Black Metal, Ecology and Contemporary Nihilism
Contents

Introduction

Chapter 1 - Melanchology and The Blackening of the Green: Black Metal and its Relationship to Ecology

1. What is Melanchology?
2. Black Metal and the Toxic Landscape - The Realists Prophecy
3. Melancholia Forever

Chapter 2 – The Black Nihilist

1. Neo-Nietzschean politics in Black Metal and the Creative Force of Nihilism
2. The (active) Black Nihilist

Chapter 3 - Contemporary nihilism, are Doomer's the New Harbingers of Black Bile?

1. Doomers

Chapter 4 - Death: Political vs Non-human

1. The Horror of Science and Our Immanent Death

Chapter 5 - Annihilation, Chaos Magick (as the Contemporary Emancipatory Mysticism) and Eroticizing Nature: George Bataille and Black Metal

6. Conclusion

Bibliography

After Pandora – Chapter 1
Introduction

A feeling of pensive sadness - typically without a cause - eats away, slowly and silently, the enduring spirit of man. No human is exempt. This affliction can sink its teeth into any learned soul, it could strike at any time.

I refer here to the phenomena of melancholia but specifically a theory of melancholy (aka, melancholy) as discussed by Scott Wilson in *Melancholy, Black Metal theory and Ecology*. Published in 2014, this book is a compilation of texts that discuss the use of a melancholy ideology and aesthetics, combined with ecological concerns and implications, within the black metal musical genre.

Black Metal and its insights into an alternate, and somewhat doomed, outlook on ecology and human existence will provide the starting point to this essay. This text, being written by a somewhat nihilistic, culturally privileged, queer Doomer fe/male, will undergo a slime morphology.

The term *nihilist* is appropriated in this text and building upon Niezsche’s definition, I propose a new character called the *black nihilist*. Expanding on Niezsche’s notion of the active nihilist, the black nihilist is one who does not succumb to the nothingness that follows once all meaning and value is destroyed. She actively destroys in order to make way for something new and lay down her own beliefs, therefore overcoming the condition of nihilism but retaining the belief that nothingness is core to our reality and future.

This essay attempts to conjure the image of the black nihilist. To draw her limbs and features, her ethos and transformative potential by using the conceptual references in this essay. She is a recurring figure within my paintings and the central character to a series of drawings and comics I am producing. The first Chapter of my comic *After Pandora*, is included at the end of this essay and explores the ideas described in this essay such as the blackening of the green, dystopian worlds and chaos magick.

The black nihilists will to destroy in order to create her own reality, shares an active positivity similar to what Wilson describes as ‘the blackening of the green’. Within the black metal genre, the future is a melancholic landscape once green but now blackened indefinitely and the wills and hopes of man have turned to meaningless shadow in the wake of ecological catastrophe and despair. The *black nihilist, the blackening of the green* and *Doomers* are terms I will discuss further in Chapters 1-3.

The philosophy that defines the black nihilist comes from black metal theory and the relationship black metal artists have with the concept of death, both in human and non-human terms.

In chapter 4 I will discuss the political use of death by black metal artists and the concept of death within black metal philosophy.

Death and annihilation is a commonly recurring theme within Black Metal music and within the mind of the black nihilist. Black metal has an antithetical view towards Christianity (its marriage to Satanism and Satanic aesthetics) and as such was born out of this anthesis. Similarly, the black nihilist who destroys and disbelieves in all meaning and value, must first comprehend meaning and value in order to de-territorialise it. Negative cannot be born without a positive. It is fitting therefore, that the black nihilist/black metal lover should have a dark savior to illuminate the connection between annihilation and eroticism. One who can marry the erotics of nature with the eroticism of death. It is in chapter---- I will discuss the work of Georges Bataille and the connections between his writings on annihilation and the philosophy of black metal.

