Cosmic Racial Holy War:

Biopolitics and Bare-Life from the Creativity Movement to the War on Terror

Thesis

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in
the Graduate School of The Ohio State University

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2009

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2009
Abstract

In this paper I argue that the phrase Racial Holly War, or RahoWa, as developed by the founder of the racialist religious organization known as the Creativity Movement, operates to encapsulate a program of white racial survival and to create a world in which a global race-war is an inevitable and natural part of biological and social existence. I argue further that “cosmic war” as articulated by Mark Jeurgensmeyer, while it is a helpful concept, is ultimately inadequate to assess this particular phenomenon. In what I call cosmic racial holy war we find a zero-sum game in which the preferred population must either conquer or succumb to destruction and all civilization with it. Further still, I argue that a biopolitical analysis, developed from the work of Michel Foucault and Giorgio Agamben, will show interesting linkages between RaHoWa and the War on Terror as a rhetorical device deployed to define a global program of defense for a precariously alive population which bears within itself the life of “civilization”; both of which are considered to be imperiled by the bare existence of an implacable enemy who is rendered as a biological threat to the people.
Dedication

To my supportive family and my fellows in Comparative Studies: per aspera ad astra!
Acknowledgements

I extend my sincerest thanks to Hugh, Ruby, and Phillip, without whom I could not have developed this project. To Kwaku who so graciously assisted in the examination. To Marge, Wen, and Lori who always help me get organized. And certainly not least, I thank my comrades in Comparative Studies. Andrew, Rachael, Mike, Wamae, Peggy, Sande, Rita, Keith, and the list goes on—you are all my truest sounding boards, always keeping me honest.
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Section 1: Introductions

The recent shooting at the Holocaust Memorial in Washington D.C. is a harsh reminder that racialist violence has not evaporated in the face of the optimistic conjecture of a “post-racial moment.”¹ In April 2009, The Department of Homeland Security released a report expressing unambiguous concern about the rise of such violence. This report specifically addressed the possibility that the “historical election of an African American president and the prospect of policy changes” could be “a driving force for rightwing extremist recruitment and radicalization” (3). This warning has proven to be unfortunately prescient. One of the most influential ideas supporting such violence in the white nationalist community is RaHoWa, or Racial Holy War. This is a phrase coined by Ben Klassen, founder of a white racist religious organization called the Church of the Creator, now known as the Creativity Movement. This acronym was imagined to express the religious imperative that he saw in preserving and expanding the “White Race” and the “shrinking” of the all others (Klassen 1973 315). Since he first coined this phrase it has become a common refrain across the white racist milieu; from song lyrics to T-shirts and flyers to tattoos. RaHoWa operates today as a “symbolic rallying cry” and “motivating cry” to take up arms for the defense of the white race (Swain 2003 252).

¹ Specifically I am referring to the article by Shelby Steele in the Los Angeles Times on November 5, 2008 titled “Obama’s Post-Racial Promise.” Here he shows some doubt that the promise will be immediately evident; however, he holds this as the ideal. On NPR Daniel Shore discussed this kind of conjecture on January 28, 2008; specifically the article by Peter Boyer in the New Yorker.
RaHoWa also stands as the “sacred credo”; the “heart” of Creativity’s “religious creed” (*Little White Book* 33).

In this essay I argue that RaHoWa operates to encapsulate a program of white racial survival and to create a world in which a global race-war is an inevitable and natural part of biological and social existence. In the Creativity Movement, war is regarded as the way of the world and is perceived as life preserving and maximizing for the “White Race.” The preservation of this life then requires the extermination, or “shrinking,” of the enemies of that population by whatever means the struggle demands. In this way one can see that RaHoWa manufactures a cosmos in which war is not the measure of last resort but is necessary to preserve that population which is perceived to be constantly under threat from the implacable and ruthless enemies of the “civilized” world. Through RaHoWa the white racialist understands the world as stage for inevitable and natural conflict between the “White Race,” the bearers of civilization, and the enemies of the same which makes violence not only acceptable but positive, creative, vital.

I argue further that “cosmic war” as articulated by Mark Jeurgensmeyer, while it is a helpful concept, is ultimately inadequate to assess this particular phenomenon. The violence related to RaHoWa is not merely symbolic or even political, but functionally linked to life possibilities; meant to secure the existence of the white race. The enemies of the people are not potential sacrifices, but disposable beings which threaten the population by the fact of their existence. Their bare existence, the fact that they are living in the world, makes them enemies and therefore subject to extermination. In the words of Giorgio Agamben, they are *homo sacer* or *sacred man*: that which can be killed by
anyone with impunity but has no value as a sacrifice (1995: 8 & 73). And finally, it is
not a mere theological appeal which gives violence its validity; but rather, proponents of
RaHoWa claim that racialized conflict is natural and inevitable and putting it in the
discourses of religiosity helps to motivate the white race to battle. In this way, what I call
the Cosmic Racial Holy War is a zero-sum game in which the preferred population must
either conquer or succumb to destruction and all civilization with it. The stakes of this
conflict are the lives of the populations and the livelihoods they bear in their “culture” or
“civilization” in a battle for bare existence in every space across the globe which is coded
in religiosity. In short, there are biopolitical elements in RaHoWa which are not
addressed in Jeurgensmeyer’s account of cosmic war which I will attempt to account for.

Further still, I argue that this biopolitical approach to cosmic war will show
interesting linkages between RaHoWa and the War on Terror as a rhetorical device
deployed to define a global program of defense for a precariously alive population which
bears within itself the life of “civilization.” Though there important and even obvious
differences between the subjectivities engendered in these projects, they are both
articulated around the protection of an imperiled population threatened by the bare
existence of an implacable enemy who is considered “evil” but is also considered a
biological threat, even a source of contagion, to one’s people. RaHoWa and the War on
Terror then seem to similarly summarize a larger biopolitical program and operate as a
means of rallying support for the cause of global war which is itself considered the means
by which the enemies of civilization must be dealt with. In both cases, perpetual and
preemptive war against indefinite enemies, coded in “religious” language in both cases,
becomes not just a way to legitimate violence but also a way to create and maintain a
certain social order. In this way one may take a comparative study of religiously
described biopolitical warfare to engage in the kinds of analyses to which Ira Chernus
suggests scholars of religion can bring critical insights and analytical tools to study
certain aspects of the so called War on Terror. That is in part also what I will attempt in
this paper.
Section 2: A Brief History of Violence

The Creativity Movement began as the Church of the Creator in 1973, founded by a European immigrant named Ben Klassen. Klassen was born into a Mennonite family in 1918 in Southern Ukraine. In his infancy, his family experienced the turmoil of the Bolshevik Revolution, and soon fled Europe. In 1924, they left Russia for Mexico where they stayed only until 1925 when they moved to Canada. In 1935, Klassen enrolled in the University of Saskatchewan where he developed an acute interest in religion and history. As the events in Europe which would eventuate into World War II began to catch his attention, Klassen, who was fluent in German, read Mein Kampf and was inspired. He was quite sympathetic to the German cause, likely due in some small part to his family’s memory of the protection that they received in Ukraine as brigands often were repelled by the German Army present on the border colonies in 1918; but, more so for what he saw as compelling ideas of volkish nationalism. Even as he joined the Canadian Officers Training Corps, he remained sympathetic to Nazi Germany and longed to help establish the “New Order” to which it aspired (Michael 562).

