, Webb, and Guyatt are employed to explore this connection as it relates to the notion of *Time* and Providence. An

analysis of *Time* as Providence leads to the conclusion that there is a coterminous spatial dimension which manifests as a re-invigorated MGI.

Chapter four explores Providence as theme related to territorialization and sovereignty. The previous chapters determined that the cosmological is rarely considered as part of the spatiality of power presently in operation. Chapter four begins with the assertion that when the cosmological- or in this case the sacred- is considered as an important factor in re-territorialization, it is sited/cited outside the 'West'. This is inaccurate. The cosmological as a component of territoriality is present within the 'Western' MGI. This is elucidated, challenging notions of American civic nationalism. This is again achieved by rubbing together the work of Spivak, Guyatt, and Webb; however Derrida understood through Campbell dominates this section in order to flush out obfuscated components of American nationalism hidden under claims of pluralist equality. This is necessary since Campbell leaves the religious and the cosmological dimension in the margins of his critique of American nationalism. Agnew's (2005a) work on sovereignty is then assessed in light of the aforementioned.

Agnew introduces four types of sovereignty regimes in order to explain the spatiality of power in operation in the present geopolitical order. Agnew's political economic bias towards territoriality and sovereignty is critiqued with an elucidation of how the ideological, in dynamic relation with historical materialist developments, remains critical in the maintenance and re-invigoration of the MGI and the pursuit of

primacy. His set of sovereignty regimes is then reassessed. It is determined that Agnew fails to elaborate how cosmological imaginations underpin the conception of sovereignty necessary for the MGI. This leads to a reconsideration of the geopolitical periodization and the geopolitical order.

Chapter five takes up the task of re-examining the geopolitical periodization in wake of the end of the Cold war, the consolidation of the global neo-liberal agenda, deterritorialization/globalization, and finally the events of 9/11. The latter is determined to be the most relevant development contributing to the geopolitical period, though deterritorialization remains the critical context in which this event and ensuing developments must be understood. Providentialism, it is found, increased in the wake of this event constituting a cosmological conceptualization of the geo-political and thus inaugurating a new geopolitical periodization and geopolitical order. From the vantage point of ideology, the cosmological increasingly buttresses the MGI while simultaneously legitimating a materiality of actual territorial occupation and corporeal manipulation (torture). All represent an increase in the “differentiation of the spatial field” (Agnew and Corbridge, 1995) and thus indicates a shift of the geopolitical order.

Chapter seven continues with an elucidation of the geopolitical order. The chapter continues with an elaboration of the present debate apropos geopolitics and the spatiality of power found in the period of the presidency of George W. Bush though understood in the context of deterritorialization and the end of the Cold War. I

introduce a neologism termed a *cosmotopology* in order to designate and comprehend the geopolitical period previously examined. In mathematical terms topology is the study of the properties of geometric forms that remain intact even when submitted to strain such as bending or stretching. This term can be applied as a metaphor to better understand the geopolitical period. The geo-political equivalent to this mathematical geometric form is the hyphenated nation-state. In effect/affect it is under strain by deterritorialization resulting from recent developments in the political economy. The properties are those of the MGI. The previous six chapters have examined how the cosmological remains a crucial ideological buttress for the MGI and its relation to the nation-state, acting as a latent 'spatial abstraction' geo(graphing) (Sparke, 2005) a re-invigorated MGI and American primacy. Ironically, this geo(graphing) of the MGI relies on what is considered to be pre-modern notion of time and space; a cosmology where God acts providentially over the affairs of nations. This is the first understanding of the term. The second and related point is that a *cosmotopology* validates *present being* territorially. This is achieved through the co-constitutional dynamic between space and Time which I elaborate upon at the end of the chapter.

In summary, the conclusion is reached that in the post 9/11 period cosmological imaginaries represented as providentialism have re-surfaced to re-affirm a specific form and understanding of American national identity coterminously buttressing the ideology of the Modern Geopolitical Imagination while legitimatizing the pursuit of primacy as benevolent Imperialism. However, the summoning of Christian

cosmological, theological, and religious references in relation to the geo-political imagination of 'America' invites paradoxes and incongruities that manifest spatially. This necessarily demands a geographical analysis with a cosmological twist to which the following thesis is committed to developing.

## ***Chapter #1: Providence, Time, and 'American' Exceptionalism***

Our initial analysis begins with an exploration of Providence of as ideological characterization of time and space with geo-political ramifications. This requires that we first define what is meant by the term Providence. A Providential belief avers that,

God is responsible for the existence of the universe, but also that He providentially cares for all of His creation. At the very least, this implies divine control over the direction of history. The world is not left to its own devices, to work out in some unthinking fashion what its *telos* is. Rather, God Himself has prescribed the goal of history, and His Providence insures that events in time interact so as to achieve that goal...But this is only the beginning. God's Providence is not exhausted by some remote, unfeeling ordering of the course of nature, even with an occasional miracle thrown in. Rather, it is of the essence of His governance that it display unbounded love for all that He governs. God's providential guidance of things is not something independent of His love for what He has created, but instead is subservient to it. He guides the course of nature precisely because He loves and cares for the offspring of His creative activity. At the very heart, then, of the doctrine of Providence is unfathomable love; far from being a calculations manager driven by efficiency considerations to achieve maximal governance, from minimal involvement, God lavishes on His children His attention and concern in the process of ordering and directing His creation. Further, the display of His love is not any emaciated, truncated attention only in terms of conservation; it is not just our being, but our well-being, which concerns Him. Such love is not compatible with the ordering of things from afar; instead it requires direct and immediate involvement-the kind of direct and immediate involvement humans know rarely, in moment of true intimacy. The events and situations in which we find ourselves must be of a part of this involvement; they cannot be hindrances or obstacles to the Divine intention, but must instead issue from the very hand of God as part of His active love for us. Here again, however, any contribution by secondary causes to the course of events seems to be overwhelmed. For if God's involvement in universal history is so direct, immediate and active, what is left of that history which can be attributed to, or explained by, the nature of things? (McCann and Kvanvig, 1991:590-591).

This last point is critical for the following analysis. For the same question can be asked of the geopolitical. The introduction made clear that transcendental legitimation of the MGI has, in the course of the evolution of the MGI, been replaced with immanent or 'natural' claims to validity and legitimacy. However, those holding a providential view of history continue to conceive of geopolitics as transcendently directed or at least inspired. Consequently, as McCann and Kvanvig make clear "all secondary causes" are "overwhelmed". The geopolitical unfolds according to a divine plan inspired by infinite love for humanity.

At this point it is important to point out that this disposition automatically em(plots) a narrative. This narrative relates an eternal space/ time of a metaphysical realm with the temporal plane of human existence. Narratives of this type are prevalent around the world and are depicted differently by varying religions. These different cosmological narratives are sometimes utilized as political devices that manifest as territorialization. Often, this territorialization is part of a cosmological construction that is not just temporally, but also, spatially teleological and therefore geo-political.

Campbell's (1998) reconsideration of how historical narratives impact geo-political constructions in the present begins to demonstrate the importance of "rethinking of history such that the onto-theo-but also archeo-teleological concept of history...is subject to critical scrutiny". This has a "positive intent for it aims not to diminish historicity, but on the contrary to show that this onto-theo-archo-teleology locks up, neutralizes and finally cancels historicity" (Derrida quoted in Campbell, 1998:22).

I am arguing that this is exactly what occurs when providential ideology is called upon to represent history teleologically, a history which ultimately manifests geopolitically. However, Campbell does not broach the subject of cosmologies. Spivak (1999) provides the first foray into this linkage, showing how the cosmological dimension relates to ethno-nationalism within the Indian sub-continent. Spivak compares “*Time*” (as transcendentally directed and teleological) with “*timing*” (understood as “sequential process”). This second understanding of time leaves historical events open to reasoned contemplation as social phenomenon. The former cancels this possibility.

### *Spivak and the politics of Time*

In the first section of her book entitled ‘*Philosophy*’, Spivak deconstructs both Hegel’s interpretation of the ‘*Gita*’, and the ‘*Gita*’ itself to demonstrate how political objectives operate in conjunction with notions of time to order society in accordance with the interests of its dominant members. She states, “I have attempted to show that ‘Hegel’ and the ‘*Gita*’ can be read as two rather different version of the manipulation of the question of history in a political interest, for the apparent disclosure of the Law” (Spivak, 1999: 58). Spivak explicates how “*timing*” defined as “sequential process” is often subsumed to “*Time*” as eternal law. Her thesis is that “Time graphed as Law manipulates history seen as timing in the interest of cultural political explanations...” (Spivak, 1999: 43). Notions of *Time* purport moral orders that continually control the possibilities inherent in a sequential

understanding of time (*timing* from here on). In short, *Time* permeating from the metaphysical facilitates permanence in the temporal. She notes,

One common way of grasping life and ground-level history as events happening to and around many lives is by fleshing out “time” as sequential process. Let us call this “timing”. This feeling for life and history is often disqualified, in a dominant interest, in the name of the real laws of motion of “time,” or rather, “Time.” It is my contention that Time often emerges as an implicit graph only miscaught by those immersed in the process of timing (Spivak, 1999: 38).

In sum, we are all caught up in the process of *timing*, change, and process, however, *Time* emerges as a discourse to control, dictate, and delineate reality as teleological for the benefit of the “dominant interest”. However, it is a teleology that does not look forward to change, but one that justifies the present order. Spivak elucidates this contention with a deconstruction of one of Hinduism must important narratives, one found within the pages of the *Bhadvagita* and today utilized in an ethno-national struggle over Indian identity, political power, and economic privilege.

The text in question reveals a cosmic moral battle in which Krishna (God of eternity) acts as charioteer and moral guide to Arjuna, a mortal human morally paralyzed and unable to fight a holy war against his kinsmen. Arjuna implores Krishna (God incarnate) for guidance, and more importantly for justification. Why, Arjuna demands, must he be forced to kill his cousins and friends for the sake of the moral order? Krishna advises Arjuna that it his moral duty (dharma) to fulfill his part in a wider cosmological order; an order that exists outside Arjuna’s conceptualize understanding. Arjuna demands that Krishna reveal this hidden reality. Krishna’s body transforms to reveal this living cosmography, where past, present, and future

are digested together in the gut of his being according to an eternal cosmological order. Krishna, manifesting and revealing himself as “Time graphed as the Law”, within the temporality of sequential timing is the crux of the ‘*Gita*’ narrative.

Spivak uncovers three implicit understandings of time present within this narrative which demonstrate how *Time* acts ideologically. The first is that “One cannot obtain sequential verification by means of just this history” (Spivak, 1999:51). That is to say that history cannot be understood apart from a telos. One cannot comprehend the purpose of *timing* unless it is subsumed to “Time graphed as the Law”. Second, Krishna/God exists through his own “auto-affective” ability, “inhabiting my own nature through my own phenomenal possibility, although I am not born but am an immutable spirit and am the head of all (already-been) beings” (Spivak, 1999:52). This impedes any comprehension of history as *timing*. She notes that,

it seems enough to notice that human historicity is shown here to be of limited usefulness as explanatory or verification model. For here the privileged or exceptional subject of knowledge is also claiming to be the subject of exceptional genesis by a self-separated auto-affection (Spivak, 1999:52).

Finally, the third and most important point is that the narrative avers that God makes himself “whenever the Law is in decline” (Spivak, 1999:53). When the moral order is threatened so is the cosmological, and God returns to restore the Law. All of the above “makes Krishna contain all origins, all developments, and also the present moment” (Spivak, 1999:55). Krishna, is himself the embodiment of “The graph of Time...devouring time as timing” (Spivak, 1999:55). This denies the phenomenality

of the present, defining it as mere affect. The “authority of the here and now is” consequently “undermined...” (Spivak, 1999:56).

From this vantage point, ‘context’ is dismissed as irrelevant. Geopolitics and the geohistorical are subsumed to cosmo-politics. The former are either trivial or of secondary importance in a wider cosmological design. Any change in context is simply attributable to the unraveling of an ultimate plan from an ultimate origin where *present* being is justified according to God’s continuous auto-effective ability and manifestation into the “here and now”, especially “whenever the law is in decline”. Consequently, all incongruities or lapses in logic are easily explained away.

### ***Providence and American Exceptionalism***

Echoing Spivak, *Providence is “Time graphed as Law”*. Just as present abuses of the ‘Gita’ serve as political-cultural explanations in post-colonial India, within the U.S., Providence avers a temporal/moral order that buttresses the identity of “America” as exceptional. Agnew notes,

The appeal of national exceptionalism lies in its pandering to national conceit. For some reason, material, mystical or magical, we are different-and better. Yet, as the case of the United States suggests, to accept the transcendental idealism of the exceptionalists is to abandon any pretense at history and instead engage in a propaganda exercise (Agnew 1983:164).

This last point confirms that Spivak’s insights are transposable to an examination of religious ethno-nationalism in the United States, for Providence is itself a

transcendental idealism that subsumes timing to *Time*. In the American context, Providence constitutes a belief in a Christian God that directs the course of human history at both the micro level of the individual and at the macro level of the geopolitical. Either independently, or through the work of a human agent, God directs history according to a *telos*. The unraveling of this plan occurs according to immutable truths and moral laws. However, there is always a pragmatic aspect to providentialism. Providentialism should therefore be understood contextually, as temporally and spatially specific, and as a reiteration of “Time graphed as Law”, which an attempts to validate a fading, existing, or emerging order.

### *American Nationalism and Providence*

This last point is critical to our present analysis of American providentialism and the Geopolitical Order. Throughout the history of the United States providential discourse has been called upon to define national distinction, essentialize national identity and re-produce the linkage between nation and state. Simultaneously, it has served to justify Imperialism and colonial practices both domestically and aboard.

Agnew’s reading of Pratt (1935) notes,

The dominant justification... became the providential mission of ‘America’ to spread American ideals and institutions to the Pacific- and beyond. This mission began to prosper during the Jacksonian era when zealots began to write of American ‘manifest destiny’ and ‘The Great Nation of Futurity’. In 1847 the Secretary of the Treasury placed in his report a section referring to the aid of a ‘higher than any earthly power’ which had guided American expansion in the past and which ‘still guards and directs our destiny, impels us onward, and has selected our great and happy country as a model and ultimate centre of attraction for all the nations of the world (Pratt quoted in Agnew, 1983:152).

Guyatt (2007a) makes clear that though this may be appreciated as common sense, American exceptionalism as derived from Providence is actually unique and bizarre. He states, “The idea that God has directed the history of the United States has become a commonplace in American life, a way of imagining America’s purpose and history that seems so thoroughly familiar that one can easily overlook its essential oddness” (Guyatt, 2007a:2). Wallace (2006) notes that this is because, “The early conflation of biblical and nationalist discourse in the history of the United States created a distinctive cultural and political environment of enduring significance” (Wallace, 2006: 219).

To date, Guyatt provides the most thorough examination of how providentialism has contributed to the invention of American national identity. He contends “that providentialism played a leading role in the invention of an American national identity before 1865 and that its role was neither static nor timeless” (Guyatt 2007a:3). The fact that providentialism was/is not static or timeless means that the context in which it emerges must be examined. Guyatt notes that providentialism has been called upon by various individuals and political groups to “influence some of the most important political debates in antebellum America” (Guyatt 2007a:3). The same is true of the present context.

In his comparison of British and American providentialism Guyatt notes three important differences in the type of providentialism employed in relation to nationalism. Only the first two are relevant to our discussion. First, he notes that a

country's point in history influences the interpretation of Providence being posited. For example, whereas British usage of providential discourse argued that God sustained the growth and stability of the nation based upon the morality of its citizens and more importantly its leaders, American providentialist argued that God "had chosen some nations to play a special role in history and that this anointment confirmed benefits and responsibilities that set apart a particular place and people from the rest" (Guyatt 2007a:3). At the time, the differences corresponded to each country's historical position in the existing world order and in the British case, to the amount of civil and religious strife found domestically. American secession from the British Empire was therefore perceived from two quite differing vantages. From the British perspective it was evidence of providential abandonment, whereas for the young nation of America it denoted providential intervention and more importantly providential expectation.

Guyatt's second point is that providentialism was "a strategy for achieving concrete political goals" (Guyatt 2007a:4). For example, African Americans and their supporters called upon providential discourse to confirm their place in America. Simultaneously, other political factions argued that the admittance of "Blacks" as full and equal members of the American nation would lead to moral decline and the abandonment of God's grace and providential guidance. Racial nationalism was buttressed on both sides by providential arguments. However, as Webb (2004) puts it providentialism succeeded in making Africans into Americans. This again occurred in 1960s with the "civil rights" movement. The achievements made,

however, required both a geographical relational imaginary and a closing off of the national imaginary to religious dispositions other than Christian. McAlister states,

If, as I have argued, the Middle East has been particularly important in the negotiation of black identities, it is partly because religion, culture, and myth have mattered enormously to a population that has often seen itself as under siege within the United States. Non-Christian religions and non-western histories promised an alternative narrative to that of dispossession and discrimination. The Middle East did domestic work for African Americans. And the sense of affiliation that was created made space to challenge the dominant narratives of U.S. global power (McAlister, 2000:270).

This being true, what is more significant is that African American links with the Middle East and Islam in general also did domestic work for the Christian national imaginary. Black radicalism came to be associated with Malcolm X, Elijah Muhammad, and African American Islam. Martin Luther King Jr's Christian based movement was made possible through this distinction. King's Christian national providentialism succeeded because it was exactly that. What this makes clear is the role providentialism plays is defining and forming the nation from within, especially with regards to race. Agnew's (1983) analysis of American exceptionalism and Providence misses this point. Instead, his focus is American exceptionalism and its relation to foreign policy. What I will make clear is that American foreign policy cannot be separated from domestic developments. The foreign and domestic are not separate realms but are instead co-constitutional.

This point is especially relevant in the post 9/11 period. Providentialism has re-emerged as an important component of geopolitical discourse. Providentialism continues to undergird American foreign policy. What is not so clear is how

providentialism also serves to foreclose the notion of “America”. Whereas providentialism opened the notion of “America” to “Blacks”, the same cannot presently be said for those of differing religious orientations living legally within the United States. Religion is not as easily folded into the American national psyche as is race. Providence as political discourse clearly demonstrates this fact, for it is a discourse that is Christian from the outset. When applied to the nation space of “America” it immediately posits a Christian territorialization. Any inclusion of religious difference under the label “American” subsequently leads to a hierarchical ordering of national belonging.

However, there are two distinct though inter related interpretations of Providence arising in the present period to cope with American religious pluralism. On the one side, the premillennialist disposition posits an abandonment of providential guidance resulting from the pollution of the American Christian nation. On the other, there exists the recurring, though never continuous, disposition to internationalize American nationalism. However, as we shall see, these two interpretations do not at present conflict but in fact interpenetrate to form the present geopolitical periodization -at least from the “Western” Vantage. In order to analyze this interpenetration we need a better explication of Providence and its relation to nationalism.

Returning to Guyatt (2007a) we find three overlapping types of national Providence. The first he terms *judicial providentialism*. From this perspective, God judge’s

nations based upon the moral worth of its leaders and its citizens irrespective of any notion of a master plan for humanity as a whole. The second type of national providentialism is termed *historical providentialism*. This is the “belief that God imagined a special role for certain nations in improving the world and tailored their history to prepare them for the achievement of this mission...” (Guyatt, 2007a:6). Finally, there is *apocalyptic providentialism*, the “belief that God was literally working out the narrative of Revelation in current events and that he had cast various nations in the leading roles of this drama...”(Guyatt, 2007a:6). In a latter book Guyatt notes that *apocalyptic providentialism* is a recurring theme in American discourse, especially when the nation is perceived as morally threatened by difference from within (Guyatt, 2007b:119).

### ***Conclusion***

All three forms of providentialism correlate to Spivak’s understanding of how *Time* subsumes timing as part of a larger cosmological narrative. Providentialism does not present geopolitical developments or specific geopolitical events in terms of causes or relationships that are open to investigation. Nor does it account for the complexities that have gone into the making of “America”. Where one might seek explanations for geopolitical developments from the perspective of the operation of the global political economy over time, providentialism masks the complexities of these relationships. **More importantly providentialism is ideological since it generates the geopolitical.** Agnew notes how it undergirds American expansion. This continues. However, in the context of global deterritorialization or

globalization(s) providential discourse is simply a re-articulation of a specific definition of American nationalism at times at odds with, though in the period under investigation, in convivial relationship with the state. It therefore generates the geo-political. Providentialism is therefore homologous to Spivak's unpacking of how the narrative of Lord Krishna's cosmological revelation first discloses a social order while in the second it is used to delineate Hindu ethno-nationalism in the present within what is now the state of India. Both represent a cosmo-political territorialization. Returning to Sparke (2005) both versions geo(graph) the nation-state. The foreclosure is made possible through relation and reference to cosmological space/time, the specifics of which will now be made clear. This begins with an analysis of the rampant providentialism found in the rhetoric and actions of the Bush administration in the post 9/11 period.

## ***Chapter #2: Providence and the Presidency of George W. Bush***

The introduction makes clear that a post-modern approach to Critical Geopolitics must problematize the individual narrative(s) of those whose actions, policies, and rhetoric are under examination. Only then can the geo-political commitments of these individuals be placed in context and subsequently made open to a deconstructive reading. Understanding the re-invigoration of the MGI through providentialism (a cosmo-political claim to space/time) must therefore take up the role, position, and relation of specific personalities and groups in this co-constitutional dynamic. For this we turn to an examination of the presidency of George W. Bush in relation to premillennialism.

George W. Bush's providential disposition dates to before the events of 9/11. His personal story is one of spiritual re-birth through a loving trust in Jesus Christ. Attending to the specifics of this story is not crucial to the matter at hand. What is important is that Bush entered the Office of the Presidency with the belief that America has a divinely ordained mission and that the fulfillment of this mission is the duty of every American. In his 2001 inaugural address he states that the American people "are not this story's author, who fills time and eternity with His purpose. Yet his purpose is achieved in our duty" (Bush, 2001). This statement is indicative of his providential disposition; a disposition he shares with many Americans and one that latter came to define the entirety of his presidency.

It has been generally accepted that during the presidency of George W. Bush the administration explicitly and implicitly aimed to shape domestic policies according to what has been termed a “compassionate conservatism”; a faith based agenda derived from a cosmological commitment to protestant Christian Providence. This is not completely accurate. This same formula came to define Bush’s foreign policy agenda after the events of 9/11. From a protestant providential disposition Bush’s logic is comprised of three components. The first is a detestation of sloth. “Waste of time is thus the first and in principle the deadliest of sins” (Weber, 1958:157). “Unwillingness to work is symptomatic of the lack of grace” (Weber, 1958:159). “In practice this means God helps those who help themselves” (Weber, 1958:115). This leads to a rejection of state funded social security and welfare programs. In fact, failure is viewed as spiritually transformative. Economic failure is the result of a lack of grace and a turning away from God. As Weber notes, protestant providentialism “... gave...comforting assurance that the unequal distribution of the goods of this world was a special dispensation of Divine Providence, which in these differences, as in particular grace, pursue secret ends unknown to men” (Weber, 1958:177). In fact, the ends are known and calculated by men such as Bush and Cheney. Failure encourages individuals to return or enter the church and to seek solace in Christ and a community of believers. It is not the state that is to provide social security in times of crises, but the Christian nation whose growth is in fact hindered by state led social security and is thus simultaneously a hindrance to Providence.