This text is a reflection in relation to the authors master exhibition. The master exhibition is related to a narrative that runs through my writing, drawings, comics, sculpture and paintings. This narra-
tive discusses modes of transcendence through a practice of self-annihilation and spiritual practice. Terms and ideas which will be discussed in this text are partially relating to the work within the master exhibition, but directly relating to my overall artistic practice.
Chapter 1. Melanchology and The Blackening of the Green: Black Metal and its Relationship to Ecology

1. What is Melanchology?

“a place empty of life / Only dead trees …’ (Mayhem, ‘Funeral Fog’, 1992)

Melancholy is quite simply a conjoining of the concepts ‘black’ and ‘ecology’. But what is black?
In this text, black refers to the sorrow ridden, death screams of Black Metal. A musical genre born out of heavy metal bands such as Black Sabbath, Bathory and Venom, among others; later invoking a predominantly Scandinavian second generation of black metal artists such as Mayhem, Burzum, Darkthrone, etc. The lyrics of black metal describe a world where humans are starved of nature. The world has become blackened, vegetation (if any) is grown dead and rotten and a new blackened world heterogenous to the green one we inhabit today, is the new ecology. I am aware of the risk with aligning myself to black metal, the problematic connotation it inhabits. However, I am throughout this essay willing to take this risk for its historical connection to a music scene and an ecological approach.

My interest in this essay is less a discussion of the socio-political implications of black metal with regards to right wing politics and its ideology and aesthetics. Instead, my interests lie in the deeper philosophical implications of the genre’s anti-anthropological ethos. The eco-political ideology of the musical genre and the melancholic mourning of environmental concerns has an urgent relevance to our contemporary time, compelling me to investigate further. Perhaps black metal is a negative form of environmental writing which takes a ‘Satanic blackening of ecology that transforms the very notion of ecology and the terrain of immanence that it takes’.¹

But of course, a ‘Satanic’ blackening would not be so useful to us in our new (dark) ecological perspective because Satan vs. God is one of the great dualisms of our time, and the most tedious one could argue. The hierarchal human model of existence as proposed by Kant, places humans, animals, plants and amoebae within a hierarchy of categories (of existence and therefore value), all residing (and subservient?) under the divine being aka God. It is this genealogy of philosophical thinking that many new materialists, speculative realists and ecologists argue to be detrimental to progressive environmentalism and ecological philosophy as it undermines the importance of objects (e.g. icebergs) and organisms (e.g. bees) that are absolutely necessary to the survival of humans and nature as we know it.

A non-anthropological and anti-anthropomorphic philosophical and political position is taken up by Deep ecologists. Such thinkers strive for a self-realization of metaphysical holism and a deep connectedness with nature. The ontological divide between the human and non-human worlds, does not exist. We must cultivate our communion with the biotic community and live contentedly within the interrelatedness and one-ness with the biosphere. This would require an adaptation of consciousness where our ethics are nature-centered, as exemplified by, for example, permaculturists.²

A deep ecological perspective can also be seen within the music of black metal, however it is undoubtedly an ecology within an all-encompassing darkness some might argue to be apocalyptic, whereas others might say realistic. Exploring a blackened ecology manifests within my artistic practice in various ways. In the black, barbed foliage in my paintings. Or the hunched, withered figure appearing but also hidden like a glitched manifestation or a man made of broken mirrors in my painting The Overseer. A blackened, dystopian world where humanity negotiates the end of nature, serves as the foundation and landscape for my drawings and comics.

² Permaculturists practice permaculture techniques within agricultural ecosystems which are designed to be self-sufficient and sustainable.
2. Black Metal and the Toxic Landscape - The Realists Prophecy

One theme resounding within the black metal genre is toxicity. The world which black metal artists conjure up is a decayed, toxic landscape, perhaps befallen by some catastrophic, manmade event. A radioactive explosion perhaps?

My favorite science fiction novels and comics are always the ones that foreshadow or recall some catastrophe that is based on a real life event occurring somewhere within our past. The scenes of a decimated future Tokyo in Katsuhiro Otomo's 'Akira' recalls the disastrous effects of the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945. Likewise, Dmitry Glukhovsky's 'Metro 2033' is a post-apocalyptic science fiction novel where humans hide within the tunnels of Moscow's metro system after a global nuclear holocaust. Science fiction and black metal share a resounding concern for imminent ecological devastation. However, the toxicity residing within ecological lifeforms today, is not science fiction at all.

