

In the Nightside Eclipse of Pretenses

About Black Metal, anti-fascism and «non-violence»

«As in Russia, some time after the victory of the workers and peasants masses, the leaders of the Communist Party declared that it was necessary to take a step backward and restore the value of the currency. This first step was followed by many others, and the Russian people only changed their master: After the tsar father of all the Russias, the little father of the people: Stalin. Barcelona only increased my bitterness: the ramblas were full of people [...] The militiamen on leave [...] filled the streets with their songs and laughter without seeing that the cause was betrayed, the revolution dead. All that remained was the war against fascism, the war between two forms of slavery.»

Antoine Gimenez, *Les fils de la nuit. Souvenirs de la guerre d'Espagne, 1974–1976.*

This essay will draw from our experience as a band to provide an analysis that goes far beyond Non Serviam and us as individuals. We are often described as experimental Black Metal and anti-fascist; that doesn't bother us because we are opposed to any form of fascism, and Black Metal is very clearly a significant influence on our experiments.

Associating our music with Black Metal, when you are open to the intersection of all kinds of genres and styles, is to propose a reference point; to designate a horizon of reference for the listener. Our association with Black Metal is subjective, depending on where the listener places their stylistic purity requirements. And if one doesn't comprehend the meaning of «experimental,” they may even refuse us this affiliation. People can laugh about it, discuss it, and get angry about where music falls on the genre spectrum. The genre debate can be seriously fascinating or terribly disappointing. In either case, what it can't be is too serious. It is at best an aesthetic question, and at worst a nominalistic one. At least, it's serious only in the relatively separate space of aesthetics.

On the other hand, the same cannot be said of our association with «anti-fascist.»



In a way, anti-fascism is much less present in our musical practice than Black Metal. We don't make «anti-fascist music» as such; our lyrics are not «anti-fascist,» neither are the melodies, harmonies, and rhythms in themselves. And yet, for several reasons, this characterization is particularly important to us, and it seems necessary for us to make it explicit.

First, Non Serviam is an anti-fascist band because the individuals who make up the band are anti-fascist. Anti-fascism is almost too precise for us; we fight against capitalism and all forms of domination and exploitation it engenders and relies on. We fight against authority in all forms, against those who exercise it, and against those who dream of it. Therefore, it's clear that we're against fascism.

However, as we make music while being (among other things) anti-fascists, others in the Black Metal scene make music...while being fascists. Others still believe that music can be neutral ground in the political fight. These people consider themselves apolitical while shaking hands with neo-Nazis who are far from apolitical—no matter how they try to manipulate the ambiguities. And this is where our anti-fascist stance becomes serious and grave.

We don't believe music itself is ideology, or that ideology itself makes music good or bad (although today's NSBM is not very convincing musically). Despite this, we believe it is urgently necessary to fight Nazis on all fronts, including when they make music that bolsters and promotes their fascist and white supremacist ideologies. Regardless of the quality of the music they make, they are Nazis to fight. It is not because they make their music, or because we make «our music» that we must attack them — it is because they are Nazis.

If we feel the need to rephrase these obvious points, it's because the Black Metal scene is muddled with confusion and manipulations. In Black Metal, fascists deliberately confuse ideas and practices that should remain radically clear in order to obscure their ideology. The guise of «apoliticism» is used by fans, dilettantes, or unscrupulous bands and labels to allow them to support, appreciate, and promote Nazi music. Making, promoting, and consuming music while anti-fascist means it's necessary to refuse all blindness and complacency with fascist music.

On the other hand, we refuse the vain attempt to rewrite what musical genres are and what their history is. If nothing is to be erased, then it is to be confronted, and its residue is to be fought. This is why we will not contribute in any way to “cleansing” Black Metal of its violence and its deviance. We are not claiming to cancel the ideological wanderings of the misguided young Norwegian church burners, or are we trying to promote the possibility of a «non-violent» or «safe» Black Metal. For better or for worse, this genre is not «safe,” and it is the violence of its rage against existence that we instead turn against those who create

it with fascist goals. As such, thinking that anti-fascist Black Metal should strive for non-violence is an aberration on two levels: if the music was non-violent, it would no longer be Black Metal; and above all, it would be incapable of fighting fascism.

Faced with fascism, social media condemnations and «canceling» are only tools for a liberal good conscience. We must fight it within the world that produces it, and needs it. Non-violence and democratism — even more so in relation to fascism — are bourgeois, capitalist pathologies which, through their complacent inaction, have already proven to have absolutely tragic results in the 20th century.

As with fascism, capitalism and the state are not just cultures and ideas, and they will not be destroyed by cultural means (let's leave the issues of cultural hegemony to the Gramscists of the Nouvelle Droite and their neo-Nazi and neo-fascist allies), but as the anarchist Joseph Déjacque stated in *The Revolutionary Question* (1854):

“By the arm and the heart, By speech and by the pen, By dagger and rifle, By irony and imprecation, By pillage and adultery, By poisoning and fire, Let us make, - on the highway of principles or in the corner of individual rights, - by insurrection or by assassination, - war to society! ... war to civilization!...”

The Old World Has To Burn !

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