The second component of Bush's logic-especially in his foreign policy-is the legitimation of profit seeking. It is incumbent upon the protestant to pursue profit if the chance is presented.

For if that God, whose hand the Puritan sees in all the occurrences of life, show one of His elect a chance of profit, he must do it with a purpose. Hence the faithful Christian must follow the call by taking advantage of the opportunity (Weber, 1958:162)

One can labor to be rich for God but not the flesh. If the end is the salvation of the soul and the conversion of the sinful then profit making is not only a right, it is a divine duty... "the providential interpretation of profit-making justified the activities of the business men" (Weber, 1958:163).

Finally, the third and related point is that protestant providentialism justifies inequality and inequities. Only through conversion is one entitled to the protection of the community. The division of labor and the division of the world under capitalism, where inequities and inequalities are obvious and abundant, are the result of Divine Providence and the sinful character of those trapped in poverty. Only through conversion can they be saved. This is true not only of non-Christian Americans but the nations of the world.

From this vantage point, God, through the actions of committed Christians, constitutes the social order. As stated, this transcendently inspired morality not only buttresses Bush's domestic policies but underpins his foreign policy initiatives which are justified by recourse to American exceptionalism. Cueing America's

exceptional status seemed to resonate with the wider population in the wake of 9/11.

This despite resistance to Bush's domestic Christian conservative agenda.

According to Agnew (2003), the President is able to shape the national perspective in a manner akin to a religious leader.

In ethnographic terms, the U.S. President is the chief bricoleur of American political life, a combination of storyteller and tribal shaman. One of the great powers of the Presidency, invested by the sanctity, history, and rituals associated with the institution- the fact that the media take their primary discursive clues from the White House- is the power to describe, represent, interpret, and appropriate (Agnew 2003:106).

This power is mythically enhanced in the presidency of G.W. Bush. This is because both Bush and his followers believe that God specifically chose Bush to fulfill His purpose (Pace, 2004: 17, Levy, 2006:67). Phillips (2006) contends that this unique characteristic sets Bush apart from previous administrations. "Bush's fusion of a religious outlook with administration policy is a striking shift in rhetoric. Other presidents petitioned for blessings and guidance. Bush positions himself as a prophet, speaking for God" (Phillips, 2006:207). Many American's believe the same. "Steve Clark of the Faith Baptist Tabernacle in Jamestown, agreed on the role that 'Divine Providence' seemed to be playing in Bush's actions: 'At certain times, at certain hours in our country, God has had a certain man to hear his Testimony'" (Kengor, 2004: 224). Upon hearing Bush's speech at a February 2003 NRB convention, Jim Cody (a Christian broadcaster from Tennessee) stated, "It seems as if he is on an agenda from God. The Scriptures say God is the one who appoints leaders. If he truly knows God that would give him a special anointing" (Kengor, 2004: 223).

Publicly, Bush is careful not to espouse his belief in his anointed status. However, Bush's belief follows what Weber (1958) long ago noted to be a crucial component of the Protestant belief system. He states, "The religious believer can make himself sure of his state of grace either in that he feels himself to be the vessel of the Holy Spirit or the tool of the divine will" (Weber, 1958:114-115). Moreover, belief in one's elected status is proof of faith. "On the one hand it is held to be an absolute duty to consider oneself chosen, and to combat all doubts as temptation of the devil, since lack of self-confidence is the result of insufficient faith, hence of imperfect grace" (Weber, 1958:111-112).

Belief in his own personal election as an act of Providence, therefore, allows Bush to consider that God works through the Office of the Presidency of the United States. In his 2003 State of the Union address (broadcast on the 28th of January 2003) Bush openly discussed the role that Providence plays in American life. "We do not claim to know all the ways of Providence, yet we can trust in them, placing our confidence in a loving God behind all of life and all of history" (Bush, 2003). Here, Bush presents *Time* as teleological. The unraveling of *Time* reveals the Law of God.

According to Pace,

He made possibly the clearest public expression of this aspect of his faith in his remarks at the 51st Annual Prayer Breakfast in Washington where he stated, "We can also be confident in the ways of Providence, even when they are far from our understanding. Events aren't moved by blind change and chance. Behind all of life and all of history, there's a dedication and purpose, set by the hand of a just and faithful God. And that hope will never be shaken (Bush quoted in Pace, 2004:11).

Following the events of September 11th, 2001 Bush made a similar statement stating specifically and explicitly that “The world he (God) created is of moral design” (Bush quoted in Kengor, 2004:131). From the aforementioned it is clear that Bush believes in a teleology set by a Christian God unraveling in the course and events of human history. However, he also notes that God’s *Time* lies outside of human comprehension. Like in the ‘*Gita*’ narrative, history follows a moral trajectory to which we are only slightly privy and into which we must live and act. However, this indeterminate character of *Time* (Providence) does not prevent Bush from scripting geo-politics in a Christian religious vocabulary of binary oppositions. Nor does it prevent aggressive military action. This is well evidenced by Professors Lincoln and Domke.

Professors Lincoln and Domke analyzed the speeches of 2001-2005 speeches of top administration officials-for the most part those of George W. Bush himself-from the standpoint of what was said and with what apparent religion and political goals. In 2002 Lincoln had dissected Bush’s October 2001 speech to the nation about his planned military response to the events of September 11. He found the president’s rhetoric to be not unlike Osama bin Laden’s own statements in that ‘both men constructed a Manichean struggle, where Sons of Light confront Sons of Darkness, and all must enlist on one side or the other without possibility of neutrality, hesitation, or middle ground’. While the American chief executive’s words were less overtly religious than bin Laden’s, Lincoln described a “double-coding” through which Bush signaled attentive Bible readers that he shared their private scriptural invocations-using phrases from the revelation of St. John (6:15-17, about the wrath of the lamb) and Isaiah (about evildoers hiding in caves and the lonely paths of the godless) (Phillips, 2006:206).

From the perspective of Critical Geopolitics this indicates that Bush’s geo-politics pull upon a wider “discursive network of difference” than is usually considered rational by the modern, secular, and realist statesman. It is also “dependent upon

these networks of difference or infrastructures of identity” (O’Tuathail, 1996: 65) for its validity. Religious differences, and more importantly cosmological assumptions, situate America within an imagined hierarchy. America is placed in both vertical relation with the realm of God and in horizontal relation with the ‘axis of evil’.

Secondly, this discursive strategy allows Bush to link “freedom and liberty with divine wishes...” which “is indicative of how central an evangelical worldview is to his conception of the United States’ role in the post-9/11 world...The U.S. government is doing God’s work” (Phillips, 2006: 207).

### ***Bush, Duty, and Providence***

For Bush and his followers the purpose of this work is to fulfill God’s moral order. This is especially true when that order is threatened by destabilizing elements. Similarities with Spivak’s unpacking of the temporal/moral politics of the ‘Gita’ narrative are abundant. Both Arjuna and Bush believe themselves to be compelled by a higher moral order that directs the course of human history according to a *telos* beyond their comprehension. Their role, and the role of their followers, is to act within this temporality to fulfill the plot of a larger cosmic narrative. Kengor notes,

Bushes favorite hymn is a ‘charge to keep’ by Charles Wesley, and the title of his memoirs. “Associated with the New Testament’s 1 Corinthians 4:2, the hymn underscores a Christian’s need to ‘serve the present age’ and ‘to do my master’s will’; that is the ‘calling of the faithful’. A “‘Charge to Keep’ calls us to our highest and best’ Bush has said. “It speaks of purpose and direction” (Kengor, 2004: viv).

Weber (1958) long ago described the development of this disposition. For the Protestant, worldly action was/is a duty which is both necessary for the preservation of one's faith and for the glorification of God. Weber notes,

The exhortation of the apostle to make fast's one's own call is here interpreted as a duty to attain certainty of one's own election and justification in the daily struggle of life...On the other hand, in order to attain that self-confidence intense worldly activity is recommended as the most suitable means. It and it alone disperses religious doubts and gives the certainty of grace (Weber, 1958:111-112).

Here, action and intention are given equal value. Given this fact, one is better able to comprehend Bush's faith based agenda. In order to demonstrate one's faith one must dutifully carry out what one understands and interprets to be the commandments of God. This is exponentially exaggerated if one is the President of the most power country in the world. Returning to Weber (1958), for the Protestant,

The world exists to serve the glorification of God and for that purpose alone. The elected Christian is in the world only to increase this glory of God by fulfilling His commandments to the best of his ability. But God requires social achievement of the Christian because He wills that social life shall be organized according to His commandments, in accordance with that purpose. The social activity of the Christian in the world is solely activity in *majorem gloriam Die*. This character is hence shared by labour in a calling which serves the mundane life of the community. Even in Luther we found specialized labour in callings justified in terms of brotherly love. But what for him remained an uncertain, purely intellectual suggestion became for the Calvinists a characteristic element in their ethical system. Brotherly love, since it may only be practiced for the glory of God and not in the service of the flesh, is expressed in the first place in the fulfillment of the daily tasks given by the *lex naturae*; and in the process this fulfillment assumes a peculiarly objective and impersonal character, that of service in the interest of the rational organization of our social environment. For the wonderfully purposeful organization and arrangement of this *cosmos* is, according both to the revelation of the Bible and to natural intuition, evidently designed by God to serve the utility of the human race. This makes labour in the service of impersonal social usefulness appear to promote the glory of God and hence to be willed by Him (Weber, 1958:108-109).

Though Weber is here discussing the cosmo(logic) behind the development of the capitalist system (a logic that still pervades ‘compassionate conservatism’), what is of importance to us is that this same logic allows Bush to act in the world unfettered by moral qualms about the legitimacy or justification for this or that policy. Faith and action are together both necessary and sufficient. Second, Weber makes clear that a cosmological disposition legitimates the production of a rationally organized social system, which in the case of geopolitics, is the promotion of a system of nation-states with America at its head, underpinned by the MGI (which is itself cosmologically infused). However, Bush is careful not to openly express this disposition stating that he does not always “know the ways of Providence”. He nevertheless insists on acting in manner in which Providence remains the final justification. Bush believes himself to have been chosen by God through Providence (*Time*). His divine election and purpose is to defend the righteous from the wicked. The former is the American Christian nation and the latter those resisting this exceptionalism. Kengor agrees noting,

George W. Bush believes that God charts his ultimate course, and that his duty is to accept God’s calling and forge ahead. In so doing, he says that he relies on faith for guidance and forbearance in a battle against what he views, unequivocally, as pure evil (Kengor 2004: xi).

Wallace (2006) notes that,

... President George W. Bush has conducted himself in terms of a religious worldview, one which is avowedly, though contestably, “Christian.” Invoking the Almighty is a long-running practice of American Presidents, but “Bush’s God-talk is different . . . he positions himself as a prophetic spokesperson rather than as a petitioning supplicant”. Bush frequently conveys the sense that he, his administration, and the hegemonic nation which he leads are privy to God’s plan for the world and are the appointed agents to fulfill it:

God is on their side, and they are unquestionably on God's. This sort of religious belief, whether held by Christians, Jews, Moslems or adherents of other faiths, is conventionally defined as fundamentalist and, as the second quotation suggests, is not self-evidently amenable to reasoned argument (Wallace 2006:210).

Waldman concurs, noting how Bush's promulgations set a historical precedent. He states,

Other presidents certainly believed that God was guiding America's fate. James Madison referred to the "Almighty Being whose power regulates the destiny of nations." Andrew Jackson beseeched that "He will continue to make our beloved country the object of His divine care and gracious benediction." Even Thomas Jefferson, considered a Deist, said it was the Supreme Being "who led our fathers, as Israel of old, from their native land and ... who has covered our infancy with His Providence and our riper years with his wisdom and power. "Yet it's hard to recall another instance of a presidential campaign so confidently promulgating the idea that its candidate had divine endorsement. The potentially dangerous implication is that since God put George W. Bush in the White House, opposing him is opposing Him. A person could get smited for that (Waldman, 2004).

This last observation is illuminating. For in the Presidency of George W. Bush there is an embodiment of exceptionalism (both national and transcendental). According to Pace,

It appears...that the faith of President Bush envisions a God that transcends the authority of the nation-state. While this concept is viewed as completely inappropriate and even dangerous by the post-modern secularist, it is a perspective that he shares with many Americans who support the phraseology of our nation's pledge of allegiance and do in fact consider the United States as "one nation under God (Pace, 2004: 12).

Bush represents this nation and its notion of exceptionalism. From this vantage Bush's dictates represent the Law of the divine will legitimated by *Time*. They are not legitimated by the law forged through *timing*. This is because the laws

instantiated by American primacy, when threatened, are revealed to be suspended for the sake of the Law justified by *Time*, or rather, Providence buttressing both America's and Bush's exceptionalism. This understanding of the Law should be *revelatory*, for it has been generally understood that Bush's 'War on Terror' suspends the law as a necessary 'state of exception'. This is inaccurate. It is in fact the opposite. The exceptionalism noted above allows the Bush administration to suspend the law through the Law. Gregory (2006) makes a similar point, though without developing the cosmological dimension.<sup>5</sup> Gregory's analysis fails to note that the ultimate Law that is invoked to produce the exception is the exception allowed for through a Christian providential conception of space/time, or in Spivak's terms "Time graphed as the Law" (Spivak, 1999:43).

Moreover, the above indicates that the relation between God, the Sovereign, and the nation is direct and hierarchical. In such an arrangement deviance is construed as evil. In the period leading up to the Iraq war, religious fervor amongst Bush's followers allowed dissent to be construed as not only 'unpatriotic' but 'heretical'. Austin notes,

The intensity of religiosity among Bush supporters also explains the source of the extraordinary passion of contemporary warmongering and the intense antipathy towards those who oppose war. Not only are those who oppose Bush "unpatriotic" and "unAmerican," but they are also heretical for refusing to accept the mission that God has made for all Americans. Peace activists are thwarting the crusade. They are godless liberals bent on tearing down the nation and this president whom God has chosen for greatness. (Austin, 2003)

---

<sup>5</sup> We shall return to this point when we discuss the spatial configuration of this exceptionalism, both ideologically and materially.

This 'Us and Them' dualism, therefore, extends not only into a geo-political arrangement that re-invigorates the MGI, but one that simultaneously forecloses the notion of the nation considered legitimate. Again, this emanates from a specific protestant religious disposition. As Weber puts it, "those who have been born again, and **they alone**, are brethren of Christ, because they, like Him, have been created in spirit directly by God" (Weber, 1958:146). Everyone else is on the Other(side). Weber notes that the development of this sense of exceptionalism corresponds with a hatred of difference. He states,

This consciousness of divine grace of the elect and holy was accompanied by an attitude toward the sin of one's neighbour, not of sympathetic understanding based on consciousness of one's own weakness, but of hatred and contempt for him as an enemy of God bearing the signs of eternal damnation (Weber, 1958:122).

Bush, however, has played down any hatred of difference prevalent in the Protestantism. He states, that he is "mindful in a free society that people can worship if they want to or not. You're equally an American if you choose to worship an Almighty and if you choose not to. If you're a Christian, Jew or Muslim you're equally an American" (Bush 2004: Online). However, this statement does not correspond with either his actions or many of his other statements. For example, he states "We honor the heritage of all who come here, no matter where they come from, because we trust in our country's genius for making us all Americans -- one nation under God" (Bush, 2006). To which God is Bush referring? One would infer that it is Christian God, a God who directs a process of assimilation according to a Christian teleological script. Moreover, Bush's actions speak to his missionary zeal.

Austin notes how even Bush's Jewish neo-conservative allies were subject to a form of Christianization.

On Frum's first day in the White House, one of Bush's aides chastised his mentor Gerson for missing Bible study. "Attendance at such sessions was 'if not compulsory, not quite un compulsory either,'" Frum is quoted as saying. That Frum is Jewish, but was nevertheless expected to wade through the New Testament with the President and his advisors, speaks volumes about the extent and degree to which the Bible organizes Bush's foreign and domestic policies (Austin, 2003).

### ***Bush, Providence, and the Premillennialists***

The disposition to view difference as heretical deviance is today captured in the apocalyptic ministries of the premillennialist; a group whose support Bush garnered early in his career. Through their contemporary interpretation of the Book of John (otherwise known as the Book of Revelation) premillennialists believe that we have entered into the end times and that within this generation God will rapture the Christian nation and begin the apocalypse. However, in order for this to proceed geopolitical tensions both intra-nationally and inter-nationally must increase.

It is common knowledge that a large portion of the Republican base is comprised of what is generically termed the Christian Right. During the Bush presidency there existed a co-constitutional dynamic between certain churches and the state department, with both aiming to form and sway the geopolitical outlook of their viewers/listeners. This commingling of politics and religion constitutes what Agnew terms a polity, "a structured organization of power within a social group that has a distinctive identity, can mobilize group members and persists over time" (Agnew,

2003:136). It was this polity that propelled George W. Bush into the presidency.

“According to Newsweek, as a subaltern to his father’s 1988 campaign, George Bush the younger assembled his career through contacts with ministers of the then emerging evangelical movement into political life” (Phillips, 2006:187).

Once in power, Bush Jr. continued to rely upon these connections in order to provide religious legitimacy and justification to his policies and actions. This was achieved through the shaping of a cosmo-political interpretation of geo-politics. Phillips notes,

...portions of the Christian-right message—too radical and divisive to be voiced directly from the Oval Office—went out through a network of preachers with whom Bush and his advisers kept in touch, could not endorse, but conspicuously never disavowed. These, of course, are stalwarts of the rapture, end times, and Armageddon such as Tim LaHaye, Jerry Falwell, John Hagee, and Jack Van Impe, whose books and television ministries reached half of the Bush electorate (Phillips, 2006: 252)

Phillips point is important because Bush’s providentialism is not openly premillennial. It is instead a providential script that mixes various strains of American political philosophy, including what Mead (2005) terms Wilsonianism, Jacksonians, and Hamiltonism. Except for the most ardent of Jacksonians (who according to Mead are predominantly also Premillennialists), most of the Christian Right is oblivious to these different notions of American Providence. They simply believe that the state, under the presidency of Bush Jr., is acting on behalf of God to rid the world of ‘evil’. What is both peculiar and ingenious is that Bush manages to merge these differing political philosophical persuasions. However, Hart writing in the *American Conservative* contends that the “reinvigorated Wilsonian foreign policy championed by Bush—and motivated less by Woodrow Wilson’s secular

values (international law, etc.) and more by religious beliefs (the God-given rights of all people)—is a reflection of Bush’s Christian base” (Hart, 2006). That being said, it is in fact quite difficult to pin Bush’s policies or his rhetoric to a premillennial mode of thinking. When asked “whether the war in Iraq and the attacks of 9/11 were ‘signs of the apocalypse’ he gave a typically nervous answer”. He states, “The answer is-I haven’t really thought of it that way. Here’s how I think of it. The first I’ve heard of that, by the way. I guess I’m more of a practical fellow” (Bush quoted by Guyatt, 2007b: 8). In fact, Bush’s use of providential discourse conforms to traditional uses of term employed throughout American history. This can be demonstrated in his insistence that God has charged America with a special mission. However, Bush’s premillennialist followers are doubtful. Guyatt notes,

The ideas that God has a special mission for the United States has been a mainstay of presidential rhetoric since George Washington’s speeches, but today’s apocalyptic Christians don’t seem persuaded by it. For them, there’s no role for America in the End Times. Many believe that their country is already tumbling into a moral abyss (Guyatt 2007b:110).

This is characterized, for example, in the writings of premillennialist Tim Lahaye who, at first read, seems to diverge from the American Providential script of America as a redeemer nation charged with the implementation of God’s vision for humanity. Even Ronald Reagan had held fast to this view; a view that has defined the dominant vision of American providentialism since the first Puritan migration. Guyatt notes,

John Winthrop, who led the Puritan migration to Massachusetts in 1630, thought that New England could be a “city on a hill,” a community set up by God for the rest of the world to admire. Abraham Lincoln filled his Civil War speeches with religious rhetoric about America’s “vast future”. Woodrow Wilson told cheering crowds that God had given the United States a special responsibility to spread democracy throughout the world. In the 1980s, Ronald Reagan liked to talk about his “eternal optimism” for America, and his belief that God had planted the nation as an outpost of freedom. Tim LaHaye, on the other hand, believed that America’s days were numbered. This seemed like a very un-American idea, and yet *Left Behind* was at the top of the bestseller lists. As I worked on my thesis about the United States as a chosen nation, I kept wondering about the Christians in contemporary America who were abandoning their faith in the nation’s redemptive potential (Guyatt, 2007b:6).

Why, one must ask, is the premillennialist vision so popular? Simply, premillennialist read contemporary events as signs of the apocalypse. And what are those signs? The everyday changes and challenging experiences brought upon by deterritorialization (better known as globalization)<sup>6</sup>. Not surprisingly, Bush is keen to listen to these prophecies. In fact, the Bush administration sought out policy advice from self described Christian prophets. Guyatt (2007(2)) notes that the writings of Joel Rosenberg, a former government employee and Jew turned evangelical Christian were at times read by the president. Rosenberg terms his prophecies bible intelligence (Guyatt, 2007b: 258). Guyatt’s research discovered that

...prophecy celebrities have acquired a disquieting influence in Washington. They push the United States government, and especially the Congress, toward positions on Israel and the Middle East that are wildly out of sync with the rest of the world. The idea that Israel has a biblical right to the land, or that Iran and Russian are developing a secrete alliance to destroy the Jewish state, would seem fantastical to most nonevangelical observers. John Hagee and Joel Rosenberg are

---

<sup>6</sup> We will deal explicitly with the subjects of territoriality and the geopolitical order in chapters four through six.

taking these ideas-based on a selective reading of the Bible's prophetic books-and presenting them to members of Congress and the administration as actionable intelligence. What's more congressional representatives and government staffers are reaching out to prophecy experts, declaring their willingness to speak at meetings of Christians United for Israel or inviting Joel to stop by for a personal chat about Ezekiel (Guyatt, 2007b:268).

Rosenberg, quoted by Guyatt argues that a biblical interpretation provides a more comprehensive perspective of the geopolitical situation. He states,

While it is fashionable in our times to analyze world events merely by looking through the lenses of politics and economics, it is also a serious mistake, for it prevents us from being able to see in three dimensions. To truly understand the significance of global events and trends, one must analyze them not only through the political and economic lenses but through a third lens as well, the lens of scripture. Only then can the full picture become clearer (Rosenberg quoted in Guyatt, 2007b:253).

