

HOW BLACK IS BLACK METAL

[JOURNALISMUS] nachrichten von heute

Kevin Coogan - Lords of Chaos (LOC), a recent book-length examination of the “Satanic” black metal music scene, is less concerned with sound than fury. Authors Michael Moynihan and Didrik Sederlind zero in on Norway, where a tiny clique of black metal musicians torched some churches in 1992. The church burners’ own place of worship was a small Oslo record store called Helvete (Hell). Helvete was run by the godfather of Norwegian black metal, Oystein Aarseth (“Euronymous”, or “Prince of Death”), who first brought black metal to Norway with his group Mayhem and his Deathlike Silence record label.

One early member of the movement, “Frost” from the band Satyricon, recalled his first visit to Helvete:

I felt like this was the place I had always dreamed about being in. It was a kick in the back. The black painted walls, the bizarre fitted out with inverted crosses, weapons, candelabra etc. And then just the downright evil atmosphere...it was just perfect.

Frost was also impressed at how talented Euronymous was in “bringing forth the evil in people – and bringing the right people together” and then dominating them. “With a scene ruled by the firm hand of Euronymous,” Frost reminisced, “one could not avoid a certain herd-mentality. There were strict codes for what was accepted.” Euronymous may have honed his dictatorial skills while a member of Red Ungdom (Red Youth), the youth wing of the Marxist/Leninist Communist Workers Party, a Stalinist/Maoist outfit that idolized Pol Pot. All who wanted to be part of black metal’s inner core “had to please the leader in one way or the other.” Yet to Frost, Euronymous’s control over the scene was precisely “what made it so special and obscure, creating a center of dark, evil energies and inspiration.”

Lords of Chaos, however, is far less interested in Euronymous than in the man who killed him, Varg Vikernes from the one-man group Burzum. Vikernes, a church burner who dubbed himself “Count Grishnackh” after an evil ore in Lord of the Rings, is now serving a 21-year sentence – Norway’s toughest penalty – in a maximum security prison for brutally stabbing Euronymous to death on 10 August 1993. After his arrest just seven days later, the Count justified himself by claiming that Euronymous was a communist “queer” who had cheated him out of Burzum royalties. He also claimed that Euronymous was plotting to kill him. After being ostracized from the black metal community, Vikernes announced that he was now no longer a black metal Satanist, but rather a Nazi Odinist because the Jews had “killed my father Odin.”

If Lords of Chaos were only about the antics of the most extreme wing of black metal, it would be an informative and entertaining look at pop culture Grand Guignol. The book, however, suggests that the events in Norway reflect a growing tendency among alienated youth from Miami to Moscow, who are now allegedly blending black metal, Satanism, and currents of fascism into a culturally explosive Molotov cocktail. Vikernes, however, is really famous for murder, not music, while the overwhelming majority of black metal musicians and fans are not, and are not likely to become, church burners, murderers, or Nazi Odinists.

To buttress its thesis, LOC points to metalheads turned murderers, including “Belfagor” from the Swedish Satanic band Nefandus, who attacked a black man in a self-described “niggerhunt”; Bard Eithun (“Faust”) from the Norwegian group Emperor, who murdered a gay man that sought to seduce him; and Jon Nodveidt from the Swedish group Dissection, who butchered an Algerian immigrant. LOC even devotes an entire chapter to an obscure two-man German band called Absurd, who coldly executed an annoying fellow high school student. Although the members of Absurd are self-pro-claimed Nazis and Vikernes fans, even they reported that they committed the crime for personal, not political, motives.

LOC also dwells on the activity of otherwise highly obscure fascist propagandists with no direct ties to black metal who are nevertheless trying to recruit its followers into their cause. It even adopts a far right spin on Jungian theory when it suggests that Vikernes may have tapped into an anti-Christian racial/cultural archetype that is allegedly still aglow in the Norwegian collective unconscious. The book also profiles racist killers with no known ties to black metal, such as the Florida youth clique called the Lords of Chaos. Before being dethroned by LOCAL police, the Lords burnt down a church, murdered a gay teacher, and were planning to slaughter black visitors to Disney World with silencer-equipped automatic weapons.

LOC culminates with a paean to the “fire” which, it claims, bums bright inside the black metal under-ground despite the attempts of mysterious unnamed “forces of finance and materialism” to “root it out and stamp it out.” If the jailed murderer Faust is to be believed, however, just the opposite has occurred. In a recent interview in the top Norwegian black metal zine Slayer, Faust complained:

As for the black metal scene, it is not really interesting anymore...! mean there must be over a hundred underground labels releasing albums of every immature, pre-ready band around. I’m amazed about the absence of every little sign of a critical attitude from record labels.

When asked if all this bothered him, Faust replied: “Not really, it is just a normal development. We saw the signs already in ‘93. As soon as the arrests were made and when people saw the publicity the happenings made, they thought ‘Hey, maybe I can make something out of this too-’” If anything, the “forces of finance and materialism” have used the events of 1993 to mass market black metal. Lords of Chaos’s publisher, Feral House, itself distributes one of Vikernes’ Burzum CDs, Filosofem.

NORWAY'S FAR RIGHT

Despite its apparent fascination with elements of fascism, LOC studiously avoids comparing black metal to "white power" music, a sound much beloved by real Scandinavian fascists within a certain age group. A longtime leading Norwegian far rightist named Erik Bliicher, who currently controls a major white power label called Ragnarok Records, is only mentioned once in passing. LOC also ignores Norway's right populist Progress Party, which won 25 parliamentary seats in the 1997 elections with a pumped up anti-immigrant, anti-welfare state, and anti-Lapp platform, even though Vikernes seems to have shared many of its prejudiced beliefs. He even justified murdering Euronymous because he "was half Lappish, a Sami, so that was a bonus." When it does briefly mention Norway's right, LOC admits that the links between the goose steppers and the ghouls are extremely tenuous. Indeed, with its white corpse paint, medieval Viking imagery, and industrial strength angst, black metal seems, if anything, overtly anti-political.

