FACULDADE DE CIÊNCIAS SOCIAIS E HUMANAS
UNIVERSIDADE NOVA DE LISBOA

VOICE AND PRESENCE

Eduardo José Barros de Abrantes Silva

Tese de Doutoramento em Filosofia

Agosto 2015

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Declaro que esta Dissertação é o resultado da minha investigação pessoal e independente. O seu conteúdo é original e todas as fontes consultadas estão devidamente mencionadas no texto, nas notas e na bibliografia.

O candidato,

Eduardo José Barros de Abrantes Silva

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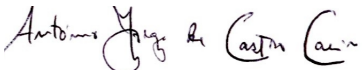

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VOZ E PRESENÇA / VOICE AND PRESENCE

Eduardo Abrantes

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: fenomenologia, voz, som, presença, pesquisa artística

KEYWORDS: phenomenology, voice, sound, presence, embodiment, artistic research

De que forma pode a voz ser considerada enquanto tema de investigação filosófica? Utilizando principalmente aproximações fenomenológicas, esta tese é uma tentativa de mapear uma constelação transdisciplinar de pontos-chave temáticos, onde a voz surge como uma manifestação expressa de presença e de processos vitais.
Simultaneamente situada, corpórea e transgressora no contexto da noção de território acústico, a ambiguidade da voz e o seu potencial enquanto fenómeno, conceito e ressonância tangível de subjetividade, são explorados através do recurso a análise de fontes pertencentes à Filosofia Antiga, aos Estudos Sonoros, à Ciência Acústica, à Fenomenologia e à Pesquisa Artística.

How can voice be understood as a theme for philosophical inquiry? Using mostly phenomenological strategies and approximations, this thesis attempts to map a transdisciplinary constellation of nexus points, where voice emerges as an expressive manifestation of presence and living processes.
Simultaneously situated, bodily and transgressive in the context of the notion of acoustic territories, the ambiguity of the voice and its potential as a both phenomenon, concept and tangible resonance of subjectivity, are explored via an inquiry informed by Ancient Philosophy, Sound Studies, Acoustics, Phenomenology and Artistic Research.

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AN INTRODUCTION IN SEVERAL STEPS

This research project on the theme of the voice began as a philosophical challenge, from me to myself. In line with a lifelong fascination with the human voice in its many configurations and the dizzying breadth of possibilities of its practice and experience, I decided to pursue the possibility of a philosophical questioning of the nature, meaning and relevance of vocal phenomena.

It has been accepted from the start that this would be an exceedingly ambitious undertaking. Instead of ignoring this or trying too hard to limit the scope of the research to a certain author or a certain school of thought, I choose instead to accept the unavoidably flawed and partial nature of such labour, and to work at it with what I strive to be some kind of intellectual and existential honesty. By this I mean that I started out by looking upon my own experience as a vocal being, fully engaged in all sorts of complex bonds with other vocal beings, and reached for a set of authors, and their respective conceptual questioning and engagement with sonorous and vocal phenomena, as guides to my mapping out of the philosophical possibility of engaging with the human voice.

More concretely, by existential honesty I mean that I tried as hard as I could to deal with the issue of the voice in a way that was meaningful to me and that reflected my own experience of it – in other words, to avoid producing a work of the philosophical genre in literary terms, that I would be, however, in a cool, distant and dispassionate relationship towards. By intellectual honesty I mean that I have tried not to prioritize being convincing over being committed; not to attempt to crush the criticism of a curious and willing reader, by using an arsenal of quotations and author authority as filler, intimidation or smoke screen to conceal my own bafflement or struggle with the notions at hand; not to put credibility above truth; and to keep my own arrogance in check by being respectful and acceptant towards my own ignorance and immaturity – both inevitable and welcome, I would argue, in the context of an early career PhD research.

So I posed the questions that I was to labour under: what is there to be said or thought about the voice that could be philosophically meaningful? And where would that take us? Then I started collecting what others have thought and written about the voice, and I started planning the strategies that would allow me to cross and connect this borrowed knowledge from the depths of the immense philosophical tradition, to my own most pressing, intimate and urgent manifestations of wonder in the presence of the expressive voice.

It was clear from the start that trans and interdisciplinary interference and inspiration would be a strong beacon in this work. To question the voice philosophically one has also to question sound, and to question sound one has to question awareness and consciousness, and to question consciousness one has to question the notion of presence and the situation we all find each other in as human beings: that of being in a world that we are essentially and mysteriously engaged with. The hierarchy and the way to organize these implications has longed remained unsolved and unclear. This thesis is a preparatory effort to pursue the mapping and structuring of a possible framework to pose these very questions.

Two first-hand experiences stand out in my memory when I recall the many that have since taken place in these last few years of thesis research.

The first took place back in Lisbon, in the Fall of 2007, and it played a major role in the very decision of which thesis theme to pursue in my, at the time, upcoming PhD project application. It happened in a very familiar place, close to where I grew up, even if it did not really happen *in* a place but *through* a number of places. It took place on a bus ride.

In a late afternoon I boarded a bus route in a familiar location, only to be struck by the strangely quiet and tense atmosphere inside. After validating my ticket, I walked to the middle of the bus and while leaning on the window noticed there was an unnatural silence inside, although it was actually quite packed with people moving about in the city at the time of day one usually returns home from work.

A few minutes afterwards, while travelling between stops, I noticed a low moaning sound coming from somewhere in the back of the bus. Straining to see, while trying not to draw too much attention to myself in an otherwise almost solemn atmosphere, I noticed two women sitting in the back, one in the seat in front of the other, both facing the same direction and leaning their heads against the window. One seemed to be around fifty years old and the other younger, in her early twenties, and they both had the neck of their woollen sweaters pulled up above their mouths, in such a way the their eyes, wet with tears, stood out as even more expressive. They were half singing half moaning in such a way that whenever one would stop the other would continue for a while and then the first one would begin again – their strained, hard to grasp voices in broken melody were often interrupted by the snivelling sound of trying to hold back tears.

The lowered voice commentary of two older ladies sitting close to me threw some light into the circumstances of their hardly repressed grief. Apparently, the two women were mother and daughter, and their son and brother had just been convicted to a jail time. I remembered that the first stop of the bus route was quite close to a court of law, so that was were the two women were coming from, having just heard the news of the conviction.

The ambiguous solemnity of the silent atmosphere of the packed bus, mixed with the shame and social repression of being witness to a public display of emotion, in the most public of places, a public transportation bus, as well as the contrasting haunting effect of the two voices mourning in a strained song, both made a strong impression in me. The complexity of the situation, and my own ambiguous and tentative engagement with it – as researcher, as a citizen and fellow user of public transportation, as a human being uncomfortably seized by empathy – would offer ample opportunity for future questioning in the context of my thesis research and beyond.

The second event that comes to mind is more recent, albeit taking place in an environment that could hardly be further removed from the first.

In the peak of the summer of 2013, I found myself on a small ferry motor boat heading towards the Westfjords (*Vestfirðir*), a large and mostly uninhabited

peninsula in northwestern Iceland where I was to go mountain hiking and camping with a group of fifteen other people, me being the only foreigner and the most inexperienced. The place we were heading towards was an impressively raw landscape of rocky cliffs, deep fjords, all under an overwhelmingly imposing expanse of sky – the kind of acute desolate beauty one finds often in Nordic landscapes.

The patch of North Atlantic ocean we were crossing at the time seemed to mimic the irregular and dramatic landscape awaiting us – the strong howling winds, the unrelenting waves, and the loud noise from the motor boat made us all – a group of around 20 people being bounced around in an open deck, clad in rain proof gear and holding on to whatever structure allowed itself to be gripped – quite aware of our vulnerable status amidst the roaring elements. Of course, deep down we were all feeling wild and free like the minor gods of the earth… with shaky knees and some kind of prayer on our lips.

And then people started singing. With no warning, the same familiar faces I had just been chatting with burst out in song – 80s pop songs, 90s rock songs, old Icelandic saga telling tales of the landscape around us, last years' Eurovision contest winners… They just sang in the midst of all the noise, helping each other out in choruses or when the lyrics were forgotten, and I, suddenly becoming a wide eyed tourist once again, seeing the Icelandic flag in a small aluminium mast blown violently by the wind gusts and the wet faces under the brightly coloured weather-proof gear, with mouth and chests moving and the mixing of voice and sea roaring, felt like I was standing in the midst of a real life enactment of the Wagnerian "Ride of the Valkyries". They kept this up for the entire two hours the boat took to reach Hornstrandir, the volcanic beach where we would camp for the first night before heading up the mountains.

Later on, I was told that singing is just what you do to avoid becoming seasick. I found this simple, and very typically Scandinavian, pragmatic explanation deeply touching. It reminded me of the voice being at hand, and everyday tool, even in the most extreme circumstances – a tool of humans not of minor gods.

In between these two events, I have lived, worked and travelled extensively in Nordic countries, living both in Denmark and in Sweden and visiting Iceland often

– and have found that the contrast between the inviting culture and landscape, and my struggle with the language, having learned conversational Danish and basic Swedish, have heightened my awareness of the everyday, most subtle and yet meaningful, uses and hidden dimensions of the voice in action.

As I have mentioned before, my research ventured beyond philosophy, yet the further I strayed from it the most compellingly I felt being pulled back to it. This back and forth movement, with all it hesitations and unexpected twists and turns would reflect itself in both method of inquiry, thought strategy and presentation of this research thesis.

In the five years this text took to completion, I deliberately pursued an intensive schedule of international public presentations and shared critical discourse, not only in traditional academic environments but also free floating, self-organizing networks of independent practitioners in the field of humanities and artistic research. It became essential to me to have my work constantly challenged by others, and having to continuously seek new and better forms of opening up the internal dialogic conflict of an on-going thesis research made all the more sense to me, given the very theme of the voice as an essential vessel in the exchange between the self and the other in its widest, and still somehow most specific, meaning. Thus, both in theory and in practice, the human voice as the locus of intersubjectivity became a main beacon of inquiry in my work.

This trans and interdisciplinary experience, which I will discuss in greater detail later on, heightened my awareness of how important it is to think of how to structure a thesis text that should reflect not only the ramifications of its theme, but also embody the dialogic process that gave it birth in its very structure. That is why this work was initially thought as a compilation of individual papers and articles instead of a strict monograph, all inter-connected to the theme of the voice and mapping out different approaches and their internal dialogue. It eventually became clear however that a hybrid form would be the best solution, and, hopefully, the most honest one.

The following text will therefore retain the nature of something written through a constant shifting of perspectives and tracing of intersections, but it will attempt to keep a strong grasp on the opening of a structured path by presenting its different sections in a dialogue and policy of mutual support. In simpler terms, I will try not to loose the element of the rhythm and gradual construction of thought that is found most predominantly in orality. Hopefully, it will be able to hold for its reader something of the experience of "hearing oneself think", or "thinking out loud" that has such a rooted tradition in the philosophical endeavour, yet seems to be so hard to retain in today's quantifiable result driven academia.

What will then follow and how?

The path of inquiry itself will take place through three main areas. Each of these areas of inquiry are not autonomous, they are open and depend on mutual exchange and the gradual deepening of their reciprocal visitations and implications.

In the first part we will auscultate the ancients and their impressions, the body-soul dichotomy, the nature of language and the place of the living voice in it. We will converse with specific instances of the thought of Plato, Aristotle, Aristoxenus and the Stoic grammatical tradition – we will try to understand what are the main routes of inquiry into which the problem of the voice is and/or may be established.

In the second part we will delve into the world of sound, to establish a lexicon of terms and concepts that can be applied to describe the voice in action and it's impact and presence in a specific surrounding environment. Borrowing from interdisciplinary sources such as acoustic science, biology, sound studies, cultural and media studies, we will map and synthetize the thematic constellation of approaches pursuing the understanding of the human immersion and participation in a world of sound. We will try to understand why a phenomenological approach can wield significant results when it comes to the questioning of the voice, and how the very questioning of sound from the perspective of voice is a particularly fruitful perspective from which to endeavour a philosophical inquiry.

In the third part we will explore the intersection between the questioning of the voice and the current focus in intersubjectivity in the context of contemporary phenomenology. We will focus on how voice is at play in the self-other dynamics, from individuation in the earliest stages of foetal life to the communal cohabitation with other selves in a world of transitive mutuality and shared presence. We will consider the voice taking place in shared, resonant environments, thinking with and through experiences that move beyond the stricter borders of philosophy and enter the realms of practice based research in the context of artistic research.

In this third part and final part, a series of experiences that I have developed with other research partners in joint explorations dealing with sound and the self in the context of the urban space will be outlined as case-studies, which aim to strengthen this thesis wider effort of contextualizing the role and potential of philosophical inquiry in practice-based research.

A final concluding part will attempt the integration of the different strands and conceptual paths following during this research into a coherent unity. This search for coherent unity remains, however, in its highest aspiration a productive attempt to instigate further research and interest in the interdisciplinary concatenation of philosophical examination and practice-informed awareness of the embodied phenomena that constitute human presence and dwelling in the sound world, with voice as its radically human specificity.

PART I

1. Plato – in search of voice as method and theme

Consulting the Platonic dialogues in search for insight concerning the theme of voice often feels like hunting for a strange animal – which is ever-present in plain sight but that, when sought after, seems to instantly camouflage itself in the landscape. Moreover, those who tread near avoid mentioning it directly as if fearing that the briefest reference to its presence would drive it away instantly. And so it often seems to.

In spite of this, one can easily argue that platonic thought, as it has come to us via his dialogues, is presented as but a choreography of voices[1] – different individuals thinking while talking to each other, asking questions, venturing answers, making themselves heard, engaging each other in discussion, activating the contemporary reader's inner voice(s) in the process. And of course, one voice stands distinct, that of Socrates, which usually gains predominance as the dialogue develops and heads to its more or less typically open conclusion.

The often found tendency to read Plato's texts in search for the longest and densest lengths of the usual Socratic monologue-within-the-dialogue – in the face of the typically overwhelmed and bedazzled interlocutor, whose presence sometimes barely serves the function of a wall to bounce thoughts off of (a resonator of sorts, as we will discuss later on) – in order to extract the doctrine in a "purer", more schematic form, usually contributes to overlooking ("underhearing"?) the immensely sonorous nature of Platonic thought, preserved in writing, but nonetheless eager for vocal rebirth. Some of the masters I have been privileged to study under have overcome this by delving into the Greek language and reading aloud, literally reciting Platonic thought, allowing the acoustical lyricism to seep in, resound and, hopefully, reveal itself.

[1] For a discussion of the specific role and philosophical grounding of the dialogic form in Plato's writings consult (Hyland, 1968), (Blondell, 2002), (Jazdzewska, 2014), (Magrini, 2014) and (Moors, 1978).

Given that remarkable effort, we might think that either voice in itself is not sufficiently interesting from a philosophical standpoint, or that a philosophical method is not competent to bring it into light as such. It seems important here to stress that it is the founding belief of the very inquiry we set out on that both of these presuppositions are wrong.

Let us, however, leave these sweeping considerations for now and go back to the textual sources at hand, and we will do so by proposing a certain kind of "tuning" of the reader's attention. Although it can be argued otherwise (and the argument itself has not yet made an appearance in this inquiry) it is our belief that any given line of text carries a potential vocality and is, in a sense, in a state of performative standby. This means that any interaction with text, including our interaction with the sources and the supposed reader's interaction with this very text, is considered thereby to be a listening exercise and also a vocal experience – even if just in the minimal sense of speaking to oneself or hearing one's own inner vocal companion to silent reading.

This point, however thinly substantiated it might appear at the moment, is thought to be crucial to understanding that, even if in this chapter we are dealing with textual sources that also pertain to a specific role in a history of philosophical thought, our attitude and ethical stance towards them is as co-inhabitants of a space for reflection and experience that can only be found in the very urgency of a present, real-time engagement with the matters at hand.

Thus, it is not a matter of merely locating the place and role of voice in these initial textual sources – it is everywhere to be found and in all actuality overflowing in manifestation – the task at hand is to recognize and weave together instances where the enacted voice (as philosophical questioning) wonders about itself, be it aware or unaware of doing so.

1.1. *Cratylus*

When it comes to the question of the harnessing of the voice, the *Cratylus* is a particularly striking text – not just because the theme explored in this dialogue is the very possibility of the questioning of the genesis and nature of language, but because this questioning is actually "performed" in the very discussion. This dialogue, which according to such experts as H. N. Fowler (Plato, 1939, p. 4) would belong to the middle period of Plato's production, following *Phaedo,* stands as an example of one of the most awe-inspiring characteristics of Platonic thought as preserved in written: philosophical questioning as an embodied task performed openly in real time.

1.1.1. On naming names and fitting sound to word

In our reading of *Cratylus,* the first mention of "voice" happens when the very initial point of the inquiry is spelled out: does naming, and consequently language, happen by nature or by convention[2], or as the philosopher puts it: does a name come by nature or by agreement[3], and is therefore "just a piece of voice applied to the thing"? Or, if we ask the question differently, which, nature or convention, is favored when voice is brought into focus?

[2] In *Cratylus* we find a dramaturgical triangle composed of Cratylus, Hermogenes and Socrates. Cratylus, a follower of Heraclitus, believes that "everything has a right name of its own (*onomatos orthoteta*), which comes by nature (*phusis*), and that a name is not whatever people call a thing by agreement (*enthemenoi*), just a piece of their own voice (*phoné*) applied to the thing, but that there is a kind of inherent correctness in names, which is the same for all men, both Greeks and barbarians" (*Cratylus*, 383a-b; trans. Fowler 1939: 7). Hermogenes on the other hand, a follower of Parmenides, thought that "whatever name you give to a thing is its right name; and if you give up that name and change it for another, the later name is no less correct than the earlier" (*Cratylus*, 384d; trans. Fowler 1939: 9-11), therefore could not "come to the conclusion that there is any correctness of names other than convention (*suntheke*) and agreement (*homologia*)" (*Cratylus*, 384d; trans. Fowler 1939: 9). As soon as these two contrary positions are set, Socrates embarks on a scrutiny of the validity of each while attempting to reach consensus on which, if any, is correct.

[3] Consult (Kretzmann, 1971) for a detailed step-by-step breakdown of the full argument concerning the correctness of names.

Two wholly different situations are a stake. Either the very sounds that animate the throat and get cast through the air into another's ears are somehow an intrinsic part of whatever things are being shared by thought, or they are not intrinsic to the things but to the coded relationship between speaker and listener that allows them to signify the same sounds in the same way. In other words, either sound and thing meet at the source of becoming and manifest this common emergence and shared origin intrinsically, or sound and thing meet in the reciprocal thought space that is itself the becoming.

In the first relationship we have four complex elements at play: two interlocutors; the vocality which is somehow in direct bond to their constitutive world and being, therefore a voice which is both of man and of all things; and all things thinkable, which are world as whole.

In the second relationship we still have two interlocutors; we still have a vocality, but which is not in direct bond to their constitutive world and being, it is in direct bond to a shared community of meaning and signification which is, so to say, internalized in the interlocutors. This shared internalized community that recognizes such and such sounds as meaning such and such thing, is in a conventional relationship to all things thinkable, which are world as whole but externalized from the coding ability of the interlocutors themselves.

In the very beginning of *Cratylus* we find, therefore, two pathways opening to the understanding of voice. One as the human ability to sound *the* world through acoustic manifestation of thought, the other as the human ability to sound *about* the world through acoustic manifestation of thought.

The former brings into play the very sonorous constitution of voice, the acoustic materiality that somehow must make it contiguous to the very fabric of things. On other words, voice must share both the nature of thought and of stone, or wood, or blood or anything else. It is a thing of motion and vibration, because wherever there is motion or vibration there is sound, and voice is sound. Still, it is thought, which is not sound, but it must also be somehow.

The latter point tunes us towards a notion of community, of dialogue, of reciprocity between voices, between ears. Not only in terms of shared meaning and signification, but also in terms of recognition of the tension between the uniqueness of the single real-time body vibration consciousness in sound, and the shareable thought matter that needs to enact a form of universality that can make it not private. Voicing means voicing thoughts that must be reachable by more than one mind, by as many minds as the community of signification might include.

1.1.2. Voice between uniqueness and reciprocity

These last two points can also be retrieved in the more synthetic words of contemporary Italian philosopher Adriana Cavarero, who has focused at length in the political role of the voice in terms of uniqueness and reciprocity in community making.

Concerning reciprocity, she states how "speaking in fact means to speak to someone, "and this someone is always quite precise, and not only has ears, like the collectivity, but has a mouth as well." (Cavarero, 2005, p. 175), or "in other words, speaking is an interlocution with others and requires a reciprocity of speech and listening" (Cavarero, 2005, p. 175). And concerning uniqueness[4], we are reminded that "in the uniqueness that makes itself heard as voice, there is an embodied existent, or rather, a "being-there" [esserci] in its radical finitude, here and now", therefore, "the sphere of the vocal implies the ontological plane and anchors it to the existence of singular beings who invoke one another contextually" (Cavarero, 2005, p. 173).

[4] "Voice is so inherent to the human body that the body can be considered *its* instrument. The lungs, trachea, larynx, mouth and other organs of respiration and alimentation transform into organs of phonation (Tomatis 1991). The first cry of the newborn is voice and breath: a sonorous, vital announcement of a singular bodily existence. As each body is always unique, so each voice differs from all the others. And as is typical of a living being, each voice develops along a temporal arc of existence and marks the physiological points on this trajectory" (Cavarero & Langione, 2012).

Structuring the sharing of sound on agreement understood as reciprocity, however, obviously opens up the possibility for disagreement, confusion and highlights the need to be able to distinguish between truth and falsity.

Considering Hermogenes position that one can attribute any given name to any given thing, and change it at will[5] as long as through agreement and convention the correspondence between a name and a thing is recognized by a community of speakers, Socrates first confirms if Hermogenes accepts that there is a difference between "speaking the truth and speaking falsehood" (*Cratylus*, 385b; trans. Fowler 1939: 11), meaning, between true speech (*logos alethes*) and false speech (*logos pseudes*). Hermogenes responds affirmatively, which prompts Socrates to ask if he thinks that it "is true of real things, that their reality is a separate for each person, as Protagoras said with his doctrine that man is the measure of all things – that things are to me as such as they seem to me, and to you as they seem to you – or do you think things have some fixed reality of their own (*auta auton tina bebaioteta tes ousias*)?" (*Cratylus,* 385e-386a; trans. Fowler 1939: 15). Faced with his own perplexity at Protagoras' doctrine, which he was supposed to agree with, Hermogenes admits he is at a loss when trying to make sense of the contradiction between a theory of free correspondence between any given name and any given thing according to convention, and the ability to distinguish truth from falsity in the naming of things – because surely, and here Hermogenes is positive, there must be a difference between wisdom (*phronesis*) and folly (*aphrosunes*) (*Cratylus*, 386c; trans. Fowler 1939: 17).

In the face of Hermogenes' perplexity, Socrates convinces him to reject both the theory of Euthydemus that "all things belong equally to all men at the same time and perpetually" (*Cratylus*, 386d; trans. Fowler 1939: 17) and the theory of Protagoras of the correspondence of "each thing to each man individually" (*Cratylus*,

[5] "In the present context *tois sunthemenois* cannot refer only to those who *established* a hypothetical original convention whereby a name was first bestowed on its referent. Here the notion of "making" a convention must also apply to also those who subsequently *agree* to the convention, even if they live centuries after it has been established. Socrates is assuming that there is no substantial difference, from the speaker's point of view, between establishing a new convention and agreeing to an already existing one. [...][according to a strict conventionalist thesis] naming is an entirely democratic matter, such that *anyone* can establish a new convention or agree to an existing one" (Ademollo, 2011, p. 387).

386c; trans. Fowler 1939: 17), thus concluding that "it is clear that things have some fixed reality of their own, not in relation to us nor caused by us; they do not vary, swaying one way and another in accordance with our fancy (*to hemetero phantasmati*), but exist of themselves in relation to their own reality imposed by nature (*ten auton ousian echonta heiper pephyken*" (*Cratylus,* 386d-e; trans. Fowler 1939: 17).

If things named have indeed a reality of their own, and our naming them is a an act of sonorous referencing, like an acoustic gesture of indication, then the choreography of the gesture might be open to conventional interpretation[6], but the meaning of the pointing must reach beyond itself into an essential bond between name and named. A possibility for nature and convention to be not conflicting perspectives, but essentially two poles of the same mixed behavior of "meaning making" starts to present itself.

1.1.3. Voice as *logos* performed acoustically

Another essential connection that appears throughout not only *Cratylus* but also subsequent sources we will inquire into is that of voice and *logos*.

The understanding of speech as a manifestation and/or enaction of *logos,* this most equivocal of notions, but above all, an understanding of voice as signifying meaningful and meaning-making speech above all other uses, is far reaching and constantly present.

We propose it is somehow easier to understand the full scope of the meaning of *logos* (translated in such wide ranging terms as "reckoning, sum, relation,

[6] To support the suggestion that "whether the same meaning is expressed in one set of syllables or another makes no difference (…) so long as the essence of the thing named (*ousia tou pragmatos*) remains in force and is made plain in the name" (*Cratylus,* 393d; trans. Fowler 1939: 41) Socrates gives the specific example of how naming the letters of the alphabet (*stoicheia*), by saying for example "beta" when we mean only the letter "b" (*Cratylus,* 393e; trans. Fowler 1939: 41), does not at all detract from grasping the letter meant. This example specifically places the discussion on the track to finding the minimal unit of linguistic meaning, a path well trodden when it comes to the search for an essential bond between language and thing, but also probably doomed to failure in the light of the potential for the eternal regression of the argument.

correspondence, explanation, plea, pretext, argument, thesis, formula, narrative, law, legend, speech, utterance, word, report, tradition, oracle, maxim, assertion, etc." (Liddell, Scott, Jones, McKenzie, & Barber, 1968, p. 1057)), if we move away from *logos,* the verbal noun, and focus on the respective verb *legein.*

Doing so implies that "within the realm of practical activity that can be associated with a "doing" word – the verb *legein* – we can identify relational propensities which seem to disappear entirely at the level of the substantive noun *logos*" (Fiumara, 1995, p. 1).

Legein, usually used in the sense of "saying", "speaking", but also "laying", "gathering" and "articulating", considered in its active principle, a "doing" word, is exactly found in a key moment in *Cratylus*, where Socrates reminds Hermogenes that "speaking (*legein*) is an action (*praxis*)" (*Cratylus*, 387b; trans. Fowler 1939: 19), and therefore "naming (*onomazein*) is a part of speaking, for in naming I suppose people utter speech (*logos*)" (*Cratylus*, 387c; trans. Fowler 1939: 19).

That this understanding of speech, of a voice in motion as a direct action, something that partakes of the immediate nature of throwing a stick, or kicking a ball, comes soon after a reminder of the distinction between "speaking the truth and speaking falsehood" (*Cratylus*, 385b; trans. Fowler 1939: 11), meaning, between true speech (*logos alethes*) and false speech (*logos pseudes*), is hardly a coincidence.

Here we find voice, while manifested as speech, as being the potential bearer of both right and wrong attribution of meaning, and of being so in action. The articulating, relational function of the voice is here underlined – but is speaking an action only concerning the consequences of the content and reception of what is spoken, or is voicing in itself an indelible intervention in the world?

The hard to grasp dichotomy between voice as a body of sound and voice as meaning of that same body of sound, of that same sonorous materiality, is present here.

The focus at this point in *Cratylus*, seems to be on the understanding of voice as vessel, more concretely voice as vessel of meaning, or voice as ineffective vessel

in the case of sonorous nonsense – a voice irreducible to meaningful words. What kind of action is that which speech undertakes then, according to Socrates?

Grammatical intervention, it seems, as we can subsume from his definition of a name, which is always a "piece of voice", as being "an instrument (*organon*) of teaching (*didaskalikon*) and of separating reality (*diakritikon tes ousias*)[7]" (*Cratylus*, 388b; trans. Fowler 1939: 23). This would make the chief concern of the speaker to become a dialectician (by being he who "knows how to ask questions (*epistamenos*)" (*Cratylus*, 390c; trans. Fowler 1939: 31) and "also how to make replies (*apokrinesthai*)" (*Cratylus*, 390c; trans. Fowler 1939: 31), and voice the dialectical tool[8] by excellence.

What is essential here is the work of fitting sound to syllable to produce a name that in its attribution, whatever the specific language context in which this attribution takes place, be it Greek or foreign (*Cratylus,* 390a; trans. Fowler 1939: 29), points towards the ideal form of the thing named – therefore allowing speakers to understand each other in the sharing of the same access to the same things. Thus, we can confidently assert that to ascertain the correctness of names a conversation,

[7] "The verb *didaskein* is sometimes best translated by the strong and specific 'teach', sometimes by a weaker and more general term such as 'inform', 'explain' or 'tell'. Given that we obviously do more with names than 'teach' in a narrow sense, I translate it here as 'inform': but it is important to bear in mind its potential to bear the more technical meaning. As for the second half of the account, 'divide' is of course a word with an important significance in Plato as, with 'collection', the canonical procedure of dialectic; and here the dialectician will soon be introduced as the expert user of names as tools (390a–d). Talk of 'division' also suggests that names should be used to draw distinctions, by sorting objects by natural kinds—to divide reality at its joints (393b–4e). And so it is plausible that informing and dividing should be seen as constituting a single function, with the *kai* linking them as epexegetical: for 'informing each other' seems to result when we 'divide' and sort things successfully, and it is in turn by giving information about things that we do this. If there is really only a single function here, the point of describing it in these two ways is to draw attention to two different relations in terms of which an act of naming can be judged: naming as 'division' specifies the relation between a name and the object named, while naming as 'informing' relates namer and hearer" (Barney, 2001, p. 42).

[8] Socrates proposes the figure of the teacher (*didaskalikos*) as the consummate user of names (*Cratylus,* 388c; trans. Fowler 1939: 23), but when it comes to whose skill (*techné*) is the teacher making use of while using names, meaning, who made the names that the teacher uses in language, Socrates offers that the credit should go to the lawgiver (*nomothete*) "who is of all the artisans (*demiourgos*) among men the rarest" (*Cratylus,* 389a; trans. Fowler 1939: 25), and whose intrinsically appointed task is to "know how to embody (*epistasthai tithenai*) in the sounds (*phthongous*) and syllables (*sullabas*) that name which is fitted by nature for each object" (*Cratylus,* 389d; trans. Fowler 1939: 27) in view of the "absolute or ideal name, if he is to be an authoritative giver of names" (*Cratylus,* 389d; trans. Fowler 1939: 27). This "ideal name" refers to what Socrates had previously defined in an analogy with the work of the carpenter as being the indestructible form (*eidos*), in reference to which a shuttle (or any other tool) is built (*Cratylus,* 389b; trans. Fowler 1939: 25).

the very performance of language, is necessary. A certain kind of in-betweenness essential to the use of the voice is starting to make itself felt – something to resume later on.

1.1.4. Etymological constellations and the mimetic function of the voice

Soon after this, supposedly in order to test out the theory of natural adequacy between name and thing, Socrates embarks on the first of his long and dazzling etymological deconstructive improvisations (*Cratylus,* 394b-411b; trans. Fowler 1939: 43-49, 53-61), tracing he names of fabled heroes, gods, astronomical bodies and philosophical notions by showing the correspondence between their nature, history and personalities and the grammatical roots of the names that were given to them[9].

Hermogenes contained reaction to this impressive string of rhetoric brilliancy is crystallized in his subdued acknowledgment: "I am listening" (*Cratylus,* 400a; trans. Fowler 1939: 61). We are hereby reminded that, apart from the etymological rampage and virtuosity of Socrates's speech, he is indeed sounding it. His is a voice that is enacting in sound the very sound-concepts of the etymological noun roots. It is the exercise of a thought-performing vocality. With a finer tuning of our reader's imagination, this sequence appears as a true vocal performance, tinted with irony, as we will soon discover, but effective in its ardency nonetheless.

[9] "As practised by Socrates in the Cratylus, an etymology evidently amounts to a proof of the correctness of a name; but it is more mysterious than it might appear just how this proof is supposed to proceed— especially as Socrates' procedures are often rushed or allusive, and vary considerably from one case to the next. Roughly and in general, a name is explained or analyzed by Socrates in terms of (at least one) etymologizing term or phrase; this phrase is presented as a phonetic explication of the name; and it is shown that the meaning of that explication—what I will call the deep content of the name etymologized—is true of the nature of the referent of the name. For instance, Socrates deems *psuchê* to be a correct name for souls because soul embraces [*echei*] nature [*phusis*] (399d–400b). That is, *psuchê* is explicated as phus[in]-echê; the meaning of that phrase, 'nature-holder', is thus revealed as the deep content of *psuchê*, and Socrates affirms that 'nature-holder' is true of souls. Thus the etymology is presented as an unpacking of the name itself—as decoding a deeper meaning or content actually expressed by it, albeit obscurely" (Barney, 2001, p. 46).

The motion of the voice is here inspired by motion (*phoras*) itself, as the philosopher soon remarks. All his etymological turns and twists, and the rooting of character in name are dependent, in this instance, on a presupposition confessed, for example, in a passage dealing with the etymology of the goddess Phersephone: "the goddess is wise; for since things are in motion (*pheromena*), that which grasps (*ephaptomenon*) and touches (*hepaphon*) and is able to follow them is wisdom" (*Cratylus*, 404c-d; trans. Fowler 1939: 75).

Soon, however, Socrates confesses that maybe his focus on motion has been misplaced[10], and he has indulged in self-deception (*Cratylus*, 428d; trans. Fowler 1939: 97). The danger of falling into infinite regression in the etymological, by the breaking down of names in search for the primal link between name and thing, looms. Still, the philosopher proposes an understanding of speech based upon a notion of body mimicry that conflated into a definition of name as a "vocal imitation" (*Cratylus*, 423b; trans. Fowler 1939: 135).

Here we have then, the underlining of the mimetic function of the voice. Not a mimetic power of mere sonorous resemblance, as in the case of onomatopoeia, substituting an animal's name for the repetition of the sound he makes, for example, and not a mimetic power of musical order either (*Cratylus*, 423c-d; trans. Fowler 1939: 135-137), which seems to be considered also a kind of emotional onomatopoeia.

To illustrate his point, and maybe to push to its limits, Socrates then "performs" a phonetic etymology (*Cratylus,* 426c-427c; trans. Fowler 1939: 145-149) of part of the Greek alphabet, trying to connect the meaning of specific words, with the sound quality (in terms of the bodily movement they require from the mouth, lips, tongue and breath) of they composing letters. We have here the suggestion that

[10] When Socrates himself reveals the anchoring of his whole discourse so far in the concept of motion, it is not without biting irony, in the face of a somewhat naïve Hermogenes. Socrates expresses himself so: "I believe I have a fine intuition which has just come to me, that the very ancient men who invented names were quite like most of the present philosophers who always get dizzy as they turn round and round in their search for the nature of things, and then the things see to them to turn round and round and be in motion" (*Cratylus,* 411b; trans. Fowler 1939: 97). He concludes this thought by stating that these philosophers overlook the fact that motion appearing to be always at play is actually attributed to "an affection (*pathos*) within themselves" (*Cratylus,* 411c; trans. Fowler 1939: 97) and not to the nature of things.

the primal link between the sound of a word, the thing it names, and the letters composing that sound[11], would be gesture[12], or better put, gestural analogy between the perceived qualities of the thing named, and the bodily sensation required from the sonic apparatus in order to voice it.

The mimetic element of vocality seems at this point to be introduced as a kind of poisoned gift, in the sense that soon (*Cratylus*, 432b-d; trans. Fowler 1939: 157) Socrates revokes his conviction in this point, and notes how the mimetic approach would lead to the problem of undesired confusion and/or redundancy between voice and thing named if sound does indeed come to close to participating in the nature of the thing spoken of. This would not do, for communication to ensue an adequacy between thing and name is required, not a coincidence.

The conventional view of attribution of name to thing is recovered partially, while the natural view is set aside momentarily, and we find the ambiguity of voice

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[11] Socrates assessment of the specific phonetic quality of each letter (*Cratylus,* 426c-427c; trans. Fowler 1939: 145-149) can be summarized as follows. *Rho* (ρ) expresses above all motion (*kinesis*) because when this letter is pronounced "the tongue is least at rest and most agitated" (*Cratylus,* 426e; trans. Fowler 1939: 145), and that is why this letter is found is such words as "flow (*rein*)", "current (*roé*)", "trembling (*tromos*)", "run (*trechein*)", "whirl (*rumbein*)", etc. *Iota* (ι) is employed for "everything subtle, which can most readily pass through all things" (*Cratylus,* 426e; trans. Fowler 1939: 145), and is therefore present in "go (*ienai*)", "hasten (*iesthai*)", etc. Likewise, *phi* (φ), *psi* (ψ), *sigma* (σ) and *zeta* (ζ), which are "letters pronounced with much breath (*pneumatode*)" (*Cratylus,* 427a; trans. Fowler 1939: 147) are to be found in notions such as "shivering (*psuchron*)", "seething (*zeon*)", "shake (*seiesthai*)", "shock (*seismos*)", etc. *Delta* (δ) and *tau* (τ), due the particular "compression and pressure of the tongue" (*Cratylus,* 427a; trans. Fowler 1939: 147) in their pronunciation, are "naturally fitted to imitate the notion of binding (*desmou*) and rest (*staseos*)" (*Cratylus,* 427a-b; trans. Fowler 1939: 147). *Lambda* (λ) on the other hand, owing to the fact that while uttering this letter "the tongue has a gliding movement" (*Cratylus,* 427b; trans. Fowler 1939: 147), is appropriately found in "level (*leia*)", "glide *(olisthanein*)", "sleek (*liparon*)", and the such. *Gamma* (γ), which appears often to stop "the gliding of the tongue" (*Cratylus,* 427b; trans. Fowler 1939: 147), is met in words as "glutinous (*glischron*)", "sweet (*gluku*))" and "gluey (*gloiodes*)". The letter *nu* (ν), perceived as "an internal sound" (*Cratylus,* 427c; trans. Fowler 1939: 147), is used in "inside (*endon*)" and "within (*entos*)". According to Socrates, *alpha* (α) was assigned to greatness (*megalo*) and *eta* (ε) to length (*mekei*) "because the letters are large" (*Cratylus,* 427c; trans. Fowler 1939: 147). Finally, the letter *o* (ο) as a sign was needed to "the expression of round (*goggulon*)" (*Cratylus,* 427c; trans. Fowler 1939: 147) and therefore came to be.

[12] At this point, Socrates takes an unexpected turn in considering the idea of a proto-language based on bodily imitation, and aligns the argument into an attempt to cross over from this place into language as we know it. He presents it by asking: "if we had no voice or tongue (*glottan*), and wished to make things clear to one another, should we not try, as dumb people actually do, to make signs with our hands and head and person generally?" (*Cratylus,* 422e; trans. Fowler 1939: 133). He then adds: "for the expression (*deloma*) of anything, I fancy, would be accomplished by bodily imitation (*mimesamenon tou somatos*) of that which has to be expressed" (*Cratylus,* 423a-b; trans. Fowler 1939: 133).

being stressed, consequently. What kind of thing is a voice that is closest to the thing in manifest thought but still far enough for it to not require an absolute bond or participation by nature? How is this intimacy of signification achieved? On the other hand, how is the very distance between sound and thing sounded retained to such a degree? The analogy between speech and gesture seems to fall a bit short of its holistic goal, at this point.

Cratylus concludes without a conclusion. Nature and convention seem to both participate of the signifying process embodied in voice, but how do they stand in harmony, or exactly where rest the boundaries of their influence remains undiscovered. That *Cratylus* ends without a definite conclusion is not a surprise – such is a usual trait of Platonic dialogue – but it does end with the eulogy of effort, of dialogue as an attempt at clarification, or the value of leaving no stone unturned – the philosophical compulsion.

Such is stated by the philosopher in the guise of a to-be-conclusion: "how realities are to be learned or discovered is perhaps too great a question for you or me to determine; but it is worth while to have reached even this conclusion, that they are to be learned and sought for, not from names but much better through themselves than through names" (*Cratylus*, 439b; trans. Fowler 1939: 187).

Can "realities" be probed by voice not through names but through some more direct access? Where are we to draw the clear-cut line between sense and nonsense? How far are we to stray from one into the other in search for clarification?

In *Cratylus* voice appears thematically mostly as an element in the pursuit of knowledge, but it reveals itself experientially in the very situation of the philosophical discourse as something to be constantly revitalized, a vocal practice set against a vocal theme, enriching it, giving it substance, allowing it to persist as a matter that holds the urgency of its own pursuit.

1.2. *Theaetetus* and *Sophist*

After this lengthy exposition of what takes place in the *Cratylus,* we choose to look at two other selected Platonic dialogues – *Theaetetus* and *Sophist* – but following a different strategy of analysis.

We will focus on a few selected passages where a specific reference to voice or speech is made, and after pinpointing these references we will briefly contextualize them in the overall reasoning of each dialogue.

The two sets of quotations, one from *Theaetetus* and the other from *Sophist* resonate quite strongly with each other, to such an extent that they are nearly only distinct regarding the context in which they appear.

The first one appears in the *Theaetetus* when Socrates proposes to define "thought" (*dianoia*) as "the talk (*logon*) which the soul has with itself about any subjects which it considers" (*Theaetetus,* 189e; trans. Fowler 1921: 179).

He further details this inner process by stating that "the soul, as the image (*eidos*) presents itself to me, when it thinks, is merely conversing with itself, asking itself questions and answering, affirming and denying" (*Theaetetus,* 189e-190a; trans. Fowler 1921: 179). And accordingly: "When it [the soul] has arrived at a decision, whether slowly or with a sudden bound, and is at last agreed, and is not in doubt, we call that its opinion (*doxa*); and so I define forming opinion as talking (*to doxazein legein*) and opinion as talk which has been held, not with someone else, nor yet aloud, but in silence with oneself" (*Theaetetus,* 190a; trans. Fowler 1921: 179).

1.2.1. Inner dialogue and flowing speech

This presentation of thought as a soundless discussion with oneself, or as inner dialogue, appears in the context of the discussion of the question of false

opinion vs. true opinion[13] in the later part of the *Theaetetus*[14], which as a whole concerns itself chiefly with the search for a definition of knowledge[15].

The discussion then moves on to an attempt to understand the forming of false opinion as an incongruence born out of the interchange between thought and perception[16] (*Theaetetus,* 191a-195a; trans. Fowler 1921: 203), and soon we find Socrates attempting another definition, that of "rational explanation (*ton logon*) (*Theaetetus,* 201d; trans. Fowler 1921: 241).

What is at stake here is the notion that "the most perfect knowledge arises from the addition of rational explanation to true opinion" (*Theaetetus,* 206c; trans. Fowler 1921: 241). As an essential characteristic of what a "rational explanation" would be, Socrates proposes that it "would be making one's own thought clear through speech by means of verbs and nouns, imaging the opinion in the stream that flows through the lips, as in a mirror or water" (*Theaetetus,* 206d; trans. Fowler 1921: 241).

This plain yet fetching metaphor of speech being likened to sound pouring out of one's lips as if water from a natural source is found again in the second quotation, this time from *Sophist.* The reference to flowing and the flux of water can be interpreted as a nod to the Platonic re-interpretation of Heracleitean theory[17].

In this dialogue, whose main speaker is not Socrates but the character of the Eleatic Stranger, ensues a conversation with Theaetetus that is supposed to take place the day after the one recounted in the previous dialogue. In the midst of a discussion whose main overarching aim is the attempt at understanding what a

[13] Consult (Fine, 1979) and (Rudebusch, 1990) for a detailed exposition of these contrasting notions.
[14] See *Theaetetus,* 190a-200a for the full length of the discussion.
[15] "Socrates: Then, my boy, is the argument right in rebuking us and in pointing out that we were wrong to abandon knowledge and seek first for false opinion? It is impossible to know the latter until we have adequately comprehended the nature of knowledge." (*Theaetetus,* 200c-d; trans. Fowler 1921: 219)
[16] See (Lee, 1999) for a critical analysis of the emergence of false opinion from a incongruence between thought and perception in *Theaetetus*.
[17] It can be argued that "flux in Heraclitus is always presented along with stability in the service of the unity of opposites; it is not an ultimate principle to which everything else must be reduced; it does not go 'all the way down'; and it does not pose a threat to our knowledge of things or to their identity" (Colvin, 2007, p. 760), while "in Plato, by contrast, flux is not presented as half of a paradoxical unity of opposites; instead, both flux itself and the unity of opposites are considered as phenomena inherent in the nature of sensibles" (Colvin, 2007, p. 760); see also (Reshotko, 1994) for a corroborative view.

sophist truly is and what kind of knowledge, if at all, does he deal in, the question of the distinction between "thought" (*dianoia*), "fancy" (*phantasia*)[18] and "opinion" (*doxa*), and their respective truth or falsity comes up (*Sophist,* 263d-264b; trans. Fowler 1921: 441).

