

EAST TEXAS BAPTIST UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF CHRISTIAN STUDIES
DEPARTMENT OF RELIGION

AN HONORS PROJECT ON CIVIL RELIGIOUS RHETORIC

A RESEARCH PAPER SUBMITTED TO
THE HONORS COMMITTEE
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS OF THE
HONORS PROJECT

BY

MANDI SUE BURTON

MARCH 30, 2007

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION..... 1

Chapter

1. DEFINING CIVIL RELIGIOUS RHETORIC..... 4

 Introduction

 Civil Religion vs. Religion

 Civil Religious Rhetoric

2. IN GOD WE TRUST: THE HISTORICAL PRECEDENCE OF CIVIL RELIGIOUS LANGUAGE..... 9

 Introduction

 Puritans and The Revolution

 The Nineteenth Century

 The Twentieth Century

3. GEORGE W. BUSH: PRESIDENT OR PRIEST: CURRENT EXAMPLES OF CIVIL RELIGIOUS RHETORIC..... 19

4. SAINT AND SINNER: HOW RELIGIOUS RHETORIC FUNCTIONS 26

 Stereotyping and Personification

 Justification

 Manipulation of Power and Authority

5. A KING AND A KINGDOM: AMERICAN CIVL RELIGIOUS RHETORIC IN PHILOSOPHY PAST AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS PRESENT..... 34

 A Philosopher’s Perspective on Civil Religious Rhetoric

 American Civil Religious Language’s Impact on International Relations

6. MY ENEMIES ARE MEN LIKE ME: THE CHURCH’S RESPONSE TO CIVIL RELIGIOUS RHETORIC.....44

CONCLUSION..... 53

INTRODUCTION

“Rationalize rhetoric and it speaks to your mind; personify her and she speaks to your soul.”

Philosophers have spent millennia debating the very nature of rhetoric and its various forms and manifestations. Yet no philosopher or human being could debate the notion that rhetoric holds vast amounts of power – much more sway over the consciousness of each individual than he or she cares to admit. As the above quote from an anonymous scholar alludes, rhetoric does not only dwell on the rational plane, feeding solely upon the mind; effective rhetorical skill transcends and pierces the very essence of humanity’s being.

In essence, rhetoric is art – the portrayal of images that do not merely speak only to the mind and appease the senses, but instead engage the soul. True and complex expression of thoughts, needs, desires, and feelings cannot occur in the form of a single word; the importance of embracing the power of language lies in embodying the practice of rhetoric. It is only through the principles of rhetoric that words are utilized as a unique and diverse color palate in order to construct arguments, verbal images that testify of personal identity and desired meaning. Words cannot simply be thrown together, for true power in language comes from the intentionality behind the choice of every word in order to complement the other to paint the intended image to its audience. By examining rhetorical strategy, the observer learns of the different colors that most effectively and realistically capture and complement the image that communicators/artists desire to convey.

Invariably, some are better “artists” than others by choosing their color palate and wielding their paintbrushes of rhetoric upon the canvases of culture. As President Bush’s use of holy war language in reference to the Iraqi conflict can attest, political leaders often invoke religious rhetoric in an attempt to provide validation to a particular policy or stance, painting a picture of the culture’s current condition by choosing colors and brush strokes that do not accurately capture the integrity of the image for the audience to consider. This rhetorical strategy has itself become a much debated issue in political and academic realms and demands to be addressed by society at large.

Slowly and purposefully, the blurred balance between celebrating a religious heritage/tradition and embracing a dangerous civil religion within American politics must be unraveled. A guiding definition of both civil religion and civil religious rhetoric and all it entails first establishes the paradigm on which the intrinsic nature of this issue can be understood. The evolution of civil religious language within American government must then be examined by historical sources and works of political and religious analysis in order to set a historical precedent to track the existence and evolution of such rhetoric. Critical analysis of this deliberate usage of this language by government leaders with a particular emphasis on wartime and language of international relations must occur. Research and analysis will be conducted using speeches and documents from the mouth of the president and the hand of his speech writers in efforts to identify these particular uses of civil religious language. Furthermore, the basis of how this civil religious rhetoric functions will be explored from linguistical, social, political and philosophical perspectives and along with consideration of the ramifications of such dialogue pertaining to the relationship between government and society and the reputation of

America in the international realm. Finally, the practice of civil religious rhetoric will be scrutinized from the perspective of the faith community and will call the Church to understand the true dangers of such rhetorical devices and demand action to challenge the status quo of Christ-followers in America.

DEFINING CIVIL RELIGIOUS RHETORIC

In order to fully recognize the sway of religious rhetoric within current American society, a firm definition of civil religion and civil religious rhetoric must be established. A definitive guide separating civil religion and its rhetorical devices from a social embodiment of the teachings and person of Christ must exist, for therein lies a distinct difference that begs for further understanding in order to fully engage the subject of the implications of the current uses of religious rhetoric within the American political realm. Terms such as civil religion and religious rhetoric are eagerly thrown around by academia and the media, yet few can define the intrinsic nature of such a popular and divisive subject matter.

Perhaps the most effective method of determining the meaning of civil religion within its present cultural context is by juxtaposing it against the characteristics of religion, particularly Christianity. 19th Century German thinker Friederich Schleiermacher declares religion to be “no kind of slavery, no kind of captivity; it is the place where you can be yourself-and the desire to be yourself is the beginning of faith.”¹ Inherently the intrinsic nature of religion is personal and the ultimate expression of identity and being.

Richey and Jones offer a historical definition of religion as including “man’s preoccupation with ultimacy, especially when this is accompanied by the language of myth and

¹ Friederich Schleiermacher as quoted by Peter Van der Veer and Hartmut Lehmann, eds., *Nation and Religion: Perspectives on Europe and Asia*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999, 95.

symbol, is ceremonially and ritually reinforced, appealed to with metaphysical or quasi-metaphysical sanctions, compelling some sort of socialization, and exacting some sort of behavioral consequences”.² Additionally in his work *The Shared Well*, Peter van de Weyer asserts that “a better definition is that religion is concerned with a person’s inner being—one’s emotions and attitudes—and religious rituals and symbols exist to exert some kind of influence on how we feel and think.”³

Already according to these two definitions of religion, it is impossible to divorce religion from its rhetoric and its social context. Each perspective offered above on religion is intertwined with these ideas of the embodiment and influence of language as symbols and myths that define one’s very nature. Thus, it can be said that that language gives one his or her being, and subsequently gives his or her being significance.

Myth and symbol inherently evoke a social context in which each must be ascribed meaning and significance in order to have any transforming influence on one’s actions or emotions. It is in the social realm where we collectively interpret symbols and mutually ascribe worth, and it is in the culture where myth develops and evolves into something that possesses significance that transforms a life.

Civil religion in essence is one of the most natural social expressions where language and myth receives its definition and significance. National identity is universal; there is no man without a country. All mankind participates in a governmental structure in some shape or form,

² Russell E. Richey and Donald G. Jones, eds., *American Civil Religion*, New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1974, 139-40.

³ Robert Van De Weyer, *The Shared Well: A Concise Guide to Relations Between Islam and the West*, Washington DC: Brassey’s Inc., 2002, 92.

a political sphere that dictates value and significance to both the individual and the community. Because religion remains so dependent on the social sphere, naturally the things that are given the most value are that which most benefits the community and is most significant to its way of life. Inevitably, this civil religion develops in which the nation is worshipped in all its naively perfect splendor.

Many have weighed in, attempting to place their finger on this cultural phenomena of civil religion. One of the most comprehensive definitions has been offered by Wilfred McClay:

Civil religion is a means of investing a particular set of political and social arrangements with an aura of the sacred, thereby elevating their stature and enhancing their stability. It can serve as a point of reference for the shared faith of an entire nation. As such, it provides much of the social glue that binds together a society through well-established symbols, rituals, celebrations, places and values, supplying the society with an overarching sense of spiritual unity—a sacred canopy, in Peter Berger’s words—and a focal point for shared memories of struggle and survival.⁴

Robert Bellah also echoes this sentiment by emphasizing that there are “certain common elements of religious orientation that the great majority of American share ... this public religious dimension is expressed in a set of beliefs, symbols, and rituals ... the American civil religion”.⁵ Bellah also makes the important distinction that although rhetoric speaks of God and evokes Biblical imagery, it is clearly not itself Christianity.⁶ Carolyn Marvin and David W.

Ingle propose that civil religion is “patriotic piety” that serves the ends of declaring “ who can

⁴ As quoted from Wilfred McClay, “The Soul of a Nation,” *The Public Interest*, no. 155 (Spring 2004):9 in the work by James W. Skillen, *With or Against the World? America’s Role Among the Nations*, Lanham: Roman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2005, 76.

⁵ Robert N. Bellah, *The Broken Covenant: American Civil Religion in Time of Trial*, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1992: 24.

kill and what for, how boundaries are formed, and what national identity is”, ultimately justifying the violence within a society.⁷

Civil religious rhetoric is the language in which this commonality of rituals, beliefs, and symbols are expressed. Simply stated, civil religious rhetoric can be described as the words of affirmation and the hymns of praise in the civil religion. Sidney Meade in his essay, “The Nation with the Soul of a Church” also asserts the fact that religion naturally is culturally conditioned expressions of language.⁸ He also takes on the opinion of Robert Kimball that this “language is the expression of man’s freedom from the given situation and its demands. It gives him universals in whose power he can create worlds above the given world.”⁹

Leo Marx separates civil religious rhetoric into two distinct natures. The first is a rhetoric that is neat and polite, an academic, churchly sort that is quite generic and mostly for the sake of social convention. The second type is what is characteristic of American civil religious rhetoric: democratic, egalitarian, common, obscene, ‘cruder, more colloquial closer to the raw’” that is a device of folk beliefs that are “earthy, native, practical vernacular response to alien and elitist ideals.”¹⁰ Marx goes as far as depicting civil religious as obscenity-imperialistic, nativist, and racist, giving people obscene responses in order to make their obscenity sacred. “Most

⁶ Ibid., 28.