LOC has generally been perceived as an expose of a colorful music sub-culture, and it does indeed provide much valuable information about an otherwise inaccessible scene. Yet what really makes the book fascinating is that its main author, Michael Moynihan, is himself an extreme rightist whose fusion of politics and aesthetic violence shapes a not-so-hidden sub current that runs throughout LOC. The book itself, however, is not a "fascist" tract in the strict sense of the term, in part because Moynihan co-wrote the book with Didrik Saderlind, a former music critic for a mainstream Norwegian paper who is now an editor at Playboy. Moreover, Feral House editor Adam Parfrey clearly wanted to publish a popular book on the strange universe of black metal rather than a political polemic. Nor does Moynihan himself fit easily into the more conventional definitions of fascism. LOC is best characterized as a palimpsest with the author's own political ideology at work just below the surface of a text ostensibly devoted solely to analyzing an extremist musical sub-culture.

THE ABRAXAS AXIS

Michael Moynihan is an interesting fellow. Some might argue that he is actually three people - "Michael Jenkins," "Michael Moynihan Jenkins," and "Michael Jenkins Moynihan" - since all three monikers have graced his projects. In 1989 the youthful Bostonian joined forces with the San Francisco-based Abraxas Foundation, which he described as an "occultist-fascist think tank" linked to the Church of Satan. Moynihan dubbed his own wing of the Abraxas Foundation "Axis Sanguinaries" [Blood Axis] because:

Blood can be seen as LIFE, and at the same time it can be equated to DEATH. It is essential to violence in almost all instances. It has powerful sexual connotations. It is the key fluid of history... [Axis]. highlights the genetic aspect of blood, bound together in the will of a people or race. It describes allies of mind and blood, mobilized for total warfare. It also reiterates the pivotal nature of blood in human existence, both personal and world-historic.

According to some reports, Moynihan's blood fetish included drinking (non AIDS-infected) blood. He was also suspected of setting fire to a manger scene on the Cambridge Commons, just across from Harvard University, in 1987. A note left by the firebug at the smoky scene the day after Christmas asked: "How many more fires before you realize your gods are dead? DEAD!"

As for the Abraxas Foundation, it was founded by another blood fetishist named Boyd Rice in 1984. The name came from Abraxas, a Gnostic deity that combined within itself the forces of light and dark-ness, good and evil. Rice hoped that his foundation would help create "a new demographic of people who are into the occult, Fascism, and Social Darwinism. It's out there as an alternative for kids who are growing up and need that information."

Both Rice and Moynihan came out of the "industrial" music scene. Rice, who calls his musical project NON, released his first self-produced "noise music" Black Album in the late 1970s. As for Moynihan, he created his own one-man "power electronics" group called Coup De Grace in 1984. In the summer of 1989 Rice invited him to come to Japan, where Rice was doing a NON tour. That same year Moynihan renamed his project Blood Axis.

THROBBING GRISTLE

And then you have hypocritical people who use this kind of [totalitarian/fascist] imagery and then claim they're against all the things they're singing about which has always bothered me...they're using these fascistic, totalitarian, disciplined tactics and there's an inherent irony in that. The people in these bands use this incredible level of violence, and yet claim they're in favor of peace and are opposed to violence. What I liked about the black metal people that I saw right away was that they seemed totally unhypocritical...Because you'll see these other bands like TG [Throbbing Gristle] who were also in a lot of ways using really violent imagery and ultimately you have someone like Genesis P-Orridge being some hippie, flower child in reality. - Michael Moynihan

The chain of events that led Moynihan and Rice to an eccentric and avant-garde form of cultural fascism that would have made Hitler himself apoplectic began in the "industrial culture" movement of the late 1970s, and particularly with the seminal British industrial band Throbbing Gristle (TG). Boyd Rice and TG played together at Rice's first London concert in 1978, and then again later in Berlin. TG's Industrial Records even agreed to release a Boyd Rice LP before he signed up with Mute. TG and Rice were also lauded by Re/Search in its influential 1983 "Industrial Culture" issue.

TG's most important member, "Genesis P-Orridge" (a pun on General Post Office), legally changed his name from Neil Megson after becoming active in the mail art movement of the early 1970s. He also did extreme performance art with his then-girlfriend "Cosey Fanni Tutti" under the name COUM Transmissions. Their shows incorporated whipping, self-mutilation, masturbation, enemas, and vomiting. COUM Transmissions lasted until 1976 when GPO, Cosey, and their friend "Sleazy" (Peter Christopherson, who had joined COUM in its last year) created TG with electronics wiz Chris Carter to reach a broader audience.

Boyd Rice recalled that when he and GPO first met in London in 1978:

I played Gen an early NON concert tape and he played me an early T.G. tape. We both agreed that there were some amazing similarities not only in the musical (if you can call it that) direction we were exploring, but also on a personal level – a lot of shared interests. I had no idea what T.G. was when I went around to look up Gen, all I knew is that he was an artist who was very into Manson and Hitler. Back then. NO ONE was into that sort of thing...In those days. Gen still wore swastikas and would tell anyone who'd listen (and many that wouldn't) what a great guy Hitler was. Uncle Adolf he called him. But that was a long time ago.

GPO's interest in Hitler was not unique. British punks often incorporated swastika imagery and Malcolm McLaren's Sex boutique sold Nazi symbols side-by-side with S/M and fetish gear. More than just a cheap shock, the swastika deliberately mocked the ideals of the 1960s, the era of long hair, free love, and flower power.

Nor could English swastika wearers be completely oblivious to the fact that the racial populist National Front (NF) was then polling at an all-time high. The NF took 18.5% of the vote in the Leicester by-election in the summer of 1976, and it appeared likely that it would win its first seat in the House of Commons from the Hackney section of east London. To the aesthetically rigid NF and its "John Bull" allies in the neo-skinhead/soccer hooligan scene, however, punk was too mockingly anti-patriotic and nihilist, just one more symptom of England's sad decline.