In a quick exchange, the Eleatic Stranger proposes that "thought (*dianoia*), and speech (*logos*) are the same; only the former, which is a silent inner conversation of the soul with itself, has been given the special name of thought" (*Sophist,* 263e; trans. Fowler 1921: 441). After Theaetetus' assent, he concludes: "But the stream that flows from the soul in vocal utterance through the mouth has the name of speech?" (*Sophist,* 263e; trans. Fowler 1921: 441).

So we find again, in an almost identical way as in *Theaetetus*, the distinction between "thought" (and subordinately "opinion") and speech as that between inner and outer dialogue, or in other words, as speech as being thought that sounds out through the lips, again, like water from a source. This understanding of speech is presented both in the *Theaetetus* and in the *Sophist* with a matter-of-fact-ness that seems to preclude further inquiry – we are left with a resonating metaphor that seems self-sufficient, and still we shall seek to probe it further.

1.2.2. The maieutic potential of voice withheld and listening expanded

Let us return to our core assertion that in the *Theaetetus* we find voice under the guise of inner dialogue. The process of soundless discussion with oneself that occurs when thinking, which might or might not be the whole of what thinking is, brings the matter of reciprocity[19] to a problematic standpoint.

[18] An attempt to define *phantasia* – which we will not take up here due to its complexity, appears in a more detailed form the *Theaetetus* (152c), were it is introduced to clarify the distinction between perception and sensation. There Socrates, while considering Protagoras' dictum 'Man is the measure of all things' (152a) proposes that "*phantasia* is the same as *aisthesis*, if *aisthesis* = perception, but not if it (*aisthesis*) = sensation" (Watson, 1988, p. 3).

[19] For a discussion of a more radical notion of the very thinking self as constituted by internal dialogue see, as well as this view's societal implications, see (Bakker, 2005), (Tsang, 2007) and (Kazepides, 2010).

We have seen how voice is the stuff of dialogue, we have proposed the requisite community of speakers/listeners that should be at hand to facilitate the dialectic process. However, when there is both an external appearance of silence and a furious inner resonance happening at the same time, are we still speaking of voice? Can "voice" be extended to the availability to hear, to listen and to have something laid out before one's mind – going back to the meaning of *logos* as *legein*[20] – and make sense of it while withholding sonorous breath?

According to the Italian philosopher Gemma Corradi Fiumara, "it we consider silence dialogically, we might frame the hypothesis that an orientation towards discourse, rather than towards listening, provokes far more a sense of cognitive security and far fewer demands" (Fiumara, 1995, p. 95). Is the inner voice more adept at listening to its own wanderings, while the voice that stands at the podium and lectures to the audience (present or imagined) is more likely to expound opinion?

Does the sense of a "*logos*-in-process" (Fiumara, 1995, p. 95) – an inner motion of soundless voice, articulating thoughts, bringing together and taking apart[21] – characterizes more truthfully the ability to listen than the face-to-face engagement of two interlocutors?

According to Corradi Fiumara, yes, because "it is almost as though a non-listening speech tends to favor "simple" mechanisms that divide and extinguish, whereas listening requires a laborious attitude more consistent with problems of integration and living" (Fiumara, 1995, p. 95). Indeed, it seems that both the inner voice and the sounded voice find themselves paralleled when it comes to the need to, and the potency, of intense listening.

It is no coincidence that in its everyday societal occurrence, a non-listening speech is characterized as being a "speaking at" instead of a "speaking with", and is

[20] The meaning of *legein* does not necessarily refer to language and what happens in language. The verb *legein* is the same word as the Latin *legere* and our own word *lay*. When someone lays before us a request, we do not mean that he produces papers on the desk before us, but that he speaks of the request. When someone tells of an event, he lays it out for us. When we exert ourselves, we lay to. To lay before, lay out, lay to-all this laying is the Greek *legein*"(Heidegger, 1968, p. 198).

[21] "Socrates: Now I myself, Phaedrus, am a lover of these processes of division (*diairesis*) and bringing together (*sunagógé*), as aids to speech and thought" (*Phaedrus*, 266b; trans. Fowler 1925: 535).

commonly identified with manipulative, such as propaganda, or offensive, such as insulting, cursing or accusing, stances that preclude a dialogue between peers and enforce hierarchical alienation or impose subservience.

The very maieutic tradition that stems from Socrates' analogy between philosophy (as practice) and midwifery[22] in the *Theaetetus* (*Theaetetus,* 149a; trans. Fowler 1921: 35) seems to point to the primacy of listening, of a bringing of thought from silence into word, as a requirement for the pursuit of meaning and knowledge.

This might be so, in part, because "the cognitive dedication to the word of the other demands a philosophical methodology that involves the person entirely, since it demands a kind of inner abnegation" (Fiumara, 1995, p. 125). She adds: "without this inner renunciation the individual can only hold a dialogue with himself" (Fiumara, 1995, p. 125). We would argue that without this "inner renunciation" the individual could not even hold a dialogue with himself, since his or her own thoughts would remain submerged in an chaotic unawareness of one's own inner voice as intrinsically dialogical and relational.

As we have seen, the importance of listening in the process of inner dialogue is stressed in the *Theaetetus* by the characterization of this inner dialogue as a kind of self-interrogation of the soul, where it "is merely conversing with itself, asking itself questions and answering, affirming and denying" (*Theaetetus,* 189e-190a; trans. Fowler 1921: 179).

The aim of this inner dialogue, in the *Theaetetus*, is, once more, the forming of "true opinion", which should be achieved together with "rational explanation (τὸν λόγον)" (*Theaetetus,* 206c; trans. Fowler 1921: 241). Here, true opinion propelled by rational explanation is compared to a "stream that flows through the lips" (*Theaetetus,* 206d; trans. Fowler 1921: 241). We find then that the process of inner dialogue that would generate true opinion, is only complete when, achieved through rational explanation, it arises again from the individual as sonorous voice, and passes through the lips like a moving body of water.

[22] For a broader discussion of the maieutic method as performed by Socrates in Plato's dialogues consult (Vlastos, 1983), (Tomin, 1987), (Pomeroy, 1978) and (Crombie, 1964).

The transition from inner dialogue to sounding voice is again recovered in the almost mirrored quote from *Sophist*, where thought and speech are considered the same "only the former, which is a silent inner conversation of the soul with itself, has been given the special name of thought" (*Sophist,* 263e, trans. Fowler 1921: 441). Which is followed by the rhetorical question: "But the stream that flows from the soul in vocal utterance through the mouth has the name of speech?" (*Sophist,* 263e, trans. Fowler 1921: 441).

By this correspondence between thought and speech, is the sonorous quality of the voice being left out as unimportant or accidental? Or is it, on the other hand, being pointed towards the intrinsically sonorous quality of thought itself, to which voice but ends a vessel-like entry into the acoustic space? These are some of the questions that will inform our progression in this inquiry.

1.3. *Philebus* and *Ion*

In *Philebus* and *Ion*, the presence of sound, speech and voice is carried subtly into the more purely sonorous realm with a discussion of language that tunes into the musical, in the *Philebus,* and then finally a particularly striking proto-theory of resonance in the persuasive and near maddening power of melodic speech, in *Ion*.

Again, the philosophical focus of both dialogues is not speech, much less speech that sounds through voice, still both discussions find themselves meaningfully unable to steer clear of these matters.

The *Philebus* deals broadly with a comparison between "pleasure" (*hédoné*) and "knowledge" (*phronēsis*), as they both vie for the role of greater "good" (*agathos*), a discussion that opens the way to a third mixed route[23].

In the beginning of the dialogue the dialectical method of discussion to pursue is presented through a progression between the "finite" (*peras*) and the "infinite" (*apeiria*), in any matter of thought, with the initial presupposition of unity that should then investigated to ascertain if it actually hides multiplicity upon closer inspection, or, as cautioned by Socrates: "we must not apply the idea of infinite (*apeiria*) to plurality (πλῆθος) until we have a view of its whole number between infinity and one; then, and not before, we may let each unit of everything pass on unhindered into infinity" (*Philebus,* 16d-e; trans. Fowler 1925: 221).

To clarify such a difficult passage, concerning with the logical question of the progression between the finite and the infinite, and the latter's distinction from plurality, sound is introduced as an example. "Sound, which passes out through the mouth of each and all of us, is one, and yet again it is infinite in number" (*Philebus,* 17b; trans. Fowler 1925: 223), proposes Socrates. Thus, in the case of both the grammarian and the musician, the mastery of their respective disciplines comes from the "knowledge of the number and nature of the sounds" (*Philebus,* 17b; trans. Fowler 1925: 223).

[23] Which remains unclear ever after "both mind and pleasure were set aside; neither of them is the absolute good, since they are devoid of self-sufficiency (*autarkeia*), adequacy (*hikanon*), and perfection (*teleon*)" (*Philebus*, 67a; trans. Fowler 1925).

Socrates goes further in characterizing which knowledge is required of the musician, by stating: “when you have grasped the number and quality of the intervals of the voice in respect to high and low pitch, and the limits of the intervals, and all the combinations derived from them […] with the traditional name of harmonies, and also the corresponding effects in the movements of the body, which they say are measured by numbers and must be called rhythms and measures […] you have become a musician” (*Philebus,* 17c-e; trans. Fowler 1925: 225).

1.3.1. Thinking voice as mixture through a double pendular movement

After such a complete and synthetic description of the knowledge that is at stake in the art of music, we can easily understand why it would be a prime example of how to build a unity of knowledge from the knowledge of its finite parts. Socrates himself sums it up plainly, in the face of Protarchus and Philebus’ perplexity, by saying that “if a person begins with some unity or other, he must, as I was saying, not turn immediately to infinity, but to some definite number; now just so, conversely, when he has to take the infinite first, he must not turn immediately to the one, but must think of some number which possesses in each case some plurality, and must end by passing from all to one” (*Philebus,* 18a-b; trans. Fowler 1925: 225).

He proceeds by presenting the example of the alphabet, or better put, its mythological origin as a creation of the Egyptian ibis-headed god Theuth (a god frequently found similar in attributes and achievements to the Greek god Hermes).

According to the philosopher, Theuth is credited with observing that “sound was infinite, he was the first to notice that the vowel sounds in that infinity were not one, but many, and again that there were other elements which were not vowels but did have a sonant quality” (*Philebus,* 18b; trans. Fowler 1925: 227). Subsequently, the god “perceiving, however, that none of us could learn any of them alone by itself without learning them all, and considering that this was a common bond which made them in a way all one, he assigned to them all a single science and called it

grammar" (*Philebus,* 18c-d; trans. Fowler 1925: 227). This one example seems to mitigate Protarchus and Philebus' doubts concerning the "reciprocal relations of the one and the many" (*Philebus,* 18d; trans. Fowler 1925: 227), and together, they move on to the matter of applying this recently earned insight to the ongoing discussion between the composite, or otherwise, natures of pleasure and wisdom.

In what way is the voice, as the "sound, which passes out through the mouth of each and all of us" (*Philebus*, 17b), explicitly brought into the discussion of the dynamic movements between the finite and infinite in the realm of thought as a gatherer and a divider?

When Socrates points out the two methods of thought, namely "a movement from unity to indeterminate nature which has been exemplified from 17a6-e5 and an opposite (*to enantion*) movement from the indeterminate to unity (see 18a6-b4)" (Benson, 2009, p. 5), it appears that voice, having been described as both indeterminate and one[24], is presented as being intrinsically paradoxical.

This apparent contradiction can be resolved by "considering the thing [voice] as a unity and moving toward the plurality until all of the intermediates are completely laid out and determined, or one can start by considering the thing [voice] as an indeterminate plurality (as Theuth did) and moving toward the unity, again until all of the intermediates are completely laid out and determined" (Benson, 2009, p. 5). This is to be understood as a pendular movement of thought, taking place within a continuous spectrum, voice on one hand moving from indeterminate sound to linguistic determination in one direction, and from the unity of musical experience into a grammar of distinct musical components in the other[25].

[24] "Sound, which passes out through the mouth of each and all of us, is one, and yet again it is infinite in number" (*Philebus,* 17b; trans. Fowler 1925: 223).

[25] "According to Socrates, Theuth began by "notic[ing] the indeterminacy of vocal sound" (18b6), and after distinguishing the vowels, from the semi-vowels, and from mutes, named them all 'element', the single link that makes them all one and knowledge of which is called 'grammatical *technê*' (18c3-d2). Contrast what Socrates says in the Theuth example, with what he says about the example of music which precedes 18a6-b4. In the case of music the process apparently began by noticing sound as one (17c2), but leading to distinctions, e.g. low, high, and equal pitch, before arriving directly at the indeterminate plurality. These examples together with the transition passage between them suggest that Plato means to be contrasting two movements of thought - one from unity to indeterminate and one from indeterminate to unity" (Benson, 2009, p. 5).

We find therefore that the kind of paradox that voice rests in is that of mixture[26]. Voice appears not so much as a conflagration of incompatible elements, but as a cohabitation of that which is distinct yet placeable in a spectrum of continuity. Each voice carries forth in a two-fold way, as a movement from unity towards plurality in its "musical" character as sheer mass of sound and acoustic potential, and as a movement from indeterminate plurality to unity in its "grammatical" sense.

1.3.2. Rhapsodic mania and voice as acoustic possession

Socrates' recurrence of examples bounding language and sound, be it musical or phonetical-grammatical, is by now starting to become familiar, and so we move on to references present in *Ion,* where Socrates engages the rhapsode[27], or he who ventures in the art of "stitching together" (*rhapsōidein*) songs, of the same name in a discussion of the nature of his lyrical art, and what kind of knowledge does it afford both practitioner and audience.

Ion specialized in performing the poetry of Homer, and in this dialogue, the discussion is sparked by Socrates admitting that the reason he admires, and even envies, rhapsodes so much is their "necessity of being conversant with a number of good poets, and especially with Homer, the best and divinest poet of all, and of apprehending his thought and not merely learning off his words […] since a man cannot be a good rhapsode without understanding what the poet says" (*Ion,* 530c; trans. Lamb 1925: 409). Thus does this dialogue begin, with a criticism veiled in praise, with a strong hint of irony.

The dialogue progresses with Socrates suggesting, against Ion's own less humble view of his own art[28], that there is a difference between the mastery of

[26] See (C. C. W. Taylor, 2012).
[27] Consult (West, 2010) and (Jankauskas, 2009) for historical context.
[28] "Ion - What you say is true, Socrates: I at any rate have found this the most laborious part of my art; and I consider I speak about Homer better than anybody, for neither Metrodorus of Lampsacus, nor Stesimbrotus of Thasos, nor Glaucon, nor any one that the world has ever seen, had so many and such fine comments to offer on Homer as I have" (*Ion,* 530c-d; trans. Lamb 1925: 409).

lyricism and the mastery of the crafts and skills inherent in the themes which are expressed lyrically, and that the rhapsode should not confuse the ability to move others through the reciting of poetry with the very grasp of whatever specific knowledge the poets is referring to.

Socrates then suggests that what inhabits the rhapsode while performing is actually a kind of "divine power" (*dýnamis*) that operates like a stone known as "magnet" (*magnḗtis líthos*). Socrates then recounts how "this stone not only attracts iron rings, but also imparts to them a power whereby they in turn are able to do the very same thing as the stone, and attract other rings" (*Ion,* 533d-e; trans. Lamb 1925: 421).

This contagious quality of poetic inspiration is the very essence of the Muse's work, according to Socrates. He states: "the Muse inspires men herself[29], and then by means of these inspired persons the inspiration (*enthousiasmos*) spreads to others, and holds them in a connected chain (*hormatos*)" (*Ion,* 533e; trans. Lamb 1925: 421). This inspiration, literally this enthusiasm, is likened to possession "for all the good epic poets utter all those fine poems not from art (*techné*)[30], but as inspired and possessed (*entheoi*[31] *ontes kai katechomenoi*)" (*Ion,* 533e; trans. Lamb 1925: 421). In the same way "the lyric poets do not indite those fine songs in their senses, but when they have started on the melody and rhythm they begin to be frantic, and it is under possession […] that the soul of the lyrics poet does the same thing" (*Ion,* 534a; trans. Lamb 1925: 421).

[29] Otherwise "Not 'the Muse herself' (Lamb, Saunders, Allen), but 'la Muse par elle-même', (Méridier), 'à elle-même' (Canto), i.e. without help, just like the magnetic stone. For *autos* 'von selbst, sua sponte' see K-G 1, 652 Anm. 2" (Rijksbaron, 2007, p. 168).

[30] "The poet cannot claim to be both transmitter and interpreter. Dispossessed of any creativity, a mere transmitter, the poet cannot interpret and explain the god-poet's [Homer] speeches. [...] The poet's hermeneutics is nothing but receiving, transmitting and, accordingly, reproducing the divine speeches. [...] Plato does not admit an investigative *hermêneia*: transmission excludes interpretation, contrary to Pindar's claim, which Plato puts in Ion's mouth (535a5). More precisely, the Platonic test of the poet's definition as hermeneutist leads to the definition of poetic hermeneutics as a transmission, which does not have a status of *technê*" (Collobert, 2011, p. 46).

[31] "The Greek *entheos* literally means "within is a god" or "in god". This indwelling *theos* (not unlike the Egyptian *ba* in its simulated sacred receptacle) speaks from the person (or from the animated cultic statue) in a strange voice, sometimes resembling the so-called "language of the birds" or the primordial noise of the creative sound" (Uzdavinys, 2011, p. 14).

According to Socrates, inspiration comes therefore to he who gives up possession of himself[32] and is "put out of his senses and his mind is no longer in him (*ekphron*)" (*Ion,* 534b; trans. Lamb 1925: 423) – and thus, this temporary madness where lyrical creation takes place is achieved not by art but by "divine dispensation (*théia moira*)" (*Ion,* 534c; trans. Lamb 1925: 423) or, in other words, "divine influence (*théia dunamei*)" (*Ion,* 534c), making all poets "merely the interpreters of the gods (*hermenes eisin ton theon*)" (*Ion,* 534e; trans. Lamb 1925: 425), and rhapsodes consequently the "interpreters of interpreters[33] (*hermeneon hermeneis*)" (*Ion,* 535a; trans. Lamb 1925: 425).

Socrates finally concludes his analysis of what is a stake in the situation of lyrical performance by returning to his metaphor of a chain of suspension, stretching form the poet as the source, through the performers of poetry, all the way to the spectators of performed poetry – an unbroken lyrical chain of contagious madness, in the guise of an aesthetic experience[34]. Those that are links in this chain are therefore as if "suspended" (*katechetai*), lifted from the ground and held by a power stronger in simile to their very bodily weight.

1.3.3. Voicing the self as vessel both empty and overflowing

In the last part of this dialogue, Socrates reveals Ion as being also under the influence of a lesser kind of madness, that of the narcissistic egotist perhaps, maybe

[32] For a discussion of inspiration in its potentially destructive manifestations as depersonalization and self-obliteration see (Koeppe, 2007).

[33] On the implicit relation between voice and interpretation: "This mediating and message-bringing process of "coming to understand" associated with Hermes is implicit in all of the three basic directions of meaning of *hermeneuein* and *hermeneia* in ancient usage. These three directions, using the verb form (*hermeneuein*) for purposes of example, are (1) *to express aloud in words,* that is, "to say"; (2) *to explain*, as in explaining a situation; and (3) *to translate*, as in the translation of a foreign tongue. All three meanings may be expressed by the English verb "to interpret", yet each constitutes an independent and significant meaning of interpretation. Interpretation, then, can refer to three rather different matters: an oral recitation, a reasonable explanation, and a translation from another language – both in Greek and in English usage" (Palmer, 1969, pp. 13-14).

[34] "This *mania* entails an ecstatic inebriation, a dismemberment of reality that is both the cause and the consequence of a traumatic experience of communication with the god. These modalities of sacred madness are not without analogy in the phenomena that surround the process of "election" in shamanistic traditions. [...] Madness is to be understood in this context as a disintegration of ordinary consciousness; it "opens up" the soul and makes it receptive to spiritual gifts" (Laude, 2005, p. 153).

with a hint of self-deception in the best of cases or of straight dishonesty in the worse – Ion returns again to insisting in how being a good rhapsode qualifies him to be that which he sings about, such as being a general (*Ion,* 540d; trans. Lamb 1925: 445) – but this confusion does not fall under the scope of our interest in this dialogue, except as a reminder of the dizzying effect of lyrical possession, and how hard it is to come down from it, back into being a mere dispossessed human[35] with a voice that stands vacant waiting for the return of the Muse.

Concluding, in *Ion* we find resonance in the captivating, maddening and contagious example of the "divine madness" that besets the poets when we becomes as if suspended in the power of the Muse-source.

This brings us to the one element in voice that connects reciprocity and listening, which the permeability of the sonic experience of the voice. This permeability can, again, enact itself in relation to semantic content, but also to the impact of the experience of the sonic envelope of a resonating voice.

In *Ion*, the rhapsode becomes so affected by giving himself up to become the embodiment of the lyrical experience, that he confuses his role with that of the bearer of specific knowledge. The rhapsode's art is that of captivating, of maneuvering the melody of words to entice the listener's sensibility. In his case, the stream of voice that passes through his lips is meant to overpower and wash along the spirits of an audience, holding their attention, suspending their *logos*-in-process in the spellbinding artifice of song.

This being under "divine influence (*théia dunamei*)" (*Ion*, 534c; trans. Lamb 1925: 423), also considered as a "divine dispensation (*théia moira*)" (*Ion*, 534c; trans. Lamb 1925: 423), which would point towards a certain something that is afforded to every single individual, and that, in the right circumstances, may be activated into a higher degree of manifestation. This can be understood as indicating a dormant element in the vocality of each and every one that can, according to a certain kind of permeability to an external overpowering influence, as that of the "gods", bring

[35] "the inspired poets and rhapsodes are not "in their mind" (*emphrones*); they loose the faculty of prudential reasoning and become like puppets in the hands of god" (Laude, 2005, p. 153).

forth the highest potential for resonance, and be appropriated by others as if it had sprouted unchallenged in one's own person.

We read the exceptionality of the lyrical possession at stake in *Ion* to be also compatible with certain dimensions in everyday, non-exceptional uses of the voice. The experience of resonating (as a state of reverberation where the self and the source somehow both do and do not coincide[36]), of falling under another's influence, of being aware of one's own potential to sway another are quite present in everyday situations, much more so when the everyday implies a relationship to philosophical inquiry.

Ion, a peculiar and brief dialogue piece, might help us to introduce later on a more detailed description of the role of the interplay of voices in intersubjectivity and the dimensions of identity and relating to the other. For now we let Plato rest, and turn towards Aristotle in our effort to highlight the potential pathways of dealing philosophically with a questioning centered on the voice.

[36] "Accordingly, the poet, as the rhapsode, does not really "understand" what he conveys. In this respect, it is quite revealing that the words which define the epistemological status of the poet in the concluding page of the treatise, *meden eidos* ("knowing nothing"), refer to the root of the verb *oida* ("to know, to see") which is also akin to *eidos* and *idea* ("form" or "archetype"). If we are mindful of the implications of these lexical indications, it would appear that, when envisaged from the standpoint of divine possession, poetry is indeed unrelated to eidetic contemplation. While the eye of the intellect is the organ of noetic knowledge, it is, however, not referred to as the organ of poetic consciousness. In fact, no such organ appears to be postulated by Plato, and the connotations of the term "possession" would rather lead us to infer that the poet, as the rhapsode, is "inspired" in his whole being, and not only through a given organ or faculty" (Laude, 2005, pp. 153-154).

2. Aristotle – voice as animated and something among all things

Two pervading qualities of Aristotle's philosophical work, as it has reached us, are the variety of its scope of interest and the encyclopedic ambition of its cataloguing style. Inquiring into not only the dynamics of the mind and, but also the worldliness of the world – from dreams to the weather, from plant life to mechanical problems, from colours to breath, from fish to physiognomy – what seems to have driven the Aristotelian "project" is a kind of radical all-encompassing curiosity.

If voice is something, it is not only something among other things, a specialized sound among other sounds, but it is also something among all things. This not only means that a broad understanding of the world – we both are and inhabit as a constellation of related and relational phenomena – would be lacking without an inquiry into voice, but that the kind of radical curiosity one finds in Aristotle's work is a kind of topological curiosity that operates under the principle of necessity.

If things are as they are, and they are in such a way as to invite questioning and classification, then, accordingly, we seem to be so constituted as to possess both the agency, the ability and the need to effect that classification. The need to exert a radical topological curiosity, meaning, locating things in their proper place in the ordering of the world, and recognize the criteria and principles that both ascertain that location, and how they situate something in relation first to something else, and eventually, to everything else[37].

The only place to start is *in media res*. Thus, in our inquiry into voice, we will briefly move through specific nexus points in Aristotle's work, where voice is treated explicitly, while trying to unveil its accompanying implicit context in the broader field of philosophical inquiry. This is carried out not only as an exertion of topological

[37] For a related notion see the discussion of Aristotle's principle of non-supervenience (Physics) understood as "a principle that precludes a given whole from having a certain property if there is any partition of that whole into parts such that the parts, individually, do not possess the property in question" (M. J. White, 1993, p. 143).

curiosity, but also as an exercise of resonant mapping, trying to sound out core holistic questions by means of caring for its fragments.

2.1.1. *De Audibilibus*, or locating voice as bodily and tangible

We start with a reported minor work of dubious authorship[38], nonetheless assuredly produced by the Peripatetic School, *De Audibilibus* (*Peri akouston*/"On Things Heard"), which is a small, compact and synthetic treatise dedicated exclusively to sound as related to voice and hearing, yet dealing "rather with the mechanics of sound production, than either its scientific or philosophical explanation" (Hett, 1936, p. 49).

Immediately, in its opening lines, sound is recognized as product of movement, as a resonant choreography of bodies engaging with each other, where "all voices and in fact all sounds arise either from bodies falling (*psophus*) on bodies, or from air falling on bodies" (*De Audibilibus*, 800a; trans. Hett 1936: 51). This happens more concretely due to air "being moved in the same way as bodies, by contraction, expansion and compression[39], and also by knocking together owing to the striking of the breath and by musical strings" (*De Audibilibus*, 800a5; trans. Hett 1936: 51).

This description of sound as a percussive and violently expansive [40] choreographic event happens, moreover, in a spatial continuum where sounds occur

[38] "What we have is a fairly long extract from a book of the same name incorporated in Porphyry's commentary on Ptolemy's *Harmonica*. Porphyry believed that the original was by Aristotle, and tells us that he had condensed it because of its length. Modern scholars however are agreed that it is spurious; the only dissentients have been TRENDELENBURG in 1833 and DÜRING in 1932, and DÜRING changed his mind two years later. But there has been no such unanimity as to the autor's possible identity. BRANDIS attributed it to Strato; he was followed by DIELS, CAPELLE, DÜRING (in 1934) and less confidently by the Oxford translators. V. JAN ascribed it to Heracleides Ponticus'. Others have been more cautious. ZELLER, while admitting that there is some evidence to connect the book with Strato, did not consider it conclusive. SUSEMIHL says that it must be by the same author as the *De Coloribus*, but without suggesting a name; he is followed by REGENBOGEN, who thinks that the author of both works must be either Theophrastus or Strato" (Gottschalk, 1968, p. 28).

[39] This description can be interpreted to conform, at least conceptually, to modern wave theory in acoustics, see (Lindsay, 1973, pp. 21-24).

[40] "For when the breath that falls on it strikes the air with successive blows, the air is immediately moved violently, thrusting forward the air next to it, so that the same sound stretches in every

as layered in gradual levels of intensity – "but those sounds are faint and fogged which are throttled down; when they are clear they stretch a long way and fill all space which is continuous" (*De Audibilibus*, 800a15; trans. Hett 1936: 51) – which seems to present an early notion of space as sonorously attuned[41].

The production of the sound that is voice is equally described in terms which point to the very phonatory apparatus as localized organic choreography in smaller scale, the variations of sound present in the voice being attained by "the blows of the air and the shapes assumed by the mouth" (*De Audibilibus*, 800a20; trans. Hett 1936: 53). So far, voice seems to be described only in so far as it is a moveable mass of air, breath and sound being subject to the same laws of reach, impact and strength as any other parts of the body[42], and sonorous potential being defined in the same terms as physical elasticity[43].

The critical question of source and location is introduced in relation to voice when the author states that "voices appear to come to us from the places in which they are produced (*ekastai gigeontai topos*), but we hear them only when they fall on our hearing (*akoé*)" (*De Audibilibus*, 801a20; trans. Hett 1936: 57). This distinction between the locative content of our hearing and the actual experiencing of the *akoumenon*is an essential one, and it will be discussed at length in Part II of this inquiry. It is formulated here in terms that translate almost directly into contemporary phenomenological analysis of the experience of sound[44], even if in *De Audibilibus*, the explicit example given as an analogy to how our hearing interpret the location of sound, is not sonorous or strictly spatial but a visual one – how in a painting, being a single surface of representation, the shaded composition of

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direction, as far as the movement of the air extends. For the violence of the movement extends beyond its own range, just as breezes do, which arise both from rivers and from the land" (*De Audibilibus*, 800a10-15; trans. Hett 1936: 51).

[41] A notion to be discussed later in this inquiry as introduced by (Ströker, 1987).

[42] "For this contributes to making the blow of the breath strong, when the lung contracting after a considerable expansion drives out the air violently. This is evident; for none of the other parts of the body can deliver a violent blow from a short distance. For it is impossible to strike violently with the leg or the hand, nor to strike and drive an object a long distance, unless one takes a considerable distance for the blow in each case" (*De Audibilibus*, 800b5-10; trans. Hett 1936: 53).

[43] "Otherwise the blow may be a hard one owing to the tension, but the object struck cannot be forced a long way off, since neither the catapult, nor the sling, nor the bow can shoot a great distance, if they are hard and cannot bend, nor if the bowstring cannot be drawn back over a large space" (*De Audibilibus*, 800b15; trans. Hett 1936: 53-54).

[44] See Part II, chapter 4, sections 4.1, 4.4 and 4.5.

different colours allows for a notion of relative distance, or chromatic perspective, for the objects represented as being near or far[45].

The next thematic turn in *De Audibilibus* veers almost into musicology, by introducing a discussion (801b-802b30) of the specific sounds made by string and wind instruments, using the term "voice" indiscriminately, whether it refers to melodic voices in the context of harmony, the declamatory quality of human voices or the individual timbre of selected instruments, and betraying an anti-choral preference for the unmixed quality of pure sounds, those which do not lend themselves to be confused with others sounding simultaneously.

The last nexus that is found in the *De Audibilibus* is a descriptive classification of voice qualities, such as "weak" or "thin" (*leptos phone*) (803b18), "thick" or "robust" (*pacheiai phone*) (804a9), "shrill" (*puknai phone*) (804a22) and "cracked" or broken" (*sathrai phone*) (804a33). The main criteria for the variation of the voice quality is pneumatic, stressing how the behavior and quality of breath is the main element defining the acoustic presence of the voice.

Constant parallels are drawn between the amount and quality of the flow of breath, and how the shape of inanimate objects, be they intrinsically musical or not, illustrates this analogically. For example, weak voices are considered to be "light when the issuing breath is slight" (*De Audibilibus*, 803b18; trans. Hett 1936: 73), and this fragility "is evident in the case of strings; for from thin ones light sounds proceed and narrow and hair-like, because the striking of the air occurs in a narrow space" (*De Audibilibus*, 803b25; trans. Hett 1936: 73); or "thick voices on the other hand are just the opposite, when much breath is emitted all at once; consequently the sounds that men make are deeper than those of perfect pipes, and more so when one fills them with wind" (*De Audibilibus*, 804a10; trans. Hett 1936: 75), which corresponds to what happens in the instrument "if one presses on the mouthpieces, the sound becomes sharper and thinner. And if one draws down the pipes and stops them by

[45] "So also in the case of painting, when one reproduces similarly in colours what is far away and what is close at hand, the former seems to us to retreat from the picture and the latter to stand out, though they are really both on the same surface. So also in the case of sounds and voices, when one falls on the hearing from a distance and the other continuously, although both reach the same place, one appears to occur far away from the hearing and the other to be close by, because one is as if it were distant and the other near by" (*De Audibilibus*, 801a35-40; trans. Hett 1936: 59).

pressure, the swelling of the sound becomes greater owing to the quantity of air, just as from thicker strings" (*De Audibilibus*, 804a15; trans. Hett 1936: 75).

The description of the quality of sound and voice in relation to breath, as presented in *De Audibilibus*, though mostly mechanistically empirical in terms used, does present a notion of continuity between breath and space as, respectively, material and vessel for the production of sound, which inaugurates an expanded sense of converging bodily and spatial acoustics.

Both voicing and hearing[46] appear as processes that are co-natural in their working principles to the very sonorous environment they are immersed in, somewhat mirroring external *akoumena* via their own natural tuning capabilities, and underlining how voice represents interiority manifesting itself into the encompassing acoustic situation.

2.1.2. *De Anima* – on hearing and sounding between potential and actual

In Aristotle's *De Anima* we find voice to be defined as the sound produced by an animate creature[47], having a soul being the defining property of a voice bearer[48] (*De Anima*, 420b; trans. Hett 1957: 115-117). Inanimate things are said not to have a voice but to be metaphorically able to "give voice (*legetai phonein*)" (*De Anima*, 420b5; trans. Hett 1957: 117), as in the case of an instrument, or any other

[46] "The sounds falling on the ear will correspond to the sources of motion which the blows on the air have; according to them they will be thin or thick, soft or hard, light or heavy. For as one portion of air successively moves another, it makes the whole sound of a character similar to itself, just as is true in the case of high or low pitch; for the rapidity with which one blow succeeds another preserves the character of the sound similar to its origin" (*De Audibilibus*, 803b25-35; trans. Hett 1936: 73).

[47] "For Aristotle the world of nature is not an external realm of mathematical necessity opposed to an inner realm of spirit and freedom. As he explains in *Physics* II.1, for something to have a nature is for it to be guided by an internal principle of motion and rest (192b21-23). This nature of the thing is properly its form; in living things, at least, it is the form that guides the development from inside (193b6-8). On the Soul [*De Anima*] makes clear that, for living things, that formal principle is what we mean by soul. To be alive is to be continually oriented toward and engaged in sustaining, enacting and fulfilling that form in its suitable material" (Shiffman, 2011, p. 20).

[48] According to Aristotle, "voice is the sound produced by a creature possessing a soul (*enpsychos*); for inanimate things never have a voice; they can only metaphorically be said to give voice (*legetai phonein*), *e.g.,* a flute or a lyre, and all the other inanimate things which have a musical compass, and tune, and modulation" (*De Anima*, 420b5; trans. Hett 1957: 115-117).

inanimate thing with which not only sound can be produced, but also modulated or musical sound.

Non-musical sounds are therefore excluded from the realm of voice, according to Aristotle, but the intrinsic bond between soul and vocality is clearly emphasized, as well as the indirect influence of the voice in objects that might lend themselves to be ventriloquized[49].

This indication of soul as a pre-condition for vocality appears in Book II of the *De Anima*, in the context of a discussion of sensation (*aísthēsis*[50]) and the distinction between the specificity of the human senses[51].

After defining sensation as consisting "in being moved (*kinesthai*) and acted upon" (*De Anima*, 416b32; trans. Hett 1957: 95), Aristotle proceeds to expand on this by introducing the distinction between "potentiality" (*dunamis*) and "actuality" (*entelecheia*), concluding that "the term sensation must be used in two senses" for "to perceive means both to possess the faculty (*to te dunamei*) and to exercise it (*to energeia*)" (*De Anima*, 414a4; trans. Hett 1957: 97).

This double sense of how sensation is constituted is reflected in the dual understanding of the notion *koine aísthēsis*, commonly translated somewhat deceivingly by "common sense"[52], and which fulfills two roles, the first is "to combine the different modalities (*koine dunamis*) of specific senses (*aisthesis idia*) like hearing, touching, seeing, etc.; the second is to accompany each sensation with the awareness of the sensation itself" (Chung, Fulford, & Graham, 2007, p. 134).

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[49] For a discussion of ventriloquism as a model for displacement of the voice in philosophical terms see (Dolar, 2006, pp. 70-71).

[50] "Aristotle distinguishes between *aisthesis*, the act of intuition, and *aistheton*, that which is intuited: the color red is distinct from the seeing of red colors. Animals have *aisthesis*, an ability, given by the nature of their vital functioning, to orient witl1in their life's context, they have organs that make it possible. It is, we could say, the ability to reproduce an objective quality, an external object. There is a certain agreement between the object and the image. *Aisthesis* is the ability to accept and contain within oneself a certain *eidos*, a semblance devoid of a material substance" (Patočka & Dodd, 1998, p. 21).

[51] Consult (Modrak, 1981) and (Hamlyn, 1968) for a detailed contextualization of the uses of the notion *aísthēsis* as sensory perception.

[52] A translation that must be taken literally as meaning *a sense that is a nexus for all the senses, a sense of unified sensation* and not in the way the expression has developed into everyday use in English language.

The first role is required because the specificity of each sense would manifest a fragmented gap of awareness, or a cloud of disassembled impressions, instead of an object, like an apple, which operates as a unified nexus that weighs, smells, sounds when bitten into, looks red and feels round in the palm of the hand, while being perceived as one single thing. The second role of *koine aísthēsis* is more subtle, it is "to accompany each sensation with the awareness of the sensation itself (*De Anima* 425b, 427a), since this awareness cannot belong to one specific sense organ (*De Somno*, 2, 455a, 13)" (Chung et al., 2007, p. 134).

It must be noted that despite this double unifying principle of sensation, "being affected is not a single thing either; it is first a kind of destruction of something by its contrary, and second it is rather the preservation of that which is so potentially by that which is so actually and is like it in the way that a potentiality may be like an actuality" (*De Anima*, 417b2).

An illustration of this quote can be made by a transposition into sonic terms. Being affected by a sound, let us say a given unexpected noise, can only happen if there is a state of expectant silence, which needs not be absolute but only diverse enough in order of quietness from that noise, in order to experience it as an affection. This pocket of awareness constituted by this expectant silence is then converted into a noise brought into the very "same" pocket of awareness.

Or in other words, because there is both an absence of sound in the ear as locus of hearing, and an expectant aptitude for being affected by sound, then the affection occur when a transaction of sorts takes place between the potential for sound and the actual sounding which both fulfills and replaces that potential with the actuality it held as possibility.

Thus, according to Aristotle, "since the activity of the object of perception and of that which can perceive is one, though what it is for them to be such is not the same, the hearing and sound which are so spoken of must be simultaneously destroyed and simultaneously preserved, and so too for flavour and taste" (*De Anima*, 426a15; trans. Hett 1957: 147-149).

When re-applied specifically to sound and hearing, this principle show us that "if then the movement, that is, the acting and being acted upon, takes place in that which is acted upon, then the sound and the hearing in a state of activity must reside in the potential hearing; for the activity of what is moving and active takes place in what is being acted upon" (*De Anima*, 426a2; trans. Hett 1957: 147-149), which brings us to consider that "the activity, then, of the object producing sound (*psophos*) is sound, or sonance (*psophesis*), and of that producing hearing (*akoustikou*) is hearing or audition (*akousis*), for hearing is used in two senses, and so is sound" (*De Anima*, 426a2; trans. Hett 1957: 147-149).

This understanding of sensation as reciprocity is further underlined by his distinction of the "actual sound (*psophos hê kat' energeian*)" and the "actual hearing (*akoé hê kat' energeian*)" (*De Anima*, 425b26; trans. Hett 1957: 147) "for it is possible for one who possesses hearing not to hear, and that which has sound is not always sounding" (*De Anima*, 425b26; trans. Hett 1957: 147). In truth, the necessary reciprocity of sensation happens only "when that which has the power of hearing is exercising its power (*to dunamenon akouein*), and that which can sound is sound (*to dunamenon psophein*), then the active hearing and the active listening occur together" (*De Anima*, 425b26; trans. Hett 1957: 147).

Aristotle then moves on to a more detailed discussion of each sense, which brings us to his further remarks on sound and hearing, where the first direct quote about the voice appears.

2.1.3. *De Anima*, *Parva Naturalia*, *Politics* and *De Interpretatione* – voice as the sound of the spirited living creature

A cautioning observation suggests that "voice, then, is a sound made by a living animal, and that not with any part of it indiscriminately" (*De Anima*, 420b5; trans. Hett 1957: 117), which is important "for as we have said, not every sound made by a living creature is a voice (for one can make a sound even with the tongue,

or as in coughing), but that which even causes the impact, must have a soul[53], and use some imagination; for the voice is a sound which means something, and is not merely indicative of air inhaled, as a cough is" (*De Anima*, 420b27; trans. Hett 1957: 119).

Here we have voice as the meaningful sound produced by an animate being, which however, we are reminded, does not exhaust the beings full possibility of expression through all manners of other sounds, being however voice the specificity of the soulful sonic manifestation.

Furthermore, it is made clear that the use and manifestation of the human voice is essential in the sense that "articulate speech is an aid to living well (*hermeneia heneka tou eu*)" (*De Anima*, 420b20; trans. Hett 1957: 117), which could be said also of other animals that also possess "other senses, as has been said, not for mere existence but for well-being; (…) and hearing that it may have significant sounds made to it, and a tongue that it may make significant sounds to another animal" (*De Anima*, 435b19; trans. Hett 1957: 203).

Man as vocal animal. Such a definition, though condemned to be but a glimmer reflecting off of a facet of a very complexly and irregularly carved stone, can definitely be withstood as passing in light of the traces gathered so far in our current inquiry. How voice and in a broader context sound, through hearing, is extremely advantageous to a fully developed and enacted human life is taken up again by Aristotle, this time in his *Parva Naturalia,* where a certain hierarchy of faculties is proposed.

"Of these faculties, for the mere necessities of life and in itself, sight is the more important, but for the mind and indirectly hearing is the most important" (*Parva Naturalia*, 437a5; trans. Hett 1957: 219), proposes Aristotle, and he justifies it by stating further that even if "hearing only conveys differences of sound, and to a few animals differences of voice" (*Parva Naturalia*, 437a10; trans. Hett 1957: 219), still "indirectly, hearing makes the largest contribution to wisdom (*phronesis*)" (*Parva Naturalia*, 437a10; trans. Hett 1957: 219), and this is so because "discourse

[53] For a broader discussion of the role of the notion of "soul" in Aristotle consult (Charlton, 1980), (Miller Jr, 1999), (Boer, 2012) and (Van Riel & Destrée, 2010).

(*logos*), which is the cause of learning, is so because it is audible (*tes patheseos akoustos*); but it is audible not in itself but indirectly, because speech is composed of words, and each word is a rational symbol" (*Parva Naturalia*, 437a15; trans. Hett 1957: 219). This brings Aristotle to the polemic conclusion that "of those who have been deprived of one sense or the other from birth, the blind are more intelligent than the deaf and the dumb" (*Parva Naturalia*, 437a15; trans. Hett 1957: 219).

These two notions we have touched upon – that of spoken word, or speech, as a vessel for exchange as a carrier of rational symbols, and that of the essential role of voice in the fulfilling of the plenitude of human life, or actually as chief characteristic in defining humanity itself – are found recurring in Aristotle's *De Interpretatione* and *Politics*, respectively.

In the Book I of the latter, we find a well-known quote that synthetizes the essential role of voice in humans. So states Aristotle in *Politics*: "And why man is a political animal (*anthropos physei politikon zoon*) in a greater measure than any bee or any gregarious animal is clear. For nature, as we declare, does nothing without purpose; and man alone of the animals possesses speech" (*Politics*, 1253a; trans. Rackham 1932: 11).

