

DARK CULT

the belief system that holds the core
of the dark weltanschauung
can be summarized in a few
fundamental ideas about knowledge,
death, desire and community

AN AESTHETIC RELIGION
OF SHADOWS

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KNOWLEDGE

Dark culture does not love skepticism and critical thinking. Its favorite way of knowledge is some form of magical thinking. The dark ideology is rooted in the aesthetic culture of dark romanticism, which was a backlash against the new world opened by the Age of Enlightenment. Since its inception, the artistic culture of shadows was a rebellion against the light of reason and scientific knowledge. The resistance to disappear of a traditional form of wisdom based in faith, dogma and belief in an eternal true that dominated the human thought of a dying feudal theocracy. The nostalgia for a way of thinking so magical and powerful that could not be questioned. Under penalty of death.

Since Plato, Idealism is a philosophical school of thought that privileges the perfect world of ideas over the imperfect world of matter, which often leads it to postulate some form of totalitarianism of thought disconnected from reality. A metaphysical philosophy not far from the traditional metaphysics of religious thought that for millennia has colonized the thinking of the human brain. This desire for ideal perfection has often led to contempt for reality, always so random and imperfect. Therefore, the innovative proposal of

scientific thinking that true knowledge must necessarily dialogue with reality to confirm its veracity can be considered as a blasphemy by those who believe they are in possession of a revealed and absolute truth. This infantilism of magical thinking that is believed to have a system of unquestionable certainties, bequeathed by tradition or by some form of mystical revelation, is not just an innocent game of the brain. History is full of religious wars that show that for a fanatical mind that puts the idea before the facts, the discrepancy is paid with death. Knowledge as a form of war of ideas won by blood and fire.

DEATH

Death is one of the main characters of this cult to the darkness turned into a religion of obscurity. In fact all religion is a reflection on death: the painful awareness of our own mortality and the desperate longing to heal this narcissistic wound with some metaphysical fantasy about a postmortem survival. The science of reality is an useless knowledge for those who can not bear the anguish generated by the consciousness of their own death. The sacrifice of reality is the first and main cult ritual for those who conceive no more truth than his own desire. And at the deep heart of all religious emotion, the desire to deny the reality of our death is always omnipresent. The peculiarity of dark religion is that the path to that healing of the anguish of the consciousness of death does not follow the trace of light but that of darkness. It is a monotheism of shades: a dark counter reform against the rational and illustrated reform of knowledge. The will to power understood as the will to desire.

The ritual origin of the tattoo practice inscribes his cult in the field of spiritual beliefs. But while that form of writing with indelible ink on the flesh disappears with the decomposition of the body, the metaphysical tattoo of the soul on mortal flesh aspires to eternally survive its putrefaction. The

preference of the duration over the ephemeral is in the center so much of the fascination for tattoo as in the fascination for spirituality. The durability of the tattoo is a rebellion of the spirit against the metamorphosis of matter. In front of the ephemeral of reality, the eternal of spirit.

The metaphysical tattoo versus the physical morph. While the morph is the symbol of the celebration of ephemeral, unique and unrepeatable, the tattoo is the symbol of the celebration of identical, fixed and immutable. Two distinct and contrasting domains: identity versus fluency, rock versus water, eternity versus metamorphosis.

DESIRE

In the religion of the shadows, sexual desire often presents a sadomasochistic structure. The dark object of desire is configured around a set of erotic fantasies related to the sexual practice of BDSM. Although it is usually considered an alternative sexual activity (with all the prestige that comes with the countercultural and what challenges established norms), BDSM is actually a very traditional and normative sexual ideology, although dressed with the paraphernalia of an extreme theatricalization. A conception of the sexual relationship staged as a war of bodies where there are only two possible roles: dominator and dominated, executioner and victim, master and slave. The erotic imaginary of dark sexuality expresses the ideology of a feudal regime of pleasure based on a manichean oppositions of human relations around power: someone who holds absolute power and someone who offers absolute submission. An absolutist ideology of pleasure that rejects the possibility of establishing a sexual exchange between equals. And as in this erotic imagery of dark desire most of the dominant roles are represented by men and most of the submissive roles are represented by

women, the staging of the sexual interaction always represents the same argument: men dominating women in an erotic cult centered on the ritual of sexual torture. Pure misogyny dressed as if it were a countercultural and alternative form of sexuality, when it really is the same machista and patriarchal conception of sexuality and relationship between sexes that has prevailed for millennia.