TG, the linchpin of the post-punk "industrial" turn, dressed in camouflage gear decorated with an SS-looking lightning bolt patch, and issued songs like "Zyklon B Zombie" and "Salon Kitty" (named after an SS-run brothel in Berlin). The cover for the TG song "Discipline" on Fetish Records showed the group outside the former Nazi Ministry of Propaganda building in Berlin. TG called their Hackney-based recording studio the Death Factory, and its Industrial Records logo was an unidentified picture of Auschwitz. Many punks despised TG as misogynist "death art" fascists. At a 6 July 1978 concert at the London Film Co-op (where Boyd Rice also appeared), a fight even broke out between TG and members of the Rock Against Racism-allied bands the Slits and the Raincoats.

T(ECH)G(NOSIS)

TG's fascination with violent totalitarian imagery, however, had its roots not in politics but in industrial culture. At a time when disco celebrated the body, sensuality, and mindless pleasure, industrial culture had an almost Gnostic contempt for the flesh. Believing that rock music had turned into yet another pop culture narcotic, TG's sound was deliberately abrasive. The Beatles proclaimed: "All you need is love." TG mockingly defined its sonic assault mission as "Entertainment through pain."

Beginning with Lou Reed's "Metal Machine Music", industrial culture demanded sounds that screamed about meaningless life lived inside concrete boxes in decaying cities. Like the Futurists of the early 1900s, it was obsessed with the tradition-smashing technological wonders of modern life – the roar of jet engines, the wail of air-raid sirens, and the screech and sparks of subway cars all served as sources of aural inspiration. Cosey Fanni Tutti later recalled that for TG industrial "wasn't just [about] the music. It was a philosophy. It was a seriousness of what life is about. That has nothing to do with what is called industrial now. It was so anti-music to call something industrial." Unlike their optimistic and Utopian Futurist forebears, however, TG and their fans were filled with pessimism about the future.

These dystopian British "industrialists" saw mass consumer society, the Situationist "society of the spectacle," as -to quote from Guy Debord - a "permanent opium war" that reduced all who were trapped inside it to docile sleepwalkers. To anyone who wanted to break the stranglehold of media high priests over the imagination, providing "entertainment" was viewed as collaboration with the enemy. The artist's mission was to short-circuit the psychic control machine by breaking cultural and social taboos. For just this reason, TG also toured with bands like SPK, whose live performances included eating raw brains from recently opened sheep skulls.

The industrialist fascination with taboo breakers extended to charismatic leaders like Hitler and Manson, who became iconic figures in a world where evil, was more real than good, and hate more strong than love. Yet because they, like the Marquis de Sade before them, were also fearless disrupters of middle-class morality, a Hitler or Manson were also, in a sense, perverse role models. The sheer bleakness of industrial culture also provided fertile ground for future misanthropy. If evil was more powerful than good, evil was also more natural. In a truly Hobbesian world the Social Darwinists and the Malthusians were right when they argued that only the strong could and should survive.

"COUNTERCULTURAL FASCISM" AND THE RADICAL EVOLANS

The sense of despair felt by industrial culture was not unique. A similar heroic/pessimistic worldview appeared in Europe after World War I. In the early 1920s there arose what I shall call "counter-cultural fascism." More a sensibility than a movement, it fused Friedrich Nietzsche's idea of the individual will-to-power and his contempt for middle-class morality with Oswald Spengler's belief in the imminent downfall of the West. Artists like Futurist founder Filippo Marinetti, Ezra Pound, Gabriele D'Annunzio, and Ernst Jünger viewed traditional forms of conservatism with the same contempt that they felt for social democracy, rationalism, and the Enlightenment. While GPO was not really a countercultural fascist, TG stood on the cusp of a revival of a "counter cultural fascist" turn in segments of haute bohemia.

Another set of ideas associated with the Abraxas network had earlier been promoted by a radical Italian fascist named Franco Freda. Freda, who advocated a combined right-and left-wing terrorist assault on the middle class Establishment, first outlined his ideas at a 1969 meeting of the far-right European Revolutionary Front in Regensburg, Bavaria. In his talk, which was later published as *La disintegrazione del sistema* [The

Disintegration of the System], Freda argued that the “nervous system of the bourgeois world” had to be disrupted with utmost violence by far right “political soldiers” working in an alliance with the far left.

Freda derived essential parts of his strategy from the Italian conservative revolutionary theorist Julius Evola, the “Herbert Marcuse” of the postwar European far right. Evola argued in books like *Cavalcare la tigre* (Riding the Tiger) that the total collapse of modern mass society was something to be welcomed, not resisted. Radical Evolans like Freda believed that violent shocks to the system could only hasten the inevitable collapse of the hated modern order.

OVER THE TOPY

GPO chose art and music, not pistols and plastic explosives, as his “aesthetic terrorist” weapons. He declared that he and his supporters were “waging war on mass culture. That’s our job. The bottom line is to always keep destroying the status quo.” In his continual quest for cultural electroshock, he had no qualms about making inflammatory statements. In his article “Giftgas”, for example, he wrote:

When you kill someone, you affirm your own existence. You heighten your perceptions... Killing puts your social intentions into perspective. If you can kill some-one with the correct altitude, you can do anything. You realize the hidden fear of retribution which has informed every action.

Such ideas were later to be reprised by the countercultural fascist milieu within which Michael Moynihan operated.