This distinction is further reinforced by acknowledging that "the mere voice, it is true, can indicate pain and pleasure, and therefore is possessed by the other animals as well […] but speech is designed to indicate the advantageous (*to sumpheron*) and the harmful (*to blaberon*), and therefore also the right (*to dikaion*) and the wrong (*to adikon*)" (*Politics*, 1253a; trans. Rackham 1932: 11). This leads to the conclusion that "it is the special property of man in distinction from the other animals[54] that he alone has perception of good and bad and right and wrong and the other moral qualities, and it is partnership in these things that makes a household and a city-state" (*Politics*, 1253a; trans. Rackham 1932: 11), which of course reads as quite adequate in an introduction to a study centered on the notion of political community.

[54] For a contemporary and historical understanding of the problematic terms of distinction between man and animal consult (Crane, 2012), (Lippit, 2010) and (Rasmussen, 2011).

A voice capable of sounding meaningfully is therefore the requisite for a life in community, for the opening of the access between the individual and the plural. What is created is a kind of public sonorous participate space, an acoustic *Agorá,* where diversity and the dynamics of diverse interests are to be choreographed and sounded out.

The former question of voice as a vessel of speech, meaning a transit of rational thoughts, on the other hand, appears at length in *De Interpretatione* (*Peri Hermeneias*)[55]*,* but most intensely in the very early Chapters I and II. Here the question of speech, language and sound is introduced through a grammatical inquiry into a definition of the parts of speech: namely, nouns, verbs, denial, affirmation, proposition and sentence.

Aristotle starts by stating that "words spoken are symbols or signs of affections or impressions of the soul (*to psyche pathematon sumbola*); written words are the signs of words spoken" (*De Interpretatione*, 16a4-6; trans. Cook 1938: 115).

This tremendous hierarchical simplification – from the original muted thought residing in the soul, from the sonorous as a symbol signifying the muted, to the written down as the spoken on paper – does little to engage the complexity of the articulation between inner dialogue and vocal expression that we have already discussed at length.

Even more so, Aristotle quickly dispatches vocal uniqueness as being a mere property of specific languages, not reflecting the universality of the movements of the soul. Or in his own words "as writing, so also is speech not the same for all races of men" (*De Interpretatione*, 16a6-7; trans. Cook 1938: 115), still, and most importantly, "the mental affections themselves, of which these words are primarily signs, are the same for the whole of mankind, as are also the objects of which those

[55] "The noun *hermeneia* (or the verb *hermeneuo*) in Aristotle has a generic meaning and two specifications. Generically it means expression, manifestation, or communication (*semainein*). In increasingly determinate specification it can then mean: verbal *semainein*, called *lexis* or *dialectos*; and declarative verbal *semainein*, called *apophansis* or *logos apophantikos*. That is: hermeneia-1 [*semainein*]: self-expression or communication in any form; hermeneia-2 [*legein*]: self-expression or communication in discourse; hermeneia-3 [*apophainesthai*]: self-expression or communication in declarative sentences" (Sheehan, 1988, p. 71).

affections are representations or likenesses (*homoiomata*), images, copies (*pragmata eide*" (*De Interpretatione*, 16a7-10; trans. Cook 1938: 115).

For Aristotle then, it is becoming apparent how voice is both the essential manifestation of soul and a completely arbitrary sonic phenomenon. Voice is presented as a mere vessel for signification, its value and relevant being its symbolic effectiveness as speech carrier, and effectiveness determined in purely conventional terms.

This contrast between the universality of the contents of the soul and the plurality of its expression reminds us of the path trodden in Plato's *Cratylus*, between convention and nature, and the difficult balance in conceiving a language equally indebted to both.

Pursuing this grammatical inquiry we are reminded that we are dealing with the vocal in Aristotle's proposals of definition of noun and verb. A noun is defined as being "a sound having meaning established by convention alone but no reference whatever to time (*phone semantike kata suntheken aneu chronon*), while no part of it has any meaning, considered apart from the whole" (*De Interpretatione*, 16a20; trans. Cook 1938: 117). A verb on the other hand is a "sound which not only conveys a particular meaning but has a time-reference also (*rhema prossemainon chronon*)" (*De Interpretatione*, 16b6; trans. Cook 1938: 119).

That both these definitions present noun and verb as sounds with distinct rational contents and temporal implications is meaningful, as is the distinction implied in the assertion that "no sound is by nature a noun: it becomes one, becoming a symbol" (*De Interpretatione*, 16a25; trans. Cook 1938: 117), and accordingly, it should not be forgotten that "inarticulate noises (*agrammatoi psophoi*) mean something—for instance, those made by brute beasts. But no noises of that kind are nouns." (*De Interpretatione*, 16a25; trans. Cook 1938: 117). It seems that animal noises are even more perfect sound signs, by being mere gesturing towards a presence of some irrational sort, they are not very good symbols however, thereby cannot be considered nouns, and are, of course, left outside of the realm of language.

We are left with an introduction in the ambiguity of voice in its symbolic essentiality and sonorous irrelevance – a reversing of the important role of uniqueness in dialogue, traded off for an absolute focus on communication. We turn therefore next to the Stoics to fill this gap, especially in what refers to a particular implication of vocality when concerned with specific pronominal particles of speech, in the context of the Stoic understanding of grammar.

3. The Stoics – voice as the expression of situated meaning

The most challenging aspect of turning our attention now towards a few key aspects present in the expansive philosophical lineage of thought known as Stoicism, is that direct quotable evidence is scarce. That "Stoicism suffers severely from a lack of evidence in its crucial, formative period" (Long, 1971b, p. 1) is a familiar introductory remark in any study of Stoic thought, and this is especially disheartening when considering that both indirect sources and a reading of later Stoic authors would tantalizingly suggest that this early period – represented by early 3rd to 2nd century BC philosophers such as Zeno of Citium, Cleanthes or Chrysippus – was exceptionally copious in terms of rigorous and detailed attention paid especially to logic and physics, and of course, to the inextricable ethical implications of these[56].

The specific points we are going to raise are mostly based upon analyses found in the 1971 work *Problems in Stoicism* (ed. A. A. Long), more concretely in chapters IV and V – *Grammar and Metaphysics in the Stoa* by A. C. Lloyd and *Language and Thought in Stoicism* by A. A. Long – which in turn depend most strongly, as indirect source of quotation, on Sextus Empiricus' *Adversus Mathematicos* ("Against the Mathematicians") especially on Book VIII ("Against the Logicians"), and on remarks collected from Book VII of Diogenes Laertius' *Lives and Opinions of Eminent Philosophers*.

The reason we include early Stoic thought in our quest for an understanding of the philosophical notions implied in a consideration of voice is certainly not obvious. What we shall try to argue for is that, in the intrinsic and inseparable bonds between thought and action, between theoretical inquiry and lived experience, that so mark the integrated way in which early Stoics thought about language, thought and nature, there rises a possibility of understanding the ability to speak and listen, and the uses and play of voice, as a direct embodied manifestation of a mind in the

[56] For a broader historical contextualization of Stoic thought see (Strange & Zupko, 2004), (Inwood, 2003), (Sanchez Castro, 2015) and (Sellars, 2006).

world, tracing itself in a continuum that does not sever nature from convention, or thought from sound.

Before we can support such an ambitious statement however, let us turn our attention to some specific elements in the Stoic understanding of grammar and logic that may rest on a strong assumption of the role of a real-time sonorous vocality at stake.

3.1. *Lekton*, or the vocal manifestation of meaningful utterance

To begin with we should point to the apparently contrary fact that "Stoics divided what they called dialectic into the study of the utterance (language as sound) and the study of the utterance as meaningful (language as what is said, the *lekton*)" (Lloyd, 1971, p. 58). This distinction and the central notion of *lekton* (which we will attempt to gradual define) as the notion of the meaning of proposition, its validity and necessary anchoring in a real surrounding world in a constant present happening, is absolutely vital to the path we seek to follow in this inquiry, towards an outline for an embodied notion of speech.

We should not forget however that "on the other hand language was based according to Stoics on natural, not conventional signs[57], the study of the utterance covered questions not only of etymology, formal grammar, metre and so on, but questions of parts of speech and of rhetoric that we should have expected to fall under the *lekton*" (Lloyd, 1971, p. 58). This dialect division would therefore be an "unstable one, and was recognized as such by the Stoics, on account of their belief that there was a natural, that is intrinsic, connection between the sound or utterance and what it signified" (Lloyd, 1971, p. 60).

[57] It should be noted however that, in the Stoic view, "the 'naturalness' of names consists, then, in their suitability for communication with others; though it presupposes a mimetic relation between words and certain kinds of objects, it is not confined to onomatopoetics; instead it makes use of other means to augment language by associations and rational derivations of further expressions that are gradually added to the original stock of words" (Frede & Inwood, 2005, p. 5), therefore setting it somewhat apart from the notion of naturalness postulated in the *Cratylus*.

Since “the Stoics shared Heraclitus’ belief that logos was part of nature, not something imposed on it by a human convention; they also shared his belief that it pervaded all nature, with the result that everything natural possessed some properties which it possessed” (Lloyd, 1971, p. 71), moreover “they interpreted logos more plainly, as sounds which signified by describing” (Lloyd, 1971, p. 71).

This in turn introduces the conceptual distinction between *lexis* and *logos*, where *lexis* was defined as “utterance (or sound) composed of letters”, *logos* as “significant utterance (or sound)” (Lloyd, 1971, p. 60). More concretely, as quoted from Diog. Laert. *VII* 57, we find that “It is “being significant” which distinguishes *logos* from *lexis,* and the subjects of significant discourse are “states of affairs” (*pragmata*) which are actually *lekta*” (as cited in Long, 1971a, p. 77).

This distinction can be exemplified by contemplating how “the meaning of the utterance “Dion is walking” is that Dion is walking; the utterance is a saying, so that to study what it says, the *lekton*, is to study what it is, the *logos*.” (Lloyd, 1971, p. 60). Lloyd here stresses further how ““what an expression signified was the *lekton*, and this was certainly not, according to Stoics, a thought – or certainly not what Aristotle and his followers meant by a thought, which was an act of thinking” (Lloyd, 1971, p. 65), and that since ““Dion” signified the logos which was unique to Dion” (Lloyd, 1971, p. 69), then ““this” and “that” signified by indicating , i.e. pointing to something” (Lloyd, 1971, p. 69) which leads to the conclusion that “the truth of a proposition of the form “Dion is walking” entails one of the form “this (man) is walking”” (Lloyd, 1971, p. 69).

According to Long, “on the basis of these passages it is clearly proper to translate *lekton* by “what is said” where “what is said” covers “statement” or “state of affairs” (*legetai pragmata*) signified by a word or set of words” (Long, 1971a, p. 77). Which brings us to acknowledge that “*lekta* then, at least in their complete form, mediate between words considered as significant utterances and things” (Long, 1971a, p. 79). This is in turn reinforced in Sextus *Adv. math.* VIII 80: “the Stoics distinguished between “merely uttering a noise” (*propheresthai*) and *legein,* which is to do this in such a way as to signify (*semaininein*) the state of affairs in mind” (as cited in Long, 1971a, p. 77).

Therefore, the critical underlying question is not merely if a proposition is sound in articulation of meaning, but if things are indeed as they are said to be, when they are said to be so?

3.2. A sense of negativity in language – the trace of the voice in the pronoun

This notion of *lekton* seems to stress the ability of language to point both to itself as an operative process, and beyond itself, as it moves between things and is present alongside "states of affairs", in a constant gesturing, or, in the case of voice, in a constant resounding.

That "the truth of a proposition of the form "Dion is walking" entails one of the form "this (man) is walking"" (Lloyd, 1971, p. 69), is essential here, because in grammatical terms, it moves us beyond our usual engagement with nouns and verbs as supreme representatives of *logos,* and focuses our attention on the pronominal indication, which seems to embody the very motion of language as aware of itself and of pointing constantly to a radical existent present outside of itself.

The importance of this indicative function in language, and how the sounding voice actively participates in it, are clearly stated, for example, by Italian philosopher Giorgio Agamben, when he notes how "the sphere of the utterance thus includes that which, in every speech act, refers exclusively to its taking place, to its instance, independently and prior to what is said and meant in it" (Agamben, 1991, p. 25). Thus, "pronouns and the other indicators of the utterance, before they designate real objects, indicate precisely that language takes place" (Agamben, 1991, p. 25), and that is why in the philosophical tradition "that which is always already indicated in speech without being named, is, for philosophy, being" (Agamben, 1991, p. 25).

We propose that this indicative manifestation of language, in its pronominal quality, resonates intensely with the attributive power of voice, and of the very presence it signals while it is sounding. Until it sounds vocally and is fully resonated

thought lacks being radicated in a living temporality, the very living temporality that births it and into which it occurs.

In other words, again, *lekta*, and in analogy voice, are not thoughts but "what are coexistent with (or "subsistent upon", *paryphistamena*) thoughts" (as cited in Long, 1971a, p. 80); and in Sextus, *Adv. math.* VIII 70, where we find that "*lekton* is that which is (subsists, *hyphistamenon*) correspondent to a rational presentation, and a rational presentation is one in which what is presented can be shown forth is speech" (as cited in Long, 1971a, p. 82).

Again, in Agamben's words, this is why "contemporaneity and existential relations can only be grounded in voice" (Agamben, 1991, p. 32). This is because "the utterance and the instance of discourse are only identifiable as such through the voice that speaks them, and only by attributing a voice to them can something like a taking place of discourse be demonstrated" (Agamben, 1991, p. 32).

He adds: "as a poet had understood earlier, and perhaps more clearly than the linguists (''I or me are the words associated with voice. They are like the meaning of voice itself; voice considered as a sign," P. Valery, Cahiers, I:466), he who utters, the speaker, is above all a voice" (Agamben, 1991, p. 32).

We are just touching upon briefly here on the larger question of the tension between presence and absence in voice, that following the Stoic trail has led us into.

This question comes from recognizing a conflation that is best expressed by the fact that "the centrality of the relation between being and presence in the history of Western philosophy is grounded in the fact that temporality and being have a common source in the "incessant present" of the instance of discourse" (Agamben, 1991, p. 36). This brings into play the already mentioned power that voice has of rooting oneself in living temporality. The other side of this rooting is that it exposes the lack, the rootlessness, and the absence at the heart of every utterance: that there is an immeasurable distance between the urge to express and the incapacity to hold on to anything at all, that the saying of anything is also and always a not saying of oneself in one's fullness, a not saying of all that could be said.

As Agamben states, “man is that living being who removes himself and preserves himself at the same time-as unspeakable---in language; negativity is the human means of having language” (Agamben, 1991, p. 85). Nowhere if not in voice is this unconquerable problem more explicit, as anyone of has ever attempted to speak can surely attest.

In this sense of dealing with a negativity at the core of language, and returning to the Stoic inquiry we have shifted away from, maybe the less problematic manifestation of the voice is that present in inner dialogue (given that according to Sextus, *Adv. math.* VIII 275, “the Stoics “say that man differs from irrational animals by reason of internal speech (*endiathetoi logoi*) not uttered speech (*prophorikoi logoi*), for crows and parrots and jays utter articulate sounds” (as cited in Long, 1971a, p. 87)), where the “naturally unseen” soul rests and emanates itself, through vibrating air as an acoustic manifestation, and signals its own nature and constitution, as well as the “shaping power of cosmic *logos”*, revealed by voice, as residing in each and everyone.

3.3. Voice as *logos* both performed and situated

Gradually, we come to understand how the Stoic notion of the *lekton* is of great interest to our inquiry concerning voice, not so much because of its role in propositional logic, but because it roots speech in what happens, instead of allowing for a disembodied understanding of *logos*.

This close bond between Stoic logic and Stoic ethics[58], between what is said and the concrete lived real-time situation that provides embodied context to what is said, points us to a possibility of understanding voice as the performing of *logos,* as thought becoming and not merely as thought expressed.

Accordingly, it starts to emerge a notion of *lekton* that can be best said as being the possibility of access to the grounded reality of a given proposition as

[58] A more detailed description of the terms of this bond is discussed in (Long, 1970), (N. P. White, 1979) and (Annas, 2007).

ascertainable at the moment of utterance – that in and through *lekton* is *logos* active and making sense.

We find the all of the above synthetized and clearly formulated in a lengthier quotation from Sextus, *Adv. math. VIII* 11-12:

> "True and false have been variously located in what is signified (*to semainomenon*), in speech (*phone*), and in the motion of thought. The Stoics opted for the first of these, claiming that three things are linked together, what is signified, that which signifies (*to semainon*) and the object of reference (*to tynchanon*). That which signifies is speech ("Dion"), what is signified is the specific state of affairs (*auto to pragma*) indicated by the spoken word and which we grasp as coexistent with (*paryphistamenon*) our thought but which the barbarians do not understand although they hear the sound; the object of reference is the external existent, that is, Dion himself. Of these, two are bodies, speech and the object of reference. But the state of affairs signified is not a body but a *lekton*, which is true or false." (as cited in Long, 1971a, pp. 76-77)

Here we have a direct reference to speech and the object of reference as pertaining to a different class than *lekta* or "state of affairs". These *lekta* are what can be said to be true of false, and this truth or falsity implies the existence of *that* which is expressed through speech *as* it is expressed through speech or otherwise – agreement, or coexistence, between thing and voiced thought as it is voiced, in the case of truth, disagreement, or non-coexistence, between thing and voiced thought as it is voiced, in the case of falsity.

This required coexistence between spoken word, thought and thing reveals the logical and the physical[59] as inextricably interweaved with the ethical.

Again, this point is strongly reinforced in Sextus, *Adv. math.* VIII 12, where it is stated that "*lekta* are not thoughts but "what are coexistent with (or "subsistent

[59] For an account of the basic principles guiding Stoic physics and their logical implications consult (Sambursky, 1987), (Besnier, 2003) and (Boeri, 2001).

upon", *paryphistamena*) thoughts" (as cited in Long, 1971a, p. 80); and in Sextus, *Adv. math.* VIII 70, where we find that "*lekton* is that which is (subsists, *hyphistamenon*) correspondent to a rational presentation, and a rational presentation is one in which what is presented can be shown forth is speech" (as cited in Long, 1971a, p. 82).

Let us now try to address a bit more in detail the internal process at work in the expressing and ascertaining of *lekta* or "states of affairs", by attempting to locate the role of voice in the whole process, starting with internal speech or thought conceived as meaningful internal dialogue.

3.4. The role of the inner voice in the constellation of thought processes

We have already seen that "the concept of thinking as internal discourse goes back to Plato" (Long, 1971a, p. 82), and similarly "in Stoicism it seems to mean that the processes of thoughts and the processes of linguistic communication are essentially the same" (Long, 1971a, p. 82), which means that "whether a man is thinking to himself, speaking aloud or listening to speech he requires a *phantasia:* that is to say, his mind must be affected by something, have something presented to it" (Long, 1971a, p. 82). *Phantasia*[60] would therefore be "this affection, "something which reveals itself and its cause" (Long, 1971a, p. 82).

How does *lekton* and *phantasia*[61] come together? Well, if "the specific character of a *logike phantasia* is its ability to say something, *lekton*" (Long, 1971a, p. 83) – meaning, "it can reveal by speech what is presented" (i.e. its object)" (Long, 1971a, p. 83) – then "the connection between *logike phantasia, lekton* and "the

[60] For an overview and comparative analysis of the use of the notion of *phantasia* in Plato, Aristotle and the Epicureans in relation to the Stoic notion consult (Watson, 1988), (R. Lefebvre, 1997) and (O'Gorman, 2005).

[61] The Stoic understanding of *phantasia* seems to be particularly indebted to how this notion is presented in Plato's *Theaetetus*, in the sense that "Plato's description of *phantasia* as a combination of *aisthesis* and judgement carried on in silent thought (from the *Sophist* and *Theaetetus*) is a close parallel to their [Stoic] *phantasia logike*, the *phantasia* in which what is presented can be conveyed in speech" (Watson, 1988, p. 6) and which plays a central role in their assertion that "it is because of the human 'internal discourse' that meaning can be given to the chaos of sensation, because of the human understanding of the sign and the grasp of the expressible, *lekton*" (Watson, 1988, pp. 6-7).

presented object" (*to phantasthen*) seems to be the same in fact as the connection between sign, *lekton* and (external) object" (Long, 1971a, p. 83).

As an additional conclusion, we must note that "to say something meaningful about, or simply to refer to, things, and for the purpose of linguistic identification the speaker's *lekton* and the auditor's *lekton* must be the same" (Long, 1971a, p. 79), since for meaningful mutual understanding to take place – a mindful sharing of *phantasiai*, which "(unlike some olfactory and tactile impressions) are expressible [as] impressions convertible into (or perhaps received as) words" (Long, 1971a, p. 83) – then "the words which an auditor receives must be the utterance of the speaker's rational presentation" (Long, 1971a, p. 83).

The interrelation between *lekton* and *phantasia* might be clearer now, but have we lost track of *logos*, how does it fit in this process?

Acknowledging that "*logos* is both speech and reason" (Long, 1971a, p. 84), and that furthermore "a man might indicate his awareness of something by gestures and inarticulate cries; but *logos* enables him to express this in meaningful, communicable form" (Long, 1971a, p. 83), is not enough. It must be added that "in Stoicism thinking requires the presentation of an object to the mind (*to phantasthen*) and the means of referring to (*ptosis*) and saying something about it (*lekton*)" (Long, 1971a, p. 84), which are "the two requirements are brought together in *logike phantasia*" (Long, 1971a, p. 84).

Logos is the active principle that inhabits, and animates, so to speak, the expressing of *lekta* through *logike phantasiai*. That it is an active principle not merely in thought but in ethical terms of situated occurrence, is the nuance highlighted by the reference to voice.

According to Long, "in Sextus' discussion of *lekton* (*Adv. math.* VIII 11-12) "that which signifies" is identified with *phoné*, "voice" (Long, 1971a, p. 84), and he adds that an element of speech such as "a noun or a verb is a *meros logou semainon…* but in nature it is a species of *logos,* under the *summum genus* "voice"" (Long, 1971a, p. 84).

This is underlined when we find that voice is not merely understood as ""vibrating air", a material object, and under it are classified "speech" (*phone semantike*) and the parts of speech" (Long, 1971a, p. 84), but that, according to Sextus, *Adv. math.* VIII 275, "the Stoics "say that man differs from irrational animals by reason of internal speech (*endiathetoi logoi*) not uttered speech (*prophorikoi logoi*)[62], for crows and parrots and jays utter articulate sounds" (as cited in Long, 1971a, p. 87).

This focus on internal discourse or inner voice as the specificity of the human is further supported by another quote from Sextus *Adv. Math.* VIII 154-155 referring to the very soul as being "naturally unseen" (as cited in Long, 1971a, p. 85). In this case "an "indicative" signal is required" (Long, 1971a, p. 85), and "the signal "at once by its own nature and constitution, practically sending forth voice (*phone*), is said to signify (*semainein*) that of which it is indicative"" (Long, 1971a, p. 85).

This natural human aptitude to send and receive signals, in which voice, both projected sonically and held as internal discourse, plays such a paramount role, is, as found in Sextus, *Adv. math.* VIII 275, due to "man's possessing an idea of logical consequence (*akolouthia*)" (as cited in Long, 1971a, p. 87), since "signal itself is of the following form: "if this, then that"" (as cited in Long, 1971a, p. 87), which leads to the conclusion that indeed "the existence (*hyparchein*) of signal follows from the nature and constitution of man" (as cited in Long, 1971a, p. 87).

As a clarification to this last quote it is important to note that *hyparchein "*connects significant discourse with material objects" (Long, 1971a, p. 95), and that *akolouthia,* understood as "an idea of succession or consequence" (Long, 1971a, p. 95), is presupposed in "the human power of drawing inferences from empirical data [as *ennoia akolouthias*]" (Long, 1971a, p. 95).

To put it in an another way, according to the Stoics "what exist at any time are material objects in certain states" (Long, 1971a, p. 93). The assessment of these diverse states of affairs is dependent on *ennoia akolouthias*, in the sense that "men experience presentations accurately reproducing some of these, and the expression

[62] See (Kamesar, 2004) for an expanded discussion of this distinction.

of such presentations will state what is the case or true, perhaps even what exists" (Long, 1971a, p. 93) and likewise "some presentations are vacuous or inaccurate images of objects, and these, when expressed in *lekta*, will state what is false" (Long, 1971a, p. 93), which leads us to grasp how "In Stoic terms the whole theory may be summed up thus: a statement or *lekton hyparchei* (is the case) if what it describes *hyparchei* (exists) and what is described is true if the statement describing it is true" (Long, 1971a, p. 93).

The same is expressed even more synthetically by Long by stating that "statements themselves do not exist as material objects, but the bodies which true statements describe instantiate the causal, shaping power of cosmic *logos* which can express itself in *lekta*" (Long, 1971a, p. 95).

We conclude therefore this crisscrossing through some of the most important Stoic notions located at the intersection between language and thought, with a specific emphasis on an understanding of the relevance of voice. It seems not so much to emerge as a theme in itself, but in a dual role, as a nexus of converging issues, and as the embodied practice and acoustic manifestation of the very animating principles of thought that seem to be pursued by the particular scope of Stoic philosophical inquiry on language.

We carry this awareness of this emerging dual role in the dynamics of voice, within a context of philosophical inquiry, further into the next chapters of our research.

4. Aristoxenus – voice as harmonic model for a sense of sound

To conclude the gathering of early sources from which to outline a pursuit of the role and understanding of voice in a philosophical context, we choose now to focus on the work of a somewhat less known figure than the ones quoted from above, that of Aristoxenus of Tarentum, a pupil of Aristotle, a 4th century BC philosopher in the Peripatetic tradition, and arguably "the foremost musical theorist of Ancient Greece", according to Henry S. Macran in his introduction to his 1902 translation of Aristoxenus' only surviving treaty *Harmonika Stoicheia* ("Elements of Harmony").

After having touched upon such intertwined matters as reciprocity, uniqueness, radical present temporality, inner voice and outer voice, voice as the in-between presence and absence, etc., we will now take a concluding look upon the understanding of sonorous sensibility according to Aristoxenus.

4.1. Ratio vs. continuum: a contention between Pythagoras and Aristoxenus

Aristoxenus' musical thought is counterpoised to the hegemony of Pythagorean tradition in the sense that (according to Norman Cazden's "*Pythagoras and Aristoxenos Reconciled*" Journal of the American Musicological Society 11 (1958): 97.) while "Pythagoras regards relationships among musical tones as manifestations of abstract number, signifying a pervasive cosmic principle" (as cited in Litchfield, 1988, p. 51), on the other hand, "Aristoxenos ascribes the ordering of musical tones to the judgment of the ear, contingent therefore on mundane musical practice and its history" (as cited in Litchfield, 1988, p. 51). For this reason "the Pythagorean and Aristoxenian viewpoints have represented poles of fundamental and irreconcilable conflict for some two thousand years" (Litchfield, 1988, p. 51).

Critics of Aristoxenus have simplified this contention in the following way: "the Pythagoreans used music as a model of numerical reality and as an expression of philosophical truth, while Aristoxenus was the empiricist whose theory of music was nothing more than a systematization of musical sound" (Litchfield, 1988, p. 51).

In fact the matter is both more subtle and more complex. Let us first take a closer look at the Pythagorean conception of musical sound[63].

If we concede that "the epochal discovery which ancient authorities unanimously attribute to Pythagoras of Samos, namely that musical notes depend on numerical proportions, was animated by the desire to convert sense distinctions of pitch and interval into observable form" (F. R. Levin, 1972, p. 214), then "in striving to establish the physical and mathematical properties of sound, Pythagoras supplanted the unobservable testimony of the ear by something concrete and susceptible of measurement" (F. R. Levin, 1972, p. 214). Which leads us to the central Pythagorean assertion, namely that "music was shown by Pythagoras to be ruled by number; it was to have as it were, an existence external to its cognition, an existence from which a mathematical system of rations could be extrapolated and studied independently" (F. R. Levin, 1972, p. 214).

Given this, there were two main points of contention with Pythagorean musical theory that are upheld by Aristoxenus.

First, that "unlike the Pythagorean theorists, Aristoxenus did not use ratios to define the *loci* or positions of the moveable notes" (Litchfield, 1988, p. 52) which in term constituted the notion of a musical scale mathematically organized, instead "he postulated a potentially infinite continuum of musical pitch" (Litchfield, 1988, p. 52) in which the Pythagorean scales were only a particular combinatory possibility amongst infinite others.

Second, and what made, according to Ingemar Düring, Aristoxenus' theory of music revolutionary, was that "it rests on the fundamental principle that the human

[63] For a deeper analysis of the specificity of musical theory within Pythagorean theory consult (Winnington-Ingram, 1932), (Hill, 1937), (Riedweg, 2005), (Pesic, 2014, pp. 9-20), (G. H. Anderson, 1983) and (Kontossi & Raducanu, 2010).

ear is the sole arbiter of the correctness of pitches and harmonic functions" (as cited in Litchfield, 1988, p. 51).

These two points need to be expanded to fully appreciate their significance, and above all, their interconnectedness.

The first, the postulation of an infinite continuum of musical pitch[64] instead of interval-based strict mathematical proportions, was born from Aristoxenus' belief that "the Pythagorean *harmonia* based on the notion of an intrinsic symmetry in the natural universe and concretized in the formula of interlocking ratios, was, in fact, violated by the inescapable force of the irrationality of musical space" (F. R. Levin, 1972, p. 219).

This was due both to the fact that Aristoxenus refused the clear cut Pythagorean distinction between musical and non-musical sound, as defined solely by conforming to the quantifiable chord and scale ratio, and to the fact that this quantifiable method was in itself found lacking in purely mathematical terms. Pythagoras astounding achievement was the fixation "of the consonant intervals of the octave in terms of the proportion *6:8:9:12*" (F. R. Levin, 1972, p. 217) which resulted in the establishment of the diatonic scale[65], however, the impossibility of equal division found in the central ratio *9:8* of the octave would point towards the incommensurability of the diatonic scale in mathematical terms – it's arithmetic irrationality and non-symmetric nature – and to the conventional introduction of the semi-tone to compensate for this.

Notwithstanding the mathematical incongruity, maybe the main underlying reason that sparked Aristoxenus' particular approach towards musical theory was that for him musical sound was typified in the human voice first and foremost, and not on an instrument driven quantification of musical scale. From the voice he would progress further to an inner sense of musical intuition that would manifest itself in the very ability to perceive musical sound, has we will see later on.

[64] See (Cartwright, Gonzalez, & Piro, 2001) and (Seror & Neill, 2015) for a contemporary discussion of pitch perception in acoustic science terms.
[65] See (Franklin, 2002), (Clynes, 1982) and (T. A. Johnson, 2003) for a in depth definition and discussion of the implementation of the diatonic scale from antiquity to contemporary times.

4.2. Guided by the motion of the voice

According to Aristoxenus, even before one reaches the stage of instrumentation (and certainly even without coming to the act of notation), the natural sonic sensibility attunes itself harmonically to the flow of the melody, whose original model is the motion of the voice[66].

To understand how the human voice became Aristoxenus' model of the manifestation of the infinite possibility of a musical continuum defined by shifting pitch we must consider that "Aristoxenus, if we may trust his own statement, was the first to treat of this subject of the motion of the voice in a satisfactory way" (C. W. L. Johnson, 1899, p. 44), by following a method which consists into "analyze and classify sounds so as to show the position which musical sounds occupy among sounds in general" (C. W. L. Johnson, 1899, p. 44). However, "the classification of Aristoxenus is not a classification of sounds at all, but of the ways in which a certain property found in certain sounds, though not in all, may behave during the existence of the sounds in question" (C. W. L. Johnson, 1899, p. 44), which brings us to realize that "this property is, of course, pitch, and the sounds are the articulate sounds of the human voice" (C. W. L. Johnson, 1899, p. 44).

Pitch, or the perceived variation of frequency between higher and lower in any given sound, has been a staple of contemporary psychoacoustics because of its measurable yet non-objective quality as a primary constituent in the distinction between musical and non-musical sounds, including noise. In the case of the human voice it plays an essential role both in gender distinction and speech recognition[67].

The "movement" of the human voice is traced by Aristoxenus in a lengthier quote from his *Harmonika Stoicheia* (Aristoxenus, *Harmonika*, I. § 26, p. 8).

[66] See (C. W. L. Johnson, 1899) and (Barker, 2005) for, respectively, comparative early and contemporary perspectives on the contextualization of the notion of "the motion of the voice" in antiquity.

[67] See (Larrouy-Maestri, Magis, & Morsomme, 2014), (Weston, Hunter, Sokhi, Wilkinson, & Woodruff, 2015), (Barkana & Zhou, 2015) and (Trollinger, 2003) for recent studies detailing the relevance of pitch in both cases.

> "In the continuous movement the voice appears to the senses to traverse a certain space in such a way that it rests nowhere, not even, so far as our conception of the sensation goes, at the bounds, but is borne along continuously until the sound ceases. In the other movement, which we call intervallar (*diastéma*), the voice appears to move in a contrary manner. In its course it rests on one pitch and then again on another, and doing so continually (*synechos*), I mean continually in point of time, - passing over the spaces included by the pitches, but resting on the pitches themselves and sounding these alone, it is said to sing (*melodein*), and to move in the intervallar manner." (as cited in C. W. L. Johnson, 1899, p. 45)

So the very nature of the voice in motion points to the coexistence of the two modes, the intervallar (underlined in the Pythagorean perspective) and the continuous, that are consonant and inclusive. According to Aristoxenus, the voice maneuvers freely across its own sonant possibilities, and while doing so, it may rest on specific pitch plateaux and by sounding these alone in harmonic fashion, construct the experience of melody.

4.3. The ear as the locus of *synesis*

Aristoxenus might start with the voice, but he does not rest in the merely sonant voice, he takes the properties of vocality as representing the very human experience of musical sound, connecting voice to ear to an inner musical sense or thought. To understand that, we must return to the second point of contention with Pythagorean musical thought that we have mentioned above, that of "the human ear is the sole arbiter of the correctness of pitches and harmonic functions", and connected to Aristoxenus' notion of musical "intuition" (*synesis*).

To that end, let us take a step back, for now it is important to return to the insight that “Aristoxenus realized that the kinds of structures that must be postulated to underlie the musical expression were not demonstrable in mechanistic terms” (F. R. Levin, 1972, p. 227), which means that “in order to do justice to man's ability to create music, it was not thought necessary by Aristoxenus to postulate numerical ratios inside man's brain, but rather a thinking substance, a musical intuition, to account for the musician's mastery of a complex and rule-governed skill” (F. R. Levin, 1972, p. 227).

To refine this understanding of musical “intuition (*synesis*)” Aristoxenus built his musical theory around the experience of melody because “as Aristoxenus recognized, real melody presupposed not a fixed scale or tuning, but a line on which the voice's potentially infinite stations could be determined only by ear and understanding (*akon kai dianoia*)” (F. R. Levin, 1972, p. 225), which brings us to the already mentioned second point of his contention with the Pythagorean theory.

If we consider that “although one can analyze precisely the physical properties of sound and interval or dissect meticulously the anatomy of melody, the affective power of music eludes objective representation” (F. R. Levin, 1972, p. 211) and in fact “the more closely music is assimilated to its physical form, the farther is one removed from its source and energy” (F. R. Levin, 1972, p. 211), then Aristoxenus’ main contribution would be “a theory of music based on the notion *e tos mousike synesis*, construed here to be "musical intuition" or "competence," i. e. an inherent mental capacity comprising one's implicit musical knowledge” (F. R. Levin, 1972, p. 211).

Instead of stopping at the sheer materiality of being able to be affected by sound, Aristoxenus looks inside instead for a unifying faculty of the human capability to experience, guide oneself, and respond to the full breadth of sonic experience.

In other words, Aristoxenus’ grounding notion of musical intuition seems to stem from not focusing on any given musical performing itself as a mere making of sounds, but to recognize the inner faculty at work in the experiencing of any melodic occurrence, be it with voice or instrument, as that which points towards the defining element, the ability understood as *synesis.*

Stressing how notation is not the final goal of a musician or performer, Aristoxenus states that those who believe so “reverse the proper order in their fancy of representing a visible activity as the consummation of intellectual apprehension; for, as a fact, the ultimate factor in every visible activity is the intellectual process” (*Harm. 41*; trans. Macran 1902: 195), adding: “for this latter is the presiding and determining principle; and as for the hands, voice, mouth, or breath—it is an error to suppose that they are very much more than inanimate instruments” (*Harm. 41*; trans. Macran 1902: 195).

Consequently, “what is responsible for the creation of music is not notation, or harmonic science or musical instruments (*Harm*. 42) any more than are the activities of the hand or mouth other than those of mere appurtenances” (F. R. Levin, 1972, p. 229), but “rather, the apperception of a reflective being, or, as Aristoxenus says (*Harm*. 41), it is the “*synesis* buried deep in the soul” that is the creative force” (as cited in F. R. Levin, 1972, p. 229).

The constitution of this faculty, *synesis*, is such that it “is made up of the ear (*akoé*) and the intellect (*dianoia*) (*Harm*. 38), the ear providing the perception (*aísthēsis*), the intellect with its ability to remember (*mneios*) (*Harm*. 39) the discrimination” (F. R. Levin, 1972, p. 229), revealing to us how “the powers of aural perception and mental apperception are combined in musical *synesis* – that unique human faculty [according to Aristoxenus] that hears, remembers and distinguishes” (F. R. Levin, 1972, p. 229).

Again, Aristoxenus “acknowledged that this faculty of intuition was not itself observable in any direct way” (F. R. Levin, 1972, p. 214), but that he believed it nonetheless ”to underly all observed musical activity” (F. R. Levin, 1972, p. 214), which was supported by his basal view that “any system that attempted to account for musical phenomena in terms of mathematical theory or empirical researches based on the mechanistic function of instruments was destined to become extraneous to the subject or quite at variance with the phenomena (*Harm*. 32)” (as cited in F. R. Levin, 1972, p. 214).

Aristoxenus would pursue this point to its inevitable conclusion, that "what the voice cannot produce and the ear cannot discriminate must be excluded from

the available and practically possible range of musical sound (*Harm.* 14)" (as cited in F. R. Levin, 1972, p. 228), and likewise in reverse, that which the voice can produce, and the ear cannot help but to discriminate, must not be excluded from the realm of musical sound, thereby presupposing a continuum that would stand against the Pythagorean focus on discreet intervals, however elegantly mathematically defined they were to present themselves.

This, of course, does not mean that the voice and the ear have an infinite scope, neither that all sounds are musical.

According do Aristoxenus, “for every musical instrument and for every human voice there is a maximum compass which they cannot exceed, and a minimum interval, less than which they cannot produce” (*Harm.* 14; trans. Macran 1902: 175). This means in effect that “no organ of sound can indefinitely enlarge its range or indefinitely reduce its intervals: in both cases it reaches a limit” (*Harm.* 14; trans. Macran 1902: 175), therefore “each of these limits must be determined by a reference to that which produces the sound and to that which discriminates it—the voice, namely, and the ear” (*Harm.* 14; trans. Macran 1902: 175).

What is meant is that these limits are to be assessed in the context of an understanding of melody, of a relative play of different intervals defined by pitch differences, which are to be experienced and performed against a continuum of sonorous possibilities, organized by the harmonic arbiter of the inner means of musical intuition. Or as stated by Aristoxenus: “Our subject-matter then being all melody, whether vocal or instrumental, our method rests in the last resort on an appeal to the two faculties of hearing (*akoé*) and intellect (*dianoia*). By the former we judge the magnitudes of the intervals, by the latter we contemplate the functions of the notes” (*Harm.* 33; trans. Macran 1902: 189).

From number to string, from string to voice, from voice to ear and vice-versa, and from both to intuition, Aristoxenus’ theoretical endeavor points towards an understanding of musical sound as an harmonic function of the mind, which mobilizes its internal resources in reaction to a sounding manifestation and participates in it through an active recognition and response – of intuition as being mindful of sound and as such being able to embody its manifestation.

We propose an understanding of this musical intuition as something attuned to the inhabiting of sonic space. The discriminating listener finds himself exposed to aural phenomena, such as voice. This exposition awakens an internal correspondence of co-naturality between the heard and the hearing. The listener, now half-possessed, though not to the extent of what was described in *Ion*, by the sonic presence of something that sounds, is moved to engage and to activate his own sonic devices.

Thus, Aristoxenus' conception of musical sound as a harmonic function of the mind is radical in the sense that it proposes a notion of man constituted as an acoustic creature[68]. The notion that surfaces is that of an open, encompassing organism, modulated by its immersion in the sound space, that so affects it internally, as to be the main molding drive constituting the very structure of its consciousness. Mind appears as a harmonic constellation of thought processes, resonating internally with a kind of inner "music of the spheres"[69], translated from its cosmic proportions into the realm of the thinking life of the individual.

These, and other gathering threads of this inquiry on voice will be pursued further in the next parts. For now, there is hopefully a clear understanding of the deeply problematic (and deeply philosophical as such) place of voice as an enticing, paradoxically widening yet simultaneously occluding theme of inquiry.

[68] More radically so than Aristotle with his formulation, which was focused on the role of speech as a specialized use of the voice in the context of societal living (*Politics*, 1253a).

[69] For a contemporary contextualization of the uses of this notion, beyond the metaphorical, see (Meyer-Baer, 2015), (Blackstone, 2011), (Thompson, 2013) and (Maruani, Lefebvre, & Rantanen, 2003).

PART II

1. Into Sound, Towards Voice

In the previous part of this philosophical study on sound and voice we have gathered sources. These sources – texts that carry an author's attributed thoughts – were brought out from a period of birth and development of the very notion of philosophy and philosophical thought. They bear the authority of the founding gesture, and they require of those that partake in the philosophical search to be borne as both something to be carried forth, and under whose weight one must toil, and as a knowledge that continually gives birth, in the sense of renewing itself.

In this second part we shall tackle the theme of the voice from another angle – from a plurality of angles to be more concrete. We will look at the human situation of being in a world of sound. We will browse through some of the particularities of both the situation and the world of sound itself, as two entangled matters. We will then attempt to situate voice in this particular situation and, as an agent and as a constitutive human possibility, in the very world of sound in which it manifests itself.

The knowledge brought into play in this part will be interdisciplinary, owing not only primarily to philosophy, in the sense of being constituted by a guiding attitude of care, curiosity and reflection, but also to the more recent science of sound, understood not only as acoustics but also as the cultural understanding of specific sound phenomena and their impact in everyday life.

The overall method will be a phenomenological one, in the sense that the way in which human experience is structured is always kept in play and foregrounded in the context of not only reflection on the reflections of others (as textual analysis would mostly be), but reflection on the direct experience of the one conducting this very inquiry, transposed into the dialogic form of more or less fusional empathy between reader and writer that is the "we".

2. The Situation of Sound

In this chapter we will attempt both to describe and articulate two things: the human situation of being in a world of sound, and the way sound situates, therefore constituting a situation that embraces the human – where it struggles, thrives and inquires about itself and others, both from within and from without.

From this descriptive articulation a notion of presence will emerge, followed by a specific inquiry in which the role and agency of the voice will become the focus of the discussion of this emerging notion of presence.

Since we will be discussing situation, the discussion will depose us as often as possible *in situ*, meaning, examples of placed sonic experiences will be brought up, and the reader is encouraged to fill up the descriptive gaps with his or her own imagination, actively exploiting the embodied memory of their own diverse sound experiences.

Ideally, this "on site" discursiveness should be taken literally, and a performative attitude of awareness is probably the most adequate to the purpose of this inquiry.

The written word is somewhat inappropriate but also inevitable given the context of this inquiry. However, we find that to imbue it with orality, and model the discourse as much as possible on a dialogue, or on an addressed monologue at least, might contribute in the highest manner to the clarification of all that is to be said-written on sound, voice and presence. This is a wish that it is to be renewed throughout the text, in both the author's and the reader's mind, as it is the core to the very notion of philosophical inquiry underlying it.

2.1. On sound beyond sense

One of the most natural impulses when one develops an interest in questioning sound as an experience of situation is to think of sound as a thing of the

senses. The ancient sensorial hierarchy that deals in range and difference as its primary criteria for attribution of value is well documented and as definitely been long at play in the whole recorded history of ideas of western civilization – refer for example to *A Natural History of the Senses* (Ackerman, 1990), or, in the context of one of the most historically significant studies delving specifically into sound, to *On the sensations of tone as a physiological basis for the theory of music* (Helmholtz, 1954)[70].