After the defeat of the Axis, Klassen moved to California and distanced himself from political activity entirely. There he established a real estate firm and did quite well in his business. Having achieved a measure of relative wealth he travelled throughout Europe, Egypt, and Mexico. He continued to live a comfortable lifestyle and started a family. However, the rising tensions in the Civil Rights movement and the specter of the Red Scare of communism rekindled his interest in politics. Klassen later moved to
Florida, relocating his political ambitions and family there in the late 1950’s (Michael 562). Shortly after this his involvement in the political scene was rewarded as he was elected to a brief service in the state legislature and then as the state chairman for segregationist Governor George Wallace’s 1968 presidential campaign. To some measure his success could be contributed to his membership in the John Birch Society, a fixture of the American right, which he later denounced as “smokescreen manipulated by the Jews” (Klassen: 1988 246).

He was soon disalussioned with American conservatism and the presence of so many Jews in the movement. This inspired him to seek alternatives his racialist views. To this end he founded the Church of the Creator in 1973 and gave himself the title Pontifex Maximus. He coinisdingly released the first of his books titled *Nature’s Eternal Religion*. In this book, clearly taking his ideas from *Mein Kampf*, he states that “Nature” is the maker of the distinctions of “mankind” and is the basis for all understanding of truth as nature’s laws are fixed and definitive. There was no god as such, just the “eternal laws of Nature” which have produced Nature’s finest creation and “greatest miracle,” the “White Race” (Klassen: 1973 15). For Klassen, this metaphysical approach to “Nature” explained the superiority of the “white race” as Nature’s “finest creation” and the progenitors of all civilization, the benefits of which were enjoyed by all other “races.” This view also explained for Klassen a natural animosity between the races of men as they compete for the resources that nature provides-- especially land, food, and mates (Klassen: 1973 15-17). As he saw it, Creativity was the only religious expression, indeed the only ideology, which saw this truth clearly and sufficiently incorporated it into a systematic approach to the problem of racial survival. This
emphasis on survival put struggle into the subtext of all the teachings of the Church of the Creator as not only necessary but inevitable. And this struggle was, and could only be, a zero-sum game in which the only victory is total victory for either the enemy horde or white civilization.

Klassen subsequently wrote *The White Man’s Bible* in 1981 and *Salubrious Living* in 1982, building on the principles explained in *Nature’s Eternal Religion*. In 1983, he began the publication of a monthly magazine called *Racial Loyalty*. In this he detailed the ideas that would make Creativity a more comprehensive programme of white racial struggle for survival. The most significant of these ideas was Racial Holy War. The articles related to this were eventually collected into a single text titled *Rahowa! This Planet is All Ours* (1987). In these articles the concept of RaHoWa was clearly defined for the first time. This was a concept of natural conflict was obviously racialized, but was also given the impetus of a religious injunction as well; defined as a solemn duty for every Creator. He writes about RaHoWa in issue number 32 of *Racial Loyalty*, the “mud races have foisted war” on the white race it to “pick up the challenge, wage it fiercely, no quarter given” until victory is achieved. He compares it to “Jihad” as a religious imperative to defend the race rather than to spread a religion for its own sake (1986 60). The expansion and advancement of the white race and “civilization” would require a war that was itself expanding and advancing. Fro Klassen, racial war was inevitable and was to be continued into the retreating horizon of the simultaneously immanent and endangered victory of the forces of civilization or otherwise civilization itself would fall into ruin, overrun by the “mongrel hordes.”
This approach, though clearly not too different from Nazism and its variants, was quite unique to the majority of racialists in the United States in the 1970’s. The ideas of loyalty to one’s race, that integration was a threat to white society, and that the white race was at odds with other racial groups were certainly not new ideas. But the emphasis on the struggle itself as a religious requirement, not to mention the absence of a god save the eternal laws of “Nature” and the “White Race,” was quite different from the Christian Identity oriented doctrines of the KKK and others in the United States at the time.\(^2\) Other movements that came about post Civil Rights were take on this tone as well. Of course the American Nazi Party under George Lincoln Rockwell was already moving in a deliberately neo-Nazi path that was in many ways quite different from the older forms of white racism in the United States. Beginning in the 1970’s Odinism was to make an appearance in the United States as well.\(^3\) In general, there was a broadening consensus that Christianity was no longer capable of defining the white racist struggle in a milieu that would come to be known in the broadest sense as White Nationalism.\(^4\) It is in this context that Klassen would define a new religion for the white race that would seek to pull the multitude of racialized organizations into a single movement to expand advance the “White Race.”

Christianity was seen by Klassen as ill equipped as an ideology to help the white race in its struggle was appealing to many racists dissatisfied with the doctrines of “love thy neighbor” and “turn the other cheek.” In addition, its “semitic” origins were always

\(^2\) Christian Identity refers to a theological movement coming out of Anglo-Israelism that states that the “white race” is the true Israel. See Michael Barkun’s *Religion and The Racist Right.*

\(^3\) See Matthias Gardell’s *Gods of the Blood.*

\(^4\) See Carol Swain’s *The New White Nationalism in America.*
held as suspect by Klassen. Soon Klassen and his new Church began attracting the attention of racialists outside the United States from Europe to Australia and South Africa. In the 1980’s, Klassen set out to establish the presence of the Church Of The Creator in several countries, with notable success in Sweden. This success was due in large part to the efforts of a young activist named Tommy Ryden who remains important in European white nationalist scene. In 1990, Ryden was convicted of “racial hatred” by the Swedish government, a charge for which he served a four month term in prison (Michael 568).

Today he runs his web-site www.tommyryden.com, which promotes genetic engineering and eugenics. He is also the founder of the De Vries Institute, a well known anti-semitic organization in Sweden, and the Cosmotiskyrkan, or Cosmotheist Church (Stephen Roth Institute). Many others in the United States, including Tom Metzger, founder of White Aryan Resistance, or W.A.R., and William Pierce, founder of National Alliance, admired Klassen and the Church and viewed him as an important ally. The Church of the Creator and its creed of RaHoWa were quickly becoming an significant influence in racist culture in the United States and beyond. The increasing popularity of the Movement was to be accompanied by legal troubles that would challenge its existence.

In 1991 Klassen faced a significant legal challenge when one of the “reverends” of the Church, a man by the name of George Loeb, was convicted of murdering an African-American Gulf War veteran by the name of Harold Mansfield Jr. With the aid of the Southern Poverty Law Center, Mansfield’s family filed civil litigation against Klassen and the Church and were successful in pursuing restitution. The assets of the Church, in particular the North Carolina headquarters, were ordered by the court to be sold for the settlement. However, William Pierce, author of the Turner Diaries, intervened, bought
the property from under the Mansfield family, and later sold it for a profit. Klassen spent the remainder of his days divesting himself of the assets tied to the Church and searching for a successor to the legacy he established. His first choice to succeed him was unable to take the position as he was serving a six year sentence for selling tainted food to Florida public schools. Klassen then settled for a Baltimore pizza delivery man by the name of Charles Alvetar. However, he was soon frustrated again by his chosen successor and appointed a rather volatile Milwakkee skinhead named Mark Wilson to the position. Wilson ran the organization until January, 1993, when he had to vacate the position after he was convicted for reckless endangerment for placing a bomb on the doorstep of the home of a Baltimore County police officer. Richard McCarty, a man well known in racialist circles at the time, was then promoted to full leadership. In August of 1993, Klassen killed himself at the age of 75 by swallowing four bottles of sleeping pills. Thus, McCarty became the sole leader of the Church ("Creativity Movement").