TG split up in the summer of 1981. CPO and Sleazy then formed the music group Psychic TV along with the Temple of Psychic Youth (TOPY). GPO’s idea for TOPY came from one of his heroes, Aleister Crowley. Crowley, a British sex magician dubbed “The Most Evil Man in the World” by the tabloid press, led a purported magical order called the Ordo Templis Orientis (OTO). He used drugs, ritual magic, sadomasochistic sex, homosexuality, and anything else he could think of in order to magically transform his and his followers’ mundane consciousness. GPO saw TOPY as an aesthetic/magical/paramilitary/political order, a new improved OTO. TOPY also fetishized Charles Manson, Jim Jones, the Process Church, and Adolf Hitler, whom GPO viewed as a powerful magician not unlike himself:

I mean, at least somebody like Hitler had vision! And did some-thing pretty exciting...you can maximize the chance of things happening if you have a vision. And I think that’s what happens with people like Hitler...they apply the forces of magick without understanding all of them...But that’s how someone like Hitler could get so much done in ten years. He kind of went from cavalry to space travel in ten years! ...So he was applying the laws of magick completely, but he was misapplying them, because he wasn’t genuinely concerned with everybody else. And that’s where the big break comes...Basically he was probably very much like we are, but he chose the political arena. And when you choose the political arena...very weird things happen, because it’s on such a scale that you can’t control it – That’s why I’m interested in the individual and not the mass. And precisely why I’ve been interested in the individual is anti-fascist. And it’s always accused of being fascist, and I always think that the mass is what is fascist – mass movements and mass systems of thought.

TOPY was also meant to act as a seed crystal for a rejuvenated youth culture. GPO, however, always remained an “aesthetic terrorist.” Moynihan was in a way right when he lambasted GPO as “some hippie, flower child in reality” because, for all his excess, GPO saw his project as anti-fascist. Boyd Rice, however, clearly took a page from GPO’s idea of an aesthetic/political order when he formed Abraxas.

CRUEL COOL

Imaginary evil is romantic and varied; real evil is gloomy, monotonous, barren, boring. Imaginary good is boring; real good is always new, marvelous, intoxicating. - Simone Weil

Industrial culture in the United States never attained the brooding complexity of its British cousin. In America it remains jumbled up with a salmagundi of styles that include John Waters’ consciously anti-political “trash aesthetics,” slasher movie *Grand Guignol*, and the deconstruction of highbrow academia by Parisian postmodernism. The French invasion was closely tied to the cultural left through intellectual icons like Michel Foucault. Unlike the bleak British industrialists, transgressive leftist “art workers” like Karen Finley wanted to épater les bourgeois and promote good causes like feminism and gay liberation.

Since all good transgressives used drugs, liked porn, and despised “middle America,” Norman Rockwell, Jesse Helms, and Pat Robertson, a natural alliance existed between the West Side liberals at MOMA and the downtown avant-garde at La Mama. Small group of mostly straight white male scenesters, however, used transgressive tactics to attack what they saw as the therapeutic left’s hegemony over bohemia. Unapologetic bad boys in search of an aesthetic that couldn’t be co-opted, they turned to cult leaders like Manson and Jim Jones, serial killers like John Wayne Gacy, violent images of deformed or dismembered bodies, weird conspiracy theories from the far left and far right, UFO abduction tracts, and hate rants by black nationalists and Klansmen.

Some wanted to “épater les communists” because they believed that artists should not live in a world of self-imposed censorship for fear of violating every leftist and feminist dogma de jour. There was also the fear that bohemia, long a bad boy Shangri-La for sex, drugs, and rock ‘n roll, was turning into a therapeutic “No Smoking” zone. And what better “in-your-face” way to say “fuck you” to the sissies, parlor pinks, and Feminazis than to play the ace card of transgression-aesthetic fascism.

EXIT

The new hip regime of mean was exemplified by the infamous Los Angeles Amok catalog. Amok Press' bestseller *Apocalypse Culture*, a collection of rants, raves, conspiracy theories, and aesthetic terrorist tracts, was another key text. Adam Parfrey, owner of Amok and later Feral House, first entered the scene in 1980 with *IDEA*, a southern California-based Re/Search-type journal about punk culture. He then moved to New York where he met the art designer George Petros. Parfrey also became friends with Joe Coteman, a painter and performance artist once famous for biting the heads off live mice and blowing himself up on stage.

In 1984 Parfrey and Petros created *Exit*, a New York-based journal heavy on graphic design. *Exit* also drew on contributions from "Cinema of Transgression" film makers Richard Kern, Nick Zedd, and actress/musician Lydia Lunch, as well as from artists and musicians like Joe Culeman, Jim Thirlwell (Foetus), Genesis P-Orridge, and Boyd Rice. *Exit* even included drawings by convicted murderers Mark David Chapman, John Wayne Gacy, Charles Manson, and the "Night Stalker" Richard Ramirez. It used strong psychedelic-like designs, cartoons, totalitarian agitprop images, photos of Hitler, and John Heartfield-style collages to punch outraged readers in the eye.

Parfrey worked with Petros on the first three issues of *Exit* before leaving to create Amok Press. Once a success de scandale. *Exit*'s increasing fascination with fascism doomed it to just six issues. Issue five, for example, featured a particularly rancid piece of anti-Semitism entitled the "Execution of Carl Jung", which was "conceived by George Petros" with "text researched by Robert N. Taylor," a former paramilitary Minuteman leader turned racial Odinit. The final 1994 *Exit* included contributions from Michael Moynihan and James Mason, an American Nazi whose book *Siege* was published by Moynihan. While producing *Exit*, Petros also served as an editor at *Seconds*, an eclectic New York-based music magazine that Moynihan, Rice, and Parfrey regularly write for.

ENTER SATAN

The new glorification of the instinctual and the barbaric, the belief in the survival of the fittest, and the hatred of both Christian morality and liberal humanism were all music to the ears of Anton LaVey, the founder and head of the San Francisco-based Church of Satan. Not surprisingly, Boyd Rice developed close ties with LaVey in the early 1980s. In 1984, Rice set up the Abraxas Foundation as a "social Darwinist think tank." An Abraxas tract called *WAKE* pro-claimed "Long Live Death!" and hailed Malthusianism as "Nature's Eternal Fascism." (The Church of Satan also maintained close ties to TOPY.) Today Rice is himself a member of the Church's governing inner circle, the Council of Nine. He also conducted the last interview with LaVey for *Seconds* prior to LaVey's death on 29 October 1997.