For all these reasons, it is not surprising that this ancient regime of desire, masquerading as alternative modernity, constantly resort to forms of representation related to absolutist and undemocratic regimes of power: slavery fetishism, instruments of medieval torture, sacrificial rituals of inquisition, nazi kit, hatred and contempt toward women of religious monotheisms, fascist symbology. An absolutist form of expression of sexuality (erotic torture) that cannot hide its affinity with an absolutist form of knowledge (religious dogmatism) and an absolutist form of exercise of power (theocracy, feudalism, tyranny, dictatorship).

When to this peculiar intercourse between sexual pleasure and terror is added the fascination for the union between art and fear, it becomes an artistic expression of the erotic terror. If we add to this an irresistible attraction for the most varied forms of paranormal terror, supernatural fear and satanic violence, the result is the bloody heart of the dark ideology of the shadows: an aesthetic religion of panic. It is precisely the fascination for psychological terror (either by exercising it in a sadistic way or by suffering it submissively in a masochistic way) which forms the essential core of the attraction for sexual torture, supernatural fear and macabre art. A magical

art of sexual pain, an aesthetic ideology centered on the magical thinking
and the erotization of inequality.

COMMUNITY

Against what world of light arises this claim of a world of shades? Why have light and shadow become incompatible? What exactly do the concepts of luminous and dark symbolize for this cult of darkness?

What is known as the modern world is the world emerged from that social and cultural revolution that occurred in European territory from what was called the century of lights. A foundational time of a new historical period in which it was considered that humanity could to escape from centuries of darkness through reason, science and equality among human beings. The blinding light from which the new worshipers of the dark (fascinated by magical thinking, human inequality and the erotic of power) want to escape can not be other than that of the world emerged from the Enlightenment. It is an act of rebellion against the modern world, that profane, materialistic and disenchanting time projected by the light of reason, with the hope of a new resurgence of the dark time of myth and spirit.

The time of myth is the time of utopia. Utopia (no place) was a term

created by Thomas More to describe an ideal non existent community. Although it is a political fiction, many people have dreamed that one day it could be real. Plato already proposed the creation of an ideal society in his Republic, and Hesiod and Ovid elaborate a narration of human history interpreted as a fall from a mythical golden age, where we lived in harmony with gods in the best of all worlds possible until the current iron age characterized by conflict and evil. The narration of human ages is the narration of the passage from Myth to History, from the mythical time of happiness to the historical time of conflict, which the utopian imagination seeks to invest with the creation of an ideal community with all the characteristics of myth. A return from the current historic dystopia to the mythical utopia of origin.

Since ancient ages the utopian visions have been part of the essential core of the religions. But these ideal communities were placed in unreal spaces or in afterlife times. Perhaps christianity was the first religion to postulate a novel relationship between Myth and History, sacred story and profane history. The god of the crsitians becomes flesh to redeem humanity from the fall in the History after his expulsion from the mythical time of Eden and to make reality the reconstruction of paradise on earth. With his sacrificial act he affirms the promise to transform History into Myth. This inaugural act will be the origin of all subsequent political utopias.

The longing for ideal and perfect worlds is as old as humanity. Among the different political utopias of modernity, two have occupied a special place in the imaginary of humanity in the 20th century, one located in the political sphere of the left and the other in that of the right: fascism and

communism. Both, deep down, are no more than two heresies of christianity. The marxist ideology, no matter how scientific it proclaims itself, is still a christianity for atheists. The desire to be so is not enough for a theory to be considered scientific, it has to be demonstrated. And with its table of the materialist laws of history never confirmed, its erroneous prophecies about the necessary conditions for the emergence of the classless community, its economic principles based on the outdated objective theory of value and its longings to establish an ideal and perfect world of justice and freedom, the marxist ideology is situated much closer to myth than to science. A redemptive millenarianism of all the evils of history, which through rebellion against the power of that sacrificial victim that is the proletarian, will lead to the creation of a perfect ideal community without internal contradictions or class struggles. A new variant of the old christian ideal of the transformation of History into Myth. It is not strange that his followers behave more as believers than as individuals with a skeptical and self critical feeling, and that their texts are treated more as religious dogmas than as hypotheses that contrast with reality. The theses of a pretended scientific materialism turned into unquestionable system of ideas, which have more of philosophical idealism than of historical realism. Never let reality spoil you a beautiful story.

