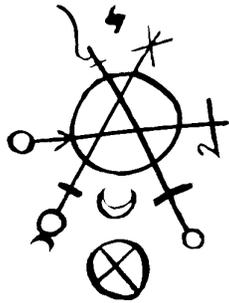
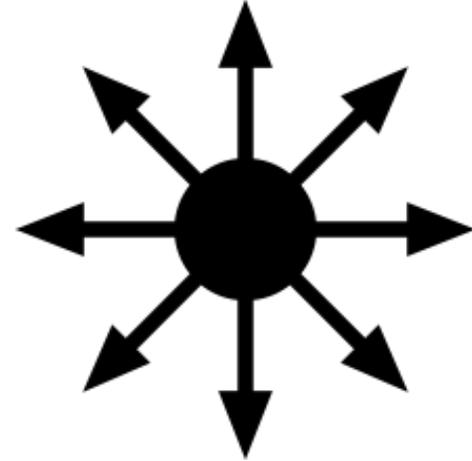


Nothing is true;
Everything is permitted



Chaos,
Nihilism,
and the Way
of
'No Surrender'



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-Aleph Skoteinos-

Originally posted on:
mythoughtsbornfromfire.wordpress.com

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So listen well: no surrender! That is the ethos I believe certain anarchists know well indeed, and guides their praxis, even if mainstream socialists have all but abandoned it.



I will say that I am not a Chaos Magician, but I don't think one necessarily needs to be a Chaos Magician in order to recognize the Chaos Star, also known as the Symbol of Chaos or Sigil of Chaos. The basic shape is eight-arrows pointing outward from one central point, meant to signify all possibilities expanding outward. In Chaos Magick, this star is often interpreted as a signifier for the endless potential of all action launching in all different directions instead of pursuing a fixed path. But, the Chaos Star is also one of a number of esoteric symbols that have been altered and recuperated by fascists as representations of their movement, leading some leftists to declare that the Chaos Star is itself a fascist symbol, despite the fact that it was a non-fascist symbol invented by a man whose own political convictions put him completely at odds with fascism. And recently, this has resulted in an entire tendency of anarchism, namely the nihilist anarchists, being tarred over the use of the Chaos Star in an image declaring the nihilist-anarchist position. Both anarchists and presumably Marxists take turns saying both that nihilist-anarchists are incapable of threatening the system and that they are dangerous fascist counter-revolutionaries, without the slightest bit of irony or self-awareness regarding the outright regurgitation of that old far-right trope that their enemy is strong but also weak.

Twitter drama in itself isn't something I like the thought of covering here, but it is on Twitter that the discourse I'm trying to address is taking place, and it is important to address this discourse, because it touches on a number of important subjects. It touches on the extent to which social and cultural alterity is either allowed expression within leftist or radical spaces or condemned and cast away as an expression of fascism or reaction, a dynamic that has implications for how we view freedom of expression and has consequences for anyone trying to embrace sub/counterculture, occultism, alternative religion, and even kink within radical left-wing political spaces. It also touches on the old threat of moral panic that surfaces time and time again, and the way that esotericism is interpreted and received, as well as the arguments through which the logic of authoritarianism may be regurgitated even by people who consider themselves anti-authoritarian leftists. I also should stress that I don't come at this from the standpoint of a nihilist, except in the sense of being very much nihilism-curious. While I don't necessarily identify with nihilism, I have the inkling that my

engagement with Max Stirner, forthcoming elaborations on Darkness, and a general interest in certain forms of revolutionary pessimism as put forward by Marxists like Walter Benjamin may end up putting me in alignment with some forms of nihilist communism and nihilist anarchism, to say nothing of recent sympathies with some of the nihilist anarchists presently being fash-jacketed. If that leads to a bias, then just know that this is the standpoint I'm coming from, and there are no neutral actors in discourse.

As far as I can tell, this all started with a tweet from Des (@queerbandit161), a queer anti-civ nihilist decolonial anarchist, originally posted on March 9th, which featured a meme depicting a balaclava-wearing wojak-style character wearing sunglasses, sporting an assault rifle and standing beneath the Chaos Star. The presumably memetic mascot for nihilist anarchism is accompanied by a quote from Blessed Is The Flame, a seminal text on anarcho-nihilism written in 2016 by Serafinski, which summarizes the basic position of nihilist-anarchism. It states that the current society cannot be saved, that hostility should be the only response to it, and that, rather than any demands for a new society, the revolution will be the "pure negation" of society. I'll post the original meme below.