⁷ This is also a view that is intrinsic to the political philosophies of Hobbes and Locke. Carolyn Marvin, and David W. Ingle, *Blood Sacrifice and the Nation*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999: 11.

⁸ As quoted from Robert C. Kimball, *Theology of Culture*, New York: Oxford University Press Galaxy Books, 1964, 47. Richey and Jones, 60.

⁹ Ibid., 60.

Americans feel comfortable with such language because it connects their personal faith and mode of worship with their public way of life even if the personal and public faiths conflict with one other.”¹¹

¹⁰ Ibid, 13.

¹¹ James W. Skillen, *With or Against The World? America's Role Among the Nations*, Lanham: Bowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2005: 15.

IN GOD WE TRUST

THE HISTORICAL PRECEDENCE OF CIVIL RELIGIOUS LANGUAGE

It is vital to realize that civil religion rhetoric in the American political life is not a revolutionary concept derived by President Bush in light of September 11, 2001 to play on the emotions of American citizens and drum up the Christian conservative vote. Instead, much of the impetus of civil religious rhetoric comes from influence and meaning derived through years of integration into American politics and identity. “The Bush administration did not come from out of the blue, It reflected enduring patterns of American foreign policy and sprang from deep sources of American self understanding.”¹² Ralph Waldo Emerson best summarizes the necessity to look at history in order to understand the current predicaments of society:

We are always coming up with the emphatic facts of history in our private experience, and verifying them here. All history becomes subjective; in other words, there is properly no history; only biography. Every mind must know the whole lesson for itself, must go over the whole ground. What it does not see, what it does not live, it will not know. What the former age has epitomized into a formula or rule for manipluar convenience, it will lose all the good of verifying for itself, by means of the wall of that rule.¹³

The term civil religion was first coined by the Romantic writer Jean-Jacques Rousseau within his work *The Social Contract*. In Book 8, Chapter 4, Rousseau discusses a civil religion

¹² Skillen, 2.

¹³ Ralph Waldo Emerson, *Self Reliance and Other Essays*, New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1993: 4.

by outlining simple characteristics of this phenomenon that he keenly perceives as pervasive to his society and impeding political development. Civil religion according to Rousseau possesses the assumption of the existence of God, the afterlife, the reward and punishment of good and evil, and the omission of religious intolerance. A society marked by this civil religion means acceptance of these four dogmas as the rationale undermining a true civilized society. Other religions may be freely held, yet they lie beyond “the cognizance of the state”.¹⁴ Although none of America’s founding father’s openly pledged allegiance to the influence of Rousseau, his ideals and observations of a civil religion shaped the very ideals and attitudes that America was founded on.

The Puritans and the Revolution

Even from the foundations of America, the legacy of civil rhetoric can be traced. In actuality, it would suffice to say that the very nature of civil religion within America was cultivated by the Puritans, back before they boarded the Mayflower. Sixteenth century Englishman William Tindale preached to the people of England that the great nation of England was in essence Israel reborn, a nation with a holy, Biblical covenant with God¹⁵. The idea stuck that they were a chosen generation, a royal priesthood in covenant with the God of the universe as his beloved took hold within the heart of the Puritans. As England faltered, dedication waned, and drastic reform was enacted by the monarch, the Puritans set sail to America, determined to have their own land where they could solidify their covenant with God without the disinterest

¹⁴ Richey and Jones, 26.

¹⁵ Richard T. Hughes, *Myths America Lives By*, Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2003:20.

and disdain of their government.¹⁶ The Puritans sought America solely as a place where they could be under the absolute control of a sovereign God, rather than a pitiful monarch.

And so was born the myth of the chosen people, one of the most dangerous, and yet still so prevalent ideologies of the American persona. Within the spirit of covenant, the Puritans did not just believe that they were to subject themselves to God's absolute control and strive to reform His church with no reciprocations in return; they believed that God would grant is utmost favor and blanket blessing on the identity and actions of this new nation. Perhaps the first governor of the Massachusetts Bay Colony put it the most plain in his declaration as the Puritans set foot on dry land: "Thus stands the cause between God and us. We entered into a Covenant with him for this work ... now if the Lord shall please to hear us, and bring us in peace to the place we desire, then hath he ratified this Covenant and sealed our Commission."¹⁷

With this belief that these new pilgrims were God's people fulfilling his "Commission" and "Covenant" with him was also the beginning of civil religious rhetoric. The pilgrims abhorred the natives, quick to cast them off as barriers in fulfilling God's purpose, obviously not God's chosen people. Natives were described in the most vile, evil rhetoric available. Native Americans were deemed as "horrid savages"¹⁸ at best, dehumanizing them as mere beasts. Correlating to their Biblical belief that Satan was the ruler of the wilderness, surely these natives were the actual embodiment of Satan himself, fighting to gain his control over God's chosen ones! At worst, the same language described in Revelation and Daniel to describe the vile rulers of evil and the principalities of darkness were ascribed to the natives, all in effort to justify their

¹⁶ Ibid, 28.

¹⁷ Ibid, 29.

senseless killings as holy endeavors to rid the world of the evil that seeks to hinder a God's reign over all the heavens and earth.¹⁹

The strains of a civil religion and civil religious rhetoric in America were not only evident in its founding; they were the impetus of her glorious revolution. Surely, it was the attitudes and paradigms of the Revolutionary War that have shaped the American attitude of war to this day. George Marsden declares that indeed, the Revolutionary War sets the paradigm for America's justification of going into battle:

The American Revolution is a pivotal instance for understanding how modern nations have transformed supposed 'just wars' into secular crusades. It is pivotal for considering other wars of America, since the patterns of nationalism and civil religion established at the time of the Revolution became important elements of the mythology that determined American's behavior in subsequent wars."²⁰

The Puritans of the 1640s had already established that God's law superseded man's, and if anyone were to violate God's standards, any action was justified in order to preserve the nation's integrity as God's chosen people. The Revolutionaries waged war against the English monarch because it posed a threat to God's law and God's "unique" covenant with the Puritans and their colonies. The bloody bath of Americans and British were deemed casualties of just war, waged to preserve the integrity of the budding nation state over unmerited intruders, trying to put claim on their divine covenants and blessings.²¹ Abraham Keteltas, a preacher in Newburyport,

¹⁸ Bellah, 8.

¹⁹ Hughes, 31-3; Jewitt, 220-1.

²⁰ Ronald A Wells, ed., *The Wars of America: Christian View*, Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1981: 12.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 11-3.

Massachusetts summarizes the underlying attitudes of Revolution in his sermon entitled, “God Arising and Pleading His People’s Cause”:

Our cause is not only righteous but, most important, it is God’s own cause. It is the grand cause of the whole human race....If the principles [adopted]...by the American colonies...were universally adopted and practiced upon by mankind, they would turn a vale of tears into a paradise of God...(the American Revolution) is the cause of truth against error and falsehood, the cause of righteousness against iniquity, the cause of benevolence against barbarity, or virtue against iniquity, the cause...of benevolence against barbarity, of virtue against vice...In short, it is the cause of heaven against hell. ...It is the cause for which heroes have fought, patriots bled, prophets, apostles, martyrs, confessors, and righteous men have died. Nay, it is a cause for which the Son of God came down from his celestial throne and expired on a cross.²²

Truly, this is a poignant example of the power of civil religious rhetoric lend justification to the wars of man to gain the favor of God and accomplish His “holy” tasks here on earth. The Revolutionary War established the American identity as a nation who is so utterly convinced by its own belief that it is God’s gift to mankind that it will go to drastic lengths to be His hand of vengeance, justice, and freedom to all generations.

The Civil War and the Age of Exploration

With the nineteenth century came much transformation within the newly minted American identity, yet the notions of America as a chosen people did not change. In fact, this myth was not only perpetuated, but expanded upon. Added in to the mix was the propagation of America as a Christian nation, Nature’s nation, and the Millennial Nation. From an amalgamation of these ideals birthed the idea of Manifest Destiny. This term originally appeared in an anonymous article placed in the *Democratic Review* of July-August 1845 in reference to the annexation of Texas as “our manifest destiny to overspread the continent allotted by Providence for the free

²² Hughes. 34.

development of our yearly multiplying millions”.²³ The principle of Manifest Destiny declared that America possessed the responsibility to embrace a God-given destiny to be a beacon of freedom, democracy and in essence become a superpower, dictating the fate of the world.²⁴ Under this doctrine, America further asserts her legitimacy among other nations to take whatever measures possible if it can be justified as for the betterment of the America and for the sake of justice and freedom. Senator H.V. Johnson rhetorically emphasizes this notion in the following statement:

War has its evils in all ages...it has been the minister of wholesale death and appalling desolation. ...However inscrutable to use, it has also been made by the Allwise Dispenser of events, the instrumentality of accomplishing the great end of human elevation and human happiness...It is in this view that I subscribe to the doctrine of ‘manifest destiny’.²⁵

Although the concept of Manifest Destiny in terms of the age of expansion were confined only to the nineteenth century, inklings of its rhetoric are beginning to become prevalent in twenty first century politics. Instead of being applied to land expansion to accommodate the sprawling American continent, it is now being used as a tool to justify the expansion of democracy, particularly within the Iraqi war context.