The right wing politic has also produced a modern version of religious utopia: the fascist community. To do so, it has had an enormous advantage: the conservative vision of the world has never renounced to the magical thinking of religion and therefore has never had the need to demonstrate that its hypotheses were scientific or realistic. It is enough with the faith of his followers in the eternal values of tradition. The political concepts of left

and right have their origin in the location of the deputies in the French assembly in the period that marks the beginning of the modern world: to the right the supporters of the old monarchical, feudal and theocratic regime; to the left the supporters of the new political and social revolution. Although today the ideological family of the right includes part of the supporters of the new political and economic order, the heirs of those counter revolutionaries who opposed the new ideas of the Illustration continue to have an important influence. That is why the conservative ideology has had to show a difficult balance between the supporters of illustrates values and the nostalgics of the old theocratic and military order. This is the reason why the modern right wing politic has developed two communitarian utopias radically contradictory to each other: a political utopia of a totalitarian state (fascism) and an economic utopia without state (neoliberalism). Centered on the economic hypotheses of the Austrian School, the founders of which deny all possibility of a scientific economy, neoliberalism is closer to being a religious doctrine based on beliefs impossible to verify than anything else. It presupposes an act of faith in the magical power of the market to create an ideal world that reality can never deny because it is based on unquestionable dogmas. The hypothesis of an invisible and omniscient hand of the market that has all the characteristics of a divinity and that the observation of facts can never belie, it is nothing other than pure magical thinking: a branch not of the economy but of metaphysics.

The fascist utopia does not claim a simple return to an idealized past prior to the Enlightenment revolution, responsible for all current ills. Although it is ideologically inherited from the traditional thought that opposed the new world that was born of it, its proposal is not a return to the past but a revolt

against the modern world to create an alternative modernity, which will emerge from the ashes of the present. Its gaze does not it is towards the past but towards the future, and its project has all the characteristics of a revolution that will give birth to a new humanity and a new ideal community. Faced with the traditional conception of fascism as an exclusively traditionalist and anti modern political movement, some authors such as Roger Griffin (*Fascism and Modernity*) have proposed a more complex view of the relations between fascism and modernity. The fascist project could be understood as a modernist attempt to regenerate a modernity that at the beginning of the 20th century was experienced as exhausted and decaying, which passed through the seizure of state power and the implantation of a new order centered on the renaissance of the nation as privileged subject of identity.

The nation as a community of reference is an idea of modernity. In the old regime, the religious community — the believers in the same god — and the community of estates — the caste to which one belongs by birth and which is practically impossible to change — are much more important when establishing a sense of identity group of the individuals than the one of the geographic community. The modern nationalistic feeling only arises with the appearance of the modern state. The marxist ideology will introduce a new community of group identity: the social class (proletarians of the world, unite!) Moreover, fascism is a mass populist movement and the propaganda techniques that he uses contribute to giving it an air of futuristic modernity and hope in creating a better world, not just a return to the past, even if it is based on a mythologized view of the heroic past and of the origin of races.

A traditionalist movement to a futurist revolution, is not this a paradox? The same project of modernity does not escape to contradiction either. In one of the main scenarios where the end of the old feudal order and the establishment of the modern world are symbolized, the french revolution, the revolutionary jacobins did not hesitate to resort to a very traditional resource to realize their dream of a new society based on the declaration universal of the rights of the citizen (freedom, equality and fraternity): terror. A wave of public executions in the guillotine showed that the birth of the modern world was not alien to the old ritual of bloody sacrifices. An apocalypse of terror with which to destroy the old world and give way to a more pure and perfect. Blood has traditionally been the preferred disinfectant to purify societies that had become too impure. The religious apocalypse dreamed by the evangelist John or executed by the courts of the Holy Inquisition (and other forms of supernatural terror) and the politic apocalypse materialized by the new social revolutionaries, both on the right and on the left (jacobins, pilgrims, colonialists, nazis, communists, imperialists, capitalists ...) are part of a same emotional sensitivity: a blind faith in the creative, purifying and regenerative value of extrem violence.

