

## NOTES ON *DIVINE VIOLENCE* pt.1



In North America, the myth of Manifest Destiny was born. This concept emphasised the fated future of American expansion as a god given right and an absolute conclusion. I have been thinking about this recently, and how the symbolism of the gun has permeated the United States. In mythology there is such thing as the Heroes Journey, where a hero must undertake many battles and low points in his life before ultimately reaching the top of the mountain, triumphing over evil or establishing himself as a genuine hero. In North America, I consider this somewhat as an overlapping image, with an interesting contrast. I would say the heroes journey in American terms could be called "The Outlaws Journey". The Old West/Wild West was a central theme (truly still is) in the early Americas. There was a certain emphasis on violence as a divine right and heavenly approach to "taming the wilderness". Even today we still have consistent media which promotes the "natural born killer". The gun is used as the conduit for American freedom. The main terms "Liberty" or "Freedom" are consistently represented in American books, myths and music. I think it's quite interesting that hundreds of years can pass and still the ultimate symbol for Americans is freedom. Some of the most famous people in American history are simply put, just killers. I think the American mind is very different in this way. I can't think of many other countries where this is the case, where serial killers, gunslingers and assassins are owed so much respect.

American mythology promotes the anti-hero, The Lone Ranger, the kinds of people who go through some kind of transformation with violence and seemingly impossible burden. I suppose these things are already known in the American subconscious, but I have been recalling on these things the past few days, possibly to recognize how eccentric the American prototype is.