At any given situation in one's life, at any given place, one needs only look around and focus one's attention in the patterns underlying the apparent organization of the world as a sensory experience, and this hierarchical articulation of the senses is right there to be noticed[71]. By the way, notice how the phrasing in English language (as in many other languages) that we have come to accept as natural is *look around*, not *hear around* (which is however not only more accurate, but a revealing pleonasm), *smell around*, *taste around* or *feel around* (which is indeed sometimes used though less often, being however highly accurate, as there will be more to be said later on about the tight bond between hearing and touching).

On an individual experiential level, this hierarchy can be found simply by a negotiation of absence. If one where to ask another, which two senses would you rather live without, one would be rather pressed to find someone whose answer would be sight and hearing. Also hard to imagine a life without touch, and maybe that it is so hard to imagine would be the main reason not to give up on it. On the other hand, taste and smell, well sure, a lot of pleasurable experiences would be forfeited, but life would go on more or less unimpeded.

For another example, the word "handicapped" does not come to mind easily or without humor when a common cold temporarily robs one of one's sense of smell, but even just temporary blindness or deafness? That would be a grave matter indeed.

[70] For contextualization of the impact of Helmholtz's scientific research on contemporary sound studies refer to (Steege, 2012), (Hui, 2012, pp. 55-88) and (Vogel, 1993, pp. 259-288).

[71] For an insightful discussion of the role of sound and hearing amongst the senses, especially in the context of synaesthesia, refer to (Berman, 1999), (Erlmann, 2004), (Harrison & Baron-Cohen, 1994) and (Bargary, Barnett, Mitchell, & Newell, 2009).

Sight and hearing do seem to be the leading senses, at least if common sense is to be held accountable, when considered in terms of range and effectiveness of differentiation and accuracy of identification while navigating the everyday. If pressed further, which one would be most important? This question reminds one of what is said about Olympic athletes, that the bronze medalist can still enjoy his or her victory, but that there is an inherent bitterness in silver, because one may naturally focus on the failure to achieve gold, instead of on the honour of sharing the podium. Silver seems indeed to be the typical fate of hearing.

From the eyelash stuck to the cheek of the one facing you, to the shapes of the craters of the moon, the range of naked sight is indeed astounding. The evolutionary advantages of looking ahead, far and wide, are undeniable. The iconic role of sight as reigning metaphor in a mainstream history of thought is also well documented and ascertained[72]. In everyday life, from the stacked shelf of a supermarket, to street signs, to every single flat screen that aids our modern life, eyesight reigns supreme.

Even unaugmented by optical science, the sheer reach and capacity attributed to the human eyes as organs of vision is awe-inspiring. We will here, however, not address the question if the organs of the sense are mere gateways and sensation happens in the brain, or if in the materiality of eye, ear, nose, tongue and skin (in the Aristotelian fashion) there is an intrinsic operative structure of adequacy between organ and medium that takes more than the lion's share of the sensorial process.

If one were to look for the qualitative specificity where the radical difference between sight and sound lies, one might be hard pressed to express it clearly. Distinctions such as the ones between senses seem to be the kind of distinctions where the very possibility of difference is itself grounded, or, at least, they come to us in our human development with such a matter-of-factness that once one recognizes oneself as he or she who sees, as he or she who listens, etc., these perceptions seem both clear cut in their distinctiveness and inseparable in their mutual dependency.

[72] Refer to (Wade, 2000), (Ings, 2008) and (Mirzoeff, 2012) for extensive discussion.

Nevertheless, we can see that which we cannot hear, and we can hear that which we cannot see. Different senses provide more than different sensorial pathways, they also inspire different ways of conceiving both the very specificity of these pathways and their integration in the experience of the whole perceiving self.

2.2. Acoustic awareness – integrating movement and synchronicity

Let us lend our imagination a sensorial content. Imagine sitting in a café in a European city. Sitting at a table, by a wide window, inside of a crowded room bordered oppositely by a long counter where the busy staff prepares drinks and food. There is a small clutter of things in front of us, upon the table, as our meal comes to a close and, no longer hungry or thirsty, we venture our attention beyond the immediate concerns of satiety. A glass, a plate with crumbs, one quarter of a cheese and ham sandwich, a cup of coffee, a sprinkle of green salad in another small dish. We might be sitting alone, but not only do the sounds and sights of the room around us strike us, as the street itself, slightly muffled beyond the broad windowpane, floods our awareness with a multiplicity of people passing, cars speeding and halting, crossing-lights blinking and ringing, a rush of different rhythms all presenting themselves in their simultaneous occurrence.

Let us now focus our attention upon the duality of sight and sound in this very situation. When we see gestures, objects being moved, people moving themselves, operating things or bumping around, in other words, movement, we are also hearing that movement. In a sense, movement is all that we can hear. That is what the plainest scientific description of sound tells us, that sound is movement, and that to hear is to be moved, literally.

As it does so well, by focusing on the relationships of cause and consequence and predictability of variation, science tells us that sound is “mechanical radiant energy that is transmitted by longitudinal pressure waves in a material medium (as air)” (Sound. (n.d.). Merriam-Webster.com. Retrieved February 18, 2014, from http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/sound) or in other words, amongst

the myriad of sources available, that sound is “a vibration that propagates as a mechanical wave of pressure and displacement, through some medium (such as air or water)” (Sound. (n.d.) Wikipedia.com, Retrieved February 18, 2014, from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sound).

Another definition of sound is as being a dispersion of kinetic energy considered in an interval of frequencies of vibration (in average in adult age between 20 to 20,000 Hz) that the human hearing apparatus happens to be sensitive to.

When we hear something, when something sounds, it means that a movement occurred in a medium that we also inhabit at the time. This medium, let us return to the café and say, the flowing volume of air that is now saturated with the smell of coffee, cinnamon and freshly baked bread, is literally shaken and disturbed by a source of movement, for example, the percussive energy released by the impact of a cup hitting a table top. Like a pebble thrown on a still water surface, from this impact point ripple rhythmic waves of air in motion that reach our hearing apparatus (which we shall describe in further detail in the next chapter), and are perceived as a sonic impression, an auditory event.

If our eyes happen to be resting on the table stop at that very moment, then we can literally see this happen. We see surfaces of both objects coming together, and at the very moment where their visual borders touch, we hear them hitting each other. We experience, therefore, synchronicity through sensorial coupling.

Synchronicity (at least between sight and sound) is the usual way in which our immediate surrounding material world impresses itself upon us. This does not however mean that the experience of synchronicity is usually experienced as a balanced interaction of sight and sound. Most typically, we would hear a loud percussive short sound, and look in that direction and see the now immobile cup on the table top. We would experience this as something that has just happened outside of our field of vision. We would know what happened and when it happened, but we would only see it after it had happened.

In this example, sight is actually delayed in relation to sound, in the sense that if we “take a rapid visual movement—a hand gesture—and compare it to an

abrupt sound trajectory of the same duration" (Chion, 1994, p. 10) we find that "the fast visual movement will not form a distinct figure, its trajectory will not enter the memory in a precise picture" (Chion, 1994, p. 10), however, "in the same length of time the sound trajectory will succeed in outlining a clear and definite form, individuated, recognizable, distinguishable from others" (Chion, 1994, p. 10).

That particular experience of sound, the reconstructed meeting of the cup and the table top via hearing followed by sight, would re-synch us to the temporal flow at that very instant, and enable us to integrate that particular instance of movement – of exchange of energy in the kinetic realm – into our awareness of what is taking place around us at the time, and which relationships are being woven simultaneously with our very presence.

The relationship between sound and temporality[73] as been well documented in many disciplines, and it has its very own tradition even in the core of philosophical research[74], so it is no wonder that the experience of synchronicity is so meaningful for our inquiry, especially when it comes to the bond between synchronicity and the very concept of presence, a matter which will be pursued further in this investigation.

Synchronicity is one of the aspects that allow for a meaningful engagement with the immersive, ubiquitous and surrounding situation of being in sound. If one wants to remind oneself of what is really sounding out there, one only has to incur in a particular listening exercise.

Sitting again in our vivid example space of the busy café, we once again listen. First to the very close things, the contents of our table top, the minute rustling of our own clothes when we shift our weight in the chair, the grazing sound of the friction between the feet of our chair and the wooden floor, some of the things that temporarily "belong" to us in this public space, that bear our temporary mark of ownership.

[73] Broadly discussed and contextualized in (Evens, 2005, pp. 26-61), (Bay-Cheng, 2010, pp. 85-90), (Kavanaugh, 2010), (Dyson, 2014), (Crispin, 2009) for example, among many others.
[74] For a broad introductory overview refer to (Hoy, 2009) and (Arstila & Lloyd, 2014), for examples of more situated analyses to (Manchester, 2015), (McInerney, 2010) and (Plumer, 1987).

Then let us listen further, to the conversations taking place around us, to different voices, pitches and tones, to the smartphone message popups from the young man sitting a few meters away, to the bouncing around of objects, hard and soft alike, that compose this further level of listening range.

Let us continue this exercise until it leads us out into the street, into the traffic and pedestrians passing by, into the city sounds and beyond into the undistinguishable rumble that marks the horizon of our auditory access.

Once we have achieved this gradual expansive listening, let us try again but this time allowing all the levels together to flood in simultaneously. This is both an exhilarating and unnatural listening experience that remind us of the confusion and acoustic chaos all around, but also of our own unawareness of our own constant monitoring and sonic landscape building, which happens mostly according to the requirements of our comfort and ability to smoothen our traversing of the spaces and circumstances of our everyday.

The ability to synchronize situates us. How sound and listening are essential to this process is often understated. The asynchronous can be terrifying and nearly maddening. The fact that our experience of asynchronicity is usually found in examples of technically induced mild annoyance – such as a poorly synchronized film where lips and voice grow apart from each other in a disconcerting choreography of equivocality, that of a voice gone astray from its body – lends an often comical character to an experience that finds in the other most extreme point of the spectre the internal ramblings of dissociative disorders, and the breaking down of psychic fabric[75].

2.3. Sonic tangibility – medium, envelopment and immersion

[75] The connection between listening, voice and mental health is too extensive to be addressed in this inquiry but a few examples of introductory research can be found for example in (Karp & Sisson, 2009), (Brown & Kushner, 2001), (Miller, 2001) and (Schleifer, 2001).

In the oceanic immersion in sound, it is the ear that both allow us to acknowledge the density of the sonic world, and to not drown in its near boundless vastness.

Sound is enveloping. That this term means both "a natural enclosing covering (as a membrane, shell, or integument)" (Envelope. (n.d.). Retrieved June 26, 2014, from http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/envelope) and in musical terms "the attack, sustain, and decay of a sound as values of a carrier wave given as a function of time" (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2014), is not a coincidence.

Enveloping can be another way of saying "embracing". Sound's embracing quality is both explicit in its physical dimension – as a trade of energy in wave shape travelling through a medium such as air, water, solid matter – and in its experiential dimension, as a phenomenon occurring in a medium shared by the listener, which is highly sensitive to it.

Embracing surely, but also flooding in. Where there is movement and medium, there is sound. Sounds fills gaps, and by filling gaps it reveals space and puts us in contact with a different level of materiality than we are usually aware of. This is a prominent point in the analysis of the situation of being in sound.

If we go back to our café situation, and look upon the white ceramic coffee cup standing again the wooden brown background of the table, we are engaging in a figure-ground distinction[76]. A sharp border of contrasting colour is impressed upon us, and together with the shadow play in the room, we are able to situate and circumscribe the coffee cup and the table top as two distinguishable objects with stable boundaries in the realm of visibility.

To image a visual scenario where this distinction is unavailable is to imagine blindness. Maybe not the blindness of darkness we, the seeing, normally envision – whatever that might mean – but perhaps a blindness of a strictly one-dimensional patchwork of colour, a blindness of depth, of sight as sheer contact between eye and colour, a most disturbing experience.

[76] For detailed description of figure-ground perceptual grouping referring to vision see (Wever, 1927), (Peterson & Gibson, 1994), (Pind, 2014), (Gordon & Driver, 1995), and (Mumford, Kosslyn, Hillger, & Herrnstein, 1987).

Is not the concept of figure-ground easily applicable to hearing also? Would it be any less disturbing if it was abolished and all we had was a mass of sound, shifting pitches and tones, but no ability to attribute a family of sounds to a source object or process?

Indeed, the figure-ground distinction has been often applied to hearing also, sometimes more of less metaphorically, sometimes literally[77]. Furthermore yes, to live facing a constant unascertainable wall of sound would be quite disturbing, probably impeding altogether our navigation of space, as well as eroding our sanity. The difference is subtle however and of degree. Our hearing is unblinking and the constancy of its openness allows for a more comfortable coexistence with the undistinguished sea of sound, with which, in a way, we naturally coexist unscathed.

In sight, an undistinguishable sea of light and colour is a definite breaking down of the usual state of the sense, it is a matter of concern and a derailing of experience. In hearing, it is the usual beginning of the very experience of listening, it is the familiar landscape that presents itself over and over again, in endless environments, in the endless days of our everyday lives. Chaotic enveloping of sound is the very precondition for any sonic experience, if only to be quickly mapped and converted into sound sources, sonic actions and a hierarchy of the variable urgency in our engagement with our surroundings.

From chaotic indistinctness (to which we ourselves are however far from indifferent to) to precise auditory difference flows the conversion that places us as listeners somewhere at any given time.

This conversion is sometimes the more lucid the quicker it takes place. An example that comes to mind is the experience of competitive swimming, especially in the style known as “crawl”. Aptly named in appearance, though not in relative speed when compared to the other styles for it is actually the fastest, it is performed in a prone position, characterized by alternate forward driven overarm movements combined with a quick continuous alternating kick.

[77] Referring specifically to its early applications concerning sound consult (Thurlow, 1957).

From the perspective of sound, the interesting thing about this style comes from the rhythmic breathing movements, where the head is turned sideways alternating left and right, in such a way that one ear emerges while the other remains submerged. That creates a very particular stereo image, which means, in acoustic science terms, the single three-dimensional sound image perceived in the brain by the coordination of the two slightly different sounds heard arriving at each of the ears simultaneously, including the intracranial mass as a solid sound buffer and the relative ear distance as a sound differential. This will be further explained in the next chapter, but in essence, stereo image is just the name given for our normal perception of any given space in as it is manifested to us in sound, considering the anatomic specificity of our hearing apparatus.

What is particular about the situation of listening to space while swimming in crawl style is that the quick succession breathing, the alternate turning of the head from left to right and vice versa, exposes us at any given moment to two very different sound experiences, that manifest a continuous exchange of chaos and differentiation.

For example, when the left ear emerges from the water, the full echoing arcades of the concrete, metal and glass vault structure of the swimming pool resound. Space is broad, loud and highly reflective in sonic terms. We register the splashing sounds of the other swimmers, the children's laughter and squeals of excitement, the tiny impacts of the stringed plastic buoys, the resonant friction of the steps taken by those walking along the dry edge of the water tank with rubber sandals. The whole space becomes loudly manifest in the often uncomfortable precision of the situated environment. Sound is the main agent of this manifestation because vision, blurred by the movement and the foggy goggle lenses, is almost useless when swimming; the visual field becomes impressionistic and marred by the dazzling lights filtered through the bright chlorinated water, but the acoustic field thrives in the highly reverberant environment.

However, while the left ear emerges, the right ear remains submerged and is exposed to a very different sound experience. Sound through the medium of water, behaves differently. Intensity is boosted but location is dimmed. The noise that

comes in through that submerged ear is a low frequency rumble of very close sound impressions and oceanic indistinctness. In a sense, as we will see in the next chapter dealing more closely with the physiology of listening, “the human ear is too much of water to make a difference between self and surround, hence that term, and that feeling, oceanic” (Schwartz, 2011, p. 741).

The lack of precise directionality and the boost in volume generated both by the increased speed at which sound travels underwater (about five times faster than through air) and the higher density of the liquid medium itself, generate a listening experience that is both disturbing and fascinating. To the submerged ear arrive sounds that remind one of amplified visceral resonances produced by peristaltic movements. The very tactility of the sound is heightened, one seems to feel the swimming body contorting rhythmically and constantly reshaping the liquid cocoon in which it floats and through which it glides.

The sonorous experience conflated at this moment in the exercise of swimming, produced both by the two opposite elements – the precise spatiality of the emerged ear, and the chaotic indistinctive physicality of the submerged one – and by the rhythmic alternation between them, is one of the most clear and extreme examples of the dynamic sense of presence at play in the situation of being in sound.

Maybe one of the reasons why the liquid element is so inspiring when thinking about sound is because it reveals to the other senses, or better put, to a synthetic conflagration of the senses at any given movement, the radical physicality of the subtle yet persistent way sound is at work in our everyday inhabitation of air. This revelation is that of a kind of extended tactility.

The density of water allows us to feel the invisible realm of sound, its flooding quality, its inclination to permeate, to pour in, to percuss and vibrate, in essence, to be the flesh of the in-between.

In the state of awareness brought on by extended tactility, by endowing every sensorial impression with the urgency and intimacy of touch, sound radically reveals both the situation and the situated. The “situated” here means both the one who is in the situation, and the how of his or her situation.

The world, as it gives itself to be heard and sounded, has it usual hierarchy of distance and three-dimensionality temporarily cancelled, or at least, deposed in a constant state of being put into question. This takes place beyond metaphor, beyond the addressing of language. Extended tactility means that in sound we touch things, things are pressed against our bodies, literally penetrating us, in the same way as we touch others and others are pressed against us, in a revealing tumbling into one another – nascent intersubjectivity, as we will attempt to inquire further in the next stages of our inquiry.

2.4. Listening as deep probing – medium, noise and soundscape

Vibration and reverberation compose the flesh of the in-between, the medium turning into the very fabric of participation, of a mingling that is not discursive, though it lends itself to be an essential criteria in the authenticity of discourse, especially philosophical discourse. It is a problematic revelation; it is the rediscovery of a questioning of presence through the way of the sonorous, presence intuited as connective tissue in the surrounding body of things.

In the context of the philosophical attitude, sound points the mind towards holistic inquiry, a way of asking questions where the whole is constantly co-presented in the detailing of differentiation. Thinking though sound inspires us to consider the philosopher as being above all the listener[78], the one that is drawn to the choreography of the unveiling of meaning through language by a nurturing of heightened awareness, radical curiosity and the ability to harness, in the essential stages of the philosophical work, the fertility of an inner silence that allows for clarity of thought and purpose.

However, if the liquid medium manifests sound's conflagration of confusion with revelation, its fluid, permeable character and the way it allows for a unified perspective on presence and situation, the play of sound in the solid medium, on the

[78] This assertion is further supported and explicitly discussed by (Bonds, 2009), (Norkunas, 2011), (Lipari, 2012), (Peperzak, 2006) and (Fiumara, 1995).

other hand, adds to this revealing complexity by pointing out the objectification of sound, its percussive contingency and its eccentric disposition.

To avoid misunderstandings, what is meant here by solid medium is not the sheer scientific description of the way sound waves travel through solid mass. Examples of this would be the classic putting one's ear to the train tracks in order to hear the incoming train one cannot yet see but which is already audible, the sounds of the plumbing system one can hear if one presses one's ear to the wall in a typical contemporary apartment, or the variant sound properties of geologic realms as it is studied in seismology.

On the contrary, what we mean here by "solid medium" is the state of sonic awareness that closely ties sound with source, in this case with the objects inhabiting our everyday spaces. What we mean is the commonplace strict attribution of sound to sounding thing, as in the very clearly shared physicality of sound and matter one feels when, for example, clapping both hands together hard and loud.

The world of solidity is the world of the object – the plate, the keychain, the bracelet around the wrist, the wool around the neck, the glass that falls and shatters, the metal that clangs and deafens. In our urban soundscapes it is the world of corrugated iron, concrete, hard plastic, of walls being pounded, staircases being trodden, doors being slammed[79]. It is the sound of the familiar unyielding surfaces and their frictional dialogue.

What we mean by percussive contingency is that state in which drums and church bells are the exception. In most everyday situations, the sounds produced by the materials that compose our things slamming against each other are thought of as unessential, or they are mostly not thought of at all. Though useful in identifying these self-same things – for example in the dark or when they are set in motion beyond our line of sight or behind our backs – these sounds are held as secondary qualities, reliable to occur in the presence of their sources, but simultaneously taken almost as sonic excrescence. The sound that any given thing makes, being knocked around, comes along somewhat uninvited, taken as it is, but paid no mind.

[79] For the discussion of the acoustic specificity of urban sounds refer to (Ando, 1998), (Plourde, 2008), (H. Lefebvre, 2004), (LaBelle, 2010), (Baumann, 1991) and (Stefanovic & Scharper, 2011).

The highly disturbing nature of a sound that is both unexpected and untraceable might point to an even stronger notion of sonic excrescence. An unfamiliar clicking or screeching in the moving parts of a bike used regularly almost always suggests the need for repair; a persisting creaking noise in an unfamiliar empty house easily precipitates one in a state of anxiety, etc. Sonic contingency is tolerated in the recognized presence of the essential source, but highly disturbing in its absence.

To think of sound as being contingent, or better put, to not think of sound at all as but that which happens along with physical activity in a world where the distinction between animate and inanimate is irrelevant, mere bodies one an all as dreamt by Galileo[80], is above all to refuse and to dilute awareness.

The opposite of this, the will to heighten awareness, is what is at stake in the concept of "soundscape" before it entered common discourse, as it was originally coined and defined by the Canadian composer, acoustic ecologist and educator Raymond Murray Schafer (b. 1933) in his books "The New Soundscape" (1969) and "The Tuning of the World" (1977).

Murray Schafer's understanding of the particularity of sound awareness can be traced to the deceptively simple observation that "there are no earlids" (Murray Schafer, 2012, p. 102) therefore "the sense of hearing cannot be closed off at will" (Murray Schafer, 2012, p. 102) which is further illustrated by the fact that "when we go to sleep, our perception of sound is the last door to close and it is also the first to open when we awaken" (Murray Schafer, 2012, p. 102).

This comprehension of the sense of sound as one that is both radically open and highly selective – we are always exposed to the fullness of sound, yet are somehow able to navigate a world where something still sounds to us unlike something else – is at the core of the notion of soundscape[81], which is the encompassing totality of any given situated sound experience, rejecting the rejection

[80] See (Sharratt, 1996) and (Galilei, Crew, & Salvio, 1939) for contextualization.
[81] For a broader discussion of the notion of soundscape see (Akiyama, 2010), (Pijanowski et al., 2011) and (Samuels, Meintjes, Ochoa, & Porcello, 2010).

of noise as mere interference, which is another way of stating what we have mentioned before as sonic excrescence or sonic contingency.

One possible definition of "noise" is the sound that imposes itself on a listener's acoustic perception while simultaneously being noxious to the listener's cohabitation with that perception[82]. The rejection of sound as noise (with the implied distinction of sound that is noise from sound that is not noise) fractures the sense of holistic sonic enveloping. A hierarchy of sonic value is imposed, with criteria such as agreeable vs. disagreeable, meaningful vs. inconsequent, and awareness becomes skewed along the lines proposed by these criteria.

Murray Schafer's understanding of the need for the heightening of awareness and subsequent preservation of the fullness of the soundscape starts therefore by the embracing of noise as meaningful sound.

In his own words: "Noise pollution results when man does not listen carefully. Noises are the sounds we have learned to ignore. Noise pollution today is being resisted by noise abatement. This is a negative approach. We must seek a way to make environmental acoustics a positive study program. Which sounds do we want to preserve, encourage, multiply?" (Murray Schafer, 2012, p. 95).

There is a clear parallel between the heightening of sonic awareness we are discussing, the gathering of an experiential soundscape by means of it, and another seminal notion in the contemporary expanded understanding of the reach of sound: the practice of "deep listening" coined in the early 1980s by the American composer and pioneering sound artist Pauline Oliveros (b. 1932).

Oliveros' notion of "deep listening" can be defined as the practice of heightened awareness of sound in a given situation, not only as it is produced or present in perception, but also as a constant resonant principle in the deepest recesses of the exchanges between matter and energy in environmental terms. This understanding pushed her to amplify Murray Schafer's notion of soundscape into her own overlapping and expanding notion of "sonosphere", which "unlike R.

[82] For an assessment of the broad and fluid definitions of noise in 20th and early 21th centuries refer to (Hegarty, 2007), (Schwartz, 2011) and (Kjellberg, 1990).

Murray Schafer's notion of soundscape […] embraces a full sweep and barrage of energies, including the magnetic, electrical, electromagnetic, geomagnetic, and quantum, as well as the acoustical" (Kahn, 2013, p. 382).

Oliveros' concept of sonosphere "rises up from the turbulent movements and geomagnetism of the core of the earth, the fluid convections in the core and convection in the atmosphere from the momentum of the earth's spinning orbit in the sun's thermal influence, and moves out through analogies and transductive intermediaries of acoustical and electromagnetic fields and waves" (Kahn, 2013, p. 383). This understanding of sound as planet encompassing, or in other words, of the whole world as a sounding body, has of course definite non-rational and even mystical undertones[83]. That is contained in the very nature of sound and its resonant essence.

The notion of deep listening implies that of deep resonance – the understanding of any situated acoustic phenomenon as distinct yet also bound into the full dynamic encompassing sonic environment. Audible resonance exhausts itself by the dissipation of its kinetic energy. In any finite albeit open system, this dissipation is acoustic entropy, energy that passes on beyond the system circuit, being considered as lost from within, while being transposed into the without. For every finite system of sonorous interactions there is however the encompassing maximum system, that of the very world, into which dissipation becomes transposition and resonance is reawakened in its potential.

In such sonic endeavours as those whose guidelines have been pointed out by researchers such as Murray Schafer and Oliveros there is a strong experimental drive, the pursuit of an holistic sense, and also a kind of playing hide and seek with hard science, being somewhat in tune with its principles and out of tune with its goals. There is a dynamics of appropriation at play, and it works both ways. There are many examples, but a particularly explicit one can be found in this notion of

[83] For a discussion of the related expanded notion of "biosphere" within the framework of the Gaia theory, which considers the Earth as a self-regulating complex system where the organic and the inorganic are equal and interdependent partners, see (Lenton & Oijen, 2002), (Lovelock, 2005), (Margulis, 1993) and (S. A. Levin, 2005).

awareness of a fullness of sound in geological scale, and the understanding of seismic waves as “long sounds”.

Geological movements produce seismic waves which are “long sounds that are underfoot and below the human audible range” (Kahn, 2013, p. 356). A long sound is “usually thought to be one that lasts a long time; yet there are sounds that are long in distance as well as duration” (Kahn, 2013, p. 356). One of the most interesting aspects about some long sounds is that they “can be heard as having acquired their character through the course of their propagation, acoustically and electromagnetically” (Kahn, 2013, p. 356), which is named by Kahn as “transperception”.

In the case of such long sounds, a seismic wave being but an example, transperception “is an apperception, a consciousness or intrinsic awareness of an energy that includes what has been traversed” (Kahn, 2013, p. 357), namely “the influence of objects and artifacts, modulation and media (e.g., rock, air, Internet), and the time required by distance—along with the source” (Kahn, 2013, p. 357).

The main point to grasp here, in the context of our inquiry, is that a heightened sound awareness, focused on the manifold coexisting levels of sonorous experience might point to a whole which is not static. It is an understanding of the whole world as a sounding system, where the movements that generate sound set in play a resonance that reveals not only their source but also the sonic path from source to listener. What deep listening aims for, what concepts such as soundscape and sonosphere point to, is an understanding of sound as manifesting universal permeability. Returning to the core of this section of our inquiry, sound not only questioned as situation or situated, but as that which situates by revealing while permeating.

2.5. An interstitial gathering of threads

To consider sound on a seismic scale is quite daunting, especially if we recall that the first example of sonic immersion in this section was that of someone sitting

in a café and slowly broadening their awareness of the different levels of sound in their own environment.

Let us attempt a consolidating summing up of some of the lines of thought followed in this section, relying on some of the insight in a seminal work in the scarce contemporary literature dealing directly with an inquiry into sound via philosophy and vice-versa: the American philosopher of science Don Ihde's (b. 1934) book "Listening and voice: phenomenologies of sound" (first edition 1976), which was intended as "a prolegomena to an ontology of listening with suggestions for the implications of a philosophy of sound" (Ihde, 2007, p. xix).

We started with a passing reference to the classic comparison between sight and sound as means to access the singularity of these senses of exceptional reach and world-building richness. In Ihde's work this comparison is simplified by stating that if "with the "overlapping" of sight and sound there remains the "excess" of sight over sound in the realm of the mute object" (Ihde, 2007, p. 51), there is, however, a "comparable area where listening "exceeds" seeing, an area beyond the "overlapping" just noted where sight may not enter, and which, like silence to sound, offers a clue to the horizon of vision" (Ihde, 2007, p. 51).

He then points out as an example that "no matter now hard I look, I cannot see the wind, the invisible is the horizon of sight" (Ihde, 2007, p. 51), therefore "an inquiry into the auditory is also an inquiry into the invisible" (Ihde, 2007, p. 51).

This is a valid point, stated in in a compellingly simple way, and we have subscribed to it in this section, our focus, however, quickly shifted to the manifestation of synchronicity, where through movement and sonic reverberation, the visible – the world of moving objects – and the invisible – the static unmoving objects in this world – actually come together in the percussive, reverberating transition between traversing space and standing still.

Instead of asserting the border between sight and sound, our emphasis was on the very sonic potential of traversing and connecting these cohabitating territories of the static and the moving.

Next, by referring to the temporal vector underlining synchronicity – its play of bringing into presence the transition between the moving coffee cup and the stationary table top – we pointed to the phenomenological nuance of what Ihde notes as "having made a turn of attention to the first naïve existential level of experience where sounds are the sounds of things, the spatial aspects of that experience may begin to show themselves" (Ihde, 2007, p. 61).

Through synchronicity we came to wonder about the immersive quality of the sonic environment, its concentric expansive levels which are reached through heightened listening awareness, and in doing so found our discourse in tune with Ihde's own phenomenological exercise of delving into sound.

He proposes that "first, auditory spatiality must be allowed to "present itself" as it "appears"" (Ihde, 2007, p. 61), which implies that "negatively, a predefinition of spatiality such that it is prejudged "visualistically" must be suspended" (Ihde, 2007, p. 61). Then, "affirming the phenomenological sense of the global character of primal experience, it is necessary to replace the division of the senses with the notion of a relative focus on a dimension of global experience such that it is noted only against the omnipresence of the globality" (Ihde, 2007, p. 61).

We have explored this notion of a globality in sonic terms in this section, but pointing always to the persistence of difference within that globality. This dynamic co-presence of the wide encompassing sound field and the localized sound events noticeable within it, was presented first with the examples of fluctuation between awareness of strict spatiality and oceanic indistinction in the experience of swimming, then via the notion of sonic excrescence or noise as a radical difference built upon contingent sonic manifestations in the whole sound field, and finally by the notions of soundscape, sonosphere and deep listening pointing again to the nurturing of a encompassing holistic sonic awareness.

In the next part we will take a closer look at the dynamic process of listening and producing sound, from the perspective of the body as ambiguously located structure of reference, and some of the implications of this ambiguity as well as its disclosing potential.

3. The Body in Sound

To be a listener who can speak, and/or a speaker who can listen, is a very complex position to be in while situated in and through sound.

To speak of situated sound is to speak of the body, of our resonant body among resonant worldly bodies, in a state of awareness, responsiveness, intention and action.

This very same body in a state of awareness is, however, highly ambiguous in its location and easily revealed as naïve in its everyday myth of stable self-containment. How much of "we" is our body? Is a body an "it"? If so, where is the "we" in "it"? If our senses seem to reside in and manifest our bodily being, in the ways its reveals open access to the world, does all that is sensed somehow belong to an extended notion of body? And where does the body unaware lie in this question, the sedated, unconscious, sleeping yet intensely animated body of our organically portrayed selves?

The role of sound in the multifariously branched riddle of the body will take center stage in this chapter, both unveiling how sound adds to the complexity, and how it can potentially point to meaningful though unconventional routes to clarification.

3.1. Dual sound path into a body whole

There is a story that has been told many times, both by others and by the protagonist himself. In 1951, John Cage (1912 – 1992), the influential American composer, music theorist and leading figure of the post-war avant-garde, visited an anechoic chamber located at Harvard University in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

An anechoic chamber is a soundproofed room where the materials lining the floor, walls and ceiling completely absorb reflections of either sound or electromagnetic waves. By artificially causing the absence of echo, as well as cutting

off the penetration of any external sound, to step into an anechoic chamber is considered to be closest one can come to experiencing absolute silence.

However, to his surprise, when Cage had the opportunity to try out the anechoic chamber at Harvard University he heard not absolute silence but two distinct constant sounds: one low and one high. When he stepped out of the chamber and asked the engineer in charge what those sounds were, he found out that the low sound was the sound produced by the blood moving through his circulatory system and that the high one was produced by the constant electrochemical labour of his nervous system in operation. The two sounds were the essential life signs of his own body in an otherwise soundless environment.

This discovery – that for Cage was summed up in that there is no silence to be experienced in actuality, only a concept of silence as the negation of the uninterrupted human experience of sound – had a lasting impact in his work, especially in the notion of the exploration of the richness of sonic content in the apparent "silences" of everyday. This he brought into his own performative practice[84] as reflected by such well know pieces as *4'33''* (1952), composed for any unspecified instrument, consisting in the performer not playing his or hers instrument during the entire duration of the piece (4 minutes and 33 seconds localized awareness of "silence"). This would happen in the required presence of a live audience whose heightened awareness would then open up to whatever site-specific sounds would be available at that time in that place.

Cage's experience of those two sounds, produced respectively by the blood circulation and the nervous network in the human body, is relevant to us at this moment of the inquiry because it bridges into two parallel paths in how capability for sound is located in the body.

This bridging relies on analogy but is not metaphorical; on the contrary, it is inspired by conceptualization of a literal understanding of a scientific description of how the body is able to listen to sound.

[84] For a deeper discussion of the role of Cage and his contemporaries in the furthering of sound art and sonic performativity consult (Kim-Cohen, 2009), (Broyles, 2004), (Nicholls, 2010).

First, let us associate each of the two sounds that Cage experienced with two different levels of understanding what the body is and does. The blood circulation as a fully autonomic function of the body is involuntary, pertaining to the same category as other visceral functions, such as respiration, vasomotor activity (constriction or dilatation of blood vessels), digestion, perspiration, etc.

Of course, all these functions are managed by the autonomic nervous system, however, largely below the level of consciousness, and to the greatest extent independent of will. We focus on these functions here to represent the anonymous living body, the biological vessel characteristic of the species in all its non-essential variations, in other words, the sleeping body, the biological organism that persists in and through unconsciousness.

To contrast this with the other high-pitched sound that Cage experienced – while bearing in mind how this analogy operates through gradation and not absolutes – we take that as representing the nervous activity of the conscious body, the realm of the voluntary, the body with a name, the body as vessel for biography, the space-travelling, time-travelling body, the hum of thought, the background electrochemical noise of awareness and presence.

In the medical tradition, the clearest cut border between these two realms of the body is manifested through anaesthesia, which preserves the fully functioning anatomical object-body while suspending the self-aware processes of cognition. In the philosophical tradition, this border is found in the distinction between *Körper* and *Leib* as it is established, for example, in the thought of Husserl. *Körper* referring to bodies as material objects, the human body included in an inanimate radically objectified sense, and *Leib* to one's own body, "in an account of the lived or personal body (*Leib*)" (Carman, 1999, p. 209). In the philosopher's own words, in the fifth of his "Cartesian Meditations": "Among the bodies (*Körper*) (…)I then find my animate organism (*Leib*) as uniquely singled out namely as the only one of them that is not just a body (*Körper*) but precisely an animate organism (*Leib*) (…) to which, in accordance with experience, I ascribe fields of sensation, (…)"in" which I "rule and govern" immediately (…) and can thereby act somatically (*leiblich*)" (Husserl, 1982, p. 97).

This dichotomic progression of analogy – body as listener/speaker, body as circulation/nervous network, body as involuntary/voluntary, body as inanimate/animate – is not to be interpreted as a dualistic simplification, it does not aim at suggesting that there is an inherent passivity in the listening process, and that the individuality of the body at stake is only activated during speech or vocalization. On the contrary, any dichotomy is only superficial, the body in sound is a sounding body, and it is the very dynamic character of the body as a sonic vessel of reverberation that we are focusing upon.

As a matter of fact, it is of the utmost significance that when dealing with sonic issues, the divide between the object-body of anatomy and the body as a self-aware constellation of living processes, is revealed as being blunt, crass and inappropriate. As such, any ambiguity whatsoever that rises when discussing the body is to be embraced in any serious questioning of the very notion of body. It is worth remembering that the distinction between striving for clarity and for mere simplification is one of the essential exercises of philosophical thought.

In order to both illustrate and bring this point into discussion let us attempt a close description of how sound is constituted first as listening through the body, using the scientific (both physical and anatomical) descriptors yet punctuating this description with an awareness of the flow of ideas and concepts operating through them.

3.2. Notions of listening – conceptualizing vibrational anatomy

When one thinks of listening merely in the sense of talking on the phone, one can easily forget how the whole body is involved in the process of acknowledging and reacting to sound. Listening in the deepest vibrational sense is a process that involves not only the highly specialized ears, but the skin, the muscles, the bones, the blood and the lymph and even the particular consistency of the internal organs.

To listen in this sense is to attribute meaning to the vibrations that one's body is constantly affected by, and the complex architecture of the ears – external,

middle and internal – however deserving of our attention should not distract us from this fact. In fact, when compared to the full intensity of the vibrational spectrum that our bodies are subjected to "sound is merely a thin slice, the vibrations audible to humans or animals" (Goodman, 2012, p. 70).

In this very vibrational nature of the body we find a clue to its ambiguity for, in the words of Steve Goodman, also known by Kode9 (born 1973), a Scottish electronic musician, artist, philosopher and author, "vibrations always exceed the actual entities that emit them" (Goodman, 2012, p. 71), therefore "vibrating entities are always entities out of phase with themselves" (Goodman, 2012, p. 71).

Subsequently, the author in case prefers the expression "an ontology of vibrational force" (Goodman, 2012, p. 70) to the most commonly used "philosophy of sound". What is at stake here, when discussion vibration, is therefore mainly an inquiry into "the basic processes of entities affecting other entities" (Goodman, 2012, p. 70), and more concretely, how "the question of vibrational rhythm shoots right to the core of an ontology of things and processes and the status of (dis)continuities between them" (Goodman, 2012, p. 72).

These are complex and potentially equivocal conceptual formulations. What is relevant to us at this point of the inquiry is to stress that, in the course of this inquiry, when we discuss the body as being both sounding and in sound, we are considering it not as a strictly localized instance of physicality, but as a complex relational constellation of processes.

The body as we mean it, is indeed part of localization, not because it is easily localized, but because it is both localizable and active in localization, in other words, it is that which provides a reference for localization. We will discuss this more closely in the next chapter when we reconnected our understanding of the body in sound with the very notion of spatiality, but mention it at this point so that the notion has, so to speak, time to root itself in the consciousness of the reader, who, supposed as being of the active sort, is of course drawing his or her own critical narrative of inquiry as we proceed.

Let us leave the body as constellation for now and take a step back to a more instrumental look at the specific organs of sound in the body, and slowly try to restore them from their factual anatomical description to their essential conceptual nature.

Let us therefore start with the ears and consider their shape before their function. Shape is inherently metaphorical, not in the mere literary sense, but in the sense of constantly establishing a network of crossing and zigzagging meaning where similarities in the context of difference seem to amplify our ability to think beyond the more conservative boundaries of sensible reasoning.

Therefore the ear as an amphitheatre[85], the ear as a seashell, the ear as a pavilion, the ear as a cup, the ear as a miniature landscape of hills and valleys, are intuitive morphologic analogies that point to a deeper symbolic tradition.

From being associated "in pre-Christian mythologies (…) with the female genital organ through which both conception and birth take place" (Fabiny, 2005, p. 189), to its biblical role where "the Psalmists ask God to "incline your [his] ear" (Ps. 17.6) and the faithful apprehension of God's word also comes through the ear or hearing: *fides ex auditu* says St. Paul in Romans 10.17." (Fabiny, 2005, p. 189). This wealth of analogy, in pre-modern times extends to its many synonyms such as ""auricle", its reference expanding in 1653 from the human ear lobe to the external ears of all animals, became more intimately figurative when applied in 1664 to the two ear-shaped upper lobes of the heart" (Schwartz, 2011, p. 97).

Abstracting from the symbolic level, and delving into a purely physical/anatomical description of the processes that constitute hearing, we find a narrative of touch. We have alluded before how this narrowest and closest of senses seems to have a particularly intimate relationship to hearing.

This can be illustrated in many ways, for example by pointing out how the ears can be described as a specialized skin, resulting from the infolding of tissue that acquires in the process of gestation such a sensitivity to air pressure variation that it can be stated that "hearing and touch meet where the lower frequencies of audible

[85] Refer to (Kaplan, 1968).

sound pass over to tactile vibrations (at about 20 hertz)" (Murray Schafer, 2012, p. 102).

This reveals not only how "hearing is a way of touching at a distance" (Murray Schafer, 2012, p. 102), but maybe most importantly, how the specificity of hearing is actually the bridging of that which is distant and that which is extremely close, meaning the vibrational component of both the animate and the inanimate entities whose presence in the world is inherently processual, dynamic and interdependent.

As such hearing extends and amplifies our understanding of touch, seemingly the most factual and concrete of the senses, into uncommon levels, gradations and nuances[86].

The literal narrative of the process of hearing is a narrative of touch, percussion and impact – figure 1 (Ando, 1998, p. 51) reproduced next should serve as spatial reference for the organs described, and be read from left to right.

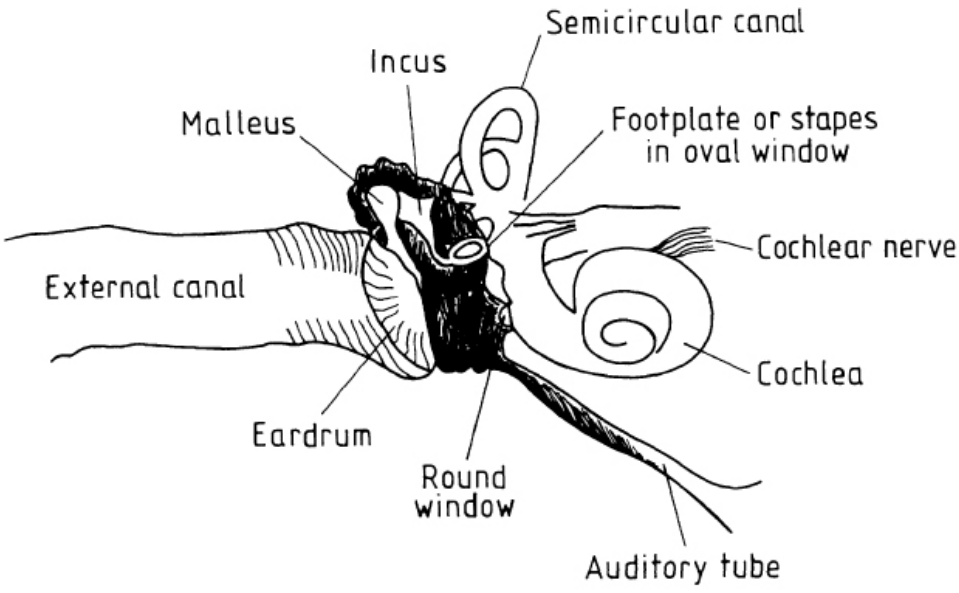

Figure 1 – Schematic illustration of the human ear.

[86] For examples of scientific assessment of the scope and reach of hearing refer to (Damaske, 2008), (Durand, 1990) and (Horowitz, 2012).

It all starts when sound is gathered by the delicate geometry of the pinna (the visible part of the external ear), and the proclivities of this miniature landscape initiate a complex (and singular to any given individual ear) process of absorption and refraction where the natural rhythmic variance of sound pressure is directed into the outer ear canal.