After the explosion of the Chernobyl nuclear facility in 1986, ecological life was decimated due to radioactive poisoning. The spread of radioactive isotopes within water bodies, such as rain and streams, air and soil, was widespread. Caesium-137 remains to this day as one of the most responsible chemicals for radiation exposure received by the general population. Further research into Caesium brought me to a strange looking mushroom, seemingly bursting with pustules of blood, called Hydnellum peckii aka the devil tooth mushroom. From nuclear mushroom clouds to mutating fungus, this little Ectomycorrhizal mushroom bio-accumulates radioactive particles and heavy metals such as Caesium-137. It absorbs the toxic chemical and continues to grow because of its adaptable cellular structure. Unfortunately, this adaptability is not common to the vast majority of life forms on earth and a similar absorption of these metals within a human would lead to death. Heavy metals, radioactive isotopes, micro-plastics, you name it, has been intoxicating our soil and seabeds for years, and it was not God that made it so, it was humans. Our overproduction and destructive processes have intoxicated our own bodies. We will absorb, retain and then die. This is not a black metal, sci-fi prophecy. This is happening now, and it is inevitable.

3. Melancholia Forever

Earlier within Chapter 1, I discussed the inadequacy of the term ‘Satanic blackening’, which I’m sure would damn me in the eyes of any black metalhead. Satanism to many, is an integral part of black metal and its anarchist philosophy. However, because it is reactionary to an already existing (Christian) oppressive structure, it is confined within a tired dualism that does not produce a new emancipated perspective on ecology, or philosophy. So, perhaps we should consider melancholy to be a melancholic blackening of ecology with a non-hierarchal (and dare I say anti-anthropocentric?) philosophical foundation. Personally, I love melancholia because she has been my constant companion for so many years. The true intensity of sadness can be delightfully pure because it is TRUE. Black metal is undoubtedly melancholic because it is the sound of an irrefutable truth; an intoxicating misery or mourning, for a world that is dying all around us.

The ancient Greek medical philosophy of Humorism (aka Humoralism) defined the human personality as embodying one of the four temperaments: Sanguine, Choleric, Phlegmatic, Melancholic. A melancholic personality was said to be analytical, deep thinking with tidy detailed-oriented behaviour. Not so bad right? Sadly, today that is not the perception of a melancholic, whom might be described as a person that suffers from acute misery, depressive thoughts or nihilistic feelings towards the future, the past, and the sorrowful present. After the 15th century the term ‘melancholic’ evolved, transforming into ‘Splenetic’ in the 18th century. ‘Neurotic’ in the 19th century. ‘Depressive’ within the 20th and 21st century.
However, melancholia differs from depression in that some may argue that depression which is not caused within the brain by dysfunctional cell activity and the depravity of dopamine, is socially induced. Whereas Melancholia historically was believed to be a severe illness caused by the accumulation of black bile within individuals. Today we see that black bile does not exist (at least a black bile caused by melancholia personality, or depressive thoughts) and melancholia is not a psychological illness. Rather melancholia, as Kant alluded to in his final days before death, is a un-
definable affliction and a conduit for misery or depressive thoughts. Melancholy is perhaps a sorrow not internal, but external. Not depressive but realistic. Perhaps melancholy is the echo sound of a cosmic cry, of darkness that becomes blackness, the ‘universe itself…the dark realm of a literally authentic melancholy, that is, sorrow humorially proper to black earth’. In my art works I attempt to translate the melancholic elements evident in the sound of Black metal music, gothic architecture, renaissance art and horror poetry. This translation can manifest as the dark, mechanical glow of an airbrush painting or the specter of a figure hiding in a world of illusion.