Under McCarty the COTC would find itself in even more legal trouble. Some members of the Church, along with some members of a local skinhead group called The Fourth Reich Skins, were arrested in California under suspicion of planning to bomb the largest African-American church in Los Angeles and to assassinate the 1991 police beating victim Rodney King (Michael, 573). Some days later, members of the COTC were arrested in Solinas, California for shoplifting. Later investigations of one of the men, Jerimiah Knesal, revealed several plots against Jewish and African American targets, as well as against military installations, gay social clubs, and radio and television stations. Under questioning, Knesal confessed to the July 20, 1993 fire-bombing of a N.A.A.C.P. office in Tacoma, Washington. Under subsequent legal pressures from the F.B.I. and the
Southern Poverty Law Center, which had not given up its initial law suit, McCarty finally gave in to demands for the liquidation of the group’s assets. The proceeds from the sale of the North Carolina property were finally recovered and the Mansfield family received the $85,000 that was earned from the resale of the property under Peirce through a 1996 court order (“Creativity Movement”).

The Church Of The Creator as an organization stagnated after Klassen’s suicide; however, it would find inspiration for recovery under the leadership of a twenty-four-year-old law student from Illinois named Matthew Hale (Michael 571). Hale was fascinated from a young age with Nazism and, like Klassen, was inspired to revolutionary racist activity by reading Mein Kampf. Hale became a member of the Church in the early 90’s while attending Bradley University, and on July 27, 1996, the elders of the Church, known as the “Guardians of the Faith Committee” named him “Pontifex Maximus.” Hale later renamed the Church The Church Of The Creator to The World Church of the Creator and set to rebuilding it. Hale would also become an outspoken advocate for white racist cause on such programs as The Ricky Lake Show, Geraldo, NBC, MSNBC, and FOX News. In addition, considerable efforts were made to conduct outreach and recruitment among prisoners and women (“Creativity Movement”). It is, however, the establishment of web-sites, including a site for kids, that has been the most significant tool of the Creativity Movement (“Poisoning the Web”). The Church had also become widely represented within the racist community through white nationalist blogs and chat sites, the most widely used of which is Stormfront.org, the first large scale white supremacist web site, founded by Don Black in 1992. All of this was overseen by
Hale in his tenure as leader. Through this activity Hale played a vital role in popularizing the Movement and Racial Holy War on the newest field of competition—the Internet.

In April, 1999, Matt Hale, who had recently graduated with a law degree from Southern Illinois University, applied for a license to practice law by the Illinois State Bar Association and was rejected because of his affiliation with the WCOTC. He quickly appealed this decision on July of that same year. It was announced shortly thereafter that Hale’s application had been rejected once again. Within hours of this announcement, Benjamin Smith, a 21 year old member of the WCOTC and personal friend of Hale, began a string of shootings of minorities across two states killing two people and wounding several others (“Church of the Creator: A History”). When capture seemed inevitable, Smith turned his gun on himself and committed suicide. The link was made immediately in spite of Hale’s repeated denials that his refusals by the State Bar Association were the cause for the shootings. Hale responded that this was the result of a young white man frustrated with a world that worked against him his whole life and described Smith as a “white warrior” that will be missed (Fletcher).

Though the WCOTC received national media focus in 1999 with the interstate shootings committed by Benjamin Smith, the violent tendencies of the members of this group had become obvious to authorities much earlier. In 1997, two members of the WCOTC were arrested for the assault on an African American man and his young son as they left a concert in Sunrise, Florida. Later that same year, an eighteen year old member was arrested for attempted murder for stabbing a person who insulted the Church. In 1998, members of the WCOTC, all under the age of twenty-five, were arrested for an
armed robbery in Florida in an effort to obtain funds to fight the impending race war. However, even these activities were soon overshadowed by Hale himself.

In 2002, the World Church of the Creator lost a trademark battle with a non-racialist religious organization that had been using the name for several years prior. Presiding judge Joan Humphrey Lefkow ordered Hale’s WCOTC to cease the use of the name immediately. Additionally, she ordered that the group to turn over all documentation of membership to the court. This was not well received by the group and on January 8, 2003 Hale was arrested for attempting to solicit the murder of judge Lefkow (Kapos). Before Hale’s eventual conviction on this charge, Judge Lefko, upon returning home after work in February, 2005, found her husband and mother shot to death in her basement (Cauchon). At his sentencing for the original charge, Hale received 40 years imprisonment. As of yet no connection has been made to him or any other member of the WCOTC to the murders of Judge Lefko’s family and the case remains open; however, little doubt remains that the Movement had something to do with the murders (Pearlman).

This violence is not mere happenstance. Nor was it necessary that Klassen or Hale, or anyone else within a cadre of leaders, should order these actions. Rather, violence in the Creativity Movement is a Weltanschauung: the cosmic order of things. That is, the struggle for survival defined by RaHoWa means that the race is always-already at war in every space. To act violently in the name of the cosmic racial holy war is to act within the realm of necessity and the laws of Nature. The preservation and expansion of the white race, so called white culture, and the civilization which the race
embodies necessitates that war would itself be preserved and expanded. With this in mind I advance a biopolitical analysis of RaHoWa itself.
Section 3: A World of Struggle

When RaHoWa was coined by Ben Klassen in 1986 it was defined as the “fighting slogan for the white race” in its struggle for survival. However, this emphasis on racial survival had been the major concern for the Creativity Movement from the first text Klassen published. In his autobiography, Against the Evil Tide, Klassen reflects on the disillusionment he felt by the insufficiency of Christianity and conservatism after George Wallace’s failed presidential campaign which led to the founding of Creativity. He says, “I realized that there was still a long and precarious battle ahead, to be sure. Not only a battle, but a relentless, unending war against the powerful and evil. The forces that sought to mongrelize and destroy our precious White Race, a war that would finally end in total victory for one side or the other” (178). It was this realization that compelled him to write in Nature’s Eternal Religion, “The main problem” was to get the “White Man” to understand the problems that faced the race and to understand its precarity (18). To that end he said,

[T]he real problem is to get our thinking straightened out, and that is what this book and the Creativity religion is all about. And the key to straightening out the White Man’s thinking is propaganda and enlightenment, organization, and more propaganda… It is towards achieving this exalted and lofty goal that this book is dedicated. It is the predominant aim of our new religion to achieve this magnificent goal (37).
Eventually the effort to describe a comprehensive program for white racial survival would lead to the refinement of the message the struggle for survival in the concept of RaHoWa.