Fascism is one of the modern ideologies in which this archaic fascination by the purifying use of extrem violence has been embodied thanks to its apocalyptic, revolutionary, palingenetic capacity to mark with fire and blood beginnings and endings, decadences and regenerations, worlds that die and worlds that are born. An apocalyptic use of extreme violence to purify the community formed by nation and race that has fallen into decay because of the infection of foreign and impure elements that have to be removed from the social body to heal it. The bloody dream of this violent utopia of

communal purification was defeated by the bloody realism of the superiority of enemy violence. But it did not disappear from the imagination of its most enthusiastic believers. The military defeat of the fascist political utopia forced many of his followers to take the path of internal exile. A strategic spiritual retreat until the future arrival of better times to try to return to make reality the dream of the fascist community. In these dark times, the thesis of the far right traditionalist thinker Julius Evola, exposed in his book *Ride the tiger*, served as a spiritual guide for the resistance. The social activist had to become an aristocrat of the soul. In this interregnum of decadence and disenchantment he had to remain pure and uncontaminated by retreating into himself or becoming a vagabond in the woods. Although it had been defeated in the political war, the fascist utopia could still win in the cultural war. The old political fascism was transformed into a metapolitical neofascism. A metaphysics, an aesthetics of the superior man for initiates and aristocrats of the soul.

Anton Shekhovtsov and Stéphane Fran ois have been two of the authors who have best studied the infiltration of this renewed metapolitical neofascism in the field of artistic counterculture, principally in music. Musical genres like neofolk or martial industrial are deeply marked by the imaginary of the fascist utopia. Although many of the musicians and fans may not be aware of it. Perhaps in this lies the success of this metapolitical neofascism, to make believe that it is only an aesthetic current that is a whole vision of the world, closely linked to the far right weltanschauung. If in the past, the alternative of the radical movements of the artistic vanguard to the decadent modern world of consumption and materialist capitalism was impregnated with symbols and referents belonging to the marxist utopia of

the left, the artistic counterculture is currently dominated by the imaginary of the right wing fascist utopia. In its metaphysical, aesthetic and spiritualist version of a renewed metapolitical neofascism. Although they no longer speak of nation but of ethnicity (Europeans descended from a mythical Indo-European affiliation) or of racial superiority but of cultural incompatibility, the ideal remains the same: the creation of an ethnically homogenous and culturally uncontaminated community, through rituals of purification of the sick social body that subject it to a traumatic shock of an apocalyptic, palingenetic and redeemer violence that will awaken it from its lethargy of impotence and decadence. In this diagnosis of the disease that western civilization suffers, three are the main pathogenic agents: an external one (the ethnic and multicultural mixture) and two internal (the feminization of the democratic and egalitarian societies; and the replacement of the metaphysics of our spiritual tradition by the materialistic values of a scientific view that throws us into a disenchanted and nihilistic world) The new cult of the heroic and mystic warrior as a human ideal, trying to recover the ancient pagan and Nordic values of a homogeneous, spiritual and virile community, reveals that this is an ideology based on misogyny, xenophobia and magical thinking.

The fascination for the magical thinking, the metaphysics of death, the mystique of violence, the sacred symbology of occultist and esoteric fantasies, the radical idealism against reality, the authoritarianism and nativism, the purifying virtue of terror and macabre, the superiority of an aristocracy of the soul become an elite of initiates in a spiritual knowledge, the redemptive apocalypse, the spiritualization of flesh through some bodily rites of passage (piercing, hook suspensions, tattooing, corset training, scarification, branding, cutting and other forms of torture of mortal flesh) and the

sadomasochistic desire places the cult of darkness of the new dark art, consciously or unconsciously, around the ideological imagery of the far right weltanschauung, one of the modern incarnations of which has been the fascist utopia. An aesthetic manifestation of ethnic tribalism of the modern primitives.

EPITOME

Monotheism of dark is as reductionist as monotheism of luminous. A complex gaze about world and about us needs both. Darkness saves us from the blindness by an excess of light, light saves us from the blindness by an excess of darkness. Beyond the manichean opposition of light and darkness, maybe it is inside of chiaroscuro, in the misty border between enthusiasm and desolation, joy and sadness, science and creativity, reason and imagination, reality and desire, order and chaos, where beats the heart of lucidity.