

Hobgoblin's Pleasure

Parergon?¹ — Walking as if it was an ornament.

I am wandering the winding streets of Warszawa. The air here always seems very dense or maybe it is just disturbed by the exhausted sighs of unfulfilled voids and neglect of untold stories, forever stuck in its fibers. My mind fixates on the crumbling architecture around me, a silent testament with its jagged cracks that echo my own internal lacks. Somehow, we are always in synch, feeding off each other's unease. Consciously unaware of time I am slowly walking towards the non-destination since again, I have promised myself I would finally develop a genuine affinity for this sweet connecting isolation, this rapid passage through varied ambiances² I am yet to explore. *Surely, it can't be that difficult*, I tell myself.

Walking provides a sense of comfort and unfolds a curious perspective on the interactions with one's surroundings and the passage of time, as it breaks them into small bits and pieces—manageable chunks.

it satisfies the desire for repetition, reiteration, recurrence, cure sustained by the physical act of walking itself. *it* offers the possibility of unexpected encounters — with desolate city ruins, beautifully displayed bench made of rusty pipes by a local handyman, or mating pigeons almost glued to the old chewing gum lying beside their feet, on this Saturday-morning pavement. *it* allows for the merging of various times and places, previously separated, now finding a way to complement each other. It's palpable that if I am walking, I am more likely to take a detour to visit this flea market on the way to school. I am constrained and my sensuous percipience is easily activated this way.

Hey, easy! I remind myself repeatedly as I race through each passing moment, each passing block, every insular loop produced on the spot by my neurotic brain. I find myself hurrying for the unknown, wanting to finally get there, to conclude my long, devout trip. *Please dedicate yourself to the roaming you are trying to tame* — my conscience chides me as I struggle to arrive on time. I am uneasy and annoyed.

Why did I begin to walk more? Perhaps it was a form of identification with this mode of being that I yearned to associate myself with, becoming a sort of flâneuse³, a dreamy utopia. Feasible or not, the need to dissect this urge was strong enough for me to persist. Ultimately, I truly long to perceive myself as one who is patient and deliberate, taking ample time for the exploration of their interiority aka leisure, instead of fully succumbing to the fast-paced urgency of neoliberalism. I really do. But walking, it had always been more of an obstacle, a subjugation for my legs, rather than an act of emancipation or resistance.

In my memory, I recall racing home from my primary school every day—which was only 700 meters from my house—to avoid the slowness and potential boredom. I'm easily bored or maybe I just bore myself. Anyway, this long-suppressed thought now resurfaced. It continues to haunt me. Running away from the very thing I need—unwinding.

Maybe the main incentive for the confrontation with walking was one of the books I started reading last

¹ A parergon comes against, beside, and in addition to the ergon, the work done [fait], the fact [le fait], the work, but it does not fall to one side, it touches and cooperates within the operation, from a certain outside. Neither simply outside nor simply inside. Like an accessory that one is obliged to welcome on the border, on board [au bord, a bard]. It is first of all the on (the) bo(a)rd(er) [Ii est d'abord l'a-bard]

(Derrida, Jacques. *The Truth in Painting*. The University of Chicago Press, Ltd., London, 1987)

² Debord, Guy. *Definitions*. Internationale Situationniste, vol. 1, 1958

³ Flâneuse derives from the Old Norse Verb flana which means to "to wander with no purpose"; The flâneur must not be confused with the badaud; a nuance should be observed there The simple flâneur is always in full possession of their individuality, whereas the individuality of the badaud disappears. It is absorbed by the outside world...which intoxicates them to the point where they forget themselves. Under the influence of the spectacle which presents itself to them, the badaud becomes an impersonal creature; they are no longer a human being, they are a part of the public, of the crowd. (Fournel, Victor. *Ce qu'on voit dans les rues de Paris*. Forgotten Books, 2017 (originally published in 1867))

summer—*Vagabondi Efficaci*⁴. This beautiful cluster of words celebrated walking as a mode of being, a way of existing. I read somewhere in one of the essays that the premise of a fall, is the one that constitutes the action of walking. It is your body's effort not to fall, to discipline itself when the instant calls for it, taking into consideration all the remaining surrounding movements of the environment. It displays *a continuum of interlinkages, feedforward and feedback, by which movements capture and convert each other to many ends, old, new, and innumerable* (Massumi, 2002, p.12)⁵. How much attention. And still, this action tends to be conceived as so effortless and simple it almost becomes unnecessary, redundant.

My shoes are covered in mud, it is winter's peak though the snow didn't come this year.

Tall, bare trees had shed all their leaves on the ground.

Kneading them, and through that becoming the protagonist of this venture
is what I thought I was.

You told me about the people hiding in the forest,

They had to adapt to the space.

Not kneading the leaves, not leaving any traces, becoming feral.

My shoes are thought to be covered in mud, trying to commingle but somehow,

I still stand out.

I'm leaving then.

I'm in Amsterdam. It's March 20 but spring, indifferent to my pleas, still hasn't arrived. The rain has finally ceased so I pressed on with my walk. Three hours in, the weight of unproductivity heavy on my mind, I found myself at a corner bookstore, seeking stimulation or, perhaps more accurately, a momentary reprieve from the feeling of laziness (through the performance of an action cemented as *productive*). Immediate gratification, huh? That's when I came across a publication by the Rietlanden Women's Office called *MsHeresies 2—Useful Work versus Useless Toil*. It is an edited version of a lecture given by William Morris in 1884 on, among other things, the relationship between work conditions and ornamentation. Initially sceptical about them using a text from so long ago, I eventually realized its relevance. It aims to spark a discussion about what it means to ornament and why it is so difficult to do so in the current (political) climate. In the glossary at the end of the publication, I found a short excerpt from the text interwoven with comments from the designers. It explains ornamentation as *the non-rational part of life where being human or being (wo)manly as opposed to machinery, comes into practice*. But *“the ornamental part of modern life is already rotten to the core and must be utterly swept away before the new order of things is realized. [...] We must begin to build up the ornamental part of life—its pleasure, bodily and mental, scientific and artistic, social and individual.”*⁶

I'm leaving.

