

POSTMODERN GEOPOLITICS?

The modern geopolitical imagination and beyond

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Globalization, it would appear, can implode geopolitics.

Luke (1994: 626)

The challenge for a mode of representation adequate to our post-modern times is . . . to articulate an understanding of world politics attuned to the need to move beyond the sovereignty problematic, with its focus on geopolitical segmentarity, settled subjects, and economic power, that appreciates the significance of flows, networks, webs, and the identity formations located therein but does not resort simply to the addition of another level of analysis or of more agents to the picture.

Campbell (1996: 19)

A certain amount of mess is perhaps the most general characteristic of human society, past and present.

Mann (1996: 1964)

We live in complicated and confusing times, in spaces traversed by global flows and warped by the intensity and speed of information technologies. Whether we term it late modernity or postmodernity, it is a condition that is unevenly yet unmistakably eroding our inherited ontologies and fixed imaginations of 'how the world works.' Our conveniently conventional geopolitical imagination, which envisions and maps the world in terms of spatial blocs, territorial presence and fixed identities, is no longer adequate in a world where space appears to be left behind by pace, where territoriality is under eclipse by telemetricity, and where simple settled identities are blurring into networks of complex unsettled hybridity. The postmodern condition seems to problematize and unsettle the modern geopolitical map; its disturbs its time-worn conditions of possibility, its conventional geographical rhetoric, its traditional territorial objects, and ontological purities. Does, therefore, postmodernity give us a new geopolitics?

The need profoundly to rethink constellations of knowledge like 'geopolitics' on the eve of the new millennium is a consequence of everyday global practices

and networks, which are regularly calling geopolitics as we have known it into question: economic globalization, global media flows, the Internet, transnational webs of crime, the hyper-real universe of information perpetually conditioning the practices of statecraft in the late twentieth century. This chapter seeks to rethink geopolitics by engaging in a critical dialogue with the theoretical schemata of John Agnew, Timothy Luke and others on the historical past, confusing present, and speculative future of geopolitics as a sign of the representations of space and the spatial practices underpinning world politics. Agnew (1998: 5) suggests that 'the history of modern world politics has been structured by practices based on a set of understandings about "the way the world works" that together constitute the elements of the modern geopolitical imagination.' This geopolitical imagination, which has its beginnings in sixteenth-century Europe, has structured and conditioned world politics ever since. Though the balance of power between the dominant world powers has changed down the centuries, as has the nature of the international economy, Agnew claims that the modern geopolitical imagination 'still remains prevalent in framing the conduct of world politics' (1998: 6). Yet Agnew himself (1998), Luke and others describe a contemporary state of affairs that puts this observation into question.

Outlining first Agnew's reading of the modern geopolitical imagination, this chapter seeks to complement Agnew's categorization of modern geopolitics using Luke's (1994, 1995, 1996) speculative writings and those of others to suggest the outlines of a *postmodern geopolitics* that disturbs yet, I wish to suggest in the conclusion, has not fully transcended the modern geopolitical imagination. Like the works it engages, this chapter is inevitably historically sweeping and theoretically speculative. It reviews and clarifies the historical schemata and ideal constructs that have been used to explain and understand our contemporary geopolitical conjuncture. As heuristic abstractions and ideal types, these schemata and classifications are far from perfect. They tend to smooth out the messy historicity and complex spatiality of geopolitical discourses and practices, attributing a deep logic and underlining coherence to these that they may not necessarily have. Nevertheless, these schemata have an undeniable heuristic and pedagogic value, provocatively clarifying yet also doubtlessly simplifying the dense history, confused present, and possible future forms of geopolitics. While the contrast between a modern and a postmodern geopolitics can lead to an unnecessary and misleading logic of dichotomization, it is nevertheless incumbent upon critical geopoliticians to theorize how the modes of representation and conditions of practice of geopolitics are changing on the eve of the twenty-first century. Geopolitics, as I have suggested elsewhere, is best studied in its messy contextual specificity (Ó Tuathail 1996). Engaging that contextual specificity today requires speculative theorization of the condition of postmodernity and the multiple transformations it is inducing in the contemporary forms and practices of geopolitics.

Modern geopolitics

The term 'geopolitics' dates from the late nineteenth century but has become in the late twentieth century a widely used signifier for the spatiality of world politics. John Agnew, on his own and together with Stuart Corbridge, has sought to give the concept some rigor and specificity, offering what is perhaps the most comprehensive historical and materialist theory of modern geopolitics in recent years (Agnew and Corbridge 1995; Agnew 1998). Blending the Marxian political economy of the Italian Communist Antonio Gramsci and the idiosyncratic writings on space of the French philosopher Henri Lefebvre with a qualified anti-textualist critical geopolitics, Agnew provides a general theory of geopolitics that treats it both as practices and ideas, as a materialist world order and as a discursive set of understandings and enframing rules. The result is what both Agnew and Corbridge once termed 'geopolitical economy,' a hybrid of geopolitics and political economy (Agnew and Corbridge 1989).¹

From Lefebvre, Agnew and Corbridge take the distinction between spatial practices and representations of space (Lefebvre 1991: 38–39).² Spatial practices for them 'refer to the material and physical flows, interactions, and movements that occur in and across space as fundamental features of economic production and social reproduction' (Agnew and Corbridge 1995: 7). Spatial practices are the everyday material practices across space that help to consolidate worldwide orders of political economy. Representations of space 'involve all of the concepts, naming practices, and geographical codes used to talk about and understand spatial practices.' Implicitly, spatial practices are a pre-discursive materiality, while representations of space are ideology and discourse. Haunting this schema, of course, is the longstanding and unsustainable Marxist distinction between practices and discourse. Aware of this yet nevertheless dependent upon it, Agnew and Corbridge stress the 'dialectical relations' between the categories as a means of handling this recurrent divide.

Building on these distinctions, Agnew and Corbridge make a crucial distinction between geopolitical order and geopolitical discourse, the first a worldwide political economy of spatial practices, while the second is a congealed hegemonic organization of representations of space. Their notion of hegemony, derived from Gramsci and supplemented by the work of Robert Cox (1987), places great emphasis on the ensemble of rules and regulations enmeshing and conditioning actors in world politics. They specify a geopolitical order thus:

In our usage 'order' refers to the routinized rules, institutions, activities and strategies through which the international political economy operates in different historical periods. The qualifying term 'geopolitical' draws attention to the geographical elements of a world order. . . . Orders necessarily have geographical characteristics. These include the relative degree of centrality of state territoriality to social and economic activities, the nature of the hierarchy of states (dominated by one or a

number of states, the degree of state equality), the spatial scope of the activities of different states and other actors such as international organizations and businesses, the spatial connectedness or disconnectedness between various actors, the conditioning effects of informational and military technologies upon spatial interaction, and the ranking of world regions and particular states by the dominant states in terms of 'threats' to their military and economic 'security.'