Chapter 2. The Black Nihilist

1. Neo-Nietzschean Politics in Black Metal and the Creative Force of Nihilism

When discussing Nietzsche’s work, one cannot not think of morality and the loss of it as we delve further into nihilism. In discussing morality and nothingness, George Bataille writes:

‘Morality (is) transcendent insofar as it appeals to the good of a being constructed on the nothingness of our own existence (humanity as sacred, the gods or God, the State). If it turned out to be possible, a morality of the summit would demand the opposite situation—that I laugh at nothingness. But without doing it in the name of a superiority. I let myself be killed for my country; I move toward the summit but don't attain it: I serve the good of my country, which is the beyond of my nothingness.’

The ‘nothingness’ Bataille describes as the ‘limit of an individual existence. Beyond its defined limits in time and in space—this existence or being no longer exists, no longer is.’ Pure imminence and transcendence can be achieved by moving beyond our existence, into nothingness. ‘When an object appears in the beyond of nothingness…the object transcends us.’ From a black metal perspective this could be interpreted as a positive. Through using death as our vehicle, we go beyond our experience. Our bodies appear in this nothingness and transcend our existence.

Contrastingly, Bataille appears more positive in his reading of Nietzsche’s morality as he alludes to the idea of the existence of nothingness as a metaphysical (non) value that non the less gives man some moral goal for transcendence (a being in nothingness). Whereas Nietzsche, in works such as ‘Will to power’, suggests that the loss of metaphysical values (the belief in God) and all human ideas (the belief in transcendence, existence, morality, etc) gives rise to the idea that all human ideas are valueless and in vain because they have no meaning within the metaphysical nothingness that is our existence. But what is nothingness? Karen Barad argues that finite particles decay, but they are ultimately born out of the void. They transform, die and return to the void from which all things are made and so the nothingness that surrounds us is “flush with virtuality”. She argues that matter itself is caught up in nothingness and the void itself is “not nothing but a desiring orientation toward being/becoming...where an event is not one and dying and living inseparable (though not the same). From the perspective of quantum physics, it would seem nothingness is beyond our understanding, but it is not true negation, absolute emptiness, but filled with the non-being of matter.

6 Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing et al. *Quantum physics and inseparability*, excerpt from: *Arts of living on a damaged planet, Ghosts and Monsters of the Anthropocene*, University of Minnesota, 2017, p112
It is the allusions to nothingness, ‘the void’, the death of all things, that black metal embodies as well as some selected parts of Nietzsche’s philosophy. If all is in vain, then anything is permitted. A depressive freedom. De-territorializing sonic sound mingles with re-territorializing (spoken word) ideology. There is consistency and contradiction. Some black metal artists vocalize the Neo-Nietzschean politics of rank and hierarchy - that they are forms of slave morality we can free ourselves from with the embracing of nihilism.

However, it could be argued that for all the terror and madness and melancholy black metal re-verbs within its ambient wails, it is not truly nihilist, as he judges the world as it should be as not existing, and cannot exist, therefore nothing he thinks, or does, or feels has meaning. Whereas black metal reflects (negative) feeling. If it reflected nothingness (for nothingness has true meaning) then there would surely be no sound and the music would not exist?

2. The (active) Black Nihilist

Considering this I see a creative force behind nihilism. That there is an acceptance of immanent death and nothingness, in humans and in ecology, but there is also a sound resonating after. Perhaps we should not succumb to the nothingness and to the destruction of all value and meaning. The active nihilist destroys meaning in order to create the new. Nietzsche characterized this nihilism as a quality of strength for the destruction of old oppressive structures makes way for new forms to be born, therefore defeating the complacency symptomatic of a passive nihilism. The black nihilist is an active nihilist - the central character to the comic After Pandora who perceives the world from this perspective. Her conception of time, space, reality and identity is depicted in my drawings and paintings. Her character acts as a performative conduit of the black nihilist ethos.
Chapter 3: Contemporary Nihilism: Are Doomers the New Harbingers of Black Bile?