This perspective corresponds to the geo-political logic of many American Christians, including it would seem, George W. Bush. However, though God's Providence is ultimately responsible for the fate of the American nation (understood as Christian), the members of that nation must nevertheless carry out their duties and fulfill their calling. In a Protestant Christian cosmology, since freewill/freedom are a gift from God, individuals are responsible for their actions and must dutifully shape the world in God's image, for it is not God's responsibility alone. This summarizes Bush's providential position. He states "We go forward with complete confidence in the eventual triumph of freedom. Not because history runs on the wheels of inevitability; it is human choices that move events. Not because we consider ourselves a chosen nation; God moves and chooses as He wills." Further to this,

Bush adds “Americans do not presume to equate God's purposes with any purpose of our own....”[Prayer] teaches us to trust, to accept that God's plan unfolds in his time, not our own” (Bush, 2004). This genuine Bush double-speak states one point and then reserves it in the next sentence. If “God moves and chooses as He wills” is he not controlling history? Is not *timing* here again subsumed to *Time*? It seems that Bush is arguing that human choices must attempt to conform to the will of God, who then utilizes this disposition to serve his greater plan for humanity. S.H. Webb’s (2004) *American Providence: A Nation with a Mission* clarifies how this type of thinking operates. He states, Providence

...frees the individual for confident action in the world. Freedom would have little meaning if it had no purpose or direction, and it would have little chance in the short run if there were no hope for its ultimate fulfillment. Democracy is a gamble on freedom and Providence is its surety (Webb, 2004:164)

Secondly, since “God brings direction and purpose to history by authorizing political authority...” (Webb 2004:169), Bush and his followers can pursue their interpretation of God’s agenda unimpeded. And what is this agenda? At least superficially it is the universal implementation of “freedom” as conceived of by the American nation through its roots in protestant Christianity. In his January 2004 State of the Union address Bush describes why this mission is universal. He states,

The cause we serve is right, because it is the cause of all mankind. The momentum of freedom in our world is unmistakable--and it is not carried forward by our power alone. We can trust in that greater power who guides the unfolding of the years. And in all that is to come, we can know that His purposes are just and true (Bush 2004).

America's mission is thus justified and guided by God's Providence. Webb summarizes this perspective. He states,

God works through history, which means that God defeats obstacles to the divine plan. God's enemies are not necessarily our own, of course, but to be a friend of God is to seek out God's purposes in history, and those purposes are not unrelated to the struggle for freedom, a struggle that involves the tragic necessity of war (Webb, 2004: 156).

The aforementioned statements of Bush and Webb represent a form of textual and more importantly a type of intellectual ruse. By first identifying that "Americans do not presume to equate God's purposes with any purpose of our own..." (Bush, 2004) and then arguing that the cause America serves "...is right, because it is the cause of all mankind" and that the "... momentum of freedom in our world is unmistakable-- and it is not carried forward by our power alone" (Bush, 2004) is simply an apologetic which denies the phenomenality of the present for the purpose of stabilizing and extending a social order through reference to *Time* (Providence). According to Webb, being a friend of God does not include humbling oneself in light of His Providence, but instead necessitates the active pursuit of God's enemies through the "tragic necessity of war" irrespective of humanity's inability to determine the actual *telos*.

What Bush and Webb present to their reader/listener is in Spivak's terminology a "sublation". In her unpacking of the '*Gita*' narrative she inquires as to the purpose of Arjuna's first demand that God reveal his divinity (as a cosmography), and then his apology for this questioning of "Time graphed as the Law" which he subsequently justifies as human ignorance or more precisely, the "self-excusing

unendorsable erring request endorsed as an indulgence of a human error that must nonetheless deny the phenomenality of affect and deny the ground of verification by the so-called lived present” (Spivak, 1999: 58). She asks, “In what interest is this graphic or visible sublation (negation and preservation on another register) of the apparent phenomenality of lived time and affect performed in the poem?” (Spivak, 1999:56). The answer is that is performed for the purpose of presenting a social order. This order can only be legitimated, however, through the necessary transcendental preamble. She contends, that

...the actual social exhortation come, framed, not as betrayal or contradiction of the abundantly celebrated transcendental sections, but as an appropriate concession, an acknowledgment of human error, an indulgence. The tone of the narrative becomes much more “temporal” (to use that charged adjective) after this. (The “bad” social writing, as opposed to the “good” transcendental writing, is indulgently and clandestinely inserted in response to human error. The “human” produces an alibi for what is in *illo tempore*... It is through these cantos, then, that the four castes-Brahman, Ksatriya, Vaisya, Sudra-can at last be named as such (Spivak, 1999:57).

What is the purpose of the providentialism in Bush and Webb? It is the production of a social or rather a geo-political order. The “good transcendental writing” collapses into “bad social writing”. It is only then that the geo-political enemy can be named and the order established. America remains the light of the world guided by God while its enemies are construed as ‘evil’ and ‘backward’.

### *Conclusion*

George W. Bush acts in accordance with a protestant notion of Providence. Both he and his adherents believe that he is called upon to reset the 'Law'. Like in the Gita narrative God (acting through a human agent) and thus through his own "auto-affective ability" appears when the "Law is in decline". Here the Law is that which is set through American primacy. It is not the law that is produced through timing. This underpins the justification for both the exceptionalism of the Bush administration and the exceptionalism of America. The phenomenality of the present is denied in order to reset the social and geopolitical order in favor of the American nation understood as Christian (the already dominant members of American society). This is achieved through cosmo-political claims to space/time.

### ***Chapter #3: The Modern Geopolitical Imagination and Providence***

The last chapter ended with the assertion that cosmo-political claims to space/time (Providence) reset the geopolitical order. The specifics of this can be traced to a re-energization of the Modern Geopolitical Imagination (MGI). The MGI is considered to be 'modern' in that it is believed to have shed religious and more importantly cosmological elements in its development. This chapter will demonstrate the inaccuracy of this belief by first examining what is meant by the term the MGI. Secondly, we will return to the work of Agnew, Spivak, Weber, and Webb to demonstrate how this belief facilitates a temporal imagination that discursively legitimates a geo-political binary between 'America' and its 'enemies'. The previous chapter demonstrates how Bush and Webb (2004) present 'America' as temporally progressive. America as the bearer of the torch of freedom (understood as neo-liberalism) diligently moves history towards a telos. This chapter demonstrates how America's 'enemies' are *per contra* construed as temporally static, stuck in the middle ages, and in need of modernization. However, this binary geo-political simplification is challenged by the notion of Providence linked to neo-liberalism's implementation. It is also challenged by the fact that this pre-modern and cosmologically oriented justification for American exceptionalism presently and paradoxically re-energizes the MGI.

Max Weber once argued a similar point, though in relation to the development of modern culture and the development of modern capitalism. Weber discovered that religious elements contribute(d) significantly to their development. Weber's inquiry

clarified "... the part which religious forces have played in forming the developing web of our specifically worldly modern culture, in the complex interaction of innumerable different historical factors". Weber goes on to argue that the Reformation contributed greatly to the "qualitative formation and quantitative expansion" of modern capitalism and more importantly that "we must free ourselves from the idea that it is possible to deduce the Reformation, as a historically necessary result, from certain economic changes" (Weber, 1958:91). The same can be said of the MGI. For though its evolution was greatly influenced by economic developments, the MGI never lost its religious antecedents and more importantly its cosmological underpinnings. Here we turn to an examination of the latter in relation to the MGI with a specific focus on the notion of Providence.

### ***Querying the Modern Geopolitical Imagination***

The Treaty of Westphalia instituted what we presently term the Modern Geopolitical Imagination a "view of the world and its geographical workings that accompanied the rise of the state and capitalism in Europe and that was both stimulated by and informed the European encounter with the rest of the world" (Agnew, 2003:135).

According to Toal (2001), Westphalia is

...held to mark a decisive displacement of a medieval imaginative geography, which organized space as a vertical hierarchy in relationship to a Christian God, by a Modern Geopolitical imagination which organized spaces as a horizontal set of competing territorial orders (Toal, 2001:187).

Today, this horizontal mode of thinking remains the conventional imaginary applied to geopolitics. Geopolitical imaginations operate within a horizontal plane of competing territorial states. Continuing, Toal notes that the MGI

as a state-centric territorial imagination...supposedly triumphed at the expense of a religious cosmography in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries with the adoption of the *cuius regio eius religio* at the peace of Augsburg in 1555 and its consolidation after the Thirty year War in the 1648 treaty of Westphalia (Toal, 2001: 189).

Weber demonstrates this to be a false evaluation. Instead, the medieval religious cosmography mutated in response to challenges brought upon by the Reformation. This re-conceptualization was necessary given the alterations made to notions of pre-destination and Providence which were at the root of the reformation itself. This contributed to the formation of religious groupings and national differences. On the development of national differences between German and English, for example, Weber argues that it “was the power of religious influence, not alone, but more than anything else, which created the differences of which we are conscious to-day” (Weber, 1958:89). The point, however, is not to explore this history but to note its *traces*. That is to say that Providence as a cosmological conceptualization related to geopolitics remains salient in the present period. Toal is therefore correct in noting,

the notion of a decisive break between medieval religious space and modern geopolitical space at Westphalia, however, is questionable. Rather than a clear and clean rupture, the already existing relationship between the secular and spiritual, the territorial and the ecclesiastical was re-organized and re-conceptualized at Augsburg, Westphalia and numerous other historical moments since (Toal, 2001:187).

One such historical moment occurred, I argue, in the post 9/11 period during the presidency of George W. Bush. In order to validate this point we must query the ideological aspects of the MGI that were tweaked during this period.

### ***The MGI as Ideology***

The MGI is considered “ideological, if ideology is defined as an amalgam of ideas, symbols and strategies for promoting or changing a social and cultural order...”

(Agnew, 2003: 102). In the first two chapters Spivak was invoked to demonstrate how *Time* operates ideologically and thus strategically in order to define a specific social order as a geopolitical order. In this chapter, *Time* (Providence) will be examined as an ideological component of the MGI.

As in Spivak’s unpacking of the ‘Gita’ narrative, it was determined that providentialism, as ideological *Time*, sublates *timing* thereby denying the phenomenality of the lived present. providentialism is therefore a discursive geopolitical strategy geo(graphing) the hyphenated American nation-state (the social order).<sup>7</sup> The production of this internal social order will be further discussed in the following chapter. What is important here is that this social order is made possible through the creation of an outside that is different, anarchic, backward, and barbarian. Moreover, this creation relies upon an imagined spatial abstraction that is cosmological. Agnew’s (2003) critique of both the MGI and American exceptionalism misses this dimension. He fails to note the religious and theological

---

<sup>7</sup> In the following chapters it will be demonstrated that Providentialism contributes to both the ideological and material manifestations of the present Geopolitical Order and as such constitutes a new Geopolitical Periodization.

ideas and symbols embedded within the ideology of the MGI and American exceptionalism, and more importantly the cosmological abstraction of Providence as necessary for the promotion of “the social and cultural order” (ibid). This cosmological abstraction is still necessary for all three key ideological characteristics of MGI. These are as follows.

The first characteristic is the belief that states possess “exclusive power within their territories as represented by the concept of sovereignty; second that ‘domestic’ and foreign affairs are essentially separate realms in which different rules obtain; and finally, that the boundaries of the state define the boundaries of society” (Agnew, 2003:51). Rapid deterritorialization puts these assumptions into question. Thus, how and why do they remain resilient? During the Cold War the ideological characteristics of the MGI were premised and underpinned by an economic differentiation; a struggle over how to best organize the international political economy (Agnew, 2003). With the end of the Cold War this ideological dualism ended, putting into question the logic of the MGI. Nevertheless, the MGI continued but in a substantially weakened form. With the events of 9/11, however, the ideological aspects of the MGI were re-invigorated and this time its formulation was overtly religious. Webb (2004) notes that after 9/11, “under the leadership of President Bush, the Republicans have begun a long and slow process of bringing the religious rhetoric of mission and purpose back to the center of American Politics...” (Webb, 2004: 47). The ideas, symbols, and spatial abstractions that went into the formulation of the Bush administration’s strategy post 9/11 reset the above listed

characteristics of the MGI in the minds of most Americans (even though they do not correspond with material reality). The historical moment that was 9/11 enabled distinction through a greater reliance on the notion of Providence, with Providence bestowing exceptionalism.

One of the key discursive linkages within this pairing is the association of modernity with Providence understood as progress. Contrarily, 'America's' enemies (such as the Taliban) are cast as pre-modern and temporally static. This facilitates the inside/outside distinction necessary for the MGI. Spivak's notion of *Time* can again aid in unpacking this binary. We shall now undertake this task leaving an analysis of the two other characteristics of the MGI (sovereignty and society/state) until the next chapter.

### *Providence, Modernity, and Time*

Spivak's analysis of *Time* subsuming *timing* shows "...that "Hegel" and the "Gita" can be read as two rather different version of the manipulation of the question of history in a political interest, for the apparent disclosure of the Law" (Spivak, 1999:58). To this I have added that American Providence can also to be understood as a "the manipulation of the question of history in a political interest, for the apparent disclosure of the Law" (ibid). Thus, *Time* enables the social order; an order that benefits societies already dominant members. Here I will continue my demonstration of how *Time* (Providence) produces the imagined spaces and distinctions of the MGI, which in turn contribute to both the geo(graphing) of the

hyphenated American nation-state and the overall geopolitical order (both will be discussed in greater detail in the following chapters). In order to achieve this end I return to the insights of Spivak (1999).

In Hegel's reading of the 'Gita' narrative, Spivak discovers that Hegel presents a binary opposition between Europe and 'India' which in fact produces Europe and presents it as historical. Europe is posited against its opposite (India) which is described as *a*-historical. Hegel arrives at this distinction in his analysis of aesthetics in relation to 'Hindu' art. According to Spivak, Hegel describes art as "the name or the sign of the lack of fit between the two axes of the graph-spirit and knowing" (Spivak, 1999:40). Hegel's contention is that in 'Hindu' art there is an immediate link between the sign (content/form) and spiritual transcendental meaning. Hegel takes this to be representative of a static *a*-historical *being* prior to the European encounter.<sup>8</sup> Pre-colonial 'India', in Hegel's system, is representative of a 'pre-conscious' form of humanity. In contrast, the European is presented as a progressive 'historical' being. This is because in European art there is a representation of change and process where each "...new configuration steps forth in the sublation of the earlier stages of the struggle". The "deviations'-lack of fit" indicative of European art demonstrate its historical nature. "Sublation" is "normative in view of the telos of the system" (Spivak, 1999:41).

---

<sup>8</sup> It is important to note Spivak does not, herself, view 'Indian' or 'Hindu' history in this manner. Additionally, she argues that the Hegelian spirit is latter 'sublated' by Hindu/Indian nationalist thereby legitimating the culture of Imperialism.

This is the European ‘epistemography’ (Spivak’s word) which works itself out historically. Though, it is not crucial for Spivak’s argument, it is important for us to realize that in Hegel’s system the highest historical form manifests in a strong state that secures individual freedoms; another key attribute of the ‘modernist’ ideal. *Time* again has a *telos*. More importantly, what is critical for our purposes is Spivak’s point is that “Hegel’s Euro-teleological normativity” ( Spivak, 1999:58) neutralizes its object of investigation in order to juxtapose and evidence ‘Europe’ as the subjective force of history. *Time* understood as “Euro-teleological normativity” enables this hierarchical social ordering. We have already discussed how *Time* is utilized in the ‘*Gita*’ narrative to the same effect.

However, Spivak argues that the difference is the “...the *Gita*’s exceptionalism” in “place of Hegel’s Euro-teleological normativity” (Spivak, 1999:58). It is my contention that these differences come together in American providentialism. Not only is Providence an exceptional force legitimating ‘American’ national exceptionalism but it also entails a Christian American teleological normativity that holds static (temporally speaking) those opposing this normativity; a normativity which blends religion and economy. We have seen in the previous chapter how Bush’s ideology construes the need to spread the neo-liberal agenda with a divine calling. Northcott notes,

Both the moral and strategic elements of neo-liberalism are clearly evident in the speeches and policies of the Bush administration. But Bush adds another crucial component to the emergent neo-imperial agenda, and this is a combination of dispensationalist apocalyptic rhetoric and more mainstream elements of American Protestant social ethics... (Northcott, 2004:82).

We have noted that it is difficult to define Bush as a prophet of apocalyptic providentialism. Northcott is, however, correct in noting that “mainstream American Protestant social ethics” dominate his policies and speeches. Bush and many of his Christian right followers believe that it is America’s responsibility to spread these ethics through the American nation model. However, there is a religious and moral disposition to this desire. This is because the “Christian Right has embraced the ‘free market’ as an exemplar of a truly biblical economy” (Northcott, 2004:71). Bush falls within this camp. So did Ronald Reagan. Both conceived of the implementation of the neo-liberal agenda in religious terms and scripted American foreign policy religio-politically. What this indicates is that the workings of the ‘free market’ economy are not a separate secular realm free of religious and cosmological design, but are instead an intrinsic part of that design. Returning to Weber, neo-liberalism (understood through protestant social ethics) is simply another extension of “a rationalization of conduct within the world, but for sake of the world beyond...” (Weber, 1958:154). This other worldly disposition indicates that cosmology remains an important attribute of political economy. American Protestant providentialism links these two realms. A pre-modern conceptualization undergirds neo-liberal economics.

Agnew misses this point. He is, however, apt in arguing that the distinction between the modern and the traditional, or the sacred and the secular, is nothing more than a convenient fiction. He states,

It is something of a conventional wisdom among European and American intellectuals that modernized societies...are rational and secular to the exclusion of traditional or metaphysical myths about their founding and nature...this has become a central element in the backward-modern metaphor itself. *Modernity is, by definition, life without myth.* But perhaps it is more that our most cherished European myths, such as backward versus modern, are simply ones without hope of providing a suddenly better world in its entirety, merely naturalized fictions that give meaning to speculation about the historical trajectories of particular societies-although it is part of their appeal, at least in the idiom of improvement, that they do hold out the hope that others can become more like us (Agnew, 2003: 47-48).

American providentialism indicates that the 'modern' defined as "life without myth" is in actual fact a fiction which obfuscates the actual complex relations between cosmology, political economy, and territoriality which co-mingle as historical process. Instead, American providentialism as *Time* subsumes this historical complexity for the sake of the social order. It re-establishes the 'Us and Them' distinction necessary for the MGI, though as the above demonstrates, the 'modern' is itself a myth and as a result, so is the distinction it enables. American Providence (*Time*) simplifies geopolitics and presents conflicts in religiously/culturally and most importantly cosmologically essentialized terms. Conflicts arise from ancient civilizational differences. Conflict is not understood as the complex interweaving of a myriad of factors including Cold War geopolitical strategizing which helped produce the Mujahedeen movement (Johnson 2004), but instead as the product of civilizational differences where the 'enemy' is conceived as temporally static. In this formulation, the 'West' is progressive and modern while the Other is backward and pre-modern.

Cultural or civilizational interpretations have been properly critiqued by the likes of Kearns (2006) and Toal (2006). Both scholars argue that cultural/civilizational interpretations miss the complexities and historical linkages that contribute to the production of 'culture'. *Timing* is again dismissed or ignored. Cultural or civilizational distinctions are in actual fact political rather than ontological. Webb (2004), however, has no problem with this type of reasoning since for him politics is a part of Providence and therefore part of a cosmological design. Following Carl Schmitt's theopolitical logic he argues that,

...the friend-enemy distinction is what gives meaning to national politics...the friend-enemy distinction can be completely dismissed only at the cost of neglecting the doctrine of Providence. God works through history, which means that God defeats obstacles to the divine plan (Webb, 2004:156).

Webb argues that it is our duty to seek out God's purposes as a friend of God and then to fulfill this duty through the "tragic necessity of war" (Webb, 2004:156). A large portion of the American population believes the same, feeling that it is their national obligation to act as God's Shepherd here on earth. This is evidenced in Tim Lahaye's "Left Behind" series. This apocalyptic providential narrative clearly distinguishes friend from enemy. However, though the emphasis is clearly cosmological, the narrative displays modern and liberal sensibilities indicated by its racial inclusiveness. "The plot consistently presents racial liberalism as the norm for the characters, and implicitly for the readers as well" (McAlister, 2003: 788). That being said Lahaye's liberal tolerance does not extend to the non-Christian be he secular or Muslim. Both are cast in the role of antagonist; Satan's minions working against Christian cosmology. However, as McAlister notes

...we must not fail to appreciate what has changed, to see ways in which the worldview embraced and exemplified by the *Left Behind* novels links biblical literalism and a traditional Christian Zionist interest in prophecy to a broader, even liberalizing sensibility—more sophisticated, more multi-cultural, and certainly more consciously ‘modern’ than anything that has come before (McAlister, 2003: 778).

And that,

The voice of the *Left Behind* series is distinctly modern in another way as well; it suggests that while the chosen believers at the end of times may be doctrinally narrow, they are culturally and racially expansive. The rather striking racial liberalism in the books has both a domestic politics and a global reach, and it is linked to both kinds of maps that structure the cultural politics of the novels: that is, race politics works both to map fundamentalism into the mainstream of U.S. domestic politics and to mainstream with U.S. foreign policy the evangelical mapping of a Holy Land without Palestine or Palestinians (McAlister, 2003: 788).

This last point demonstrates that Lahaye’s geopolitical imagination is also ‘modern’ in that this apocalyptic providential narrative re-establishes the ideological characteristics of the MGI.

The idea of modernism contributes to the friend-enemy distinction in another way, differentiating ‘good’ Muslims from ‘bad’ Muslims. Mamdani (2004) makes clear that not all Muslims are construed as ‘bad’. Instead, it is only those Muslims who do not divorce belief from practice, or more specifically, those whose consumption and production patterns, and those whose social organization, differs from the normativity set by the modern ideal. However, modernity as a separate secular and rational order is a myth. As we have discovered from Weber, modernism developed in conjunction with changing Christian religious beliefs. Though Weber contends

that modern culture later separated from its religious roots, we see in Bush and his Christian followers that this separation was never exact. Instead, there evolved a complex relation between the material and rational ideal of modernism and its original ideological underpinnings. Neo-liberalism (modernity's latest form) as presented by the Bush administration and fellow Christian conservatives demonstrates that modernity's material and social organization is still undergird by a cosmological disposition; the purpose being the production of a social order that allows Christianity to flourish. The imposition of neo-liberalism is the first step to this end. Webb indicates that this is so. He states,

The one globalism-American economic power-is, in crucial respects, a necessary prerequisite for the other globalism-American style Christianity. American commerce is serving God's purpose today just as Roman roads were providential for the expansion of Christianity many centuries ago (Webb, 2004:145).

Economic globalization understood as American lead neo-liberalism opens the way for Christianization. He states that there are "... compatibilities between the aims of globalization and the aims of Christianity... Christianity can keep the excesses of globalization in check by moving it toward the end anticipated by providentialist theology" (Webb, 2004:15). However, Islam represents "...the major impediment to this twin process of globalization and Christianization" (Webb, 2004:15).<sup>9</sup>

---

<sup>9</sup> As an aside, it may be argued that the socialization that arises from the global implementation of neo-liberalization alters the life ways of those impacted by its implementation bringing them closer and more amenable to the ethic of protestant Christianity. Webb makes a similar point but only to laud the selflessness of Christian missions. As in the colonial past, Christian missionizing, he argues, diminishes the consequences associated with economic globalization. It is therefore presented as benign if not heroic. "Commerce and Christianity" are complicit. (Webb 2004:142).