Ornament as a normative, descriptive word, has its roots in the Latin *ornamentum*, meaning *equipment, tools, or embellishment*. Derived from the verb *ornare*, which meant to *adorn or embellish something*⁷. It has been a part of the English language since the 14th century, referring to the elements used for enhancement of the appearance of something as well as its apprehension—both aesthetical and symbolic. *There is an ontological, or rather teleological⁸ legitimacy for ornament, which by supplying a structural lack within the object, would become essential for restoring and achieving the unity of the existent. The need for ornament is thus sanctioned as fundamental since it corresponds to an intrinsic and not to a superficial requirement.*⁹

Structural lack of the human psyche finding completion only in the embrace of connection (with).

⁴ Candeloro, Constanza, editor. *Vagabondi efficaci*. Ness Books, 2019

⁵ Ferguson, Kathy. *Anarchist Women and the Politics of Walking*. Political Research Quarterly, 2017

⁶ Rietlanden Women's Office, *MsHeresies 2—Useful Work versus Useless Toil*, Rietlanden Women's Office, 2019

⁷ Online Etymology Dictionary, <https://www.etymonline.com/word/ornament>, 2019

⁸ concerned with the purpose, goal of something rather than the cause of its existence

⁹ Criticos, Mihaela. *The Ornamental Dimension: Contributions to a Theory of Ornament*. New Europe College Yearbook, 2004

Walking disclosed to me as an abstract ornament, one I had sought to craft for months on end. (Sadly) it still doesn't feel truly genuine. But is it actually sad? Maybe it is just not mine... A simulacrum with a purpose of bringing questions. A pretext for me to dwell, to wander off a bit.

So then I think:

What is it that terrifies me about ornamenting my life?

Who or what stands in my way?

Reveal it to me, or I may be left to conjure my own delusional explanations.

The need for ornamentation, which I first experienced in purely visual categories of my graphic design practice, now appears as a symptom of a broader societal condition in which I find myself and discover anew. Grappling with nostalgia for the devout ornamentation of my precarious life — for this *glitter that makes things appear and become part of a unique assemblage, part of the presence*¹⁰. Ornament is a mediator in expression, a carrier of meaning, serving as a bridge between the abstract and the concrete, ethereal and the tangible, rendering ideas comprehensible or visceral to the observer. Now I can see and justify the need for myself to conflate these two realms—of visual arts and mode of existence in the world—to delve deeper into what has become a *syncretic inclusion*.¹¹

I'm already telling you. I can't truly comprehend the intricacy of an ornament in its entirety. It would be insincere of me to pretend otherwise. I'm trying to capture some of its scattered fragments, and display them as traces mixed in a large, weighty bag that I shake with each step forward. One piece falls out, I retrieve it and place it back, but it inevitably lands somewhere else. It is not an orb that is impervious to any external force, forever unscathed, gleaming, and unassailable.

Hermeneutics of ornament

There are so many various ways in which ornamentation ripens for understanding and utilization, but it is this specific interpretation that captivates me—with its timid, introspective words. Where the ornament serves as a guide to this super-confused and frenzied world.

Symbolic aim

Firstly, as a sense-giving detail in symbolic scenography, *a material bearer of ritual, social or cultural signification*¹². Its function—which amplifies or completes the essence of an object—delves into the ineffable bond between the physical form and the metaphysical content. Throughout the ages, this symbolic or representative function can be seen in myriad places, from the funerary ideologies of ancient Neolithic communities¹³ to Stalin's five-pointed star. Act of sharing a common symbol or ritual, *giving and taking of meaning*¹⁴ whether it be something as small as assembling a window display for the pleasure of your neighbours or getting matching tattoos with close friends.

Adjectival aim

Ornament is also a type of adjective, and without any adjectives, nouns would not be able to have a distinct existence (regardless of this possibility in theory).¹⁵ So

I am made of the smell of the passing farms on our way to the mountains,

I am made of roman snail's trails beaten after a drizzle,

I am made of a dandelion wreath braided by my mother as we sat in the grass behind our home,

¹⁰ Heidegger, Martin, Criticos, Mihaela. *The Ornamental Dimension: Contributions to a Theory of Ornament*. New Europe College Yearbook, 2004.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Criticos, Mihaela. *The Ornamental Dimension: Contributions to a Theory of Ornament*. New Europe College Yearbook, 2004.

¹³ Micheli, Roberto. *Personal Ornaments, Neolithic Groups, and Social Identities: Some Insights into Northern Italy*. *Documenta Praehistorica* 39, 2012 (227-256).

¹⁴ Hall, Stuart. *The work of Representation*. London: Sage in association with the Open University, 1997

¹⁵ Coomaraswamy, Amanda, Criticos, Mihaela. *The Ornamental Dimension: Contributions to a Theory of Ornament*. New Europe College Yearbook, 2004.

the one-meter-deep hole in the muddy sand and the sand tossed aside during its excavation,
the smell of tomato soup blended with way too much yogurt,
CocoRosie's Werewolf,
an old roof waiting for the next storm to finally collapse,
a floor slick with sweat from countless hours of feet stepping and hitting and jumping and touching, caressing
and falling, exertion and cry
a physical body prone to decay,
future nostalgias and
all the conversations I have had with you since we met. You have made me too and still molding.

In this way, *ornament is related to subject as individual nature to essence*.¹⁶

The accidents of essence.

Ordering aim

But that's not all. Ornament's interiority also realizes an ordering purpose, one that structures the physical reality¹⁷. It brings organization and coherence to that which may otherwise be perceived by many as chaotic or even formless. Decorum, the fitting of form to content, the adherence to conventions and customs, and the appropriate relationship with the surrounding context, all with the aim of creating harmony and balance.

I was sitting with Zuzia in a cafe, talking. At one point Jerzy, my sister's bobo, started unrestrainedly eating the cake he had just beseeched me to buy for him. I had no revulsion at the way he was feeding himself, but surely my awareness of our surroundings heightened, and I became self-conscious, all too aware of our presence in this shared space. Zuzia noticed my discomfort. *I recall a class we took discussing the evolution of spitting etiquette*. She was quick to react, as she is always attentive. *Until the eighteenth century, spitting was not frowned upon, but as time progressed, the norms surrounding it changed. It's quite amusing, don't you think?*

Do not spit over or on the table. (English c.1463)

It is very ill-mannered to swallow what should be spat ... After spitting into your handkerchief, you should fold it once, without looking at it, and put it in your pocket. (La Salle, 1729)

It is unpardonably gross for children to spit in the faces of their playmates (la Salle, 1774)

It tells us so much about the psychological fluctuations that occurred in the psyches of European societies over time.
She continues reading.

