

to include the notion of 'arriving.' The expectations that we will later 'arrive' at a certain insight, we arrive at a better place in our lives, closer to something real, an arrival at 'home.' We tend to forget that what we understand as real is and only is the present. When we feel 'unheimisch' or 'unreal,' this is the real unreal feeling of the present. ¶

¶ This image may contain: one person, arriving ¶

¶ By inserting the word 'arrive' here, I also come to think of 'superiority,' similar to the superiority of the speaker or writer claiming and deadening the continuity of the described. Columbus 'discovered' the Americas, meaning all the life that was there before Columbus arrived, was not considered meaningful or even living at all. It was no life. It only became life as he recognized it. Or so the history narrative we are accustomed to, latently (but bluntly) assumed. When one arrives, one remembers the journey, but one does not acknowledge what was there before arrival or during the journey. Whenever there is a place to arrive, the place must have – in some way or another – existed all along. Those who arrive – whether at an insight, a conclusion, at happiness, or at mature behaviour – neglect the existence of that which already there. This goes hand in hand with a certain feeling of superiority, as it is one's own arrival that's central, not the ongoing existence that one comes to recognize. The efforts of the journey get the most attention. The common, inspirational motto 'It's all about the journey' forgets that the person journeying demands an awaiting point of departure and arrival, unless one would state, 'all is journey.' When we think about progress, similar feelings of superiority come into play. Often, when someone poses, like Anna Tsing, that it might be possible and at least interesting to try and imagine a world without progress, this has historically been countered with a positivist belief in science. Especially medical science sounds very convincing. It's a doctor's duty to improve and possibly prolong (and thus progress?) life. ¶

¶ I have experienced a short lifetime in a wheelchair. On a cold day in March, I woke up, then ten years old, and my hip was hurting so much that I couldn't walk. Before that, I did sports everyday. Since that morning, I could only move in a wheelchair or walk short spans using crutches. I'm grateful that this sudden injury slowly disappeared after two years. Doctors used prednisone medications on me, the physical therapist tried different exercises, and my parents were wealthy enough to rent a better wheelchair than the free chair you are given by Thuiszorg. ¶ All of these factors helped me get better. But I was only helped to get through this. Why did I not learn to live with this injury? Even signs of progress, such as managing the wheelchair better, were seen as a sign of decline at the same time, as it meant I was getting better at something which was not considered 'good' or healthy. Living in a world made to be unsuitable for wheelchair users or other non-conformative bodies, I'm utterly happy that the pain in my hip went away. The point is, I have lived two years in my life in which I was getting through a situation. I was living through life, while not actually living life, living with. Is this why I remember nearly nothing of that time? Because I arrived at the other side – being able to walk again, lucky and 'healthy' – and upon my arrival I could forget that all worlds and all sides that are always already out there, even if you are not experiencing and enduring them. ¶

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¶ Being With Instead of Getting Through ¶

¶ In retrospect, this way of living may have mirrored they way I was living life before landing in a wheelchair. As a child, I was rather unhappy. I listened to Marilyn Manson to express this unhappiness, not to fuel it. I dressed in black and painted my room black, I collected fake skulls and bracelets with studs to feel surrounded. People wanted to make me feel better, but they especially told me that I would feel better. It would get better, I was told, because I would grow older and find my way. People trusted I would find my way maybe especially because I was a white kid from a reasonable wealthy and educated family. All would be fine as the society I grew up in, had space for people like me (white, wealthy, educated). I am fine. But maybe it would have been good if someone told me I was already fine. Not to build my self-confidence (though no harm in that), but to acknowledge the world as a continuous place, instead of believing that one will 'arrive' in the world. We cannot arrive in the world, as worlds are constantly arriving. We need continuous ¶ language ¶. There is no platform waiting for you to get on board, there is no 'way of being' or mode awaiting your growth. ¶

¶ What can we give to a future that is not awaiting our arrival? The ¶ needs a language that does not identify the future as a separate era. It needs a language in which the deadening force of words – tense – is countered with presence, continuous life. We need a language that is not old, nor presents itself too enthusiastically as 'new,' thus becoming commercial-like, claiming and promising 'newness' in order to legitimize its existence. What does language need? It needs faith. It needs speakers (and listeners) who believe in its performativity, who recognize the effects of language, understanding that the expression (of an event, an experience) actually changes the event, the experience. It needs speakers who believe in plurality and constant noticing. This way, the performativity of words will not create a chain of sameness and definitions will not stall life into comprehensible situations that can be compared and strategically used for progress. ¶

¶ I listen to "Low Lights" nearly every day, when running in the same park and making the same laps. I only run when I feel healthy, but when I don't run, I don't feel healthy. That too is a lapse. The running is by no means making me healthy. There isn't one assignable cause for how I feel. When I run, it is not like I'm trying to get through. It is the actual running, the moving, that excites me. I pass people whom I have passed for years and I always see new people. Some may see me. I don't hate the hill halfway through my 6K run, I'm with the hill, not getting over it or through it. My heart beat rises and I hear the singer's worship, her expression of love and thereby the existence of love. I suddenly realize that, of course, talking to or about or with God is a way to eternalize the conversation. A feminist queer language may well be that: God-language. A God-language without the need for one grand Lord listening and speaking, but an eternal effort from all, allowing everything to be alive – amorphous and recognized. ¶

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1. ¶ West, K. 2016. Low Lights. The Life of Pablo. ¶

2. ¶ My expectation that her worship was meant for another human, might not only say something about my secular upbringing but may also reveal that I'm listening with white ears – taking in consideration that my white, secular Dutch background probably limits my ¶ interpretation ¶ of Kanye West's music. ¶

3. ¶ I'm here using 'Him' to refer to God, as the singer does. Let's acknowledge that some also refer to god as She ('I met god, she's black') or without using gender binary terms. Islamic scholar Amina Wadud refers to Allah as 'Trans.' I am also speaking about heterosexual love here, because "Low Light" refers to girl-boy love. This fits well with my argument, as my initial hesitation with the text – finding it overly romantic – certainly has to do with encountering a surplus of straight love in songs, movies, commercials. As I state in footnote 1, I might be ignoring specifics about black love by considering this girl-boy love 'straight.' Scholars like Saidiya Hartman and Alexis Pauline Gumbs would argue that 'black' and 'queer' are interchangeable, as black people are never gender conformative in a world ruled by white norms. ¶

4. ¶ Think about the way the Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte defended the racist figure Black Pete ('Zwarte Piet'). He stated: "Black Pete is Black, the word itself says it, nothing I can change about that," pretending the nature of the figure itself creates the description 'Black Pete,' while not acknowledging that naming something 'black' makes it black, while reproducing the possibility of using 'black' as a description and pretending it is a description only. ¶

5. ¶ Tsing, Anna Lowenhaupt. The mushroom at the end of the world: on the possibility of life in capitalist ruins. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2015. ¶

6. ¶ A home care organization in the Netherlands. ¶

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¶ In the contribution TENSE, Simon(e) van Saarloos expresses their desire to promote continuous language, notably by avoiding description. ¶

¶ In my interpretation, I affect users' reading experience by implementing disruptive elements called 'meta' descriptions into the text. ¶

¶ The term 'meta' defines metadata about an HTML document and usually remains invisible to the reader(s). Meta description any content to find a hierarns are commonly used to specify character sets such as page description, keywords, or the author(s) of the document, which allochy and an organization within a Web page. By making them visible to the reader, I wish to exacerbate van Saarloos' statement: "What is described can sometimes even be more easily celebrated and embraced, because it appears dead" ¶

¶ Martin Foucaut ¶