At the end of this short tunnel “the sound pressure striking the eardrum is transduced into vibration” (Ando, 1998, p. 51), which in turns causes a cascade process where the three ossicles in the middle ear hit each other in sequence, so that the vibration is passed on into the complex structure called cochlea.

These three ossicles are located behind the eardrum (a thin membrane taut in the likeness of a drumhead) inside of the tympanic cavities and are respectively called malleus (the hammer), incus (the anvil), and stapes (the stirrup) (Ando, 1998, p. 50). Their names refer to their shapes, which in turn all refer to rhythmic percussive events. The last of these small bones, the stapes, hits an oval window in the wall of the cochlea – which is a spiral shaped tubular organ filled with fluid and whose interior is lined with sensitive microscopic hairs, each connected to nerve endings – and generates “a traveling wave [of fluid] along the basilar membrane” (Ando, 1998, p. 53).

This wave of fluid – such a strong symbolic connotation given the oceanic quality of hearing – rhythmically moves the small hairs (stereocilia) within the cochlea. The cochlea “contains the sensory receptor organ on the basilar membrane, which transforms the fluid vibration into the neural code” (Ando, 1998, p. 53). At this point, the “mechanical information in the traveling waves on the basilar membrane is transduced into biological information” (Ando, 1998, p. 55). The sound as a physical phenomenon has been transposed into neural processes, and the brain can start to do what it does, so science tells us.

At this point, for example, the function of time in decoding sound meaningfully is said to be triggered, and the three-dimensionality of space is brought out from a neural processing that accounts for such facts as that “head-related transfer functions between a source point and the two ear entrances have directional qualities from the shapes of the head and the pinna system” (Ando, 1998,

p. 48). This refers to the so-called “interaural time difference” (Ando, 1998, p. 48), which in essence explains why we hear the world in stereo and why this stereo sound-imaging places us in a tri-dimensional referential, which not only has to do with the fact that we have two ears, therefore two channels of sound input, but that the specific differences in the geometry of the ears, “placed” in our head symmetrically, and how the intracranial space between them affects the penetration of sonic vibrations, are all variables that are processed in order to construct our real time sense of balance and perception of sound directionality. We merely allude to this for context, but this is where our inquiry and the scientific approach to the understanding of sound part ways – the theory of sound as information to be neurally processed is a territory of knowledge we shall not probe[87].

If listening can then be broadly conceived as a narrative of touch and the ear a “mechanism of sympathetic vibration” (J. Sterne, 2003, p. 64), operating essentially on the level of translation of mechanic energy into neurochemical information, composed of organic parts that essentially percuss each other rhythmically and sequentially at increasingly smaller and more subtler scales, can the process of speaking, or better put, of voicing sound be conceived merely as a reversal of this process?

If we describe it in a mechanistic simplified way, yes. If we take a closer look at the context of some of the stages implied in the process of phonation, then a mere reversal is maybe not the best way to understand it, unless it is conceived in a context of something like a feedback loop with incredible variance of proportion at some of its stages.

From considering the microscopic stereocilia inside of the cochlea to the very way the atmospheric pressure affects the acoustics, and therefore the behaviour of the vibrations, in the room where the listener is at, this scale shift is quite awe-inspiring. In other words, this feedback loop goes from the room to the nerves and back again as we will soon see, understanding “room” as any given acoustic space the listener might be located at, from a phone booth to a valley.

[87] For those willing and interested in following this path of inquiry, we suggest (Ding & Simon, 2012), (Perani et al., 2011), (Seifritz et al., 2002) and (Kohler et al., 2002) as introductory references.

3.3. Notions of phonation – breath, vibration and resonance

After having described the process of listening as starting with "the ear vibrating in sympathy with the airborne vibrations" (J. Sterne, 2003, p. 59), we shall now describe the process of phonation or vocalisation as starting with the very act that constitutes one of the main staples for the persistence of life: breathing.

Let it be noted that the following figure 2 abstracts from the anatomical specificity of each of the organs implied in the process of phonation – meaning both "the physical process of forming audible speech sounds" and "the combined activity of the vocal apparatus"[88] – and instead aims at providing a reference to the nature of the activity taking place at any given stage of the phonatory process.

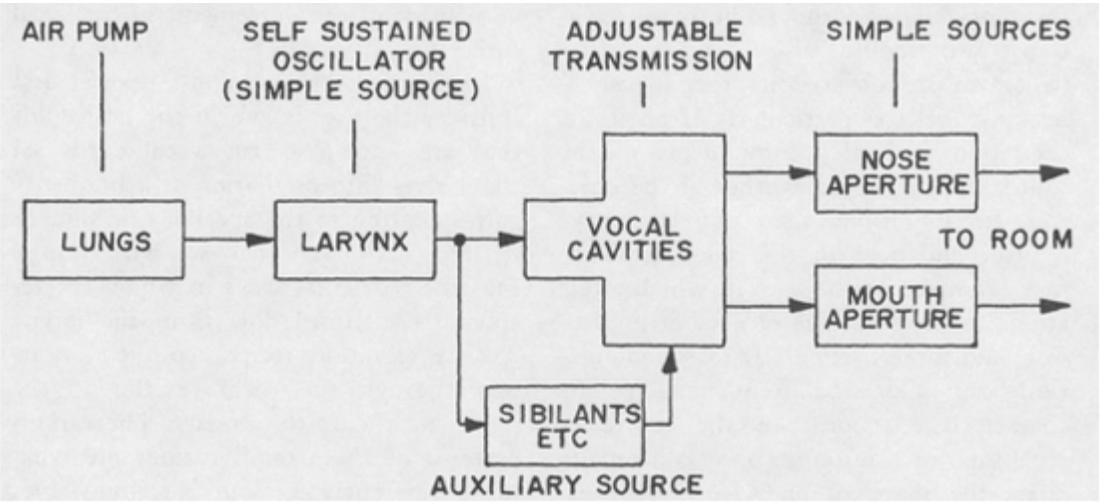

Figure 2 – Schematic of the different stages of the phonation process.

Thus we start with breathing, here understood physiologically as breathing out, a continuous pumping out of air that is the medium of sound in most human sonic interactions.

[88] phonatory. (n.d.) McGraw-Hill Dictionary of Scientific & Technical Terms, 6E. (2003). Retrieved January 24 2015 from http://encyclopedia2.thefreedictionary.com/phonatory

The pneumatic action of the lungs is therefore what sets in motion a significant enough volume of air to vibrate the structures of phonation, who will then modulate these vibrations in such a way as to produce the specialized choreography of sonic variation know as voice.

In the simplest of terms, the phonatory system can be described as having three organizing principles of physicality: a “power source”, “a vibrator” and a “resonator” (Otolaryngology, 2015). The power source are the lungs, who in playing their essential role of sustaining life through respiration, deflate rhythmically and exhale air up the windpipe, known scientifically as trachea, a tube that connects the lungs to the larynx.

The larynx, on top of the trachea, is a mostly cartilaginous casing articulated by a series of muscles that houses the vocal chords, which in turn “do the actual vibrating in the larynx, [and] are flaplike folds of muscle attached to the interior of the larynx in such a way as to produce a slit-like opening through which air can pass” (Benade, 1990, p. 998).

The essential principle at work in the larynx, via the work of the vocal chords is that of oscillation, which means that “when one phonates (produces vocal sound) normally, the cords are given a shape and spacing that permits the aerodynamic forces which arise from the air flowing between them to set them into oscillation” (Benade, 1990, p. 999).

In more detail, what happens to these flaps of flesh is that “when we breathe normally, they pull themselves back out of the way, so as to leave an unobstructed air passage” (Benade, 1990, p. 999), however “when we whisper, they are held close enough together that air flowing between them generates a rushing or hissing sound made up of roughly equal amounts of all possible frequency components (“white” noise)” (Benade, 1990, p. 999).

The vocal chords themselves are “soft and are set into vibration by the passing airstream” (Otolaryngology, 2015) while vibrating “very fast from 100 to 1000 times per second, depending on the pitch of the sound we make” (Otolaryngology, 2015). This pitch is quantifiable as the frequency of oscillation of

the vocal chords, high frequency of oscillation accounting for high pitch sounds and low frequency of oscillation for low frequency sounds.

Let us just remark that oscillation is particularly important as a principle at work in phonation because it reconnects us immediately, and indeed symmetrically, with the previous described process of listening in which an essential role was played by “the motions of the eardrum caused by inward and outward forces exerted on it by the air“ (Benade, 1990, p. 459), which are nothing more than oscillatory pressure variations.

From the vibrator/oscillator principle to voice, the intermediate step is the manifold complexity of resonation. “By themselves, the vocal folds produce a noise that sounds like simple buzzing, much like the mouthpiece on a trumpet” (Otolaryngology, 2015), so this vibrating air already active in sonic vibration of limited detail, becomes voice through its passage through the vocal tract, which includes the throat, nose and the mouth with its teeth, tongue and vocal cavities, all the way into the outside reverberant acoustic space here sound can be heard as voice.

In closer detail what happens is that the “simple buzzing” sound generated in the larynx is actually a “random collection of closely spaced sinusoidal components” (Benade, 1990, p. 999) on which “the vocal tract can operate […] to produce intelligible speech” (Benade, 1990, p. 999). In other words, what happens in the vocal tract is the “transforming the rather simple airflow spectrum provided by the vocal cords into the recognizable acoustical patterns needed for speech and music” (Benade, 1990, p. 1017).

Finally, through the movement of the lips, the tongue, the reverberation of the teeth and nasal cavities, adjusting the natural frequencies generated by the oscillatory patterns of the larynx, the mouth is revealed as “a sort of window at the far end of this room [referring here to the internal chamber produced by the vocal cavities], acting in its turn as a simple source for the excitation of the vibrational modes of the three-dimensional room in which we can imagine we are listening” (Benade, 1990, p. 1017).

Thus closes the feedback loop, when the sonorous exertion of the phonatory devices are poured into the acoustics of the specifically located external surrounding space where the listener is – the place where sound as voice meets the body it belongs to.

3.4. Voice as acoustic-anatomical specificity of its sounding body

The sound, now understood as voice, carries the specific physicality of the individual organic mechanisms that produced it. To say that the "voice source (as heard in the room) is characterized by a spectrum envelope" (Benade, 1990, p. 1024) means that each vowel (and consonant) sound has its own characteristic bodily proprietorship, that "the peaks and dips of any such spectrum envelope are determined by the frequencies of the characteristic vibrational modes of the corresponding vocal tract configuration" (Benade, 1990, p. 1024).

Voice brings us back to the body in the room. Voice brings us back to being the body in the room, by allowing the body to feel itself vibrate and reach out, vibrating, into the "surround" as both noun and verb.

In this context, it is of significance that the mouth is the first and last visible operator of the phonatory process, in the sense of respectively being perceived and being anatomically described. It is, more than that, one of the most intense touch operators of the phonatory process because we literally "experience the voice by feeling it in our body" (LaBelle, 2014, p. 4). In other words, the voice "is such an effective and sensual material precisely because it comes from the mouth; it rises from the chest, up into the throat to shudder the vocal cords, to appear (for surely, it appears!) in and then from out of the mouth, rippling behind the facial muscles, the nasal passage, and along the jaw" (LaBelle, 2014, p. 4).

The mouth, or the mouthing of voice, underlines the body one consequently is, not only because it is "an extremely active cavity whose movements lead us from the depths of the body to the surface of the skin, from the materiality of things to the pressures of linguistic grammars—from breath to matter, and to the spoken and

the sounded" (LaBelle, 2014, p. 1), but because, on a deeper level "if voice is the very thing that forces itself outward, to carve out a space for the self amid all the intensities of surroundings, the mouth can be highlighted as the cavity that resonates with all such negotiations and brings them back into the body, to gather and to inflect future expression" (LaBelle, 2014, p. 2).

What we have been attempting to build up so far, in this chapter, is a notion of the body in sound as a constellation of living processes, integrating both its description as something that sounds and as something that is sensitive and reactive to sound, into a comprehensive narrative of heightened awareness, both of self and other, and subsequently a radical notion of presence inquired into in sonic terms.

In the next chapter we shall expand this inquiry of the sounding body understood as the core of awareness of presence, and, most importantly, as a dynamic generator of reference coordinates for a spatiality that is inherently relational.

Let us however, before that, attempt a concluding systematic summing up of the path followed so far in this chapter.

We started with the story recounted by John Cage himself, about his experience of the essential dual nature of the constantly sounding body, even in as close as absolute silence as one can get: the sound of blood circulation and the sound of the nervous system in operation.

These two sounds materialized for Cage in what was essentially an involuntary moment of self-auscultation. Auscultation, as a medical practice, is one of the oldest forms of diagnostic of the living body, being, in its immediate form, already found in the account of Hippocrates in the 4th Century BC (Rice, 2012). It bypasses the patient's own potentially incoherent or at least anatomically untrained spoken description of his ailments, while still being able to have the body reveal it's own condition before the inevitable tardiness of a post-mortem examination.

The later development of the modern stethoscope by Laennec in 1816 instigated the development of the sophisticated skill of active listening, and a veritable lexicon of bodily sounds and their respective causes became a staple in the

diagnostic deciphering of the 19th and early 20th centuries. This historical curiosity concerning auscultation techniques interests us because it marks the impulse to "allow the body to be constructed as a dynamic acoustic space" (Rice, 2012, p. 304).

As Cage discovered, "the soundspace of the body is characterized by flow and by recurrent patterns of movement: of blood around the body and through the vessels and chambers of the heart, of breath in and out of the lungs, of matter and gases through the gut" (Rice, 2012, p. 304). We then proceeded to connect his dual sonic experience to a dual understanding of the sounding body. To the "audible hemodynamics" (Rice, 2012, p. 305) of the blood flow which "describes the corporeal surfaces and spaces across and through which it moves" (Rice, 2012, p. 305) we attributed a loose correspondence with the philosophical understanding of body as *Körper*. To the higher pitch hissing of the nervous system we associated an understanding of the living body as *Leib*.

This metaphorical translation in both cases reveals the sounding body essentially as a place where movement occurs and reverberates, which brings us close to the haunting words of Brandon LaBelle when he asks in the introductory remarks to his book "Lexicon of the Mouth": "Is not sound already a type of restlessness? Can we not understand sound as the shaking of an object, the squirming of a body, as a point of friction between this and that, you and I, and which stirs the in-between with its sudden, generative energy?" (LaBelle, 2014, p. x).

Indeed, this "restlessness" in vibratory terms, in the conversion of mechanic movement into nervous impulses, in the mutually percussive structures of both the organs of hearing and of speech, was what we focused upon next. In a simplified description of the physical structures and organic processes at play in hearing and vocalizing, we tried to, by following the anatomical path, to simultaneously bring into light the operating principles of animation, vibration, reverberation, process, and mutuality, constantly at work in the localized sonic processes taking place in the body.

Then, after establishing the processes of listening and of phonation as built upon a narrative of touch, we tried to bring these interdependent processes back into an understanding of the body in sound as marked both by self-awareness and

self-relation, and by an opening towards the localized spatiality of the surrounding sonorous environment.

From the acoustics of the room, as a volume of air within a material geometry of diverse solids and surfaces, into the translation from pressure into vibration and from vibration into impulse, back from the inner volume of air available in the exhaling lungs, modified into airborne vibration by the phonatory apparatus and spilled back into the room, we have charted a cyclic self-perpetuating understanding of the sonorous activity of the living body, tuned towards the manifestation of voice.

4. Sounds as Events

The raw experience of sound has a very special role in understanding spatiality in the sense of both situation and possibility. Any given “room” we might find ourselves in, be it the aisle of a cathedral, a bathroom, and corridor in a large ferryboat or the immense bowl of an inactive volcano crater, is perceived as empty space. An empty space in the context of specific material boundaries, be they natural, man-made or a combination of both, that for the listener can be listened to from the reference position of a static placement of his or her own body, creating a fixed stereo image, or from the shifting audio perspective of a crossing of that space, a moving stereo image.

It is in this transitional experience of the living listener/speaker that sounds manifest themselves as events – both individualized, articulated in sonic constellations, and as constant and revealingly reverberating acoustic dialogue with its immediate spatial surroundings.

4.1. Sounding space – between audiorama and sonic wandering

Let us call this first possibility of a listener fix in his or her listening point “audiorama”, and the second possibility of a listener moving through space “sonic wandering”. They are of course not only complementary but essentially integrated in a unified human relationship with sound, but let us separate them nevertheless so as to be able to address these two states of being affected by sound.

In our last chapter, we left the body, revealed as both a listening and a sonorous constellation of living practices, voicing into the room and listening back to both the room and itself in a feedback loop. We left the body talking to itself, therefore we left a door open for madness to creep in which is always necessary when keeping an eye on the pursuits of sanity.

Our use of voice is indeed, to the common everyday sense, one of the signs for accessing someone's mental stability[89]. Speaking out loud to one self, speaking too loud or too quiet in the public space, and the displacement of interruption, either by absence or by too much insistence easily portray the speaker as more or less insane[90].

The question of interruption is important, and is also the reason why we ventured on this tangent line of thought. The ability to interrupt is, of course, one of the essential philosophical strategies for productive inquisitive thinking. Issues are to be interrupted by well placed questions, thoughts are to be interrupted by the assessment of their value, people are to be interrupted, either by themselves or by others, or both, in their everyday life flow, in other words their "unexamined life", so as to open up for the possibility of a deeper engagement with meaning and meaningfulness.

There are many ways in which the word "interruption" might be used[91], but the fact that its meaning is so easily grasped when dealing with sound is not coincidental to our current line of inquiry. To interrupt someone while speaking, to interrupt a musical performance are of course good examples, but what is at stake here is to interrupt oneself. It is the ability to interrupt oneself while in the doing of something, in the act of sounding for example, that allows for a gap where concepts might be introduced to clarify by distinction and juxtaposition.

It is however essential to note, that these concepts which are effective in generating useful distinctions, such as hopefully "audiorama" and "sonic wandering" are, need to be able to somehow accompany the phenomena in their natural unfettered state of happening. That we, in this inquiry, have to go back and forth between the diagrammatic presentation of articulated concepts and the effort to reconnected these to an experiential narrative is an attempt of enacting productive

[89] Bibliographical sources for the relationship between voice and mental health have already been suggested on footnote 75 at the end of chapter 2.3.
[90] For further information concerning the diverse vocal performative levels, particularly the dynamics of interruption, associated specifically with Tourette Syndrome consult (Olson, 2004), (Schleifer, 2001), (Buckser, 2006) and (Kushner, 2012).
[91] For a discussion of the relevance of interruption within psychic processes refer to (Kalsched, 2013) and (Salberg, 2010).

interruption, without severing the essential ties to the experience itself. This concludes our digression on the nuances of philosophical strategy in the context of our current inquiry.

Back to the located body in the situation of the audiorama and in the possibility of the sonic wandering, which are essentially two complementary modes of sonic awareness. To better understand how these two modes relate to each other, how they overlap and which meaningful distinctions can be made between them let us imagine a winter landscape.

The listener stands at the top of a hill overlooking an expanse of snowy grounds, bordered by the smooth milky surface of a frozen lake on the right and by deep patches of woods both in front and to the left. The open space immediately beneath, at the foot of the hill, is a crisscross of paths, with people, mostly families, walking through in chatty dispositions, venturing into the outdoors for enjoyment, games, physical activities or relaxation.

The space curving into the landscape before the listener, has a roughly cupped shaped, with the wooden walls of the circumscribing trees reflecting the noises back to the center at the foot of the hill, mostly the voices emerging from the families, and the crunching sound of the footsteps of the snow. The snow itself is highly absorbent of the sounds, creating a muffled quietness that contrasts with the open expanse of the space.

This sonic image, this audiorama the listener is facing, is ripe with acoustic occurrences graspable by the merest shift of the focus of attention. These clustered sounds generate their own counterpoint, by their sounding apart and by their sounding together, by the juxtaposition and the intermixing of their identifiable characteristics and by the contrast of the micro-rhythms that structure them.

4.2. The role of micro-rhythm awareness in the audiorama

From the listener, in the presence of the sonic multiplicity constituting the audiorama, is inevitably required that he or she becomes the amateur "rhythmanalyst", a concept collected from the work of French philosopher and sociologist Henri Lefebvre (1901-1991).

The rhythmanalyst[92] is him or her for whom "nothing is immobile" (H. Lefebvre, 2004, p. 20), who, in the face of the audiorama, "hears the wind, the rain, storms; but if he considers a stone, a wall, a trunk, he understands their slowness, their interminable rhythm" (H. Lefebvre, 2004, p. 20). This highly developed ecological acoustic awareness is of course not specific to the natural settings, it is essentially rooted in the everyday, wherever it might be lived.

The rhythmanalyst is exactly the one who devotes him or herself to this "wherever" in order to turn his awareness of where he or she is, in the radical specificity of the surrounding rhythms of which he or she herself is part, into the understanding of the radical interconnectedness of the self in the shared sound world.

Inevitably, rhythmanalysis pursed far enough brings one back to his or her own body in the sense that "the rhythmanalyst will not be obliged to jump from the inside to the outside of observed bodies; he should come to listen to them as a whole and unify them by taking his own rhythms as a reference: by integrating the inside with the outside and vice versa" (H. Lefebvre, 2004, p. 20). Understood in this sense, rhythmanalysis becomes an exercise in sonic empathizing with one's reverberant surroundings, at a level of awareness that touches upon the micro-vibrational and is construed upon acoustic permeability.

The audiorama is therefore not only an expanse of sound but also an acoustic mirror. By requiring the attention to exercise itself outwards, it brings the sonic self into a place of recognition of both participation and identification of the specificity if its own rhythms.

[92] For an in-depth conceptualization and discussion of rhythmanalysis refer to (Simonsen, 2005), (Ikoniadou, 2014), (Fraser, 2009) and (Boutros & Straw, 2010).

This discovery of inner motion, this curiosity of sorts, often literally moves the listener, inspires him or her to become an agent of displacement within the configuration of the audiorama. It inspires the listener to wander and to keep listening to his own consequent sonic presence made manifest.

4.3. Micro-rhythmic participative awareness as catalyst for sonic wandering

To talk about space is to ask about the “where” – but also about the “where from”, “where at” and “where to”. If the audiorama allows for the access to a “where”, the sonic wandering inaugurates the “where from”, the “where to” and, maybe most importantly, the “where through”.

In the same winter landscape we have used as an example above, the listener who has become a listening wanderer discovers space as something that is traversable. The same multiplicity of sonorous elements that constituted the audiorama remains present, but their characteristics change, their sonic behaviour mutates. In being aware of this change, a pact is somehow broken and a question rises. Sounds manifest for the first time a kind of independence from sounding things.

Not only are the sounds produced by the wandering listener, such as his crunching footsteps in the snow, the rustling of his clothes while brushing away the low thin branches that stand in his way, his own breathing getting heavier, added to and set into play in a new complexity the already expansive multiplicity of the audiorama, but the subtle change of quality of both the sounds of the audiorama and his own while he moves through the landscape alert him to the circumstantial character of sound itself.

In the more passive situation of the audiorama, sounding things and their sounds were not only synchronous but also essentially bound together in a single identity. Awareness was marked by the stability of reference, even if some effort was required to lock the correspondence between sound and thing.

The listener could hear the sounds of the playful voices of the families moving in groups. The listener could hear the sounds of their steps in the snow. Suddenly, the very expression “the sound of” is revealed as problematic.

The sound of the voices and the steps changes when the listener, now wanderer, moves through the thicker forest, the proximity to the tree trunks absorbing, reflecting and masking the sounds in a different way then before. Not just the surrounding, materials but also the distance shift, with the wanderer moving closer or away from the sound referents, the sound “sources” as the expression is commonly used, is revealed as interfering with the specific materiality of the sounds. Even the angles of reflection play a part in this, the flat side of a stone changes the behaviour of sound in a different way that the round surface of tree trunk, etc.

Above all, in the transition from the audiorama to the sonic wandering, sounds are revealed to be not just about their sources – the interaction of physical processes which generates them, be it the percussion of boot heels, the compression of the snow, the exhalation of air animated by the diminute flapping of the vocal chords – but also, maybe to an even greater extent, about their behaviour operated upon by the specific spatial circumstances of their manifestation, which includes the position and motion of the listener.

4.4. In-betweenness – sounds as relational events

How to conceive more fully the nature of a sound once we have recognized in the fluctuation of its physicality an independence from its source? Not as a quality, not as an entity in itself, but as a relational event, a concept in which every single sound is revealed as being “that which agitates the boundaries of things, as a force of continual departure and propagation” (LaBelle, 2014, p. viii) and sound as whole, from the perspective of both a body of knowledge and an object of study, as “an intensely dynamic analytical and poetical platform defined by notions of the migratory, the connective, the associative, and the emergent; in short, that the operations of the acoustical, by immersing us in a continual flux of animate (and

rather invisible and immaterial) force comes to afford dramatic opportunities for relational contact, and a subsequent form of acoustical thinking" (LaBelle, 2014, p. viii).

An event is something that literally *takes place*. It is however not only something that *takes place* but it is also something that *happens.* This dynamic play in sound between *placing* and *happening* points to an understanding of spatiality rooted in the notion of *in-betweenness*.

In-betweenness means accounting not only for an understanding of "where things are" that includes the awareness of "where things are in relation to one another", but also for the very active principle of this relationality being supplied by, in and through the located self.

The space of the in-between, made sonically "palpable" in the transition between the listener and the listening wanderer, is grounded in an understanding of spatiality that is in its ultimate inquisitiveness asking about temporality. We are however far from being able to support this leap in the current instance of our inquiry. Let us take a step back and try to understand which privation does in-betweenness come into play to fulfill in a discussion about spatiality.

Why is it not enough to bind sounds to their sources, if in a spontaneous unreflected way the most natural behaviour for one to take without further consideration upon hearing a sound is to turn to look at its perceived source? If it seems obvious that "the direct objects of audition are sounds" (Matthen, 2005, p. 289), why is it not equally obvious in unreflected spontaneous behaviour that although "we are frequently able to determine whence and from which material objects these sounds come, […] the sounds and their characteristics are not attributed to these sources as predicates are to subjects" (Matthen, 2005, p. 289)?

More than belonging to a source, sounds emanate from a source, they distinguish themselves for their source by the fact that "auditory experience does not have, primarily, a feature-placing structure, rather it has a feature-direction structure, and though it is true that there is some sense of distance in sounds as well, this is not as precise as the directional aspect" (Matthen, 2005, p. 286).

Could it be that the turning of the head is actually more meaningful than where the head turns to? This consideration of the primacy of the directional aspect in auditory experience notes our normal reaction to a sound as having the implication of the reaction to a sonic source-path[93] more than to a sonic source-point.

In the subtle changes of the specific physicality of identified sounds in our winter landscape example – the ways in which both the distance, the pliability of the materials and the geometry of the solid surfaces interfered with the quality of the sounds – what was at stake was not the disorienting loss of identification between sound and source, but the awareness of the dynamic nature of the sound path between source and listener – a premonition of the relevance of in-betweenness.

A commonly found contemporary philosophical approach to this problem of what sounds are is to start the inquiry in the lines of the following dichotomy: either what happens is that "we auditorily experience distally located sounds, perhaps along with their sources" (Nudds & O'Callaghan, 2010, p. 11) which would usually mean that "sounds might be heard as properties or as parts of their sources" (Nudds & O'Callaghan, 2010, pp. 11-12), or "we hear sounds locally or aspatially, but thereby experience distally located sound sources" (Nudds & O'Callaghan, 2010, p. 11), meaning that "we immediately hear only sounds and their attributes, such as pitch, timbre, loudness, duration, and location" (Nudds & O'Callaghan, 2010, pp. 11-12).

This last possibility would imply that any given auditory experience is acousmatic, the experience of disembodied sound detached from an intrinsic bond to a source, and that whatever processes make audition work, therefore sustain the functioning reference between sound and thing sounding, are not part of the auditory experience as such but belong to a kind of mute thinking.

On the other hand, the first possibility is indebted to visuality, by treating sound as property of the source-object such as color, for example. The inadequate character of this approach is clearly presented synthetically by the German

[93] For detailed analysis of sound path determination in acoustic science, musical performance and other sonic disciplines refer to (Camilleri, 2010), (C. Anderson & Scipio, 2005), (Driscoll, 2012) and (Moore, 1983).

philosopher Elisabeth Ströker (1928-2000). She notes that although “color is attached phenomenally to an object, not only as a property, with all its nuances and differentiations of intensity, but also as an expressive presence” (Ströker, 1987, p. 25), it “can never appear except on a colored object” (Ströker, 1987, p. 25), but sound is different. By detaching itself from its source, sound is revealed to be “not a property but an event; it is not attached to something but draws nearer and recedes into the distance” (Ströker, 1987, p. 25).

This position differs from the acousmatic understanding of complete detachment between sound and source exactly because it inaugurates the implicit manifestation of what Ströker calls “attuned space” (Ströker, 1987, p. 24). This concept of attuned space is achieved by becoming “free from the presupposition that every space must be defined as an order of one next to the other” (Ströker, 1987, p. 24), and instead by embracing temporality in the sense that attuned space becomes “a form of executing movements, their co-determination by something temporal (sound) and their horizontal limitation through nearness and remoteness as spatio-temporal phenomena” (Ströker, 1987, p. 36).

We find this notion of attuned space to combine both the awareness of in-betweenness granted by the detachment between sound and source, the bond of directionality and of the gradual play between synchronicity and absence that ties temporality together with spatiality.

Ströker goes as far as marking that in attuned space – spatiality as revealed by sound – “the sound coming towards us not only fills space but also contracts it” (Ströker, 1987, p. 36). This perceived elasticity of space when engaged sonically reflects clearly the experience of the listening wanderer while navigating the subtly changing soundscape, namely how distance is felt not as a mere detachment from sound as itself and source as source of sound but as a fluid relational experience including both in the notion of event.

As we have seen so far, the notion of sound as events is above all an attempt to capture the complexity of the auditory experience by recognizing its distinguishable parts yet not distort it with forced either/or distinctions, which only achieve the opposite of clarification.

It is accepted that “since sounds seem to come from their sources only in a causal sense, and since auditory awareness of location must occur by means of awareness of audible qualities, hearing sounds and their qualities as located is required in order to perceive or form judgments about the locations of material objects and events through audition” (O'Callaghan, 2010, p. 32). It does not mean however that we must either “attend to the source of the sound and its properties—what it is, how it is, where it is, whether it is moving, and so on” (Nudds, 2010, p. 69) or “attend to the sound itself and its properties—its pitch, timbre, loudness, and so on” (Nudds, 2010, p. 69).

This commonly presented dichotomy seems to consider that either sound must be completely transparent in relation to location – a purely immaterial sign – or that is must be a concrete acoustic phenomena of opaquely acousmatic character. This is a simplification that can only take place in an inquiry about being in sound that departs, and deposes itself, in a deaf mute diagrammatic argumentation of the poorest kind.

When even the dry words of psychoacoustics state that “information about objects and events is embodied in the relationships among the frequency components produced by an object’s vibration; but the frequency components detected by the ears may have been produced by many different sources; so, in order both to determine how many sound-producing events are occurring at any time and to extract information about the objects involved in them, the auditory system must organize frequency components into groups corresponding to the objects and events that produced them” (Nudds, 2010, p. 72), one must strive to let go of views which are skewed by the apparent virtuosity of specialized dissection, and allow for the complexity and richness of the interconnectedness of living processes not to be brushed away as ungraspable as it is experienced.

We have so far attempted to describe how grasping the role of the detachment between sound and perceived source allow us to venture into an understanding of in-betweenness as the main concept at play in the exploration of spatiality from a sonic perspective. It is in the context of this in-betweenness that the auditory experience is viewed as intrinsically relational, both when it comes to

recognizing its predominant source-directionality as well as how the dynamic experiential bond between sound and source, through its manifestation as a complex shifting soundscape, is irrevocable. In other words, sound as event emanates – it is both *of the thing* and *in itself,* both identical and distinguishable, both *here*, *there* and *in between*.

4.5. From event to effect – mapping the way a sound sounds

To consider a sound as an event is to affirm that "sound is a propagation and is therefore directly connected to circumstances" (Augoyard & Torgue, 2005, p. 9) as we have seen. However, if the awareness of the detachment between sound and source points to the in betweenness of spatiality, it also invites a higher awareness of what is going on with the sound in itself.

Sound not only points to a source while simultaneously manifesting itself as not being reducible to mere directionality and location, it also reveals a character and a behaviour within the shifting soundscape. Sound as an event is an *it. It* not only sounds something, but *it* sounds *a certain way*, revealing in the way of its sounding a path in between itself and the thing sounded.

It sounds *a certain way* to a listener in his or her specific acoustic situation. The ways in which sounds are the ways in which it can be heard as a "sound object" (*objet sonore*)[94] as conceptualized by French musicologist and acoustician Pierre Schaeffer (1910-1995) from 1959 onwards, meaning a sound that is heard as an acoustic fact with a specific sonic quality described in terms of its sonic behaviour for the length of its duration (Schaeffer, 1966), independent of considerations concerning what it is the sound of.

The way a sound sounds, as it is perceived by a situated listener, can be described in detail via the use of a lexicon of so called "sound effects" which, from an experiential point of view, describe "the interaction of the physical signal and the

[94] For an extended discussion of the diverse definitions of "sound object" in contemporary sound practice and exploration refer to (Dyson, 2009, pp. 54-82), (Klett, 2014) and (Delalande, 1996).

perceptive intentionality, without which there would be no perception" (Augoyard & Torgue, 2005, p. 6).

The sound effect is the particular access to the sound event that is made possible when the sound event is listened to through a narrower focus of the specific situated materiality of the sound. It reveals the sound as an event that is no longer mainly defined by the detachment from its source, but by its manifest presence as it reaches the listener phenomenally. It refers to and clarifies how the understanding of sounds as events can point not only to a detachment of sound from source, but to a reconnection between listener and sound towards source.

We will now characterize more closely now a few of the sound effects which are part of this lexicon of sonic materiality. The main source for this lexicon, as it is presented here, is Jean-François Augoyard's and Henri Torgue's compilation work *Sonic Experience: A Guide to Everyday Sounds* from 2005. In this extensive inquiry sonic effects are considered as concepts that are essential to mapping out "everyday sound behaviours" (Augoyard & Torgue, 2005, p. 7), in such a way as to account for their role in the "sound marking of inhabited or frequented space; sound encoding of interpersonal relations; symbolic meaning and value linked to everyday sound perceptions and actions; and interaction between heard sounds and produced sounds" (Augoyard & Torgue, 2005, pp. 7-8).

The description of the specific distinctive qualities of these sonic effects presupposes a heightened awareness of everyday auditory experience, focusing on the fact that "there is an effect to any sonic operation" (Augoyard & Torgue, 2005, p. 8), which of course implies acknowledging that "the physical signal is under a perceptive distortion, a selection of information and an attribution of significance that depends on the abilities, psychology, culture, and social background of the listener" (Augoyard & Torgue, 2005, p. 8).

The lexicon at hand was collected in the context of an interdisciplinary collaboration between the social sciences, mostly from a psycho-sociological point of view, and the more technically grounded fields of acoustics and psychoacoustics. By borrowing from it at this point in our inquiry we are extending it further into a point

of view that retains the use of heightened awareness of sonic phenomena, but aims at contextualizing them in the philosophical context of human experience as such.

Although the study we are borrowing from affirms that "without a particular organization and morphology of a space, there can be no reverberation, resonance, cut out, ubiquity, or natural filtration [given as examples of sound effects]" (Augoyard & Torgue, 2005, p. 8), our analysis is built somewhat on the reversed sequence of reasoning. These sonic effects are for us meaningful as describable instances in the manifest shifting materiality of the experience of sounds, which is directly translated into an acoustic experience of spatiality. In our inquiry, each sonic effect is an attempt at naming distinctive ways in which sound allows us to experience space.

The sound effects that interest us more as examples can be grouped as such: *synecdoche*, *ubiquity* and *envelopment* as effects that constitute a certain state of auditory experience more than they attach themselves to specific sounds; *delay*, *resonance* and *reverberation* as effects that refer directly to the emanating behaviour of sound in the sense of presenting an experience of extended and nuanced occupation of space; *filtration*, *masking* and *metamorphosis* as effects that reveal the depth and multiplicity of the interaction between sonic phenomena; and *remanence* as an effect that stands for the essential play of sound and temporality in sustaining in the listener a situated and durational presence of the sound heard.

4.5.1. Noting a lexicon – ubiquity, synecdoche and envelopment

Ubiquity in the simplest terms refers to, under certain circumstances, the "difficulty or impossibility of locating a sound source" (Augoyard & Torgue, 2005, p. 130) experienced along with the sensation that the given sound at hand "seems to come from everywhere and from nowhere at the same time" (Augoyard & Torgue, 2005, p. 130). Together with envelopment, defined as "the feeling of being surrounded by a body of sound that has the capacity to create an autonomous whole, that predominates over other circumstantial features of the moment"

(Augoyard & Torgue, 2005, p. 47), the auditory sense of ubiquity heightens awareness by interfering with the usual affirmative source-directionality that accompanies the experience of individualized sounds.

The confusion that arises from discovering ourselves surrounded by a state of sound of almost palpable thickness acts as an effective instigator of the conscious focusing of the attention through an aural browsing of the surroundings. If ubiquity is the immediate experience of failure of locating a source of a sound, then envelopment expands this experience through the failure of locating the very behaviour and vectorial quality of the sound in case, meaning the question "what is making this sound?" is refined into "where does this sound come from?" and the listener is deposed urgently in the acoustic opaqueness of the spatial situation he encounters himself in.

Envelopment is sometimes experienced as a pleasurable, when it allows the listener to focus on the intrinsically sonic qualities of the sounds present, relating to them as sound objects instead of as mere sonic intimations of other presences.

Ubiquity on the other hand, instead of releasing the self from its accurate sonic location by deposing his interest in the outer realm of sonic envelopment, can entail a reaffirmation of the location of the self as a stable aural platform in a confusing sonic surrounding.

Due to the location of the both ears on a horizontal level, the location of sound-source correspondence is easier and more accurate on a lateral movement of left-right surveillance than on a top-down vertical axis, meaning that sound coming from above or bellow us are harder to locate than sound coming from the left or the right, therefore "more "ubiquitous" than a source emitted on the horizontal level, where our ears are located" (Augoyard & Torgue, 2005, p. 136). A suggestive analogy of the implications of ubiquity is made when considering "whether the ubiquity effect is stronger with children, because the voice of the father or the mother comes from above" (Augoyard & Torgue, 2005, p. 136).

It is not obvious how or if ubiquity and envelopment can be construed as contributing to a certain hierarchy in terms of space as it is revealed through sound.

However, the connotations of envelopment with security and release of the hold of the self, and of ubiquity with angst, urgency, heightened awareness and a focusing of the locating instinct of the listener in space, do seem to express a constraining or releasing potential for the individual located at a certain time in a given sonic situation.

Synecdoche on the other hand, described as being "for someone listening to a complex sound ambience, […] the ability to valorize one specific element through selection" (Augoyard & Torgue, 2005, pp. 123-124), as the third of these mostly state inducing sonic effects refers to the situation in auditory experience where, in the awareness of the multitude of sounds, the listener manages to gage his sensitivity to the acute specificity of a single located one. In the chaotic context of envelopment and ubiquity, synecdoche accounts for the chaos and within it inaugurates the manifest intentionality of selective active listening.

Since "the valorization of certain sounds necessitates partial or absolute deletion of the other sounds" (Augoyard & Torgue, 2005, p. 124), the synecdoche effect underlines the sonic agency required and enacted by the listener when exposed to the non-hierarchical and potentially disquieting presence of the sound world in the full force of its indistinct aural impact.

Having established how synecdoche introduces the notion of aural intentionality in the auditory experience, we should note how it "refers directly to time perception by establishing continuity in our everyday experience" (Augoyard & Torgue, 2005, p. 125) by means of "emphasizing the permanence of certain sounds" (Augoyard & Torgue, 2005, p. 125) in detriment of others that are allowed to remain undistinguished from the background noise.

Synecdoche, as an effect, plays therefore an essential role in understanding how the experience of duration, in sonic terms, is connected to a hierarchical organization of sound perception by means of the intentional drive in the selective listener. To listen for something within all that is listenable, implies an aural alignment with the sonic materiality of the specific sound object made distinct from the full sonic spectrum. This alignment of aural attention is a requirement for the

awareness of the role played by the following group of sonic effects: delay, resonance and reverberation.

4.5.2. Noting a lexicon (continued) – delay, resonance and reverberation

By delay is understood in its generic sense as the temporal gap that is present between the perceived emission of a sound and its perceived repetition, such as in the case of echo or reverberation, that we will describe in more detail next. The relevance of delay is exactly that it manifests acoustically the in-betweenness of space revealed in the detachment between sound and source, or better put in strictly auditory terms, between first perceived sonic instance of a source sounding and its following reproductions caused by the physicality of emanated sound reacting to the solid surfaces in a given space.

Delay implies a repercussion, implies a vectorial duration of any given sonic emanation, and by its quality reveals the specific acoustic quality of the stereophonic space embracing both the sonic phenomenon and the listener. Delay is the essence of duration by unfolding a given sound into a perceived duration, beginning, sustaining itself in given surroundings, and ending. The extinction of delay is the closing of the sonic event, localized as such via synecdoche or attentive discriminatory listening.

Reverberation is a form of delay, being defined as “a propagation effect in which a sound continues after the cessation of its emission” (Augoyard & Torgue, 2005, p. 111) and where “reflections of the sound on surfaces in the surrounding space are added to the direct signal” (Augoyard & Torgue, 2005, p. 111).

As an effect, reverberation is an agent of chaos connected to the experience of ubiquity since “schematically, we can assume that the more reverberant a place is, the more opportunities there are for the ubiquity effect to appear, due to the increase in relative importance (in number and intensity) of reflected sounds to direct sounds” (Augoyard & Torgue, 2005, p. 132).

Reverberation potentiates the complexity of a given auditory experience due to the fact that “in the displacement of a sound from its source to the ear, only a small part of the sound energy travels in the most direct way” (Augoyard & Torgue, 2005, p. 111). In effect “large portion of the sound energy follows indirect paths, as it is reflected on the ground and the environment of the milieu: walls, ceiling, facades” (Augoyard & Torgue, 2005, p. 111), consequently “since these routes are longer, reflected sound energy takes more time than direct energy to reach the ear” (Augoyard & Torgue, 2005, p. 111) which accounts for the temporal delay that reverberation manifests.

However, it is not only a more chaotic sonorous situation that is produced by reverberation. Exactly because, maybe more than any other sound effect, reverberation reveals how the materiality of any given sound is intrinsically imbued of the spatiality of its situation, its is our ability to listen for reverberation and interpret it that accounts for our intuitive sense of acoustic space. It is through reverberation that a cathedral sounds big, wide and rigid, a forest sounds charged, full and deep, and a closet sounds like an instant amplification of body sounds, like breath and skin friction.

Reverberation plays an essential role in establishing the audiorama listening situation we have referred to before, where a whole multiplicity is manifested as located instances of sound in space, such as sources as emitters, listeners as receivers, and materials as reflectors. Reverberation portrays a given space as a stable stereophonic field, and in it, it allows for the occurring of a differential geometry of spatial reference, meaning it presents auditorily a state of sounding things.

On an individually located level, reverberation signifies also a sense of otherness, of the resound presence of an other, or of oneself as another, for example in the case of “the perception of the presence of something or someone beside oneself (through the modification of the reverberated field)” (Augoyard & Torgue, 2005, p. 115), “the feeling of “collectivity” and the sharing of social communication (through the envelope it creates)” (Augoyard & Torgue, 2005, p. 115), or “the propensity toward a narcissistic attitude as a sound mirror in situations

of individual sound productions (singing or whistling in a bathroom, for instance)" (Augoyard & Torgue, 2005, p. 115). As such, it is key for the inquiry into a notion of intersubjectivity in sonic terms.

Sounds reverberates because it resounds, because sound waves emanated by a vibrating source, when they encounter obstacles and if not absorbed, are able to be deflected into other directions than the original direct path between source and listener. Resonance is therefore the very potential for alteration of original sonic behaviour, in a sound world where most materials of the surrounding environment are too a certain extent impermeable to sound beyond their surfaces.