The Civil War solidified freedom as the true gospel of America, carried out to all the ends of the world-no matter the cost. Both the Union and the Confederacy fought for their individual expression and embodiment of freedom, with each side firmly appealing to the notions that they

²³ From the article “Annexation,” *Democratic Review* (New York), July-August 1845; 5. *Ibid*, 106.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 107.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 107.

were the true, just warriors of God, his chosen people preserving his chosen country. Both the North and the South were spurred to a zealous moral transformation in efforts to embody the “kingdom of God” and in essence gain his favor²⁶, for “just as religious life requires reformation and revival”, so does the political life demand “a new birth of freedom”²⁷. Inevitably in light of these circumstances, the political landscape was inundated with civil religious rhetoric, with each side evoking God’s purpose and design. An example would be this excerpt of Union ideology laden with religious and cultural expressions from the *Ladies Repository* of February of 1850:

Our government will be the grand center of this mighty influence...The beneficial and harmonious operation of our institutions will be seen, and similar ones adopted. Christianity must speedily follow them; and we shall behold the grand spectacle of a whole world, civilized, republican, and Christian. Then will wrong and injustice be forever banished. Every yoke shall be broken, and the oppressed go free. Wars will cease from the earth.²⁸

The intensely civil religious struggle between the North and the South demanded a president with a unique understanding of the nature of the struggle. Enter Abraham Lincoln to delicately weigh in on the situation and mend a deeply divided nation. “Abraham Lincoln’s strongest supporters were religious people “who saw life in terms of good and evil” and who believed that slavery was evil.”(Baker). Lincoln however was careful not to label either side as good or evil, and still find some cohesion and clarity in this firmly entrenched battle. His most famous statement recounted by most historians and critics of civil religion makes a gentle assertion that

²⁶ Wells, 73.

²⁷ Bellah, 35.

²⁸ As originally published by Joseph Brady, “The Magnetic Telegraph,” *Ladies Repository*, 10: February 1850: 61-62. Quoted by Moorehead in *America Apocalypse* Wells, 66.

evokes a civil religion and strong scriptural references, yet is careful to not give justification or validation to either side's fight: "Fondly do we hope-ferverently do we pray-that this mighty scourge of war may speedily pass away. Yet if God wills that it continue, so let it be said 'the judgments of the Lord, are true and righteous altogether.'"²⁹ It is statements like this that earned Lincoln the title of a "true (Saint) of Civil Religion", due to his possession of "qualities and virtues that, in traditional Christianity, are attributed to Jesus alone-freedom for sin...virtue and righteousness...-true Americans!"³⁰

The Twentieth Century

The history of twentieth century civil religious rhetoric is arguably less animated than the centuries before and after it. The American philosophical, religious and political landscape was changing, many believe with Nietzsche's declaration that God was dead. Derivation of power and authority was changing, and individualism was rapidly emerging and taking the focus from a cultural expressions of religion, to the individual.

Again, it is in times of war in which civil religious rhetoric makes its presence. Woodrow Wilson exhibited less overt expressions of civil religious rhetoric than in the past, yet he delicately tinged his wartime speech with religious undertones. Wilson was vocal that America had a God-given responsibility to be the "brother's keeper"³¹ of other nations, defending them from inhumanities and fostering democracy and freedom. Harley Notter summarizes Wilson's perspective of America's duty in the international realm as the responsibility:

²⁹ Reitveld in Wells, 67.

³⁰ Herberg in Rickey, 82.

...to realize an ideal of liberty, provide a model of democracy, vindicate moral principles, give examples of action and ideals of government and righteousness to an interdependent world, uphold the rights of man, work for humanity and the happiness of men everywhere, lead the thinking of the world, promote peace-in sum, to serve mankind and progress.³²

Civil religious rhetoric seeking to evoke God in order to justify war actions is markedly missing from Wilson's language; however his words are very characteristic of the civil religious notion of spreading the gospel of democracy to all people in the name of progress – “a world-historical mission to fulfill” as righteous ones in a evil, uncivilized world.³³ Wilson affirmed “America's role in the world to be that of a messianic nation bringing redemptive political light and leadership to the world of nations.”³⁴ In a speech directed to Civil War Veterans in June of 1917, “Wilson, promised that God had preserved the union through the Civil War to achieve His transcendent purposes, so that the nation might be ‘an instrument in the hands of God to see that liberty is made secure for mankind. The United States had been saved for this moment in the divine plan.’”³⁵

Looking back on history, it is obvious that “Protecting God's lead nation in the world is part of the American way of life whether the enemy is Nazism, communism, or terrorism.”³⁶ This would also provide justification for why we have in the past “supported Islamist radicals like

³¹ Bolt in Wells, 128.

³² Skillen, 79.

³³ Ibid., 79.

³⁴ Ibid., 80.

³⁵ Ibid, 82.

³⁶ Ibid, 20.

Osama to fight Soviet colonialism, supported Saddam in his fight against the Iranians.”³⁷ The truth of the matter is that America is willing to fight in the name of God for anyone who attempts to accept part of the gospel of freedom for any length of time. Perhaps it is George H.W. Bush who states this perspective so plainly when he declares in the midst of Desert Storm: “to every sailor, soldier, airman, and marine who is involved in this mission, let me say, you’re doing God’s work. We will not fail.”³⁸

³⁷ Ibid, 17.

³⁸ Jewitt, 1-2.

GEORGE W. BUSH: PRESIDENT OR PRIEST
CURRENT EXAMPLES OF CIVIL RELIGIOUS RHETORIC

The 43rd President of the United States of America George W. Bush is firmly committed to the propagation of the civil religion of America as evidenced by his overt and innumerable uses of civil religious rhetoric. The events of September 11th 2001 and following have been the perfect fodder for further emphasizing the worship of the supremacy of the American nation state and its mission to spread the gospel of democracy and justice throughout all the world. This era more than any other in history has been exploited in efforts to further exalt America over all the world, and never before has the “dialectic between liberation and liberty, revolution and constitution, conversion and covenant ... [been] overrun by the insatiable American empirical desire of impulse and control”.³⁹

From the initial moments of September 11, 2001, President Bush eagerly embraced civil religious language to characterize his speeches. The very evening of these events, Bush addressed the nation and made his intentions very clear: “The search is underway for those who were behind these evil acts...and bring them to justice.”⁴⁰ Although seemingly mild, this speech establishes the important distinction that these atrocities and the persons associated with them are

³⁹ Bellah, 83.

⁴⁰ George W. Bush, “September 11, 2001 Address to the Nation”, Accessed by <http://www.americanrhetoric.com>.

purely evil and sets the stage for future delineation of the “war on terrorism” as a cosmic battle of good versus evil.

A presidential address after an executive cabinet meeting on September 12, 2001 issues some very provocative statements that set the tone for the future actions and attitudes of the American empire by declaring the following:

...The deliberate and deadly attacks, which were carried out yesterday against our country, were more than acts of terror. They were acts of war. This will require our country to unite in steadfast determination and resolve. *Freedom and democracy are under attack.* The American people need to know we're facing a different enemy than we have ever faced. This enemy hides in shadows and has no regard for human life. This is an enemy who preys on innocent and unsuspecting people, then runs for cover, but it won't be able to run for cover forever. This is an enemy that tries to hide, but it won't be able to hide forever. This is an enemy that thinks its harbors are safe, but they won't be safe forever. This enemy attacked not just our people but all freedom-loving people everywhere in the world. The United States of America will use all our resources to conquer this enemy. We will rally the world. We will be patient. We'll be focused, and we will be steadfast in our determination. This battle will take time and resolve, but make no mistake about it, we will win.⁴¹

This statement is littered with civil religious rhetoric that accomplishes a number of things.

First, the declaration that “they were acts of war” where “freedom and democracy are under attack”, marks the unofficial declaration that America is waging war in the name of preserving the glorious American nation and her gospel of freedom and democracy. It also deems the actions of 9-11 as not merely crimes, but acts of war, which lends itself to justification of violence and also in aligning its actions to the principle of proportionality according to the Just War Theory. The comment that “this enemy hides in shadows and has no regard for human life”, also serves as a rhetorical device that dehumanizes the enemy and distances them from

their status as individuals. Ultimately, this address serves as a battle cry for the sake of the holy American empire, the last bastion of righteousness and justice.

The President's proclamation on the National Day of Prayer and Remembrance for Victims and Families is laden with holy imperatives, evoking a sense of religious duty to defend America, the kingdom of righteousness, from "evildoers":

Civilized people around the world denounce the evildoers who devised and executed these terrible attacks. Justice demands that those who helped or harbored the terrorists be punished -- and punished severely. ***The enormity of their evil demands it.*** We will use all the resources of the United States and our cooperating friends and allies to pursue those responsible for this evil, until justice is done. ... We will persevere through this national tragedy and personal loss. In time, we will find healing and recovery; and, ***in the face of all this evil, we remain strong and united, "one Nation under God."***⁴²

According to this language, Bush asserts that it is the duty of the civilized to take a holy stand as representatives of the good. America is likened to patriots of righteousness, crusading as one, strong and united with crimson crosses girding our shields, able to quench the spears of the uncivilized defilers of freedom's song. Bush's speech at the national cathedral a day later also rings heavy with these notions that America as the procurers and preservers of freedom must stand up to its historical, God given responsibility to "answer to the calling of our time".

... Just three days removed from these events, Americans do not yet have the distance of history, but ***our responsibility to history is already clear: to answer these attacks and rid the world of evil.... There are prayers of friends and strangers that give us strength for the journey, and there are prayers that yield our will to a Will greater than our own....*** America is a nation full of good fortune, with so much to be grateful for, but we are not spared from suffering. In every generation, the world has produced enemies of human

⁴¹ George W. Bush, "President's Address from Cabinet Room following Cabinet Meeting, 12 September 2001", Accessed by <http://www.americanrhetoric.com>.

⁴² George W. Bush, "A Proclamation on the National Day of Prayer and Remembrance for the Victims of the Terrorists Attacks", Given on September 13, 2001, Accessed by <http://www.americanrhetoric.com>.

freedom. *They have attacked America because we are freedom's home and defender, and the commitment of our Fathers is now the calling of our time.*⁴³

The September 20th, 2001 Congressional State of the Union Speech is particularly noted for its usages of civil religious rhetoric as a call to arms in the “war on terrorism” and a definitive stance in the leadership of George W. Bush.