(Agnew and Corbridge 1995: 15)

Emphasizing the historical emergence of a 'society of territorial states' and modern rules about 'power politics' after the Napoleonic Wars, Agnew and Corbridge specify three different geopolitical orders: the British geopolitical order (1815–1875), the geopolitical order of inter-imperialist rivalry (1875–1945), and the Cold War geopolitical order (1945–1990) (Table 1.1). There is a certain slippage in Agnew and Corbridge's schema between historical periods, geopolitical orders, and the condition of hegemony, a function, I have argued elsewhere, of the imprecision of the Gramscian notion of hegemony, when a condition of hegemony does or does not exist (Ó Tuathail, 1995). They note that 'a geopolitical order is always partial and precarious' (p. 19) but nevertheless specify their geopolitical orders as permanent, discrete, identifiable periods of time. While they allow a geopolitical order without a hegemon (a dominant state), they do not conceive of a geopolitical order without a condition of hegemony. Geopolitical order is hegemony. A non-hegemonic geopolitical order is not admitted as a possibility. The current post-Cold War epoch is described as a hegemony without a dominant state hegemon, a geopolitical order dominated by powerful countries like Germany, Japan and the United States, integrated by worldwide markets and regulated by transnational institutions and organizations like the European Union, the World Trade Organisation, the International Monetary Fund, and the World Bank (Agnew and Corbridge 1995: 193). The hegemonic ideology of this epoch is transnational liberalism, the belief that universal progress lies in the expansion and extension of capitalist markets across the globe.

Geopolitical discourse, for Agnew and Corbridge, is the discourse by which intellectuals of statecraft, both formal theorists and practitioners, spatialize world

Table 1.1 Modern geopolitics (after Agnew 1998; Agnew and Corbridge 1995).

<i>Spatial practices</i>	<i>Representations of space</i>	
Geopolitical Order	Geopolitical Discourse	
British Geopolitical Order, 1815–75	Civilizational Geopolitics	
Inter-Imperial Rivalry, 1875–1945	Naturalized Geopolitics	
Cold War Geopolitical Order, 1945–90	Ideological Geopolitics	
Transnational Liberalism, 1991–?	Enlargement Geopolitics	

politics. It refers to the reading and writing of a geography around the international political economy. It involves the 'deployment of representations of space which guide the spatial practices central to a geopolitical order' (*ibid.*: 47). Rejecting what they see as the idealism of the textualist approach and the determinism and functionalism of geopolitics-as-ideology, they stress the contingent relationship between thought and practice: 'modes of representation are implicit in practice but are subject to revision as practice changes. Spatial practices and representations of space are dialectically interwoven. In other words, the spatial conditions of material life are shaped through their representations as certainly as representations are shaped by the spatial contours of material life' (*ibid.*: 47).

Just as certain organizations of spatial practices become hegemonic geopolitical orders, so also do certain dominant modes of geopolitical representation become hegemonic geopolitical discourses, epistemological enforcers that suggest to people how they should live, think, and imagine how the world works. While acknowledging that hegemonic orders of geopolitical discourse are, like all conditions of hegemony, fluid, contingent, and perpetually shifting in response to challenge, they nevertheless identify three relatively stable and sweeping historical modes of geopolitical representation, which correspond to the three geopolitical orders already identified: civilizational geopolitics (1815–1875), naturalized geopolitics (1875–1945) and ideological geopolitics (1945–1990) (see Table 1.1). Although Agnew and Corbridge are not explicit about it, the dominant representations of space in the contemporary period could be termed, after the Clinton administration's strategy of enlarging the community of so-called 'market democracies' (a questionable construct that is deeply riven by contradictions and tensions of many kinds), *enlargement geopolitics* (Ó Tuathail and Luke 1994). In all cases, 'the practical geopolitical reasoning of political elites is the link between the dominant representations of space and the geopolitical order of dominant spatial practices' (Agnew and Corbridge 1995: 48).

Enframing and conditioning all these historical and hegemonic modes of geopolitical representation are even more abstract and sweeping macro-historical principles that define 'modern geopolitical discourse.' In *Mastering Space*, the beginnings of modern geopolitical discourse are traced back to the encounters between Europeans and non-European others during the 'Age of Discovery.' While previous empires and social orders long had notions of 'otherness,' Agnew and Corbridge claim that the 'singular trait of modern geopolitical discourse' is its representation of 'others as "backward" or permanently disadvantaged if they remained as they are' (*ibid.*: 49). Europe's others were fixed for all time in a state of inferiority to Europe. They were represented as Europe's past, as the external barbarity and savagery that defined the civilization of Europe. Geographical difference was translated into a temporal schema of backward and modern. To travel beyond Europe, therefore, was to travel back in time, to earlier backward stages in the evolution of human civilization (Doty 1996; Gregory 1994; Grovogui 1996).

These ideas about an overarching modern geopolitical mentality are consider-

ably expanded in Agnew's *Geopolitics: Re-Visioning World Politics* (1998). In this work, Agnew identifies a series of meta-theoretical characteristics of 'the modern geopolitical imagination' that has its beginning during the Renaissance. Though he continues to emphasize the 'singular trait' noted above, the new 'primary feature' or 'most distinguishing feature' of the modern geopolitical imagination, he argues, is a 'global visualization' without which world politics would not be possible. The development of the philosophy and cartographic techniques of global visualization in Europe from the sixteenth century onwards made modern geopolitics possible, for it enabled the seeing of the world as a unitary, albeit still incomplete, whole. The technical invention of perspective made possible the consideration of the world-as-a-picture from a single-eye vantage point. Cartesian philosophy rendered this monocular eye a point of objectivity upon the world. This objective seeing of the world as a unified homogeneous whole led to its differentiation by Europeans into a horizontal hierarchy of places. Ancient binary geographies and hierarchies were recycled to differentiate the globe into vast swathes of fixed and essentialist space.³ Local difference was cartographically purified and translated into pervasive global danger.