*Spatting is at all times a disgusting habit. Besides being coarse and atrocious, it is very bad for the health. (English. 1859)*¹⁸

Decorative aim

All this is so often overshadowed by ornament's equation with the decorative. Through the adornment of a building's facade with intricate carvings, one can connect to the reality of the structure's materiality, as well as the cultural and historical significance it holds. If you are soaked with European culture, try looking upon the statues of St. Men at St. Peter's Basilica and not feel a sense of remorse, even as an atheist. The indication is so ingrained it becomes a visceral response.

Look!

Here, below the tiniest sculpture's feet, nestled near the edge of the facade, I can see the *ornamental slips*,¹⁹ details formed in the process of ornamentation that blur the distinction between the practical purpose of an object and its aesthetic form. These ornamental slips embrace elements that may be viewed as flaws, errors, or

¹⁶ Coomaraswamy, Amanda. *Figures of Speech Or Figures of Thought? The Traditional View of Art*, World Wisdom, 2007, (originally published in 1946)

¹⁷ Criticos, Mihaela. *The Ornamental Dimension: Contributions to a Theory of Ornament*. New Europe College Yearbook, 2004.

¹⁸ Davies, Norman. *Europe: A History*, Harper Perennial, 1998

¹⁹ Rietlanden Women's Office. *MsHeresies 2—Useful Work versus Useless Toil*, Rietlanden Women's Office, 2019

experiments—forever incomplete. A sudden muscle spasm at the conclusion of an inked curve results in a graphic tension of interrupted perfection, sparking a potential for suspended judgment. It makes space for replacement. With what exactly? With apprehension expanding into perception. With perception that points to and celebrates the unique or the one at odds.

Ornamentation and the Erotic: the difficulty in reconciliation of Rational and Sensual

*See the sky through your belongings
by making holes in them*

*i.e.: pants, jacket, shirt, stockings, etc.*²⁰

When beauty is found, it brings a sense of joy and completion, elevating our appreciation of it more. And in turn, when we are fulfilled, we become more attuned to the beauty that surrounds us. In this way, beauty and satisfaction are entwined, each strengthening the other in a positive feedback loop, each element reinforcing the other in an endless dance.

Sadly, there has been a big shrink, a decline in appreciation for beauty, which can be traced back to the new epistemology proposed by Descartes. He separated the indubitable mind from the dubitable body in a way not considered before him. Distancing himself from sensations, he made the world dead, litter.

So *Between me and the world, there is now a veil of ideas*.²¹ The veil that grew so vast that I no longer notice its presence. *Even* if I somehow still find, in a gleam of recognition, the meaning in ornamenting this distant world, I am hindered by the long-standing tradition of *evangelizing for correct use of it*²², by *The Grammar of Ornament*²³, how and why and what it means.

Let me elaborate on the cause of my *even*.

I am speaking near Llewelyn Negrin, the author of *Ornament and the feminine*.

Before modernism, there was no distinction between the *merely ornamental* elements of an object and those of *function*. Then, a clear cut happened, a division. The giant scissors in the faulty hands of Adolf Loos²⁴ who wrote that the use of ornamentation indicated a lack of cultural development, reconceptualizing it as a *mere embellishment*, an accidental not an essential aspect. Ornamentation—primitive and wasteful deserving symbolic criminalization. Modernist architecture²⁵ and design²⁶ became greatly influenced by these ideas, favouring a functional and minimalistic approach over ornamental elements as if they could be separate. Loos believed that all art had its roots in *the (wicked) erotic*, some sort of Freudian sublimation—an expression of *wanting to rid oneself of natural excess*²⁷—within which exists a relationship between ornamentation and the feminine that deserves dismissal if not demonization, putting it in the suffocating box of irrational, sensual, superficial. *Man had progressed enough for ornament to no longer produce erotic sensations in him*²⁸—he said.

According to Negrin, by putting too much attention to just giving ornament a positive rather a negative value, most of the criticisms²⁹ towards Loos neglected the prejudice which dismissed it at its core—the idea

²⁰ Ono, Yoko. *A painting to see the sky III*. Grapefruit, Wunternum Press, 1964

²¹ Dr. V.A. Gijssbers. *History of Modern Philosophy*, Universtiy of Leiden. 2020

²² Twemlow, Alice. *The decriminalization of ornament*. EyeMagazine. 2005

²³ Jones, Owen. *The Grammar of Ornament*. London: Day & Son. 1856

²⁴ Even though Adolf Loos has already received way too much attention, I am also choosing to engage with him. This decision to give a platform to a man with questionable beliefs and actions is a complex one, however, as a feminist, it is important to examine and critique these figures as part of *living in proximity to a nerve*, as discussed by Sara Ahmed in her book *Living a Feminist Life*.

²⁵ It is noteworthy to mention Beatriz Colomina's text *Battle Lines*, in which she tells us a story of Le Corbusier employing the technique of mural-painting as a means of ornamenting and yet defacing the surface, specifically the house made by Eileen Gray. Through this act, he asserts his ownership of the space, marking it with a bold and destructive gesture.

²⁶ Alice Twemlow mentions in her text *The decriminalization of ornament that even today, despite its proliferation and the slow emergence of discourse surrounding it, the use of decoration is still regarded by mainstream graphic design as a taboo—a testimony, perhaps, to modernism's enduring hegemony*.

²⁷ Loos, Adolf. *Ornament and Crime*. Penguin Classics. 2019 (or.pub. 1913)

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ The critique of Loos has been ongoing for several decades. Among the theorists that tried to deal with his harassment were women like: Norma Broude, Naomi Schor, Penny Sparke.

that ornamental is not a carrier of meaning. With that, the labels that were stuck to the ornament stayed in place—a perpetuated image of either or. Meaningful or Sensuous. The enchanting binaries.

Negrin aims at encapsulation of ornament, considering it as a multidimensional phenomenon. By that she legitimizes it not in its reduced form, but as a complex, nuanced expression. This approach makes space for dwelling on ornament's spiritual value—the one satisfying a decorative impulse that is intrinsic to humanity and brings pleasure to the soul. She brings back the aspect of nonrational spirit that now has an agency to resist the attention economy³⁰ by engaging in an alternative framework. Reclaiming the nonrational while at the same time pointing to its semiotic function can be a step towards its rehabilitation since above all, ornament hints, guides and exposes.