Klassen describes Creativity as a religion that operates in pure recognition of the “laws of Nature,” which govern the “whole cosmos, the total universe” and its “eternal laws” through “space and time” that define all of life as struggle for the preservation and expansion of one’s own kind (1973 4-5). This then defines difference as line of demarcation in a war that is always-already raging in which each species defends itself and “propagates its kind” to the “exclusion of all others” (1973 6 & 9). In Nature’s Eternal Religion Klassen articulates this line of difference as one based upon biological difference, but not merely biological. This line of demarkation is also written into so-called cultural difference that defines a defense of civilization. He writes:

Anyone who is for the promotion and advancement of civilization and culture, peace, plenty and prosperity, must of necessity be for the advancement and expansion of the White Race. Our religion, Creativity, is for both of these goals, namely the shrinking of the colored races and the expansion of the White Race, not only because it is highly desirable, which it is; we are overwhelmingly dedicated to these goals because Nature has bestowed upon us the manifest calling to expand our kind to the limit of our abilities and to populate the world with our own (315).

In this we can see some major points that Klassen wants to make. First, for Klassen there is a linkage between the “White Race” and “civilization” which compels one who favors “culture, peace, plenty and prosperity” to shrink the enemies of the same. Second, there
is a religious mandate in Creativity to recognize and to act on this project of expansion and advancement of “civilization.” And, finally, that this effort is natural in the sense that the “white race” has been given the ability and the “manifest calling” to do so. It is this logic that will come to be encapsulated in RaHoWa.

When Klassen formulates this phrase a decade later he would try to offer a “rallying cry” for all those who would engage in this project. In issue number 32 of Racial Loyalty Klassen states:

The mud races have foisted war on us. There is no escaping it. We therefore are forced to pick up the challenge, wage it fiercely, no quarter given, until victory is ours. We must also give it identity, give it a name. The Moslems have their name for theirs. It is Jihad. We need to have our own and the Church of the Creator has coined a word for it. The word is Rahowa! It means White RAcial HOly WAr. (Pronounced rah-ho-wah.) Let us wage it fiercely, fearlessly and tenaciously until victory is ours. RAHOWA” (1986)!

In this we can see another angle on the naturalness and necessity of racial warfare according to Klassen. That the expansion and advancement of the white race, and civilization itself, requires conflict with others who endanger them both is clear from the earlier statement. However, here we have the compliment of a state of emergency as the selected population is viewed as being under attack from a ruthless enemy horde. The presumed implacability of the enemy here is presumed to force the hand of the defenders of the civilization to engage in a preemptive total war for survival. The orientalist imagination of ‘jihad,’ which persists quite strongly in the War on Terror as well, is here deployed to authenticate the religio-racial struggle that Klassen sees as an indelible part
of a proper ideology for the struggle ahead. The anticipated danger to the white race and its civilization from the “mud races,” the presumed inevitability of cataclysmic total war, and the authenticity of the concept of holy war barrowed from the imagined “Moslem,” work together to formulate, not just what RaHoWa means, but a world in which RaHoWa is considered the “ultimate and only solution” (Little White Book 33).

This globalized racio-religious struggle would also be articulated as a unifying force for the “White Race.” In The White Man’s Bible, Klassen laments that the white race is “divided by political parties, labor unions, religious groups, class warfare, by homosexuals, feminists, you name it… we are undoubtedly the most heterogeneous, the least homogenous, the most fragmented nation on the face of the earth” (1981 86). This heterogeneity proves for Klassen to be a source of danger to which he particularly addresses his project. He writes later in that same text, “only a homogenous society can be stable and survive. Homogenous means one kind, the same race, and more or less the same level of intelligence, similar moral standards, similar basic goals, ideals, religion and culture” (1981 83). This too is a sentiment clearly taken from Mein Kampf in which Hitler wrote, “For a people that has once understood the great problems and tasks of its existence, the questions of outward formalities will no longer lead to inner struggle” (346). Echoing Hitler’s volkish nationalism, Klassen formulates a white nationalist response to racial survival in unity and purity of the white race in one culture which is held together in the face of precarity. Racial Holy War is then a call to unity and purity to defend and expand the domain of white civilization. This unity and inner purity of culture is more recently articulated by Hale also. In an interview he commented on “multiculturalism,” stating, “The Creativity religion holds, first and foremost, that
multiculturalism breeds racial violence...and the history of the world has proven... [n]o multicultural society has ever survived for any length of time” (qtd. in Swain 2003 239). Here the obvious appeal to homogeneity is coupled with the threat of destruction if this “natural” demarcation is not respected. Thereby we see the definition of the world as one in which the natural distinction becomes an inevitable cause and calling for expansive global conflict that is itself natural and inevitable.
Section 4: Cosmic War and Bio-War

In *Terror in the Mind of God*, Mark Jeurgensmeyer’s makes specific mention of RaHoWa in his chapter on “Cosmic War.” The basic premise of his account of cosmic war is that “images of divine struggle—cosmic war” are put “in the service of worldly political struggles” (149-50). That is to say that specific struggles over material gain or political strategy are imbued with a particular religious significance. In this effort, “grand scenarios” are evoked to provide the reason for violent action, suggesting an “all-or-nothing struggle against an enemy whom one assumes to be determined to destroy” (152). The “absolutism of cosmic war,” writes Jeurgensmeyer, therefore “makes compromise unlikely, and those who suggest a negotiated settlement are as excoriated as the enemy” (157). This then provides a sense of the world in which the world is read as in perpetual sacrified conflict; or as Jeurgensmeyer writes, “war provides cosmology, history, and escatology” (158). In this, warfare is a an activity which provides the perpetrators of such violence a certain meaning for that violence is justified but also explains the world and all functions therein (159).

The violence in cosmic war then is that which is directed toward cosmic enemies constructed as an essential element of the grand struggle. Jeurgensmeyer calls the process by which this enemy is “discredited” and constructed as less than human “satanization” (178). In cosmic war, as Jeurgensmeyer explains, satanization has two functions. First, it allows one to see the enemy as a “faceless collective” that is the very embodiment of the chaotic forces that religious violence is often organized against (178-
9). This then allows one to fit the enemies grotesque existence in the larger frame of a grand struggle. The other function is one of “ennoblement, empowerment, and dehumiliation” of those who resist the enemy (188). Here the actors in what he calls “symbolic acts of power” can display their supremacy over the forces they have branded as utterly evil (188-9). For Jeurgensmeyer, satanization is thus a part of a larger pattern of behavior in which people desperately try to “make sense of the world and maintain some control over it” (189).

Jeurgensmeyer’s account of cosmic war seems to address very well what is going on in RaHoWa. Indeed the elements of “all-or-nothing” war as generative of a sense of the world and its operations fits quite well. The *Little White Book*, a short reference manual for the Creator, states that “Racial Loyalty is the greatest of all honors, and racial treason is the worst of all crimes” (2). This indeed makes compromise in the struggle not only unlikely but criminal. In the mind of the Creator, to compromise would mean that one has become a threat to the survival of the white race—an enemy traitor. However, there seems to some elements that require further development. What are we to make of the obvious racialization in Racial Holy War in regarding this as “cosmic war”? Are we to consider “religion,” as Jeurgensmeyer suggests, as that which makes “incidents that might have previously been considered minor skirmishes” rise to the level of cosmic war? In the context of RaHoWa “religion” is part of the conception of RaHoWa, but it is only part. It may even be an ancillary part of the Creator’s world struggle. To elucidate on this gap in the conceptualization of Racial Holy War I propose to approach the logic of racialized warfare using Michel Foucault’s development of the bipolitics, especially as
it appears in his lectures collected in *Society Must be Defended*, and Giorgio Agamben’s concept of bare-life, which he introduces in *Homo Sacer*.