A second characteristic of the modern geopolitical imagination for Agnew reiterates his earlier argument: time is turned into space. Blocks of space are isolated and 'labeled with essential attributes of different time-periods relative to the idealized historical experience of one of the blocks' (1998: ch. 2). This spatial mode of representing the 'modern' generates those binary geographies that have been persistently part of geopolitics since the Renaissance: developed and backward, modern and traditional, West and East, the Occident and the Orient. Each hegemonic geopolitical order gives its own particular meaning and value to these terms. Hegemonic states, according to Taylor (1996), are laboratories of modernity producing hegemonic visions of modern politics, economy, culture, and ordinary everyday comfort. They project an idealized vision of their present – seventeenth-century Amsterdam, nineteenth-century Manchester or mid-twentieth-century Los Angeles – to the rest of the world as its future. This practice tends to organize the geography of the world ethnocentrically into a hierarchy of spaces defined in terms of their degree of modernity, progress and development *vis-à-vis* the ordinary modernity of the hegemon. The Cold War division of the globe into three worlds and Walt Rostow's modernization-as-development theories on the stages of economic growth were merely the latest manifestations of this longstanding feature of the modern geopolitical imagination.

A third characteristic of the modern geopolitical imagination is its state-centered representation of global space, what Agnew (1994) terms the 'territorial trap.' This state-centered approach to world politics has evolved in both practical and formal geopolitical reasoning over the centuries. According to Agnew, it is underpinned by three geographical assumptions: '(1) that states have an exclusive power within their territories as represented by the concept of sovereignty; (2) that "domestic" and "foreign" affairs are essentially separate realms in which

different rules obtain; and (3) the boundaries of the state define the boundaries of society such that the latter is "contained" by the former' (1998: ch. 3 1). All of these assumptions are historically questionable and tenuous, yet they nevertheless function in the practices of everyday statecraft to give world politics a geopolitical segmentarity and territorially defined sets of boundaries and identities (Murphy 1996). While these identities or imaginations of in-stated space are often precarious and contested they are nevertheless enforced by a complex of state institutions, international organizations, and everyday social practices. Geopolitics is made not given.

A fourth component of the modern geopolitical imagination isolated by Agnew is the pursuit of primacy by dominant states in the inter-state system. Although nominally equal sovereign entities, states in the modern inter-state system are in reality radically different from each other in geographic location, territorial extent, natural resource endowment, social organization, political leadership, and power potential. These differences have long been classified and conceptualized by geopoliticians within the context of relative struggles for power between states. The pursuit of primacy, at the local, regional and global scales, by dominant states has generated discourses that have sought to explain and justify state militarism, territorial expansionism, overseas imperialism and warfare as inevitable consequences of the uneven distribution of power potential across the globe and timeless 'laws' of competition between states under conditions of anarchy for finite resources. In the late nineteenth century and throughout the twentieth century, the 'realist' language of power politics blended with the so-called 'scientific' language of emergent modern disciplines like geography and biology to create geopolitical discourses and practices that were strongly social Darwinist in tone, locating and explaining various orders of civilizational, racial and statist hierarchy in a primordial 'state of nature.' The geopolitical assumptions that, first, 'power flows from advantages of geographical location, size of population and natural resources' and, second, 'that power is entirely an attribute of territorial states that attempt to monopolize it in competition with other states' are, Agnew (ch. 4) correctly notes, no longer plausible, and their redundancy is evidence of the limits and historical contingency of the modern geopolitical imagination.

So characterized, geopolitics can be described as a particular mode of representing global space. The practices of global visualization that produce the world-as-a-picture are dependent upon an unproblematic Cartesian perspectivism, a supposed view from nowhere that in practice historically represented particularistic views from Europe and the West generally as objective renditions of global space. The hierarchical organizations of global space into essentialist blocs are dependent upon the deep logocentrism of the Western tradition, which has sought to discipline contingency by appeal to the underlying truths of science, history, and nature. The containment of the dynamic currents of global space by territorial geometries and spatial dichotomies mobilizes a metaphysics of presence that makes borders, divisions, and frontiers possible.

Revealing this dependence of modern geopolitics on an order of philosophical commitments and conceits is not to absolutize geopolitics as discourse (contra Agnew 1998). Geopolitics is state philosophy, a technology of governmentality. It was conceived and nurtured in the imperial capitals of the Great Powers, in their learned academies, in the map and war rooms of ambitious expansionist states. A parochial imperialist gaze that represented lands beyond the horizon as spaces of destiny, it helped to colonize the globe with networks of communication, logistics of war, and ethnocentric models of territorial organization (Marellart 1996). The modern geopolitical imagination is a legacy of the imposition of European territorial forms across the globe from the sixteenth century, an order of power over the Earth that sought to discipline its infinite spaces – internal and external, mountain and valley, land and sea – around sovereign presence and immanent logos. Global space was stamped by essential presence (and absence), organized into natural regions and hierarchies, graded for its inherent value and worth, and marked as the destined property of providential authorities.

Yet, this order of geo-power and its epistemological imperialism has not gone without challenge from alternative subjugated forms of organizing space and graphing the geo (Gregory 1994). In recent decades, the modern geopolitical project has appeared more precarious than before as globalization has rearranged the interconnectivity and functional boundaries of the world political map (Luke 1996b). Today, the fraying of the modern geopolitical project is becoming more and more evident as the daily practices of 'global life' slip territorial bounds and accelerate beyond the modern map, prompting declarations of the 'end of geopolitics' (Ó Tuathail 1997a). It is to the fraying lines and edges of the modern map, to the interruptions of the postmodern within our still nominally modern world politics, that we now turn.

Postmodern geopolitics

A series of distinct yet nevertheless related tendencies have served in recent years to generate considerable speculation about the 'end of the modern' in contemporary world politics. The first is the long relative decline of American hegemony in world politics, an inevitable process that has had many symbolic turning points: the end of the Bretton Woods system of pegged exchange rates, the oil crises of the 1970s, the US withdrawal and *de facto* defeat in Vietnam (Cox 1987). The second is the concurrent and also long-term increasing relative intensity of economic globalization, a phenomenon that is hardly new but that has *appeared* in the last decade to be a profound structural change away from a predominantly statist international political economy towards a deterritorialized global economy (Kofman and Young 1996, Mittelman 1996).⁴ Again, many processes and events are read as symbolic of an inevitable and unstoppable 'globalization': the emergence of global financial space, the widespread adoption of flexible specialization production methods, the explosion of transnational