LaVey, who is often only seen as just a libertarian maverick, called for a new kind of fascism in a 1994 interview with Michael Moynihan in *Seconds*, Moynihan's essay, "The Faustian Spirit of Fascism," was also published in the Church of Satan's magazine, *The Black Flame*. LaVey even contributed an introduction to a new edition of "Ragnar Redbeard's" *Might Is Right*, a Nietzschean and Social Darwinist tract first published in 1896 which LaVey had liberally plagiarized in his own book. *The Satanic Bible*. The editor of the new edition of *Might is Right* is listed as Katja Lane. She is the wife of David Lane, an Odinit leader of the high-profile far right paramilitary group called the Order, who is now serving a life sentence for conspiring to murder a Denver radio personality named Alan Berg.

The author of *Might's* after word is, arguably, even more "devilish" than LaVey. He is none other than George Hawthorne, head of the white racist musical group RaHoWa (Racial Holy War) and founder of Resistance Records, whom Michael Moynihan interviewed for *Seconds* and *The Black Flame*. Moynihan is also thanked in the new edition of *Might Is Right* for helping make the book possible.

MANSON/MASON

In the mid-1980s Adam Parfrey formed Amok Press, the precursor to Feral House, with Ken Swezey of the Amok catalog. Amok's first book, *Michael*, was an English translation of Nazi Propaganda Minister Joseph Goebbels' sole novel. Parfrey's next book, *Apocalypse Culture* was followed in 1988 by *The Manson File*, which was edited by Nikolas Schreck (the boyfriend of LaVey's daughter Zeena) in collaboration with Boyd Rice and others. Rice regularly visited Manson, and even campaigned to get him released from jail through an Abraxas spin-off called the Friends of Justice.

Via Manson, the Abraxas circle came into contact with James Mason, a former member of George Lincoln Rockwell's American Nazi Party (ANP) and the eccentric head of the National Socialist Liberation Front (NSLF). Mason had established contact with Manson in the early 1980s through an NSLF member named Perry "Red" Warthan. Warthan later murdered a 17-year-old high school student in Oroville, California, because the boy told police that Warthan had been distributing racist literature.

In the late 1980s Rice got into hot water due to his friendship with Robert Heick (aka "Bob Blitz"), Heick is the leader of a skinhead group called American Front that once attacked the San Francisco anarchist bookstore Bound Together Although he denied having any political ties to Heick, the growing unpopularity of Abraxas in San Francisco led Rice to decamp to Denver, Colorado.

As for Parfrey, he first moved his publishing operation from New York to Los Angeles. After the LA riots, he reLOCated to Portland and then returned south to Venice, California. While in Portland, Parfrey (whose own mother is Jewish) hired the late Keith Stimely, an openly gay former editor of the journal of the Institute for Historical Review, the world's leading HoLOCaust-denial outfit, to write Feral House press releases. Stimely's name also appeared on a leaflet, along with that of Moynihan and Portland artist Diabolos Rex, as part of a Boyd Rice/NON "Total War" performance in that city.

SIEGE

Michael Moynihan was Boyd Rice's Denver roommate in 1991. That summer their apartment was visited by men who first said they wanted to talk to Moynihan because, as he later recalled, "they believed I had witnessed the murder 'of a black man.'" The visitors, who turned out to be Secret Service agents, next accused the stunned Moynihan of plotting with some Manson followers to assassinate then-President George Bush during a visit to Denver!

One year later, Moynihan was more preoccupied by literary than legal matters. His Denver-based Storm Press published *Siege*, a 400-page anthology of the writings of James Mason, the Nazi fan of Charles Manson. In his acknowledgments, Moynihan ("Michael M. Jenkins") thanked (among others) both Adam Parfrey and Anton LaVey • for their help in facilitating *Siege's* publication.

Mason argued in *Siege* that National Socialism had lost its violent, revolutionary edge. "We want to see crime and chaos rise to such a degree where the System becomes no longer viable and falls apart," he wrote. In a tract called "Smashing the Pig System," he growled: "If a bunch of Black Nationalists rob a Brinks truck, if they kill some System Pigs, WHO CARES??!!"

Siege also paid homage to white racist "lone wolf" assassins like Mason's former ANP colleague Joseph Franklin, who specialized in shooting interracial couples ("race traitors"); and James Huberty, who massacred a largely Hispanic clientele at a McDonald's restaurant in San Diego. Mason felt that the lone wolves were merely expressing healthy "Viking berserker rage" against "Big Brother." He especially liked the fact that, since they acted alone, these lone wolves were very difficult to catch. *Siege* also glorified Charles Manson. Mason even created a Manson-inspired successor group to the NSLF called the Universal Order in an effort to transcend the traditional "left-right spectrum."

In his introduction to *Siege*, Moynihan also highlighted Mason's call for a unity of extremes against the System:

At this point in history there were no such things as "innocent bystanders." The degeneration and decline of the West had long since passed the point where such ideas had any meaning. Now it all boiled down to whether you were working "for" or "against" the System, and anything which helped further augment instability in society – no matter what corner it came from, or what "opposing" (i.e.. Left Wing or Marxist) group might be responsible. The break with conservatism and "Right-Wingism" (the categories most people invariably believe Nazism falls into) had now been made once and for all...Mason will reiterate that he wishes the best of luck to anyone willing to attack the System head-on.

For all its crudeness, *Siege* echoed Franco Freda's radical Evola call for total social disruption in *La disintegrazione del sistema*. Storm also plans to issue the first English translation of Evola's 1953 book, *Gli uomini e le Rovine* (Men Among the Ruins).