The fog of associations in my mind starts to slowly clear to make space for the realization of how my desire to dissect ornamentation is simply an extension of all that I had already learned from Audre Lorde. I can no longer recall who told me about her some years ago. What is still lingering somewhere in my head is this overarching, warm feeling of becoming completely entranced by her words. *The erotic is not a question only of what we do; it is a question of how acutely and fully we can feel in the doing. Once we know the extent to which we are capable of feeling that sense of satisfaction and completion, we can then observe which of our various life endeavors brings us closest to that fullness.*³¹ But I fear that. I fear this word, this expression that has been stripped away from me, from us, by those who wield power. A theft that led to neglect on my side, perhaps even a sense of disgust that I started developing at one point. Thank Goddess, Lorde uncovered some of this abuse, explaining that *the erotic has often been misnamed by men and used against women. It has been made into the confused, the trivial, the psychotic, the plasticized sensation.*³² An idle gesture. Somehow, Lorde managed to reintroduce me, re-engage me with ideology of the erotic. The erotic, this time as a force for resistance against oppression and a catalyst for change, a wellspring of our utmost power. Refusing to use the word properly³³, reconceptualizing it. A *queer vandalism*.³⁴

How long can we be at odds? How much endurance and emotional effort can one possess?

I'm almost out of energy to keep persevering in this ornamental dwelling. My soul is full, but my legs are getting tired. This is my small complaint.

Feminism as complaint, complaint activism.³⁵

³⁰ Odell, Jenny, *How to do nothing*. Brooklyn, NY, Melville House, 2019

³¹ *When I speak of the erotic, then, I speak of it as an assertion of the life force of women; of that creative energy empowered, the knowledge and use of which we are now reclaiming in our language, our history, our dancing, our loving, our work, our lives.* Lorde, Audre. *The Uses of the Erotic: The Erotic as Power*. In *Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches*, edited by Audre Lorde, 53-59. Crossing Press, 1984.

³² *Ibid.*

³³ *How can we bear the present?* asks Lisa Robertson in her book *Anemones—A Simone Weil Project, thinking near Weil herself*. At one point, she focuses on how reinhabiting the words that were misused or co-opted by the terrorizing powers can be an experience deeply valuable for resisting the flattening narratives. Simone Weil lived amid horror. In the 1940s she wrote: *The sole strength in the world is purity.* (Petrement, Simone Weil, p.16) Robertson chooses to give space for contemplation of Weil's usage of the term. Weil, herself was Jewish and antifascist, and her choice to give great importance and value in her writings to the term *purity* (a theft enacted by Nazi propaganda of the time) can seem misplaced or troubling. But Robertson convinces us that it is a difficult relationship that unfolds multitudes that we should aim at. It underlines the relationship to language as contextual, including the histories of abuse, and heresy of resistance. It is a purity that is considered as opposition to force, purity is the opposite of force. *Here the word purity pertains not to an essence or a putative origin, nor a coalitional focus or exclusivity, but to a quality of social relationship—social mutual consent.* It is a heresy because not many will take the time to understand the purpose of this employment. But this approach faces us with something exciting for me. It stands in opposition to neglect or erasure, it claims the reality in its fullness, offering this linguistic reinhabitation as a difficult fight against singularity and binaries. It *opens our ways of coexisting, and so our mentalities, if not always to hope, at least to a discernment that evades the market-driven flattening and squandering and of our intellectual and spiritual beings.* Such discernment must underpin any lovingly committed living in the world, where the world is the inconceivable, irritating, stimulating many-ness that will persist nonetheless to the end, whether personal or global.

³⁴ *When we recover a potential from materials, when we refuse to use things properly, we are often understood not only as causing damage but as intending what we cause. Queer use could thus also be interpreted as vandalism: "the wilful destruction of the venerable and beautiful."* Sara Ahmed for *feminstkilljoys* blog

³⁵ *Consider how feminist artists have made use of complaint, or how feminist art can be complaint. The Guerrilla Girls, for instance, had an exhibition called Complaints Department, in which individuals and organizations were invited to post "about art, culture, politics, the environment, or any other issue they care about." They also ran office hours where you could share your complaints "face to face." You can turn what might be assumed to be a mundane administrative practice into an art project. The direction of travel goes both ways. Those who make complaints, who enter that department, the Complaint*

Big words. Hope you know they are just in this moment.

They feel right to me. Gadają do mnie. Sparked by all these talking heads³⁶.

*Do all lovers feel like they are inventing something?*³⁷ Héloïse asks Marianne between breaths.

I don't mind all these cheesy words with you
saying it's the best sex I've ever had, you're the best kisser
words can be ornamental too
seedlings, suddenly bursting forth from the plant embryo
maybe it's not true, maybe you're not the best kisser but I really don't care
Dlatego zasiej się we mnie,
zapaść swoje korzenie,
zakorzeń się jeszcze głębiej³⁸

Ornamentation and labour

*The ornamental can only come about with enough rest, agency, and variation. However, it is not an outcome or product of these conditions' rather, it is something intrinsically intertwined therein. The ornamental reminds us that life is more whole than the divisions of leisure/work, useful/decoration, business/pleasure, or individual/communal.*³⁹

We accommodate multitudes so don't tell me I'm one.

Still, (visual) ornamentation is highly tied to time, which makes it susceptible to criticism for its connections to privilege. Its consideration is necessary to incorporate the more all-embracing approach. We can't deny the long history of exploitation of workers in the production of ornamentation which persists to this day. The continued existence of the need to seek out *slave-free* goods is evidence that a significant number of products are still produced using exploitative labour practices.⁴⁰

*Today, decorated objects, which, thanks to progress, have become separated from the realm of ornamentation, imply wasted labour⁴¹ and material.*⁴²

This hazy sentence can serve as a small sand box in which to contemplate some of its particles.

Rendering ornamentation abundant aligns itself with the logic of late-stage capitalism, it becomes a *useless toil* in Morris' words. Right now, the thought of ornamentation to embellish one's life, or one's work can be seen as a subversive act—as it challenges the idea of such adornment being unnecessary—but also an act playing along the lines of privilege since it is mainly cogitable by the ones having enough time and rest, and resources.

We can see this tension in Pilvi Takala's intervention called *The Trainee* from 2008 where, under the cover of a trainee in the marketing department of the Deloitte consulting firm, she spends her days at work engaging in 'non-doing'—sitting behind her empty office desk, just looking ahead or riding the elevator for the whole

Department (though of course making formal complaints often means entering many departments), can turn what they do—it might seem tedious, it might seem dull, all those papers—into art. Or perhaps there is no turning involved; perhaps there is an art in the mundane, to the mundane.