But this country will define our times, not be defined by them. As long as the United States of America is determined and strong, this will not be an age of terror; this will be an age of liberty, here and across the world.

Great harm has been done to us. We have suffered great loss. And in our grief and anger *we have found our mission and our moment. Freedom and fear are at war. The advance of human freedom -- the great achievement of our time, and the great hope of every time -- now depends on us. Our nation, this generation will lift a dark threat of violence from our people and our future. We will rally the world to this cause by our efforts, by our courage. We will not tire, we will not falter, and we will not fail.*

... I will not yield; I will not rest; I will not relent in waging this struggle for freedom and security for the American people. The course of this conflict is not known, yet its outcome is certain. *Freedom and fear, justice and cruelty, have always been at war, and we know that God is not neutral between them.*

Fellow citizens, *we'll meet violence with patient justice -- assured of the rightness of our cause, and confident of the victories to come.* In all that lies before us, may God grant us wisdom, and may He watch over the United States of America. Thank you.⁴⁴

The declaration that “freedom and fear, justice and cruelty, have always been at war, and we know that God is not neutral between them”⁴⁵ is one of the most overt examples of civil religious rhetoric up to this date, making the volatile assertion that God sides completely with the freedom fighters and the justice bringers. This phrase thus assures the American kingdom that they are

⁴³ George W. Bush, “Remarks at the National Prayer Day of Remembrance”, Given on September 14, 2001. Accessed by <http://www.americanrhetoric.com>.

⁴⁴ George W Bush, “Address to Joint Session on Terrorist Attacks”, Given on September 20, 2001, Accessed by <http://www.americanrhetoric.com>.

politically aligned with the God of the universe, or rather in this case, the deity of the Civil Religion. The sentence that follows feeds off this assertion by declaring that there can be assurance and confidence because with God on America's side, surely it cannot fail; the righteous end ultimately justifies any means. God of course must be divinely sanctioning this battle against the "evildoers", and success is guaranteed, because the American people are crusaders of justice!

In his speech to UN General Assembly on September 12, 2002, the president declares America's divine destiny to the international community:

Neither of these outcomes is certain. Both have been set before us. We must choose between a world of fear and a world of progress. We cannot stand by and do nothing while dangers gather. We must stand up for our security, and for the permanent rights and the hopes of mankind. By heritage and by choice, the United States of America will make that stand. And, delegates to the United Nations, you have the power to make that stand, as well.⁴⁶

Bush brazenly affirms that America possesses a heritage of destiny and divine imperative to be the national embodiment of goodness and justice on earth. He also asserts that any country who sees themselves as havens of democracy pursuing justice and freedom for the rest of the world must align with the United States and their divinely ordained mission.

The words issued by the president on the one year anniversary of September 11th at Ellis Island further asserts religious obligation to this mission of "war on terrorism":

... We cannot know all that lies ahead. Yet, we do know that God had placed us together in this moment, to grieve together, to stand together, to serve each other and our country. And the duty we have been given -- defending America and our freedom -- is also a privilege we share.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ George W. Bush, "President's Remarks at the United Nations General Assembly", Given on September 12, 2002. Accessed by <http://www.whitehouse.gov>.

Tomorrow is September the 12th. A milestone is passed, and a mission goes on. Be confident. *Our country is strong. And our cause is even larger than our country. Ours is the cause of human dignity; freedom guided by conscience and guarded by peace. This ideal of America is the hope of all mankind. That hope drew millions to this harbor. That hope still lights our way. And the light shines in the darkness. And the darkness will not overcome it.*⁴⁷

By declaring that defending America and freedom is both duty and delight evokes religious obligation on all individuals to serve the government and its interests (namely of course the war on terrorism), for if God has ordained it, the cause must be one of eternal significance.

Bush's usage of civil religious rhetoric also characterizes his policy. The Patriot Act, enacted within the year after September 11th is undergirded by the desire to squelch out the "evil ones" with the American sword of democracy and the shield of the cross. This piece of legislation loosely defines the character of the "enemy" which can only be surmised as dehumanizing rhetoric at best. Jewitt points out that the rhetoric of the Patriot Act seeks to show that the enemy has no barrier of morality, no conscience, and cannot be reasoned with, a subhuman scum that "can only be rooted out and destroyed"⁴⁸. In his introduction to his 2002 National Security Strategy, the president declares that "freedom is the non-negotiable demand of human dignity; the birthright of every person-in every civilization...[and] the United States will use this moment of opportunity to extend the benefits of freedom across the globe"⁴⁹. James Skillen is quick to deduce that this rhetoric is nothing more than a thinly veiled global imperialism , based in

⁴⁷ George W. Bush, "President's Remarks to the Nation at Ellis Island", Given on September 11, 2002, Accessed by <http://www.whitehouse.gov>.

⁴⁸ Jewitt, 235.

⁴⁹ Skillen, 97.

obligation to the larger, historically acting subject of freedom-Providence to earlier Americans and God to the Puritans⁵⁰.

The president further praises the climate of civil religion in which he has created by his rhetorical devices by declaring that “he senses a "Third Awakening" of religious devotion in the United States that has coincided with the nation's struggle with international terrorists, a war that he depicted as “a confrontation between good and evil”.⁵¹ Bush sites the more open religious expressions of faith and ritual as signs that a broader revival looms ahead similar to the other awakenings of history. Inevitably, this is merely another demonstration of the self serving nature of civil religion to heap primacy, legitimacy, and validation for America as empire; this civil religious rhetoric only “appeal[s] to American’s fears for themselves, rather than appealing to American hopes for others.”⁵²

⁵⁰ Ibid., 97.

⁵¹ Peter Baker, “Bush Tells People He Sees a Third Awakening”, *The Washington Post*, 13 September 2006: A05.

⁵² Ibid.

SAINT AND SINNER

HOW CIVIL RELIGIOUS RHETORIC FUNCTIONS

No one can deny that there remains a great interest in religion, however “we must make the distinction between good religion and bad religion”⁵³. A discerning citizen bears the responsibility to make sensible judgments as to what should be deemed healthy religious practices— rhetoric, rituals, and customs that edify the community and the human condition, and damaging religion—in this case the detrimental rhetorical character of a civil religion that marginalizes society by creating a false dichotomy between good and evil and justifies the warring devices of mankind. Just how does this damaging civil religious rhetoric function; what is its essential task within current American political discourse by President George W. Bush? In essence, civil religious rhetoric can be classified into three separate, yet delicately contingent functions: stereotyping and dehumanization, justification, and manipulation.

Stereotyping and personification

Robert Jewitt in his book *Captain America and the Crusade Against Evil: The Dilemma of Zealous Nationalism* begins his critique of the function of civil religious rhetoric by issuing the disclaimer that, “To explore the process of stereotyping is to grapple with one of the

⁵³ Robert Van De Weyer, *The Shared Well: A Concise Guide to Relations Between Islam and the West*, Washington DC: Brassey’s Inc., 2002: 92.

most volatile components of the current global situation.”⁵⁴ The linguistic process of stereotyping adheres to the innate nature of religion to provide order and clarity within the chaos of society. By stereotyping, mankind uses language to ascribe place and meaning to each individual in the social structure. Each member of the community knows his or her place contingent on his intrinsic value to the society and conversely the community gains its value and authority from the status of its individuals. Linguistically speaking, civil religious rhetoric stereotypes are both prescriptive-asserting the value and meaning in which something ought to have- and descriptive-testifying of what is already lies in basic nature.⁵⁵

The civil religious rhetoric commonly utilized by President Bush in the current political arena heavily depends upon stereotyping of Muslims, terrorists, criminals, and those who disagree with the United States in general as evil and inferior within the global community particularly in light of the American “empire”. In these circumstances, the people themselves have not changed; there has been Islamic followers of all extremes, terrorists, criminals, and dissenters to the US. Instead, our language changes, carefully constructing archetypes in order to change attitudes, and inevitably the value ascribed to the certain individual and/or sector of society. It was not the events of September 11th that marked some radical, fundamental change in the nature and function of the Islamic community, terrorist, etc.; what changed was the

⁵⁴ Jewitt, 215.

⁵⁵ James I. Campbell, *The Language of Religion*. New York: The Bruce Publishing Company, 1971: 68-9.

language which was used to describe such individuals to change the perspective in which Americans thought of such people⁵⁶.

What was once considered our Muslim neighbors, or crazed criminals have now become evil ones and terrorists, pawns of Satan who are less than human. By injecting the adjective “evil”, the nature of the great travesty of the acts of September 11 has been transformed from ruthless criminals to a full fledged cosmic battle which the civil religion must take up arms and fight. Jewitt highlights this dehumanization by posing the question below:

Is it a mystery that some American soldiers collected the arms and teeth of slain Japanese, but those in Italy and Germany did not do so? Would Americans have been willing to resort to the destructive tactics that were used in Indochina if we had visualized our antagonists as white Christians?⁵⁷

Obviously, if there exists an evil, a good must inevitably exist juxtaposed against it, and of course the title of “good” goes to the saintly patriots of the civil religion. The stereotype of the evil ones interjects first a religious dimension to the effort and secondly a superior thrust to the identity of the crusader for good. A line is drawn in the sand, dividing the victim versus the thief, the defensive versus the offensive, the clean and the dirty, the law abiding and the lawless, the faithful and the faithless, and the humble versus the arrogant. “...The dichotomy between the sacred and profane...This great encounter between cosmic forces-an ultimate good and evil, a divine truth and - is a war that worldly struggles only mimic.”⁵⁸ The battle on earth transcends the temporal realm and now has eternal ramifications for the soul of the nation state.

⁵⁶ Skillen, 2.

⁵⁷ Jewitt, 215.

⁵⁸ Mark Juergensmeyer, *The New Cold War? Religious Nationalism Confronts the Secular State*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993: 155.