1. Doomer’s

As long as there is culture, one can be sure there will be cultural stereotypes. Some stereotypes, such as a black metalhead, can be easily identified by their gothic attire, long hair or corpse painted face. The Doomer, on the other hand, is their opposite in that he is almost invisible to us. His physical presence is shy rather than notable or commanding. He dresses in generic casual clothing, preferably black and grey with no brand tags. Doomers are considered the archetype of nihilist thinkers within the millennial generation. They believe that the destruction of the human civilisation and extinction of life on earth will come from predominantly man-made causes as well as climate change. Over population, pollution and ecological destruction will ensue and all problems are inevitably irreparable. No doubt, the Doomer mentality is one of the most pessimistic in our time, but also the most symptomatic of environmental and economic failure.

Doomer’s embody nihilism and despair, as noted in their passivity towards most ideas and activities and producing few ‘meaningful objects’⁷. From this I can assume that a Doomer ecology embody an (in)active nihilism (a Doomer is concerned with climate change but sees no meaning in fighting climate change because the destruction it will cause is inevitable) as opposed to the active black nihilist, with her dark visions of a blackened earth/ecology. A ‘Black Doomer’ might have more exciting effects upon her surroundings. For she is a melancholic, active nihilist, eco erotic terrorist queer feminist, not unlike the protagonist Rachel in Justine Franks Sweet Sweat.

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⁷ meaningful objects—any idea, action, thing or thought that is give value.
Chapter 4: Death: Political vs Non-human

1. The Horror of Science and Our Immanent Death

Never have mass extinctions occurred in such great severity and in number, than in the past 3000 years. It is safe to conclude that the extinction of say, large mammals such as mammoths or multiple species of elephant, were undoubtedly caused by human action. Many species have been obliterated by the myth of progress human civilizations have aspired to achieve for centuries. However, our own death may well be averted. Research into the cell regenerative functions within the Turritopsis dohrnii aka immortal jellyfish, has already begun. Japanese scientists hope to synthesize the creature’s phoenix like cellular rebirth cycle and apply it to human DNA so we too can self-regenerate. Anti-immortality and exploring death as a personal freedom was a concept I explored in the work Death Bong. A jesmonite sculpture resembling a Medusa-like head and functioning as a bong containing a mixture of homemade cyanide and sunflower poison. This work attempts to draw a connection between two emancipatory acts – death and recreational drug use. What materialized was a contradictory sculpture - both intriguing and grotesque.

Death bong also combines dark humor with the notion (or temptation) to suicide, an act used as a political gesture within the black mental community, against the societal co-opting of human bodies. We must actively search for our death so to transcend, and black metal could be said to be the mourning cry of a death that can never truly be thought. The death of a life without being. Instead of the extinction of all human life, one can extinguish their own life.

The sum of all you ever knew equals zero.

You are not dead, you never existed.

You are not dead, you never existed ... You are not dead, you never existed’

(Mayhem, ‘Chimera’, 2004)

The act of suicide, in the case of Mayhem and the death of their lead singer ‘Dead’, one could interpret as a symbolic gesture against the biopolitical sovereignty over our lives. The occupation of life reduces us to faceless corpses and so ‘Dead’s’ commitment to death is perhaps an attempt to reclaim his great freedom. In black metal, as well as in baroque depictions and stories of Christian Martyrs, there is a poetic sensibility towards death in the name of love, religion, or self-annihilation. In the work Tears of Eros, I paint a woman hidden within the gloomy surrounding foliage. Her eye has been torn out of her socket and her black blood mingles within the stems and leaves of the funeral flowers engulfing her. Here the violent act is subtle, almost unnoticeable. The seductive tone/contrast, pinks and greys, act as a metaphor for the seductive act of violence and death, and the romanticism that surrounds it.

Black metal is the cry of a slave who is condemned to abysmal guilt for she has been forced to internalize God and retain some idea of God’s transcendence so that we may still conceive (and sustain) the environment by treating it as an end, rather than a means. However, the slave is not

8 "extinction is the non-being of life that is not death" - Eugene Thacker, In the Dust of this Planet. John Hunt Publishing, 2011, p123.
reconciled as her very DNA has become valuable property. As Eugene Thacker elucidates in his book *The Global Genome*:

“Biological molecules can be encoded into strips of data in a computer file (in the case of genomics); digital computer files can be exchanged for biological molecules (in the case of DNA synthesis); biological molecules can be rendered as intellectual property (in the case of gene patents); and intellectual property can be transformed over time into genetic medicines tested in human clinical trials.”