Foucault introduces his concept of biopolitics in *The History of Sexuality Volume I*. Here he describes the various machinations of the state as it found the basic biological “truths” of the human subject a focus of political power. Among the various rights of seizure of property, time, and bodies that the state claimed came include life itself. In this the focus of power as exercised by the state through subjects came to include the right of the managers of the social body to “ensure, maintain, and develop its life” (136). To assure the maximization of the life of the social subject it became the obligation to ensure the life of the individuals within that society. Thus, what was formerly the right of the sovereign to defend himself, his rule and seat of power, was translated into the obligation of a society to defend itself against defective and dangerous individuals. In this way “slaughter became a life necessity” for the survival of everyone within a given society (137). Therefore, warfare was no longer a question of political choice but a matter of survival, a biological necessity, as power came to be situated and exercised “at the level of life, the species, the race, and the large-scale phenomenon of the population” (137). Thus the power over life and death came to colonize everyday life, working in, through, and on every subject in society.

In the lectures of 1975-1976, compiled recently in *Society Must be Defended*, Foucault set about to elucidate how this biopolitical concept of war operates in society as a relation of power and discipline in which Clausewitz’s famous dictum is reversed and political activity becomes “war by other means” and civil society the battle ground (16). In this way “peace itself,” the peace which Hobbes promised after the great civil wars, is
actually itself “coded war”; thus, constructing a “battlefront [which] runs through the whole society, continuously and permanently” (51). These lines of battle then put everyone in that society “on one side or the other”; creating a “binary structure” through all of society, thereby making neutrality impossible (51). And in this division, these lines of demarcation in a permanent state of civil war, Foucault understands racism as a fundamental function to define subjects that are then deposited on one side or the other of the Manichean battle-line. He describes this racism, one that is not hard-linked exclusively to phenotype, as “primarily a way of introducing a break into the domain of life that is under power’s control: the break between what must live and what must die” (249). That fundamental distinction is what Foucault describes as the fundamental element in biopower, and the various interventions that are then required to affect that project of making live and letting die as biopolitics.

If we try to then re-assess the concept of the enemy in the frame of biopolitics we can see something else at work in RaHoWa that goes a step beyond Jeurgensmeyer’s cosmic war approach. If we understand Giorgio Agamben’s “protagonist” in his book *Homo Sacer*, we can get another perspective on the enemy that puts into question Jeurgensmeyer’s concept of satanization in this case. Agamben is concerned in this work with the concept of the biopolitical as the focal point of modern state sovereignty and the contemporary concept of the political. Here he draws directly from Foucault. What he develops in his own treatment of biopolitics is the point at which the “the production of the biopolitical body is the original activity of sovereign power” (6). This body to which he refers is *homo sacer*, the “sacred man”: that being “who may be killed by anyone and yet not sacrificed” (8). It is in this subject, a constructed being whose life becomes the
site of exception, which Agamben finds the key for understanding sovereignty in biopolitics and the problems that arise from it.

In Agamben’s account, in the life of the homo sacer—that which can be expunged without consequence but has no value as sacrifice—rests in an exclusion or “exception” (11). In this the sacredness, which Agamben understands in ancient Roman law as “before or beyond” present understandings of the religious, lays a “conjunction of two traits” in the “sacratio”: the unpunishibility of killing and the exclusion from sacrifice (9 & 81). Here we witness a situation in which “biopolitics can turn into thanatopolitics” in which killing is neither cause for legal culpability nor religious or moral condemnation (122). And key to this state of exception in which violence is imminent is the homo sacer: that life which “does not deserve to live” (138). The sacred man then carries within himself that “fundamental biopolitical fracture” in which we see the distinction of friend/enemy, with us/against us, emerge as a frame which generates that enemy whom can be killed by anyone of the people without committing homicide. And, as Foucault argues, in this biopolitical mode, the preservation of the life of the people killing the enemy becomes a technique of guaranteeing that valued life continues. Concurrent to the abundant life of the people is the bare-life of the enemy. As Agamben argues, it is a situation in which “the care of life coincides with the fight against the enemy” (147). Killing becomes a basic strategy of living.

This sacred man, argues Agamben, exists outside the juridical order and is therefore not regard as life in the sense that he has no absolute right to exist. Again, repeating the biopolitical frame from Foucault, Agamben understands that the fundamental right of the sovereign as that the right over life and death; that is, the right to
decide who is homo sacer and to decide where the exception lies (87). That is to say that he is sovereign who decides the state of exception (11). Here the sovereign and the 
*homo sacer* are joined as “two extreme limits” of juridical order. In the case of the sovereign all men are potentially *homo sacer*, and with the *homo sacer* all men are potentially sovereign (84). This is crucial to grasp in order to comprehend the claim to racial supremacy through RaHoWa. In this way we can begin to grasp the claim of the Creator in RaHoWa that the white race is Nature’s finest creation and the rightful ruler of the earth. As such each creator may claim to white racial sovereignty through the right to decide who must live and who has to die; who is properly “white” and who is a “traitor,” “jew,” or “mud.”

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5 Here Agamben calls upon Carl Schmitt’s *Political Theology*. The quote from this work is “Sovereign is he who decides on the state of exception” (5). For Schmitt this state of exception arises in a moment of crises which reveals the need for the sovereign choice, revealing the basis of the real social order—the sovereign who wields total power to decide (10).
Section 5: Biopolitics and Cosmic Racial Holy War

If we look at RaHoWa through the lens of biopolitics from Foucault and Agamben, and reflecting upon the concept of cosmic war from Jeurgensmeyer, we can develop a more substantial account of the claims in and effects of RaHoWa. First, an understanding of RaHoWa in the context of the biopolitical from Foucault we understand racism to operate here as an articulation of a fundamental break between those who must live and those which must die. This fundamental distinction is referenced in the Little White Book, “We believe history and experience have shown that only on the basis of recognizing our enemies, destroying and/or excluding them and practicing racial teamwork can a stable lasting government be built for the progress, prosperity and advancement of the White Race” (19). But this break also cuts through what be described as phenotypically “white.”

This fundamental distinction and exclusion makes an appeal to biological survival and social stability, hence a racism which seems to divide along the plane of phenotype also references cultural difference and inner character. Hence the possibility of including former members of the Latin Kings into the fold and the possible exclusion of those perceived as race traitors.⁶ The concern in the bio-racial distinctiveness is related to a cultural distinction which compels a project of preservation in which the enemies of the white race are read as the enemies of civilization itself. One can see this in the statements

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⁶ An example of this inclusion of “Latins” into the white racial category is Gabriel Carafa. He is a former Latin King who then joined a skinhead group called The Hated and became a Creator. See “Ten Who Terrify” on the web-site for the Southern Poverty Law Center.
from Klassen and Hale iterated earlier in which they both claim the inevitable
destruction of a “multicultural society” (Klassen Hale). So the fundamental break in
RaHoWa cuts through supposed biological difference, but also through supposed cultural
difference which defines who can be a part of civilization or must be disposed of for
civilization to survive. In this way the battle-line of the Racial Holy War cuts through all
social relations and divides the world into friends and enemies, maximized life and bare-
life.