Tragically, civil religious rhetoric mistakenly casts America in the light of the righteous crusader, superior in all its democratic ways, the only one worthy, and cosmically responsible to strike the inferior evil ones into submission to democracy by the sword. God is reduced to king warrior in the crusade of freedom, or as Ralph Waldo Emerson states it in the following: “All men who hear me, feel, that the language that describes Christ to Europe and America, is not the style of friendship and enthusiasm to a good and noble heart, but is appropriated and formal-paints a demigod, as the Orientals or the Greeks would describe Osiris or Apollo.”⁵⁹

When the dichotomy of evil vs. good is perpetuated, people are no longer seen as human beings with both strengths and weaknesses, flaws and triumphs, but instead as spiritual adversaries, demons running around, plotting the demise of the good at their own expense. Ultimately, “when another nation is defined as ‘the great Satan’, or a whole people as immoral terrorists, the state is set for their violent destruction”⁶⁰. Jewitt goes on to elaborate that “it has always been thus with stereotypes of ‘the evil ones’; once you have your needles under their fingernails, you can be sure that salvation is near at hand”⁶¹. This rhetoric makes way for the civil religion to sweep in and save the day once again and score one for liberty and justice for all.

Justification

Secondly, the current climate of civil religious rhetoric serves as a means of justification, of providing order and purpose to the American crusades for democracy however violent and brutal they may be. After carefully constructing stereotypes, polarizing sides in some grandiose

⁵⁹ Emerson, 108.

⁶⁰ Jewitt, 215.

struggle over good and evil, the violence that ensues must be justified as necessary blood sacrifice which the civil religion dutifully adopts in fulfilling their role as good and any necessary cost. “The ferocity of some religious nationalists is jarring: they seem to be even more violent than necessary, and they cloak their violence in religious rhetoric.”⁶²

Civil religious rhetoric fulfills the role of symbols and images to which the society can express and identify with the larger religion. This language “symbolically transforms” violence, for this religious rhetoric serves as “mechanisms through which peace and order conquer violence and chaos”⁶³. No longer is violence “unruly and has to be tamed”, but instead it is vindicated and white washed under the banner of religion, “the ultimate statement of meaningfulness...the primacy of meaning in the face of chaos”⁶⁴. Religion, speaking as the ultimate expression of stability, necessity, and assertion to ultimate reality and value, is the only social construct powerful enough to lend credibility and value to bloodshed and travesty. Juegenheimer again states it best by summarizing civil religious rhetoric’s power to justify by the following conclusion:

Thus violent images can be given religious meaning and domesticated. But an awful thing can also happen: conceptual violence can be identified with real acts of violence. These acts, although terribly real, are then sanitized by becoming symbols; they are stripped of their horror by being invested with religious meaning. They are justified and therefore exonerated because they are part of a religious template that is even larger than myth and history: they are elements of a ritual that makes it possible for people involved in it to experience the drama of cosmic war.⁶⁵

⁶¹ Ibid, 236.

⁶² Juegenheimer, 156

⁶³ Juegenheimer, 159.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 159.

Herein, a common objection to these negative assertions of the function of civil religious rhetoric as justification must be addressed. Those who carry the banner of civil religion high into battle in the American political arena object to the literalist interpretation of Bush and other's insistence that this language of war is nothing more than metaphorical, drawing from a rich literary tradition in order to artistically craft an image of the state of current domestic affairs. Fareed Zakaria however interjects that yes, in some cases it could be legitimate for the president to utilize war language in a metaphorical sense, however according to Zakaria, the line has been crossed between a metaphorical literary reference and actual characterization of what Bush deems as reality. Instead, if the assumption of the civil religious rhetoric critic that this is more than metaphor is correct, then did not "the conclusion about war rhetoric begin, then not with President Bush's call for a 'war on terrorism' but with his administration's prior misidentification of the terrorists attacks as acts of war instead of criminal acts...because he accepted at face value Bin Laden's use of 'holy war' language to characterize Al Qaeda's attacks⁶⁶? Bush has clearly moved past metaphor and instead into ascribing the reality of the expanding American empire as war. Ethan Bronner declares that this whole notion of the war on terrorism is not being used metaphorically at all, and instead serves a very specific tactical purpose in this religious crusade:

The enemy has made the entire world the battleground, the administration says, so anyone we capture in 'battle' can be labeled (by the commander in chief) an 'enemy combatant', meaning someone with few rights under our Constitution...even if that captive is an American citizen caught in the United States...As [Attorney General John] Ashcroft said, "The last time I looked at 9/11, an American street was a war zone."⁶⁷

⁶⁵ Ibid., 156.

⁶⁶ Skillen, 5.

This too refers back to the rhetorical strategy of stereotyping in order to dehumanize the other all the while exalting cultural domination, superiority, righteousness, and divine mandate to the glory of the nation state.

Manipulation of power and authority

Ultimately the function of civil religious rhetoric culminates at the abilities of such language to cunningly assert power and authority. Religious rhetoric is the sword that politicians wield in their battle to claim legitimacy to their empire and to secure their crown, for this is how “religious spokespersons can derive their authority in the public sphere, by invoking the national community as though it were also a religious one”.⁶⁸ The situation is so severe in the case of George W. Bush’s dramatic utilization of civil religious rhetoric as already identified, that Jewitt goes so far to assert that “In violation of his oath of office, the president has turned away from the task of enforcing the law of the land in order to play politics with the stereotypes⁶⁹”.

Civil religious rhetoric has become the weapon of choice of George W. Bush in his war to assert authority and expand the realm of the American empire. Juergensmeyer presents his analysis of this political controversy:

The language of cosmic struggle is easily exploited by political activist who want to give sacred legitimacy to worldly causes. Sometimes they do so only for the sake of public relations. In other instances it is for a much more important purpose: empowerment. Because religion has the ability to give moral sanction to violence, and violence is the most potent force that a nonlegal entity can possess, religion can be a potent political tool.⁷⁰

⁶⁷ Ibid., 4.

⁶⁸ Ibid, 182.

⁶⁹ Jewitt, 233-4.

The true desire of civil religious rhetoric by the political sphere is to “manipulate the conditions in which they act or refrain from acting” and “employ a variety of communicative devices to target their desires and anxieties”⁷¹. In the case of George Bush, this rhetoric is utilized in order to manipulate the votes of the ever growing right wing Christian conservatives. The tragedy of civil religious language is that so often the true issues are hidden underneath desperate attempts at image making and stereotyping heaping dirt onto an opponent in order to play up the good versus evil motif.⁷²

Ultimately, civil religious rhetoric employed by political leaders, particularly with the office of president usurps power originally bestowed to God. Rhetorically, these leaders place themselves into the role of supreme deity in the civil religion of American democracy. No longer are they head of a nation state, but are now the ultimate overseers of the whole universe in charge of carrying out justice in the cosmic battle over evil. This is not just a grave political misstep, but “to confuse the role of God with that of the American nation, as George Bush seems to do, is a serious theological error that some might say borders on idolatry or blasphemy.”⁷³

⁷⁰ Juergensmeyer, 163.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Jewitt, 232.

⁷³ Jim Wallis, “Dangerous Religion: George W. Bush’s theology of empire”, *Sojourners Magazine*, (September-October 2003) Accessed by <http://www.sojo.net>.

A KING AND A KINGDOM
AMERICAN CIVIL RELIGIOUS RHETORIC IN INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS AND
THE JUST WAR TRADITION

Civil religious rhetoric has had a twofold effect on how America relates to the international community. This language on the one hand has been a divisive tool on the global front, polarizing the international community into good versus evil, Christian versus Muslim, and democratic and civilized versus diverse in government and cultural practices. The American Empire, armed with the seal of approval from the supposedly Christian God to wage holy war against terrorism in the name of democracy only further supports what critics of America have condemned all along—downright egocentrism and cultural superiority. Thus, civil religious rhetoric and its functioning stereotypes, justification, and manipulation have actually been counteractive in suppressing terror, and instead has stretched the fissure of terrorist anger into a full-blown canyon of cultural rage over the domination and nationalistic pride of the American empire and its beacon of democracy. Persisting in an indefinite American “war” against terrorism, therefore causes long-term damage to U.S. relations with friendly states and allies, something that would be directly counterproductive to stopping terrorism⁷⁴. Ultimately, “trying to dress up the Christian way of the cross to look like self-interested American foreign policy is a

⁷⁴ Skillen, 5-6.

project bound for failure”⁷⁵.

Another result of civil religious rhetoric upon the international realm is more positive in nature, for the growth of civil religious dialogue has highlighted the need for a religious understanding in the role of international relations and has pushed matters of religion to the political forefront. Madeline Albright in her recently published book *The Mighty and The Almighty* confesses that it was her policy as Secretary of State to keep God and Religion out of international affairs, yet she could not ignore the growing influence that religion held in the foreign policy of the global community by the end of her tenure. Ms. Albright is also quick to point out that “it’s one thing to be religious, but it’s another thing to make religion your policy,” – a fine delineation that civil religious rhetoric blurs with little regard.⁷⁶

As much as one would like, religion cannot be unraveled and separated from the very fibers of culture and all its various expressions. As America becomes more enlightened to the global community, it is gradually realizing that religion inevitably tinges all of life-whether it be cultural and ethnic conflict in Iraq or the Arab world, lively festivals in Brazil or China, hunger and overcrowding in India and African nations, the AIDS epidemic among tribal societies, or senseless killings and child solders in Sudan. The current philosophical shift from a modern mindset that has no regard for religion’s place in society is now giving way to a postmodern outlook that acknowledges the significance of religion and fosters a cultural environment that thrives on exploration, understanding, and awareness. “The postmodern mind, for once, agrees to issue this family, maltreated or sentenced to deportation by the modern scientific reason, with

⁷⁵ Hilton, 155.

a permanent residence permit”⁷⁷. Awareness of the presence and sway of religion paves the way for a new era of foreign relations that recognizes and allows for dialogue that pierces to the religious underpinnings of international affairs. Acknowledging religion’s inherent place within cultural identity and its significance in comprising foreign policy demands individuals and government alike to retrain our eyes and develop new lenses to adjust to this new age of globalization⁷⁸.