Quoting Huntington, Webb asserts that this is because Islam *in toto* is a different civilization on a collision course with the 'West'. Webb characterizes the history of Islam as fundamentalist, uncritical, and bent on conquest. Consequently, Islam is unable to adapt to the changes brought upon by economic globalization because of its essentialist character. It can only be subdued through war. Islam's various complexities, which already fuse modernist elements, along with Islam's internal divisions, are disregarded presenting Islam as temporally static. The Islamic world is unable or unwilling to concede to the demands necessitated by the inevitability of economic globalization; an economic globalization led by a providentially inspired American hegemony making in-roads for Christianity. Commensurately, it is construed as resisting the Providence of God (understood as Christian). In sum, Islam is posited as *a*-historical in contrast to American style Christianity presented as adaptive, open, and historically progressive. This same oppositional politics defines Hegel's analysis of the '*Gita*'. Like Hegel, Webb and those like him, present Islam as *a*-historical in order to present America as progressive. Through this oppositional relation, Webb is subsequently able to construct an American-teleological normativity.

It is important to note that Webb's emphasis on globalization makes his account appear historical. Webb does argue that Islam is increasingly the religion of the losers of economic globalization. He nevertheless dismisses this factor and reiterates that Islam is essentially fundamentalist. This easily allows him to omit the

---

historical material dimension or any other contextually based arguments. Instead, Webb chooses to generalize Islam as *a*-historical; that is to say static and ideologically fundamentalist from its inception up until the present. This same charge can be posed against Christian providentialism. However, the point is to show the opposite. Instead, providentialism's historical and geographical specificity demonstrates that it is fallacious to demonize an entire belief system.

Providentialism appears at specific geo-historical moments. This includes 9/11 but more importantly its proliferation must be understood in the context of deterritorialization. Webb's assertion that Islam is increasing the religion of globalization's losers is only partially accurate. Apocalyptic Christianity is also increasing the religion of those feeling disenfranchised by deterritorialization. This leads to both the evangelizing globalism of which Webb speaks (which includes war) and to a reterritorialization of the 'homeland'. In chapter four we move to analysis of this phenomenon.

### ***Conclusion***

Though the U.S. is quick to define itself as a modern state, providential discourse indicates that cosmological elements still underwrite the geo-political script making the modern ideal a mere fiction. This fiction extends to modernism division of the world into economic and religious realms which, in the socializing aims of neo-liberalism embraced by the Christian right, is demonstrated to be a spurious distinction. American providentialism (*Time*) fuses both a divinely inspired exceptionalism, as found in Spivak's analysis of the 'Gita', with an Anglo-American

teleological normativity similar to that found in her analysis of Hegel's reading of the 'Gita' (Spivak, 1999:58). American Providence is "Time graphed as the Law" for the sake of creating and maintaining a social order. This order is geopolitical and manifests as a re-invigorated MGI. It insists that the United States is a territory given to a specific people chosen by God for the purpose of spreading Christianity. The Bush administration, Webb, and the premillennialist re-iterate this reading off of the map whenever they pull upon providentialism for legitimacy. Furthermore, any change to the meaning and representation of the American nation is construed by Christian Americans as a threat, or in the religious imaginary of the premillennialist geo-political script, a signal of the failure of the 'shinning city on the hill' and the end of days (Northcott, 2004). Many American Christians believe that God has abandoned America because of the heretical/evil influence of non-believers and immigrants. The nation is lost and the end times are near. God, through His *judicial providentialism* has forsaken the nation. The nation can only be saved if measures are taken to expel the heretic/immigrant, or second, through *apocalyptic providentialism* when/where, in the final battle of Armageddon, the United States and Israel battle the forces of evil and are then re-united as Christian under one God. In both versions the MGI as ideology is reproduced and the pursuit of primacy is legitimated. This indicates that providentialism is an important factor in the religious territorial mode of thinking. This warrants further investigation.

#### ***Chapter #4: Providence and Territoriality***

The previous chapter demonstrates how Providence as *Time* enables the ideological characteristics of the MGI for the sake of reproducing the social order. This order remains territorially fixated. It is a geopolitical order where domestic and foreign affairs are considered distinct realms. In this chapter I will examine the remaining two characteristics of the MGI which are “that the boundaries of the state define the boundaries of society” and that states possess “exclusive power within their territories” (Agnew, 2003:51). This chapter will explore Providence as a theme relevant to territoriality and vice versa.

Providence has contributed the idea of America ever since its inception. Dijkink notes “the foundational history of the United States reveals a remarkable event: the sudden geopoliticisation of religion or ‘civil millennialism’” (Dijkink 2004:202).

Grondin concurs noting that,

American liberalism has evolved as the ‘peculiar fusion of **providential** and republican ideology that took place after the Revolution’ and stands as the civil and political religion that animates the powerful ‘master narrative’ of a manifest destiny, whereas liberalism becomes a ‘manner of interpreting the space and time of “America”’. Therein lays a unification of a sacred and secular conception of liberty, of a providential mission and sense of moral crusade that would identify ‘America’ and guide its action in the world (Grondin, 2006:10).

This last point is especially important. The sacred and the secular are interwoven in the geo-political imagination and geo-political identities of America and Americans.

Wallace notes that “...interacting with, the national narratives of civil religion, doctrinal debates developing within Christian faith communities have.... injected

specifically theological contours into the evolving profile of American political identities” (Wallace, 2006:220).

This is often forgotten in post-colonial research, where the sacred is considered an important aspect of ‘third-world’ nationalisms but not ‘Western’ nationalisms. The scholarly tendency is to externalize matters of religious significance and sacred space to post-colonial spaces, the focus being an examination of the reclamation of indigenous lifeways in relation to the end of colonialism. However, this form of post-colonial research does not accurately address the present geopolitical/geoeconomic environment characterized as deterritorialization and better known as globalization(s).

Flusty (2004) complicates this assumption. He notes how an influx of immigrants from the outdated geographical classification of the ‘third-world’ into key centers of global cultural hegemony have challenged our tendency to view cultural influence as emanating only from the ‘West’. Furthermore, this ‘foreign invasion’ has in Los Angeles, for example, led to an increase in fear and the militarization of both private and public spaces. Enlarging this perspective, in the ‘West’ there has been an increased desire to conceptualize the nation in religious, sacred, or more accurately cosmological notions.

Like their post-colonial counterparts in the ‘third world’, countries in the ‘West’ increasing view their national space as sacred space. The belief that the ‘West’

represents a secular opposition to these religiously oriented countries is nothing more than a geographical simplicity. Unfortunately, this thinking continues to be prevalent. For example, Griffiths states

Since the European Enlightenment, the West has generally worked on the simplistic premise that society is essentially secular, and that the primary orders of public knowledge should therefore be rooted in scientific and the rational rather than in the sacred and the mysterious. This understanding is often assumed to apply to all times and places. Neither set of assumptions holds true... This false representation of the sacred as a relic of a disappeared past and of outdated modes of knowing has led to complex and often contradictory Western responses to the renewal of interest in the phenomena of the sacred in the post-colonial space (Griffiths, 2001:452)

The simplicity is not as Griffiths asserts, but is instead his externalization of the renewal of the 'sacred' to post-colonial spaces and the assumption that the 'West' has evolved out of this form of thinking even though it remains relevant elsewhere in the world. In reality, it remains as important in the 'West' as in the spaces to which he is referring. Continuing on, he states that in "non-Western societies, where the sacred is still part of a majority social practice, or where it is being actively reasserted as an aspect of an anti-colonial and anti-globalizing mode of social identity and cohesion," it has "been vigorously repudiated in the West as regressive, or even as intrinsically barbaric and anti-human. Recent Western accounts of Islam offer notable examples of this sort of repudiation" (Griffiths, 2001:452).

I am arguing that the 'sacred', or more accurately the cosmological, is also relevant to an anti-global identity arising in the 'West' manifesting as religious nationalism and religious territoriality. "As Foucault has noted, contemporary conflicts over

space and place are frequently rooted in the “hidden presence of the sacred” (Foucault 1986 quoted in Scott 2001: xxviii). This is especially true of the United States. Yet, there is a persistent focus upon the ‘sacred’ as an aspect of post-colonial ethno-nationalism as opposed to ‘Western’ ethno-nationalism. Gayatri Spivak’s (1999), *A Critique of Postcolonial Reason: Toward a History of the Vanishing Present*, demonstrates another example of this bias. However, Spivak, unlike many authors, notes the complex geographical and historical layerings and connections that presently contribute to the cosmological aspects of ethno-nationalism now manifest as fundamentalism. In the context of Hindu ethno-nationalism, cosmology serves to bind Hindu national identity to the colonial borders of state instituted by the British Empire. This enables a highly exclusive notion of the nation which essentializes ethnic identity in the present, though in terms of a romanticized, pure, traditional, and idealized construction of an ‘Indian’ identity found in the past. The ‘nation’ is constructed from the pages of the ‘*Gita*’ and is linked to the present borders of the state, a state not present during the writing of the ‘*Gita*’ but instantiated through a history of colonialism. This has two effects. One, it denies the complex history of the colonial encounter and its relation to notions of ‘Indian’ and ‘Hindu’ identity. Second, it creates dogmatic and highly problematic identities, denying post-colonial subjectivities while further marginalizing India’s subalterns.

However, the discursive linkages just presented are not constrained to post-colonial societies such as India. In fact, deterritorialization can be said to have engendered similar forms of cosmo-political rhetoric throughout the world, essentializing ethno-

religious understandings of the nation. In the United States, Providential rhetoric has served to limit and define the nation-state linkage, while providing justification for what can be termed colonialism/Imperialism outside the nation-state. Presently, cosmological commitments have regained strength and retrenched both the MGI and Imperial discourses. The proliferation of providential ideology in the United States, for example, is evidence of this point. Spivak's insights can begin to explain this phenomenon and more specifically how the cosmological operates in the present discursive economy of knowledge in order to essentialize ethnicity, form the nation, justify imperialism, and territorialize this resultant.

Providential thinking, simply put, contends that God directs the course of human affairs. For some this occurs at the level of the individual, but for others God directs the geopolitical through his election of specific individuals or entire nation-states to positions of power. Webb argues, "...if we are redeemed through history, then nationality is not irrelevant to God's purposes" (Webb, 2004:5). "The suggestion that God works through the nation to achieve the divine plan is clear from the Bible..." (Webb, 2004:7). "A providential reading of world history must account for America's miraculous rise to world power, and it must give an interpretation of God's blessings for America as well as America's responsibilities for those blessings" (Webb, 2004: 9). Webb's concerns is to demonstrate how

The geopolitical does not lie outside of God's plan. God works through nature and through individuals, but also works through the great movements of entire peoples that are world's nations. Christians do not, or at least should not, believe in luck, nor should they believe that the geopolitical, anymore than the astrological, controls our destiny. The geopolitical is not our destiny; God is. Nevertheless, the

road on which humanity must travel into the future leads through America, so it is incumbent upon every theologian to try to read the signs God has posted along the way (Webb, 2004:14).

This perspective represents what Guyatt has termed *Historical providentialism*. However, a “reading of the signs that has God has posted” has also led to the premillennialist inclination to interpreted contemporary events through *Apocalyptic providentialism*. Thus, like Spivak’s analysis of the ‘Gita’, *Time* is here “graphed as Law”. Like the rhetoric of post-colonial nationalisms or fundamentalisms which attempt to build essentialized notions of the nation through reference to religious texts, American Providence is a re-enactment of a moral/temporal order that calls upon a script of “Time graphed as Law” as developed within Protestant Christian theology. Again, this benefits the already dominant members of society. In this case the dominant members are Christian Americans. ‘American’ national identity is thus limited within a providentialist view. It is not produced as a result of *timing* which allows for the evolution of novel cultural practices through encounters with difference, subsequently enabling a redefinition of the nation as process, but is instead another example of how history is “...disqualified in a dominant interest, in the name of the real laws of motion of “time,” or rather, “Time” (Spivak, 1999:38). Providence secures the belief that ‘America’ has an essence which is Christian by design. This requires an *a priori* cosmological imaginary into which America can be slotted. Within this cosmological imaginary, God works through the ethnoreligiously spatialized and sanitized idea of the American nation-state. This limits the possibility for the development of identities that are non-territorial, or at the very minimum, trans-national. This form of subjectivity is enabled by deterritorialization.

Instead, however, society is made commensurate with the territorial borders of the state. With this imaginary in place, the MGI and the pursuit of primacy can be reconstituted cosmo(logically). providentialism, therefore, re-territorializes the space of America in wake of deterritorialization, while simultaneously construing spaces beyond its borders as different. However, this geo(graphing) of space does not conform to the Cartesian map of the supposed MGI, but is geo(graphed) within a cosmological imaginary that hierarchically orients all places in relation to the Kingdom of God. America as the closest equivalent to the Kingdom substitutes in this relational imaginary placing it at the head of all nation-states making America the primary subject of Providence. In fact, it is Providence that has directed America to this position.

### ***Founding and Fixating: The Geo (graphing) of America***

The narrative of the founding/origin of the American nation emanates from a Christian understanding of space/time. Christian cosmology is at the heart of the American national ideal. This allows the American nation to be presented in absolute and religiously essentialized terms. Cosmological origin binds and defines the nation, limiting *becoming* and *process* for *present being*. Granted, pluralism is part of the American creed. However, as Webb argues this pluralism arises from Providence. Pluralism is, by itself, insufficient for national definition. Consequently, the plurality advocated by the American creed is subsumed to a Christian idea of the nation emanating from a Christian cosmo-politic of space/time (Providence). Webb states,

America is a nation whose very being is providential. The American experiment, because of its fragile nature, requires a providential reading of history. Especially after 9/11, American Christians must choose whether the providential understanding of America makes sense or not. The alternative to providential America is pluralistic America, but the case can be made that even our commitment to pluralism, depends on the concept of Providence. That is, we think we are uniquely pluralistic and thus chosen by God (or the forces of history) to model pluralism for the rest of the world. It is questionable, then, whether pluralism can be a satisfactory substitute for providential conceptions of the American experiment (Webb, 2004: 13).

Pluralism is established through Providence and democracy develops from liberal Christianity (Webb, 2004:10). Webb goes on to state, “The great accomplishment of liberal Christianity is to fuse faith and flag in a civic religion that trumps religious passion with the common sense of civility. Church and state are united by a truce that allows the nation to show all outsiders a friendly face” (Webb, 2004:19). However, this begs the question as to how genuine this encounter with difference actually is. The premillennialist have taken this form of providential explanation and justification to the extreme, advocating positions bordering on fascism. Quoting John Hagee, Guyatt finds that “apocalyptic Christians are remarkably hostile towards immigrants. Hagee’s shot in ‘Attack on America’ seems especially low: ‘Our political leaders for more than a decade have been so fearful of offending one ethnic group or another that we have put all Americans at risk’” (Hagee quoted in Guyatt, 2007b:50). Hagee goes on to argue that the nation has fallen out of favor with God and is being punished for its insolence. The only way out is to repent. The approach is two fold. Americans must missionize and extend Christianity while simultaneously insulating America from non- Christians elements.

Speaking to premillennialist David Reagan, founder of *Lamb and Lion Ministries* and host of “Christ in Prophecy”, Guyatt finds a similar disposition to blame immigration for American decline. Reagan states that,

What has been fatal to America’s moral health, and its providential standing with God, is that this drift away from Christianity has coincided with a big influx of immigrants. For Dave, the United States was founded on “Judeo-Christian principles.”... “Similarly the nation as a whole is making a big mistake by encouraging “a flood of immigrants from non-Christian areas.” In recent years, millions of immigrants have come to America “without a Christian background” and have demanded that the nation’s values should be changed to accommodate them. By doing this, they’re “undermining the very basis of the nation (Reagan quoted in Guyatt, 2007b:101).

Within this providential mode of thinking there is the stated belief that Christians have been divinely elected and destined to occupy the space within the territorial borders of the U.S. at the exclusion of Others. This “metaphysics of presence” focuses our attention on another of Derrida’s philosophical explorations of nationalism; the ‘mystical’ attributes of authority. For Derrida, a mystical foundation of authority means that authority (in this case national exceptionalism) has no ground upon which to justify itself or its exceptional qualification except through the *act* or the enacting of this distinction. In a sense, it arises from nothing except itself making it magical or mystical. For example, Derrida notes that the American Declaration of Independence could not and cannot draw its authority from the nation or the state since neither existed until they were declared. It is the act of signing the declaration, the act of writing into existence the nation which constructs a differentiation. It is a wholly generative act arising mystically.

Derrida terms this a *coup de force*. Further to this, Campbell argues that the *coup de force* is intrinsically temporal. “In this sense, the crucial point that flows from the notion of performativity is the *coup de force* is temporal. It highlights the way in which something receives its interpretative justification as true after the fact” (Campbell, 1998:26). Following Campbell, I argue that Providence is an “interpretative act”. It is therefore a *coup de force* (Campbell, 1998:26). However, there is a difference. In the case of America’s founding and continuity, the inclusion of the notion of Providence complicates Derrida’s argument because the act is guided through to the founding moment by God. In this case there is a foundation for authority, a founding retroactively justified within a wider cosmological imaginary which necessary includes teleological time unfolding into temporal space. Here the ‘after the fact’ justification has cosmological antecedents that anticipate the moment of national foundation. Providence then provides an enduring foundation upon which to draw legitimacy outside of historicity. This is not to say that context does not influence how providential ideology is employed, cited, and performed. This is a crucial point for this (or any) analysis. However, no matter its mutation or invocation, providentialism argues from a position of authority originating in the cosmological. There is a design to which historicity is subject, one where specific nations and individuals play a transcendently inspired and elevated role.

Derrida and Campbell are correct in noting that the “onto-theo-archeo-teleology locks up, neutralizes and finally cancels historicity”, however they don’t demonstrate how the cosmological is enacted to achieve this end. For this reason,

Spivak is crucial. Spivak (above) is in fact demonstrating how the cosmological forms a political discourse. Recall, that God makes himself “whenever the Law is in decline” (Spivak, 1999:53). God and the cosmological “...contain all origins, all developments, and also the present moment” (Spivak, 1999:55). The first statement demonstrates why providentialism has increased in correspondence with American hegemonic decline and deterritorialization. It also explains Bush’s belief in his divine election. God has chosen him to lead America in this period of instability. The second point demonstrates that Christian religious nationalism when tied to providentialism is difficult if not impossible to deconstruct because it is an ideology that can be applied generally and irrespective of other prevailing factors or conditions, even though Providence serves as political discourse meant to influence the present. In geo-political terms it stabilizes and fixes existing borders. Moreover, Providence as discourse is resilient to critique since it less temporal than cosmological. It is ideological. Though this ideology changes in response to material concerns it nevertheless influences how history is first interpreted and more importantly the material practices which follow. Understanding the relation between these two ‘realities’ allows us to contemplate how changing conditions in the present lead to the invocation of providential ideology as a mean of territorialization.

It must be stated that providentialism can also be called upon to increase national inclusiveness. This is an important point since providentialism has also been used to expand the definition of the American nation to include African-Americans.

However, this strategy was/is successful because it includes Christianity as an

element of national identity. When in the sixties, for example, Black Nationalism flirted with Islam, it was demonized thereby making room for a Christian based movement which ultimately succeeded. Christianity is therefore critical to the national imaginary of America, even though tolerance for religious difference is enshrined in the constitution. Were this assumption of Christian superiority to be threatened, the foundational assumptions upon which the political logic of democracy rests in America would be destabilized. Firstly, this is because Christian providentialists like Webb (2004) contend that democracy arises from liberal Christianity. Second, democracy requires a sense of an imagined community, which in America, is grounded in a sense of divine national election- Christian providentialism.

Lefort quoted by Campbell argues that the political logic of democracy does away with this type of reasoning. He contends that if we contrast the “political logic of democracy to the political structures of the ancient regime, we see that the key feature of the latter is that power was embodied in the sovereign in accordance with a “theological-political logic” (Lefort cited in Campbell, 1998:195). He contends that with democracy this “transcendental guarantee” disappears. He states,

The uniqueness of democracy lies in the fact that the locus of power becomes an empty place: popular sovereignty is a ground for authority but it is a ‘ground that is not permanently grounded as no person, group or other authority can permanently appropriate the place of power (Lefort quoted in Campbell, 1998:195).

This is inaccurate. The idea of Providence infuses national sovereignty with a ‘transcendental guarantee’. Since it is invoked as a specifically Christian

cosmological conceptualization its utterance does in fact ground authority and allow for the permanent 'appropriation of the place of power'. If, for example, through democratic processes a group were to amass enough popular support to alter this *a priori* notion of national sovereignty, the political logic of democracy would reach a point of crisis for those perceiving a displacement from this place of power.

Premillennialist like Hagee and Reagan contend that this is already occurring.

Lieven (2004) notes that

these anxieties stem from the progressive loss of control over society by the 'original' White Anglo-Saxon and Scots Irish populations, later joined by others. Connected to these concerns are class anxieties-in the past, the hostility of the small towns and countryside to the new immigrant-populated cities; today the economic decline of the traditional White working class. As a result of economic, cultural, and demographic change, in America, the supremely victorious nation of the modern age, large numbers of American feel defeated. The domestic anxieties which this feeling of defeat generates spill over into attitudes to the outside world... This too is a very old pattern in different nationalisms worldwide. (Lieven, 2004:7)

However, Lieven contends that these same Americans still believe strongly in the American creed which avers democracy and equality. However, the Americans of which he speaks, like Webb (2004), also believe that these 'American' attributes are,

the product of a specific White Christian American Civilization, and that both are threatened by immigration, racial minorities, and foreign influence...people with this belief feel embattled, embittered and defensive as a result of many contemporary trends" (Lieven, 2004: 7-8).

This threat also spurs a sense cosmological catastrophe as denoted by *apocalyptic providentialism*. Providentialism is a hierarchical cosmological conceptualization that places these individuals into an elevated position of authority- economically,

politically, and most importantly morally. Many Christian Americans feel that they have fallen out of favor with God due to non-Christian immigration and moral relativism leading to a sense of national pollution. The “site of legitimation and authorization” (Feldman quoted in Campbell, 1998:85) for this sense of entitlement originates in the cosmological. A providential discourse of America, when invoked, re-establishes a link between this site and the space of America. Belief in privileged exceptionalism therefore emanates from the cosmological. If the nation is guided by Christian Providence there is a limit to the extent to which civic nationalism, understood as citizenship and democratic participation, can fold individuals outside or opposite to this cosmological order into the imagined community of the nation.

In the language of Critical Geopolitics this means that though relations between words and things are continually in flux, making the notion of the nation a process rather than an enduring amalgam of a specific set of characteristics and criteria, the citing of a Christian cosmological conceptualization such as Providence sites the location of power in a place outside the mutability of space and time, limiting the flux made possible through an understanding of politics a *differance*. In fact *differance* as the “setting off” or “differentiation” along with the continual “pushing away” or “deferment” from what is being defined is what allows national politics to exist (Derrida cited in Spivak, 1999:424). As a cosmo-politics, providentialism works in just this way in order to define the nation as Christian. Thus providential ideology allows for the “suppression of historicity through linear, teleological, eschatological, or progressive temporalities” (Derrida quoted in Campbell, 1998:85).