In August 1993, one year after *Siege* was published. Varg Vikernes murdered Euronymous. Although Moynihan was not a black metalist, the lure of Norway's new Charles Manson was too much to resist since

Varg Vikernes serves the role of a pariah and heretic (to Norwegians, similar on a number of levels to that of Charles Manson in America. Both profess a radical ideology at odds with, and at times unintelligible to the average citizen. Both insist they have done nothing wrong. Both espouse a revolutionary attitude with strong racial overtones. Both have become media bogeymen in their respective countries, and both knowingly contribute to their own mythicization. Both also understand well the inherent archetypal power of symbols and names – especially those they adopt for themselves.

BOMBING BLITZ HOUSE

In LOC Moynihan suggests that Vikernes is an avatar of a long-repressed Odinist archetype analogous to what Jung claimed for Nazi Germany in his famous 1936 essay on Wotan. Moynihan clearly believes in racial archetypes and told Ohm Clock: "racial achievements are distinctive between different races and I think that culture is based on race. I don't understand why it's a taboo topic to discuss."

In LOC Moynihan relies upon "Kadmon," editor of a Vienna-based journal called *Aorta*, to bolster the racial archetype thesis. Kadmon argues that Norwegian black metalists are modern day examples of an ancient martial/mystical band of Werewolf-like "berserker" warriors known as the Oskorei. No disinterested scholar, Kadmon is also a political supporter of Vikernes as well as Moynihan's collaborator. His band *Allerseelen*, for example, put out a joint CD with Moynihan's group *Blood Axis*. A blood fetishist, Kadmon named his journal *Aorta* because it is "a blood-red cycle. In *Aorta* there is my blood. The blood of the poet, the blood of the magician, the blood of the warrior." Kadmon also devoted one issue of *Aorta* to "the Odinist Norwegian composer Varg Vikernes...who is currently in prison due to his Viking ethics."

But should Odin take the rap for Vikernes' "Viking ethics"? LOC offers strong evidence that Vikernes, who came from a divorced family and was raised by his mother Lene Bore, was a fascist well before he became a metalhead. Vikernes reports that his mother "was actually afraid that I was going to come home with a black girl! She's very race-conscious...She could just as well be my friend as she is my mother." He also said about his acts:

It's not a rebellion against my parents or something, it's serious. My mother totally agrees with it. She doesn't mind if someone burns a church down. She hates the church quite a lot.

Few doubt the truth of Vikernes' remarks, especially after Lene Bore was arrested in 1997 for giving close to \$20,000 to a neo-Nazi clique that wanted to break her son out of jail. Her racialism clearly affected her son who

“insists his racial/nationalist feelings have been present since childhood.” Vikernes also said: “I was a skinhead when I was 15 or 16. Nobody knows that. People say that I suddenly became a Nazi, but I was actually a skinhead back then. It was in waves -in 91' I was into occultism, in '92 Satanism, in '93' mythology and so on, in waves.”

Vikernes recalled that when he was a skinhead, “there were these Punks – that was more the reason I went over to the other side. But of course the main reason is weapons: German SS helmets, Schmeizers [sic] and Mausers and all these weapons. That’s what they shot the British and Americans with, great – we hated British and Americans.” In January 1993, some months before his murder of Euronymous and at a time when Vikernes wasn’t openly identified with fascism, a photo taken in his apartment displayed his Nazi memorabilia.

Given how much valuable information LOC does present, it is some-what incredible that the book fails to note that at the time that Vikernes murdered Euronymous, he was also planning to destroy an Oslo-based punk anti-fascist squat called Blitz House. After his arrest for murder, the police discovered that he had about 330 pounds of stolen dynamite in his possession. Vikernes may have felt that he had no choice but to kill Euronymous before bombing Blitz House because “the Communist” would almost certainly have opposed such an act- Recall in this context that Vikernes also claimed that Euronymous had been plotting to have him killed- It may well be true that Vikernes really did murder Euronymous for petty personal reasons. By refusing to even mention Blitz House, however, LOC glides over another potentially highly relevant motive.

LOC also ignores another obvious cultural influence on Vikernes, the Abraxas network’s glorification of killers like Charles Manson! Vikernes’ home town, Bergen, is also home to Jan Bruun’s Hypertonia World Enterprises. Bruun is a major distributor of Charles Manson memorabilia like “Watching Satan -the Legacy of Charles Manson-” He knows Moynihan and interviewed him for an Italian journal aptly named Healter Skelter. Moynihan also thanks Bruun, an avowed social Darwinist and Malthusian, in the acknowledgements to LOC. It seems almost impossible to believe that Vikernes would not have known about Hypertonia World Enterprises, especially since Bruun was in contact with Euronymous and even sold Mayhem LPs.

THE ASATRU CONNECTION

Despite his use of Kadmon’s theories, Moynihan claims in LOC that “there is absolutely no specific connection” between practitioners of Nordic religion and the black metal scene. “In fact,” he writes, “public assumptions that such a link would exist have been a severe liability to these groups.” Moynihan, however, neglects to mention that he himself is a leading member of a U.S.-based racist “Old Norse and Germanic religion” movement called the Asatru Alliance of Independent Kindreds (AA), which is headquartered in Arizona.

The AA evolved out of a 1960s Odinist/Nordic revival movement called the Asatrii Free Assembly. The AA faction argued that a Norse religious movement should only include people of Northern European descent. It also publishes a journal called Vor Tru which is edited by Robert Ward, the former editor of a rightist music zine called The Fifth Path. He is also almost certainly the “R, Ward” thanked by Moynihan for his typesetting contribution to Siege. Another AA leader, “Valgard” (Michael) Murray, was a former member of Rockwell’s American Nazi Party.

Moynihan’s close friend Robert Nicholas Taylor, who publishes an Odinist journal called The Continuing Clan, is yet another AA bigwig with a far right bio. The rightist music journal Ohm Clock reports that during “a 12-year stint as a national spokesman for the Minutemen, he [Taylor] went on to become Director of Intelligence and set up the first guerrilla training schools ever to exist in the United States.” Taylor’s call for the racial balkanization of America, an argument associated with the late “Klanarchist” leader Robert Miles, was also featured in the last issue of Exit.