Civil Religious Rhetoric In Light of Just War

Without mincing words, just war cannot co-exist in the face of American civil religious rhetoric. “History knows of no just wars, as it knows of no just peoples”,⁷⁹ however in the face of this language, a war in line with true Christian ideas cannot be waged. The spirit of the Just War Theory is to first instill within the sincere student of just warfare a solid paradigm of universal morality and regard to human nature and social decency unlike civil religious rhetoric which creates a blurred perspective due to manipulation and vain attempts for justification. Those who embrace a civil religion and exercise a civil religious rhetoric are desperately seeking to justify their actions in light of just warfare, but in all actuality, it is the immorality found within their rhetoric that makes their fighting dishonest, a lie to all American citizens about the

⁷⁶ Kevin Lamarque, “Madeline Albright Opens Up”, *Time Magazine*, (27 April 2006) Accessed by <http://www.time.com>.

⁷⁷ Bauman in Paul Heelas, ed., *Religion, Modernity, and Postmodernity*, Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1998: 55.

⁷⁸ Thomas L. Friedman, *The Lexus and the Olive Tree: Understanding Globalization*, New York: Anchor Books, 2000: 17.

⁷⁹ Oliver O’Donovan, *The Just War Revisited*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 2003: 13.

true nature of the fight. Zakaria⁸⁰ discusses the notion that “to speak of war also distorts thinking by suggesting there is an easily identifiable enemy and an obvious means of attack...”, when in all actuality this is the farthest thing from the truth, and yet it remains another tactic to justify unjustifiable warfare by the current administration. By acknowledging the presence, function and sway of a civil religious rhetoric, we may learn to continuously question our motives, intentions, actions and attitudes of our leaders toward our fellow man:

The point here is that a judgment about undertaking justifiable warfare depends on a prior judgment about whether certain violent acts actually amount to a cause for war, a *casus belli*. ...Did the confusion about war rhetoric begin, then not with President Bush’s call for a “war on terrorism” but with his administration’s prior misidentification of the terrorist attacks as acts of war instead of criminal acts?⁸¹

The principle of Just War Theory is not merely an impersonal theoretical ideal to be debated in classrooms or peace summits; it demands that all remain aware of our leaders and all humanity in both times of war and peace. For as we examine and question our perceptions of humanity, we shall continuously hold ourselves accountable and refine the ways in which we relate nation to nation, religion to religion, ethnicity to ethnicity, heart to heart.

Just what is this foundational ethos of the heart of the Just War advocate as opposed to civil religion? Vitoria perhaps captured it best in his perpetuation of the notion of the natural law which intrinsically lies within and thus binds together all humanity as the transcendent guide of just warfare.⁸² The Constitution of the United States was formed out of natural law as the

⁸⁰ Skillen 5-6.

⁸¹ Ibid., 5.

⁸² Daryl J. Charles, *Between Pacifism and Jihad: Just War and Christian Tradition*, Chicago: InterVarsity Press, 2005: 26.

authority of legitimate state, yet Bush uses civil religious rhetoric to establish illegitimate global authority.⁸³ As Vitoria argues, the world is comprised of diverse individuals all who embrace different human and religious laws that leave mankind seemingly disjointed and participants in different communities unable to relate to the other. Just war must then look deeper to the natural law, the depths of the individual that are the same and thus make us universal participants in the same community with equal paradigms and rules for fair play we may all relate to.

Hume in *A Treatise of Human Nature* goes a step further than Vitoria and natural law by also establishing the universal laws of justice. He contends that “when men have found by experience that it is impossible to subsist without society”, yet learn it is “impossible to maintain society” while given free reign to indulge their pride, mankind naturally imposes laws of justice in which preserves both the individual and the community.⁸⁴ It is from these innate laws of justice that the sentiments of duty and obligation empower mankind to fight for the just cause. In exploring into the natural law of mankind, we find that we are actually connected as we innately celebrate the same virtue, disdain the same vice, and crave the same peace and love, for truly by the depths of our being, all humankind is in essence participating in community with one another.

The first section of *The Ethics of War: Classic and Contemporary Readings* looks at the ancient and early Christian tradition of just war. Some of philosophy and Just War Theory’s most prevalent foundational voices such as Plato and Augustine speak out concerning the

⁸³ Ibid., 69.

⁸⁴ David Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature Volume 2*, London: J.M. Dent & Sons Ltd., 1949: 266.

emerging problems of war, power, and religion's early role within the just war. In light of such an ethical and religious debate, surprisingly enough it is the historian Thucydides who first addresses the moral implications of the Greek armed battles, particularly that of the Peloponnesian War between Sparta and Athens. Thucydides is first to address issues of proper initiation and right intention as tempering what he considers proper warfare.

Plato takes heart to the warring Greeks, albeit the fundamental jest of the bulk of his writings do not touch war at all. He does however declare "his concern for a well-ordered city"⁸⁵ and firmly advocates that peace, and thus the absence of war and manipulated authority, is the foundational principle of such a noble social pursuit. In light of these claims, Plato cannot be considered a forerunner for pacifism, for he also believes that the responsible, peaceful city is at all times vigilant and ready for war.

One cannot look at this era of thought without considering the works of Augustine, for in him, the foundations of Just War Theory are built. Although his opinions of warfare are not centrally confined to one body of work, Augustine's reference to morality and the Church in relations to war and peace form the integral roots of legitimate authority, just cause, and rightful intention. Augustine declares in the *City of God* that "...the ruler's use of force must be motivated by the love of others..."⁸⁶. The nature of civil religious rhetoric is only a self serving tool utilized to manipulate; truly this does not align with the demands that just war must be of legitimate (not coerced or manipulated) authority, and out of love and consideration for the other, not for self interest.

⁸⁵ Gregory M. Reichberg, Henrik Syse and Endre Begby, ed., *The Ethics of War: Classic and Contemporary Readings*, Oxford: Blackwell Publishing Limited, 2006.

The second part of the history of ethical thinking in regards to war examines the medieval period thinkers' concentration upon the concern of Holy War and the limits of violence and defense. With the pinnacle of the church as a socio-political entity, thoughts were directed to the relation and strength of the Church and war and how it must be wielded. The papacy, particularly Pope Urban II justify their warring behaviors and utter brutality by aligning themselves as God's chosen warriors given the legitimate authority to take back from the Persians what rightfully belonged to Him.

Medieval peace movements sought to declare religious limitations on warfare, but this time period was clearly dominated by the Church's perception of itself as a holy warrior, crusading justly for the righteous devotion that belonged to God. John of Salisbury recognizes these tyrannical attitudes and delicately urges both the Church community and the secular society to show restraint in its dealings of war and in their rhetorical attempts to justify war in the name of the Church. He heralds the ideals of liberty, safety, and respect of all and calls leaders to show such moderation in affairs of war and peace. The prominent Innocent IV also addresses critical issues of moderation and restraint within war and serves as a significant influence on Aquinas' later ideas of just war and Vitoria's emphatic views that non Christians should not be denied rights over their own property in light of a Christian kingdom.

Aquinas truly had much to say in light of improper language and the necessity to justify warfare:

It is always wrong and misguided for an individual, in relations with other individuals, or for a nation, in relations with other nations, to depart from or to make any exceptions to the immutable rules of morality, to depart from or to make any exceptions to the

⁸⁶ Ibid., 41-5.

immutable rules of morality in order to attain what may falsely appear to be a greater good (such as security of even survival).⁸⁷

Bush's use of civil religious rhetoric particularly falls under scrutiny for its false appearance to be fighting for the greater good as a crusader of justice over "the evil ones". According to that criterion alone, America's current situation with Iraq is unjustified. Furthermore Aquinas supports this claim by his argument that "war can be justified if it is waged by a proper governing authority and carried out for a just cause with the right intention of promoting the common good"⁸⁸. According to these criterion of just warfare presented by Aquinas, the plethora of civil religious rhetoric thrown around by Bush cannot justify this war.

The fifteenth through the seventeenth century ushers in the third part of just war thinking categorized by the Late Scholastic and Reformation writers. Reformers denounce the corruption of the Church in blurring the sacred and the profane in a pre-cursor to civil religion of the Puritans particularly concerning religion's rightful place in war. The writings of such thinkers work to strengthen and solidify the tenants of Just War as a solid governing theory comprised of principles such as necessity, discovery, defense and preventative war. Most notably is Vitoria's assault upon the Church and crown in justifying their ruthless "discovery" of the new world and their subsequent treatment of the native Indians in which they find. Vitoria radically asserts that this is not the Church's position to thrust Christianity by way of the sword and use the justification of a unbelieving faith as proper reasoning for taking land, property, and life. Obviously, this is quite reminiscent to the civil religious rhetoric utilized by the Puritans and their settlement of American, "the chosen nation".

⁸⁷ Skillen, 49.

⁸⁸ Ibid., 40.

Grotius also plays a significant part in constructing a systematized theory of just war. It is Grotius who initially purposely sets out to establish a full rationale of just war by identifying the very tenets and conditions that a just war operation must embody. These criterion include just cause for going to war, right intention in fighting, it must be the last resort, and victory must be possible and establish peace after the war is over⁸⁹. Bush's use of civil religious rhetoric as justification is a feeble attempt to satisfy these requirements, with little success and much contradiction.