Providence folds geography and history into a cosmo-politics of space/time. Providence forecloses an understanding of history as historicity. More than that, when associated with the nation-state, Toal's above assertion that the MGI never lost its cosmological correlates is confirmed. Further to this, it invalidates or at least complicates Claude Lefort's analysis of the political logic of democracy. That is because the political logic of democracy is bound up with other conceptions of identity, conceptions with enduring characteristics that are believe to have existed prior to and now beyond the democratic nation-state. Campbell notes that these characteristics are often cited as 'ethnic differences' but that "far from being a natural outgrowth of historical animosities and earlier conflicts", ethnic conflicts represent "history violently deployed in the present for contemporary political goals" (Campbell, 1998:86).

It is important to realize, however, that history- and the geography it attempts to validate- in Christian providentialism arises at the point of cosmological creation. When applied to territorial conflicts this history allows geopolitics to be read in cosmological terms. Territorialization is then both morally necessary and inevitable. It is part of a larger cosmological design. The power of Providential ideology applied to territorialization is that it is legitimated through a cosmological imaginary that cannot be empirical discounted. Therefore Providential ideology can be used to justify just about anything. Here it is used to cite/site America as a Christian space where a Christian nation maps easily onto the territory bounded by its borders. Cosmology dictates geopolitics. God has selected and elected America to do His

bidding. This simplifies geopolitics into an inside space of the righteous and an outside space of the wicked. When the two collide, as in Christian America's experience with globalization, difference is simplified as dangerous.

Non-Christian elements within the United States are considered a threat to the internal fabric of the nation and the coherence of the nation-state linkage. This is because the political logic of democracy relies upon other unchallenged biases. When these are threatened, the logic of democracy gives way to xenophobia and violence. We have already discussed how for certain white Christian Americans the admittance of difference has already provoked a feeling of 'crisis'. This 'crisis' results from a deterritorialization of economic and cultural affairs understood as globalization. Though global, these effects are experienced as change at the local level. This fear of change has led to both the hardening of national borders through a re-invigorated MGI and the coterminous thrust towards Imperialism (the quest for primacy).

Imperialism represents a very old resolution to paradoxes inherent in Christian thinking. How does one equate peaceful co-existence and non-violence with an aim to missionize, universalize, and minimize differences? When faced with obstinate opposition the solution has been to use coercive violence masquerading as loving discipline. This is justified within a cosmological imaginary that hierarchically orders individuals, groups, and nations in relation to the Kingdom of God. The possibility for equality is available though not without conversion. In fact,

conversion itself requires an abstract spatial imagination. Conversion represents a crossing of a spiritual “transformational boundary” (Thompson, 1991). Therefore, crossing a border/boundaries in the temporal plane does not in itself denote inclusion. For example, crossing the border of the United States as a non-Christian is a violation of the sacred space of America. Conversely, the crossing of American soldiers into Iraq is a descent into a space that is tending towards evil but where good souls can still be saved if exposed to the light of Christianity. Following Thompson’s analysis of the Book of Revelation, this is because there is no actual “demonic plane”. It can have no “independent reality” because it derives from the heavenly plane. This provides the spatial imaginary necessary for a war construed as both Just and benevolent. This is but another example of how the MGI understood as a flat space is now and perhaps never has been flat. It is underpinned by cosmology.

Reversely, the MGI represents a parallel problematic for the Christian notion of nation. Though territorial state sovereignty is still underpinned by religious beliefs and cosmological imaginaries, the Christian notion of the nation is intended to extend beyond territorial delineations such as that defined by the MGI. For example, the wider Christian community has, in Catholic terminology, been termed ‘The City of God’, a society lacking any geographical address in the present spatial/temporal realm though destined towards a cosmological place- the Kingdom of God. In this formulation, derived from Augustine, ‘The City of God’ represents a nation of Christians unified by their common destination. At the time, Augustine did not have to contend with the geographical separation of the Christian community resulting

from the MGI, for Augustine believed that a Roman Christian Empire would neatly tie together the association of state, church, and nation.<sup>10</sup> Historical developments, specifically for our purpose the emergence of the MGI, complicated this simplicity. Consequently, notions of divine national election proliferated in association with the MGI, which each state applying its own conceptualization of national exceptionalism in accordance with their own (in)version(s) of Christianity and more importantly Providence.<sup>11</sup> This spatial abstraction (Christian cosmology) enables a religious territorialization cross-mapping the nation with the state.

Territoriality itself represents a paradox for Christians. Christians, like everyone else, exist in temporal space. The present notion of exclusivity and inclusiveness within temporal space is related to territorial citizenship. However, this form of territoriality is contrary to the Christian mandate of Universalism. It is also contrary to a Christian's supposed and required disposition towards spiritual as opposed to worldly power. Subsequently Christianity demands a conception of identity lacking

---

<sup>10</sup> This is not to say that there were no territorial conflicts. Wars between the Romans, the Visigoths, and the Donatists (to name a few) provided the environment and necessary context in which Augustine's conception of the 'City of God', and more importantly his Christian 'Just War' theory were forged. See Deane, H. A. (1963). *The Political and Social Ideas of St. Augustine*. New York: Columbia University Press

<sup>11</sup> Exploring Augustine's conceptualization and influence upon notions of national exceptionalism, sovereignty, war, and more generally 'Western thought' are beyond the scope of this project. Suffice it to say, his writings are highly nuanced, both theologically and philosophically, and formed within a wider cosmological imaginary.

territorial loyalty, especially towards a temporal territorial power.<sup>12</sup> Instead, loyalty is supposed to be bound to a cosmological site- the Kingdom of God.

Wallace (2006) explores this contradiction in his analysis of the displacement of theological motifs such as “exodus”, “chosen nation”, and the “promised land” from Israel to America. His theological examination determines that the fulfillment of God’s commitment to Israel and humanity through Christ as elaborated in the New Testament requires an inclusive and deterritorialized engagement with the temporal world as preparatory for the Kingdom of God. He states,

The New Testament, however, detaches these benefits from their “territorial moorings”. The person and work of Jesus Christ is presented as the fulfillment of God’s covenant with Abraham, and to be “in [relationship with] Christ” is to be an inheritor of its blessings. The socio-economic dimensions of the land as a means of security and material provision are picked up in the New Testament accounts of fellowship and mutual sharing.. in the early decades of the Church, made concrete at both local and inter-regional scales...In the process, the medium for assuring the community of God’s people that they are participants in the blessings of the covenant, including access to the material basis of life, is reconceived: membership in the territorially unbounded Church and its networks of sharing supersedes occupancy and subsistence in the ‘Promised Land’ (Wallace, 2006:217-218).

However, there has rarely been a lack of temporal territorial interest. Instead, Christianity has at times muted into Imperialism. That is because any and all claims to universalism provide justification to extend one’s influence abroad while curtailing difference at home. Throughout humanity’s violent history this script has not changed, nor has it been limited to Christian Imperialism. For our purpose, it is

---

<sup>12</sup> Though Paul did encourage Christians to follow Roman rule, this not institute a notion of identity that linked Christianity with territory nor with temporal power.

important to point out that this script is again playing out as U.S. Imperialism. Though, the U.S. administration has at many times argued that they are not in pursuit of empire, the expansion and imposition of their principles abroad- be it neo-liberalism or Christianity or a mixture of the two, (many missionaries have made their way to Iraq in the wake of U.S. occupation)-the geopolitical strategy is nothing short of Imperialism.

Providential ideology and discourse is what enables this geopolitical strategy, reforming the MGI and the pursuit of primacy. Describing the pursuit of primacy in this way may seem obvious, however, it is important since most critical geopolitical studies understand primacy from a world political economy or historical materialist perspective thereby downplaying the importance of religion and cosmology (Agnew, 2003). Though the world political economy remains important, it omits a crucial dimension of primacy; the moral and spiritual as bound to the relation between geopolitics and cosmology. In Bush's formulation we have the pursuit of an empire in which the cosmological is extended through America to the rest of the world. America as the 'Shining City on the Hill' represents the moral beacon to which other nations should/must gravitate. The aim is a World Order led by American Hegemony. Though premillennialists detest Imperialism, they nevertheless support this pursuit. For premillennialists World Order is indicative of the reign of Satan and the coming apocalypse. However, they believe that this can be resisted through, and not as a result of, American Imperialism. This view is captured by Guyatt.

Quoting one premillennialist preacher he notes that,

...he is not about to withdraw his faith in America's redemptive possibilities, or at least in the nation's ability to sustain its Christian status... he puts it like this: "America's role in Bible prophecy is, to quote Ronald Reagan, to be that shining city on a hill. Until someone nukes the hill (Guyatt, 2007b:183).

However, the inevitability of decline is dictated by apocalyptic providentialism.

Eventually it ends with a peaceful coalition of nations as one nation under a

Christian God. Following Thompson (1991) "...The spatial heaven and the eschatological restoration collapse into one center" (Thompson, 1991: 123).

American primacy is, therefore, an attempt to consolidate this 'globalism' or unification of nations before and as part of the actual unification of the Kingdom of God with temporal power. Webb (2004) is explicit about this geopolitical strategy.

Webb's contention that American geoeconomic power represents a necessary prelude to American style Christianity, and that the political structures imposed by American power represent those found in the Kingdom of God indicates a continued disposition towards viewing Imperialism as a necessary extension of Christian love. It is a policy of loving coercion required for the benefit of the heretic.

However, it is not simply good will and love that continues to push Americans towards the pursuit of primacy but additionally a commensurate fear of disempowerment. Webb's simplification of globalism as the global spread of American geoeconomic power through neo-liberalization lacks an important dimension which accounts for this fear. This is, that, globalism is not a unidirectional force, but is instead a deterritorialization of economic and cultural

affairs. This has spurred an increase in providentialism. For this reason many Americans are convinced the way forward is to spread Christianity abroad while religiously reterritorializing the 'homeland'. Returning to Webb we see the cosmo(logic) behind this necessity and its incongruities. Webb insists that "reading globalism providentially is a risk, but one that cannot be avoided, least of all in a book dedicated to the idea that God works through nations to establish the political freedom that is a foretaste of the politics of the kingdom yet to come" (Webb, 2004:14). The exportation of democracy is the sort political freedom he envisions, but only with the implantation of Christianity as the final goal. However, for Webb this political freedom has its limits; especially when democracy threatens the notion of a Christian America. Webb argues that in heaven there will be no democracy. By connection, Christians have a right to invoke an exception to the law which includes the suspension of the general rule of democracy (Webb, 2004:154). However this exception is made through the Law, understood as Providence (*Time*), in order to save the hyphenated nation-state during a perceived 'crisis'. Wallace makes a similar point. Quoting O'Brien's notion of America as a 'deified nation' he notes that there is

...no longer any entity, or law, or ethic superior to the nation. Therefore, whatever the nation decides to do, or whatever its leader does in the name of the nation, is inherently and intrinsically right, however it may appear to other peoples". In the days since 9/11, the Bush administration has frequently appeared comfortable with language consistent with 'deified nation' status, and nowhere is this more evident than in the National Security Strategy of the United States of America, released by the White House in September 2002 (Wallace, 2006: 224-225).

O'Brien's observation is frightening in light of Webb's previous assertion which he arrives at through his reading and validation of Carl Schmitt's theopolitics.

American Christian providentialism, it seems, flirts with Fascism.

### *The Contradictions of Christian Religious Territoriality*

Primacy and a re-invigoration of the MGI represent an attempt to resolve a "structural contradiction" within religious territoriality. This structural contradiction...

is being played out between the dynamic of territorialization, which is the theological and practical basis for the legitimacy of assigning land to each community on account of the ability of its message to organize the social, and the dynamic of deterritorialization, which marks the dual purpose –universal and individual- of this message itself. This contradiction ties in, at least partly, with the tension between the imperative to affirm the singular identity of the religious community and the imperative to show the universal significance of the truth it declares itself to be carrying: the tension between the 'already there' of the Church and the 'not yet' of the Kingdom on Christian terrain... This fundamental contradiction between involvement in a community (local involvement, therefore) by the religious and its universal aim (which no visible space can enclose) determines all the paradoxes of the relationship of religion to space, paradoxes that are variously expressed but especially in the gap that has become permanently established between the political claim to the territorial stability of the community ('a land for the people of God') and enhancing the spiritual value of movement ('not to settle in one place')-evidenced for example, in the universal practice of pilgrimage (Hervieu-Leger, 2002:102-103).

This contradiction is captured in the providential globalism of both Bush and Webb.

The insistence in both of their modes of thinking is the need to reterritorialize

American society with the state (the second characteristic of the MGI) while at the same time declaring the universalism of their message thereby undermining this

relationship. The resolution comes as the pursuit of primacy (Imperialism).

Following the language of Sparke (2005) the globalism of both Bush and Webb makes complicit geo-economic and geo-political assertions with cosmological assumptions.

Though Sparke's analysis of the "war on Iraq" has nothing to do with Providence or cosmology the territorial contradictions he unpacks can elucidate the contradictions posed by religious territoriality. Sparke argues that the "war in Iraq" was sold internationally using contradictory and misleading spatial abstractions, the "double-edged suggestion that [neoconservatives] were conjugating their vision of American unilateralism using a geoeconomic grammar predicated on the sweeping MBA-style visions of deterritorialized global networks" (Sparke, 2005:272). The contradiction lies in the conflation of the idea of the pursuit of American primacy (geopolitical assertion) based upon an idea of an equal and flat geo-economic world (the assumption). As Grondin avers,

It is in this framing of U.S. globalist nationalism that its neo-liberal hegemonic global strategy tries to have it both ways, to remake the world in America's image, while assuming that its national interests are global interests, thereby conflating its national security with global security, as if the great aspirations of the US and of mankind were one and the same (Grondin, 2006: 12).

This contradiction accurately represents the complexities of the present religious territorial mode of thinking within the United States. For in the U.S., Providence acts to buttress "the political claim to territorial stability of the community" thus defining an inside of the "already there" (the geo-political assertion) while commensurately

legitimizing the pursuit of the “not yet” of the Kingdom through notions of universal applicability and providential responsibility (the cosmological assumption). More to the point, the present expression of the paradoxical “relationship of religion to space” is unraveling as a renewed pursuit for primacy (Imperialism) and the reinvigoration of the MGI instead of engendering a borderless world free of hierarchies as expected by both global neo-liberalization and Christianity.

### ***Providence, Sovereignty, and the MGI***

The third characteristic of the MGI which has yet to be assessed is the notion of sovereignty, or rather the belief that states possess “exclusive power within their territories as represented by the concept of sovereignty” (Agnew, 2003:51). Agnew provides the most thoughtful analysis of the subject in his 2005 article regarding what he terms as “Sovereignty Regimes”. Unfortunately, Agnew’s overemphasis on the global political economic dimension of sovereignty omits religious and cosmological aspects (Sovereignty) which continue to undergird territoriality in the U.S. even as actual sovereignty over the domestic economy is challenged and/or changed.

In an earlier work Agnew is apt in noting that the “the historicity of spatiality implies that both material forces and intellectual perspectives or representations interact to produce the spatiality of power predominant within a given historical era” (Agnew, 2003: 129). Confusingly, and yet craftily, providentialism acts as a representation of space/time which buttresses the spatiality of power present during

the period spanning 2001-2008. However it does so by doing away with historicity (*timing*) in favor of *Time*. This assertion of *Time* over *timing* is, however, itself historically and geographically contingent. Agnew is therefore correct in his assertion, however, his recent contributions have failed to address a resurgence of cosmo-political claims to space/time which legitimate the spatiality of power that dominate the period. This spatiality of power comprises both a reinvigorated MGI and the pursuit of American primacy as Imperialism. Within this spatiality of power Sovereignty remains a critical element.

To repeat, the reason for this omission is due to Agnew's analysis of sovereignty from a global political economic perspective. However, in a 2006 article he does begin to consider the co-constitutional relation between "religious thought" and "material interests". He states,

the connections between religious thought and language, on the one hand, and material interests, on the other, depend on interpenetration or metabolizing between them rather than an efficient causality subordinating one to the other, as has been remarked of the seemingly strange alliance in US politics between "cowboy capitalism" (represented best of all, perhaps, by Vice President Dick Cheney) and "evangelical Christianity" (represented by a stream of TV preachers and local pastors), brought together in the person of George W. Bush...(Agnew, 2006:1)

What Agnew does not explore, however, is the cosmological disposition that binds free-market capitalism with Christianity. I have previously dealt with this relation in the last chapters. Agnew also fails to discuss the impact of deterritorialization upon America from a cosmological perspective. Their relation through the notion of Sovereignty and the notion of nation is crucial to the present geopolitical order.

In line with Agnew and Corbridge (1995) I argue that the present geopolitical order is **materially** characterized as a deterritorialization of the global political economy (Agnew and Corbridge, 1995) and a commensurate deterritorialization of cultural practices (Agnew, 2003). However, what is missing is that this material focus obfuscates that the aforementioned has simultaneously produced an increase in religious territoriality. Agnew (2005a) misses this point when discussing his “sovereignty regimes”.

In his analysis, Agnew contends that there presently exist four overlapping “sovereignty regimes” which correspond to the present geopolitical situation. Agnew arrives at this determination by plotting strong or weak central state authority against open or closed territoriality. Classic sovereignty is indicated by strong central state authority and relative closure over territoriality. This includes the control of trade, domestic markets and domestic politics. This form of sovereignty places each state in competition with each other. The integrative regime (corresponding to the European Union) is indicative of weak central state authority and open territoriality, while the globalist regime (the U.S in Agnew’s view) comprises strong central state authority and open territoriality. The U.S., as hegemonic representative of the globalist regime, is able to lead and enlist other states within this regime without coercively undermining their central authority or forcibly ensuring openness to their respective territories. Finally, the imperialist regime comprises states that have both weak central state authority and open

territoriality. States corresponding to this regime are most often under the coercive control of a great power.

It should now be clear that this analysis has limitations. Agnew's understanding of territoriality omits the religious and cosmological dimensions. These are critical to understanding sovereignty within the United States. To say that the U.S. has an open territoriality with regards to trade is not the same as to say that it also possesses an openness to a re-presentation of its national imaginary; a crucial component of territoriality and spatiality. In fact, the globalist regime places tremendous pressure upon the ideological dimension of territoriality- nationalism. This is because trade is not the only factor in globalization.

Globalization includes the movement of people, the movement of enterprises, and the movement of ideas. Honestly, this is a simplistic notion of globalization. The point, however, is to demonstrate that these factors put tremendous stress on the nationalist imaginary. The globalist regime denotes a fluid condition in which the state no longer has complete control over its territory, even if a strong central state authority exists. The state's control over the ideological dimension (the MGI) must continually play catch up in a world of rapid deterritorialization. The state must continually counteract the materiality of the globalist regime as it is experienced at the local level as change.

This means that in accounting for two of the main components of the MGI- the persistent belief that domestic and foreign affairs are separate realms and that society remains overwhelming bounded to the territoriality of the state- the globalist regime must also account for the MGI and the manner in which a strong central state is possible and not simply assumed. This includes the belief that power is still constituted through and within sovereign nation-states “where there is a close match between membership in a distinctive nation and the boundaries of a particular state” (Agnew, 2003: 52). This requires re-thinking the characteristics of the MGI through Sovereignty and not sovereignty. It demands that we understand that when sovereignty is challenged in the political economic realm leading to stress on the ideological dimension (the MGI), sovereignty (or in this case Sovereignty) continues to act as a buffer. This is the reason why there is a resurgence of Sovereignty (understood cosmologically). This is meant to demonstrate an extension of Agnew’s contention that

..effective sovereignty is not necessarily predicated on and defined by the strict and fixed territorial boundaries of individual states. In my view, the negotiation and redefinition of political authority in geographically complex ways suggests the need to change the terms of debate about sovereignty (Agnew, 2005a: 438)

Agnew’s point has absolutely nothing to do with the cosmological. He is instead arguing that a powerful state can exercise power over a territory, not its own, without the need for actual territorial occupation. This may be fine for explaining the globalist regime as he defines it, however it does not explain the persistence of the MGI nor does it explain a return to the pursuit of primacy characterized as Imperialism. As he suggests, what is needed is a “negotiation and redefinition of

political authority in geographically complex ways” (ibid). This requires that we note that in the U.S., the post-modernism of the globalist regime has led to a return to a pre-modern notion of Sovereignty. The debate must therefore range into the cosmo-political dimension. Agnew fails to develop this ideological correlate to his political economic “sovereignty regimes”.

Some may argue that Sovereignty has always played a role in American exceptionalism. As I have made clear, however, the present increase in providentialist language exemplified by Bush and his followers is a historically and geographically specific phenomenon. In fact, Bush is unique in that his presidency is characterized as directed by the Sovereignty of God (Providence) making Bush more than the president but the Sovereign incarnate. Webb (2004) argues that since God acts through individuals as well as the nation then it makes sense that George W. Bush’s presence as president of the United States was/is providential. A Providential selection of leaders problematizes democratic election and the ideals of modernity that go with it. However, the providential discourse propagated by the Bush administration does not in itself manage to reinvigorate the ideology of the MGI and the pursuit of primacy *ex nihilo*, but aims to resonate with an already existing disposition to view geopolitics and national identity in religious and more importantly cosmological terms. The scaling up of Sovereignty cannot, therefore, confer legitimacy without popular support. In order for Bush’s rhetoric to resonate widely, Sovereignty understood as divinely ordained, must represent an ideological belief that is wide spread and to which many Americans ascribe. Thus, Sovereignty

from on high relies upon power from below. Agnew terms this form of power “non-sovereign”. He states,

More radically, however, the power of states over their populations and in relation to one another can be understood as resting largely on power ‘from below’. In other words, the territorial state draws its power in capillary fashion from social groups and institutions rather than simply imposing itself upon them. From this point of view, power is present in all relationships among people, animals, things, and the power of the state relies on the wide range of sources it can tap into. This can be termed a non-sovereign conception of power (Agnew, 2003:56).

This includes the social institution of the church irrespective of the averred separation of church and state within U.S. politics.

### ***Conclusion***

Agnew’s “sovereignty regimes” provide an incomplete picture of sovereignty.

This is especially true with regard to sovereignty in the United States.

The open territoriality of Agnew’s “globalist regime” is questionable when religious territoriality and Sovereignty are included in the analysis. In fact, the MGI, now saturated with cosmological dressings, constitutes a very closed territorial mind-set.

We have discovered that the state is active in the formulation of the MGI and thus it is active in its own reproduction as a strong central state, or more accurately, a nation-state. This indicates that the state still maintains power over its territory even though deterritorialization problematizes the exclusivity of this sovereignty.

Ironically, however, this same problematic has increased cosmo-political claims to space and thus engendered a reterritorialization where Sovereign Providence solidifies the MGI. This development has not arisen *ex nihilo*. Instead it is the result

of contemporary trends that have changed both the economic and cultural fabric of the nation in the last few decades making White, Christian, Americans feel persecuted and morally excitable. Inside the state there is the desire to control elements threatening the coherence of the American nation understood as the aforementioned; the want to expel the modern day 'heretic' or 'schismatic' (the Hispanic, the Muslim, or the immigrant), contrary to the often touted claim of tolerance.