BYE BYE BOYD

Moynihan now lives in Portland, where he moved in order to work for Feral House. He also left Colorado after a falling out with Boyd Rice. In an interview in Momentum, Moynihan announced that Blood Axis “will not ever work with Boyd Rice again, due to personal differences.” He also told Heater Skelter: “I don’t have any contact with Boyd Rice anymore, mainly because we just went our separate ways.”

Unlike Moynihan, Rice is usually quite careful to call himself a fascist only in aesthetics and not in politics. He did, however, tell Seconds: “I think basically I am a Fascist, because I do think there is a hierarchy, and there are people that are stupid, and there are people that are clever,” a definition so bland that it hardly does justice to the complexity of fascism as a political ideology and the extremism of fascism as a political system.

Moynihan clearly seems fed up with Rice’s bob and weave. In the Momentum interview, he groaned:

I’m sick of people saying they’re “not political,” as I think this is a cup-out...If you’re going to espouse “fascist” ideas, then I believe you have to accept some of the responsibility for their application in the real world; otherwise what is the point of espousing them in the first place?... Terms which are bandied about like “occult fascism” don’t have any tangible meaning as far as I can tell, though they sound impressive.

Moynihan apparently feels that “occult fascists” like Rice “cop out” when they refuse to carry their “aesthetic” agenda to its real world conclusions. For the same reason Moynihan hates black metal bands that don’t use violence because they fear it might prevent them from becoming rock stars.

THE FAR RIGHT AND BLACK METAL

True to his principles, Moynihan is quite active in the propaganda support network for Vikernes. He is, for example, a leading contributor to a rightist journal called Filosofem, which is published by a group also called Blood Axis. Filosofem is LOCated at 5 Rue Gabriel Price in Metz, France. This same address is the source of a

series of pro-Vikernes leaflets which carry the name Cymophane on them. Filosofem also takes its name from a Burzum CD that Vikernes recorded in 1993 while out on bail. That CD is currently being jointly distributed by Misanthropy Records, Cymophane Productions, and Feral House Audio.

LOC also contains an interview with Kerry Bolton, a New Zealand-based Satanist who is trying to popularize fascism inside pop culture with a series of small journals like Key of Alocer, The Nexus and The Flaming Sword. His essays have also appeared in The Black Flame and Filosofem. In one of his writings Bolton even calls the Futurist (and later Fascist) Filippo Marinetti a forerunner of "Industrial Culture". His publications also feature Moynihan, R. N. Taylor, Boyd Rice, Kadmon, and others like them.

In his interview in LOC, Bolton denounces Christianity in classic "right meets left" jargon as:

One product of the Magian [i.e. Jewish-KC] infection of Western culture, the others being plutocracy, liberalism, globalism, egalitarianism. and so forth...Since the thrust of the present civilization in its phase of senility is towards a global plutocracy, with the plutocrats and globalists utilizing con-sumerism and multi-culturalism to break down the different nations and cultures and archetypes upon which they are based, it is fitting that "new" forms of Satanism are emerging with a nativist heathen basis to challenge this globalism.

Bolton also leads an overtly fascist magical sect called the Black Order. The Black Order's New Zealand address is conveniently reprinted in an illustration in LOC.

A French far rightist and OTO leader named Christian Bouchet also pops up in LOC. Along with publishing his own occult journal Thelema, Bouchet helps lead Nouvelle Resistance, a fascist "third way" grouping whose journal Lutte du People he edits. Bouchet advocates an alliance with the far left, applauds Castro for resisting American imperialism, and praises the French nineteenth century anarchist Pierre-Joseph Proudhon. He even offered a eulogy for the German ultra-leftist Ulrike Meinhof, a leader of the terrorist Rote Armee Fraktion, RAF. Nouvelle Resistance is also behind a pro-Vikernes music fanzine called Napalm Rock, whose editor LOC interviews.

Given his own background and publicly proclaimed political' views, it seems fairly obvious that Moynihan would not be terribly distraught if a new wave of "berserker youth" chose to follow in Vikernes' path - regardless of whether or not he holds the Count's most extreme political statements in high regard. Although Vikernes was later ostracized for killing Euronymous, LOC claims that black metalists who act out their violent fantasies gain "a perverse form of credibility over the bands who merely sing and dream of empty morbid fantasies." Speaking to Ohm Clock, Moynihan was even more explicit:

I would see these forms of music and expression talk about violence, people who were clearly obsessed with violence, but never would actually go out and do what they were talking about. They never take the logical step...If you're going to sing songs or record entire records about killing people then after a while it gets silly when it's just fantasy. I think that's why a lot of the death metal stuff got really cartoonish and stupid. Then the black metal phenomenon superseded death metal and basically wiped it off the map. They actually did something more than just release records for their friends to buy. The others had been doing a disservice to themselves by not actually going out and committing the act.

For much the same reason LOC highlights non-black metal killers like Florida's Lords of Chaos or the teenager in France who stabbed an elderly Catholic priest to death. They too are part of the fiery youth of the future, in whom "rebellious embers grow brighter."

CONCLUSION

Lords of Chaos contains a good deal of fascinating information about both black metal and cultural fascism. But does it all add up? While one could persuasively argue that church burnings per se might well arise from black metal's dime store satanic ethos, LOC's musings about fascism and black metal largely hang on a thin evidentiary thread, Varg Vikernes. Yet when Moynihan replaces his steel helmet with a reporter's fedora, LOC shows that Vikernes had been a far rightist well before he became a black metalist. After his murder of Euronymous, Vikernes lost almost all his credibility in a scene where the old timers still mourn for the "Prince of Death".

LOC gives an especially clear, even restrained, summary of its core thesis in the following paragraph:

There are many divergent political views found across the spectrum of Black Metal musicians and fans (the communism of Euronymous provides a prime example of some-one taking leftism to its utmost extreme), but no one will deny that right wing attitudes have become a natural extension of the interests of some involved.