The thinkers of the sixteenth through nineteenth centuries begin to fully embrace the notions of the concrete Just War Theory as a foundation in which just war must be waged and peace must be achieved. Within this time came the shift in focus from the Church as political power entity to a strong centralized government and the development of the nation state. This shift accounts for the fact that many thinkers such as Locke, Webster and Lieber must address the timely notions of how the military must act in accordance with proper treatment to the enemy in just war. The thoughts of Hobbes and Hegel also prove quite timely in their deliverance of opinions concerning the war and internal strife that rages within this continuing awareness of the government, nation, and the affirmation of identity for the individual.

Never in history has it been necessary to consider the threat of nuclear warfare and organized terrorism into our rationalizations as to the personality of a just war. However, within this unparalleled context of peace and justice in warfare, the wisdom of the voices of Just War Thinkers from ages past cannot be discounted as irrelevant and ignored. Each generation can and must learn from those before them in how they addressed matters cutting edge and puzzling

⁸⁹ Ibid., 3.

to their day in age. The wise American must scrutinize the language of war, the rhetoric of the civil religion. He or she must discover and subsequently embrace the overarching ethos of peace and justice tempered in a humble, yet dignified grace that the just war thinkers before us celebrated and then seek to apply these undermining intentions of their hearts to our unique contemporary questions concerning the presence of civil religious rhetoric.

MY ENEMIES ARE MEN LIKE ME

THE CHURCH'S RESPONSE TO CIVIL RELIGIOUS RHETORIC

In Christian theology, it is not nations that rid the world of evil—they are too often caught up in complicated webs of political power, economic interests, cultural clashes, and nationalist dreams. The confrontation with evil is a role reserved for God, and for the people of God when they faithfully exercise moral conscience. But God has not given the responsibility for overcoming evil to a nation-state, much less to a superpower with enormous wealth and particular national interests. To confuse the role of God with that of the American nation, as George Bush seems to do, is a serious theological error that some might say borders on idolatry or blasphemy.⁹⁰

In order to fully embrace the notion of fighting a just war instead of war in light of the perversion of civil religious rhetoric, one must have a proper understanding of this concept of community which stems from the principle of the natural law and the laws of justice unifying all of mankind. The just warrior must embrace the beauty of humanity and the sanctity of the individual life. The Christian community must reject the tendencies of civil religious rhetoric to dehumanize the enemy and set themselves up as superior by recognizing all as equal beings part of one global community implies further that we have responsibility to the other in which we recognize their basic person and needs just as significant as our own. Never before has this concept been timelier, for in this age of exponentially increasing globalization, one cannot ignore the presence and influence of others outside of his or her own geopolitical sphere. Society is growing more aware of the concept that “no man is an island”, and we can deal with

⁹⁰ Wallis.

globalization in two ways: the Church can recognize and embrace the commonalities and inherent struggles that we all possess as we live life in abundance and or we can further utilize it to justify attitudes of superiority and domain over those whom we deem as inferior due to dehumanization or inferiority perpetuated by civil religion, and the nuances and dissimilarities in cultural practices.

In recognizing the global community and the universality of the natural man, the danger of democratic superiority still does exist and must be eradicated in our speech. In embracing community, one must realize that this does not imply that all national boundaries, identities, and governments must be eradicated in an effort to embody this “global community” concept. If this was to occur, it would only be an attempt by one nation to exercise eminent domain over its other “weaker, less civilized” counterparts and make the world into one democratic utopia. National boundaries are not to be seen as a device that exalts one culture as superior beings while all others outside its lines are inferior. Instead, the nation state must be viewed as unique expressions of cultural individuality in which the culture most effectively preserves itself and provides for the basic, unique needs of the individual. Just because a nation is not democratic does not make it the weakest link in the global community, for it must be recognized that each culture in its uniqueness and self expression may find other systems of government significant and beneficial to the particular demands of that culture. This is not to dismiss the brutality of cruel dictators and civil wars as just part of culture, but instead to eradicate the presuppositions that those who may embrace monarchy or tribal ways of governing are inferior, backwards, or undeveloped.

By acknowledging the ultimate value of the community and the individual, one cannot escape that war goes beyond the violence and gore of guns and ammunition; war is in essence a battle over the recognition of the worth of the individual in the life of the community of humankind. Unlike war that is fought by a select few at certain times in history for particular causes, the struggle for love and acceptance by society is a war that rages within each and every individual at all times. Civil religious rhetoric works against this notion of equality and purpose, shrewdly sanctioning violence in attempt to exalt one over the other. Each word and action speaks to the other, affirming them as an equal with a valid purpose and worth to the society, or it condescends and instead becomes a power struggle of whose identity is greater in importance or whose contribution is more valuable to the community. Beyond the obvious atrocities of blood and slavery, the true tragedy of civil religious rhetoric is the undermining denial of equality and the rejection of one group or individual's place and worth within the global community.

The notion of the victim supports the universal atrocity of rejection, for the question arises, just who truly is the victim in war and civil religious rhetoric? Is it the one whose arms are raised in vulnerable surrender or the one whose arms are raised in arrogant attack? This duality testifies to the notion that in actuality both are being victimized. One is being rejected of worth and life, while the other falls victim to the utter debasement and foolishness of depriving himself out of being in community and learning from the other whom he brutally slays.

Goya's *The Third of May, 1808: The Execution of the Defenders of Madrid*⁹¹ painted in 1814 as a depiction of the atrocities of the Spanish insurrection against Napoleon stands as a poignant visual representation of both the universality and relevance of war to each individual by putting a sympathetic, personal face to the cold impersonal concept of war. In discussing war and going to battle, mankind becomes so detached to the true tragic nature of war because it is regarded more of a general theoretical concept instead of individuals fighting hand to hand and heart to heart. Likewise, through his painting Goya seeks to imply that people are not merely minor characters casting a backdrop for the story of *my* life. Instead each person is a unique character with a detailed persona all his or her own, and our relation together creates the story of *our* life. Goya's use of light to shift the focus of the painting to the individual under gunfire at the center of the page immediately evokes not only mere sympathy but also identity, for Goya's male represents all mankind. Each individual knows this nondescript character because he embodies us all, waiting our fate within society. Just as the character in the painting has his arms raised basking in the tension of awaiting his fate, so does all mankind wait, vulnerable and exposed to society's gun barrels; will we be accepted or rejected as equal, valuable, and worthy by society?

So how should the Christian respond to these fundamental beliefs of community and individual in light of civil religious rhetoric? The Church of all people should understand and embody just war more than anyone else on earth and serve as the definitive example of what it truly means to exercise justice within both war and peace. It is in Christ that the Christian is

⁹¹ Francisco De Goya, *The Third of May, 1808: The Execution of the Defenders of Madrid*. 1814, Oil on canvas, 266 x 345 cm., Museo del Prado, Madrid, Spain.

given the utmost example of this struggle to breathe life by embracing the sanctity and intrinsic value of each individual or to wrought death by language denying unique individuality, worthiness, purpose, and equality⁹². The fundamental teaching of Christ is one of unconditional, unmerited grace, embracing all of mankind as benefactors of the love and acceptance of God himself! Civil religious language perpetuates the desire to somehow make violence and dehumanization acceptable, and exalt ourselves as Americans to the place of saviors, bearers of redemption's hand of justice.

Instead, "...the church is about a business far more urgent, and more vast, than being a naïve agent of either rogue revolutionaries, on the one hand, or nation-states, on the other"⁹³. The Church therefore must embrace her calling to be a prophetic community of faith, boldly declaring and modeling these principles of community, grace and justice to the entire world. Of all the people within the world, the Church should be the first to recognize and celebrate the beautiful vivid testimony of the Creator God as revealed through His creative diversity in culture. Just as Christ has extended grace to humanity, so must each individual bestow that same grace to each other by loving your neighbor as yourself and loving your enemies⁹⁴. Condemning or disgracing the other does not elevate one as better than the other, and instead this rejection paralyzes all. The acceptance of the grace of Christ foremost and then subsequently bestowing that same grace upon the other resurrects the human soul. If the Bride of Christ truly seeks to abide as loyal to its Bridegroom it must decide: will grace be exercised, recognizing and

⁹² Jewitt, 250-1

⁹³ Avram, 11.

⁹⁴ Hilton in Avram, 156-7.

embracing the intrinsic value and sanctity of all life, or will death be carried out, the most severe expression of condemnation and rejection of the purpose of each individual? In situations of war and peace, all too often death and condemnation is chosen. Herein lies the timeliness and urgency of the message of the grace of Christ to debunk the rhetoric of civil religion.

It is vital to make the distinction that grace does not inherently denote unyielding, total pacifism, nor does it imply apathy to unjust oppression of the individual. The Church has too quickly and incorrectly interpreted its call to exercise the grace, peace, and justice of Christ. It seems as if in attempts to prefer the basic principles of the pacifist, heralding peaceful means to resolve disputes with violence being the ill preferred and last resort, the Church has instead become passive, paralyzed to any objection or action to stand up to the atrocities of a civil religion. This is a debilitating misnomer that has resulted in the Church becoming lazy and irrelevant, unable to transform culture by neglecting its call to be prophetic, declaring the love of Christ and applying his grace to all humanity and all situations. The Church must again learn the true nature of meekness: to exercise transforming power and truth under the control of the grace of her loving Savior.