(Ahmed, Sara. *Complaint Activism*. Feministkilljoys, 2021)

³⁶ Kiesłowski, Krzysztof. *Gadające Głowy*. Warsaw Documentary Film Studio, 1980

³⁷ Sciamma, Céline. *Portrait of a Lady on Fire*. 2019

³⁸ Spalarnia, 2022. *Ziemia*. On USTA

³⁹ Rietlanden Women's Office. *MsHeresies 2—Useful Work versus Useless Toil*, Rietlanden Women's Office, 2019

⁴⁰ Not mentioning a new facet of this problem that comes with a neoliberal metamorphosis of allo-exploitation into auto-exploitation further explored in the writings of Byung-Chul Han such as *Psychopolitics*

⁴¹ The increasing industrialization shed new light on (wasted) labour, where on the one hand, the body of the labourer is used up or wasted at accelerated rates to secure the most profit. On the other hand, the exigencies of capitalist profit-making may lead to this factor of production being excreted (as a form of waste) into unemployment or underemployment, creating surplus populations that are separated partially or fully from domains of capitalist exchange and social life

(Yates, Michelle. *The Human-As-Waste. The Labor Theory of Value and Disposability in Contemporary Capitalism*. Radical Journal of Geography, 2011)

⁴² Loos, Adolf. *Ornament and Crime*. Penguin Classics, 2019, (originally published in 1913)

working day, doing “thought work”. Resisting to do anything in ways that are commonly accepted, such as scrolling or texting on social media, her non-doing in the workplace becomes a potential threat for her colleagues. What is she capable of? She becomes illegible and through that illegibility she disrupts the order. Her refusal not only becomes a threat, but also a sense of privilege others start to resent, a visible claim: I can afford doing nothing.

*Pleasure resides and flourishes (also) in the intellectual uncertainty and deferral, which can open the moral spectrum of our existence to forms of experience that can't be quantified by market censors.*⁴³ However, when one is engaged in tedious and repetitive labour, in unhealthy and alienating conditions, and is consumed by the thought of providing for their loved ones who are not even present, it becomes difficult to find pleasure or the energy to engage in activities such as reading critical theory or appreciating the beauty of a glimmering sunset as a form of moral exploration.

Instead, you just want to numb yourself, a *delicate depression*.

Scary thoughts that bubble up as I am writing these words. This human urge to continually strive for greater heights, to assert dominance and to separate themselves from others. Me vs the Other. Forever. Endless quest for power and possession. Economic gain cloaked under the guise of *rationality*.

To take a step back, to slow down and re-evaluate our priorities. This way, we could strive for progress that is conscious, drawing upon the concept of degrowth—this (un)common assertion that unyielding pursuit of further economic growth in industrialized countries is unsustainable or even detrimental to the creation of a more harmonious and ethical society.⁴⁴

Because if the *current* way in which we pursue progress is inherent in human nature, then are we not lost?
(Prze)mysli

Just imagine. *The race would soon become extinct if mothers did not sacrifice their lives to take care of their children.*⁴⁵

These mothers, once medieval witches illuminating our journeys through the dark of the woods, performing the most laborious of works.

Reengaging with reality is reengaging with the past.

A movement towards the failures, the points of intensity, and of rationality, in order to access a “better life, not elsewhere, but in this world, and right away, because the values brought to life are the values of this world”—as Lisa Robertson reflects alongside Simone Weil in her book *Anemones: A Simone Weil Project* talking about gestures hinting at what once was or is thought to had been.

I want to hear you; I want to hear about you, from you, with you, next to you.

Consideration of capitalist condition necessitates consideration of women's position within its roots. Sylvia Federici, in her book *Caliban and the Witch: Women, the Body, and Primitive Accumulation*, examines the role that the witch hunts of the late medieval and early modern periods⁴⁶ played in the emergence of capitalism. At the beginning of the Modern Period, a new cultural narrative was established. One that held that women were inferior, lustful, emotional, and incapable of self-governance, and therefore must be controlled by men. This belief was widely accepted across religious and intellectual lines, much like the condemnation of witchcraft.⁴⁷ According to her, witch hunts were a tool of social control used by the emerging capitalist class to oppress and exploit the lower classes. They were part of a larger process of

⁴³ Robertson, Lisa. *A Simone Weil project: Anemones*?, 2021

⁴⁴ Degrowth directs itself at reaching a society that *enables global ecological justice, strengthens social justice and self-determination and strives for a good life for all under the conditions of this changed metabolism. It redesigns its institutions and infrastructure so that they are not dependent on growth and continuous expansion for their functioning*. Multiple viewpoints exist on reaching this state, with no one perspective dominating the discourse. It is a pluriverse, containing many possible futures. This is reflected in number of degrowth-oriented imaginaries including *currents* that are institution-focused, sufficiency-focused, communing-focused (alternative economy), feminist, and post-capitalist/critical of globalization. (*this fragment is based on* Schmelzer, Matthias, Aaron Vansintjan, and Andrea Vetter. *The Future is Degrowth*, VersoBooks, 2022)

⁴⁵ Kropotkin, Peter. *The Conquest of Bread*. Tresse et Stock, 1907

⁴⁶ *Important factor in the devaluation of women's labour was the campaign that craft workers mounted, starting in the late 15th century, to exclude female workers from their workshops, presumably to protect themselves from the assault of the capitalist merchants who were employing women at cheaper rates. The craftsmen's efforts have left an abundant trail of evidence.*

(Federici, Silvia. *Caliban and the Witch: Women, the Body and Primitive Accumulation*. Autonomedia, 2004)

⁴⁷ Federici, Silvia. *Caliban and the Witch: Women, the Body and Primitive Accumulation*. Autonomedia, 2004

primitive accumulation, in which the capitalist class expropriated the commons and the labour of the lower classes to accumulate wealth and power. The witch hunts were a means of disciplining and terrorizing the lower classes, particularly women, to force them to accept the new capitalist order and to work for wages.⁴⁸

Reengaging with reality is reengaging with the pain of the past.