investment in the United States, the implementation of the NAFTA, the burgeoning US trade deficits with Japan and now China (Harvey 1996; Greider 1997; Leyshon 1996). The third tendency involves the oft-described 'revolutionary changes' wrought by the establishment, adoption, and ever-increasing diffusion of new information technologies throughout the interstices of societies, economies, and politics: facsimile machines, satellite technologies, personal computers, cable television, and, in recent years, networked computers, wireless communications, and the Internet (Tapscott 1996). In keeping with McLuhan's famous declaration that the 'medium is the message,' many theorists have, with considerable justification, argued that these technologies have radically remade the bonds, boundaries and subjectivities of actors, societies, economies, and politics as they have unfolded across global space, itself transformed by the process (Poster 1995; Morley and Robins 1995). All three tendencies in combination with others – increasing ease of transnational transportation and mass travel, the consolidation of transnational media empires, continued transnational migration – have generated a widespread fourth tendency, the disembedding of societies from their nominal territorial roots, the shrinkage and collapse of traditional conceptions of scale, and the emergence of a fluid experience of 'global life' (Appadurai 1996). In a world where traditional centers no longer hold, technologies of time-space compression are colliding modern scales into each other and generating postmodern local/global fusions that many have termed 'glocalization' (Agnew and Corbridge 1995: 188–207; Robertson 1995).

Does glocalization, as Luke (1994: 626) suggests, implode geopolitics? One means of exploring this question is to trace the emergence of new forms of imagining global space in the condition of postmodernity, new modes of representation that Campbell (1996), like many others, identifies with *flows, networks, and webs* (Appadurai 1996; Castells 1989; Shapiro and Alker 1996). Describing the eroding of once discrete national economies by flows of transnational commerce, Robert Reich (1991) identifies 'global webs' as the emergent economic geometry of the contemporary epoch. Corporate nationality is becoming increasingly irrelevant as formerly centralized corporations restructure themselves into web-like organizations with global reach. Power and wealth flows to those groups with the most valuable skills in problem solving, problem identifying and strategic brokering. 'As the world shrinks through efficiencies in telecommunications and transportation, such groups in one nation are able to combine their skills with those of people located in other nations in order to provide the greatest value to customers located almost anywhere' (*ibid.*: 111). Contemporary information technologies are fundamental to this new geometry of power. 'The threads of the global web are computers, facsimile machines, satellites, high-resolution monitors, and modems – all of them linking designers, engineers, contractors, licensees, and dealers worldwide' (*ibid.*: 111).

Manuel Castells (1996) pushes this further, suggesting that the dominant functions and processes of the information age are inducing a new *network soci-*

ety. While networks have long existed, 'the new information technology paradigm provides the material basis for its pervasive expansion throughout the entire social structure.' Networks, he argues, 'constitute the new social morphology of our societies, and the diffusion of networking logic substantially modifies the operation and outcome of processes of production, experience, power and culture' (1996: 469). They are making new types of spatial practices possible. Being part of a network, a set of interconnected nodes, is crucial to the exercise of power in the information age. Switches connecting networks are the privileged instruments of power. 'The switchers are the power holders' (*ibid.*: 471). Yet the switchers are powerful only by virtue of the network that 'induces a social determination of a higher level' than that of any social interest expressed through or located at any node or point along the network. Echoing earlier arguments (Castells 1988), he declares that 'the power of flows takes precedence over the flows of power' (1996: 469).

Castells' technologically driven analysis subsumes all the 'new' geo-graphing tropes of postmodernity – flows, webs, connectivity, and networks – within a schema that is ultimately eclectic and *ad hoc*. Bruno Latour's (1993, 1997) notion of the network is more ontologically radical than Castells' grab-bag conception. Challenging the operation of what he terms the 'Modern Constitution,' which legislates an ontology that holds that (1) 'even though we construct Nature, Nature is as if we did not construct it' and (2) 'even though we do not construct Society, Society is as if we did construct it,' Latour (1993, 32) claims that we have never strictly been modern, for we do not abide by the terms of the Modern Constitution. A vast middle kingdom of hybrids, of quasi-objects and quasi-subjects, of cyborgs and monsters, is the proliferating product of the socio-technical networks that make up the unacknowledged nonmodern world. So numerous and multiple have these nature–society–object–discourse amalgamations become that they have strained the acts of purification and translation needed to keep the Modern Constitution intact. Our Enlightenment ontologies struggle to make sense of a world where humans and nature are so intimately interdigitated with scientific and technological systems of all kinds.

The subjects, objects, and actors our postmodernity has thrown up are all impure, hybrid, boundary creatures. Our world, he suggests, is a made up of collectives of humans and nonhumans. It is best described as composed of 'actor-networks,' which are more than the technical or social networks isolated and described by Castells. Actor-network theory, Latour (1997) writes, 'claims that modern societies cannot be described without recognizing them as having a fibrous, thread-like, wiry, stringy, ropy, capillary character that is never captured by the notions of levels, layers, territories, spheres, categories, structure, systems. . . . Literally there is nothing but networks.' Thinking in terms of networks, according to Latour, problematizes proximity/distance and local/global distinctions, in short geography as we have conventionally known it. The science of geography, of mapping, measuring and triangulating physical space, is useless, according to Latour, for actor-network theory, for it seeks to define universal

measures of proximity, distance, and scale based on physical measurements. Proximity, distance, and scale, however, are defined by the connectivity of a network. 'The notion of a network helps us to lift the tyranny of geographers in defining space and offers us a notion which is neither social nor "real" space, but associations' (*ibid.*). If geography is reconceptualized as connectivity not space, traditional 'real space' geography is merely one network among multitudes.

Using fragments from these and many other theorists – Marx, Mumford, Lukacs, Baudrillard, and Virilio – Luke (1994, 1995, 1996c, this volume) outlines a suggestive McLuhan-like three-stage narrative for conceptualizing the shifting relationship between humans and nature, and the transformative environments and orders of time-space these generate. Luke begins with first nature, an order of time-space where the relationship between humans and nature is largely unmediated by complex technological systems. In this ideal schema, the principle of spatial ordering is organic and corporeal. 'The wetware of the human body measured space, marked distance, metered time, and defined order with infinite variation in the contemporary manifestations of each traditional society' (Luke 1996c: 123). The enveloping environment and lifeworld is the natural biosphere. If first nature has a geopolitics, it is one organized by terrestrial visions and practices (see Table 1.2).⁵

Luke's schema is not strictly successionist; older orders of space are certainly succeeded and displaced by newer ones, but the older orders do not necessarily disappear. The social order of primordial communities in organic space prevailed before the invention and implementation of city and state building but also beyond it (*ibid.*: 124). Echoing Lukacs and Mumford, Luke describes second nature as the artificial technosphere manufactured and built by modern industrial capitalism from the eighteenth century onwards. Its spatial orderings are engineered, its lifeworld the artificial technosphere created by humans and mechanical machines, its landscapes those of cities and states, its identities those of nations, peoples, and ethnicities. In contrast to the localistic corporeal technologies of first nature, second nature is spatialized by evolving hardware complexes of railways, electrical grids, steamships, hard-surface roads, canals, and telegraph/telephone systems (*ibid.*: 125; Matellart 1996). Space is mastered

Table 1.2 Three geopolitical natures (after Luke 1994, 1995, 1996c).