When our DNA (biological) is appropriated it is then archived (made technological) and becomes intellectual property. A value object. The biological and political implications of genomic archives could well be severe, but it also denies us our freedom of total death. If we die but our DNA exists outside of (Batailles notion of) nothingness, are we robbed of our successful death? Is transcendence still achievable? Using a black metal perspective, I would argue no, and so the decimation of sovereignty- the dissolution of God, the State, the Anthropocene etc. is paramount. In my comic *After Pandora*, this dissolution has occurred and the black nihilist protagonist explores an Earth with no God or modern societal structure. With the end of nature and no organizing structure to govern her life, time becomes endless and indiscernible to her.

*Chapter 5 - Annihilation, Chaos Magick (as the Contemporary Emancipatory Mysticism) and Eroticizing Nature: George Bataille and Black Metal.*

If Nihilism is bound to a dualistic context, the black nihilist that I define through my practice looks more towards an eco-centric Gnosticism. The rejection of Christianity and the pursuit of the immanent truth as separate from God, is a Gnostic belief shared also by mystics and Chaotes (also known as Chaos magicians). Chaos magic however, does not involve the art of illusion for entertainment, but rather, is a spiritual practice that uses elements of Gnosticism, Mysticism, Buddhism, Shamanism, and others, to create a system aimed at enlightening the practitioner to the power of Kia (the formless energy that enables all things into existence). By enabling Chaos into the life of the practitioner and implementing contradiction into every action, the Chaote will become master of her human emotions, her will to power is indomitable. The Chaote becomes everything and nothing.

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To achieve transcendence via Chaos practice, the black nihilist is to dissolve her concepts of presence. If man is to be the face drawn in the sand, eventually wiped away by the ocean tides\textsuperscript{10}, then the blackened earth becomes the dissolved idea of real ecology as it is consistently, constantly “there”. The belief in constant presence, that nature would always be there for us to enslave, colonize and harvest, was an Anthropocentric delusion that most be annihilated.

6. Conclusion

Perhaps there is no conclusion to this essay but in its ending emerges some strategies or metaphorical “tools” that we can use to help navigate our mind and bodies through the present and into the future blackened forest. The first tool is the ring that defends authenticity and materiality in its actual, physical sense. We can reclaim our body in a physical sense by rejecting the immortality project and anti-aging technologies and accepting the (in)constant presence of the self.\textsuperscript{11} Our presence is fleeting, not permanent.

Another way in which we reclaim the body, is through the annihilation of repressive structures as identified in the works of Georges Bataille. By eroticizing our bodies, we free the self from oppressive, repressive structures (political, societal, religious, etc). Similarly, the annihilation of the self, which is obtained through this eroticizing, allows authenticity to present itself to us in the wake of our ego-death.

In defense of materiality, the black nihilist that I make use of through my practice implements her eco-gnosticism whereby she is coexisting and accepting the strangeness of her surroundings instead of subjugating her surroundings, as those have done before her. If we treat the environment as an end, rather than a means and reject the Kantian hierarchical categorizing of objects (human and non-human) would it be possible to slow the process of nature’s extinction? Would this signal the return of the repressed?\textsuperscript{12}

The Chaotes magickal ring binds the black nihilist to our physical plane of existence and guides her to attain the authentic death.\textsuperscript{13} Transhumanist dreams, body augmentation and anti-aging techniques are aspired solutions to the problem of death and its permanency, the reality of which these solutions are closely within our reach as technology continues to progress. As discussed earlier, Nietzsche’s notion of the emancipating, transcendence of spirit can be achieved by ones chosen death, and the death of oneself completely.\textsuperscript{14} Similarly, the negative stigma surrounding suicide is removed, as she accepts the political freedom of death, and it is her choice when and how she achieves death. She realizes the death of nature, and seeks not to resurrect or save ecology, but to understand it as it is now through healing and sustainability. The black nihilist resists all simulations of authenticity and aims to discover the trueness of all matter.\textsuperscript{15}