However, like in the dual definition of reverberation as generator of chaos and accuracy, resonance also refers not only to the sound that is deflected by an unyielding surface, but to the ability of sounds to transfer part of their vibrational energy into the objects they encounter, creating a sympathetic pattern of vibration between traveling sound and sounded thing.

As we have seen before, when describing the organic processes of listening, resonance is the core aspect for the very possibility of hearing. We have marked how "the ear is also the centre of a number of resonance phenomena (outer, middle, and inner ear), since it is a chain of reception and transmission based on mechanical systems put into forced vibration by a variation in pressure created by sound" (Augoyard & Torgue, 2005, p. 107). Additionally, because "the human vocal system, on the other hand, can be compared to an instrument, since it comprises a source of energy (air from the lungs), an oscillator (the vocal cords) and resonators (the pharynx and the mouth)" (Augoyard & Torgue, 2005, p. 107), it follows that "the vocal canal is thus a resonator possessing four or five important resonance frequencies, referred to as "formants"" (Augoyard & Torgue, 2005, p. 107). Moreover, the whole human body at any given circumstance can be "at the level of low frequencies, […] considered as a group of spring-mass-damper subsystems" (Augoyard & Torgue, 2005, p. 106), which means that, even in its most object-like passivity, it is a resonator.

Thus, sound "contaminates" the soundless by affecting it with vibration. Resonance implies permeability, implies mutuality of sonic affection, implies "affect

and after-effect" (Schwartz, 2011, p. 45), implies the systemic dynamics where in a given stereophonic field, all multiplicity can be interpreted as variance of both co-existing and interfering vibrational patterns.

Resonance stands for a radical interactivity of all elements in a given sonic situation. As such it is essential to the understanding of a deeper notion of sound as event, as expansive occurrence of mutual interference, contamination, as non-indifference, as a happening that instantly involves all within its spatial and temporal circumstances – in two words, radical reciprocity.

4.5.3. Noting a lexicon (continued) – filtration, masking and metamorphosis

That in space, as experienced through sound, reciprocity is modulated is what filtration, masking and metamorphosis teach us, being effects that manifest how sonic interference, obstacles and absorption – things that dim, distort and impede the sound signal to travel unchanged and unfettered – play a revealing role in the recognition and interpretation of the specific situation of a given stereophonic field. Whatever hinders does also reveal.

Filtration is defined as "a reinforcing or weakening of specific frequencies of a sound" (Augoyard & Torgue, 2005, p. 48), being more concretely perceived "when the frequency of a sound that we are accustomed to or that we have heard previously is modified" (Augoyard & Torgue, 2005, p. 48). Filtration occurs due to "modification of the spectral envelope [that] can be caused by distortions linked to the mode of utterance, to the space of propagation, or to an electroacoustic filtration that makes it possible to act voluntarily on the response curve" (Augoyard & Torgue, 2005, p. 48), which happens given that "various features of the environment separating the source and listener can filter sound" (Augoyard & Torgue, 2005, p. 48), such as typically "sound propagation through air (atmosphere density, air movement created by wind, lapse rate), or to the presence of obstacles

that block the direct reception of a signal (for instance, traffic insulation walls)" (Augoyard & Torgue, 2005, p. 48).

A particularly meaningful kind of experience of filtration is that which can be called "acoustic shadow". This is what happens when a listener, which previous was exposed directly to the path of sound from source to ears, steps behind an obstacle such as a wall, a door, or even another person. Standing now in the "shadow" of the dampening field caused by the interposition of an obstacle between himself and the sound source, the listener will experience a shift in the sonic experience usually translated into the dulling of higher frequencies and the underlining of the low ones.

A common example is the experience of closing a previously open window – where the whistling of the wind and the higher voices of women and children, or even the higher notes of traffic engines, become subdued. The reverse, the stepping "out of the shadow" when the obstacle is removed can be quite a thrilling experience of intensification of a somewhat tame everyday soundscape. It also reveals, in the case of stepping out into the street from home, how "the constructed limits of a house function as a zone of spectral transformation and a filter playing on intensity" (Augoyard & Torgue, 2005, p. 52).

Filtration also plays an essential role during childhood in the acquisition of a mother tongue. Any given spoken language is defined sonically by a set of recurrent frequencies not only constituting words per se, but also accent and pronunciation, and all the aural characteristics that make it recognizable and distinguishable from any given foreign language. It is therefore through learned filtration that the ear constitutes a sense of a specific language in the surrounding sea of sound[95]. Filtration is then essential in any situation where specialized listening is demanded, where a certain sound need to be recognized as a given sign and distinguished from any other. As such it must be noted that "the human hearing system, from the external ear to the brain, is itself a filtering process" (Augoyard & Torgue, 2005, p. 49).

[95] For an analysis of the complexity of this process in what pertains both to language acquisition and speech comprehension see (Darwin, 2008) and (McDermott, Wrobleski, Oxenham, & Adelson, 2011).

Filtration can be interpreted as a more concrete descriptor of what is at stake in the synecdoche effect presented above. It is essential is revealing the layered quality of the sound event, how it unifies and contains multiplicities without however diluting them completely. Filtration affirms the agency of the listener, able to accept the fullness of sound, navigate its layers by exercising an intentional aural mode of attentive listening, and finally experience difference in sound, a difference that is recognition and identification.

Masking is another sound effect that can be described as building up on what we have already said concerning filtration. Being defined as "the presence of a sound that partially or completely masks another sound because of its intensity or the distribution of its frequencies" (Augoyard & Torgue, 2005, p. 66), it moves the question of the sonic shadow cast by spatial objects to the very interaction within the sonic field of sounds constituted by similar vibratory qualities. Masking reveals how sounds also "cast shadows" upon each other.

Having a clear commercial potential as "sonic makeup" (Augoyard & Torgue, 2005, p. 69), especially in the context of the noise saturated soundscape of contemporary urban life, the use of masking as been quite expounded upon through technology, for example in background music soundtracks for the open space office configuration, meant to retain privacy by muddling after a short distance individual conversations, or in the common noise-cancelling headphones so popular for long distance travelling in dealing with pervasive noises such as that of an airplane's engine. Another example is the effectiveness of the sound of a considerable volume of running water, such as in a fountain in the context of urban design, to cover up the similar and unwelcome frequencies of noisy street traffic.

Through masking the permeability between sounds is made apparent, to the point where absolute permeability can consist in one sound effectively making the other undistinguishable by occupying it's specific range of frequencies and overwriting it in the listener acoustic sensitivity.

Thus, masking puts into question the commonly accepted qualification of sound as something immaterial, diaphanous and invisible. It reveals the specific density of acoustic materiality, where sounds behave and occupy sonic space much

like solid objects occupy the tri-dimensional space, interfering with each other, permeable with fluid “borders” given its specific frequency components, but also constant and stable enough to suffer transformation.

Speaking of transformation, the understanding of metamorphosis, as a sound effect, owes greatly to what we have discussed so far concerning filtration and masking.

In sonic terms, metamorphosis refers to “a perceptive effect describing the unstable and changing relations between elements of a sound ensemble” (Augoyard & Torgue, 2005, p. 73). It is meant to characterize “the instability present in structural relations that link parts of an ensemble and the resulting possibility to switch elementary components of a totality, so it is perceived as being in perpetual transition” (Augoyard & Torgue, 2005, p. 73).

Essentially, metamorphosis in sonic terms refers to the awareness of the coexistence in the sound field of aural events construed as both partial and whole, in a dynamic shifting that constitutes a given soundscape, a given auditory experience.

As we have stressed often, human auditory experience is construed upon the dual ability “to perceive multiple sounds as an entity but at the same time, its discriminating capability allows us to listen selectively” (Augoyard & Torgue, 2005, p. 74), which is commonly illustrated by a terminology where “some elements are emphasized as “figures” while others remain as “background”” (Augoyard & Torgue, 2005, p. 74). That there is instability at play between figure and background is at the core of the meaning of metamorphosis. This makes it particularly manifest in spaces with high reverberation, where ubiquity is present and the potential for masking is most acute, such as in public spaces where crowds converge in a place surrounded by reflective surfaces, as in a market or train station.

Being related to the ubiquity effect when it imparts a presence of the whole, and to synecdoche when it closes in on the shifting entities within the whole, “in a way, metamorphosis is to time as presence is to space: the former is characterized by permanent instability of referents in time (incessant inversion of the relation between sound figure and background); the latter is characterized by an instability of

referents in space (incessant questioning of the position of sound sources)" (Augoyard & Torgue, 2005, p. 75).

The deep sonic choreography of the multiplicity of sound in space that metamorphosis underlines leaves indelible traces, both in the acoustic fabric of the soundscape and in the experience of the listener.

4.5.4. Noting a lexicon (concluded) – remanence

Remanence, understood as "a continuation of a sound that is no longer heard" (Augoyard & Torgue, 2005, p. 87), points to the role of the listener in sustaining by his own aural participation the sound event in a extended spatiality that includes, not only all the material characteristics of the located space, but the very resonant inner acoustic space of the listener awareness and presence.

Remanence names the state where the listener resonates beyond the extinction of the mere physical manifestation of the sound. Remanence is, however, "neither an anamnesis (sounds heard in the present that evoke the past), nor a phonomnesis (remembered sound without physical listening)" (Augoyard & Torgue, 2005, p. 87), it is sound as trace, vibrating consciousness.

As a sound effect that explicitly cannot be measured in acoustic terms, remanence is closely related to the experience of the decay of a sound, its tending to silence as it looses its initial energy. The operative concept here is *tending to* silence, since remanence includes, contrastingly, both the experience of the fading of the sound event, and the vivid presence it manifests while waning as it resists waning in the remainder of resonance occurring in the listener. The presence of the sound has shifted from source, via path, to listener, who is now not only receiver but also vessel, container of trace.

It is through remanence that sound can be met in thought and inquired upon, and in this sense, it is the single sound effect that allows for the very existence of any

study of sound. It is as such deemed worthy of closing this short presentation of a working lexicon of sound effects.

Lastly, it is of great significance to remind ourselves that all the sound effects we have described so far, as sonically constituting the vivid, located and eventful experience of spatiality through sound, are to be found as integral to the very functioning of the human hearing system. Scale changes, function and meaning remain – in sonic terms the fractal is fact more than metaphor.

In the next chapter we will inquire specifically into the role of the sound event, which is voice, in the complex dynamic nature of sonic experience as manifestation of presence as we have described it so far.

5. Sound as Vocality

After having attempted to draw out a path of inquiry through the meanderings of sound, we come now to rest upon the questions raised by the voice.

In a philosophical sense, which aims at touching upon something of the deepest quality, voice is the sound whose task is to ask questions and offer answers. Dialogue, in its wider sense taken here as the core of philosophical practice, is voice play. It is a way of setting thought into motion by exchanging sounds. It is literally shared resonance of thought.

We have described so far some of the most relevant particularities of the situation in which this sound exchange takes place, by discussing listening and sound making in the context of an experience of spatiality. We have also suggested, even if not delved upon, how this spatiality relates to temporality. We have posited a body in this situation, described its processes of gathering unto itself sound, and manifesting it outwards. We have posited a body bound to a self who is simultaneously agent, participant, vessel and stage of the sonic experience. All throughout this analysis we have let the body self be considered as intrinsically sonorous, but we have also let it remain silent in its most particular and characteristic human sonic living process: the use of the voice.

Voice has been absent so far not only because it is such a complex issue, but because it seems to require an interminable extent of introductory effort, in order to be understood as problematic in such a way in which philosophy should concern itself with. This is due to the fact that voice rests so comfortably in the body bound to a self. That which is confortable, and seeming unproblematic, or at least, whose problematizing can be bypassed without severely hindering the full manifestation of the phenomenon, has been traditionally a very attractive philosophical theme, for the kind of philosophical tradition that is, which dedicates the highest effort to understand that which seems to be given at the lowest cost[96], and which, in what is

[96] "Was ist das Schwerste von allem? Was dir das Leichteste dünken, Mit den Augen zu sehn, was vor den Augen dir liegt" (Friedrich Schiller, Ärtze *in* Xenien, 1797).

a both obvious and veiled manner, seemingly permeates the full extent of human experience.

Voice, as a philosophical problem, belongs to such a manner of theme. To inquire into it, immediately puts us in a position to do violence to a most fluid phenomenon by, through a kind of mock entomology, pinning it down and spreading out its constitutive parts in such a way to hopefully better describe it. In more radical terms, we have another name for this "mock entomology" which dispenses with metaphor, we call it "written word".

Since we have to "do violence" to voice, in order to attempt to write meaningfully about it, let us at least do it questioningly. Let us begin with an opening set of three interweaving questions. How does sound become voice? When does sound become voice? What is a sound once it has become voice?

The use of the verb "to become" in this set of questions should not be interpreted as implying a strict sequentiality, we are not suggesting that every instance of voice starts out by an instance of sound which is not voice. We might however be suggesting that what we call voice is a certain kind of experience of sound and not something that is intrinsically found in the very sonic fabric of the sound of any voice. In other words, we might be suggesting that to hear a voice is not to hear the sound of a voice but to hear a sound in a certain way. We will attempt to clarify this further.

Returning to this first set of questions, it is important of course to mark that we should attempt to answer them keeping in mind the tripartite experience of listening to another's voice, listening to one's own voice, and voicing one's own voice.

We are also excluding from our inquiry voice under technological mediation[97]. What is meant here by technological mediation are the methods, strategies and consequences of the transformation of voice in real-time, as well as the recording and reproduction of voice in the context of temporal displacement in

[97] For an alternative introductory access to this path of inquiry refer to (Birdsall & Enns, 2008), (Bijsterveld & Van Dijck, 2009), (J. E. Sterne, 2012, pp. 209-324), (Goodman, 2010), (Milutis, 1996) and (Ong, 2002).

relation to its source emanation. This exclusion is justified merely by the necessarily finite nature and scope of this inquiry, and should not be interpreted as a judgement of value or relevance upon these matters. Operating on the voice through technology is understood to have its own complexities and raising of significant questions, however, the questions raised by the "direct" experience of voice unmediated by technology are considered to be essential also when technology comes into play. Our line of inquiry is therefore considered as having the potential to, in further instances, lead into a questioning where technological mediation could be considered as the main theme.

Let us return to our three introductory questions. The first two – "how does sound become voice?" and "when does sound become voice?" – can be approached as interlinked. The last one – "what is a sound once it has become voice?" – is indeed another way to ask "what is a voice?", therefore it is a demand for a kind of definition. Such a definition of voice, attractive and elusive as it might be, will be built up to instead of merely put forth.

5.1. Voice – sounding as calling

Every sound making is a kind of voicing, if understood as a calling. Every human voice calls in a particularly human way, not like the screeching breaks of an incoming car, but with its own intense urgency. Sometimes a voice heard is a matter of life or death, but at all times it is a matter of life and death. Each voice sounds out a living mortal presence, a finite participation in a world of relatively infinite proportions.

Hence, every voice says *here sounds a life*, *here sounds a soul*, *here sounds a breathing, thinking, feeling constellation of living processes that is an embodied*[98]

[98] For a broad contextualization of the notion of embodiment in contemporary philosophy see (Csordas, 1994), (Lakoff & Johnson, 1999) and (Varela, Thompson, & Rosch, 1993). Our use of the notion in this inquiry is however confined to meaning the confluence of self and its bodily situation, which is understood as selfhood in presence.

self. This is what a voice does, though it can also ask for hotter coffee, ask a question about filling out a tax report, or scream "help" under the threat of violence.

In a sense, it is the urgency of the voice, as well as the possibly heavy conscience pangs in ignoring it, which amounts to the meaning of a calling. That which calls is recognized as being self-animated. To hear the calling which is voice is to hear the sound of the presence of manifest being, be this sound produced willing or unwillingly.

A constrained voice is still a voice. A vocal emanation under duress not only is still a voice, it is a voice overcome by the sense of urgency that is at its core. It is, in a sense, a voice turned inside out – the sound of a person turned inside out, projected sonorously outward from a place of pain, suffering and/or despair.

Similarly, we experience the vocal urgency of joy and/or of pleasure, the vocal urgency of rage and indignation, the vocal urgency of the turning inside out of a contained human being, instantly located and extroverting his or her presence through our ears into our awareness.

Such can be the content of a philosopher's dream, as recounted by Martin Buber in his compiled "Between Man and Man", in a text titled "Dialogue" (*Zwiesprache*), originally written in 1929. A recurring dream which starts with the threat of mauling by the fangs and claws of an wild animal, after which "suddenly the pace abates: I stand there and cry out" (Buber, 2002, p. 2). This cry, full of urgency but hazily from the dreamed threat, "is sometimes joyous, sometimes fearful, sometimes even filled both with pain and with triumph" (Buber, 2002, p. 2), but the most important thing is that after the uttering of this cry, "inarticulate but in strict rhythm, rising and falling, swelling to a fullness which my throat could not endure were I awake, long and slow, quiet, quite slow and very long, a cry that is a song" (Buber, 2002, p. 2) then "somewhere, far away, another cry moves towards me, another which is the same, the same cry uttered or sung by another voice" (Buber, 2002, p. 2).

This is, however not an echo or a repetition of the caller's voice, on the contrary it is "its true rejoinder, tone for tone not repeating mine, not even in a

weakened form, but corresponding to mine, answering its tones—so much so, that mine, which at first had to my own ear no sound of questioning at all, now appear as questions, as a long series of questions, which now all receive a response" (Buber, 2002, p. 2).

The core of the urgency that a human voice, by sounding, commands is the need for a response[99]. This required response is a call to action, to recognition, to an acceptance of shared situation, shared context even in the face of the difference of individuation.

It is much more than "its inner relationship with meaning" (Dolar, 2006, p. 14) that strikes us, although a voice indeed is "a sound which appears to be endowed in itself with the will to "say something," with an inner intentionality" (Dolar, 2006, p. 14). If the voice is "the quasi-natural bearer of the production of meaning" (Dolar, 2006, p. 15), the concept to underline is "production" and not "meaning". A voice is a place of origin, "origin" meant as the origin of thought, but "origin" also in the sense of "original" as pointing to that which stands as the reference when it comes to the authenticity of whatever is voiced and recognized as meaningful: the situated speaker as a the original source of the utterance.

Production of meaning is a human task, the one task that cannot be outsourced or vicariously enacted, and a task that to such a great extent rests in the voice.

Accordingly, the core of urgency in the human voice can be understood, above all, through the awareness that the sounding of one's own voice, no matter how remote the conscious function to be fulfilled at hand is from any kind of calling – be it repeating a phone number out loud to better memorize it, or insulting a fellow driver in the throng of rush hour road rage – does indeed include this questioning, this opening up for a rejoinder, this proto choral possibility.

This call and response dynamics inaugurates an understanding of radical intersubjectivity in sonorous terms, which we will develop further in the next and

[99] For an expanded discussion of Buber's notion of "mutuality" as necessary to the very notion of "human" see (Haslam, 2011, pp. 67-91).

final part of this inquiry. For now, let us hold on to the thought of the urgency of the sounding voice as a catalyst for a dialogue that is rooted in the early glimpse of the existential recognition of a shared "being mortal among mortals", understood as an elusive togetherness of being.

One may ask however, can another's voice not be heard without urgency? Can another's voice not be heard as so much background noise, as no more than an inanimate acoustic artifact of the surrounding soundscape? Can our ears not be impermeable to a sound that is heard as a voice? In the world as we know it, the answer surely must be yes, and there is no end to the potential tragedy contained in this acquiescence. If a voice can be heard as a voice, even if diluted in a crowd, and still be heard as neutralized of its urgency, the urgency of the sonorously living, surely there must be a element of violence, subtle as it may be, perpetrated by the listener upon him or herself.

This violence, the likely possibility of which we can point to but not argue for, belongs not to the percussive, but to the strangling, muffling, numbing kind. We are not talking here about selective listening, about listening to the voice that has our name at the core of its calling and not to the one, equally loud and present, of the stranger invested in catching the attention of someone else. We are talking of the ability to stand indifferently within the inhabited sound field where we ourselves are anchored in any given situation. We are talking about the ability to carelessly hear a voice without partaking in the manifest presence, without being struck, no matter how discreetly, by the opacity of another's life, of another's enacted meaningfulness. That this operation might be possible without a measure of violence is to be considered of course, in the name of intellectual honesty if nothing else, but hardly embraced without a degree of dejection.

5.2. Vocality as a communion of permeable interiors

If "it is through the voice that "interiors commune with interiors"; speech sounds out our interiority to deliver it to another, and deeper, into the interior

private space of their hearing" (LaBelle, 2014, p. 3), then to listen to another's voice as a calling, to listen to one's own voice as a calling, to voice one's own voice as a calling – is to be aware of the essential distinction between the transparency of the voice when considered as mere vessel for linguistic meaning, and the meaningful opacity of the voice when experienced as a radical sonorous existential interpellation, which rests more intimately in the awareness of the presence of the other than in the ability to translate the other's thoughts into ours.

It is then that the voice appears not only as the sound of the urgency of being aware of the presence of another, but also as the awareness of the very situation of the other in relation to ourselves and to a surrounding acoustic spatiality – as we have seen in detail in the previous chapter – or in other words, acoustic and embodied awareness of intentionality and non-indifference in the sound-field.

The voice is a sound that is directed, which is a statement that does not distinguish it from any other sound, until we consider it as being directed not merely in acoustic terms, therefore not indifferently according to physical laws, but according to an engaged notion of difference in terms of being imbued with intention.

To say that the voice is an intentional sound, is not merely to say that voicing is doing something in order for something to happen according to an explicit purpose. "Intentional" is not meant as a synonym of "instrumental"[100]. A voice is an intentional sound because it announces a non-indifferent living presence as its origin. A living presence that engages with the world and is aware of its own engagement.

However, the conceptual correspondence between the urgency of the sound which is voice, and its character of being "in situation" via the manifestation of an intentional and non-indifferent presence is far from being straightforward.

[100] For a contrasting view of intentionality focused mostly on its interpretation as an evolutionary advantage connected to cooperative goal-oriented behaviour in the human species see (Tomasello, 2014).

5.3. Sounding the ambiguity of presence

We have affirmed the human voice as being a sound amongst all others and still a sound unlike all others. This is due to a great extent to the fact that sound points towards presence, but in the case of voice, it points towards the ambiguity of presence.

A voice originates from a situated body that is a self, a voice resonates acoustically the presence of this situated body self. Still, to say that voice manifests presence is not the same as saying that voice is itself present, and if a voice might not be present in an obvious manner, how can it manifest the very presence of that which is?

It is in this problematic duality that the transparency of voice as vessel, and the opacity of voice as a tangible sound of intangible presence come together in attrition. Because the presence we mean is not only of the body, but of the non-dissociable self of the living body.

Let's try to clarify this by looking more closely at the way in which voice is not problematic when it comes to its relation to presence.

The voice as a sonorous extension of the body is not problematic. In this context, its description can be confined to its acoustic and physical properties as sound. In the same way that we can be made aware of a body's presence by being blocked in our movement by its physicality as a tangible obstacle – something with weight, volume, density, resistance, extension, etc., that indeed stands in the way of our very own animated bodily territory of weight, volume, density, resistance, extension, etc. – a voice is equally tangible as a vibratory activation of a mass of air within a specific limit range, still well beyond that of an immovable body's arm's length. In this sense, it is not so very different to be made aware of another's presence by being slapped in the face or by being shouted at. Herein this exemplary violence rests no conceptual problem.

That the voice also originates from whatever becomes absent when the body dies is more problematic. It is also what allows voice to manifest presence. The

question here is: where does the voice come from? Or: where can one situate the voice that is not merely reducible to the tangible body? To answer that the voice comes from the soul, that it might even be as close as the soul can come to being tangible and as such share its essence, has alas become unacceptable in the context of a contemporary understanding of philosophy[101]. Notwithstanding, the question remains pertinent.

Another way in which voice is not problematic in relation to presence is when voice is conceived as mere vessel of linguistic meaning.

The reason why it is not problematic is because conceptualization of voice in this context operates upon a form of detachment, where voice is spoken and heard as a string of words granting meaning, and the specific situated vocal acoustics are somewhat subsumed in this process of transfer of meaning between speaker and listener, which occurs in the context of a shared language.

This “process of detachment [which] can be traced with extreme clarity in spoken language” (Ströker, 1987, p. 26) operates by conceptually wedging voice as “a sound formation brought about by specific organs of the body” (Ströker, 1987, p. 26) from the “sense content of the word” (Ströker, 1987, p. 26).

Awareness of this detachment is less obvious in a context of a shared language, but it “will be spontaneous when someone speaks a language of which we "do not understand a word"” (Ströker, 1987, p. 26), because in this situation “a word will become noticed as a word spoken by someone, who emerges into the foreground with all his personal accentuations” (Ströker, 1987, p. 26). Thus, in the concrete case of the spoken word we are alerted to how “the sense-fulfillment of a sound formation goes hand in hand with an emancipation from it source” (Ströker, 1987, p. 26). The detachment at play in this “emancipation” finds its most clear instance in the act of writing, in the conversion of speech into text.

[101] For a discussion of the shifting relevance of the notion of “soul” in the context of philosophical discourse, both historical and contemporary, see (Schmitt, 2012, pp. 277-287), (Frede & Reis, 2009), (Ellis, 1940), (Boer, 2012), (Teske, 2011), (Long, 2015), (Amerini, 2013, pp. 34-51) and (Van Riel & Destrée, 2010).

When that which is voiced is considered as able to be reduced and fully translated into written word, the urgency of presence is neutralized since living thought stops being what is at stake. Since text as a container of thought can persist while literally disembodied, or at least can persist in a transitory alternating process between disembodiment and embodiment, it does manifest the potential situation of urgent living presence, but not its actuality as a matter of necessity. We deal in the worded thoughts of the long dead everyday, yet not always in such a way as to integrate these in our own living processes, by providing words with the benefit of surrogate resurrection as our own living thoughts, and by caring for the fruits of this unending labour of re-birthing ideas.

In sum, it is in its conceptual extremes – as pure resonating physicality or as mere bearer and vessel for spoken language – that voice is not problematic when it comes to presence. It is in these extremes that voice is considered in a way that is most detached from its everyday being and its uses. Conceptual extremism distracts us from the accurate reflection upon the experience where the phenomenon manifests itself. The problematic nature of voice is never more explicit as when it is at work in the most banal of everyday situations, in the fullness of its rich layering and the breadth of its scope.

Still, even in the everyday the question remains: where does the voice come from? Where or what does it point to? How to characterize its essential ambiguity? Can this ambiguity, made explicit in and through voice, be wholly due to the ambiguity of that which voice manifests and not only to voice itself as a manifestation?

To question voice as a manifestation of presence in what concerns its source or what it point to brings us back into considering the notion of “acousmatic”. We have seen that “there is no voice without a body, but yet again this relation is full of pitfalls: it seems that the voice pertains to the wrong body, or doesn’t fit the body at all, or disjoints the body from which it emanates” (Dolar, 2006, p. 60), or, in other words, we have pointed to the ambiguity of presence manifest through voice. An acousmatic voice, like an acousmatic sound, is but “a voice whose source one cannot see, a voice whose origin cannot be identified, a voice one cannot place” (Dolar,

2006, p. 60), or in more accurate terms in what concerns our inquiry, a voice that is situated in such a way as to manifest both presence and transcendence in regards to its very situation.

To grasp the full extent of the relevance of the notion of acousmatic implied in our understanding of the voice we have to step away from the more literal interpretations of this concept. From the voice behind the curtain of the Pythagorean disciples (Laertius, 1925), to the trivialization of acousmatic phenomena via the technologically disembodied voice of new media such as the radio, the gramophone, the tape-recorder and the telephone (Dolar, 2006, p. 63), these examples all point to a clear mechanism of camouflage of the body who speaks[102].

However, the kind of acousmatic understanding of the voice we are dealing with can be better understood if we focus on the particular interval between the silent face with still lips and the uttering of voice coupled with the choreography of the moving mouth. This interval, and the torrent of meaning that consequently issues forth, flooding the acoustic space with manifest presence of thought sustained by living processes, and yet still, the gap of correspondence that is still at play even in the gushing of sonorous meaning – it is in this dynamic expression where we focus the inquiry into the core experience of the acousmatic ambiguity in the voice.

Of course, in another, equally radical sense, an intimate experience of the acousmatic voice is that of our own voice while we speak. The voice of the speaker, as experienced by the speaker him or herself, is not so much situated in the sound field as it emanates into and through it and by doing so constitutes the speaker's sonic situation, provides acoustic reference. It is felt bodily as a resonant vibration concentrated upon the torso and the upper region of the throat all the way up to the mouth and the head, where it is heard both as an inner and outer sonorous phenomenon, tangible in the closest bone and tissue tactile resonance, as well as in its reverberation onto the external surrounding sound field.

[102] The broad theme of disembodied voice and sonic camouflage is discussed in (Miranda, 2005), (Fakhrkonandeh, 2014), (Dokic, 2007), (Goodman, 2010), (LaBelle, 2014), (Chion, 1999) and (Migone, 2012).

In the same way as the narrator's voice, standing for inner speech made explicit in the art of film, is often used as an example of the acousmatic voice, so is the very vocal presence of the speaker as revealed to him or herself in the act of utterance. This self-revelation often strikes the speaker as a strange kind of ventriloquism, as a voice that not only "comes from inside the body, the belly, the stomach—from something incompatible with and irreducible to the activity of the mouth" (Dolar, 2006, p. 71) but even further beyond that oral cavity, from somewhere like the core of selfhood from where it bursts forth "like a bodily missile which separates itself from the body and spreads around, but on the other hand it points to a bodily interior, an intimate partition of the body the "physics" of the voice which cannot be disclosed—as if the voice were the very principle of division into interior and exterior" (Dolar, 2006, pp. 70-71).

This role of voice, promising a "hidden bodily treasure beyond the visible envelope" (Dolar, 2006, p. 71), indeed allows it to become the "flesh of the soul, its ineradicable materiality, by which the soul can never be rid of the body; it depends on this inner object which is but the ineffaceable trace of externality and heterogeneity, but by virtue of which the body can also never quite simply be the body, it is a truncated body, a body cloven by the impossible rift between an interior and an exterior" (Dolar, 2006, p. 71).

In the voice as the operator of this impossible yet manifest partition between interior and exterior rests the ambiguity of presence revealed both acoustically and acousmatically –the self both in its resonant principle and its ever conspicuous receding in the sonorous opacity of the individual vocality.

PART III

1. Voice as Presence – context and a short history of stethoscopic access

In this last part of the current inquiry we will focus on the voice understood in the context of intersubjectivity, individuation and their dynamic interplay – in other words, the possibility of the presence and the transcendence of the self into an inclusive acoustic space. We will also present a series of interdisciplinary experiments that have been undertaken during the research for the present thesis, and that stand for exercises in embodied awareness and reflective practical engagement with the theme at hand.

The first two parts of this inquiry can be broadly characterized as an introductory assessment of the possibility of considering the voice as a philosophical problem. This we attempted to achieve by mapping out two broadly conceived territories, that of tradition and that of interdisciplinary context.

In the first part we dealt with tradition, in the sense of localizing our concrete theme in a series of texts representative of the earliest problems addressed by those who have come to be considered as founders of western philosophical tradition, and did so by collecting explicit references to sound and the voice while attempting to contextualize them in the main conceptual discussions they appeared together with.

In the second part we dealt with interdisciplinary context, by moving towards a conceptualization of voice departing from a consideration of sound, both in its acoustic physicality, embodied manifestation and the dynamic exchange between both. We introduced notions of acoustic territoriality and resonance, discussed sonic experience, and introduced the specificity of vocality within the soundworld.

In this third part we will start by discussing two compatible models of individuation borrowing from an understanding of the role of voice and sonic awareness in the early life of the womb, before we proceed to more strictly

phenomenological questioning of a notion of presence in relation to voice and its implications.

Before operating on more strict conceptual grounds, we will however start our inquiry into the sonic life of the womb with a short detour introducing a resumed material history of the stethoscope, an ubiquitous medical tool which is of particular importance to our inquiry by indicating the very notion of acoustic permeability.

1.1. Acoustic permeability and real-time access

One of the most obvious reasons why sound and the sense of hearing are privileged when it comes to accessing an experience of pregnancy and pre-natal life, is the multiplicity of perspectives it affords. When the opacity of skin and the thickness of the flesh limit both sight and touch, sound offers the permeability of matter to the conscious senses.

The signs of inner life that are beyond sight and touch become intelligible to the ear. This is the perspective of the curiosity of others, of the mother herself as an other to her own foetus, and the scientific medical perspective – that which underlies diagnosis, hopefully, the diagnosis of health and normality. It is a question of access, *from the outside in* to a developmental process that takes place *from the inside out*.

The stethoscope, greek derivation of *stéthos* (chest) and *skopé* (examination), is a French invention dating from the early 1800s. It was an adaptation of the wooden ear trumpet, used by the partially deaf as an amplifier hearing aid, which was in itself a derivation of the old habit of cupping your hand around your ear to hear better, through the creation of a temporarily extended resonance chamber.

The stethoscope was initially used for breathing, heartbeat scanning and other internal sounds such as those pertaining to digestion – its earliest incarnation

having been developed by French physician René Laennec in 1816 – but the first so called “fetal stethoscope”, a stethoscope specific to pre-natal obstetrics, was developed in the late 1800s by the French obstetrician Adolphe Pinard.

In Pinard’s case, the stethoscope came as both an alternative and an expansion to his palpation methods – it implied both the translation of diagnostic knowledge based on the sense of touch into sound, an the expansion of this knowledge to include new information obtained through the sense of hearing. Pinard had to learn to identify by hearing what he had only felt before and beyond that, to also be able to identify by hearing what he could not have felt before.

As a curiosity, the technological seed for the next great step in using sound to understand pre-natal life, the now common “ultrasound”, was planted as a direct consequence of the sinking of the RMS Titanic in April 15, 1912. Spurred by this event, and the need to detect massive bodies such as icebergs, while invisible under water, French physicist Paul Langevin patented in 1916 a hydrophone of which the modern ultra-sonographer is a direct descendant. Strange and ironic paths, those taken by of the history of technology: from the fear of icebergs, to submarine warfare in World War I and II, to pre-natal health in the present.

The modern ultrasonography method (”ultrasound”), used in a medical context since the 1960s, developed in a way that seems to mark a return to the prevalence of visuality, by translating sounds into images that are then analyzed by the obstetrician from the perspective of the visual pattern recognition method. Thus, the modern obstetrician seems to have focused on the ability to see through sound, instead of hearing through sound.

Concluding this short history of sound technology and pre-natal life, can we spot any emerging phenomenological strands from such a set of facts and curiosities?

I’ll propose two. One, pointed out recently by the sound and media historian Jonathan Sterne in his 2003 book titled “The Audible Past: Cultural Origins of Sound Reproduction”, has to do with an revealing transition from the 2nd to the 1st person

perspective in medical practice regarding the reliability, or lack thereof, of a patient's voiced complaints.

While analysing the use of sonic techniques as tools for diagnosis, mainly such as the stethoscope we've discussed, Sterne points out the need to have the body "voice" it's symptoms, in a reliable way that can be interpreted by the physicians, as a necessary alternative to the unreliable and sometimes misleading vocal complaints and symptom descriptions from the perspective of the patient, who naturally most often lacks medical training.

Here, with all due caricaturing of the term aside, the stethoscope can be construed as a "sonic *epoché* device", by presenting the medical condition as a set of acoustic phenomena, to be experienced and interpreted by the physician, while allowing the same physician to simultaneously bypass the testimony and personal experiential construct of the symptom bearer.

The other phenomenological strand or clue one can find amidst the facts and figures of the history of sound technology and pre-natal life, can be spotted while browsing articles in early 20th century medical journals which compared the performance and reliability of the stethoscope with the newer x-ray, questioning if the former had been rendered obsolete by the latter, mostly in the context of the diagnosis of respiratory diseases like pneumonia, lung cancer, etc.

Surprisingly, amongst seasoned medical professionals, there was almost the unanimous opinion that the use of the stethoscope, even if relying on the skill and acquired knowledge of the doctors using it, and as such not as evenly reliable in its results as the mechanical, reproducible process of the x-ray imaging, allowed a special kind of access to acoustic symptomatic phenomena, whose advantages were as yet unmatched by the x-ray. The stethoscope made possible the real-time experience of the acoustic phenomena manifested by the organism, and not just the instantaneous, static, highly contrasted pictures of moments of that same organism – which is what is captured in an x-ray plate. As such, the stethoscope enabled doctors to listen in to the internal rhythms of the pulsating organism, to the relative strength, tone and quality of its movements and sounds, to any distortion or

irregularity indicative of potential pathology, as they were happening at that very moment in that very same organism.

In the access provided by the stethoscope is therefore inherent the temporal structure of the acoustic phenomenon, with the heightened experiential acuity this entails. The status of this simple apparatus, as one of the least mediated of the medical technologies still in current use, and the added benefits this minimal mediation brings to the real-time accompaniment of acoustic phenomena in the context of the living organism, indicate a path of inquiry to follow, in which intrauterine life is a locus for conceptual experimentation when it comes to understanding individuation and mutuality.

The meaning of this sentence will be further clarified in the next chapter, dealing specifically with two examples of how this conceptual experimentation can rise and flourish: the genesis and structure of the permeable self in the selected works of the French psychoanalyst Didier Anzieu (1923-1999) and German philosopher Peter Sloterdijk (b. 1947).

2. Voice as Presence – individuation as transitive and in-between

We seem to be here, wherever we are, and we seem to not be alone. This is a core issue and the mystery is that our situation can be shared but cannot be understood. This should not be read as a final proclamation but as an intimation of a driven pursuit that we have all inherited, because in truth, sharing is problematic and understanding even more so. In truth, our situation can be shared somewhat and some understanding seems to be possible – in the world that we inhabit, gradations seem to set the rhythm and the melody steers clear of absolutes.

The notion of a self that is a becoming of uniqueness onto itself, and that nonetheless can still remain permeable to other selves and to a strange world where all the selves seem to find a place or another, for a short while at least, is one of the brightest and most enduring beacons for philosophical navigation. This question finds a place in our inquiry metaphorically embodied rather as a siren than as a beacon. The question of individuation and of the permeability of the self in a process of becoming is a theme of this inquiry in as much as the role of sound and voice can be situated in it.

To inquire about something is always a kind of quest for a source, even if the one who questions does not have the expectation of tracing a clean clear line of succession and consequence all the way back to the inauguration of whatever question one pursues. When it comes to the beginning of individuation, a fascination with intrauterine life is hard to avoid, since in a organic sense that is where all starts, when one body becomes two, and for a while, two bodies live as one organism, before the delivery makes individuation a public affair and the whole world steps in as the great divider.

2.1. Intrauterine acoustic space and the early stages of individuation

From a scientific point of view, the role of sound in intrauterine life is well accounted for and documented. According to a variety of medical sources, until the late nineteenth century babies were thought to be born deaf as well as dumb, but in fact the inner ear of the foetus is completely developed by mid-pregnancy, and the foetus responds to a wide variety of sounds.

Recent research in the field of obstetrics points to the intrauterine world as being one where intense sensorial stimulation is at work. For instance, according to a series of studies made in the late 90s by a team of researchers based at Johns Hopkins University and led by the psychologist Janet DiPietro: "By nine weeks, a developing foetus can hiccup and react to loud noises. By the end of the second trimester it can hear. Just as adults do, the foetus experiences the rapid eye movement (REM) sleep of dreams. The foetus savours its mother's meals, first picking up the food tastes of a culture in the womb. Among other mental feats, the foetus can distinguish between the voice of Mom and that of a stranger, and respond to a familiar story read to it. Even a premature baby is aware, feels, responds, and adapts to its environment." (DiPietro, Hodgson, Costigan, Hilton, & Johnson, 1996)

The studies that have focused specifically on the sound environment of the womb, such as Gerhardt & Abrams' 1996 article "Fetal Hearing: Characterization of the Stimulus and Response", portrait it as being a low-frequency laden surround environment, filled with internal rumblings of the mother's circulatory, breathing and bowel movements [103]. The two rhythmic elements that are at the foreground of this "oceanic" embodiment that is the fetal sound world, and which persist as sonic references throughout the whole pregnancy, are the mother's heartbeat and the vibrational frequency and pitch quality of her voice.

From the embodied experiential point of view there are two central elements at play in the foetus' sonic world. First, most of the sound reaches the foetus through bone conduction and not through his ears. This means that the mother's

[103] For detailed accounts of the sonic elements that compose the intrauterine soundscape, as well as the processes used to assess it, see (Abrams et al., 1998), (Armitage, Baldwin, & Vince, 1980), (Dirix, Nijhuis, Jongsma, & Hornstra, 2009), (Barbara S. Kisilevsky, Muir, & Low, 1992), (Barbara S. Kisilevsky et al., 2003) and (J. S. Taylor, 2008).

body, the womb and the foetus form a resonant system, and that whether internal or external sound sources are modulated by the permeability of the mother's body tissues – for instance, hard tissue, such as bone, facilitating reverb, while soft tissue, such as muscle or connective tissue, producing absorption and muffling – sound waves travel through direct contact between the mother's and the baby's bodies. This also gives a literal meaning to the enveloping, omnidirectional quality of the so-called "oceanic" womb soundscape.

Second, the experience of the mother's voice is particularly determinant to both speech recognition and later language acquisition. A set of experiences described in Gerhardt & Abrams' article points towards a significant probability of language specific phoneme recognition and adaptation taking place already in fetal life. This means, for example, that the foetus of a French-speaking mother, would gain some amount of habituation and eventually proficiency in distinguishing the French language phoneme structure even before birth. In other words, the language-specific "bath of sound" to which a newborn is delivered to in gaining contact with adults in his immediate surroundings, and in which he acquires a mother tongue, would already be significantly at play in intrauterine life[104].

So we come to an understanding of the intrauterine sound environment as marked by permeability, a permeability that is mediated by the immediacy of the mother's body as a resonant structure, itself in an acoustic relation with the world beyond. This permeability inaugurates mutuality, in the sense that the foetus is more than a passive sensitive core, experiencing sound that comes through layer after layer. In its inner situation, the foetus is also listened to from an outside that contains its inside – the mother's dual barrier body, caught between a public world beyond her bodily borders, and a private world of budding selfhood within herself, like a, hopefully, lovingly occupied territory.

[104] See (Mampe, Friederici, Christophe, & Wermke, 2009), (Marx & Nagy, 2015) and (Voegtline, Costigan, Pater, & DiPietro, 2013).

2.2. Anzieu's "Skin-Ego" – from psychic structure to dynamic sonic mutuality

To map out the possibilities of this mutual engagement that births individuation, it is now time to consider a conceptual approach that takes the mother and the foetus as a nexus of mutual intersubjective identity building, in a way where the psychic structures resonate closely in analogy to the organic ones – something echoing the metastable dynamics present in complex systems in the thought of French philosopher Gilbert Simondon (1924-1989), where individuation is presented as a continuous self-propelled negotiation between the one and the more-than-one[105].

This approach is based on the work of the French philosopher and psychoanalyst Didier Anzieu (1923-1999), who, in line with the thought of Melanie Klein (1882-1960) and Donald Winnicott (1896-1971), and in a somewhat tense dialogue with the psychoanalytic theory of Jacques Lacan (1901-1981), developed an interest on pedagogy and the early stages of psychic individuation in the mother-child pre and postnatal interaction and interdependence.

For a perspective that considers specifically the role of sound as highly relevant in psychic individuation, we are looking concretely into his 1985 book "The Skin-Ego (Le Moi-peau)", where the notion of "sound envelope" comes to play a significant role, as one of the main configurations of what Anzieu calls the "psychic envelope".

We will try to present these concepts in a structured way, starting with the founding notion that gives rise to the book title, the "skin-ego", which was inspired, in Anzieu's own words, by the realization that "from before birth, cutaneous sensations introduce the young of the human species into a world of great richness and complexity, a world as yet diffuse, but which awakens the perception-consciousness system, forms the basis for a general and episodical sense of

[105] Refer to (Simondon, Chateau, & Simondon, 2010), (Toscano, 2005, pp. 380-398), (Combes, 2013), (Simondon, 1989, 1994) and (Barthélémy & Beaune, 2005) for in depth discussion.

existence and opens up the possibility of an originary psychical space" (Anzieu, 1989, pp. 12-13).