First nature	Second nature	Third nature
Agrarian antiquity	Modern industrial capitalism	Postmodern informational capitalism
Natural biosphere	Artificial technosphere	Informational cybersphere
Earth and gods	Map and clock	Television and computer
Organic spatiality	Engineered spatiality	Cybernetic spatiality
Terrestriality	Territoriality	Telemetricity
Bioscape/ecoscape/geoscape	Ethnoscape/metroscape/plutoscape	Cyberscape/infoscape/mediascape

by states and these hardware complexes. This, in sum, is the classic era of modern territorial geopolitics, of competition between distinct, bounded spatial entities for the domination of lands, oceans, and the resources of the Earth.

The most provocative aspect of Luke's schema is his elucidation of a distinct realm of third nature, where spatial orderings are generated by cybernetic systems. This is the domain of the informational cybersphere, its electronic landscapes the cyberscapes, infoscapes and mediascapes of postmodern informational capitalism. The forms and structures of second nature begin to buckle and disintegrate under the impact of fast capitalism and its globalizing infrastructures. 'Systems of software, as cybernetic codes, televisual images, and informational multimedia, sublate the central importance of hardware. . . . A third nature of telemetricity emerges where informationalization rapidly pluralizes the spatialized operational potentialities of existing cultures and societies' (Luke 1996c: 127). Modern geo-graphing becomes postmodern info-graphing (Luke, this volume). Groups of people begin to join global webs, while the quickening space of flows erodes traditional divisions between the local, national, and global, creating a scalar dynamic of 'neo-world orders' composed of rearranged global space (Luke 1995). New networked social actors, quasi-subject cyborgs, and quasi-object 'humachines' within megamachinic collectives populate third nature and give it its functional ontologies, though not, *contra* Haraway, yet its politics, dominated still by mythic liberal categories, identities, and narratives (Haraway 1991; Luke 1996c, 1997).

All of these schematic theorizations have their problems. Reich has justly been criticized for exaggerating the erosion of national economies, the irrelevancy of corporate nationality, and globalization (Hirst and Thompson 1996: 96). Castells can be justly critiqued for his technological determinism, hasty eclecticism, and overly extended reductionist claims. Latour's schema threatens to dissolve all our inherited ontological notions into networks, inflating the concept, dehistoricizing it, and as a consequence generating only modest insight. Luke's schema can be accused of being too sweeping, abstract and intellectually isomorphic, an academic exercise with questionable relevance to the 'real' not 'hyper-real' dilemmas and dramas of world politics today (for counter-evidence see Luke 1991, 1993).

Yet, such schematic theorizations can be useful in clarifying immanent tendencies in contemporary affairs. Combining Agnew's arguments with the suggestive claims of Luke and others, I have constructed a table distinguishing a purified modern from an immanent postmodern geopolitics (see Table 1.3). The table is organized around five key questions central to the problematic of geopolitics as practiced by dominant states in world politics, with two sets of distinctions devoted to each. The questions are as follows:

- 1 How is global space imagined and represented?
- 2 How is global space divided into essential blocs or zones of identity and difference?

Table 1.3 Modern versus postmodern geopolitics.

<i>Modern geopolitics</i>	<i>Postmodern geopolitics</i>
Cartographic visualizations: maps	Telemetrical visualizations: GIS
Perspectivist theatre	Post-perspectivist simulations
Inside/outside, Domestic/international	Global webs, globalization
East/West	Jihad/McWorld
Territorial power	Telemetrical power
Hardware ascendant: GPR	Software ascendant: C4I2
Territorial enemies	Deterritorialized dangers
Fixed, rigid posture	Flexible, rapid response
Geopolitical man	Cyborg collectives
States/Leaders	Networks/cyborgs

- 3 How is global power conceptualized?
- 4 How are global threats spatialized and strategies of response conceptualized?
- 5 How are the major actors shaping geopolitics identified and conceptualized?

While such an exercise has its limits, grappling with these five questions reveals some general trends and tendencies about the conditions of possibility of geopolitics at the end of the twentieth century that are worthy of critical attention. What the tabular distinctions highlight and elucidate are tendencies already finding expression in the practices of the US strategic complex of institutions, intellectuals, and actor-networks.

The first question points to the growing significance of telemetrical visualizations in contemporary world politics. It was no accident that the Bosnian War peace talks in 1995 were held at the Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Dayton, Ohio, the place where the term 'bionics' was first coined and the site of some of the most advanced geographical information systems (GIS) and visualization technologies in the world (Gray 1997: 19). There the negotiating parties could visit the 'Nintendo' room, where they could see up-to-date three-dimensional maps of the disputed territories and settle precisely on lines of separation and demarcation. The technology, according to Secretary of State Warren Christopher, enabled the parties to 'fly' over the area and 'actually see what they were talking about' (quoted in Gray 1997: 19). But what the parties were 'actually seeing' was, of course, a simulation, a model of the real that became in Dayton more real than the real terrain itself.

The displacement in Dayton of maps by GIS, of modern cartographic representations of global space by postmodern telemetrical simulations, is symptomatic of a much broader technocultural transformation in how world politics is imagined and visually represented in the late twentieth century.⁶ With globally positioned 24-hour news machines in perpetual operation, the drama of world politics has been turned into an information spectacle, a spectacle that takes its

form from its virtual life in flow-mations. Perpetually projected and screened as televisual images and easily recognizable scripts – chaos in the streets, democracy in action, *coup d'état* in motion – world politics has long ceased to be the theatrical drama it was to geopoliticians in the first half of the twentieth century. It is now a hyper-reality of television spectacles and military simulations, a universe of information that encompasses and overwhelms all. CNN's spinning globe is a globe in informational spin. Residual yet redundant, the tropes of political realism can no longer cope with the dizzying world scene. Visions are eclipsed by vertigo (Ó Tuathail 1996). The speed, quantity, and intensity of information problematizes the very possibility of foreign policy as deliberative reflection and decision making (Luke and Ó Tuathail, forthcoming).