Outside, there is either the ambition to extend God's gifts of democracy, freedom, and the free market (Bush's stated intention and one which additionally acts as a means of control), or the desire to eliminate difference once and for all in a final battle between good and evil. Though many subtleties exist between these polarities, each can respectively be argued to depend upon either a postmillennial or premillennial script of the geopolitical. However

..both varieties of New World millennialism involve the claim that Americans are in some exceptional sense in charge of human history, that their story represents the fulfillment of Biblical passages about the end of history, the last judgment and the final revelation-the word apocalypse means revelation or unveiling-of the millennial rule of the saints in which human history is finally redeemed. Americans in this millennial reading of history came to see America as the 'redeemer nation', the first nation fully to realize the true salvific intent of human history (Northcott, 2004:15).

In both varieties, the state is understood as representing the functional arm of the nation, and though the postmillennial leanings of the state may at times be at odds with a premillennial bent, both operate in unison to continually construct the nation through religious forms of territorial discourse. Moreover, both varieties aver that

God's special Providence has divinely ordained the creation of the American nation and its link to the territorial state, however the premillennial disposition is openly xenophobic. Crucially, however both forms of providential discourse reproduce the nation as Christian, **naturalizing** the link to territory. Though race, blood, and soil are important components of the premillennial discourse, this form of **naturalization** is not derived from a biological script which, for example, dominated earlier forms of geopolitical discourse, but from a form of natural or Divine Law read from scripture (especially the book of Revelation and Ezekiel). This narrative is "Time graphed as the Law". These texts are interpreted and used to classify, bound, and limit the notion of nation linked to the territorial United States. For many, this *deja vue* is a pre-modern conceptualization of geopolitics. However, it defines the geopolitical period under examination and represents the geopolitical order.

## ***Chapter #5: Geopolitical Periodization***

In the last chapter we completed our analysis of how the MGI has been re-invigorated utilizing providentialism (a cosmo-politic claim to space/time). This chapter argues that in light of this phenomenon and the coterminous pursuit of primacy as religious territorialization that there has been a shift in the geopolitical periodization constituting a new geopolitical order. Materially, since the political economy is increasingly global in scale, scope, and most importantly depth, the re-invigoration of the MGI is a bizarre phenomenon. Sparke (2005) has demonstrated how the rhetoric of neo-liberalism and economic globalization does not and has not created a flat world free of hierarchies. Agnew (2005a) demonstrates that the notion of *de jure* sovereignty gives way to *de facto* sovereignty creating a spatialization of power that is complex and folded. Geographers must, therefore, explain how and why geo-politics remains spatialized at the scale of the nation-state.

Taylor and Flint (2000) long ago noted the role of the nation-state in the global political economy. They state,

The role of all three-tier structures is the promotion of a middle category to separate conflicting interests. In our model, therefore, the nation-state, as the pivot becomes the broker between the global and the local scales. Given that a major political geography aspect of its brokering is to act as a simple buffer, we treat this arrangement as a classic example of ideology separating experience from reality. The three scales, therefore, can be viewed as representing a national scale of ideology, a local scale of experience and a global scale of reality... This model does not posit three processes operating three different scales but just one process that is manifest at three scales (Taylor and Flint, 2000: 43).

Taylor and Flint aptly note that the scale of the national acts to deflect attention away from reality; a reality that is global but that is experienced at the local level. However, the recent and rapid deterritorialization of national economies and the associated issue of immigration have placed pressure on the ideological dimension (the national scale). This is because over the last twenty or so years there has been a shift in the geopolitical order understood materially as “the changing geographical basis to the international political economy in different historical periods” (Agnew and Corbridge, 1995:19).<sup>13</sup> So why not an associated shift away from the MGI especially when globalization(s) has challenged its fundamental properties, the most important being the notion of sovereignty over internal economic affairs?<sup>14</sup> To explore this question it is crucial that we realize that the MGI is co-constituted by the nation-state linkage. Let us now explore the existing debate apropos both the condition of the nation-state within a globalizing world and the existing designations of the present geopolitical periodization.

### ***Globalization(s) and Geopolitical Periodization***

Through the decade of the 1990’s many argued that we were witnessing the demise of territorialization and commensurately the demise of the nation-state under threat from both a rapidly developing global economy and/or the re-emergence of

---

<sup>13</sup> A change in the Geopolitical Order is not the same as a Hegemonic shift, or as Agnew and Corbridge aver, “the apostolic successions of Great Powers to hegemonic status” resulting from the logical progression of the capitalist system. (Agnew and Corbridge 1995:19)

<sup>14</sup> At this point I will not get into a discussion of how state policies actually enable the global economy. See for example, *The Imagined Economies of Globalization* by Cameron and Palan.

'historical/civilizational' grievances (Guehenno 1995, Hobsbawn 1994, Huntington 1996, Miyoshi 1993, Wolf 2001). Hardt and Negri's (2000) flat and networked globalism-termed *Empire*- emphasized the "end of geography". Territorialization, however, remains potent. Following McAlister, this is because "globalization and hybrid cultures do not mean that the nation or race are no longer relevant: it means that nation and race must be accounted for, not presumed" (McAlister 2001: 274). The same must be said of the nation-state linkage and the MGI understood as territoriality. In the previous chapters I have demonstrated how in the American context providentialism geo(graphs) the nation with the state using the spatial abstraction of Christian cosmology. It has also contributed to the pursuit of primacy. This represents a new periodization of geo-political discourse. To be clear,

A periodization of geopolitical discourse... obviously simplifies a more complex flow of representations and practices. Each period has within it the seeds both of its own demise and of subsequent periods. The dating of periods is tentative and contestable. Each can be subdivided to represent the inevitable shifts and turns in understanding and practices. Different places do not necessarily share all the features that each period is taken to represent. For example, the political elites of different Great Powers might have different emphases from one another. Subordinate or colonized people would not necessarily share the cultural and economic presupposition upon which the modern geopolitical imagination relied at any particular time in any specific place...Rather, the idea is that in each period the various 'principles' or foundations intersect in different ways to produce a different mix of geopolitical representations and practices. This gives rise to different hegemonies, and dominant sets of rules governing world politics, in different epochs. These correlate with economic, technological, and social trends...Neither are the hegemonies intrinsic to the different eras free of contradiction or contest. Indeed, it is out of their internal contradictions that old hegemonies are undermined and new ones arise (Agnew 2003: 86).

The present situation is one in which religious and cosmological principles have “produced a different mix of geopolitical representations and practices” buttressing the MGI and this has “given rise to a different hegemony, and dominant sets of rules governing world politics”.

Again, my argument is not internationally comprehensive or applicable, but instead represents the changing attitudes of the hegemon in the wake of deterritorialization and decline. This is because it is within the U.S. where “economic, technological, and social trends” have facilitated the hardening of national identity in religious terms and which have also legitimated the pursuit of primacy<sup>15</sup>.

Two charges may be laid against my contention that we have entered a new geopolitical period. Firstly, in terms of discourse (as opposed to practice) one may inquire as to what has changed. Does not the rhetoric of geo-economics which defined the New World Order remain prevalent in Bush Jr. Yes, however there is an overemphasis on its providential and religious worth in Bush Jr.<sup>16</sup> Second, hasn't providentialism always contributed to America's MGI and its pursuit of primacy as indicated by, for example, Manifest Destiny? Again, the answer is yes. However, providentialism is more potent at certain historical points than others. This is one of these moments. Unlike other presidents Bush's use of religious rhetoric is prolific,

---

<sup>15</sup> Additionally, it may be argued that this extends to the entire 'Western world' where national identity is still couched in racial, religious, ethnic, and territorial terms. However, this requires exploration on a case by case basis.

<sup>16</sup> There is therefore overlap between geo-political periods even though 9/11 represents a point of rupture

often citing the bible in his geo-political speeches (see chapter two). Second, what is new today as opposed to the time of other presidents is the rate and degree of deterritorializing/globalization(s). This context is crucially important. Agnew notes, “In a globalizing world, the geopolitical consequence of the displacing of state boundaries by the flows of people, goods, and capital... has been the undermining of conventional processes and understandings of spatial hierarchy” (Agnew, 2003:82). This destabilization of the spatial hierarchy is perceived as a crisis for those whose identity is reli-geo-politically constructed. Deterritorialization is subsequently perceived as a threat to one’s life-space. Dijkink (2006) avers,

only when a threat to the freedom of a group arises that involves an infringement of the life-space by other human groups does religion appear capable of offering inspiration or narratives for describing the world in terms of a territorial struggle (Dijkink, 2006: 202-203).

Deterritorialization has produced such a climate and it is for this reason that we see an increase in providential discourse/cosmo-political claims to space which have re-invigorated the MGI and the pursuit of primacy. What makes this period unique, therefore, is not only the change in geo-political discourse but its relation to the changing geographical basis to the political economy which has supplanted nationally based economies (Agnew and Corbridge 1995:19) thereby altering cultural and material affairs while destabilizing taken for granted notions of identity and privilege associated with the nation-state linkage. Thomas Ferguson contends that this has led to an increase in religiosity and otherworldly concerns. He states,

It is unrealistic to think that the Republican Party and Conservative Democrats who have bought control of the ‘opposing ‘ party make people religious, save in the sense that their policies promote this in the long run. But if elites keep

insisting that “there is no alternative”, as Wal-Mart transforms heartland downtowns into ghost towns, jobs flow overseas, imports pour in, and much of industrial and agricultural America withers away under conditions of long-term exchange rate overvaluation and chronically insufficient effective demand, then it should come as no surprise if large numbers of people begin longing for saviours not of this world (Ferguson, 2006: 199).

This has led many to find salvation within a cosmological imaginary where the Kingdom of God will soon permeate into our own and once and for all destroy the present temporality to erect a Holy Order (the premillennial vision). Though the premillennialist perspective is informed by local change, the emphasis and disposition is overwhelming otherworldly. However, this does not mean that actions in the here and now are no longer necessary. In fact, it makes geopolitical action a pressing necessity. First, there is the desire to purge the nation of ‘foreign’ influences. Second, there is the need to prepare the earth for the Kingdom to come; to engage, eliminate, or convert ‘evil-doers’ through state military action. This divinizes the American nation-state with special status within both a hierarchy of nation-states and a cosmological hierarchy of imagined spaces. The American nation-state is held static through this relational imaginary stabilizing the state’s existence within a discursive network of words and things. However, networks of words and things change rapidly in a deterritorializing world. The cosmo-political language of providentialism is therefore a reaction to these changes and acts to stabilize the extent to which these networks can mutate. The reinvigoration of the MGI and the pursuit of primacy underpinned by providentialism/cosmo-politics is therefore a new geopolitical periodization because of the new networks and relations

that link deterritorialization with an increase in cosmo-politics. Deterritorialization therefore represents the changing context in which cosmo-politics operates to reinvigorate the MGI and the pursuit of primacy. Agnew would agree since,

the vocabulary of state centered geopolitics is still underwritten materially by pressures from social groups reacting to increased economic globalization by reviving ethnic and local identities or attempting to resurrect state power. Strong national identities die hard (Agnew 2003:116).

Webb concurs nothing how this is achieved. He states that in "...times of political upheaval, the doctrine of Providence can contribute to both the stability and the instability of the state" (Webb, 2004: 118). Second, he argues that "America needs skilled practitioners in providential hermeneutics" (Webb, 2004: 75). The geopolitical discourse of Bush does in fact demonstrate a skilled use of providential hermeneutics. Providence represents a vocabulary of U.S. nationalism and state centered politics that is increasing written in religious terminology and held constant through a cosmological imaginary. This leads to an important question which is rarely considered. Dijkink asks,

Less obvious an issue, but no less important, is how religion has helped to constitute the international order with its sovereign states. Two of the properties mentioned by Smith directly touch on geopolitics: ethnic election and sacred territory. Ethnic election implies an asymmetric relation to other international actors and possibly conflict. Sacred territory has a similar capacity to engender territorial conflicts... (Dijkink, 2006:195).

First, one must realize that ethnic/national election is couched within a cosmological imaginary that enables a territory occupied by a group to be termed 'sacred'. This is accomplished by geo(graphing) national space in relation to cosmological space. For it is through the latter that the present temporal/spatial order is constituted.

This point begins to answer Dijkink's question. Second, we must consider the notion of sovereignty. Cosmo-politics binds ethnicity/nationality to territory through a conception of sovereignty that is still derived and guided from on high.

Accordingly, the separation of territory finds cosmological legitimacy. These missing components describe the cosmological factors that make "isolationism and internationalism in US policy today... two sides of the same imperial coin, as are American exceptionalism and universalism" (Grondin, 2006: 10).

What should now be clear is that cosmo-political territorialization presents its own 'structural contradictions' and thus the contemporary period is more comprehensively comprehended if geographical imaginations are explored up into the cosmological dimension. This breaks with the singular perspective of the structuralist approach which conceives of recent geopolitical events as simply the logical progression of capitalism or more specifically the result of neo-liberalization biting back and finally offering itself as failed Imperialism (Smith, 2005; Harvey, 2003). That is not to say that these perspectives do not overlap with this discussion. Material concerns associated with deterritorialization have led to the present increase in cosmo-political discourse (providentialism).

More immediately, however, the events of 9/11 did more to contribute to this new periodization than deterritorialization. An increase in providentialism/ cosmo-politics must therefore be interpreted within this in mind.

***9/11, Representational Space and Material Practices: The Geopolitical Order***

9/11 ignited a sense of overwhelming fear within the American psyche, turning the attention of many American's towards God in the hope of finding explanations for what was for many an incomprehensible act of sheer evil. Providential explanations were many, re-iterating the idea of America as an elected and persecuted nation charged with a moral duty to rid the world of 'evil' (*historical providentialism*). Bush, along with many other Americans, perceived the event as a divine call to duty. This interpretation of events reinvigorated old tropes. Secondly it provided a "guide to action" necessary for the reproduction of the MGI. Along with discourse, Agnew argues that actions and practices are also necessary for the continuance of the MGI. He states,

An imagination or ideas do not exist 'out there' or simply in texts and documents; they are implicit in practices or social action. To survive and prosper they must be passed on from generation to generation as a form of common sense or guide to action and must adapt successfully to challenges and changed historical contexts (Agnew, 2003: 128).

When understood as *performative*, both Bush's speeches and the sermons of premillennialist preachers represent a form of social action/ practice which reproduce the MGI and the pursuit of primacy. However, in order to fully comprehend how this operates we must expand Butler's notion of *performativity* and place it within the context of 9/11. Thrift's (2006) conceptualization of *performativity* is therefore useful. Thrift defines *performativity* as

an ability to act convincingly into the situation that presents itself by taking whatever propensity for dynamism may be offered that is also a practical ethic of discovery and invention. Organizations are rarely made up of practices that are so mechanical that they simply

reproduce themselves. Usually, they consist of sets of root practices which can very often go wrong or, at the very least, require radical adjustment to keep the same (Law and Urry, 2004). In these circumstances, improvisation is often called for, improvisation which sometimes produces solutions that become the base of new practices. This process of almost continual improvisation is forced by the exact configuration of forces that presents itself to actors at any point in time which in turn requires a more or less skilled response to the arrangement of things, a sense of the propensity of the situation that the Chinese call 'shi', the potential born out of disposition (Jullien, 1995). A critical element of 'shi' is space. For much of what counts as configuration is exactly that: a continuous re-arrangement of things in response to event (Thrift, 2006: 144).

9/11 provided the "propensity for dynamism" needed to "re-arrange things in response to events". Since this includes space, 9/11 meant a re-invigoration of the MGI through cosmo-political claims to space/time. 9/11 consequently helped to reconsolidate an American national identity spread over the territorial space of America. Agnew concurs noting that, "the terrorist acts of 11 September 2001 have helped to re-secure US and, more broadly, Western identities that had begun to erode in the aftermath of the Cold War" (Agnew, 2003: 122). More than that, it helped to define the American national identity in explicitly Christian terms as denoted by an increase in providentialism. This is important because prior to 9/11 it was difficult to predict how the geopolitical imagination would be reconstituted. During the Cold War the Soviet Union provided the ideological Other necessary for the MGI. However, Agnew notes that with the end of the Cold War the persistence of the MGI was put into question. He states,

In the absence of either a widely accepted alternative world-view or a convincing replacement for the former Soviet Union the geopolitical imagination must once more be reconstituted. But there are confusing and contradictory signs as to how this will be done (Agnew, 2003: 115).

The answer is now clear. Within the United States, cosmo-political claims to space/time have ‘naturalized’ the MGI. This runs contrary to conventional comprehension of the MGI as buttressed by the logic of rationality and secularism.

Returning to Toal (2001:187) we find that there has never been a break between the cosmological and the MGI. 9/11 simply represents another historical moment when their relation was re-organized and re-conceptualized. 9/11 provided the “propensity for dynamism” needed to tweak the relationship between the secular and the sacred towards the latter. This re-positing of America in cosmo-political terms has facilitated what Agnew and Corbridge term a shift **“in the differentiation of the spatial fields of practice that are the root of geopolitical order”** (Agnew and Corbridge, 1995:19). However, this differentiation has occurred not only at the level of material reality, but more importantly at the level of ideology which enables those material practices. In contrast to Sparke’s (2005) geo-economic analysis, this cosmo-political examination argues that the “war in Iraq” and the “war on terror” required an increase and not a decrease in the differentiation of both the spatial fields of practice and the spatial fields of abstraction necessary for those practices. This contradicts Sparke’s (2005) argument that the “war in Iraq” relied upon a spatial abstraction that was flat, even, and networked (geo-economics). What providentialism facilitates is the widening of the spatial field or geopolitical imaginary beyond the horizontal axis of nation-states and into the cosmological. Second, it legitimates an increase in the spatial fields of practice. It provides a

vertical axis that is beyond modern/secular notions of space and time conventionally used to define geopolitical order in political economic terms.

However, changes to the space/time of the global political economy cannot be separated from the discursive use of cosmological space/time to comprehend those changes and provide a 'guide to action'. With the space/time compressions and space/time expansions associated with globalization(s), there is also a coterminous insistence that cosmological space/time is compressing into experiential space/time. Premillennialist insistence on the coming rapture is but one example. Here, Jesus operating from the Kingdom of God miraculously removes his righteous American Christian followers from the earthly plane in the ultimate moment of cosmological and temporal space/time compression. Returning to Thompson (1991) "heaven and eschaton become one, and the parabola becomes a circle. Space and time curve into one another" (Thompson, 1991:118). However, this *apocalyptic providentialism* is in fact a cosmo-political discourse. And though, premillennialist are preparing for the rapture they are simultaneously pursuing temporal ambitions which reconfigure the geopolitical order. This includes a reinvigoration of the MGI and the pursuit of primacy. This is enabled by placing nation-states within a cosmological hierarchy. The Christian America nation is held in relation to the Kingdom of God and is represented as its temporal agent acting through the state. Moreover, it is geo(graphed) teleologically towards the Kingdom providing the spatial abstraction necessary for its continued *presence*.

Thus when considering the cosmological component of the representational aspect of Geopolitical Order, the fracturing of space found as the map of nation-states is conceptually and moreover emotionally connected to a differentiated cosmological space imagined as nested hierarchies of good and evil with open and closed borders. From the perspective of American nationalism, consideration of an individual as part of the national community is increasingly linked with being able to pass through the “transformational boundaries” associated with Christian cosmology enabled only through church membership. It is increasingly less about being able to legally cross and remain within the territorial borders of the United States. Assimilation into the nation requires Christianization.

### *Spatial Differentiation and the Geopolitical Order*

The re-invigoration of the MGI is the first example of a spatial differentiation of practice which is the product of cosmo-political claims to space/Time. This institutes the belief that “domestic and foreign affairs are essentially different”, that society and the state are commensurate, and finally that states “have exclusive power over their territory” (Agnew, 2003: 51). In the quest for primacy these ideals mutate constituting another shift in the differentiation of the spatial fields of practice. First, though society is still commensurate with the state, in the quest for primacy (Christian primacy **and** American state primacy) the intention is to expand society. This represents a dilemma. Returning to Webb we see the difficult relationship between an expansionary and territorial Christianity. He states,

American Providence is an interpretation of American history set in a global, indeed a cosmic, context. In the end, American Providence is not really about America. America's heart is so often in the right place because the American government was designed as a safe harbor for the Christian faith. If America were to stop providing that safe harbor, then Providence would cease being, in any sense of the term, American (Webb, 2004:168).

Here, there is both the desire to territorialize Christian society, to make it commensurate with the state, and then to defend this state, while at the same time arguing that the concern is not actually the state but the Christian faith. However, in an attempt to spread this faith there is the additional attempt at maintaining American state primacy. This imperial mode of thinking leads to a spatial differentiation of the field of practice as denoted by the insistence that what is outside the state is inherently dangerous and that the 'war on terror' and the 'war in Iraq' require different laws applied outside the territorial U.S. in order to combat these dangers. However, what legitimates these practices is not the law but "Time graphed as Law" (Providence) which requires a cosmo-political spatial imaginary that differentiates the spatial field of practice. A widening differentiation of the spatial field has legitimated some of the most heinous practices associated with Imperialism. I am speaking specifically of torture. What is important is that this practice is justified with respect to intent and not action. According to a March 2003 memo approved by Donald Rumsfeld, if someone "knows that severe pain will result from his actions, if causing such harm is not his objective, he lacks the requisite specific intent..." necessary to be charged with torture. Moreover, someone "is guilty of torture only if he acts with the express purpose of inflicting severe pain or suffering on a person within his control" (Jones 2004). If

the intent is to extract information for the greater good i.e. the continuation of American primacy than one cannot be charged with torture. If American primacy is but a necessary component of a wider cosmological order where America fulfills the role of the Kingdom of God before the ultimate compression of cosmological and temporal space/time, than again torture is justified.

It is further justified if the ultimate intent is loving discipline and coercion for the benefit of the heretic who is unable to see that joining the existing and ultimate order is in his best interest. This is but another example of the “sublation (negation and preservation on another register) of the apparent phenomenality of lived time...” (Spivak, 1999:56). It “...acts as an appropriate concession, an acknowledgment of human error, an indulgence” (Spivak, 1999:57). Here, “a textual ruse” is instantiated and “is indulgently and clandestinely inserted in response to human error. The “human” produces an alibi for what is in *illo tempore*” (Spivak, 1999:57). Since only God can “know the ways of Providence” (Bush, 2004) it is impossible to determine intention, and therefore it justifies the sublation of the law through the Law for the establishment of a social order. Torture is thereby justified. Torture as corporal manipulation is itself a further differentiation of the spatial field of practice, however, its actualization is achieved through a coterminous differentiation of the spatial field of practice that relies upon a folded and serial geography.<sup>17</sup> Gregory

---

<sup>17</sup> Paglen (2009) notes that the “space of exception” has a long been a part of U.S. politics beginning with the Manhattan project. That being said, the torture spaces of “black sites” remain novel in that their existence is widely known and therefore enable a biopolitical affect/effect contributing to the geo(graphing) of the nation-state and the pursuit of primacy.