Here we can see the binary structure function at multiple planes in which the Racial
Holy War operates not simply to define justification for violence or to vindicate a
humiliated population, but to define all social relations around an order of battle. One
may then understand RaHoWa as totalization of all social relations around a world of
inevitable conflict which not only informs the world view of the Creator but prescribes
various actions, dispositions, affects, and behaviors. The order of racial struggle then
manifests in various commandments in which the daily actions of life, including the
choice of business and sexual partners, are read through the discipline of RaHoWa as an
“avowed duty and holy responsibility” conformed to “What is best for the White Race”
(Little White Book 6). The discipline of the battlefield, as Foucault suggests in Society
Must be Defended, permeates all of society as the defense of the people becomes the
individual responsibility of every person and the prescriptive limit for all social action. It
is the colonization of everyday life in the form of war in which everyone is either a
soldier or the enemy.

The struggle between races as articulated in RaHoWa also functions as that which
fundamentally defines all life as either productive in the expansion and advancement of
the preferred population and therefore civilization, or inhibiting to this function. In this we can see that overt physical violence is not the only way in which RaHoWa manifests. War is the very structure of the world and the way that all social action is understood and oriented. This then reads a position of insecurity into one’s existence, which then manifests a totality of social relations, which develops disciplined subjects with certain affective responses, who are prepared to undertake certain actions which are considered self defense. As the Little White Book states this call to a disciplined life in this way, “We are now in the precarious position of being exterminated, a crisis that is coming to a rapid climax. Unless the White Race soon becomes aware, aroused, organized and militant, we will soon be an extinct species” (11). Thus RaHoWa is a race war to the finish which authorizes total destruction of the enemy whose bare existence is cause enough for total war. As Klassen writes in RaHoWa: This Planet is All Ours, “No longer can the mud races and the White Race live on the same planet and survive. It is now either them or us” (4). It is also a program of social discipline that orients all activity around the racio-cultural order of battle.

This complicates cosmic war as it also complicates satanization which we get from Jeurgensmeyer. I have suggested that Agamben’s notion of bare-life helps us to understand a deeper conception of the enemy in Racial Holy War. If we take the statement from Racial Loyalty Issue #34, we can see the biopolitical construction of the enemy. Klassen writes:

In a rapidly degenerating world that is now overcrowded and overrun with an explosion of inferior mud races; a world that is drug-ridden and already overly polluted with toxic chemicals and nuclear wastes; a world now steeped in
anarchy, chaos and terrorism. It is nevertheless our ultimate and continuing goal to build in its place a WHITER AND BRIGHTER WORLD for our future generations (A Revolution of Values 117).

Here, again, we have the fundamental distinction that marks then enemy as religious, racial, and cultural world enemy; one that is by his presence on the Earth an enemy of the white race. Good and evil seem to be ancillary to the fundamental biological problem of the existence of a species that should not be as it is locked in perpetual Malthusian conflict with the rightful owners of the Earth. Here the enemy is rendered as an “odious” and “parasitic” element which wrongfully inhabits the earth and inhibits the expansion of the white race into “all the good lands.” In a word, the enemies of the white race are bare-life; a threat to the life of the people which can be killed by anyone but have no value as sacrifice.

In RaHoWa we have a biopolitical conception of race-war which articulates a fundamental break between lives that are of infinite value and those which threaten those valued lives and must be destroyed and, consequently, have no value at all. Here we can also see how RaHoWa extends a battle-line through all society, orienting all social relations to fit the order of battle. The very precarity of the population, caused by the abject existence of a potentially polluting and inevitable dangerous alterity, becomes the focus of all productive activity.7 This abject other then is simultaneously constructed as infinitely killable and worthless: the homo sacer. This worthless other is simultaneously

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7 Here I am referring to Kristeva’s concept of the abject from The Powers of Horror. The abject is that which is necessarily of the body but must be expelled beyond the boundaries of the body; like urine, fecies, and puss. It is that thing which threatens the supposed natural boundaries that give the bounded subject meaning. A process that she calls ”Abjection,” which “preserves what existed in the archaism of pre-objectal relationship, in the immemorial violence with which a body becomes separated from another body in order to be” (10).
constructed with the preferred population which is constructed as infinitely valuable, and whose precarity provides a state of emergency in which all means are right as they are necessary. Any and all action to the end of removing that threat to the population is not simply justified through some appeal to religion but is considered a biological necessity to which the religious commandment is then applied. This appeal to a bio-war of cosmic dimensions in RaHoWa provides the white man as that is exempt from the juridical order.

This sovereign position to define the means of survival and to whom violence can be directed is clearly laid out in the Little White Book, in which it states:

Should the jewish government use force to violate our Constitutional rights to freely practice our religion; to peacefully assemble; to peacefully organize; to distribute our WHITE MAN'S BIBLE; to use mails and any other prerogative in promoting and expanding our legal religious organization and the full practice of our religion, then we have every right to declare them as open criminals violating the Constitution and the highest law of the land. They then obviously are the criminals, and we can then treat them like the criminal dogs they are and take the law into our own hands.... It will then be open season on all jews (22).

In this global struggle over the lives of the population, presumed legal means can be transcended by the sovereign race in a moment of necessity which they define on their own terms of necessity. And necessity, as Agamben reminds us, has no law (2005 29). Thus this state of exception in RaHoWa secures the sovereignty and supposed superiority of the white race and the homo sacer as they are simultaneously manifested an inseparably linked. It is in this milieu of the state of exception that RaHoWa does its work in defining everyday life as a battle for biological and social survival. And it is here
that it has linkages to the War on Terror as a device for defining a fundamental break that draws the lines of battle through all social relations in a global biopolitical struggle in which the enemy is constructed as bare-life to dispose of for the expansion and advancement of the preferred population.
Section 6: Biopolitics and the Cosmic War on Terror