The second question foregrounds the disintegration of the Euclidian world of discrete nation-states imagined by so many political realists. Maintaining a distinct border between the inside and the outside, the domestic and the international was and still is always a matter of political performance (Walker 1993; Campbell 1992; Weber 1995), but it is today a performance that is becoming more complex and involved amidst the deterritorializing scale-scrambling consequences of globalization. In our postmodern condition of deterritorialization, Appadurai (1996) has argued, 'configurations of people, place, and heritage lose all semblance of isomorphism.' Contemporary cultural forms are 'fundamentally fractal, that is, as possessing no Euclidian boundaries, structures, or regularities' (*ibid.*: 46). The questions we need to ask in 'a world of disjunctive global flows,' he suggests, should rely on 'images of flow and uncertainty, hence *chaos*, rather than on older images of order, stability, and systematicness' (*ibid.*: 47). This is not to suggest that world politics has necessarily transcended the imaginary of the territorial state but it is to admit the disintegration of its traditional mythic Euclidian forms and to acknowledge strange new (con)fusions of delocalized trans-nations (*ibid.*), simulated sovereignty (Weber 1995), postmodern war (Gray 1997), deterritorialized currency (Kobrin 1997), and a globalized networked economy of production and consumption (Burton 1997).

It can be argued that the questions many commentators and foreign policy analysts are asking today are no longer dependent upon such traditional binary conceptions of space as modern/backward, East/West – and the 'three worlds' of the Cold War that emerged out of them – as they are on new nominally post-spatial binaries like Jihad versus McWorld (Barber 1996). McWorld represents the deterritorializing pace of globalization, MTV, Macintosh and McDonalds, the Utopia of free markets and fast food diffusing across the globe. Jihad represents the primordialist's reaction, the rally to fundamentalist myths, moral absolutes, and rocklike certainties in a boundary-collapsing world. Perhaps this narrative, and variations upon it, is the postmodern equivalent of the hierarchization of space that Agnew identifies with modern geopolitics. Certainly part of the appeal of Barber's dichotomy, irrespective of his own intentions, is its implicit recycling of longstanding Orientalist imaginary geographies. For

transnational liberals, McWorld is the world's manifest destiny and Jihad, like Communism in an earlier age, is a dangerous 'disease of the transition' that has the potential to cause considerable unpleasantness. Jihad warriors are considered primitivists, deluded fanatics, and religious ideologues who want to turn back the clock and reverse the accelerating market destiny of history. While geographically concentrated in certain states like Iraq and Sudan, they are a pervasive danger throughout the world, even within the United States. Barber's argument, generated from the ontology of Western liberalism, is a critique of the disturbing implications of both McWorld and Jihad for democracy, but its terms could well be used as a discourse by McWorlders mobilizing against Jihaders everywhere (like President Clinton, who has cited Barber's thesis; Barber 1996: 299). Invocations of the threat posed by 'sons of globalization' like Patrick Buchanan, Vladimir Zhirinovskiy and Jean-Marie Le Pen are emerging as an influential discourse of danger in contemporary world politics (Luke and Ó Tuathail, 1998; Rodrik 1997b).

The territorial versus telemetric contrast generated by the third question is easily overstated but it does, nevertheless, echo the discourse of some strategic analysts of global power today (e.g. Rosencrance 1996). In assessing power in the contemporary age, Nye and Owens (1996, 22) write that the significance of technology, education, and institutional flexibility has risen, whereas that of geography, population, and resources/raw materials (GPR), the traditional concerns of early twentieth-century geopolitics, has fallen. They suggest that the country that can best lead the information revolution will be more powerful than all others. For them that country is the United States. Its 'subtle comparative advantage' over its rivals is 'its ability to collect, process, act upon, and disseminate information, an edge that will almost certainly grow over the next decade' (*ibid.*: 20). This 'information edge' can 'help deter and defeat traditional military threats at relatively low cost.' It supposedly can improve the intellectual link between US foreign policy and military power as well as offer new ways to maintain leadership and cement alliances. Overall, America's information edge is a 'force multiplier,' adding greater potency to its hard military power and its soft economic and ideological power. *Software power* converts existing hard and soft power into power plus.

Blind to the unanticipated consequences of informationization (Levidow and Robins 1989; Rochlin 1997; Shenk 1997), Nye and Owens celebrate the role of ISR – intelligence collection, surveillance, and reconnaissance – and C4I – command, control, communications, computer processing, and intelligence; Gray (1997: 7) adds inter-operability, rendering it C4I2 – in providing the US military with 'dominant battlespace knowledge' in conflict situations. The ability of the US state to undertake real-time continuous surveillance of potential hotspots provides it with 'pre-crisis transparency' and an 'informational umbrella' that US decision makers can use, after the manner of its Cold War nuclear umbrella, as a weapon to be shared, if conditions warrant, with allies. 'Like extended deterrence,' America's informational capabilities 'could form the

foundation for a mutually beneficial relationship.' Using information as a diplomatic instrument, the United States could provide 'accurate, real-time, situational awareness' to certain states, thus inducing and inclining them to work closely with the United States. Immanent to this reasoning is a condition where geo-graphing has already become info-graphing and where geopolitics becomes info-politics.

Nye and Owens conclude with an updated informational version of Henry Luce's mid-century articulation of American exceptionalism. Information, they declare, is 'the new coin of the international realm, and the United States is better positioned than any other country to multiply the potency of its hard and soft power resources through information' (1996: 35). The twenty-first century, not the twentieth, will turn out to be the century of America's greatest pre-eminence. With informationization, the old themes of American national exceptionalism can be replayed once more. Cyberspace is the latest frontier proliferating freedom and forging the American character (Dyson *et al.* 1994). The paradox, however, is that informationization deconstructs solid state presences and old-style frontiers. Instead of being a solid state presence, the 'United States' in a fully informationized world would become a node of global networks and webs, a switching point in functionality as it becomes a simulation of old codes in (hyper)reality. Furthermore, the 'American character' would be a fully cyborgized one. C4I2 is not simply a set of tools but a deterritorialized telemetric civilization; it is part of 'the socio-economic-technical construction kit from which future societies will be assembled' (Rochlin 1997: 211).