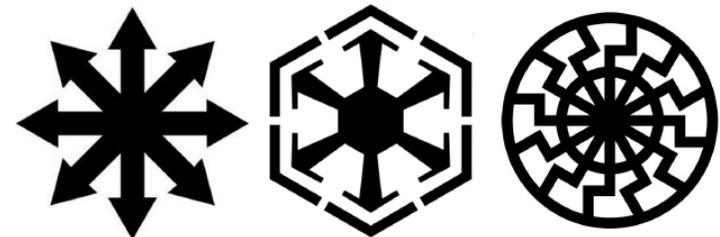
The post attracted a mixture of responses from various people. Some praised the post and its message, and expressed an interest in reading nihilist literature. Many, however, were quick to dismiss it and mock it, and a few of those resorted to cruelly suggesting that Des commit suicide. Some of Des' detractors asserted that the anarcho-nihilist position was merely stuck in the bourgeois worldview, accepting its premise for the social order and merely positioning themselves as an antagonist; a

and is now still a driving element in the growth of contemporary fascism. Not to mention that whatever reactionary transformation "the left" undergoes will have a lot of money behind it, and, if the masthead at Compact is anything to go by, the support of numerous appartchiks from the neoconservative establishment, and my suspicion is that the mainstream, statist "left" will probably end up accepting this transformation once it is completed; after all, it was only ever about getting votes.

You want to worry about a pipeline to fascism in the left? Anarcho-nihilism not only isn't a pipeline to fascism, but even with enough red flags it doesn't even come close to the very real pipeline to fascism involving mainstream state socialism that is being forged right now and has been in the makings for years before you idiots decided to fash-bait people over the occult again. And when it happens, at least half of you will defend it. I guarantee that much.

Things like this are why it's important to recapture something core to Satanism: the philosophy of no surrender. People who are part of occultism or alternative sub-cultures or alternative religions and who are also politically radical know that they can't afford to surrender what they love just because the ignorant commissars of mainstream socialism have only relatively recently become attuned to the problem of fascist creep and now fancy themselves to be a sort of anti-fascist community police. Indeed every anti-fascist knows that if the enemy is given an inch they will take the whole mile. Fascists need every appendage they can grab hold of in order to form a network of culture presence that then translates into political influence, so that there are countless avenues into which a person can be radicalized into fascist ideology. The only answer to this is to preserve the cultures that the fascists want to take over by driving out fascists from those spaces and asserting the anti-fascist value of those spaces. The people who want anarchists to surrender the Chaos Star would have them walk the opposite path, no doubt in the hope of sacrificing everything that doesn't conform to the cultural regime of the late Enlightenment. That cannot be allowed.

Can YOU Tell The Difference Between These Symbols?



Chaos Star

Sith Empire Logo

Sonnenrad

Know The Difference. Don't Be An Idiot.

social-democratic state” that “defends community” against “the libertine left and the libertarian right” (that sounds just a little bit like fascism but OK). They express say that they want to challenge “the overclass that controls capital”; that is to say, they don’t want to challenge capital, they just want a new set of paternalistic elites to rule society and govern capitalism. To that end, the magazine brings leftist voices like the ostensibly Marxist Slavoj Zizek and Ashley Frawley and racist social-democrats like Malcolm Kyeyunye and Paul Embery together with outright bourgeois conservative voices like Christopher Caldwell (literally a Weekly Standard editor), Sohrab Ahmari (Catholic neocon), Peter Hitchens (British right-wing crank), and Matthew Schmitz (if “establishment conservative” were an archetype, I’d say this guy is its embodiment), as well as conspiracy theorists like Alex Gutentag. Social-democrats across Europe (and, yes, I include the UK here) have for years made numerous efforts to meet the far-right half-way by accomodating many of their demands through conciliatory policy programmes designed to fit reactionary immigration policies in with social-democratic economics, and these efforts have never succeeded in doing anything except for creating a pipeline between social-democracy and fascism. It doesn’t look like that reality is going to convince social-democratic politicians to stop doing it either, since ultimately they need as many votes as they can get, and they often have a vested interest in preventing the radicalization of their party apparatus and the working class.