The fundamental break established in the War on Terror was announced by the statement from former President Bush on November 20, 2001 in which he said, “Either you are either with us or with the terrorists.” This distinction carries within it the biopolitical basis for the war on terror as a conflict which divides the world between those that must live, “us,” and those who are rendered bare-life to be disposed of, the “terrorists.” This distinction does not manifest as a clearly biological racism which RaHoWa makes use of; but, rather deploys what Etienne Balibar called a “neo-racism.” This is a racism that is coded not in a narrative of unsurpassable biological difference but “within the framework of a cultural racism” that re-narrativizes the biological notion of race into the presumed unsurpassability of “cultural” difference (26). Balibar states that “culture can function like nature” to define specific limits of compatibility before conflict ensues (22). In the French context, to which he specifically addresses his essay, he remarks on the “Arabophobia” which conflates “Arabness” with Islam and marked a fundamental fissure between the “European” way of the life and the internal other (24). In spite of the repeated pleas of the Bush administration that Islam is not the enemy, it is not a stretch to see this particular account as perhaps representative of the notions expressed in the War on Terror in which “Islamist” has been the replacement for “terrorist,” and the image of the terrorist has been the dominant image of the Arab other in the Islamophobic imagination agitated by the War on Terror.
This fundamental biopolitical break in the War on Terror is perhaps more visible in the statement from the Royal United Studies Institute (RUSI) released in January 2007. In this report, Gwyn Prins, a Professor at the London School of Economics, and Robert Salisbury, Marquess of Salisbury and a Privy Councillor, describe the “misplaced deference to multiculturalism” which they feel has made Britain a “soft target for terrorism” (23). They further suggest,

The deep guarantee of real strength is our knowledge of who we are. Our loss of cultural self-confidence weakens our ability to develop new means to provide for our security in the face of new risks. Our uncertainty incubates the embryonic threats these risks represent… We are indeed a soft touch, from within and without (26).

This statement echoes that from Samuel Huntington’s now infamous Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of the World Order, in which he states:

Multiculturalism at home threatens the United States and the West; universalism abroad threatens the West and the World. Both deny the uniqueness of Western Culture… The preservation of the United States and the West requires the renewal of Western identity… (318).

And, as should be obvious from the statements from Klassen and Hale about multiculturalism, these statements map quite well on the basic premise of RaHoWa: only in purity and unity can a society guarantee defense from the abject other. And as in RaHoWa, the threat of heterogeneity makes “culture” a hyper-represented site of the break between the preferred population which must live and the population that alien enemy which will be excluded by whatever means the guardians of the people decide is
necessary. Thus the lines of battle in the War on Terror are drawn along supposed
naturalistic categories coded not in the biological narrative of race but in the
unsurpassable differences between “cultures.” With the promise of security in
homogeneity, the lines of battle run through global society, putting us all on one side or
the other. You are either with us or you are with the terrorists-- there is no possibility of
neutrality as a country or an individual.

The USA Patriot Act is ready example of how this battle-line has extended
through social milieu of the United States. In this legislation, passed as a tool in the War
on Terror, were measures for increased surveillance and powers of deportation of
“aliens” who may be connected to very broad definitions of “terrorism.” However, these
lines of battle, stated in terms of a battle for civilization itself, stretch through global
relations as well. Former President Bush, remarking on the “barbarity” of the 9/11
attacks on September 11, 2006 stated, “This struggle has been called a clash of
civilizations. In truth, it is a struggle for civilization” (“Text of President Bush’s
Address”). L. Paul Bremer, former Administrator of the Coalition Provisional Authority,
articulated the fundamental break similarly at the April, 2004 graduation of recruits of
Iraq’s police academy, stating, “The men and women before me are the line between
civilization and barbarism.” He went on to say that,

[T]he Land between the Two Rivers is the focal point of the clash between the
forces of darkness and the light of civilization. You, the men and women of the
Iraqi Police, have chosen the side of civilization. You and your colleagues are the

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8 Duke University has a helpful breakdown of the provisions in the patriot act and the adjustments to it that
took place in 2003. See,
visible answer to the shameful barbarians of Fallujah and Karbala and Najaf and Baghdad (U.S. Department of State).

The fundamental culturalist distinction in the War on Terror, with us or with the terrorists, is simultaneously coded as a clash between civilization and barbarity which stretches the lines of battle through every social relation; even in the occupied areas of Iraq.

As the War on Terror is defined through this fundamental break between those who must live and those who must diminish to make that life possible we see the biopolitical struggle coded in terms that Paul Gilroy describes as “civilizationalist”—a fundamental line of “antagonism in global politics” that is a reiteration of the narrative of a hierarchy of cultures (22). In the introduction to the 2003 Strategy for Combating Terrorism released by the Central Intelligence Agency states, “Our goal will be reached when Americans and other civilized people around the world can lead their lives free of fear from terrorist attacks.” Here the biopolitics of the struggle are clearly stated in the necessity to secure the life possibilities of the “civilized” population from the threats to that “civilized” livelihood. Here the stakes of the struggle, stated in the precarity of the people and civilization, articulates not just a legal imperative, or even a moral one; but an imperative that is fundamentally tied to the necessities of biological and social existence. The world is no longer a site of complex differences and strategic, even precarious, alliances. It is a “post 9/11 world” in which the lines of difference are militarized and the possibilities of alliance are confined to “us” and the “terrorists” deeply coded in terms of culture, civilization, morality, and religiously. In a 2005 speech, which had some eerie resonance with Klassen’s proclamation of RaHoWa in 1986, President Bush said,
We didn't ask for this global struggle, but we're answering history's call with confidence and a comprehensive strategy... There's always a temptation, in the middle of a long struggle, to seek the quiet life, to escape the duties and problems of the world, and to hope the enemy grows weary of fanaticism and tired of murder. This would be a pleasant world, but it's not the world we live in ("Islamic Radicals Doomed to Fail").

The inevitability of the struggle between civilization and barbarism defines the world and circumscribes the affects and activities of a cheap patriotism which defines virtue by the way one contributes to the common defense.

Of course there is another side to this discourse in the War on Terror with the delineation of the presumed nature of the enemy, the terrorist evil-doer as it were. Spivak warns of this circumscription of the “enemy” in her speech shortly after the events of September 11, 2001 in which she said, “making terror both civil and natural provides a rationale for exercising psychological diagnostics, the most malign ingredient of racism.”

This brings us to a discussion of the reduction of the “terrorist” to the status of bare-life; a certain biological threat to the preferred population that must die so the people may live. Agamben specifically remarks on this in State of Exception. He argues that the “immediate biopolitical significance of the state of exception” is manifested in the “indefinite detention” of terrorists under the abject title “enemy combatants” (3). Here the target of the violence of the War on Terror is a legally unclassifiable being that relieves the perpetrators of the violence of any responsibilities to the life of the detainee. The biopolitical is revealed as thanatopolitical in the immanently detainable, torturable, and killable terrorist other. To ensure the safe life of the people the abject other is subject
to be “detained,” subjected to torture, or simply killed without regard, and in many ways without consequence. The fact that to date no count of the precise number of Iraqi civilians that have been killed since the 2003 has been conducted demonstrates that in the War on Terror the biopolitical enemy literally does not count. As General Tommy Franks Said in 2002, referring to the conjecture about enemy dead in the aftermath of the Afghan invasion, “You know we don’t do body counts” (Epstein). The terrorist, the detainee, the enemy combatant, all signal the *homo sacer*: those who can be killed but are not worthy of sacrifice—lives that have no value and often literally don’t count. And all too often this signals to the audience “Islamist” to the exclusion of almost all other possibilities. One hardly ever hears of the KKK when hooded terrorists are mentioned.