Medieval gesture and why it matters

They relate to the beginnings They are in the middle and will appear at the end
Not in the epicentre
Centre is free
They're not the most important

It is May, summer but somehow the heat doesn't seem to enter the guts. Sweaty, in motion—to get from one class to another—I walk through the building's corridors, oblivious to the materiality around me. I know it is quite inconsiderate of me since today marks four years of struggles encapsulated into one brief exhale—a graduation exhibition of art students. But I can't look, I am overstimulated, overwhelmed, I am no longer able to read more than 2 lines of text at once, and still, I don't even know what she wanted to tell me with those 2 lines. *Please let's just leave and get some food! Otherwise, I am going to faint*—I text Luna while walking towards the exit. She agrees but wants to see the sculpted shrine before leaving. I wonder if I've even seen the artwork myself.

In my dreamy mind, everything fused into a hazy mass of works. It utters into the space softly whispering: *Middle Ages*. I am experiencing a range of conflicting emotions in response to this recognition. There is a small glimmer of hope that is deeply felt, but also a sense of darkness and despair about the world's current paralysis. I am longing for the past and have a desire for reconciliation. There is also a sense of curiosity, silliness, and queerness. I am questioning myself. Are these seemingly medieval impulses I am experiencing just a figment of my imagination? Do they hold any real potential?

*Could we now be experiencing a revival of an era where illiteracy was the norm, where we read in images rather than abstract symbols (letters), right brain over left?*⁴⁹

Even though I feel ambivalent about these clear distinctions made in the *Medieval Minded* pamphlet, I find solace in the realization that I am not alone in this intuitive recognition. It prompts me to continue discovering.

In *Dreaming of the Middle Ages*⁵⁰—a poetically named essay written by Umberto Eco—the writer discusses a renewed interest in medieval times observed by him already in the 1980s. Eco highlights ten ways⁵¹ that people have attempted to capture the spirit of the medieval era. But his critique is deeply rooted in the time of its expression and is in this way failing to encapsulate something that remained out of his reach—the spirit of the 21st century. The division he makes, therefore, feels too rigid in its structure, with a tendency to oversimplify and flatten the diverse and nuanced ways in which people have engaged with the past. *It is a shaggy medievalism, and the shaggier its heroes, the more profoundly ideological its superficial naïveté.*⁵² As I read the text, it became evident that the various interpretations of the Middle Ages are inextricably intertwined and, like all things in life, are constantly evolving. Even if they do not necessarily hold constructive power in themselves, these visitations offer us a window into a haunting and complex history that unfolds in front of us. Unlocking rich and captivating past and by this unlocking rendering it meaningful. Our cravings, hopes, and disappointments.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Exhibition curated by Daniel van Straalen. *Medieval Minded*. 2019

⁵⁰ Eco, Umberto. *Dreaming of the Middle Ages*. Travels Through Hyperreality, 1987

⁵¹ *Middle Ages as a pretext, as the site of an ironical revisitation, as a barbaric age, a land of elementary and outlaw feelings, of Romanticism, of the philosophia perennis or of neo-Thomism, of national identity, of decadentism, of philological reconstruction, of so-called Tradition, as an expectation of the Millennium*

⁵² Eco, Umberto. *Dreaming of the Middle Ages*. Travels Through Hyperreality, 1987

*Looking at The Middle Ages means looking at our infancy*⁵³, Umberto Eco says. These words, having a hint of cynicism, set the tone that permeates the text throughout. And of course, it is difficult not to agree with him stating that we no longer want to be infants, at least to some extent. We yearn to mature, take on responsibilities, have control over our own lives, and attain independence in some form or another. Building his arguments on this comparison, he considers most of the contemporary allusions to the medieval period as idiotic or unnecessary. Their validity is disregarded. By setting aside Eco's purism, we allow ourselves to notice a constructive angle in this text to dissect the neo-medievalist⁵⁴ traces happening today. We should look at our infancy filled with care because examining it can not only help us to understand the lingering effects of past grievances on our adult selves but also allow us to rediscover and embrace the positive qualities that we may have lost as we rushed into adulthood. To remind ourselves how to be ludic.⁵⁵ This is one of the attempts of neomedieval art, to relearn, to reconcile.

****Silent Mantras and hectic Movements. Delicate depression. Post hope.**

How to get out? **⁵⁶

Hilf Dir Selbst!—God helps those who help themselves—serves as a title of a gothic-jungle album released in 2021 by a Berlin-based producer Christoph de Babalon. This motto, even though it is known to be one of the most prominent citations from the Bible, doesn't actually appear in the source. The rumour became indicative of Christian morality although it was birthed in another circumstance—conceived in ancient Greece. This transposition of meaning—a meaning traveling uncontrollably from one temporal context into another—feels familiar in our tendency to connect with the past. Incomprehensive. The past that never occurred but could have. The past that was reimagined, a distant void marking present ideologies and desires. I am listening to the lamentations expressed in the album, and it feels recognizable, this post-hope expression of stillness in excruciating affliction. My imagination activated by the sonic experience bit by bit carries me towards a different time-space and I land amid the Middle Ages. I find myself caught in the liminal space, unable to fully enter or leave, having one foot in between the fall of the Western Roman Empire in the 5th century and the weight of the early modern period's witch-hunts bearing down on me, the other somewhere in the 21st century. This sensation becomes more vivid as I focus on the accompanying album cover and start carefully scanning it with my eyes. A collage made of tears and armour by Nicola Tirabasso, alias visio. Different epochs conflating under the influence of raining castles melting into ornate dissolved rotunda-like font ornamenting this confusing image.

In this example I see the usage of an epoch—medieval period—serving as an ornament, as an indication that we are led towards, that beckons us to feel moved, to find relation. Here, medieval imagery—which to me in this context is not just a graphic depiction but rather a distant cousin of imagination, derived from Old French *imaginacion* meaning *concept, mental picture; hallucination*, and Latin *imaginationem* meaning *imagination, a fancy*⁵⁷—is used to grasp at least a fragment of the present-day zeitgeist through image-creation. Ornament here is thus an appreciation uttered both towards the past and the present simply and mostly through the act of paying attention and dedicating time.

In this album, describing itself as a *delicate depression*, the ornament guides us towards the future that will questionably bring anything new but repetitions of what has already happened, what has already been—both

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ various postmodern tropes directed towards the medieval past

⁵⁵ Ursula LeGuin paints a similar story in a conversation she had with Jonathan White (*Talking on the Water: Conversations about Nature and Creativity*) In it, she said: *The daily routine of most adults is so heavy and artificial that we are closed off to much of the world. We have to do this in order to get our work done. I think one purpose of art is to get us out of those routines. When we hear music or poetry or stories, the world opens up again. We're drawn in — or out — and the windows of our perception are cleansed, as William Blake said. The same thing can happen when we're around young children or adults who have unlearned those habits of shutting the world out.*

⁵⁶ description of the album *Hilf Dir Selbst!* by Christoph de Babalon

⁵⁷ Online Etymology Dictionary, <https://www.etymonline.com/word/imagination>, 2017

felt and expressed by our ancestors. From this perspective, the future appears as chimera, materializing itself as a constant self-actualization of the past in the interim with the present. And it is a gruesome picture.