New threats to America's software civilization, however, are on the horizon or, perhaps more accurately since dimensionality is being rearranged (Virilio 1997), in the flows and wires of the information age. The fourth question on the spatialization of threats and the conceptualization of response accents certain fashionable themes about flexibility and speed in contemporary strategic doctrine (Virilio and Lotringer 1983). After the Cold War, the meaning of security is essentially contested (Dalby 1997) and threats are increasingly represented as emanating not simply from territorial enemies, where containment imperatives remain in force, but from a plethora of deterritorialized dangers: stateless terrorism, cybernetic sabotage (Gray 1997), narco-terrorism, global corruption (Leiken 1996), infectious diseases (Garrett 1996), humanitarian crises (Luke and Ó Tuathail, 1997), environmental degradation (Dalby 1996), and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (Sopko 1996). Shadowy stateless terrorism increasingly targets complex interdependent systems, the spaces of flows – subways, world trade centers, skyscrapers, airports, network computers, switching nodes, databases, communications headquarters – of a McWorld that is engulfing and eroding (while also electronicizing) their most cherished myths.

In contrast to the transcendent containment imperative and fixed posture of Cold War strategy, what is required in response to persistent territorial concerns and proliferating deterritorialized threats is a geo-strategic doctrine premised on flexibility and speed. The 1995 *National Military Strategy of the United States*

is subtitled 'a strategy of flexible and selective engagement' (Joint Chiefs of Staff 1995). Threats are described as widespread and uncertain, the possibility of conflicts probable, but their geographic sites are too often unpredictable. This document describes the current strategic landscape as characterized by four principal dangers that the US military must address: 'regional instability; the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction; transnational dangers such as drug trafficking and terrorism; and the dangers to democracy and reform in the former Soviet Union, Eastern Europe, and elsewhere' (*ibid.*: 1). What is remarkable about these threats is that none has a fixed spatial location; regional instability refers not only to the Middle East but also to Europe and Africa; proliferation and transnational dangers are global; even dangers to reform, which is the only danger explicitly linked to certain places, are potentially ubiquitous, as the 'elsewhere' indicates. Military strategy still has to negotiate territory and place but it has also, in interesting ways, become untethered from place and territory. Anywhere on the globe is now a potential battlefield. The document concedes as much, noting that 'global interdependence and transparency coupled with our worldwide security interests, make it difficult to ignore troubling developments almost anywhere on earth' (*ibid.*: 2).

Responding to threats which are potentially everywhere, the US military is now organized around two central strategic concepts: overseas presence and power projection. Overseas presence is the stationing of US military forces throughout the globe as well as the development of alliances with local and regional forces, the pre-positioning of equipment in certain sites, and the maintenance of a routine program of air, ground, and naval deployments across the surface of the planet. Power projection is the ability of the US military to organize the various elements of its overseas presence into a coherent, C4I2ized, multi-option, fighting force. It involves strategic mobilization and mobility with information coordination, speed, and flexibility fundamental to its operation. Swift, flexible power projection as a *fast geopolitics* buys time for liberal politics (Luke and Ó Tuathail 1998): 'the ability to project tailored forces through rapid, strategic mobility gives national leaders additional time for consultation and increased options in response to potential crises and conflicts' (Joint Chiefs of Staff 1995: 7). The logic of this strategy is the annihilation of space by military speed-machines in order to create flexible decision time in dromological crisis situations. Its institutional consequence is the restructuring of the US military as a globe-destroying speed. This is described in the US military doctrine as 'strategic mobility enhancement,' its four components and imperatives being 'increased airlift capability, additional pre-positioning of heavy equipment afloat and ashore, increased surge capacity of our sealift, and improved readiness and responsiveness of the Ready Reserve Force' (*ibid.*: 7). Liberalism gives us our cyborgian way of life for the 'our' here is thoroughly cyborgian.

With collectives and cyborgs so obviously a part of the theorization and practice of geopolitics at the end of the twentieth century, the contrast foregrounded

by question 5 is an unacknowledged and under-theorized one (see DeLanda 1991). Critical geopoliticians need to begin to recognize the pervasive yet unproblematic presence and anonymous functioning of collectives of humans and nonhumans in world politics (Luke 1997). Contemporary geopolitics obviously gives life and sustenance to military collectives and their networks, but do the networks of everyday collectives have secret geopolitical lives? Follow, Latour-style, our automobile network for just a short connection and we quickly encounter the very military nets we have just described and many other geopolitical quasi-objects and quasi-subjects: oil tankers, the House of Saud, autocyborgs, Fordism, petrol pump politics, George Bush, the Nigerian military, dromomechanics, Exxon, aircraft carriers, polluted beaches, and dying forests. What strange forms of life are revealed by Japanese transplants, strategic choke-points, and 'what's good for GM or Exxon is good for America'? Proceed further into the network and one encounters the transcendent cyborg creature, Hydrocarbon Man and his megamachinic dromocracy, the Occidental Petroleum Worshipping Collective, a developed, voracious, and accelerating form of life that reacts primitively and violently to any threat, real or imagined, to its speedscapes and lifelines (Virilio 1995). Track the automobile actor-network and the Gulf War and many other wars soon reveal themselves (Yergin 1991). The network collective lives and expands as it kills and depletes. Some conscientious cyborgs within the collective can protest about its poisonous effects on what they still imagine is 'nature' and 'the human habitat,' but none will ever be powerful enough to control or dismantle the collective (Luke 1996a). It has us rather than us having it. It gives us its geopolitics.

Actor-networks do have geopolitical lives, and it is time to acknowledge and theorize these rather than chronicle the stories of Geopolitical Man, the Mackinder-like figure that eyes the globe and divines the secrets necessary for mastering it. Agency in geopolitics is now with the thoroughly cyborgianized networks and not with the geopoliticians. New cyberorganized forms of geopolitical life are perpetually being conceived by our proliferating networks, expressing the fears and fantasies of competing and cooperative collectives. Perhaps Latour is right and that it is misleading to even talk about modern and postmodern geopolitics, for the world we inhabit – its 'we' acknowledged as an enhanced cyborgian identity encased within and enveloped by technological life support systems – is resolutely nonmodern. Maybe it is time to critically problematize *nonmodern geopolitics*.

Continuity and change in (post)modern geopolitics

Agnew and Corbridge have persistently emphasized both continuity and change in their studies of geopolitics. In *Mastering Space*, they declare that there is 'an obvious continuity running through modern geopolitical discourse in the continuing use of a language of difference expressed in terms of a temporal metaphor (modern/backward). However, the idioms and contexts of usage have

changed dramatically over time' (1995: 51). Agnew returns to this theme in *Geopolitics*, noting that as a result of the dialectical interplay of spatial practices and representations of space the modern geopolitical imagination, 'while having an essential continuity, also shows dramatic shifts in content and form. . . . Within a general continuity . . . one can identify distinctive epochs in which the geographical representations and practices implicitly in world politics have undergone important shifts' (1998: 6-7).