The core function of the socialization of the working class that defines social-democratic electoralism, and thereby much of the mainstream left, as well as even the vanguardism of state socialist forms of Marxism, ultimately bends much of the mainstream statist left towards a greater project of socializing the working class as functionaries of a more paternalistic state order, one theoretically more benevolent than its right-wing counterpart. The unity of this function with the still ever-present conservatism of bourgeois society leads inevitably to social-democracy arcing towards a reactionary reassertion of the dominant social order, and of hierarchical domination itself, and the unity itself is rendered inevitable by the realities of social-democratic electoralism. Every radical knows that this is not the first age in which social-democracy has proven reactionary or seen fit to ally with fascism or conservatism, and it may not be the last for as long as the status quo continues to perpetuate itself. Both social-democracy and Marxism-Leninism exist ultimately to socialize the masses as functionaries of the ruling system, whichever that ruling system happens to be, and that idea is not as incommensurate with fascism as any ostensible commitment to “the left” might make it seem. That socialization will arc inevitably towards the idea of a paternalistic state order that reinforces the hierarchy from which fascism derives life. Anarcho-nihilists, by contrast, seek the ultimate negation and destruction of this hierarchy, this state socialization, the order of the state itself, and every benign illusion that keeps it alive. At any rate, I would expect alliances between social-democrats and conservatives (not even necessarily “populist” ones at that) to continue growing. Right now you’re mostly seeing things like this confined to the internet and select columns on fairly mainstream media outlets, but there’s no reason to think it’ll stay that way. The alt-right used to just be a collection of think tanks, ideologues, and bloggers that nobody knew or cared about, but they’ve since evolved into a concrete political force that has extended well beyond its former limited sphere of influence,

strange objection for self-styled communists to make, considering they are supposed to be the material antagonists of bourgeois society.

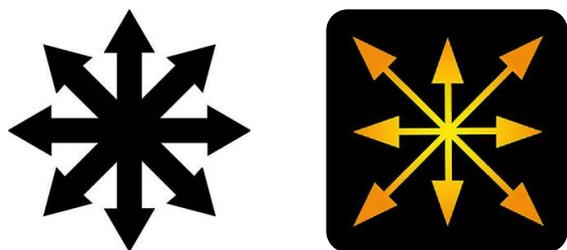
For whatever reason, Des’ original post attracted further attention at around March 18th, 9 days after the original post, from numerous individuals spouting mostly the same lines, except that this time there were people accusing Des of being a crypto-fascist on the grounds that the Chaos Star is a “Duginist symbol”. This seems to have kicked off a whole discourse about nihilist-anarchism as a whole being somehow fascist, and besides that a wave of anarchists and socialists from other tendencies pronouncing that nihilist anarchists are ineffectual. Some users have gone so far as to claim that the Chaos Star is essentially the Sonnenrad, the Nazi sun wheel symbol (often popularly, but ultimately erroneously, dubbed the “Black Sun”). It’s at this point that we need to get into the problems with all of this discourse.

The Chaos Star as we know it was created by Michael Moorcock, the author of the Elric of Melnibone novels, as a symbol of the forces of Chaos. In Moorcock’s novels, there is constant struggle two cosmic forces, those of Law and those of Chaos, and a figure referred to as the Eternal Champion acts on behalf of the Cosmic Balance to ensure that neither Law nor Chaos come out on top for long. The forces of Law, symbolized by a single upward-pointing arrow, represent cosmic order and are credited with ensuring that anything material exists, but a world dominated by Law tends to lead to stagnation, and the Realm of Law is an empty and barren place where, in the absence of the ability to do wrong, law and justice become meaningless. The forces of Chaos, symbolized by a star of eight arrows, represent both entropy and a state of infinite possibility unfettered by any rules, and are credited as the source of the power of magic and sorcery, but a world dominated by Chaos is unstable, and all possibilities are exhausted in a state of constant change (personally I find that to be a strange idea considering that the possibilities are, well, infinite). Fans of Shin Megami Tensei, like myself, will easily notice similarities between the premise of Moorcock’s novels and the Shin Megami Tensei games that would be released decades later; in the original Shin Megami Tensei, one of the four demon generals of Chaos is called Arioeh, which happens to also be the name of the gods of Chaos in Moorcock’s novels. Michael Moorcock himself was not a fascist. In fact, he has explicitly referred to himself as an anarchist, and specifically a “Kropotkinist” (that is, an adherent of Pyotr Kropotkin’s form of anarcho-communism), and he insists that his works often end with the message that “one should serve neither gods nor masters but become one’s own master”. So while the Chaos Star may not in itself be an anarchist symbol, it was created by an anarchist, and in the context of Chaos Magick it definitely dovetails with political anarchism rather more closely than fascism.