The second tool is the dagger of reclamation, used to sow and harvest the roots of this new blackened world. It is the symbol of penance and redemption. The penitent girl takes hyper responsibility for every thought and action she might have. She is aware of the ecological effects of starting her car and contributing to CO2 emissions within the Earth’s atmosphere or the abusive industries that thrive when she eats a beef sandwich. Only through her dismissal of global ignorance can she help make amends for her actions that contribute toward the damnation of ecology. How can the

\textsuperscript{10} A reworded quote from - Michel Foucault, \textit{The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences}, Vintage; Reissue edition, 1994
\textsuperscript{11} Many Chaos practitioners have a magic (purified and endowed with phenomenological and spiritual power) ring which is used to centre and focus the practitioner’s power and also bind his spirit to our physical plane existence, but in this case it is a metaphorical symbol.
\textsuperscript{12} In this sense, nature is the body (physically) repressed by the many layers of carbon created by human industry and accumulating on the Earth’s crust in the late 18\textsuperscript{th} century. Binding humans to geology.
\textsuperscript{13} Magic is spelt by Chaotes with a K – ‘Magick’
\textsuperscript{14} A complete death meaning no DNA storing
\textsuperscript{15} Matter includes the physical and non-physical. From this perspective, experiences and feelings are objects and therefore matter, because they have actual effects and consequences. (see Object oriented philosophy and the work of Graham Harmon).
black nihilist redeem herself? Permaculturists around the world are realizing re-wilding projects aimed at reclaiming the deforested areas (such as moorland). Practices implemented by ecologists such Starhawk, combine sustainable growth, coexistence between plant species and pagan spirituality in order to create harmonious and permanent ecosystems. Similarly, collectives such as Chaos Magick Space, based in Nottingham, UK – combines artistic collaborative practice with Chaos magick spirituality and ecology. Producing workshops that connect environmentalism with public communities and encouraging deeper insights into the interconnectedness between art, ecology and spiritual practice.

Obtaining the symbolic tools, the dagger of reclamation and the ring of authenticity and materiality is used to implement the Black Nihilists new will to power. The will to contradiction.

Gnostic practice within the Chaos Magick tradition uses contradiction as a method of breaking free of all earthly habits and desires. For example, if the Chaote is hungry, she should resolve not to eat and when she is not hungry, then she should eat. 16 This contradictory method should then be applied to all actions and emotions so that instinctual thoughts become muddled and confused. She has learned how to discard her habits and wield her emotions and actions at will. She can harness their full power because she continually opposes and re-opposes herself, until all meaning in things dissipates. Suddenly, where all meaning had disappeared before her, the world becomes an empty space imbued with new meaning. A new blackened Earth.

Her power lies in her will to contradiction. If this strategy causes meaning to collapse on itself, could we finally break free of our logical dualism, and dualism itself? After all, this essay is not about saving our world and ourselves, but equipping the Chaote, the black nihilist, with the eyes to see the authentic deadened ecology and to co-exist together with the non-human.

Bibliography


Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing et al. *Quantum physics and inseparability*, excerpt from: *Arts of living on a damaged planet, Ghosts and Monsters of the Anthroposcene*, University of Minnesota, 2017

The next pages of this text contain chapter one of *After Pandora.*
It is a comic set in a future where what has been described in this essay has occurred and become reality. It follows a Black Nihilist and her journey to embodying Chaos and discovering the unreality of the blackened Earth.
Then.

Only shadows.
Then the shapes became plants, made of poison and rotten earth.
And humans started to fade into the soil because they had poisoned Nature. So she poisoned them in return.
And from her tears fell black water which the humans drank because the rivers were toxic. Her tears turned to bile in their stomachs.
The bile is sadness in the blood.
They went insane, longing for the world they had lost.
Master says this process of cleansing was thus named—
The Blackening of the Green.
The blackening of the green - commonly referred to as the blackening - is a timeless process. Not a poisoning, but a degrowth within Nature.