A conventional trope that is often a fudge, this theme of continuity and change nevertheless expresses a certain wisdom that sometimes eludes schematic theorizing about the modern and/or the postmodern. In playing the then/now game of designating the modern and its transformation into the postmodern, there is often an irresistible urge at work rounding up, branding and ordering the messy complexities of human history into clean and precise categories. Sometimes there is an appealing theoretical aesthetic at work, an admiration for theoretical contrasts, transcendent symmetries and elegant isomorphism rescued from the occluded density of history. Also implicated is the normalization of hyperbole, in this case manifested in academic writing, that is characteristic of postmodern culture generally (Shenk 1997).

Mann (1996: 1964) suggests that 'a certain amount of mess is perhaps the most general characteristic of human society, past and present.' Societies, he argues throughout his work, consist of multiple, entwined networks of interaction operating at a variety of scales. They are remarkably complex and should not be considered 'systems' with singular identities, clear boundaries, and an overarching essence. Though he does not question as Latour does, Mann's emphasis is on the networked nature of social relations, noting, in opposition to the nation-statism/globalism duality, that 'we do not today live in a society constituted "essentially" by the transnational or the global' (1996: 1960). This is also true of the categories we have been using in this chapter. We do not live in a world constituted essentially by modern or postmodern geopolitics but by conjunctural congealments of geopolitical theories and practices that are points of entry into the visual techniques, transportation technologies, communicational capabilities, war logistics, political economy, state forms, global crises, spatial ontologies, and pervasive anxieties of our time. In fact, this very notion of 'our time' or 'the contemporary', with associated linear notions of past, present, and future, is inadequate amidst a condition where plural technologically mediated temporalities composed of spectral pasts, deferred and unsettled present tenses, and imperative and diabolical future tenses struggle to constitute and stabilize the 'now' (Derrida 1994; Virilio 1997). While the categories of modern and postmodern geopolitics have pedagogic merit, we should always be cognizant of how the density, hybridity, and impurity of contemporary socio-spatial and socio-temporal practices often escape the grasp of our theories. A modest note of caution, it is a point worth remembering as we struggle to untangle and describe the (con)fused, fragmented and fractal post/non/modern geopolitics of the twenty-first century.

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Notes

- 1 This term seems to have disappeared. The closest to it is 'a geopolitical and economic order' in Agnew and Corbridge (1995: 9). It does not appear in Agnew (1998).
- 2 Agnew and Corbridge also transpose Lefebvre's confusing 'representational spaces' category into their schema somewhat awkwardly. In Lefebvre, the category corresponds to 'lived space,' idiosyncratically defined as the imaginative spaces conjured up by artists, writers, and philosophers. In Agnew and Corbridge (1995: 7), it becomes 'scenarios for future spatial practices or "imagined geographies" that inspire changes in the representation of space with an eye to the transformation of spatial practices.' In this rendering, the distinction between representations of space and representational spaces is never very clear.
- 3 Crosby (1997: 106) argues that the lines drawn by the Treaty of Tordesillas (1493 and 1494) and later by the Treaty of Zaragoza (1529) are evidence of Renaissance Europeans' confidence in the homogeneity of the Earth's surface, for they divided lands and seas not yet seen to either Spain and Portugal. Even though the Pope was instrumental in drawing these lines, the conception of Earthly space as homogeneous and potentially infinite is a departure from the traditional medieval conception of space as part of a sacred vertically hierarchical order.
- 4 Globalization has persistently been represented as ushering in a deterritorialized global economy but, as many commentators have pointed out, we still live in a triad (Europe-USA-East Asia)-dominated international political economy (Castells 1996; Rodrik 1997a; Hirst and Thompson 1996). The hyperbole associated with economic globalization can, in part, be explained by the functioning of globalization as an ideology closely associated with transnational liberalism (neoliberalism) (Cox 1996; Herod, O Tuathail and Roberts 1998).
- 5 Strictly speaking, geopolitics is a second nature phenomenon only in Luke's schema associated with the in-stating of space and the imposition of the modern territorial map across global space. In this chapter, however, I wish to retain a broader conception of geopolitics that identifies the geographical representations and practices associated with statecraft - ancient, modern, and postmodern - as its problematic.
- 6 Consider the fate of visualization in warfare today. Rather than poring over maps, today 'an aide would more likely find a field marshal pacing back and forth in an electronic command post, fiddling with television displays, talking to pilots or tank commanders on the front lines by radio, and perhaps even peeking over their shoulders through remote cameras' (Cohen 1996: 49-50).

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FIGURING THE HOLOCAUST

Singularity and the purification of space

Marcus A. Doel and David B. Clarke

Introduction

The enormity of the death and destruction conveyed by the names Auschwitz and the Holocaust is an indelible stain on the fabric of the twentieth century. If one were forced to single out one sequence of events that necessitated an insistence on the 'dark side' of modernity, on the real and potential horrors that accompany rationalization, bureaucratization, adiaphorization, the will to power and order, and the will to purity and propriety, then the Holocaust would no doubt be it.

In order to contextualize what we wish to say in this chapter about the singularity of the Holocaust and its heterotopic spacing and tropology, it is perhaps worth beginning with the closing words of Weinberg and Sherwin's (1979: 22) historical overview of the Holocaust: 'THE TOTAL NUMBER OF DEAD FROM MAJOR GENOCIDAL OPERATIONS BY THE NAZIS IS ESTIMATED AS BEING BETWEEN TWELVE AND THIRTEEN MILLION.' This figure includes six million European Jews; four million Soviet POWs; two million non-Jewish Poles; 100,000-400,000 Gypsies; 2,000 Jehovah's Witnesses; an unknown number of homosexuals and Freemasons; and 50,000-250,000 of Germany's 'insane, mongoloids and retarded children ... political dissidents and random victims' (Burleigh 1991). In addition, there were around a third of a million forced sterilizations between 1934 and 1939, ordered by Germany's Hereditary Health Courts for the maintenance of so-called 'racial hygiene' (Gellately 1990; Mason 1993). Yet of all the Nazis' many victims and atrocities (Wyrwicky 1980), the Holocaust is associated almost exclusively with the murder of two-thirds of European Jewry, the vast majority of whom were systematically killed by the Nazi régime. And when one thinks of the Holocaust, one tends to call upon images of the 'Auschwitz universe' (Steiner 1987: 55), with its industrialized, bureaucratized, and rationalized machinery of (in)human slaughter; although it is important to recall that many were killed through starvation, mob violence, disease, shooting, mobile gassing, and death marches.

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