It’s worth mentioning that, although the Chaos Star as we know it was invented by Michael Moorcock, there actually was a similar older symbol that appeared in the work of Aleister Crowley. In the Thoth tarot deck, which also contained in Crowley’s The Book of Thoth, the Eight of Wands card depicts a large symbol consisting of eight arrows shaped like bolts of lightning and each extending outwards in all directions. It’s not really the Chaos Star, but it does look similar. According to Crowley, the symbol

on the card represented energy that scattered at high velocity. That does sound fairly similar to the way the Chaos Star is talked about as representing infinite potential branching off in different directions. The Thoth deck project was originally initiated in 1938, and completed in 1943, and The Book of Thoth was published in 1944. That's 17 before the first Elric of Melniboné novel, The Dreaming City, was published in 1961. It's not quite the same symbol, but it does predate Moorcock. And, again, there's no reason to interpret it as a symbol of fascism.

This brings us to Aleksandr Dugin, the fascist advisor to Vladimir Putin, who used his own eight-pointed star symbol to represent his Eurasianist movement. Dugin's eight-pointed star seems to have first appeared on the cover of Foundations of Geopolitics, a treatise on neo-Eurasianist ideology and politics that was first published in 1997 and has since become widely influential in fascist circles in both Russia and "the West" and has been widely read within the Russian government. Although the two symbols are similar, there are important differences between them. The star of Eurasianism is typically squared, whereas the common Chaos Star is round, and the star of Eurasianism usually has the four intercardinal arrows appear larger or longer than the cardinal arrows, whereas the common Chaos Star is typically much more equilateral, with the eight arrows all of equal size and length. These are the obvious visual differences between the Chaos Star and the Eurasianist Star, or the Star of Dugin as we might also call it. As for the symbolic meaning, it's not clear that the Chaos Star and Dugin's Star have any symbolic correspondence. Frankly, I'm amazed that people have even managed to confuse the two symbols.



In a now-deleted tweet, a Twitter user going by the handle @DualPowerRanger repeated a claim from Alexander Reid Ross which asserted that Aleksandr Dugin is a practitioner (or "follower") of chaos magick, and they asserted further that there is a convergence between the Chaos Star and National Bolshevism that is not accidental, based on the purported presence of eco-fascists in the nihilist milieu. Incidentally, the same basic claim of Dugin being a Chaos Magician was put forward by Robert Zubrin, writing for the conservative magazine National Review, in an article arguing that Dugin's Eurasianist ideology was a "satanic cult". Oh how easy it is to find certain people on the same side as reactionaries when it's time to make people afraid of the occult again! In any case, the basic claim is wrong-headed for a number of reasons. For starters, Chaos Magick is not a religion, and there are no "followers" of Chaos Magick. The very notion is fundamentally at odds with the radically anarchic, anti-dogmatic, and anti-organizational ethos of Chaos Magick, and arguably offensive to its practitioners. For another thing, while it is true that Dugin was interested in occultism

own, as a response to the fact that the world around is shitty not just to them but to everyone, and to the possibility that things might get truly irreparably bad within their lifetimes for a number of reasons. You just can't look at the current political and ecological situation, or in some sense even the basis of modern capitalism or even modern civilization, and act like pessimism isn't a completely legitimate response to it, and nor can you look at the fact that we're stagnating even as we know what's going on and theoretically trying to resolve it without something inside you telling you that maybe we're not actually going to get this right. Pessimism is a logical reaction to all of this and, if it doesn't lead to resignation, people can and do radicalize on the basis of pessimism, and some people will follow that path in response to the conditions they live in whether you like it or not.

The reason people defend the Chaos Star has nothing to do with whatever false sense of victory you claim for yourself, or with fascist creep. The reason people defend the Chaos Star doesn't even necessarily have to do with the merits of an-ancho-nihilism itself. The reason people defend the Chaos Star is, rather simply, because the Chaos Star is not a fascist symbol, the claim that it is a fascist symbol is laughably absurd, there are plenty of non-fascists including anarchists who use the Chaos Star to signify interest in Chaos Magick or esotericism even if probably for subcultural reasons, and an-ancho-nihilism is not a fascist ideology. It's ultimately that simple, and, frankly, I think what distresses the anti-nihilist anarchist and the anti-nihilist socialist is the idea that perhaps the nihilist-anarchists might provide a more interesting critique of capitalism and might find themselves unmoored by the limits of mainstream socialism. And yet it is ultimately an irrational fear, in the end. There is inherent reason why nihilism, anarchism, communism, or egoism cannot exist alongside each other and cannot form a coherent political worldview side-by-side; in other words, there is not much reason why you can't be all of those things at once.