But just how many black metal "fascists" are there? Ten? One Hundred? One Thousand? LOC doesn't tell us. And are these unnamed fascists the natural children of black metal? For all its cleverness in seeking to portray Varg Vikernes as the Charles Manson of the Marilyn Manson Gen-generation, LOC fails to make a convincing case that black metal and fascism walk hand in hand.

LOC may even get the story of Norwegian black metal backwards. There really was a small clique of black metal Satanists whom Euronymous dominated. Vikernes made his mark in the scene by torching a church, an act so extreme that Euronymous had little choice but to go along or be revealed as a con man or a coward. After Vikernes killed Euronymous -for whatever reason- the subsequent wave of arrests decimated the underground. Nor did massive press coverage spawn a new wave of Vikernes copycats. The exact opposite seems to have occurred: a poseur takeover by would-be rock stars blathering about Satan. Far from symbolizing black metal's

metamorphosis from guitars to gasoline, Vikemes actually helped to rob black metal of its dark soul. Since then, it has largely been just show biz and record deals.

Since Euronymous' murder still haunts Norway's metal scene, it seems appropriate to give the last word to "Son of Satan," who writes in the most recent Slayer:

Welcome to Norway, the Black Metal center of the world. Never has such a small country spawned such a big amount of bands in a somewhat limited genre. Yeah, that's cool...or is it? The scene is unique and so on, but there is a but... Shouldn't there be something more? Shouldn't also Black Metal be extreme? Something went wrong somewhere. In between all bands signing to major labels I think something disappeared. There is [sic] not many in Norway who puts [sic] Satanism before Black Metal in our scene...Everyone has his or her definition of Satanism but at least you can say the extremity is gone. I think many just dress in black because everyone else does it, wearing pentagrams without knowing its potential danger... But nothing is really happening in Norway now as in regard to anti-Christian action. People say that there will be no more church fires which of course is a sad thing. No matter what, the church burnings were great. Even if it didn't really help in the war against Christianity I thought it was a great thing. A hail to those who committed those deeds. But nothing like that happens now; there is not even proper violence. Everything is so nice up here.

Notes:

There is an enormous scholarly and popular literature on fascism, but much of it is sadly deficient. The best general history of fascism is undoubtedly that of Stanley Payne, *A History of Fascism, 1914-1945* (Madison: University of Wisconsin. 1995). For the best introductions to "classical" fascist ideology, see Eugen Weber, *Varieties of Fascism: Doctrines of Revolution in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1964); the many studies by Israeli scholar Zeev Stenhell, including 'Fascist Ideology', in *Fascism: A Reader's Guide*, ed. by Walter Laqueur (Berkeley: University of California, 1976), *La droite révolutionnaire, 1885-1914: Les engines françaises du Fascisme* (Paris: Seuil, 1978), and *Ni gauche, ni droite: L'ideologie fasciste en France* (Paris: Seuil. 1983); Emilio Gentile. *Le origini dell'ideologia fascista, 1919-1925* (Bari: Laterza, 1975); and A. James Gregor, *The Ideology of Fascism: The Rationale for Totalitarianism* (New York: Free Press. 1969). All of these works rightly emphasize the left-wing and anti-capitalist features intrinsic to fascist ideology, especially in its earlier 'movement phase'. Far more on these elements, compare Paul Mazgaj, *The Action Francaise and Revolutionary Syndicalism* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 1979); David D. Roberts, *The Syndicalist Tradition and Italian Fascism* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 1979); Remo De Felice, *Mussolini il rivoluzionario* (Turin: Einaudi, 1965), the first of many volumes of De Felice's comprehensive biography of Mussolini; Reinhard Kühnl, *Die nationalsozialistische Linke, 1925-1930: Eine Untersuchung über Geschichte, Struktur, und Ideologie der Strasser-Gruppe* (Meisenheim: Hain, 1966); Patrick Moreau, *Nationalsozialismus von links: Die "Kampfgemeinschaft Revolutionärer Nationalsozialisten" und die "Schwarze Front" Otto Strassers, 1930-1935* (Stuttgart: Deutsche, 1985); and Rainer Zitelmann, *Hitler: Selbstverständnis eines Revolutionärs* (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta. 1990).

Needless to say, the term 'fascist' has nowadays become a general epithet used by all sorts of people to smear their political and ideological opponents, so much so that its actual meaning has become hopelessly corrupted and confused and it has been transformed into a virtual synonym for absolute 'evil', not to mention authoritarianism, genocide, and militarism. (Why the same fate has not befallen the word 'communist', a political ideology and system which shares many of the same characteristics and has been responsible for an equal measure of human misery and even more genocidal murders, is a subject worthy of serious study.) For good surveys of the contemporary Euro-American radical right see Paul Hainsworth, ed., *The Extreme Right in Europe and the USA* (New York: St. Martin's, 1992); Ludano Cheles & others, eds., *The Far Right In Western and Eastern Europe* (New York Longman. 1995); and Jeffrey Kaplan & Leonard Weinberg, *The Emergence of a Euro-American Radical Right* (New Brunswick Rutgers University. 1998).

For an introduction to Julius Evola's thought, see Richard Drake. 'Julius Evola and the Ideological Origins of the Radical Right in Contemporary Italy', in *Political Violence and Terror: Motifs and Motivations*, ed. by Peter Merki (Berkeley: University of California, 1987), pp. 61-89; and Franco Fenvesi. *Threats to Democracy: The Radical Right in Italy after the War* (Princeton: Princeton University, 1996), pp. 43-50. For contemporary Far the continental European neo-pagan, anti-American, and 'metapolitical' New Right (i.e., the Nouvelle Droite) - which must be carefully distinguished from the conservative, pro-free market Anglo-American New Right- see especially Pierre-André Taguieff, *Sur la Nouvelle Droite: Jalons d'une analyse critique* (Paris: Descartes, 1994).

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