As in RaHoWa, in spite of differences in the coding of racialization, in the War on Terror we have a fundamental break in the population which stretches the battle-lines of a global struggle through all social relations putting us all on one side or the other. In this bio-war, coded as a clash for civilization, there is the institution of a state of emergency generating the necessity to secure the precarious life of the people against an implacable enemy that is “flat evil” and a threat to “civilization” itself. Thus the post 9/11 world is one in which the forces are clearly defined in a bipolarity of those who must be defended and those against whom all measures are not simply just or right but absolutely necessary. And the one who can declare the state of emergency has the power to define who lives and who dies. And in this power to define the exception one becomes the exception. One has only to see the recently released memo from Office of Legal Counsel to the Justice Department from 2002 which states, “the President's authority to detain enemy combatants, including U.S. citizens, is based on his constitutional authority
as Commander in Chief. We conclude that section 4001(a) does not, and constitutionally could not, interfere with that authority” (1). The expansion and advancement of American hegemony and “Western civilization,” justified in the defense of life and freedom from those that can only be understood as those who oppose both—those implacable, natural enemies against whom all means are required. Like the “muds” and “Jews” in Racial Holy War, the “terrorists” and “detainees” in the War on Terror stand as *homo sacer*, the causus belli and the hinge of sovereignty in a permanent state of exception; a war for life and civilization.
Section 7: Conclusions

These notions are not new. Nor are they unique to the Creativity Movement nor the Bush administration. Take for example the statement by Winston Churchill in 1937 on the issue of Palestine in which he said,

I do not agree that the dog in a manger has the final right to the manger even though he may have lain there for a very long time. I do not admit that right. I do not admit for instance that a great wrong has been done to the red Indians of America or the black people of Australia. I do not admit that a wrong has been done to these people by the fact that a stronger race, a higher grade race, a more worldly wise race to put it that way, has come in and taken their place (qtd. in Gilbert 120).

General Sherman writing to General Sheridan about the means by which the Native Americans may be handled in the fullfillment of Manifest Destiny stated, “I will say nothing and do nothing to restrain our troops from doing what they deem proper on the spot, and will allow no mere vague general charges of cruelty and inhumanity to tie their hands... the enemies of our race and of our civilization, shall not again be able to... carry out their barbarous warfare” (qtd in Cozzens 266). These statements may be construed to signal continuity between the murderous actions of colonial imperialism, American expansionism, RaHoWa, and the War on Terror. However, I think it is better to think of the similarities in discourse’s as examples of how themes of race and civilization in bio-warfare represent “preserved possibilities” which betray the “underlying discourse of
permanent social war” which calls for a murderous purification (Stoler 69). Threaded through the fabric of the biopolitical state, and its publicly disavowed offspring—like white supremacists, militias, and other “extremists”— are common themes that have provided moralistic claims to total war coded as a duty to defend human life and prosperity.

This is the warp and woof of the fantasies of RaHoWa. Here the themes of the defense of race and civilization are described as a religious obligation, signaling something more than cosmic war; more than a political goal layered with religious significance. It is a bio-war of global dimensions coded as a sacred duty written in the lives of the people. Religion here serves to rally those who would to the cause and give the racial war a connotation that can serve as total ideology. It provides a total program for racial survival, circumscribing the range of affects and actions appropriate to the white racial warrior and provides the long sought solution to the problem of ideology. It defines the world as a place of eternal struggle and all that lives within it as a part of that struggle in the bare fact of life.

Here we can see again the similarities with the War on Terror. The concept of “double coding” in Bruce Lincoln’s Holy Terrors and Hugh Urban’s “triple coding” in Secrets of the Kingdom provide an insight here. As Lincoln notes, Muhammad Atta and George Bush constructed world of “Manichean struggle” in which their violent actions made sense (20). Double coding made it possible for Bush to establish a “regime of truth” in which the War on Terror could then be carried out as both a political necessity and a biblical mission; painting his activities as a cosmic war without offending the secularist sensibilities that so many hold as itself a necessity of modernity (57). Hugh
Urban pushes this concept by proposing a triple coding; by which he means the incorporation of the “clash of civilizations” with the language of religion (111). Here the neo-conservatives’ militant neo-liberalism is linked with racialized conflict, in the neoracism sense, and coded in a religiousity that frames the War on Terror as a civilizational as well as a cosmic war; the stakes of which is life and civilization. The War on Terror could then be read as a highly coded version of cosmic racial holy war, one that tries to publicly disavow its own racialized discourse.

We can see that the common theme of the danger of multiculturalism in RUSI and the statement from Hale what Gilroy calls a “populist racism” in Western Europe and the United States as borders are increasingly militarized in the face of increased immigration and migration from the “global South” (134). As the “biopolitical commitments” of Empire and Manifest Destiny, previously maintained by the biological narrative of race hierarchy, are troubled we can see these commitments reframed “in the form of common sense” of naturalized categories of “culture” and “civilization” (144). Religious coding of these divisions persists as well. One could see the efforts against candidate Obama was itself loaded with these narratives as he was labeled equally a Marxist, fascist, Muslim—all code for his insurmountable “cultural” incompatibility with “real America.”

With the direction that President Obama has taken in reaching out to the “Muslim world” and his abandonment of the most odious policies of the War on Terror, it is perhaps easy to say that the war there is perhaps on its way to being over. However, the fundamental biopolitical problem remains. It is likely that the more he abandons the rhetoric and policies of the War on Terror he will find himself placed on the other side of the line. The June 9th article by Frank Gaffney Jr. in the Washington Post, in which he
hypothesizes that Obama may be a Muslim, is a good example of this. He states, “What is alarming is that in aligning himself and his policies with those of Shariah-adherents such as the Muslim Brotherhood, the president will greatly intensify the already enormous pressure on peaceful, tolerant American Muslims to submit to such forces - and heighten expectations, here and abroad, that the rest of us will do so as well.” This continued assertion that Obama is culturally incompatible and therefore dangerous has carried with it the suggestion that he is part of the problem of survival of the American people and civilization. This clear in the assertions by former Vice President Cheney that Obama’s promise to close Guantanamo and the application of basic rights to “detainees” puts the American people imminent danger from an enemy that does not value life or freedom and therefore deserves neither.

The War on Terror and RaHoWa do similar kinds of rhetorical work. They suggest that the messy complexity of social life is best articulated as a Manichean fantasy “in which, as Gilroy argues, “bodies are only ordered and predictable units that obey the rules of a deep cultural biology” in which the “logics of nature and culture have converged” (6). These phantasmagorical cosmic holy wars have a life outside of the institutions that coin their terminology, as they did with bloody fantasies of empire, colony, and Manifest Destiny. They do so precisely because they rearticulate the discursive reserves that seem to still hold resonance for many. With increased anxieties over an African American President and immigration within the white nationalist milieu, Racial Holy War is likely to continue to provide a means of articulating a global struggle along the lines of race, culture, and civilization; putting us all on one side or the other of that battle line. With continuing disputes over “illegal” immigration, the financial crises,
and the entanglements in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Guantanamo, the War on Terror may continue to inform bio-war solutions for these complex issues. This is evident in present discussions from militarized borders to defend against the contagious, job stealing, drug smuggling “alien” to the prolonged detention and torture of “terrorists” for whom suspicion is enough to confirm their danger to the homeland. As Foucault said in the course summary of his lectures in Society must be Defended, “the war continues to rage…” (268).
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