An-ancho-nihilism is not going to make anarchism or the left as a whole more fascist, but it's honestly quite rich that the accusation is even flung around nowadays anyway in consideration of the fact that, if there is any part of the left that is at a major risk of becoming fascism or a pipeline to fascism, it's none other than the entire edifice of state socialism. You might think that I am only referring to Marxist-Leninists, and they definitely are reactionary (I'm sorry not sorry but it's the simple truth), but they are not the only ones. Paulauski describes himself as a democratic socialist? Very well, let's see what the democratic socialists are doing. The eggheads over at Jacobin are currently advocating for a decadent big tent populism that would have leftists ignore social struggles in favour of strictly economic understandings of capitalism. This has also sometimes meant bringing on white nationalists in socialist garb like Thomas Fazi for years, and their YouTube channel is full of videos of their hosts spouting a number of conservative talking points about "identity politics" among other social issues. Speaking of Fazi, he's one of several reactionaries who certain leftists have decided to collaborate with to form a new magazine called Compact, which is essentially just an edgier and slightly more social-democratic version of what is essentially an establishmentarian neoconservative rag - try to imagine The Weekly Standard but for Bernie-boosters. The magazine positions itself as an editorial on behalf of a "strong

richer and profit off of all of the misseration I've described, and all the while the left so far still appears powerless to change any of this in the long-term. In that sense, being a doomer as a leftist is an inevitable possibility, and that's not usually because fascists are convincing otherwise faithful optimists to abandon hope. Rather, it's a natural product of the grind that is left-wing politics in a late capitalist nightmare. Climate "doomerism" is also a natural reaction to the very real scientific conclusions being drawn about how much time we have and how much we can do to stop total ecological disaster from inflicting us all. The main difference, I suppose, is that some of us like the thought of turning what would be pure pessimism into a source of power and a deepening of the radical worldview, one that goes beyond the usual palliative quotations of Antonio Gramsci.

The other major problem is that the argument made against "doomerism" could also be applied to any counterculture, or any expression of alterity within society. Neopaganism and modern reconstructionist polytheist movements are not unaware of the problem of fascists trying to use their religion as an edifice of fascist ideology, and the same is true for Satanists and many occultists, and many within those movements are all determined to root out fascism from their communities. But if we followed Paulauski's line of thought, then we would assume that, because fascists attempt to use Paganism, Satanism, and occultism as spaces for fascist ideology, then those things are now inherently fascist, even though they aren't. Punk music, industrial music, noise music, and black metal are all music scenes where fascist movements are known for trying to set up shop, but that doesn't make them inherently fascist, and if we followed Paulauski's argument those subcultures would be totally off-limits and so would the gothic subculture simply because fascists attempt to weaponize them. The same goes for gaming, which is to this day a fairly notorious place for right-wing infiltration; you wouldn't be able to play video games and be a leftist anymore, simply because fascists exist and try to seduce gamers into their cause. The final logical conclusion of this argument is that socialism itself cannot be trusted because the idea of socialism has in fact repeatedly been weaponised by fascists. The Nazis called themselves socialists even though they were just capitalist fascists, China still calls itself communist despite just being an authoritarian capitalist state, and there is a surprising amount of people on the internet who call themselves socialists while peddling conservative and often white nationalist ideologies. If the left followed Paulauski's argument consistently, they would abandon socialism completely, and ironically I would say this is far more defeatist than anything that anarcho-nihilism could put forward.