(2006) explains that the state of exception that legitimates torture "...is also a space of exception...in these situations surely the exception depends on the articulation of multiple spaces of political-juridical violence and an ex-ception, a taking outside" (Gregory, 2006: 209). Gregory argues that this exception works through the law instead of canceling the law. Continuing on he states,

The very language of 'extraordinary rendition', 'ghost prisoners', and 'black sites' implies something out of the ordinary, spectral, a twilight zone: a serial space of the exception. But this performative spacing works *through* the law to annul the law; it is not a 'state' of exception that can be counterposed to a rule-governed world of 'normal' politics and power. (Gregory 2006: 226)

In contrast to Gregory, my point is that this spatial differentiation is enabled through the Law that is American exceptionalism (legitimated by Providence). This is different from saying that it is legitimated through temporal laws arising through *timing*. In fact, it is legitimated because timing is subsumed to *Time*. The present is construed as mere affect and is thus disregarded in the same manner in which it is disregard in the '*Gita*' narrative for the sake of the social order masquerading as a cosmological order.

### ***Conclusion***

In sum, a periodization is a subjective determination. In the 1990s there was considerable debate regarding the future of the nation-state. However, the nation-state has not disappeared in light of deterritorialization. Instead there has been a reterritorialization, though one in which different rules and abstractions are invoked to facilitate disconnection between global 'reality' and local 'experience'.

Providentialism as a cosmo-political claim to space/time is the primary abstraction allowing for this reterritorialization. 9/11 provided the “propensity for dynamism” needed for providentialism to re-arrange space in favor of the American Christian nation/state. This has led to a widening or further differentiation of the spatial field of abstraction necessary for the simultaneous widening of the spatial fields of practice. These practices include torture, ‘extraordinary rendition’, the geography of ‘black sites’, and more generally Imperialism. This constitutes a new geopolitical order.

## ***Chapter #6: Cosmotopology***

In the last chapter it was established that a spatial differentiation of the field of practice has occurred, and that those practices are enabled by what has up until now been described as a cosmo-politics of space/time, which is itself a novel differentiation and a spatial abstraction. This constitutes a new geopolitical order. Here, I wish to introduce a new neologism in order to better elaborate and examine this order which I term a *cosmotopology*. In order to achieve this task we must first conduct a review of the predominant literature in the field of Critical Geopolitics apropos the present geopolitical period.

In the past few years there has emerged a litany of books dealing with this subject. In the discipline of geography, however, no attempts have been made to tackle geopolitical order from a cosmological perspective. For example, Smith (2005) and Harvey (2003) - giants in the field of Marxist geography- aver that American Imperialism (as the geopolitical period) is in fact a last ditch effort to regain hegemony in the wake of decline. Ironically, this decline ensues from the very same free market policies advocated and imposed through U.S. hegemony and which opened the world to freer trade for the benefit of American capital. Now this same global strategy for American hegemony has backfired which threatens to undermine America's ability to dictate global economic affairs. Agnew (2005b) makes a similar argument though with a consumerist twist. He instead avers that a global culture of consumerism might soon undermine American hegemony; a consumerist culture purposely exported by American industries to enhance global sales.

Matthew Sparke (2005) takes a different approach. He argues that American hegemony in geo-economics allowed the U.S. to sell the 'War on Terror' and the 'War in Iraq' in geo-economic terms. The 2002 National Security Strategy states that America's overall security relies upon the global spread of free markets. Imposing this strategy is a moral good. Bush himself stated that, "we will defeat them (the terrorists) by expanding and encouraging world trade." Thus, the imposition of the free market upon non-conforming countries is posited as an effective strategy for containing fundamentalism and terrorism. This contention allowed the U.S. to sell the Afghan and Iraq wars in terms of security pegged to economic justifications leading to what Sparke terms a "complicity of geopolitical assertion and geoeconomic assumption" (Sparke, 2005:271). This formulation provided the ideological leverage necessary to elicit support from geoeconomic elites throughout parts of Europe, the Middle East, and Asia (Japan), making the interests of U.S. elites conterminous with those of the general interest. Under the guise of this geo-economic justification, however, the United States pursued an "American centered-imperialism" contrary to the tenets of neo-liberalism which avers free and open trade and which is supposed to flatten hierarchies and even the relations between nation-states. This did/has not occur(ed). Geo-economics has not eclipsed geopolitics.

All of the above represent political economic approaches to the subject of American Imperialism and the geopolitical order. Only Sparke broaches the subject of ideology with any real depth.

Though Sparke's argument assumes a post-foundational approach, his emphasis, like that of Harvey and Smith, is nevertheless focused upon the political economic dimension. Gregory (2004), however, rigorously unpacks the ideological characteristics of what he terms American Colonialism. Gregory makes an important point. He contends that "the colonial present is **not produced through geopolitics and geoeconomics alone**...it is set in motion through mundane cultural forms and cultural practices that mark people as irredeemably 'Other' and that license the unleashing of exemplary violence against them" (Gregory, 2004:16). Gregory goes on to argue that the 'war on terror' is in actuality a reconstitution of the colonial past. Following Edward Said, Gregory argues that the "imagined geographies" at work in the present geopolitical period

...fold distance into difference through a series of spatializations...Their space is seen as the inverse of "our" space: a sort of negative, in, in the photographic sense "they" might "develop into something like "us", but also the site of an absence, because "they" are seen somehow to lack the positive tonalities that supposedly distinguish "us". We might think of imaginative geographies as fabrications, a word that usefully combines "something fictionalized" and "something made real," because they are imaginations given substance (Gregory, 2004:17).

For Gregory, the colonial present is an extension of the Orientalist imaginary critiqued by Said. In this mode of thinking "European and American imaginative geographies of the orient combined over time to produce an internally structured archive in which things came to be seen as neither completely novel nor thoroughly familiar". Here one perceives of "new things, things seen for the first time, as versions of a previously known thing" (Said quoted in Gregory, 2004:18). This imaginative geography pulls upon a "citational structure...categories, codes, and

conventions that shape the practices of those who draw upon it, actively constituting its object..." (Gregory 2004:18). A spatial imaginary of the 'Other' is formed which in turn creates that which is supposed. Gregory uses this logic to analyze the present construction of the imaginative geography of the "the Middle East". He argues that this imaginative geography draws upon old Orientalist tropes.

What is important for our purposes, however, is that Gregory, unlike the previously cited authors, begins to explain the role of religion in the production of this imaginative geography, where religious language is enacted and Christian scriptures cited to produce and construct the geo-political codes and categories of good and evil. Gregory demonstrates how the religious beliefs and practices of the 'Other' are demonized as backward, allowing one to temporally script certain spaces as different. In this case, an imagined geography is formed which construes parts of the globe as pre-modern. However, this designation is only made possible through relation. That is, these spaces are imagined in relation to an idea of the 'West' as modern or even post-modern. Violence emanating from these spaces is subsequently construed as an inherent part of the cultural fabric of the population. Little attention is paid to historical context, either past or present. As Gregory puts it, the population of this region is "seen as occupying a space beyond the pale of the modern" and having "repudiate its moral geography" they "have forfeited its rights, protections, and dignities" (Gregory, 2004:28). In contrast the United States is construed as the bastion of modernity and progress. America is averred to be a space that is "open and inventive, plural and dynamic" (Gregory, 2004:22).

America is presented as “the privileged site of universal values” (Gregory, 2004:23). This creates a sense of legitimacy for pursuing primacy. More than that, it follows that this self-understanding justifies the belief that United States and its allies are the sole parties allowed or able to properly narrate the unfolding of global events.

However, contrary to the imagined geography of the U.S. as modern or post-modern, I have demonstrated how it remains underpinned by pre-modern notions (Sovereignty and Providence) which stabilize and geo(graph) the American nation-state, though made possible through relation to the ‘backwards’ space of the Other. The point is that the pre-modern, the religious, and the cosmological permeate the hegemonic script of the ‘war on terror’. It is not only the ‘enemy’ whose ideology is otherworldly. The moral script of the war which cites modern rights and values as justification for the war has not lost its pre-modern antecedents. Instead this script has formed what Gregory calls an “architecture of enmity” (Gregory, 2004:58) providing the geographical imaginary necessary for waging war. Coterminously, this architecture has had the effect of stabilizing the idea of America as “a unitary and cohesive master-subject” a belief that was undermined with the collapse of the Soviet Union (Gregory, 2004:58). Citing Philip Golub, Gregory states, “With the collapse of the Soviet Union, the United States required a military and ideological Other whose stature was commensurate with its own self-image”(Gregory, 2004:160). The loss of its evil competitor

...threatened the survival of the national security state itself, and its resuscitation-let alone its growth-required. a “new demon” whose menace would be sufficiently grotesque to remind the American public of both “the meaningfulness and the precariousness of their

culture and polity. The consolidation of the United States as a hyper-power required a hyper-villain-absolute Evil as its dark and constituent Other-whose aggrandize threat legitimized the consecration of its own assumption of Global Hegemon (Gregory, 2004: 161.)

Tran-national Islamic terrorism conveniently compartmentalized into Afghanistan and Iraq provides this necessary Other. This allows for the reproduction of the MGI and the pursuit of primacy. This pursuit aims to rid the world of evil incarnate as a cosmological project. However, it has had the additional effect of settling the identity of America as a Christian space operating within a Christian cosmological design. With this established, America could/can proceed with its pursuit of primacy. Agnew contends,

The pursuit of primacy requires a hierarchy of settled political identities like those implicit in Hegel's model of lordship and bondage and in conventional understandings of the origin of the hierarchy of states. Changes in historical-geographical conditions of flows that are integral to globalization, therefore, signals a crisis of representation for the modern geopolitical imagination. There is a crisis in the intellectual authority of established conventions about the behaviour of Great Powers-the main active figures in classical geopolitics. Not the least of these is that of the pursuit of primacy (Agnew, 2003: 82).

Exactly. What I have argued, however, is that this crisis was/is stabilized through cosmo-political claims to space/time, or rather, providential legitimation of American exceptionalism. American providentialism re-invigorates the MGI. This belief underpins a geographical imagination where America was/is placed at the center of God's divine plan to rid the world of evil. Evil and Good are given geographical address "collapsing ontology into geography" (Agnew, 2003:121). More than that, the collapse of cosmology into geopolitics sets up the spatial

imaginary necessary to defend and define America. Within this imaginary, horizontal geopolitics is tabled with vertical cosmological space. There is a space/time compression between the two dimensions geo(graphing) America according to *Time* thereby stabilizing its national identity.

This point enables us to extend Gregory's assertion that a "metaphysic of power" (a term borrowed from Agamben) saturates the "Colonial Present". Gregory cites Agamben to argue that sovereignty is sanctioned by the sacred and not just the juridical. The sacred acts as "an invisible imperative that inaugurates authority" (Agamben cited and quoted in Gregory, 2004: 63). This supports my argument that sovereignty derived from on high remains a crucial element in the persistence of the MGI and the pursuit of primacy. This is because the pursuit of primacy is about more than mere material or economic dominance. In the context of the U.S., the quest for economic dominance operates in conjunction with the belief that the U.S. is destined and obligated to lead the world for the good of humanity. *Primacy is Providence*. Anything less than hegemony is construed by premillennialist Christians as the beginning of the end and evidence of the coming apocalypse. These narratives allow for the tweaking of imagined spatial categories such as the American nation-state in order to re-present the American nation as a coherent entity under threat from a menacing and anarchic outside world. Moreover, this mapping of the United States has not only reterritorialized the nation but has additionally charged the nation (acting through the state) with providential purpose. This mission, carried out through the institutions of the state, re-links the state and the

nation and thus delineates distinctiveness within the confines of a restricted geographical imagination. As Toal puts it, “The muscular realism” propounded by the Bush Administration “is...really better understood as a form of affected idealism, indeed an affect-loading idealism of the nation as a coherent and anthropomorphic geopolitical agent” (Toal quoted in Sparke, 2005: 248). Invariably, this leads to the reconstitution of the MGI and in this case to the pursuit of primacy.

### ***Space, Time, and the Geopolitical Period***

Except for Gregory’s invocation of Agamben there has been no contemplation of transcendental, metaphysical, or more importantly cosmological aspects of space/time in relation to geopolitics. This omission must be rectified since the cosmological dimension is necessary for understanding the present period. In the previous chapter I demonstrate how the cosmological contributes to a new geopolitical order. Here, I will expand upon the conceptualization of this new geopolitical order as a *cosmotopology*. This requires a more rigorous examination of the relation between space and time then has yet to be presented.

Providentialism constitutes what I have initially called a cosmo-politics of space/time. We have already seen through Guyatt (2007a) that providentialism is in fact political from the outset. However, he fails to note how spatial conceptualizations operate to underpin the ideology of providentialism as political discourse. Providential thinking relies upon relational categories; one is cosmological the other is geopolitical. It is an imagination that collapses the

temporality of the metaphysical into the present realm in a manner akin to the thinking of Thompson (1991). In his geographical analysis of the “Book of Revelation” Thompson finds that human existence occurs at two temporal and spatial locations at the end of a parabola. One is in the here and now and upon this earth and the other is at the temporal end point of the eschaton where the space/time of heaven and earth interpenetrate. The narrative of apocalypse, like Providence, is located in a “four dimensional grid”. “Upward and forward movements are destined to the same location. Heaven and eschaton become one, and the parabola becomes a circle. Space and time curve into one another” (Thompson, 1991: 118). Thompson like Guyatt demonstrates how this type of narrative is in fact political and intended to inform listeners as to the manner in which to interpret temporal events taking place around them. Differing interpretations of Providence must therefore be analyzed with this in mind. In the speeches of Bush, and in the beliefs of the premillennialist, we find that geopolitics is an attribute rather than a substitute for cosmo-politics. The former is concerned with the horizontal plane of geographical space. The inclusion of a vertical and otherworldly dimension extends geopolitical space into cosmo-logical space, situating places within a geo(graphic) imagination where the two interpenetrate to create a vision of the world where certain places and spaces appear as closer to divinity than others. This is intrinsically a spatial imagination situating good and evil.

According to Visser “human beings readily think of time in terms of space” (Visser 2000:30). That is, time parceled spatially. The above suggests that space is also

thought of in terms of time. When “Time graphed as Law” (Providence) is commensurate with the divine election of a spatial category such as the American nation-state, space and time cannot be understood in a binary relation but as co-constitutional. However, it may appear that Providence indicates that *Time* is the independent and space the dependent variable. This is not so. Though the spatiality of the American nation-state is thought through Providence the reverse is also true. The changing of the spatial category of the American nation-state alters the perception of *Time* as Providence.

Doreen Massey (1992) argues a similar point in her deconstruction of the relationship between space/time and politics. She asserts that space is often posited as static in relation to time. Space is understood as eternally “present” and unchanging and thus cannot be “dislocated”. This is in contrast to time which is fluid, dynamic, and therefore political. Space and time are often portrayed in binary opposition. Transcendence is often associated with the temporal and immanent with the spatial. Time, consequently, cannot be “...contained, whereas, space is immanently perceivable and knowable”. Neither conjecture is accurate or acceptable. Following Lefebvre she asserts,

But if spatial organization makes a difference to how society works and how it changes, then far from being the realm of stasis, space, and the spatial are also implicated (contra Laclau) in the production of history-and thus, potentially, in politics (Massey, 1992: 70).

In addition, “it is not that the interrelations between objects occur in space and time; it is these relationships themselves which create/ define space and time” (Massey, 1992: 79). From this vantage point space is socially constructed, but additionally the

social is constructed by space. Spatial organization creates the social 'reality' in which politics function and history unfolds. Thus, space is relational and depends upon the observer's position in space. Sparke (2005) adds to this critique in his analysis of the work of Homi Bhabba. Sparke argues that in Bhabba's writings the,

privileging of time over space emerges because Bhabba's "complex rhetorical strategy of social reference" called "the people" is thought of solely in terms of the "double-time" of pedagogy and performance even though this "double narrative moment" of the people refers specifically to a "nation-space". The outcome of this abstraction, in Sparke's words, is that Bhabba "ignores the possibility of how space can be operationalized pedagogically in attempts to convene and thereby potentially co-opt plural traditions and histories into the abstraction of the single territorial collectivity we call the state. (Sparke quoted in Bonura, 2008)

Again, the arrangement of space dictates the understanding and unfolding of history. But with providentialism the situation is even more complex. To expand take Spivak's assertion that "the Time of the Law has the spaces of a rebus, the active reading of which will produce the timing of history" (Spivak, 1999: 39-40). In the context of American Providence, the American nation-state is the rebus. It is the symbol of the unraveling of *Time*. However, the reverse is also true and this is where space dictates both *Time* and *timing*. It begins with first reading the American nation-state off of the map as an *a priori*. Space is first operationalized. American providentialism refers back to this given. That is to say that though Providence is performative it nevertheless refers to a specific "nation-space" as Christian. This "will produce the timing of history", just as in Massey and Sparke. History will unfold given the conditions set by this spatial *a priori*.

Second, and more importantly for us, American Providence as *Time* is itself altered by changes to the spatial *a-priori* of the American nation-state. It is for this reason, I argue, that there is a change from mere *historical providentialism* to *juridical* and finally *apocalyptic providentialism*. *Time* has changed with respect to space. Like in Einstein's relativity, the perception of *Time* is altered with respect to the increasing speed of spatial dislocation. Webb (2004) demonstrates this point. He states,

A providential interpretation of world history offers no divine guarantee that the American governance of global capitalism will remain within the sphere of Christian influence. Indeed, John of Patmos, in the last book of the Bible, warns us that the nearness of the kingdom of God will call forth a false double—a parasitical distortion of God's universal rule. That false claim might be already on the horizon (Webb, 2004:146).

Webb's statement is clear. The decline of American global political economic hegemony can and probably should be interpreted as the beginning of the apocalypse. The perception of Providence (*Time*) changes with respect to changes in the spatial imaginary of America. Hence, following the later part of the above quotation from Spivak, the unfolding of history is not simply Providential, but rather the existence of the American nation-state as a rebus stabilizes or alters the notion of Providence (*Time*). When, the American nation-state is perceived as in decline there is a similar vision for the cosmological order. For this reason we have the *juridical* an *apocalyptic providential* disposition of many Americans.

However, though providentialism (and especially *apocalyptic providentialism*) appears to dismiss the state, it simultaneously geo(graphs) the nation with the

territorial U.S., legitimating its exceptionality while justifying Imperialism to expand the Christian nation before the end-times. *Time* stabilizes, limits, and dictates the form of the nation within the state. The rhetoric of cosmological implosion into the temporal plane of geopolitics, when made coterminous with American declinism, simultaneously essentializes the nation as Christian even if the state and the 'true American nation' are viewed as lost.

But even this has not eliminated territoriality but only increased its urgency. The desire to recover both the nation and the state continues. Derrida and Connolly respectively and indirectly explain the logic of this type of thinking. Derrida argues, "one can say that the order of intelligibility depends in its turn on the established order that it serves to interpret" (Derrida quoted in Cambell, 1998:86). The coterminous attributes of cosmo-politics and geo-politics "contains fundamental presumptions that establish the possibilities within which its assessment of actuality is presented" (Connolly quoted in Campbell, 1998: 22).

A cosmo-political claim to space/time therefore delimits and determines how the *present* is to be understood. This includes the map of nation-states, the space of America, and additionally the type of providentialism being posited. When a Christian God is presented as buttressing the existence of America, there is a territorialization at play which inevitably delineates the space of America as a Christian space. Returning to Butler, a providential reading of the geo-political (and vice versa) subsequently "enacts that which it names". In this case what is enacted is

America as a territorially bounded and divinely elected/exceptional nation constructed in relation to Christian cosmological presumptions. Second, it enacts an apocalyptic providentialism and the pursuit of American Christian primacy. Both are territorial. There is no Pauline indifference. **This makes *Time* and space co-constitutional.**

### ***Cosmotopology***

A cosmo-politics of space/time, where *Time* and space are co-constitutional, can be termed a *cosmotopology*. In mathematical terms topology is the study of the properties of geometric forms that remain intact even when submitted to strain such as bending or stretching. The geographical equivalent to the geometric form is the nation-state. The properties are those of the MGI.

Providentialism represents what I am calling a *cosmotopology*, a neologism that specifies more directly than *ontopology* the metaphysical, transcendental, and more specifically cosmological (space/time) aspects of belief that undergird religious territorialization in the here and now. *Ontopology* is a term posited by Derrida and picked up by Campbell in his exploration of nationalism. It is “a neologism that signifies the connection of the “ontological value of present-being to its situation, to the stable and presentable determination of a locality, the topos of territory, native soil, city, body in general”” (Derrida quoted in Campbell, 1998: 80). In Campbell’s reading *present being* is linked to topology, a topology that achieves its validity through historical narrative and immanent claims such as ‘soil’ and ‘blood’.

Instead, a *cosmotopological* reading of national identity grounds identity within a topology that is cosmological and therefore stable and resilient even when exposed to strain, where time forms a teleology emanating from a *topos* or space beyond this realm. The unraveling of this master narrative, understood as God's Providence, justifies a nation's belief in its exceptionalism, but more than that is used to legitimate its link with a given territory. Furthermore, through providential ideology it is easy to read the spatiality of *present being* as 'natural' and explained through a cosmological *a priori*. This is indicative of the logic of Webb (2004).

He states, "Providence defines America as a nation- it is more accurate to say that America is a product of this doctrine than to say that Americans projected their history on this theological scheme..."(Webb, 2004: 29). This means that America was guided into *being* through Providence. However, *present* being is only legitimated by a state of being yet to come and already been-the Kingdom of God. This is not *non-presence*. *Presence* depends on the omnipresence of God and a human commitment to this omnipresence. Second, this legitimates an expansionary territoriality undergird by extra-territorial claims (cosmo-political claims to space/time). Here, *Time* and space take on properties not considered, or at least only partially covered, by Derrida, Campbell, or Spivak with regard to territorialization. Juxtaposing cosmological space/time with geo-politics opens new avenues of research into Critical Geopolitics and more broadly critical social theory.

*Cosmotology and the Geopolitical Order*

Agnew argues that

What now seems increasingly clear is that as a feature of the modern geopolitical imagination, the transcendental conception of the pursuit of primacy involves the projection of a historically specific set of practices and representations on to world politics in general (Agnew, 2003:76).

Absolutely. Throughout, I have argued that the “historically specific set of practices and representations” imposed onto global politics in the post 9/11 period is increasingly cosmo-political in design. Additionally, I have also argued that this is due to the historically specific condition of rapid deterritorialization. This engenders a reterritorialization or re-invigoration of the MGI and the pursuit of primacy through and as cosmo-political claims to space/time. Agnew notes,

Sometimes a religious vocabulary has served to validate secular geopolitics in classical transcendental terms... This rhetoric, however, is usually a mask for the sense of a mysterious and alien threat coming from distant shores.... Anarchy ‘out there’ can be countered only by making sure that ‘out there’ does not come ‘here’. Only primacy, a dominant global position underwriting national security, can guarantee it stays ‘out there’ (Agnew, 2003: 70).

Agnew’s statement is accurate, however, he misses that rhetoric excites an ideology that is comprised of cosmological commitments that supersede geopolitical concerns (though they are related). Second, given his last point it is bizarre that he goes on to state that “a return to the pursuit of primacy seems an unlikely recipe for anyone’s success, except those interests in the militaries and the defense industries whose careers and profits have come to depend on it” (Agnew, 2003: 82). I have

demonstrated that there is more to the pursuit of primacy than political economic considerations.