In the *Ghosts of My Life*, Mark Fisher gives us a tool that contributes to the better understanding of the current artistic climate by introducing the term *hauntology*, originally coined by Derrida. Hauntology is the specter that keeps haunting us.⁵⁸ We relate to the past in our conceptualization of the present, and through this employment of the already existing narrative, it becomes strong again, vivid because we engage with it anew, creating new associations. Looking through Fisher's eyes, we would see here the dialogue between the Middle Ages and the contemporary art scene as disenchanting in essence, an excessive tolerance of the archaica which lost its clarity.⁵⁹ Haunted by the lost futures that never arrived, artists use the imagery associated with the pre-capitalistic world of the Middle Ages. But to Fisher, this future will never arrive because we are not really able to conceptualize anything new. Recycling old ideas that are ultimately consumed by capitalist realism is a frightening notion, but one that must be considered. Despite this disheartening reality, we must rise above it and make it insufficient for our pursuit of reengaging with reality.

Nostalgia having purpose outside of itself. This aesthetics asks us: what is the present? The sound and image answering with a *helpless cry*. The visio-created image conjures the widespread association of the Middle Ages with mystery, uncertainty, and terror—described by Umberto Eco as the *barbaric age*.⁶⁰ At first glance, the violence depicted in the artwork may go unnoticed due to its grotesque nature. However, once it is observed, it becomes impossible to unsee.

*However, a progressive view of human knowledge should also consider that the concept we have of the so-called dark ages is most likely not our own at all, but rather ideas imposed on us by a growing capitalist empire that needed to build a fervent belief in the dawn of a modern age and create a dark past from which we could emerge. To enter the state of mind of a distant epoch requires a great shift of belief systems.*⁶¹

It is not just the historical facts themselves that are important in our engagement with reality, but rather how we interpret and navigate them, even when faced with contradictory or ambiguous information. This interplay of truths has the power to rethink this relationship. This interplay of truths has an unclear subversive potential. What may appear grotesque to me could have originally been intended with sincerity.

The designs of Nicola Tirabasso possess a powerful quality that derives from their ability to create an ambiguous and confusing atmosphere, resulting in a strong presence. This presence is achieved through the disruption of one's ego. We see it in how they employ medieval signs such as blackletters, elements of insular art, illuminated letters, and so on, but also in how they succeed in conveying an identifiable atmosphere after the primary, decipherable and clear signs are gone. The neo-medievalist gaze, to be convincing, must possess a profound understanding of the processes shaping the creation of different associations and abstractions. It results in us, the spectators, often finding ourselves assigning the word *medieval* to a work of art or object without the ability to discern the specific elements and pinpoint the signifiers that contribute to this choice of words.⁶²

One instance of this phenomenon can be found in the album *X, wheel* by Heith featuring image assembled by visio. It resembles a map or stela, adorned with asemic writing⁶³ by Heith and Pietro Agostoni bringing the affect like that of an old manuscript. Some time ago I stumbled upon a 15th-century work, a Voynich Manuscript—which purpose is still undecipherable. A scientific diary, a forgery, a medicine book, astrological readings, and herbal remedies. Having a glimpse of mysterious spirituality that is not possible to

⁵⁸ Fisher, Mark. *Ghosts of My Life: Writings on Depression, Hauntology and Lost Futures*. London: Zero Books, 2014

⁵⁹ Fisher, Mark. *Mark Fisher: The Slow Cancellation of The Future*. Youtube, Uploaded by pmilat, 2014, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aCgkLICTskQ>

⁶⁰ Eco, Umberto. *Dreaming of the Middle Ages*. Travels Through Hyperreality, 1987

⁶¹ Exhibition curated by Daniel van Straalen. *Medieval Minded*. 2019

⁶² The ornament can be equated with expression also because it acts as a particular type of sign, whose original content fades almost completely in the favour of the meaning it has to embody or to enhance in a particular context. Its content being reduced or inessential, the ornamental sign acts as pure expression, although its form cannot be devoid of its primal sense and is chosen precisely for its signifying potential (Criticos, Mihaela. *The Ornamental Dimension: Contributions to a Theory of Ornament*. New Europe College Yearbook, 2004)

⁶³ a shadow, impression, and abstraction of conventional writing (Jacobson, Michael, Schwenger, Peter. *Asemic: The Art of Writing*. 2019)

grasp with words that are known to us—asemic writing *eliminates meaning in that it does not convey a verbal message, but the evocation of writing is meaningful*⁶⁴ *on another plane. It conveys something about the nature of writing that is generally obliterated by the verbal message. (...) This is a description of writing that locates its essence in the rhythms and gestural relations of marking. It is precisely this vision of writing that asemics wants to convey.*⁶⁵

There is some sort of parallel in intelligibility that I see expressed in both asemantic writing and pre-capitalistic ornamentation of life (in forms of magick, feminine power, consideration of body and mind more united, investigating the world from within not from the outside) that makes this immediate association with Middle Ages possible. A mythical rather than historical embodiment. Asemantic writing can be seen *here* as a contemporary attempt at reconciliation with some aspects of medieval epistemology, yet another transposition.

The possibility of micro-resistance⁶⁶ in homo ornans⁶⁷

Revaluation of medieval practices such as magical beliefs, belief in parapsychology, and biofeedback is considered by Silvia Federici as once being a real threat, to a society in which it had a disruptive role, killed the industries, was offering an alternative to feudal relations, now, in the world of mechanized body, now gobbled by neoliberal forces that do make space for these *quirks* because they don't disrupt the regularity of social behaviour.⁶⁸ Silvia Federici and Mark Fisher concur in their bleak view of our ability to effect change within neoliberalism.

I keep coming up against the same wall.
Affliction follows me, inextricable encounter sometimes muted
I crave more. More of this silence.

*To nurture and fulfill the complexity of an immanent ability, we sometimes need to withdraw from perceivable action and discourse. Such a protective withdrawal carries a hint of heresy with it.*⁶⁹

November 13

I stand easy and outside of this world. I needed a break. Ostensibly passive, just staring at it.