Paulauski points to another thread from a user basically saying that anarcho-nihilists inundate people with "doomer shit" and then entice them with their ideology, which I'm sure is totally not elementary conspiratorial thinking. I think that there is a much more realistic way to look at it. If by "doomer shit" you mean pessimism and reasons to be pessimistic, then people are definitely exposed to that pretty regularly, but it's not because of nihilist-anarchists. I would assume that there are far too few nihilist-anarchists in the world for them to be responsible for people becoming doomers. To me, it makes much more sense to assume that people become doomers on their

and wrote a number of tracts on the subject when he was much younger, he is at this point very much a Christian traditionalist. Dugin was baptized into the Russian Orthodox Church since he was six years old, he is deeply involved in right-wing Christian politics in Russia which so characteristically revolves around the Russian Orthodox Church, and much of the religious content of his politics is expressly a form of Christian nationalism; he explicitly frames his struggle between a Eurasianist Russia versus the liberal/"globalist" West as a struggle between the forces of God, church, state and empire against the forces of Satan. Some people have told me in the past that there is at least a noticeable contingent of folkist neopagans in the Russian National Bolshevik movement, but I have never seen any evidence of that being the case. Even if Dugin did at one point practice Chaos Magick, he likely doesn't now, and even if he did, this certainly doesn't make the Chaos Star a fascist symbol.

A particularly hilarious bit of conspiracy thinking comes from self-styled leftists who appear to sincerely believe that the Chaos Star is synonymous with the Sonnenrad, or the so-called "Black Sun" used by neo-Nazis to represent their ideology. This is patently absurd for a number of reasons. The Chaos Star not only does not carry the same symbolism as the Sonnenrad, the two symbols are not even the same shape! Whereas the Chaos Star consists of eight arrows pointing outward in different directions, the Sonnenrad consists of twelve seemingly stylized sig runes through two circles, the runes each meeting at the centre of the circle, thus forming a wheel. The design was probably modelled after old Germanic ornamental disks that were generally symbols of royalty or aristocratic power, but otherwise barely resembles even those. The Sonnenrad is a distinct symbol that was created by Wilhelm Landig and commissioned by Heinrich Himmler as a substitute for the swastika to adorn the Wewelsburg Castle. As for the name "Black Sun", the Nazis themselves never referred to it as the "Black Sun". The symbol itself wasn't even originally black, more like a kind of dark green. We don't really know what the Nazis originally called it and even the original symbolism is something of a mystery, though it is speculated in scholarship that it represented a source of power for the so-called "Aryan" race. The reason I refer to it the Sonnenrad is because the word means "sun-wheel", and that's all that the basic symbol is; just a sun wheel made of stylized sig runes. The Sonnenrad only started being called the "Black Sun" by neo-Nazis in the 1990s, likely deriving the name from the thriller novel *The Black Sun* of Tashi Lhunpo. The novel was published no earlier than 1991 by the German author Stephan Mögle-Stadel, under the pseudonym Russell McCloud, who probably wasn't a neo-Nazi himself, though Mögle-Stadel's lack of enthusiasm for Nazi ideology didn't stop neo-Nazis from running with the concept regardless of its expressly fictitious basis.

The very name "Black Sun" as an esoteric concept is not the historic property of the Nazis. In Western alchemy, the "black sun" was the Sol Niger, a symbol of the process of nigredo, the state of spiritual putrefaction or "death" that necessarily precedes renewal and the completion of the Great Work. There have been other "black suns" and similarly dark lights with different symbolic meanings throughout the ancient pre-Christian world. In Egypt, a "black sun" can be seen in some tombs as a devourer of the unrighteous and the enemies of the gods, and this sun was represented by a

demon in the form of a black ram dubbed “The Lord of Power”. In Greece and Rome, the god Dionysus or Bacchus was sometimes referred to as the “Night Sun”. The planet Saturn was in some cultures considered to be a “sun of night”, and in Mesopotamia the sun god Utu was believed to travel to the underworld as a “night sun” to judge the dead. Mayans believed that the Sun took the form of the “Night Sun” as it journeyed to the underworld.

The logic of the comparison between the Sonnenrad and the Chaos Star is in essence the same logic used by your average conspiracy theorist to argue that every triangle or hand sign is secretly some esoteric or satanic symbol cryptically placed everywhere by a secret society of elites who for some reason want you to know that they rule the world and can’t tell you any other way. The Chaos Star is round and pointy, is employed by an occult subculture, and happens to be brandished by people you despise, while the Sonnenrad is round and jagged, maybe a little pointy in places, is linked to an esoteric movement, and is employed by people you despise, therefore, by ignoring the exact context and symbological differences between the symbols along with the precise ideological and political differences between the people who actually use those symbols, you can claim that the Sonnenrad and the Chaos Star are the exact same symbol and that Chaos Magicians and nihilist-anarchists are secret Nazis with no effort whatsoever! And the people looking to attack nihilist-anarchists seem to see fascist symbols literally everywhere, or at least everywhere in Ukraine. Another person attacking Des and accusing the Chaos Star of being a fascist symbol also claimed to see that same symbol on a Ukrainian soldier as proof that the soldier was a fascist, as part of a broader party line that Ukraine is a Nazi regime. The actual symbol was not a Chaos Star, but instead the symbol of the Sith Empire, which doesn’t at all resemble the Chaos Star and really doesn’t signify anything other than being a Star Wars fan. On a somewhat unrelated note, I’ve also seen some people claim that Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy was a secret Nazi on the basis of an equilateral cross-like symbol on his shirt that was somehow supposed to be the German Iron Cross. That cross is obviously not the German Iron Cross, but in fact a symbol of the Armed Forces of Ukraine. The fact that Zelenskyy happens to be Jewish should be relevant to anyone trying to claim that he’s some sort of secret Nazi, but apparently that doesn’t matter to pro-Russian conspiracy theorists.