By "skin", Anzieu refers to, not only the epithelial container that fully covers our internal organs, muscles and bones – the skin that the dermatologist deals with, and that which we touch when we touch one another – but also "skin" as a notion resting on a analogy that refers to the psychic apparatus at work in the individuation of the Self. This Self in the continuous process of individuation is what Anzieu calls the "Skin-Ego".

According to Anzieu: "By placing the emphasis on the skin as a basic datum that is both an organic and an imaginary order, both a system for protecting our individuality and a first instrument and site of interaction with others, I am seeking to bring into being another model – one resting on a solid biological foundation, out of which interaction with the environment (*entourage*) arises, and which respects the specificity of psychical phenomena in relation both to organic and to social realities" (Anzieu, 1989, p. 3).

The potential of the skin as an element able to bridge the gap between the organic and the psychic orders arises from the consideration of its three main functions, as well as a fourth potential that points beyond itself into the collective where individuation actually becomes meaningful. He writes: "The primary function of the skin is as the sac which contains and retains inside it the goodness and fullness accumulating there through feeding, care, the bathing in words. Its second function is as the interface which marks the boundary with the outside and keeps that outside out; it is the barrier which projects against penetration by the aggression and greed emanating from others, whether people or objects. Finally, the third function – which the skin shares with the mouth and which it performs at least as often – is as a site and a primary means of communicating with others, of establishing signifying relations; it is, moreover, an 'inscribing surface' for the marks left by those others" (Anzieu, 1989, p. 40).

Anzieu considers these three essential functions of the skin – as containment, barrier and permeable exchange site – as also being the founding principles that both constitute and sustain the Ego. The notion of an Ego defined by these

principles, a “Skin-Ego”, is thus presented as the constitution of a psychic apparatus “shaped” as a “psychic envelope”. This assertion was seminal in his theoretic conception, as it is clear by its two guiding hypotheses: “What if thought were as much an affair of the skin as of the brain? And what if the Ego – now defined as a Skin Ego – had the structure of an envelope?” (Anzieu, 1989, p. 9).

During pregnancy, quite literally in organic terms, and according to Anzieu also in equally literal psychic terms, the individuation of the foetus as a body and mind of its own, happens through a continuous process of enfolding, doubling upon itself, of the materiality of the mother’s body, supplying nutrients and the building blocks of matter, as this same process is mirrored in psychic terms. The Self is as much a system of cavities and connectors, of segregation and connection, as the organs of the body and the nervous system.

2.2.1. Containing, enfolding, and a sonorous notion of “skin”

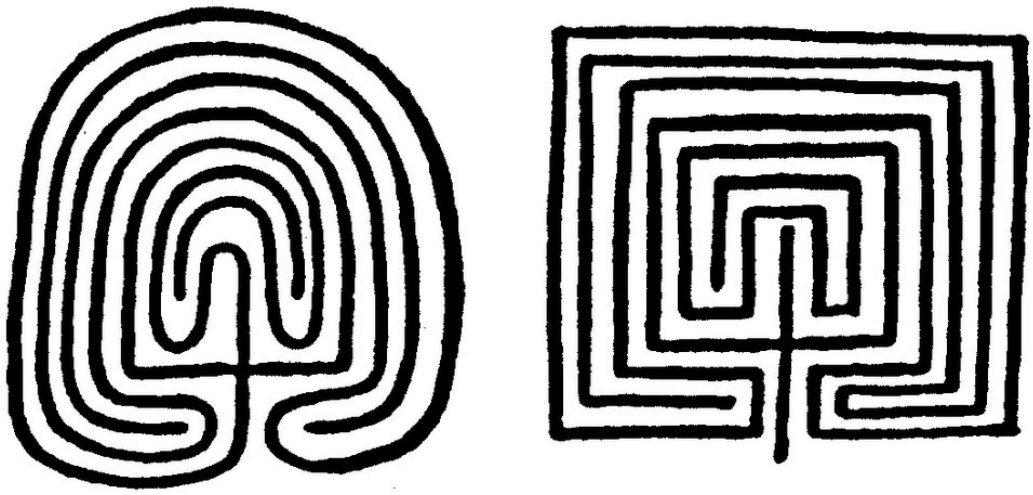

Figure 2 – Hopi Tápu’at Labyrinths, (Herberger, 1991).

In the *Tápu’at*, a symbol representing “Mother and Child” and to a certain extent the life-line of the individual, as drawn by the Hopi Native American tribe, located mostly in the state of Arizona, USA, an illustration of sorts can be found. In

the concentric outer and inner reverse u-shaped areas it is possible to envisage the shapes of the body of the mother containing and enfolding the barely distinct body of the child.

Even more suggestive is the fact that the symbol represents a labyrinth that, unlike a maze[106] where one is constantly faced with choices concerning the path to take, is constituted by a single convoluted and twisting path, which will nonetheless produce distinct shapes and patterns. Just like in a labyrinth, where a single wall generates multiple shapes, rhythms and movements, by winding upon itself, so does the skin, always a surface and never a centre, by its winding and folding upon itself, constitute variation in form and individuation in process, and ultimately, in identity. An analogy can be established with what happens in the mother-child system, where contiguity slowly and continuously turns into individuality, and the one births the two.

For Anzieu, while describing the different configurations of his notion of "psychic envelope", as has been defined before, the first and most important is the so-called "sound envelope". This refers to the mutual recognition and sound play between mother and baby, before and after birth.

The role of sound is essential to Anzieu in that, according to him: "The sound space if the first psychical space. External noises, painful when they are sudden or loud, worrying internal gurglings which cannot be localized in any particular part of the body, cries that come automatically at birth, then in response to hunger, pain, anger and deprivation of the object, but which are accompanied by an active motor image – all contribute to forming that space" (Anzieu, 1989, p. 170).

The French psychoanalyst even considers sound as the genesis of the very concept of "Skin-Ego", by stating that: "Even earlier (than birth, in intrauterine life), the Self forms as a sound envelope through the experience of a bath of sounds (concomitant with the experience of nursing). This sound-bath prefigures the Skin Ego with its double face, one half turned towards the outer world, the other towards

[106] For a more detailed overview of the context and historical distinctions between labyrinth and maze see (Hackworth, 2012), (Kern, 2000), (Doob, 1990), (Jaskolski, 1997), (Matthews, 1970), (Pérez-Gómez & Parcell, 2011) and (Molholt, 2011).

the inner, since the sound envelope is composed of sounds emitted either by the baby or by the environment. The combination of these sounds therefore produces (a) a common space-volume permitting bilateral exchange (whilst feeding and elimination involve a one-way flow; (b) a first (spatio-auditory) image of one's own body; and (c) a bond of actual fused reality with the mother (without which the imaginary fusion with her would not be possible later)" (Anzieu, 1989, p. 167).

Anzieu, furthermore, presents his theoretic objective candidly, by stating that: "I should like to demonstrate the existence at an even earlier stage of a sound mirror or of an audio-phonic skin, and the role this plays in the acquisition by the psychical apparatus of the capacity to produce meaning, and then to symbolize" (Anzieu, 1989, p. 158).

This not only seems to be confirmed by the technological research that has since then looked into the realm of the intrauterine soundscape, but also the main conclusions derived from it have been anticipated by Anzieu, when he writes: "However, the baby is only stimulated to emit sounds by hearing himself if the environment has already prepared him for this by the quality, elaborateness and volume of the sound bath in which he has been immersed. Before the look and smile of the mother who feeds and cares for him reflect back to the child an image of himself which is visually perceptible to him, and which he interiorizes to reinforce his Self and develop the rudiments of his Ego, the bath of melody (the mother's voice, her singing, the music she causes him to hear) have made a first sound mirror available to him. He makes use of it first in his crying (to which the mother's voice responds soothingly), then in his babbling and lastly in his early games of phonemic articulation" (Anzieu, 1989, pp. 168-169).

2.2.2. Mutual resonance – "sound envelope" as acoustic intersection

The notion of "sound envelope" thus presents the birth of language as stemming mainly from the prenatal exposure to a resonant universe of sounds, which reach the foetus through the permeable interface of mother's own body, as

well as from the continued postnatal interplay that relates the now self-contained and individual body of the enfant both to its previous indistinctness and to the life-long task of becoming oneself.

Recovering the ancient meaning of the word “ethos”, as being the natural dwelling place of a creature, its habitat where growth and sustenance abide and life prevails until death and beyond, in the chain of reproduction and individuation, we can posit that Anzieu deems the sonic “ethos” that connects pre and postnatal sonic immersion and interplay as the core of the bond between mother and child. It seems that all that is at stake in individuation is represented by the carrying and use of the most refined sonic identity – that of one’s own voice – both consequence and driving power of individuation and life of the Self.

This mutually constructed sonic “ethos”, this place of resonance, seeking and recognition, is both something which is present as situated, in its organic system of interdependence between mother and foetus, and present as a potential for a lasting dynamic beyond birth and into adulthood.

In the same way, the skin-ego itself is both “a reality of the order of phantasy: it figures in phantasies, dreams, everyday speech, posture and disturbances of thought” (Anzieu, 1989, p. 4) while providing “the imaginary space on which phantasies, dreams, thinking and every form of psychopathological organization are constituted” (Anzieu, 1989, p. 4), as well as “an intermediate structure of the psychical apparatus: intermediate chronologically between the mother and the infant, and intermediate structurally between the mutual inclusion of psyches in the state of primitive fusion and the differentiation of psychical agencies” (Anzieu, 1989, p. 4).

This sonic “ethos”, which we consider as synonymous to the “sound-envelope”, therefore manifests mutuality by providing acoustic permeability. A permeability that is not without noise, confusion and dubious signals – in the same way the mother strains to interpret and localize the sonic sensations stemming from her insides, we can imagine some of these same operations, however tentative and un-self-aware, can be already at play in the later-stage foetus – but in which the very

sonic interference originates from the material presences of two psyches meshed in a relational process.

From the permeability that allows for mutual presence we can retrieve the core notions of in-betweenness and transitivity, which define the very possibility of individuation originating from this transitive in-betweenness. The sound play between the dual order of inner and outer taking place between mother and foetus – the double barrier of a contained individual in a bond with another individual that contains him or her – presents individuation as something that stems from a shuttle like sonic motion of reaching out and bringing in, reaching out and bringing in, and so on.

To be mutually penetrated, to be listened to and to make noise into the listening space, to cross and traverse and become familiar with the situated point of return which is oneself, and with the situated point of permeable otherness, which is the other, are the dynamics of a transitive notion of presence in the context of individuation.

It is in the very beginning of Anzieu's book, before his more in-depth analyses of the multiple roles of skin as a model for permeable containment, when he is describing the dual support role of the human psyche "both in the biological body and social body" (Anzieu, 1989, p. 4), that he points to a mutuality in this relation of support, where "organic and social life, at least in humankind, both need equally to support themselves almost constantly upon the individual psyche (as is shown in the psychosomatic approach to physical illnesses and in the study of the fostering of myths or of social innovation), just as the psyche cannot do without the reciprocal support of a living body and a living social group" (Anzieu, 1989, p. 4) that we find a lead to bring us into Sloterdijk's thought.

2.3. Sloterdijk's "Spheres" - dynamic territoriality between containers themselves contained

If through the work of Anzieu, we have tried to draw out a notion of the complex and dynamic territoriality of individuation, and to relate to it in sonic terms while discussing permeability and a transitive notion of presence, in the work of German philosopher Peter Sloterdijk, in particular the first part of his trilogy *Spheres* (composed of *Sphären I – Blasen, Mikrosphärologie* published in 1998, *Sphären II – Globen, Makrosphärologie* published in 1999 and *Sphären III – Schäume, Plurale Sphärologie* published in 2004) titled in the English translation "Spheres, Volume I: Bubbles, Microspherology", we will find a theorization of human existence as defined by containment and permeability in a scope that encompasses not only the individual, and the individuals facing each other, but the very notion of community and the very history of ideas that have defined humanity as we know it [107].

The sphere is a particularly omnipresent geometric shape, manifested imperfectly in our material world in countless overlapping dimensions, scales and scopes. From the planet to the human skull, from the eye to the atom, the sphere stands as the materialized definition of "surrounding".

Defined mathematically as the set of points that are all the same distance from a given point in three-dimensional space, the obvious about the sphere is often forgotten in our everyday encounters with quasi-spherical things such as oranges, grapes and cannonballs: the sphere defined mathematically is a pure surface of breadthless thinness and absolute hollowness. It is a taut skin, a pure container, an absolutely gapless divide between an inside and an outside.

In the same way that Anzieu proposed a notion of skin encompassing both the order of the imaginary and the organic fact, both thing, concept and conceptual model of interpretation, so does Sloterdijk present us a notion of sphere that comprises multiple layers of interpretative potential.

Since a sphere always refers to a centre, a specific and unique point of reference, even if an insubstantial one, and, in a way that reminds us of our recent use of the notion of "ethos" as natural habitat and place of mutual awareness in sonic terms, Sloterdijk starts out by affirming that "an inquiry into our location is

[107] For a closer discussion of Sloterdijk's notion of "anthropogenealogy" consult (Schinkel & Noordegraaf-Eelens, 2012) and (Lysemose, 2012).

more productive than ever, as it examines the place that humans create in order to have somewhere they can appear as those who they are" (Sloterdijk, 2011, p. 28). This place, according to him, "following a venerable tradition […] bears the name "sphere" (Sloterdijk, 2011, p. 28).

A "sphere" is defined as the "interior, disclosed, shared realm inhabited by humans – in so far as they succeed in becoming humans" (Sloterdijk, 2011, p. 28) because "living always means building spheres, both on a small and a large scale, humans are the beings that establish globes and look out into horizons" (Sloterdijk, 2011, p. 28).

If "living in spheres means creating the dimension in which humans can be contained" (Sloterdijk, 2011, p. 28), then "spheres are immune-systemically effective space creations for ecstatic beings that are operated upon by the outside" (Sloterdijk, 2011, p. 28). This association of the spherical quality of human "ethos", their natural inhabiting state, with the immune system brings out the notion of sphere as a protective and selectively permeable surface, an encasing that both defines an outside and an inside in somewhat potentially antagonistic terms.

This association is better understood is its wider context when Sloterdijk expresses his conviction that "modernity is characterized by the technical production of its immunities and the increasing removal of its safety structures from the traditional theological and cosmological narratives" (Sloterdijk, 2011, p. 25), whereby "industrial-scale civilization, the welfare state, the world marker and the media sphere: all these large-scale projects aim, in a shelless time, for an imitation of the now impossible, imaginary spheric security" (Sloterdijk, 2011, p. 25).

This contemporary preoccupation with the transgression of borders as a sort of contamination process, both in its socio-economic and political forms – as well as in the many elements which permeate our everyday First World consumer society and which heighten the phobia of penetration by the nonaseptic and the non-normalized – place the notion of the sphere, in its manifestation as the protective bubble, as a kind of holy grail of desire for the comforting reassurance that indelible and impermeable borders can indeed be drawn.

In a contemporary world that has embraced the notion of our very home planet as a mere temporary bubble of life floating in an absolute vertiginous expanse of centreless void, “networks and insurance policies are meant to replace the celestial domes; telecommunication has to reenact the all-encompassing […][and] the body of humanity seeks to create a new immune constitution in an electronic medial skin” (Sloterdijk, 2011, p. 25).

The connotations present in the word “bubble” indeed nuance the understanding of “sphere”. In the family of ideas that a bubble brings to mind, as for example in the case of “the emblem of “Man as a bubble”, *homo bulla*, which stems from the Roman adage coined by Varro and Lucian and adapted by Erasmus for his famous collection of proverbs “Adagia,” published in 1572” (Mödersheim & Coue, 2003), and which became a mainstay of the *vanitas* tradition of depicting still life in painting as play between timelessness and mortality, we retrieve notions of brevity, fragility, but also of lightness and transparency which a sphere might not immediately bring to mind.

A bubble is also something that is shaped by a measure of breath exhaled into a viscous liquid, which holds air inside while travelling, short as might such travels be, through space, as a luminously reflective surface that shines and casts almost no shadow, before succumbing to contact with a harder, piercing surface, and being annihilated with a mere “pop!” sound. The full spectrum of comedy, tragedy and satire seems to play itself out in the short lifespan of the most unremarkable bubble, from the most hopeful heroism to the tritest nihilism.

2.3.1. “Being-in-spheres” and communal inhabiting

By applying the notion of sphere to the communal inhabiting and community building that characterizes humans, from a philosophical point we find Sloterdijk’s assessment that “what recent philosophers referred to as "being-in-the-world" first of all, and in most cases, means being-in-spheres” (Sloterdijk, 2011, p. 46). He adds: “if humans are there, it is initially in spaces that have opened for them because, by

inhabiting them, humans have given them form, content, extension and relative duration" (Sloterdijk, 2011, p. 46), therefore spheres "are the original product of human coexistence, however-something of which no theory of work has ever taken notice- these atmospheric-symbolic places for humans are dependent on constant renewal" (Sloterdijk, 2011, p. 46).

To define the spaces of human coexistence as spherical "atmospheric-symbolic places" in constant need of renewal begs the question: how is this renewal to come by? Sloterdijk proceeds not so much by stating how this renewal is supposed to come by, but by stressing that it is necessary in the same sense as permeability is to any living system – the active exchange between inner and outer as a principle for the sustainability of life, like breathing, or voicing and listening.

He writes that "spheres are air conditioning systems in whose construction and calibration, for those living in real coexistence, it is out of the question not to participate" (Sloterdijk, 2011, p. 46). Moreover, "the symbolic air conditioning of the shared space is the primal production of every society" (Sloterdijk, 2011, p. 46) because "humans create their own climate; nor according to free choice, however, but under pre-existing, given and handed-down conditions" (Sloterdijk, 2011, pp. 46-48).

By creating their own climate, by defining while inhabiting their own territories, human beings thrive in communal interdependence. An interdependence that, as any living complex system, must face its own transitoriness, its own mortality and limitation whose price is to endure while "constantly disquieted by […] inevitable instability" (Sloterdijk, 2011, p. 48), which is a constant reminder the these spheres, now viewed increasingly more like bubbles, "would not be constructs of viral geometry if they could nor implode" (Sloterdijk, 2011, p. 48).

This probably inevitable implosion is alluded to, in philosophical terms, when Sloterdijk comments that "what Heidegger called being-toward-death means not so much the individual's long march into a final solitude anticipated with panic-stricken resolve; it is rather the circumstance that all individuals will one day leave the space in which they were allied with others in a current, strong relationship" (Sloterdijk, 2011, p. 48). This abandonment of the temporary habitat, structured by the viral

geometry that colours the inhabiting-within-spheres with a techno-organic profusion and finality – where conceptual and material strategies[108] blend together while operating at different scales, from the cellular to the metropolitan – inevitably connects to the human experience of death and the process of becoming ruin.

According to Sloterdijk "human death thus always has two faces: one that leaves behind a rigid body and one that shows sphere residues-those that are sublated into higher spaces and re-animated and those that, as the waste produces of things, fallen out of former spaces of animation, are left lying there" (Sloterdijk, 2011, p. 48), which leads him to subsume that "in structural terms, what we call the end of the world is the death of a sphere" (Sloterdijk, 2011, p. 48), which on everyday terms is unveiled in such moments as "the separation of the lovers, the empty apartment, the torn-up photograph; its comprehensive form manifests itself as the death of a culture, the burnt-out city, the extinct language" (Sloterdijk, 2011, p. 48).

What kind of relationship between humans arises from this interconnected spherical geometry? What kind of inhabiting, what kind of interdependence and what kind of intersubjectivity? In our very own terms, what kind of in-betweenness is there in such living processes?

Sloterdijk answers in terms that recall Anzieu's previous analysis: "the relationship between human subjects sharing a field of proximity can be described as one between restless containers that contain and exclude one another" (Sloterdijk, 2011, p. 85). This statement brings to mind the often quoted and discussed porcupine parable (Prochnik, 2007), as it was stated by German philosopher Arthur Schopenhauer (1788-1860) in his *Parerga and Paralipomena* (1851) and later used by Sigmund Freud (1856-1939) as a footnote to his essay *Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego* (1921), which concerns the complex issues arising from humans negotiating their intimacy.

[108] For a discussion, in philosophical and bio-political terms, of the unstable balance between interdependence and desire for immunity consult (Couture, 2010), (Campbell, 2011, pp. 83-118), (Sloterdijk & Ziegler, 2006), (Sloterdijk & Fabricius, 2007) and (W. Anderson, 2014).

The parable describes the dilemma faced by porcupines when trying to survive in cold weather. A group of porcupines "crowded themselves very close together one cold winter's day so as to profit by one another's warmth and so save themselves from being frozen to death" (Prochnik, 2007), however they soon felt the painful pricking of one another's quills, and this pain and discomfort induced them to separate again. Nevertheless the cold continued pressing, so in an attempt to survive "the porcupines were "driven backwards and forwards from one trouble to the other," until they found "a mean distance at which they could most tolerably exist" (Prochnik, 2007).

The danger faced by human subjects as "restless containers that contain and exclude one another" is equally a matter of life or death. If two containers collide in a way that interferes with their ability to sustain their respective intact permeable surfaces, then pain, suffering and the inability to distinguish and to maintain individuation proper might lead to chaos and disaggregation. On the other hand, two or more containers that do not at all engage, will not even be able to sustain themselves in a communal relationship, and will therefore perish in a state of mutual alienation.

To complicate matters further, in human terms, the analogy does not stop at the clearly defined mutually exclusive surface borders that would, for example, be metaphorically embodied in two hot air balloons. On the contrary, the dilemma runs deeper because on one hand "in the physical space, it is impossible for something within a container simultaneously to contain its container" (Sloterdijk, 2011, p. 85), and on the other hand "it is equally inconceivable to imagine a body in a container as something that is excluded from that very container" (Sloterdijk, 2011, p. 85).

According to Sloterdijk, the problem rests in that "it is precisely with relationships of this type [a combination of the former and the latter], however, that the doctrine of psychological space deals from the start" (Sloterdijk, 2011, p. 85). In other words "this notion, an insurmountable paradox in geometric and physical terms, is the point of departure for the doctrine of psychological or human locators: individuals are subjects only to the extent that they are partners in a divided and assigned subjectivity" (Sloterdijk, 2011, p. 85).

Partnership is key, one is one because there is two, and so on. Individuation implies, participates and is only possible in a context of a community of individuals, engaged in constantly renewed mutual recognition.

2.3.2. Permeable bodies and their sonorous presence

In a conceptual motion that again reminds us of Anzieu's analysis, Sloterdijk moves temporarily away from his reasoning concerning interplay between individuals in the scope of community building, and turns again inside the more intimate system of containment, the human body. He states that "as a system of hybrid communicating vessels, the human interior consists of paradoxical or autogenous hollow bodies that are at once tight and leaky, that must alternate between the roles of container and content, and which simultaneously have properties of inner and outer walls" (Sloterdijk, 2011, p. 88), and concludes that "intimacy is the realm of surreal autogenous containers" (Sloterdijk, 2011, p. 88).

In the body as a system of autogenous containers, the paradoxical relations of containing while being contained are structural and ever-present. For Sloterdijk, as for Anzieu, it is more concretely in the human body during the period of gestation – the mother bearing the foetus – where the initial dynamics of individuation and intersubjectivity are at play in one of their most intense manifestations, that the conceptual inquiry proves to be more fulfilling.

Sloterdijk, following the criticism of the traditional Freudian psychoanalytical theory of stage development as expounded by Austrian cultural philosopher and media anthropologist Thomas Macho (b. 1952), endorses the view that it would "be a futile, not to say pathogenic undertaking to attempt a description of the early mother-child reality in terms of object relationships, as there are not yet any traces of subject- or object-like aspects in the actual situation" (Sloterdijk, 2011, p. 293). Instead, the relational dynamics in the earliest stages of the mother-child reality would be better understood as "a finely woven language of reciprocal solubility and suspension in a bipolar ether of relationships" (Sloterdijk, 2011, p. 293).

An “elaborated theory of psychosomatic mediality” (Sloterdijk, 2011, p. 293) would be required to fully investigate this shared reality, which is marked by an immersive, indistinct, yet highly nuanced, unified mutuality of presence. This notion of localized “environmental” presence is outlined by Sloterdijk in the description of three redefined “pre-oral stages and forms of condition before the supposedly primary oral phase” (Sloterdijk, 2011, p. 293).

Sound comes into play explicitly in his analysis when he refers to the role of the ““second aspect of the pre-oral media field [in what] concerns the psychoacoustic initiation of the foetus into the uterine sound world” (Sloterdijk, 2011, p. 296). However, this aspect is preceded first of all by the conception of an initial “phase of fetal cohabitation in which the incipient child experiences the sensory presence of liquids, soft bodies and cave boundaries: most importantly placental blood, then the amniotic fluid, the placenta, the umbilical cord, the amniotic sac and a vague prefiguring of the experience of spatial boundaries through the resistance of the abdominal wall and elastic walling-in” (Sloterdijk, 2011, pp. 293-294).

These experiences introduce the foetus to “a foretaste of what will later be called reality [that] presents itself in the form of an intermediate fluidal realm that lies embedded in a dark, spheric spatial factor softly cushioned within firmer boundaries” (Sloterdijk, 2011, p. 294). Refusing explicitly the traditional view of the mother-child complex as defined by object relations, Sloterdijk adds: “If there were already early "objects" in this field, their state could only ever be that of object shadows or things of emergence – contents of a first Yonder from which a first Here conceives itself, both combined in a vaguely contoured encompassing space with an increasing tendency towards tightness” (Sloterdijk, 2011, p. 294).

For purposes of clarification, the candidates for these object shadows would likely primarily be “the umbilical cord-which may be sensed by touch early on – and the placenta, which, like a nurturing primal companion to the foetus, has an early diffuse presence as the harbinger of a first counterpart” (Sloterdijk, 2011, p. 294). However, as Sloterdijk immediately recalls: “Objects that, like those we have named, are not objects because they have no subject-like counterpart, are referred to by

Macho as "nobjects": they are spherically surrounding mini-conditions envisaged by a non-facing self, namely the fetal pre-subject, in the mode of non-confrontational presence as original creatures of closeness in the literal sense" (Sloterdijk, 2011, p. 294).

Thus, this emergence of a "first Yonder" from a "first Here" stands as the genesis of individuation, the very first bout with the notion of containment and permeability between it and the beyond-contained, meaningfully established under conditions of radical mutuality and interdependence. In a radical mutuality where, moreover, one of the partners, even if a "non-facing" foetal self, is an integrating part in a bond between the "original creatures of closeness" – the earliest one immersed in the earliest two.

According to Sloterdijk, in this earliest of stages, the currency of this bond is embodied in the sharing of the blood mediated via the placenta. The bond between the mother and the foetus, "their being-close-to-here (which is precisely not yet a demonstrable being-there) communicates itself to the child most of all with its first gift, the placental blood" (Sloterdijk, 2011, p. 294). This blood, "which is not only the blood of the one, but automatically also creates the first medial "bond" between the dyadic partners interlocked in bipolar intimacy" (Sloterdijk, 2011, pp. 294-295), appears as the primary fluid site of in-betweenness and exchange.

However, in the second stage, the one which mostly resonates with our inquiry, it is sound that comes into play as privileged agent, medium and site of in-betweenness.

According to Sloterdijk "it is logical that acoustic events can only be given in the nobject mode – for sonorous presences have no tangible substrate that could be encountered in the attitude of standing opposite something" (Sloterdijk, 2011, p. 296). We have argued before in our inquiry against the "easy" interpretation of sound as intangible (see Part II, Chapter 5), but in this context, given that Sloterdijk is discussing experiences specific to the intrauterine sound world, and the criteria for tangibility adopted seems to be the same kind of resistance one would expect from a solid mass, we stand in no conflict to his assertion.

Sloterdijk proceeds by emphasizing that “from the physiology of listening as a state of being set in sympathetic vibration, it is evident that acoustic experiences are media processes which cannot possibly be represented in languages of object relationships” (Sloterdijk, 2011, p. 296), and that “Macho, for his part, places less emphasis on the fetal bonding through the mother's voice than on the immediate postnatal self-experience of the newborn in the use of its own voice, which secures the connection to the mother outside the bodily enclosure as a vocal-magical medium” (Sloterdijk, 2011, pp. 296-297).

He further concludes that the vocal play of the newborn “as a form of acoustic umbilical cord, [...] offers a replacement for the lost actual umbilical connection” (Sloterdijk, 2011, p. 297) and that “Macho emphasizes that this coming together through listening in the extra-uterine dyad remains the nucleus of all communal formations, and that connection to others through acoustic umbilical cord is the central principle of psychosocial synthesis” (Sloterdijk, 2011, p. 297).

2.3.3. Vocal self-revelation

In the same way that vocality is in such a way tied to the essential dynamics of community building and inhabiting, it reflects back into he or she who voices and simultaneously listens because “at the same time, a pre-oral, medial ego core develops in the child when it hears its own voice; the incipient subject's lifelong history of mediations with itself and its vocal extensions begins in crying, crowing, babbling and word-making” (Sloterdijk, 2011, p. 297). The self is aroused by its own voice, it learns to be within and beyond its own acoustic sphere of sound[109] and sonorous presence, sharing its territory with other co-inhabiting sonorous selves.

The shared acoustic space becomes animated with the calling forth and the answering back of voices who “produce acoustic coverings of spheric-presentist expansion, and the only mode of participation in vocal presences can be described as

[109] For scientific acoustic analysis supporting description of the intrauterine space as an early territory of acoustic ”dialogue” and mutual awareness see (B. S. Kisilevsky & Hains, 2011), (Krueger, Cave, & Garvan, 2015), (Rand & Lahav, 2014), (Picciolini et al., 2014).

being-in within the current sonosphere" (Sloterdijk, 2011, p. 297), therefore "when the mother and her child exchange vocal messages in a direct play of affection, their interdependency is the perfect self-realization of an intimate-acoustic bipolar sphere" (Sloterdijk, 2011, p. 297), and their in-betweenness is embodied in a "vocal umbilical cord, [which] like the physical one, is also nobjectal in its structure" (Sloterdijk, 2011, p. 297).

The ability to call forth, for sustenance in this case, as the primary mode of the vocal play of the newborn is further stressed by Sloterdijk when he states that the mastering of the "post-uterine use of the voice; [...] gives [the newborn] the power to make itself insistently heard by its mother in case of need" (Sloterdijk, 2011, p. 394). The mastering of the use of the voice implies an individuated self-centredness not only because it "secures the dispensability of the blood community because it "signifies" the summonability of milk" (Sloterdijk, 2011, p. 394), but also, and more importantly, because "being outside means being able to call; I call, therefore I am; from this moment on, existence means existing within the success space of one's own voice" (Sloterdijk, 2011, p. 394).

Thus, concludes Sloterdijk, "symbol genesis, like ego formation, begins with voice "formation"; Thomas Macho and others have rightly assigned properties of a vocal umbilical cord to the voice that leads to the mother's ears" (Sloterdijk, 2011, p. 394) because "the physical umbilical bond must indeed have a successor to ensure that unbound life too will remain under the sign of attachment" (Sloterdijk, 2011, p. 394).

It is exactly the urgency of attachment via vocal in-betweenness that becomes the final theme of our inquiry with and through Sloterdijk's analysis. A set of questions is summoned, not without poetic dexterity, that capture the simultaneously matter-of-fact and perplexing quality of the urgency and immediacy of engagement brought on by the voice.

Sloterdijk's first question is how can it be that "for billions of messages, I am a rock on which their waves break without resonance, while certain voices and instructions unlock me and make me tremble as if I were the chosen instrument to render them audible, a medium and mouthpiece simply for their urge to sound?"

(Sloterdijk, 2011, p. 479). He follows up with: “Is there not still a mystery of access to consider here? Does my accessibility to certain unrefusable messages not have its dark "reason" in an ability to reverberate that has not yet been adequately discussed?” (Sloterdijk, 2011, p. 479). Finally concluding with: “On what wavelength is the speech broadcast that puts you in a state of unreserved resonance, and whose audition makes the ear open and swell up, as if it were suddenly involved in ardently singing a hymn whose sounds contain its earliest and most recent expectations?” (Sloterdijk, 2011, p. 479).

The question is posed from the perspective of a deep vulnerability to specific vocal manifestation, one believed to be universally shared, that of “unreserved resonance” that wells up and vibrates the whole being immersed in a shared acoustic space and provided with a vocal beacon to turn towards, one that explicitly beckons him or her in his or her individuality.

2.3.4. Intimacy of listening and voicing as allowing for the other

This intensity of being violently moved by one’s own permeability to listening to a certain voice is however not something that happens from the outside in. Instead, this urgency stems from a kind of listening that has preserved it own acute sensitivity, which has not gradually grown deaf to the sounding of otherness.

It is therefore a requirement, and for the philosopher amongst all others one of the most pressing, that “if one inquires as to the most elemental and interior layers of mental accessibility, one must also desire to know how to re-disarm a hearing sense that has become hard, careful and narrow” (Sloterdijk, 2011, p. 479).

What is here at stake is that “the shift to intimate listening is always connected to a change of attitude from a one-dimensional alarm – and distance – oriented listening to a polymorphously moved floating listening” (Sloterdijk, 2011, pp. 479-480). Intimate listening therefore re-situates the interlocutors in a space of shared acoustic territory that is ripe for the emergence of dialogue and the corresponding mingling of the selves.

Listening stops being something like the tool of the lone hunter, browsing his environment to map spatially the points of most interest, becoming instead the instrument of the community dweller, constantly renewing the potentiality of a public space of sonorous mutuality. This shift to intimate listening, according to Sloterdijk, “reverses the general tendency to move from a magical, proto-musical listening to one revolving around alarm and concern – or, to put it in more enlightened terms: from uncritical participation to critical awareness” (Sloterdijk, 2011, p. 480). The kind of in-betweenness that this intimate listening affords is however far from uncritical, though it is definitely participative.

The kind of engagement harnessed by this intimate listening, is driven by the allowance of the other, by the opening up of a sonorous realm where individuation and its resulting idiosyncrasies can co-exist, in a heightened state of mutual awareness and recognition. The vulnerable permeability to the other’s voice, and vice-versa, is indeed moving and intimidating, in so much as it does expose the individual to its own uniqueness and insolvability in the fabric of the very community he is drawn to belong to, yet only through this “opening of the flank” to the empathetic wound, can the individual truly thrive as more than an isolated instance of a fragmented humanity.

It is to metaphorically stress the bond between mutuality and the un-hardening of the ear that Sloterdijk recalls at this point the often conceptualized myth of the Sirens. These creatures of irresistible vocality have found “the simplest solution to the problem of the accessibility of otherwise closed ears” (Sloterdijk, 2011, p. 487). By rendering “precisely those songs in which the passing sailors' ears yearn to immerse themselves” (Sloterdijk, 2011, p. 487) instead of authoring their own rhapsodies, “the fatal singers compose their songs in the ear of the listener; they sing through the larynx of the other” (Sloterdijk, 2011, p. 487). By doing so “with nefarious accuracy, [they] perform the exact sonic gestures with which the listening subject will unlock itself and step forward” (Sloterdijk, 2011, p. 487).

Having been called for with a voice that carries the very awareness the speaker possesses of the uniqueness of the listener, “listening to Sirens thus means entering the core space of an intimately touching musical key and wishing to remain

at the source of this indispensable sound from that point on" (Sloterdijk, 2011, p. 487). This sense of belonging, manifested by the will to remain in the resonant reach of the voice who calls for the self that hears it, is the very aural glow that fulfills the sense of presence of the fully aware listener, when in open exchange with a community of his or her peers.

"Intimacy is a transmission relationship", concludes Sloterdijk. The vocal in-betweenness which grounds mutuality is not modeled after "the symmetrical alliance between twins or like-minded parries, where each mirrors the other, but from the irresolvably asymmetrical communion between the maternal voice and the fetal ear" (Sloterdijk, 2011, p. 511) – the earliest community of difference.

In the common sonic territory that is the mother-child mutual containment even in post-intrauterine life, we find embodied "the unconditional emergency of encounter, but it does not involve the two approaching each other from their respective spaces or situations; rather, the mother is the situation of the child, and the child's situation is nested within the maternal one" (Sloterdijk, 2011, pp. 511-512). This means that it is "acoustic communion [that] gives the primordial encounter its location in the real" (Sloterdijk, 2011, p. 512), where "the voice does not speak to itself: and the ear has not withdrawn to listening to its own sounds" (Sloterdijk, 2011, p. 512), but instead "each is always already outside-and-with-itself: the greeting voice in its turn towards the intimate co-listener, and the feral ear in listening for the euphoriant sound" (Sloterdijk, 2011, p. 512).

Between adult individuals, which have had some experience of growth in a world full of dividing forces, maybe it is near impossible to achieve the "almost boundless surrender of the one to the other, and an almost seamless interlocking of the two sources of feeling" (Sloterdijk, 2011, p. 512) which characterizes the early vocal play between mother and child. There are moments of sonorous emergency, however, sometimes budding in a context of intense intimacy being either sewn together or torn apart, that can catapult us back to the vicinity of this sonorous field where the voice and the ear seem to dissolve "in a shared sonorous plasma – the voice entirely geared towards beckoning, greeting and affectionate encasement, and

the ear mobilized to go towards it and be revived by melting into its sound" (Sloterdijk, 2011, p. 512).

This primary form of sonic umbilical chord – and let us not forget how "chord" is always a binding and sounding word, recognizable in its uniqueness yet repeatable in its melodic nature – between mother and child, develops as the child ages into "unambiguous individualization" (Sloterdijk, 2011, p. 517) in its own rhythm.

While "according to evolutionary biologists, newborn piglets or kids are immediately capable of recognizing their mother's voice with absolute certainty among thousands of similar ones-an achievement of early shaping that can only be explained by a form of prenatal "tuning"" (Sloterdijk, 2011, p. 517), we find that "among humans, the process of subtle symbiotic attunements in the audio-vocal resonant space is even more highly differentiated, encompassing emotional keys, recitative-like accents, types of sonorous milieu and, above all, individual frequencies of welcome" (Sloterdijk, 2011, p. 517). In conclusion, it seems appropriate to sustain that "the human being's time in the world is defined, [maybe] more than with any other living creature, by the necessity of staying within a psychoacoustic – or, more generally speaking, in a semiospheric – continuum and developing there" (Sloterdijk, 2011, p. 518).

In this lengthy chapter we have traversed a vast territory yet simultaneously stayed within the confines of a definite community of concepts. We explored the notion that both individuation and intersubjective mutuality happen in a sonorous field of in-betweenness, which is most sharply illustrated by meditating on the earliest mother-child dynamics both in the intrauterine sound world and in the initial stages of newborn life. This core dynamics of mutuality through in-betweenness is transported into a radical notion of intimacy that evolves into the very fabric of communal co-habitation in a shared exchange of individuated voices.

Voice as containment, voice as extended sonorous skin, voice as such, in the realm of where the borders are mutually tangible and selectively permeable, which encompasses, manifests and operates an inclusive notion of radical presence – this melody of thought drives us into the next concluding stage of our conceptual inquiry,

where the specificity of the phenomenological inquiry meets the polymorphic potential of the voice.

3. Voice as Presence – key concepts in a phenomenology of akoumena

The experience of being in and listening to a landscape has an almost geomantic quality.

What is at stake is not so much a question of divination, of interpreting markings on the ground or patterns in the configuration of the natural elements such as trees, mountains, the angles of a valley or the curves of a riverbed, in order to predict events relating directly to the lives of the humans inhabiting those very landscapes.

Instead, the quasi-geomantic character of experiencing a surrounding landscape through sound translates into a willing exercise of intensification not only of one's sensorial awareness, not only of one's essential kinaesthetic[110] situation through an aroused and engaged proprioception, but to a conflagration of presence and absence, a flux of intermittent transition between the radically here and now and the transcendent context of the very experience of this here and now. Understood in this sense, this experience constitutes a phenomenological encounter.

3.1. Phenomenological encounter as method

Any encounter rests in a mutuality, in a coming together of two or more loci of agency or manifest presence, set in relation to (or against) the gapping tension of in-betweenness. The encounter with landscape is not an exception. It is an encounter between self and non-self, in the same way that the encounter with another self is also an encounter between self and non-self, or between self and other. The specific terms of the encounter might change, but this is in any case an intentional and relational encounter, where will, directedness, drive and

[110] For a contextualizing discussion of the relationship between kinaesthesia and sound practices consult (Behnke, 1997), (Schwenkler, 2013), (Sklar, 2008), (Reason & Reynolds, 2010), (Radman, 2012), (Buchanan, 2005), (Sheets-Johnstone, 2010, 2015), (Ito, Tiede, Ostry, & Nottebohm, 2009), (Tajadura-Jimenez, Tsakiris, Marquardt, & Bianchi-Berthouze, 2015), (Fensham, 2014).

actualization participate. Someone finds him or herself somewhere and things happen, things happen through the inside and outside partitions of the aware presence of that very self, situated where it might be at that given time. Thoughts are thought, actions are pursued, living processes engage, and we are and do, indelibly.

However, to speak of an encounter as a phenomenological encounter is to say something more than what we have just said. It is to underline the simultaneous ability to problematize the complexity of the encounter, both as it happens, in its projected expectation, and in the overwhelmed aftermath of its unexpectedness.

A phenomenological encounter is a philosophical practice. It is about embodied awareness and the pressing demand of relevant questioning, like philosophy always is or should be, but it is also more specifically about investigating experience by inquiring into the structures of consciousness that enable a manifest presence of phenomena, and the very problem of how presence itself is constituted.

If phenomena are instances of manifest presence, then so are akoumena. “Akoumena” is therefore but a name given to phenomena whose manifest presence occurs predominately, if not exclusively, in the realm of sound.

So far in our inquiry, even if unnamed as such, akoumena have been the kind of phenomena we have mostly discussed. We have however let the phenomenological nature of our inquiry remain implicit. It is now the moment, at the closing of this inquiry, to trace some explicit connections between some essential phenomenological concepts, the phenomenological method as a strategy for inquiry, and a contextualizing of sound and voice as a philosophical problem in phenomenological terms.

Method is key. This means not only that it is very important, but also literally that is supplies the function of the key, which is to be understood in two ways. First, finding the key hole and tentatively trying out its own adequacy as a penetrating tool, fitting shape to shape, fullness to gap, then the process of turning and unlocking the mechanism. The actual opening of the door and access to whatever

content of the room it might be impeding entrance to (or exit from) rest beyond the metaphorical reach of the key and of method too.

Phenomenology as a method relies on a centripetal positioning from which to acquire a centrifugal perspective. To complicate matters further it also relies on the reverse to the point of simultaneity. Its is a highly vibratory or resonant endeavour, full of multiplication and branching out of possibilities, taking two steps forward only to take three backwards and always struggling for a kind of unification passable enough to allow for some approaching the stability of a theory, while at the same time refusing vehemently the implied stagnation of such a move. In the words of one of its masters: “We search, as it were, in zig-zag fashion, a metaphor all the more apt since the close interdependence of our various epistemological concepts leads us back again and again to our original analyses, where the new confirms the old, and the old the new” (Husserl, 1970b, p. 175).

Our goal at this point of this inquiry in exactly to trace a synthetic account of a series of interdependent concepts leading up to a contextualizing of the voice in relation to a phenomenological understanding of presence. The path we are about to take is not informed by a pseudo-encyclopaedic access to the full body of the multi-branched phenomenological tradition, and as such the authors and interconnecting themes that will be left aside vastly outnumber the few elucidating remarks we hope to achieve.

Moreover, the phenomenological perspective we borrow from is very specific, one which is deemed rich in its problematizing although tightly focused in its territory and thematic constraints. One that stems from a critical dialogue between contemporary phenomenology of the mind, as represented by the work of the Danish philosopher Dan Zahavi (b. 1967), and the founding efforts of clarification of the very field of inquiry that phenomenology may be, in the seminal work of Edmund Husserl.

It was through critical exposure to this dialogue that we have set our theme of sound and voice itself in a relation to a notion of presence, which is built up to by analyzing the potential of sonorous inquiry in the research of the self as an experiential dimension, self and other in the framework of selfhood and

intersubjectivity, and the role of embodiment and situated empathy in the notion of the "lifeworld".