Suddenly, my body starts to gently tremble as I feel a growing presence inside me. My belly abruptly filling with an idyllic picture of a sentient⁷⁰ encounter that starts to expand and expand and it fills me completely. In it, the body of one is the body of all. I am all of them (I don't know how many there are) and their material surfaces engulfed in each other, an erotic dynamic. At first, iffy, I don't recognize their human-like forms as they are intertwined without clear boundaries, so radiant from the blinding threads gracefully handled, extended from (what seems to be) one body to another. I can't see with my eyes but somehow manage to

⁶⁴ *I learned this technique while working in sound design — you can just like deep-fake words. You just take syllables and move them around and if you do it correctly, it sounds like that's how they were spoken. So between the chords and my voice being deep-faked constantly, there isn't actually literal meaning in the music. Especially in Chinese, which is a monosyllabic language. It's actually just gibberish. You cannot understand anything. With that, even when I play these songs out as gibberish, people still have visceral emotional reactions to it. That indicates to me that the music has effectively imprinted whatever moment of emotion I had when I made it.*

(bod, Get lost in bod [包家巷]'s sprawling *Music for Self-Esteem*, 2020, <https://www.thefader.com/2020/04/30/bod-nich-zhu-music-for-self-esteem-interview>)

⁶⁵ Schwenger, Peter. *Asemantic: The Art of Writing*. University of Minnesota Press, 2019

⁶⁶ Micro-resistance refers to subtle forms of resistance to authority or dominant systems, such as ignoring rules or norms, expressing dissent through tone or body language, and using irony, humour, or other forms of small subversion. While not as visible as more overt forms of resistance, it can still be effective in challenging oppressive systems.

⁶⁷ ornans meaning adorning, decorating, praising

⁶⁸ Federici, Silvia. *Caliban and the Witch: Women, the Body and Primitive Accumulation*. Autonomedia, 2004

⁶⁹ Robertson, Lisa. *A Simone Weil project: Anemones?*, 2021

⁷⁰ forms that are able to perceive and feel

navigate all my movements with intention guided from within. The threads are very comfortable, different depending on connection, but equally tight; flexible, allowing for fluid movement without causing any discomfort. I feel so clearly that, now being a part of this mass of bodies, there is nothing more holy in the present than this encounter, there is nothing more than this encounter. Now, there is no space for other reality.

Break does not mean negation, I didn't leave. I was just trying to refuse for a moment, being responsible to the present.⁷¹

*To be alive: not just the carcass
But the spark.
That is crudely put but...
If we're not supposed to dance,
Why all this music?*⁷²

The objective is not to maintain consistency, but rather to embrace the inherent contradictions within us—a sort of Nietzschean *Amor Fati*⁷³, a serenity in accepting the present circumstances as necessary. The oppressive narratives of neoliberalism and dooming critiques can numb and paralyze us, leading to feelings of disappointment and resentment. However, by transcending these limiting beliefs, we can tap into a sense of fulfilment and connection with the world around us.

I'm sitting alone in my room watching this documentary with a silly, relatable title *I'm not unhappy*. The narrator talks about their friendships.

*With them, I'm in a bubble
Warm and cozy
like the backstage of the serious life we need to have on the side
the moment I catch my breath
I don't have any anxiety left
these moments make me forget the future
held by their strength, I step back
what matters is what we're living
everything seems far away
years passing by*⁷⁴

Seems like they figured it all out. Somehow managed to transcend the neoliberal reality of all these concepts allowing us to bathe in the numbness of our condition.

Or I guess they haven't.

The scene is followed by a crude conversation about the pointless reality of studying, elusive nature of self-discovery, and the ennui induced by the oppressive forces of the Global North.

Yes, I am aware of the decline around me, but I still need to get by... I still want to be an agent in this fatalistic world, so I need to accept that this determinism imposed by capitalist devour belongs to the realm of thought and limits me. I can still revolt. The revolt is a necessary component of this dynamic. Seeing beauty as revolting.

⁷¹ (Standing apart) also means giving yourself the critical break that media cycles and narratives will not, allowing yourself to believe in another world while living in this one(...) To stand apart is to look at the world (now) from the point of view of the world as it could be (the future), with all of the hope and sorrowful contemplation that this entails.

(Odell, Jenny. *How to do nothing*. Brooklyn, NY, Melville House, 2019)

⁷² Orr, Gregory. *To Be Alive*. From *Concerning the Book That Is the Body Of the Beloved*, Copper Canyon Press, 2005

⁷³ Nietzsche, Friedrich. *The Gay Science*, Courier Corporation, 2012, (originally published in 1882)

⁷⁴ Decaster, Laïs. *I'm not unhappy*, Paris 8 Vincennes-Saint-Denis, 2018

To see things as beautiful is to make things beautiful, I guess?

But *to fall in love with the world, we must be aesthetically alive to it.*⁷⁵ Although this solution may seem straightforward and even trite, it is the most challenging to fully embrace and embody in our lives.

So please don't cancel the future, not yet

*In her private journal of January 18, 1915, in the bleakest hours of the First World War, Virginia Woolf observed that 'the future is dark, which is the best thing the future can be, I think.' As Rebecca Solnit has written, 'It's an extraordinary declaration, asserting that the unknown need not be turned into the known through false divination, or the projection of grim political or ideological narratives; it's a celebration of darkness, willing—as that "I think" indicates—to be uncertain even about its own assertion.'*⁷⁶

Convoluted path of the simple engagement

I'm walking towards you

not aimless still scared but

I have changed a bit insofar everything changes with its small disturbance

⁷⁵ The insight of James Hillman, a student of Carl Jung aids me. A glimmer of hope. There is this one interview that I kept compulsively sending to my friends two years ago while struggling with mental exhaustion, reaching the limits of my sanity. In it, he identifies the root issue plaguing contemporary (so-called) Western societies as a chronic, numbing detachment from the world and its captivating beauty. *The "cosmos" which was the world for the universe, was at the same time signifying an adornment. The cosmos was an adornment.* Hillman suggests that we can heal ourselves by reigniting our sense of aesthetics. If we approach the world with a sense of its beauty, we will want to preserve it, just as we would do with anything that captivates our hearts.

(Hillman, James. *James Hillman on Changing the Object of our Desire*. Youtube, Uploaded by TreeTV, 2015, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rFa0X06hLOU>)

⁷⁶ New Dark Age