My point is, there seems to be a noticeable element of conspiracism involved in the basic claim that the Chaos Star is inherently a fascist symbol, in that justifying such a claim often involves literally just seeing fascist symbols everywhere even where there aren’t, in the same way that lots of conspiracy theorists see symbols of Satanism or their imagined secret society everywhere even where they don’t exist.

What motivated me to write this article at all was a Twitter thread written by a self-described democratic socialist named Michael Paulauski, and it’s worth addressing the claims he makes against nihilist-anarchists. The thread begins with an endorsement of @DualPowerRanger’s problematic claims against nihilist-anarchists and the Chaos Star, and his bid to connect the Chaos Star to a broader issue of fascist creep in ecological movements. He claims that people who deny the existence of eco-fas-

cism are relevant to the Chaos Star, implying the Chaos Star is a symbol of a broader fascist creep within anarchist movements. We’ve already addressed the reasons why the Chaos Star is not a fascist symbol, so it doesn’t bear repeating here. The argument I’m much more interested in addressing is Paulauski’s claim that “doomerism” is weaponized as a tool of fascists who supposedly use it to ensure that any and all constructive progress is obstructed, and claims that the utilization of the Chaos Star as a symbol of nihilist-anarchism fits perfectly with this along with the phenomenon of anti-civ and anarcho-primitivism, both of which he reflexively dismisses without argument.

In addressing this argument, we need to discuss the concept of the “doomer”, or “doomerism”. The word “doomer” seems to be a modern term the internet gives to someone who’s basically a long-term pessimist. It can mean someone who is convinced that society will collapse within their lifetime, and in fact it used to specifically refer to people who thought that this collapse would be brought about by the demise of peak oil production, and nowadays it can be interpreted to mean a latent assumption that the end of organized human society in the form of ecological collapse, global conflict, or any number of causes is basically inevitable and can’t be stopped at this point, and for whom the only thing left to do is figure out how to survive or live with the inexorable. It can also mean someone who finds themselves given to a much more personal resignation, having accepted the idea that, for various reasons, their own lives aren’t going to get any better than they currently are. Nowadays the terms “doomer” or “doomerism”, whenever they enter mainstream political discussion, are almost always related to the broader discussion around climate change, and the term “doomer” is thrown around interchangeably with terms like “nihilist” or “collapsitarian” to denounce or dismiss people who believe that it is too late for the human species to meaningfully avert the worst consequences of man-made climate change.

There are numerous and obvious problems with asserting that pessimism as a whole is merely an appendage of fascism. For one thing, pessimism is really rather common in left-wing movements, particularly in the United States. And there’s a host of good reasons for leftists to feel pessimistic without requiring the input of fascist interference operations. The climate crisis shows no signs of getting better, and in fact it seems like we really will be unable to stop most of the worst effects of climate change from being inflicted on the world, whole species and ecosystems are still being destroyed, there’s war everywhere, with Russia presently invading Ukraine while ongoing conflicts in the Middle East remain unresolved and continue to claim thousands of innocent lives, progressive politicians either make little to no progress in improving the lives of the people or are actively compromised by the internal hierarchy of their party establishment, while their increasingly reactionary rivals on the right continue to grow and plot their next advance towards dictatorship, millions of people are still poor, suffering, with increasingly little hope that they’ll lead better lives or that their descendants will be better off, marginalized people continue to be brutally oppressed, the “democracy” we take for granted is being eroded even in the bastions of Western “freedom”, the whole world is slowly moving towards greater authoritarianism of some form or another, the capitalist system is still universal and the rich get