The ideology of Providence which legitimates the MGI is primarily concerned with the unfolding of a divine plan through American geopolitical and political economic actions.<sup>18</sup> This disposition is otherworldly oriented. Returning to Weber, it is a “rationalization of conduct with the world, but for sake of the world beyond...” (Weber, 1958:154). The fact that many geographers including Agnew dismiss the religious dimension as a ‘mask’ while outright omitting cosmological considerations explains why many geographers equivocate over the trajectory and present periodization of geopolitics in the post 9/11 period.

It seems that many geographers do not accept a prefacing of ideology above material concerns. However, for many Americans temporal existence is simply a prelude to Christian eternity. This means that the ideological component of the MGI explained as a *cosmotopology* should not be dismissed as simply a guise for material economic interests. Nor should it be understood wholly apart from political economic considerations. What I am arguing is that the pursuit of primacy is based upon dispositions that are perhaps less material than cosmological. This is especially true when local, temporal, experience indicates that the world one knows and cherishes is declining, terminating and beyond salvation.

---

<sup>18</sup> Though those in the religious community and even academics have profited greatly from recent geo-political events.

### ***Conclusion***

The geopolitical condition is far from what Agnew (2003) and others aver is the coming geopolitical order. The belief that there will emerge a world-society based upon an inter-linkage of places-especially Global Cities- with the further development of cosmopolitan identities is far from actualization. Post-modernism has not been the only trajectory of geopolitics within the period bracketing 2001-2008. Superficially, it may appear that the MGI has remained continuous. When excavated, however, one notes that the ideological justifications for the MGI and the pursuit of primacy have turned heavily towards *cosmotopolitical* claims rather than realist or even geo-economic conceptions. This marks a new geopolitical period.

## ***Chapter #7: Conclusion***

Throughout, I have argued that the geopolitical period (2001-2008) is one in which cosmo-political claims to space/time are in resurgence. This is evidenced by an increase in providentialist rhetoric emanating from both the Bush administration and the religious polity which underpins his legitimacy. This has led to a re-invigoration of all three characteristics of the MGI. I have argued above that the persistence of the MGI remains salient because of a renewed sense of religious territorialization that extends over the space of the United States, but that more than that it extends this horizontal reli-geo-political imagination into a hierarchically arranged cosmological order. Here we see the interpenetration of cosmology and geopolitics, where the interpenetration provides justifications for *present being*. I have also argued that this problematizes present debates apropos Sovereignty. Religious underpinnings for sovereignty are believed to have ended with the treaty of Westphalia. However, the above argument demonstrates that this separation was never fully actualized. Recent debates apropos sovereignty have failed to include this dimension and have instead focused upon the deterritorialization of the political economy.

Furthermore, providentialism has served to geo(graph) a specific form of the American nation with the territorial state through a spatial abstraction that is cosmological. This represents a form of re-territorialization. However, this development has not occurred *ex nihilo* but is correlated with an increase in global deterritorialization/ globalization.

With an increase in re-territorialization within the ‘homeland’ there has been the simultaneous pursuit of primacy. This represents a very old resolution to the structural contradictions posed by religious territoriality and indicates a new differentiation of the spatial field of practice. These practices include torture. However, torture finds legitimacy through another spatial differentiation (a spatial exception) characterized as ‘black sites’. This spatial differentiation of the spatial field of practice finds legitimacy in an ideological spatial differentiation which is cosmological. Providence underpins American exceptionalism. It is through the Law (Providence) and not the law that the aforementioned are made possible. Therefore, the geopolitical order is one in which present being is justified *cosmotopologically*. Within this conceptualization space and time constitute one another in dynamic relation. *Time* (Providence) dictates the space of America while ground level material changes alter this spatial imaginary and thus alters the perception of *Time* being presented. This is why there is a movement away from *historical providentialism*, into *juridical providentialism*, and finally into *apocalyptic providentialism*.

Providentialism is “Time graphed as the Law” manipulating “history seen as timing in the interest of cultural political explanations...” (Spivak, 1999: 43). This indicates that cosmological commitments still undergird geopolitical imaginations.

Providence constitutes a moral design that legitimates suppression of difference in a globalizing world. Providential rhetoric subsequently legitimates American nationalism as Christian, making it commensurate with the territory and the

structures of the state. The neat association of the nation with state, in this context, overrides the messiness of multiple subjectivities which more accurately describes and comprises the American nation.

Moreover, in the providential rhetoric of Bush, the American nation-state takes on the characteristics of an absolute, unfolding as an elected and territorially bounded entity imbued with a moral essence. The moral attributes of this *telos* require both expansion outside the territoriality of the American Christian nation-state, (understood by providentialist as loving coercion and not colonialism/Imperialism) and coterminously purification of the inside of the American nation-state in order to contain or at least suppress non Christian elements within a hierarchy of national belonging (the premillennialist vision). This is justified as a religious duty. Since America is divinely elected through Providence, the extension of its hegemonic influence as Imperialism is construed as an act of love and charity. America is simply carrying out God's divine plan.

From this vantage point, when American influence is rejected, Christian Americans feel threatened and thus construe resistance to their leadership as evil incarnate. Adding insult to injury, domestic changes resulting from globalization(s) have contributed to this feeling of besiegement and thus contribute to an aggressive re-iteration of the MGI and the pursuit of primacy. This self-righteousness is derived from the belief that the territorial United States is different from the outside world. Its sovereignty is conferred directly by God. It is therefore God who mandates that

America benevolently interfere in the affairs of other states. Again, this type of Sovereignty not only shores up the territorial boundaries of the U.S., but allows the state to extend its influence beyond its boundaries as an act of love and kindness. From this position it is no wonder why many Americans feel threatened and scorned if not completely in control of global affairs. 'Fallen' nations should be thankful for America's goodwill.

What makes Bush such an interesting figure is that he is able to capture these sentiments and utilize them to forward an American Imperial adventure that runs contrary or is at least antithetical to the teleological script posited by the premillennialist. For the premillennialist, this Christian filter somehow obfuscates the fact it is the United States that was/is attempting to consolidate a World Order through its policies and actions. For premillennialist informed by the writings of Tim Lahaye and other authors within his genre, the consolidation of a World Order is prelude and tantamount to the diabolical occupation of the earth and the beginning of the apocalypse. However, this diabolical World Order is embodied not by American Imperialism but by the United Nations. This interpretation casts true multilateralism and multiculturalism as evil incarnate, charging America with the moral task of Christianization before the end times. This justifies the pursuit of American primacy and the consolidation of a World Order under Christian directive. Surprisingly, in Lahaye's fiction, America is construed as combating the evil forces of global assimilation instead of actualizing its inevitably.

In sum, I have argued throughout that cosmologies provide powerful discourses upon which ‘modern’ societies draw in times of perceived crisis; especially in the U.S. More than that, it enables their reproduction and justifies primacy. In the hands of Bush, Webb, and the premillennialists good “transcendental writing” is “clandestinely inserted” for the sake of the social order (Spivak, 1999:57). This order manifests geo-politically as a *cosmotopology*.

### *Discussion*

What this thesis has demonstrated is the need for greater religious and theological literacy within the sub-discipline of Critical Geopolitics and furthermore that cosmologies remain *a priori* within any consideration of geopolitical imaginaries. However, tackling the cosmological dimension of geopolitics brings to the fore many epistemological and methodical issues. Wallace (2006) recently noted the “epistemological challenges that attend any meaningful engagement between secular and religious worldviews” (Wallace 2006:210). This is not only true of the approach taken to analyze religious worldviews as subjects of investigation, but also presents a challenge in that the secular and the religious are often intertwined to such a degree that it is very difficult to unpack their relations. Above, I have completed a deconstruction of the connection between the secular and the religious in the formulation of the MGI within the United States in the period spanning 2001-2008. This has entailed a secondary deconstruction of the religious geo-economics of neo-liberalism in order to demonstrate the relevance of cosmo-political claims to space/Time in the consolidation of the geopolitical order (2001-2008). This project

empirically demonstrates that cosmological spatial abstractions remain relevant to geopolitics.

However, the geopolitical order produced through cosmological abstraction is best understood in the context of material and experiential developments. Here the context has been global deterritorialization experienced within the American nation-state. Dittmer's (2008) recent study of American apocalyptic evangelical Christianity which links religion and geopolitics fails to take account of this context; a context which enables an apocalyptic imaginary. This is because the religious cosmological dimension of space/time (as relative) changes in relation to material space/time compressions and expansions. These material developments have altered the spatial and temporal imagination of the American nation-state linkage. The notion of Providence is key to understanding this connection, since deterritorialization (as a change to the spatial imaginary of America) is first interpreted through *juridical providentialism* leading to a reterritorialization *through apocalyptic providentialism*. *Time* (Providence) changes in relation to space. Space is then altered in relation to Time. Providence is invoked to geo(graph) the American nation-state, reproducing the MGI, legitimizing the pursuit of primacy, and constituting the geopolitical order. Sturm (2006), Wallace (2006), and Dittmer (2008) all fail to address this complex relationship between space and time and therefore fail to properly address the cosmological dimension of geopolitics. I have termed this process a *cosmotopology*. A *cosmotopology* legitimates present *being* territorially.

A *cosmotopological* conception of *being* is not, however, restricted to the period in question. The above elucidation of the formulation of the geopolitical order (2001-2008) folds into previous geopolitical orders in a complex and often contradictory manner. The recent debate apropos Imperialism both inside and outside the discipline is indicative of this point.

However, the religious, or more importantly, the cosmological dimensions of Imperial power have not been properly analyzed. I have demonstrated how the tenets of the protestant notion of Providence are critical to the present *cosmotopology*. Whereas I focus Critical Geopolitics back to the canonical texts and the *cosmotopologies* they attempt to legitimate, Dittmer (2007, 2008) shifts focus towards popular religious geopolitics and its relation to popular culture. His methodological motivations are driven by an interest in non-elite interpretations of religious fictional texts and biblical scripture (in relation) which facilitate popular geopolitical imaginaries. Dittmer argues for

for a shift in popular geopolitics from representational analysis to the study of audience interpretation, which is critical not only to theorizing religion but also to operationalizing it. Is religion a text (or texts) that can be definitively interpreted, or is it the meaning provided by audiences... (Dittmer 2007:738)

Sturn (2008) joins Dittmer (2007, 2008) in his demand for greater ethnographic and audience based research. Similarly, Dalby's (2008) examination of warrior-codes in relation to the shifting geographical context of war draws upon cinematic sources to evidence the creation of popular geopolitical imaginations. Dalby's exploration of

warrior geopolitics in the present, however, misses its complex relation to religious warrior codes of the past such as those found in the Christian Just War tradition. For this reason, it is important that the recent shift towards popular religious geopolitical imaginations is accompanied by an engagement with religious and theological texts of old. One area of future research may be to approach the development of distinctive cosmologies within their specific historical and geographic contexts. In fact, this is what Thompson's (1991) analysis of the "Book of Revelation" brings to our attention. Reading these texts with an eye for geographical themes such as space, time, place, locality, state and society will provide insights that will enhance research into present day religious territoriality.

I have termed this religious territoriality a *cosmotopology*. The present *cosmotopology* is a product of geographical change in the present though one that is related to cosmological notions expanded in the past. Cosmologies as ideologies will always remain present, providing legitimacy to those who politically will these spatial abstractions into the existing political discourse. However, the territoriality attached to these cosmologies can (hopefully) dissipate as quickly they form. The election of President Obama and the change of official rhetoric from the Bush era indicate that geopolitical periods do change rapidly. It is yet to be seen, however, if this will hold. It is very easy to backslide into an officially legitimated *cosmotopological* geopolitical order, especially since the 'global financial crisis' which has further undermined spatial hierarchies while stoking a vehement attachment to place and space prevalent in working class protestant America.

The rhetoric prevalent in the McCain and Palin campaign is indicative of this point. Notions of the 'real America' found in the 'heartland' requires that we pay close attention to the manner in which oppositional politics fomenting throughout the nation-state take form and find their legitimacy in the years ahead.

This is crucial since there is no *telos* which automatically and progressively leads to a post-conflict era. Nor is there one which demands that the American nation-state conform to its present territorial boundaries.

Hopes and fears remain important areas of exploration for geographers in understanding these possible future developments (Sparke 2007). However, instead of assuming that geo-economics will re-write the wrongs of spatial hierarchies, it is important to realize that geo-economics has not eclipsed geo-politics and may yet re-enforce a *cosmotopology* where fears and hopes mesh together in a re-consolidated religious territoriality. Obama has not abandoned the material basis of the geopolitical order which has been discussed. However, deterritorialization is not, in itself a cause for concern, but the global distribution of wealth into the hands of the few is creating conditions for alarm. This was/is a component of the *cosmotopological* period under examination and revealed in the paradoxes of religious territoriality. How these hopes and fears proceed is yet to be seen. This remains another area of future research.

A cosmological focus indicates that critical geographers expand both the categories and temporal periods that are believed to be relevant to a study of Critical

Geopolitics. Though critical theory is a post-Westphalian development, its benefits and insights can now be applied to geopolitical periods prior to the development of the MGI. This does not entail a search for 'origins' but it does indicate that critical geographers engage and explore the development of cosmological notions in periods prior to our own in order to shed light on how and why these cosmological shifts found legitimacy, and how and why they remain relevant and find legitimacy in present and possibly future periods.

***“Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly are ravenous wolves” (Matthew 7:15)***

### Works Cited

- Agnew J. (1983). An excess of 'national exceptionalism': towards a new political geography of American foreign policy. *Political Geography Quarterly*, 2(2),151-166.
- Agnew, J., Corbridge, S. (1995). *Mastering space: Hegemony, territory and international political economy*. New York: Routledge.
- Agnew, J. (2003). *Geopolitics: Re-visioning world politics*. New York: Routledge.
- Agnew, J. (2005). Sovereignty regimes: Territoriality and state authority in contemporary world politics. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 95(2), 437–461
- Agnew, J. (2005). *Hegemony: The new shape of global power*. Philadelphia Pennsylvania: Temple University Press.
- Agnew, J (2006). Religion and geopolitics. *Geopolitics*, 1(11), 183–191
- Anderson, B. (1983). *Imagined communities: Reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism*. New York:Verso.
- Aitken, S.C. (1997). Analysis of texts: armchair theory and couch-potato geography. In R. Flowerdew and D. Martin (Eds). *Methods in Human Geography*. Essex: Pearson.
- Austin, A. (2003). Faith Matters: George Bush and Providence. *PublicEye*. Available from <http://www.publiceye.org/apocalyptic/bush-2003/austin-providence.html>
- Beier, M. (2005). *International relations in uncommon places: Indigeneity, cosmology, and the limits of international theory*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Bonura, C. (2008). Postfoundationalism and its spatial abstractions. *Theory and Event* 11(1). Available from [http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/theory\\_and\\_event/toc/tae11.1.html](http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/theory_and_event/toc/tae11.1.html)
- Bush, G.W. (2001). *President George W. Bush's Inaugural Address*. Available from <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/inaugural-address.html>
- Bush, G.W. (2004). *State of the Union Address: January 2004*. Available from <http://www.freerepublic.com/focus/f-religion/2163451/posts>

- Bush, G.W. (2004). *CNN Transcript: Bush, Kerry debate, October 2004*. Available from  
<http://www.cnn.com/2004/ALLPOLITICS/10/14/debate.transcript3/index.html>
- Bush, G.W. (2006). President Bush's speech on immigration. *Latino Journal*.  
 Available from  
[http://nylatinojournal.com/home/politics/americas/president\\_bushs\\_speech\\_on\\_immigration.html](http://nylatinojournal.com/home/politics/americas/president_bushs_speech_on_immigration.html)
- Butler, J. (1995). For a careful reading. In S. Benhabib, J. Butler, D. Cornell, and N. Fraser (Eds.) *Feminist Contentions: A Philosophical Exchange*. New York: Routledge
- Campbell, D. (1998). *National deconstruction: Violence, identity, and justice in Bosnia*. Minneapolis Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press
- Crang, M. (1997). Analyzing qualitative materials. . In R. Flowerdew and D. Martin (Eds.) *Methods in Human Geography*. Essex: Pearson.
- Dalby, S. (2008). Warrior geopolitics: Gladiator, Black Hawk Down and The Kingdom of Heaven. *Political Geography*, 27, 439-455.
- Dijkink, G. (2006). When geopolitics and religion fuse: A historical perspective. *Geopolitics*, 1(11), 192-208.
- Dittmer, J. (2007). Intervention: Religious Geopolitics. *Political Geography*, 26, 737-739
- Dittmer, J. (2008). The geographical pivot of (the end of) history: Evangelical geopolitical imaginations and audience interpretation of Left Behind. *Political Geography*, 27, 280-300
- Ferguson, T. (2005). Holy owned subsidiary: Globalization, religion, and politics in the 2004 election. In W. Corry (Ed.), *A defining moment: The presidential election of 2004*. New York: Armonk
- Flusty, S. (2004). *De-coca-colonization: Making the globe from the inside out*. New York: Routledge.
- Gregory, D. (2004). *The colonial present*. Malden: Blackwell Publishers
- Gregory, D. (2006). Vanishing Points: Law, Violence, and Exception in the Global War Prison. In Gregory, D., Pred A. (Eds.), *Violent Geographies*. (pp.205-234). New York: Routledge.

- Griffiths, G. (2001). Postcolonality, religion, geography: Keeping our feet on the ground and our heads up. In. Scott, J., Simpson-Housley, P. (Eds.), *Mapping the Sacred: Religion, Geography and Postcolonial Literatures*. (pp xv-xxxiii) Rodopi: Atlanta.
- Grondin, D. (2006). Coming to terms with America's liberal Hegemony/Empire. In. C.P. David, Grondin, D. (Eds.), *Hegemony or Empire?: The Redefinition of US Power under George W. Bush*. Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing
- Guehenno, J. (1995). *The end of the nation-state*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press
- Guyatt, N. (2007). *Providence and the Invention of the United States*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Guyatt, N. (2007). *Have a nice doomsday: Why millions of Americans are looking forward to the end of the world*. New York: Harper Perennial
- Hardt, M., Negri A. (2000). *Empire*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press
- Harrison, R.T., Livingston, D.N. (1980) Philosophy and problems in human geography: a presuppositional approach. *Area*, 12(1), 25-31
- Harvey, D. (2003). *The New Imperialism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press
- Hart, J. (2006). Ideology has consequences: Bush rejects the politics of prudence. *The American Conservative*. Available at <http://www.amconmag.com/article/2006/nov/20/00013/>
- Hervieu-Leger, D. (2002). Space and Religion: New Approaches to Religious Spatiality in Modernity. *International Journal for Urban and Regional Research*, 26(1), 99-105.
- Hobsbawn, E. (1994). *The Age of Extremes: A History of the World, 1914-1991*. New York: Vintage
- Huntington, S.P. (1996). *The Clash of Civilization and the Remaking of World Order* New York: Simon and Schuster.
- Johnson, C. (2000). *Blowback : The Costs and Consequences of American Empire*. New York: Metropolitan Books.
- Jones, T. (2004). This won't hurt much. *The Guardian newspaper*. Available at <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2004/jun/16/usa.comment>

- Kearns, G. (2006). Naturalizing empire: Echoes of Mackinder for the next American century? *Geopolitics*, 11(1), 74-98
- Kengor, P. (2004). *God and George W. Bush: A Spiritual Life*. New York: Harper Collins.
- Lieven, A. (2004). *America Right or Wrong: An Anatomy of American Nationalism*. New York: Oxford University Press
- Mamdani, M. (2004). *Good Muslim, Bad Muslim: America, the Cold War, and the Roots of Terror*. New York: Pantheon Books
- Massey, D. (1992). Politics and Space/Time. *New Left Review*, 1(196), 65-84.
- McAlister, M. (2000). *Epic Encounters*. Berkeley: The University of California Press
- McAlister, M. (2003). Prophecy, politics, and the popular: The Left Behind Series and Christian fundamentalism's New World Order". *The South Atlantic Quarterly*, 102(4), 773-798.
- McCann, H., Kvanvig J. (1991). The occasionalist proselytizer: A modified catechism. *Philosophical Perspectives*, 5, 587-615.
- Mead, W.R. (2005). *Special Providence: American Foreign Policy and How it Changed the World*. Toronto: Random House
- Miyoshi, M. (1993). A borderless world? From colonialism to transnationalism and the decline of the nation-state. *Critical Inquiry*, 19(4), 726-751
- Northcott, M.S. (2004). *An Angel Directs the Storm: Apocalyptic Religion and American Empire*. New York : I.B. Tauris
- Pace, R. (2004). The role of religion in the life and presidency of George W. Bush. *USAWC Strategy Research Project: U.S. Army War College*. Available from <http://stinet.dtic.mil/cgiin/GetTRDoc?AD=ADA424265&Location=U2&doc=GetTRDoc.pdf>
- Phillips, K. (2006). *American Theocracy*. New York: Penguin.
- Scott, J., Simpson-Housley, P. (1991). Introduction: The Geographics of Religion. In. Scott, J. (Ed. ) *Sacred Places and Profane Spaces*. New York: Greenwood Press
- Smith, N. (2005). *The End-Game of Globalization*. New York: Routledge.

- Sparke, M. (2005). *In the Space of Theory*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Sparke, M. (2007). Geopolitical fears, geoeconomic hopes, and the responsibilities of geography. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 97(2), 338-349
- Spivak, G. (1999). *A Critique of Post-Colonial Reason: Toward a History of the Vanishing Present*. Harvard: Harvard University Press
- Sturm, T. (2006). Prophetic Eyes: The theatricality of Mark Hitchcock's premillennial Geopolitics. *Geopolitics*, 11(2), 231-255.
- Sturm, T. (2008). Critical methodological geopolitics: Discourse analysis/ethnography. *Geopolitics*, 13(3), 600-609.
- Taylor, P., Flint, C. (2000). *Political geography: World-Economy, Nation-State and Locality*. Harlow: Longman Scientific and Technical.
- Thrift, N. (2006). Space. *Theory, Culture, and Society*, 23(2-3), 139-146.
- Toal, G. (1996). *Critical Geopolitics: The Politics of Writing Global Space*. Minneapolis Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press
- Toal, G. (2000). Spiritual geopolitics: Fr. Edmund Walsh and Jesuit Anti-Communism. In. Dodds, K. and Atkinson, D (Eds.), *Geographical Traditions: Critical histories of a Century of Geopolitical Thought*. New York: Routledge
- Thompson, L. (1991). Mapping an Apocalyptic World. In. Scott, J. (Ed. ) *Sacred Places and Profane Spaces*. New York: Greenwood Press
- Visser, M. (2000). *The geometry of love: Space, time, mystery and meaning in the ordinary church*. New York: North Point Press
- Waldman, S. (2004). Heaven sent: Does God endorse George Bush? *Slate Magazine*. Available at <http://www.slate.com/id/2106590/>
- Wallace, I. (2006). Territory, typology, theology: Geopolitics and the Christian scriptures. *Geopolitics*, 11(2), 209-230.
- Webb, S.H. (2004). *American Providence: A Nation with a Mission*. New York: Continuum
- Weber, M. (1958). *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*. Parsons, T. (Trns.). New York: Charles Scribner's Sons

Wolf, M. (2001). Will the Nation-State Survive Globalization? *Foreign Affairs*, 80(1),