Furthermore, if the Church is to embrace its call to be prophetic by speaking for those with no voice and making all society aware of atrocities and social injustice, the Church must make itself the most socially and politically aware people in all the world. Christians bear the responsibility to continuously be vigilant and not naïve or ignorant of the needs of the individual and cultures as a whole. The Church must be aware of the reality that it is “an international communion committed to truth-telling”, not hiding behind words or actions that manipulate a

specific political agenda.⁹⁵ In order to answer the questions that we face in applying the Just War Theory and ultimately the transforming grace of Christ to the present day issues of all nations and peoples, we must remain knowledgeable and educated about current events, policies, changes, philosophies, challenges and attitudes that leave their imprint upon each nation and the individual. We must recognize that the Church is universal; heaven is a gorgeous display of diversity. The Church must embrace its global scale with its great responsibilities as Wallis details:

In the meantime, American Christians will have to make some difficult choices. Will we stand in solidarity with the worldwide church, the international body of Christ—or with our own American government? It's not a surprise to note that the global church does not generally support the foreign policy goals of the Bush administration—whether in Iraq, the Middle East, or the wider "war on terrorism." Only from inside some of our U.S. churches does one find religious voices consonant with the visions of American empire.⁹⁶

It also must be noted that the principle of proportionality as advocated by Just War theorists is not in contrast to Christian grace. Instead, principles of proportional warfare must be tempered with grace. As we battle, the process of continuously questioning our motives and intentions should be dealt with honestly, and in light of a proper understanding of the sanctity of life and the individual. The concept of grace does not cancel out proportional fighting, instead it should guide our suppositions as to what is proportional and if the act of the enemy is one that demands equal, lesser, or no response at all. Too often the verse of Exodus 21:24 declaring “an eye for an eye, tooth for tooth”, is considered without regards to its true graceful, compensation nature (and not revenge) or without regard to Jesus’ nullification of it altogether as further perpetuated in verse 26 and 27 of that same chapter: "And if a man smite the eye of his bondman, or of his

⁹⁵ Andrew Goddard, *When Is War Justified*, England: Grove Books, 2003: 13.

⁹⁶ Wallis.

bondwoman, and destroy it, he shall let him go free for his eye's sake. And if he smite out his bondman's tooth, or his bondwoman's tooth, he shall let him go free for his tooth's sake.”

The Church in response to war must ultimately view themselves as enablers rather than warriors. This is in tune with both the teachings of Christ and the Just War Theory and particularly in harmony with the declaration by Augustine that “war should be waged only as a necessity and preserve them in peace...war is waged in order that peace may be obtained”.⁹⁷ War then must be seen not as a sword to wield arrogant domain and ruthless power in attempts to fuel the human ego; war should be seen as a tool to be applied with caution and grace as the absolutely last resort with all other possibilities and channels exhausted to fix injustice and enable the individual to finally embrace their intrinsic worth and utmost purpose within society and within the Kingdom of God. Wallis sums up this imperative to the Christian community in the following remarks:

In our own American history, religion has been lifted up for public life in two very different ways. One invokes the name of God and faith in order to hold us accountable to God's intentions—to call us to justice, compassion, humility, repentance, and reconciliation....The other way invokes God's blessing on our activities, agendas, and purposes. Many presidents and political leaders have used the language of religion like this, and George W. Bush is falling prey to that same temptation. Christians should always live uneasily with empire, which constantly threatens to become idolatrous and substitute secular purposes for God's. As we reflect on our response to the American empire and what it stands for, a reflection on the early church and empire is instructive.⁹⁸

Through the heart of the Just War Theory, mankind is challenged to peel the layers of nonchalant attitudes and arrogant facades shrouded in flowery civil religious rhetoric and recognize that each individual desires to be loved, accepted, and deemed worthy. Each word and action must reconcile this tension of being both literal and/or figurative ammunition shooting

⁹⁷ Augustine as quoted in O'Donovan, 135.

rejection and judgment or embracing humanity and calling a cease fire, leaving the bullets within their casings. The Church must sound the universal call to all humanity to lay down our guns, drop our defenses, and dwell with each other as equals all neutral upon the field of battle. This choice is forever directly beckoning all members of society: will our every word and action affirm the worth of the individual or will they condemn his or her purpose and value in the global community?

⁹⁸ Wallis

CONCLUSION

The legacy of Civil Religious rhetoric is deeply entrenched in American society in politics, but is not a lost cause for the Christian community. “The political community does not itself have to be a community of faith supported by a civil religion in order to have strong, differentiated civic bonds built of shared memories and, most importantly, a shared confidence that the constitution and the government are pursuing public justice”.⁹⁹ The church should embrace the value of each and every individual as an expression of their lord and savior Christ, instead of an evildoer and a pawn in the game of war for the sake of democracy. It must choose this day whom they will serve: will the church be enslaved to a civil religion that utilizes God as the justification for political gain, or will it choose to see past the detriments of civil religious rhetoric and be kingdom citizens who reflect the goodness of God to all mankind?

Ultimately, the difference between condoning a civil religious experience and expressing faith in Christ comes down to word and deed. Civil religion is forever masked behind mere words, while celebrating a true Christian heritage transcends verbal recognition and manifests itself in actions of love. For in the words of Ralph Waldo Emerson: “In the soul, then, let redemption be sought. In one soul, in your soul, there are resources for the world. Wherever a man comes, there comes a revolution.”

⁹⁹ Skillen, 77.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books

- Al-Hibri, Azizah, Jean Bethke Elshtain, and Charles C. Haynes. *Religion in American Public Life: Living with Our Deepest Differences*. New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 2001.
- Avram, Wes. *Anxious About Empire: Theological Essays on the New Global Realities*. Grand Rapids: Brazos Press. 2004.
- Baron, Salo Wittmayer. *Modern Nationalism and Religion*. New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1947.
- Bellah, Robert N. *The Broken Covenant: American Civil Religion in Time of Trial*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1992.
- Campbell, James I. *The Language of Religion*. New York: The Bruce Publishing Company, 1971.
- Charles, J. Daryl. *Between Pacifism and Jihad: Just War and Christian Tradition*. Chicago: InterVarsity Press, 2005.
- Clapp, Rodney. *A Peculiar People: The Church as Culture in a Post-Christian Society*. Downers Grove: Intervarsity Press, 1996.
- Corbett, Michael, and Julia Mitchell Corbett. *Politics and Religion in the United States*. New York: Garland Publishing, 1999.
- Ellis, Marc H. *Unholy Alliance: Religion and Atrocity in Our Time*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1997.
- Emerson, Ralph Waldo. *Self-Reliance and Other Essays*. New York: Dover Publications, Inc. 1993.
- Friedman, Thomas L. *The Lexus and the Olive Tree: Understanding Globalization*. New York: Anchor Books, 2000.

- Goddard, Andrew. *When Is War Justified*. England: Grove Books, 2003.
- Heelas, Paul. *Religion, Modernity, and Postmodernity*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1998.
- Hughes, Richard T. *Myths America Lives By*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2003.
- Hutchison, William R., and Hartmut Lehmann, ed. *Many Are Chosen: Divine Election and Western Nationalism*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1994.
- Jewett, Robert, and John Shelton Lawrence. *Captain America and the Crusade Against Evil: The Dilemma of Zealous Nationalism*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2003.
- Juergensmeyer, Mark. *The New Cold War? Religious Nationalism Confronts the Secular State*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993.
- Marvin, Carolyn and David W. Ingle. *Blood Sacrifice and the Nation: Totem Rituals and the American Flag*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999.
- May, Larry, Eric Rovie, and Steve Viner. *The Morality of War: Classical and Contemporary Readings*. Upper Saddle River: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2006.
- Noll, Mark A., Nathan O. Hatch, and George M. Marsden. *The Search For Christian America*. Westchester: Crossway Books, 1983.
- O'Donovan, Oliver. *The Just War Revisited*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003.
- Parsons, Gerald. *Perspectives on Civil Religion*. Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2002.
- Pierard, Richard V., and Robert D. Linder. *Civil Religion & the Presidency*. Grand Rapids: Academie Books, 1988.
- Reichberg, Gregory M; Henrik Syse and Endre Begby, ed., *The Ethics of War: Classic and Contemporary Readings*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing Limited, 2006.
- Richey, Russell E. and Donald G. Jones, eds. *American Civil Religion*. New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1974.

Sherrill, Rowland A., ed. *Religion and the Life of the Nation*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1990.

Skillen, James W. *With or Against the World? America's Role Among the Nations*. Lanham: Bowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc. 2005

Van der Veer, Peter and Hartmut Lehmann, eds. *Nation and Religion: Perspectives on Europe and Asia*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999.

Van De Weyer, Robert. *The Shared Well: A Concise Guide to Relations Between Islam and the West*. Washington DC: Brassey's Inc., 2002.

Wald, Kenneth D. *Religion and Politics in the United States*. Washington D.C.: CQ Press, 1997.

Wells, Ronald A, ed. *The Wars of America: Christian Views*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1981.

Wuthnow, Robert. *The Restructuring of American Religion*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988.

Articles

Bush, George W. "September 11, 2001 Address to the Nation". Accessed by <http://www.americanrhetoric.com>.

Bush, George W. "President's Address from Cabinet Room following Cabinet Meeting, 12 September 2001". Accessed by <http://www.americanrhetoric.com>.

Bush, George W. "A Proclamation on the National Day of Prayer and Remembrance for the Victims of the Terrorists Attacks". Given on September 13, 2001. Accessed by <http://www.americanrhetoric.com>.

Bush, George W. "Remarks at the National Prayer Day of Remembrance". Given on September 14, 2001. Accessed by <http://www.americanrhetoric.com>.

Bush, George W. "Address to Joint Session on Terrorist Attacks". Given on September 20, 2001, Accessed by <http://www.americanrhetoric.com>.

Bush, George W. "President's Remarks at the United Nations General Assembly". Given on September 12, 2002. Accessed by <http://www.whitehouse.gov>.

Bush, George W. "President's Remarks to the Nation at Ellis Island". Given on September 11, 2002. Accessed by <http://www.whitehouse.gov>.

Lamarque, Kevin. "Madeline Albright Opens Up". *Time Magazine*. (27 April 2006) Accessed by <http://www.time.com>.

Wallis, Jim. "Dangerous Religion: George W. Bush's theology of empire". *Sojourners Magazine*. (September-October 2003) Accessed by <http://www.sojo.net>.

Paintings

De Goya, Francisco. *The Third of May, 1808: The Execution of the Defenders of Madrid*. 1814. Oil on canvas, 266 x 345 cm. Museo del Prado, Madrid, Spain.