3.2. Pursuing an Husserlian "akoumenology"

One of the best known explicit uses of akoumena in the context of phenomenological inquiry stems from Husserl's discussion of "the width of presence" (Zahavi, 2003, p. 82) while stating that "our experience of a temporal object (as well as our experience of change and succession) would be impossible if our consciousness were only conscious of that which is given in a punctual now, and if the stream of consciousness consequently consisted in a series of isolated now-points, like a line of pearls" (Zahavi, 2003, p. 82).

In this seminal analysis of the temporal structures of consciousness[111], the very notion of time Husserl departs from is problematized. He states that "when we speak of the analysis of time-consciousness, of the temporal character of objects of perception, memory, and expectation, it may seem, to be sure, as if we assume the Objective flow of time, and then really study only the subjective conditions of the possibility of an intuition of time and a true knowledge of time" (Husserl, 1981, p. 277), but instead "what we accept, however, is not the existence of a world-time, the existence of a concrete duration, and the like, but time and duration appearing as such" (Husserl, 1981, p. 277).

To illustrate this "existing time [...][which] is not the time of the world of experience but the *immanent time* of the flow of consciousness" (Husserl, 1981, p. 277) the example of how we experience a melody is brought into question.

Husserl points out the way in which we listen to a succession of tones, whose perception of each is rooted in an atomic instant of the present, while at the same time being able to sustain an expanded listening experience of the melody as a flowing whole and not a staccato-like succession of disconnected noises.

[111] For a broader discussion of multiple perspectives concerning Husserl's "time-consciousness" refer to (Palmieri, 2014), (Kelly, 2014), (Lo, 2014), (McInerney, 2010) and (Hopkins, 2011, pp. 125-138).

Our ability to listen to a melody as such, which is an example of what Husserl calls “temporal objects (*Zeitobjekte*), that is, objects that have a temporal extension and whose different aspects cannot exist simultaneously but only appear across time” (Zahavi, 2003, p. 81), is explained as being possible “because the succession of psychic events [sounds] is united .. at once" into a total formation” (Husserl, 1991, p. 22), meaning that “they are in consciousness successively, but they fall within one and the same total act” (Husserl, 1991, p. 22).

This synthetic structure of inner consciousness of time is described in detail in several of Husserl’s works, namely in his “Analyses concerning passive and active synthesis” (*Analysen zur passiven Synthesis*, *1918-1926*) and his “The Phenomenology of internal time-consciousness” (*Zur Phänomenologie des inneren Zeitbewusstesens, 1893-1917*), but the jest of the Husserlian account of the dynamic structure of the temporal process that occurs while listening to a melody is as follows:

> “When the tone C is first heard, it is intended by the primal presentation. When it is succeeded by the tone D, the tone D is given in the primal presentation, whereas the tone C is now retained by the retention, and when the E sounds, it replaces the tone D in the primal presentation, whereas the tone D is now retained by the retention, and so on. The retention, however, is not simply a consciousness of the tone that has just passed. Every time a new tone is intended in a primal presentation, the entire retentional sequence is modified. When the tone C is succeeded by the tone D, our presentational consciousness of the tone D will be accompanied by a retention of the tone C (D(c)). When the tone D is replaced by the tone E, our presentational consciousness of the tone E will be accompanied not only by a retention of the tone D, but also by a retention of the tone retained in the tone D (E(d(c))), and so forth.” (Zahavi, 2005, p. 57)

Additionally, because the “primal impression must be situated in a temporal horizon; and be accompanied by a retention, an intention that provides us with a

consciousness of the phase of the object that has just been" (Zahavi, 2003, p. 83), it must also be accompanied by "a protention, a more or less indefinite intention of the phase of the object about to occur" (Zahavi, 2003, p. 83).

The example of a melody here used by Husserl, can be easily substituted by that of voice, and pointing to the charged temporal internal tension of the sonorous manifestation, encompassing primal impression, retention and protention, in a constant distension of temporal presence which occupies both an atomic and a synthetic appearance in the given sound field where it resonates.

This now classic phenomenological description of the consciousness of time has entailed also a classic misunderstanding. It must be underlined that "retention and protention should be distinguished from proper (thematic) recollection and expectation" (Zahavi, 2005, p. 58), because "there is an obvious difference between retaining and protending the tones that have just sounded and are about to sound, and remembering a past holiday or looking forward to the next vacation" (Zahavi, 2005, p. 58).

This difference consists in that "whereas the two latter performances are full-blown intentional experiences that presuppose the work of the retention and the protention, the protention and retention are dependent moments of any occurrent experience" (Zahavi, 2005, p. 58), therefore "they do not provide us with additional intentional objects, but with a consciousness of the temporal horizon of the present object" (Zahavi, 2005, p. 58).

This distinction between the protention–primal presentation–retention structure and a notion of intentionality fully integrated in a self that wills, introduces the question of awareness, more concretely, self-awareness.

If "to be a subject is to be in the mode of being aware of oneself (Hua 14/151)" (Zahavi, 2003, p. 87), and "an absolute existent is existent in the form of an intentional life—which, no matter what else it may be intrinsically conscious of, is, at the same time, consciousness of itself (Hua 17/279-280 [273, transl. modified])" (Zahavi, 2003, p. 87) , then this demands the question of not only "how we can be

aware of objects with temporal extension, but also how we can be aware of our own fluctuating stream of experiences" (Zahavi, 2005, p. 58)?

At this moment, where we find the experience of being oneself as intrinsically constituted by an awareness of being that is one's own, a self-awareness, we will take a step back and question the very appearance of subject of experience.

3.3. From 1st and 3rd to 2nd person – on the intersubjectivity of experience

One of the tenets of phenomenological tradition is that it deals with the so-called first person perspective – something that we have named above as being "a centripetal positioning from which to acquire a centrifugal perspective", or in other words, to think in one's own shoes. Every experience that *I* can experience is *my* experience.

The apparent trite banality of this statement can be misleading. It points to the intrinsic "mineness" of every experience, of the very experiencing itself, in which "self-consciousness, rather than being something that occurs only during exceptional circumstances, namely whenever we pay attention to our conscious life, is a feature characterizing subjectivity as such, no matter what worldly entities it might otherwise be conscious of and occupied with" (Zahavi, 2005, p. 11).

This essential aspect, which Husserl referred to as being "characterized by a "*Für-sich-selbst-erscheinens*," that is, by a self-appearance or self-manifestation (Hua 8/189, 412)" (Zahavi, 2005, p. 11), does not imply solipsism, on the contrary, it articulates the radical "I" position present at the core of experience, with the openness to the world, otherness, and the very possibility of empathy. It deals with the "I" as a condition, not as a constraint necessarily breeding seclusion or exclusion.

It is a peculiar subject, the one whose perspective is the first, and whose presence and sense of self is adapted to a constant paradox of appearance and evanescence, coming to be and vanishing away – such as it emerges, through the

sharp lens of reflective awareness, in the everyday experience of consciousness of time. That the ineffable yet omnipresent flux of the sound world beckoned as an enlightening example of this dynamic process is no surprise, given its intrinsic characteristics as have been described in this inquiry so far.

Is the first person perspective accessible to others on only truly to the self? Yes and no – here lies one of the challenges of the phenomenological method. The first person perspective should not be akin to private language[112], it should also not only be able to be validated privately by the one who holds it. However, it does constantly flirt with the incommunicable, the unrelatable, the difficulty of both accessing the immediacy of the experience and being able to reflect upon it in such a way as to produce knowledge.

In other words, the requirement for a proper phenomenological first person perspective is that "one must be able to think of oneself *as* oneself" (Zahavi, 2005, p. 13) in the same way that voicing implies both being able to speak and to hear and recognize one's own voice. This means that "It is not enough to have desires and beliefs, it is not enough to have a perspectival attitude, nor is it enough to be able to distinguish between self and nonself; one must also be able to conceptualize this distinction" (Zahavi, 2005, pp. 13-14).

From the first person perspective what is required therefore is to translate consciousness via the conceptualization of self-consciousness. The very term "consciousness", which we have been using as self-evident without daring a definition is considered to be immediate but not immediately self-evident.

According to Husserl, the notion of consciousness encompasses three main nuances of disambiguation. First, it can be understood as "the entire, real (*reel/e*) phenomenological being of the empirical ego, as the interweaving of psychic experiences in the unified stream of consciousness" (Husserl, 1970c, p. 81); second, as "the inner awareness of one's own psychic experiences" (Husserl, 1970c, p. 81); and third, as "a comprehensive designation for 'mental acts', or 'intentional experiences', of all sorts" (Husserl, 1970c, p. 81).

[112] For a discussion of the wider problem of private language in a philosophical context see (Meyers & Waller, 2009), (de Gaynesford, 2007), (Walton & Strongman, 1998), (Baker, 1998) and (Ginet, 1999).

These three nuanced clarifications review the main structures of consciousness as we have discussed so far, the first one referring to the "unity or totality of experiences [or stream of consciousness]" (Zahavi, 2005, p. 32), the second to consciousness understood in the intransitive sense as in that "we can say of an experience that it is inwardly given to us and thus conscious [self-awareness]" (Zahavi, 2005, p. 32), and the third to consciousness understood in the transitive sense as in that "we can say of a certain experience that it is conscious of something, that is, we can speak of consciousness in the sense of an intentional directedness" (Zahavi, 2005, p. 32).

In view of these three criteria, consciousness manifests the self and a self is that which manifest consciousness, from this dynamic structure self-awareness arises, and in phenomenological terms, the self is therefore considered as not only an isolated nexus of experience but a whole experiential dimension. This is so because "to be conscious of oneself, consequently, is not to capture a pure self that exists in separation from the stream of consciousness, but rather entails just being conscious of an experience in its first-personal mode of givenness; it is a question of having first-personal access to one's own experiential life" (Zahavi, 2005, p. 106), hence "the self referred to is not something standing beyond or opposed to the stream of experiences but is rather a feature or function of its givenness" (Zahavi, 2005, p. 106), or in other words, the phenomenological understanding of the self is that it "is conceived neither as an ineffable transcendental precondition, nor as a mere social construct that evolves through time; it is taken to be an integral part of our conscious life with an immediate experiential reality" (Zahavi, 2005, p. 106).

3.3.1. Vocal self as intrinsically relational

The notion of self as an intrinsic relational structure recalls some of our previous discussion of the role of voice in mutuality and in-betweenness, as an acoustic manifestation of radical individuation in a context of sharing of presence and mutual recognition. After having described the situation of the self in relation to

experience, in a phenomenological context, we must now return to a clarification of the distinction being presumed between a first and a third person perspective, on the path to introducing a notion of empathetic presence and intersubjectivity, which might well be described as a second person perspective.

The main criticism leveled from a phenomenological position to the third person perspective is that passes off presumption as fact. Not just as mere fact but as grounding fact, as that which sustains the very possibility of knowledge. It purports objective fact, a stable, universally accessible, objective worldview, which can be measured, compared, held as evidence, independently preserved and manifested for any individual instances of subjectivity that might be enmeshed in it.

The tenets of the third person perspective are those of the scientific method, resting on the systematic controlled observation of empirical evidence, measurement, quantification, and experiment followed by the formulation of hypothesis, all occurring under the banner of strict rationality. What the third person excludes is where the first person perspective departs from, as we have seen, the very conditions and structures of the very consciousness whose agency animates the whole process described above.

Instead of presupposing this consciousness, and removing it from the scope of inquiry by transitioning the subjective role from the situated and active “I” to the passive “it”, the first person perspective departs from the very embracing of this intentional “I”, and from that point inquires into the situation of the nature of manifestation of the “I” to itself and of the “it” to the “I”.

The relation, in phenomenological terms, between the “I” and the “it” forces us to recall an essential feature of intentionality that we have not underlined so far, its existence-independency. What this points to is that “our mind does not become intentional through an external influence, and it does not lose its intentionality if its object ceases to exist” (Zahavi, 2003, p. 21), instead, as we have seen, “intentionality is not an external relation that is brought about when consciousness is influenced by an object, but is, on the contrary, an intrinsic feature of consciousness” (Zahavi, 2003, p. 21) that “does not presuppose the existence of two different entities—consciousness and the object” (Zahavi, 2003, p. 21). In fact, “all that is needed for

intentionality to occur is the existence of an experience with the appropriate internal structure of object-directedness (Hua 19/386, 427)" (Zahavi, 2003, p. 21).

Although present throughout the whole phenomenological endeavour, criticism directed at the reigning notion of science and rationalism, in the context of the need for a first person perspective and the fallacies of the third person perspective, appears most notably in one of Husserl's later works, "The crisis of the European sciences and transcendental phenomenology" (*Die Krisis der europaischen Wissenschaften und die transzendentale Phänomenologie*, *1934-1937*).

In this work, Husserl problematizes the consequences of the extreme success and universal acceptance gained by the positive sciences, including pure mathematics and the exact natural sciences, "which we can never cease to admire as models of rigorous and highly successful scientific discipline" (Husserl, 1970a, pp. 3-4).

The problem, and the root to the "crisis" at stake, is that "merely fact-minded sciences make merely fact-minded people" (Husserl, 1970a, p. 6) and that science has become a tyrannical titan that "excludes in principle precisely the questions which man, given over in our unhappy times to the most portentous upheavals, finds the most burning: questions of the meaning or meaninglessness of the whole of this human existence" (Husserl, 1970a, p. 6).

In other words, the problem is that given that "scientific, objective truth is exclusively a matter of establishing what the world, the physical as well as the spiritual world, is in fact" (Husserl, 1970a, p. 6) the question must be posed: "But can the world, and human existence in it, truthfully have a meaning if the sciences recognize as true only what is objectively established in this fashion, and if history has nothing more to teach us than that all the shapes of the spiritual world, all the conditions of life, ideals, norms upon which man relies, form and dissolve themselves like fleeting waves, that it always was and ever will be so, that again and again reason must turn into nonsense, and well-being into misery?" (Husserl, 1970a, pp. 6-7).

The question is pressing and it has remained so. The origin of the crisis might be historical, stemming as "a direct consequence of the objectivism that has dominated since the Scientific Revolution in the Renaissance, a revolution characterized by its quantitative ideal of method, its sharp distinction between facts and values, and its insistence that science and science only can describe reality as it is in itself" (Zahavi, 2003, p. 126), but the fact in question is that "not only are the positive sciences in need of an ontological and epistemological clarification, they have also lost their existential relevance" (Zahavi, 2003, p. 126). Hence, "according to Husserl, the only way to overcome the present scientific crisis and to heal the disastrous rupture between the world of science and the world of everyday life is by criticizing this reigning objectivism" (Zahavi, 2003, p. 126).

From this critique arose the concept of "life-world" as "the forgotten meaning-fundament of natural science" (Husserl, 1970a, p. 48), meaning that which was left aside during the process of "surreptitious substitution of the mathematically substructed world of idealities for the only real world, the one that is actually given through perception, that is ever experienced and experienceable—our everyday life-world" (Husserl, 1970a, pp. 48-49).

3.3.2. Situated "we" – sonorously inhabiting the "life-world"

The life-world – considered as prescientific, pregiven, and "horizon of all meaningful induction" (Husserl, 1970a, p. 50) – is the "world that we find to be the world of all known and unknown realities" (Husserl, 1970a, p. 50), a world of "actually experiencing intuition" (Husserl, 1970a, p. 50), to which "belongs the form of space-time together with all the bodily [*körperlich*] shapes incorporated in it; it is in this world that we ourselves live, in accord with our bodily [*leiblich*], personal way of being" (Husserl, 1970a, p. 50).

The notion of life-world transports us to our previous discussion of Sloterdijk's concepts of the natural inhabiting spherical territories of human existence. The question of dwelling and belonging, and its relation to presence,

becomes explicit in the consideration of the dynamic structures that constitute the life-world.

According to Husserl, on the one hand, the life-world “for us who wakingly live in it, is always already there, existing in advance for us, the "ground" of all praxis whether theoretical or extratheoretical” (Husserl, 1970a, p. 142), it is therefore given in the mode of grounding presence. Accordingly, “To live is always to live-in-certainty-of-the-world” (Husserl, 1970a, p. 142).

On the other hand, “there exists a fundamental difference between the way we are conscious of the world and the way we are conscious of things or objects (taken in the broadest sense, but still purely in the sense of the life-world), though together the two make up an inseparable unity” (Husserl, 1970a, p. 143).

The difference is that “things, objects (always understood purely in the sense of the life-world), are "given" as being valid for us in each case (in some mode or other of ontic certainty) but in principle only in such a way that we are conscious of them as things or objects within the world-horizon” (Husserl, 1970a, p. 143), therefore “each one is something, "something of" the world of which we are constantly conscious as a horizon” (Husserl, 1970a, p. 143). However, the world itself as horizon ”does not exist as an entity, as an object, but exists with such uniqueness that the plural makes no sense when applied to it” (Husserl, 1970a, p. 143).

It is also from this difference that the essential paradox of human subjectivity arises, that of “being a subject for the world and at the same time being an object in the world” (Husserl, 1970a, p. 178). How can humanity be “world-constituting subjectivity and yet as incorporated in the world itself” (Husserl, 1970a, p. 182)? Or in other words that echo Sloterdijk’s analysis as we have seen in the previous chapter, how can a container be itself contained in that which it contains?

To attempt an answer might imply a reconfiguration of the very terms of the question. In the terms of the question an absence was implied, which as it becomes explicit opens up to a consideration of the role of intersubjectivity. According to Husserl, “what was lacking was the phenomenon of the change of signification of

[the form] "I"—just as I am saying "I" right now—into "other I's," into "all of us," we who are many "I's," and among whom I am but one "I" (Husserl, 1970a, p. 182).

The new question rising out of the paradox is now "who are we, as subjects performing the meaning- and validity-accomplishment of universal constitution— as those who, in community, constitute the world as a system of poles, as the intentional structure of community life?" (Husserl, 1970a, p. 182).

In this question, which opens up to notions of sharing mutuality and the possibility of being together in the world, we are still however in the first person perspective, but this time in the first person of the plural, the "we". It is important to understand how this "we" positioning is actually still an "I", in the sense that as "primal ego, I constitute my horizon of transcendental others as cosubjects within the transcendental intersubjectivity which constitutes the world" (Husserl, 1970a, p. 184).

This is so because "I am the one who performs the *epoche*, and, even if there are others, and even if they practice the *epoche* in direct community with me, [they and] all other human beings with their entire act-life are included, for me, within my epoche, in the world-phenomenon which, in my *epoche*, is exclusively mine" (Husserl, 1970a, p. 184). *Epoche* here refers to the philosophical method leading to an "abrupt suspension of a naive metaphysical attitude" (Zahavi, 2003, p. 46). As a "procedure, which entails a suspension of our natural realistic inclination" (Zahavi, 2003, p. 45), the *epoche* is effected not "in order to deny, doubt, neglect, abandon, or exclude reality from our research, but simply in order to suspend or neutralize a certain dogmatic attitude toward reality, that is, in order to be able to focus more narrowly and directly on the phenomenological given—the objects just as they appear" (Zahavi, 2003, p. 45).

In a context of intersubjectivity, when the primal ego, the "I", practices the *epoche*, it is only then that it really becomes situated in a radical first person singular perspective. The *epoche* "creates a unique sort of philosophical solitude which is the fundamental methodical requirement for a truly radical philosophy" (Husserl, 1970a, p. 184), however "in this solitude I am not a single individual who has somehow willfully cut himself off from the society of mankind, perhaps even for theoretical

reasons, or who is cut off by accident, as in a shipwreck, but who nevertheless knows that he still belongs to that society" (Husserl, 1970a, p. 184).

More than mere belonging, the "I", thereby made aware of itself as being-itself and being-amongst-others, participates in the "transcendental intersubjectivity constituting the world as "world for all," in which I again appear, this time as "one" transcendental "I" among others, whereby "we all" are taken as functioning transcendentally" (Husserl, 1970a, p. 184).

Through the *epoche,* we learn "how the always singular "I" in the original constituting life proceeding within it, constitutes a first sphere of objects, the "primordial" sphere; how it then, starting from this, in a motivated fashion, performs a constitutive accomplishment through which an intentional modification of itself and its primordiality achieves ontic validity under the title of "alien-perception," perception of others, of another "I" who is for himself an "I" as I am" (Husserl, 1970a, p. 185).

3.3.3. Situated "you" – empathetic cosubjectivity as voiced presence

At this point, to recognize the other – which appears as phenomena, as akoumena even in his voiced presence – as another "I", as an other pole of foundational subjectivity, "the immediate "I," already enduring in the enduring primordial sphere, constitutes in itself another as other" (Husserl, 1970a, p. 185).

Husserl describes the process in detail as follows: "Self-temporalization through depresentation [*Ent-Gegenwärtigung*], so to speak (through recollection), has its analogue in my self-alienation [*Ent-Fremdung*] (empathy as a depresentation of a higher level—depresentation of my primal presence [*Urpräsenz*] into a merely presentified [vergegenwärtigte] primal presence)" (Husserl, 1970a, p. 185). This somewhat obscure description leads to: "thus, in me, "another I" achieves ontic validity as copresent [*kompräsent*] with his own ways of being self-evidently verified, which are obviously quite different from those of a "sense"-perception" (Husserl, 1970a, p. 185).

This seems to point to the fact that to achieve “transcendental intersubjectivity and its transcendental communalization, through which, in the functioning system of ego-poles, the "world for all," and for each subject *as* world for all, is constituted” (Husserl, 1970a, p. 186), or in other words true intersubjectivity, the self must allow itself to become an other to itself, without breaking the bond of subjective belonging, but to alienate itself sufficiently in order to be able to accept the manifest otherness of others, to whom he must appear as an other who he himself must still acknowledge as his own self. A gap must be opened, a chasm must be drawn in order to be able to be crossed.

To take the step in the context of intersubjectivity from the first person perspective to the second person perspective – the “I” encountering the other “I” that appears as a “you” in the concrete manifestation of its otherness – empathy must come into play. To address the other, to voice the call, and be addressed in return, the other must be embraced into the embodied shared presence of being situated in the life-world. Consequently, it must be recognized that “even prior to my concrete empathic encounter with another subject, intersubjectivity is already present as cosubjectivity” (Zahavi, 2005, p. 167).

Mutual presence, communal intersubjectivity, and the role of voice and sound in relation to both have already been addressed in this inquiry. The convoluted path through phenomenological concepts that we have trodden so far, has not dealt with the peculiarity of akoumena, because in a sense, akoumena are not particular. All that can be said of phenomena can be meaningfully said of akoumena, the terms are interchangeable in the context of our inquiry.

Only the voice stands as problematic and as particularly inspirational, by being both understood as an akoumena, and as a radical manifestation of subjectivity, of intersubjective communion. The empathetic encounter with the other is of uttermost importance here, since the voice is one of the most concrete and tangible territories where and through which this encounter occurs.

Empathy[113] as it is questioned in contemporary phenomenology seems to arise one particular question. Is my ability to feel what the other feels, and the communion of recognition that stems from this, based on a comparative translation to my own ways of feeling, the only to which I have access? Or is there some kind of true mutual participation in the other's being, crossing the very boundary of otherness, suddenly revealed as permeable somehow? The question behind this question is if empathy is essentially an ability acquired through experience, and as such owing to the specificity of that experience, or if it is somehow intrinsically structural to the workings of the self, or both, and how? The discussion ensues and arguments supporting both positions are plenty.

If in some situations, our empathy for another is so intense, immediate and unquestionable that no internal comparative mediation seems to have the opportunity to take place, other times we find ourselves so baffled by another behaviour, poise or expression, that it becomes a very conscious puzzle to decipher it in any meaningful way. Maybe this question on the nature of empathy can be only answered by degrees, by a more nuance gradation of the situation at play, in any case to answer it is neither our focus nor ambition in this inquiry.

In any case it seems that the body definitely plays a major role in the dynamics of empathy, the body in an extended embodied notion, therefore including its acoustic reach, the dynamics of its voicing. In the voice there is ample opportunity for self-revelation and as such for the intensification of an empathetic mutuality. Even in the absence of the physical wholeness of the present body, the mere sound can transport meaning to a degree of subtlety and accurateness that is awe-inspiring.

Having discussed the phenomenological method, and some key phenomenological concepts in this chapter, we would like to conclude with a short narrative. When "I" talk to "you" and "you" answer back, "I" hold the content of "our" conversation while simultaneously becoming a "you" to myself. The "you" that

[113] For a broad contextualization of the dynamic discussion of the role of empathy in contemporary phenomenology refer to (Zahavi, 2014, 2015), (Bornemark, 2014), (Stueber, 2010), (Shuman, 2011), (Hollan & Throop, 2011), (Giummarra et al., 2015), (Svenaeus, 2015), (Rashed, 2015), (Costello, 2014), (Ratcliffe, 2012), (Stanghellini & Rosfort, 2013) and (Walsh, 2014).

spoke first, the once “me” in time and still “me” in extended temporal presence, is aware that something was said and that “those” who said it, and how “they” said it, might have become so entangled with the saying that “they” have become lost for both of “us”. Against this constant vanishing, “we” hold our own in two fronts, the memory of having been and the inner potential of coming-to-be, against the background of an ever-flowing now.

Voice might be special not only because it has such an intense power of animating and bringing to life, by connecting us in a highly receptive situation of mutual awareness, but also because it vanishes so absolutely as nothing else, as only mortal time does, in a flow towards ever quiet death.

4. Voice as present – specific sound site experiments

From the very beginning, this inquiry on the notion of presence, as understood in relation to a questioning of the potential of voice as a relevant philosophical problem, was sparked by a very acute sense of being and becoming present.

This sense of being and becoming present is too be understood as a certain practice of engaged listening and engaged speaking within a community of voices, both encountered in the everyday and in specialized research situations. These research situations happened mostly in collaborative efforts within the context of artistic research[114].

Artistic research is in a certain sense a new name for an old concept. It refers to interdisciplinary practice as a "form of knowledge production" (Borgdorff, 2011, p. 44) where the artistic and academic strategies and approaches come together in an hybrid materialization that encompasses curiosity, a critical sense of inquiry, a skilled practice associated with one of more of the several technical domains of artistic production, and an understanding of the philosophical notion of embodied research, in sum, the ability to make art and to critically engage with artistic production, both one's own and the others'.

Artistic research as an explicit denomination stems from the understanding that "every artist does research as she works, as she tries to find the right material, the right subject, as she looks for information and techniques to use in her studio or atelier, or when she encounters something, changes something or begins anew in the course of her work" (Borgdorff, 2011, p. 44), and that by uniting "the artistic and the academic in an enterprise that impacts on both domains" (Borgdorff, 2011, p. 44) allows for a situation where "art thereby transcends its former limits, aiming through the research to contribute to thinking and understanding; academia, for its

[114] For diverse contemporary examples of sound experimentation in the context of artistic research consult (Crispin & Gilmore, 2014), (Dyson, 2009), (Furlong, 1994), (Emery & Morriss, 1986) and (Freeman, 2010).

part, opens up its boundaries to forms of thinking and understanding that are interwoven with artistic practices" (Borgdorff, 2011, p. 44).

In my own case as artistic researcher, in what pertains to the inquiry followed through in the present thesis, the area of artistic practice that has become instrumental in setting up the conceptual framework of inquiring into voice as a philosophical problem as been my own work as sound artist and performance "designer".

The discovery, however, that what I was doing was something called "artistic research" came after the fact though, in 2010, after I had already started working on the presence inquiry, during my first forays as a participant in the international conference circuit. Presenting my work in multiple instances of the typical conference situation setup – stand up, read/speak/show images, answer one or two question, move on to the next – I was suffering from a growing unease that something essential was being voided and made irrelevant, that something precious and deeply rooted was being distorted and turned into mere affectation.

The essence of philosophical thinking as a life form – the communal potential of the dialogue between living beings, the urgency and relevance of thinking through risk in the face of obscurity and confusion, humbleness before the unknown and boldness before the apparently known, in order to live better what amounts to a fleeting living presence in a complex world shared with others – was mostly absent in my earliest nomadic incursions into the conventional academic scene.

Here and there, mostly connected to this or that individual's display of passion for the pursuit of meaning, there were glimpses of something more, something more radically ethical in the awareness of the responsibility that rests in the production of knowledge in the humanities. Finally, by accident like most great encounters, I found a group of kindred minds in an international research circle, a Nordic and Baltic network for research and interdisciplinary studies, under the title NSU (Nordiska Sommaruniversitetet).

Out of the two sets of artistic research projects, concretely site specific sound experiments, which I will present next as examples of the kind of practice-based

work that developed alongside the more theoretical text-based knowledge production present in this inquiry, only one was created in the context of NSU, but both definitely benefited from the fruitful interactions that sprang out of working and sharing within this nomadic community.

The two following sound experiments, as well as other sound explorations pertaining to my recent artistic output can be listened to at:

http://pairsofthree.org/sound/

4.1. *Two in Transit* – vocal play in motion through urban space

The first sound experiment to be presented in the context of this inquiry is titled *Two in Transit* and was produced in Stockholm, in the Spring of 2013, integrated in the the project LUR (*Levande Urban Radio*), made in collaboration with a team of researchers based at ARKDES (*Arkitektur- och designcentrum*).

LUR, translatable to English as Living Urban Radio, was meant as a series of short sound experiments dealing with the exploration of the complexity of the urban environment in Stockholm. *Two in Transit* was a sound piece authored by me and made in collaboration with two Swedish vocal performers, the actress Sara Franceschi and the composer Ylva Fred.

The conscious inspiration for *Two in Transit* came from a memory of living a few years earlier in Copenhagen, quite close to the Rytmisk Musikkonservatorium, situated at the island cluster area of the Holmen district. There I grew used to see and hear the music students singing together while riding their bicycles past my house, rehearsing pieces for the classes.

I had witnessed Danes do all sorts of things while driving their bikes before, so this was not so much amazing as acoustically inspiring. A more or less constant human made sound in motion is a powerful acoustic agent, activating all sorts of elements in the urban setting, in this case resonating across the whole length of the street. On an aesthetic-emotional level, I was personally quite moved by the student

duets that were light-heartedly struggling with the piece they were supposed to prepare, mixing the discipline of study preparation with the forced improvisational context of the situation – singing while biking, singing and biking together, singing and biking together in between places and on the way.

For the LUR project, I decided to try to recover this sound memory as a strategy to explore the potential of vocally improvising while riding a bicycle through a specific and sonorously diverse path across central Stockholm, a city where the urban environment can vary significantly and abruptly even in short distances, given the proliferation of nature, waterways and public spaces, along with the kind of traffic one would expect from a cosmopolitan European capital.

Sara and Ylva accepted the invitation to simultaneously ride their bikes, sing and be recorded while experiencing the city struggling with harmony, their own physicality and the balance between distraction and concentration in relation to the ever-present sound world of the public space.

The decision on the path to take came through a mixture of familiarity, maximum urban variety and unpredictability. We would begin under the bridge between Lilla Essingen and Marieberg, follow the jogging path through the woods and close to the water until Rålambshovsparken, where we would explore the acoustics of the skate park beneath the Västerbron underpass; then we would move along the Norr Mälarstrand waterfront until reaching the Stockholms Stadshus; next we change radically the acoustic environment by crossing under Tegelbacken and riding into Gamla Stan. At Gamla Stan's Stortorget we would end the performance by meeting a group of the LUR participants that would create a final improvised choir response to Sara and Ylva's singing, while finally blending into all the resonant background of the tourist crowds and resonant stone floor and building facades in Gamla Stan.

The musical piece that would be the working basis of the improvisation was decided in a meeting between Sara and Ylva – the melodically and counterpoint rhythmically rich *Gjendines Båtnlåt*, a Norwegian folk lullaby piece of unknown authorship that Edvard Grieg (1843-1907) had been inspired to arrange for piano after having heard it often sang by a young nanny called Kaia Gjendine Slålien (1871-

1972), which he met in the summer of 1891 while visiting Skogadalsbøen in Jotunheimen, Norway. Sara and Ylva knew the song but had never rehearsed it before in an improvised duo situation, therefore the singing would not be the performing of the fruit of training, but an active play, an experiment of mutual approaching via the shared exploration of unfamiliar vocal territory.

Technically, *Two in Transit* was recorded using two pairs of binaural in ear microphones, one for each performer, and an external X/Y cardioid stereo condenser microphone (carried by myself, the third person on a bike). These binaural microphones allow the listener to put himself acoustically in the very same situated listening position the original listener was in when the recording took place, for example, a car moving from left to right of the original listener while the recording was being made will sound as if coming left to right to the listener of the recording, and so on.

The strategy behind this option was to have two subjective stereo recordings from the embodied perspective of each of the performers, together with an external source capturing the surrounding stereo image – that would include both the constantly changing environments and the voices themselves from the perspective of a listener moving through the same path.

In the digital editing process, some amount of superimposing and transition design was used but no filters or effects – it was important that the sonorous experience of *Two in Transit* was not to be composed in a computer environment but that the physicality of the sounds themselves as recorded was to come through. The editing process was quite revealing of the tensions between the musical and the non-musical sounds, and the fact that the performer's voices would cross over into both categories quite added to the complexity.

From a conceptual perspective, in what pertains to this inquiry, *Two in Transit* was a live experiment of intersubjective embodied listening. It also implied a heightened awareness both of what each performer was doing with her voice, but also what the other one was responding, and how the conditions of the surrounding environment in terms of relative loudness or resonant complexity would add to this vocal exchange.

It was also a literal experiment in in-betweenness and transitional sonorous presence. When the spaces shifted, the voices shifted accordingly. The whole process took place between two voices, and between the relatively harmonic movement of two bodies in a peculiar two-wheeled balance, navigating traffic, multitasking, remaining aware of the many levels of the situated performance.

4.2. *Silent dinner soundscape*, *Sing-a-longing* and *Some body in the landscape (and there were other bodies)* – situated voice within immersive sound intervention

The second sound experiment happened more recently, during the Spring of 2015, and consisted of an unplanned but not unforeseen triptych of sound works produced in collaboration during a two week residence at MoKS, a non-profit artist-run project space situated in Mooste, a rural area in the Viljandi County, in the south of Estonia, 20 km from the Russian border.

For two weeks, in an immersive environment both in what concerns the exploration of the surrounding forest landscape, the cohabitation rhythms of a nomadic community of around ten artistic researchers living together, and the contact with the local residents and their own everyday experience of place and locality, I collected a series of recordings to be compiled and edited into two performative sounds pieces to be presented in Tallinn, at the Kanuti Gildi Saal theatre.

These two performance sound pieces, *Silent dinner soundscape* and *Sing-a-longing* were presented immediately after the two week residence period, the third one however, *Some body in the landscape (and there were other bodies),* was only finished a few months afterwards, in transit between Lisbon and Stockholm, and found its output by being not performed live but published in the online trans-disciplinary art magazine ESC:ALA, a platform created and ran by a team of Portuguese artists and researchers.

Silent dinner soundscape was a direct collaboration with the German philosopher Sebastian Dieterich and the American artist Luisa Greenfield, both also artistic researchers. These two researchers shared the practice of long explorative walks through the landscape around Mooste, both in order to activate their sense awareness and kinetic proprioception in the context of embodied thinking and dialogue, but also to playfully explore their own sense of orientation and tacit communication by alternately guiding each other while wearing blindfolds or pursuing temporary pacts of silence.

Walking has its own concrete, ancient and intensely documented role in the history of philosophical thought, as both "means and end in itself", as Rebecca Solnit points out in her seminal 2001 book *Wanderlust – a History of Walking,* to the potentiation of thought and kinetically embodied reflection, where the inquisitive mind and the restless feet have long been constant travel companions.

By accompanying Luisa and Sebastian on these walks, recording the direct sounds of their intervention in the landscape – like breathing or the rich crunching stepping sounds of walking over dry foliage – but also the sheer soundscape of the surroundings, temporarily unaffected by human rhythms, I gathered a sonic lexicon of a concretely situated embodied practice.

This sonic lexicon was then edited and performed as a subtle yet detailed soundscape of micro-rhythms, accompanying a public collaborative performance of a shared meal, using ingredients, senses and smells recollecting the situated experience of a concrete locality. *Silent dinner soundscape* became therefore an experiment in soundscape surrogation, a transposition of an embodied experience of sonic intervention moved from one site-specific location, the forest around Mooste, to another site-specific location, the Kanuti Gildi Saal theatre stage.

The participants in this second instance of the performance, experienced their own sensory heightened awareness, intensified by the lack of the actual experience of the space reconstructed, and by the sensorial immersion in a sound field composed of collected sound memories.

The use of binaural microphones, therefore including the specificity of my own body in constructing the stereo image of the original recordings, which is then dispersed through the performance space, becomes instrumental. In the stage, where the participants are invited to partake in a silent dinner, allowing their active listening to blend with their taste experience, and completing introspection with the sensorial engagement with their immediate surrounding sound field, the notion of shared presence, both transcendent and radically rooted, as defined in sonic terms finds a very concrete and tangible manifestation.

The second instance of this triptych of sounds experiments, *Sing-a-longing,* found its inspiration even before my arrival in Mooste, while studying the turbulent history of Estonia during its multiple stages of occupation during the from the 12th to the 20th century, all the way up to its independence in 1991.

A particular period captured my imagination, the so-called "Singing Revolution"[115], a series of events taking place between 1989 and 1991, where the choral singing tradition and the modern rock and punk scene came together in an effort of strengthening Estonia's resolve to pursue its independence, using protest songs in public space as one of its foremost rallying strategies. This contemporary thrust of noncompliance and public protest through song, resonated with a long vocal history of choral singing tradition as one of the main cultural pillars of Estonian identity throughout its different periods of occupation by more powerful neighbouring nations such as Denmark, Sweden, Germany and Russia.

Sing-a-longing was born as an exercise in exploring the dichotomy between the historical account of the role of song, the arousing images of outdoor amphitheaters filled with thousands of people singing as one, and my very own radically embodied contact with the site-specificity of the local Estonia I would live and travel through for a short while.

Sing-a-longing consists of a gathering of recordings from two main sources: street recordings made from short interviews with passers-by in the city of Tartu,

[115] For a broader historical context see (Gerner, 2015) and (Waren, 2012).

and a longer recording of a small local choir rehearsal taking place in the community cultural centre of Mooste, the local high school gymnasium.

The street recordings took place according to the following strategy: with the help of a translator, I approached individual strangers in the streets of Tartu, asking them to share any kind of short melody that might at that very moment, in that very place where we happened to meet, to be going through their minds. Whenever an individual agreed to shared this melody, in his or her own voice against the specific background soundscape of the urban location where we were, I would then approach the next person, have them listen to the sung fragment I had just recorded, and ask if they wish to continue it, in case they recognized the melody or if it was relevant to them, or else to share their own big of sung melody that I would then transport as an invitation to the next listener/singer/speaker.

This chain of fragmented recordings created a binding link between strangers that, while still remaining strangers, would somehow connected vocally on a strictly sonic space which would in effect reconstruct these fragments into a kind of dispersed choral experience. By bringing together voices that would normally remain apart, by allowing then to become a purely sonic community of resonance through the compilation of their unidirectional "dialogue", the concept of a choir of radically engaged intersubjectivity was produced.

My meeting them, the casual contingency of it, would justify the radical site specificity of the situation, while preventing me from projecting too much of my own expectations on the improvised vocal soundscape I was to actually relate to in the streets of Tartu, during my short stay. Keeping my own expectations (my own "longing") in check, having to relate to the sonic content of the encounter, and then connect the multiple contents into a single train of song, represented for me an acute experience of the kind of vocal presence I was to write about in this very inquiry.

The other source of material to compose *Sing-a-longing* came from interacting with a small local choir of around fifteen people, meeting once a week in the piano room of the Mooste high school. My first contact with the choir revealed to me how very little it actually looked like one. Out of the fifteen people, except for

two men in their 70s, most were middle aged women, and the hardness of the long working day was patent in their tired faces, in their crumped posture (their were sitting not standing), and in the vacant look in their expressions.

The choir conductor, a bald man in his fifties with the body of an ex-ballet dancer, and the energy and vocal projection of a whole stomping Bolshoi, was larger-than-life in that small rural area context, and was projecting a level of energy that completely overpowered the weak voice, timid singers. In was more surprised than disappointed in the beginning, surprised at the faultiness of my own projection, surprised that people kept talking amongst themselves in between singing parts, most of them doing something else in parallel like knitting or play crosswords, as if sitting in a hospital's waiting room. The contrast with the singing titan that was the conductor, pounding the piano and berating the singers for this or that fault was overwhelming.

Soon I understood however, the length of my own projection. After the first hour, knitting needles were left forgotten on laps, crosswords put aside, and the voices became stronger, more agile and more present. All the energy being put out by the conductor finally contaminated the choir and their very facial expressions became every now and then almost beatifically intense, the tiredness finally receding, and the acoustic space becoming full of the communal vocal resonance finally in a melodious dialogue of voices with and within voices.

All the time I was recording this transition, the sounds from the gymnasium's main hall next door never stopped spilling into the piano room: the bumping and grinding of rubber tennis shoes against the floor, that came from, I was later told, a strenuous and competitive series of badminton matches being played by teenagers.

The shifting intensities, the complexity of the acoustic spaces intermingling with each other, and the play of voices, both manifesting presence and carrying presence through space and into permeable spaces and bodies that are internal spaces themselves – all of this saturated my own active listening, and opened up both my awareness of where I was and of the possibilities of transporting all that complex resonance into another spaces. I was caught by a whirling transitional kind of embodied thinking, being moved into creating something moving, creating new

situated expectations from the previously unsituated ones, taking one step closer to where I already found myself at.

When *Sing-a-longing*, the resulting sound piece, was performed later in Tallin at the Kanuti Gildi Saal theatre, the audience was asked to lie down in a circle, heads almost touching heads, a kind of centripetal listening, and feet pointing outwards. This horizontal body positioning, allowing the floor to fully bear the relaxed weight of the lengthened bodies, was meant to allow the listening imagination to wander, while at the same time, the close presence of the others' ears and breath meant to be a subtle reminder of the convergence of the individual presences, at that very moment in that very place in time, sharing an experience, sharing a immersive plunge in the sound field.

Unlike the two previously described sound pieces, *Some body in the landscape (and there were other bodies)*, the last part of the triptych, was not performed live in Tallinn. After having returned to Stockholm, I almost immediately left for Lisbon for a stay of a month and a half. Having been invited a few weeks earlier to participate in the fifth issue of the online trans-disciplinary art magazine ESC:ALA, *Some body in the landscape (and there were other bodies)* germinated from browsing material from field recordings taken in Mooste and Tallinn that had not been previously used.

These were recordings I had made while exploring alone the immediate surroundings of our temporary home at MoKS. Some were vocal and percussive improvisation exercises made inside of a highly reverberant abandoned concrete storage silo, others came from forest sounds collected after sundown. There was also a recording made of a conversation had with a friend in an evening in Tallinn, in which she recounted the strong impression a vicarious near-death experience had just impacted upon her.

While travelling from Barcelona to Düsseldorf on the 24th March, she had sat in the waiting area reserved for the passengers of Germanwings Flight 9525 and engaged a few of them in casual conversation. This was the same flight that 30 minutes later would crash in the French Alps killing all those aboard, after a rapid descent apparently voluntarily caused by its suicidal co-pilot.

Out of the three sound performances, *Some body in the landscape (and there were other bodies)* is both the most conventional in being a pure sound composition, but also the most authored and conceptual in its nature, being a sonic meditation on wandering, on collaboration, and on the unexpected intimacy that results from the kind of sharing that happens in the artistic research environment.

In it occurs a transition between the serenity of sounds arising in the poetic indifference of nature and their contrast to the human condition, occupied with self-doubt and issues of mortality, but also with the need to embed its sonic individuality in the surrounding soundscape – the need to be heard, the need not to be forgotten, and the willingness to accept the vulnerability that comes with the expression of this very need.

There quite a few distinct manifestations of voice in all of these three sound performances, some of them conceptually in line with the inquiry we have written so far, others quite problematizing it in directions we have not even ventured into. These three pieces stand as artistic experiments which aim both at broadening the very notion of what a meaningful critical questioning can be, and the kind of commitment and embodied participation that is required of an artistic researcher, where thinking by doing and doing through thinking come together, and true radical experimentation finds its superlative connotation.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

1. Narrative of the inquiry

Few weather phenomena activate sonorously the landscape as subtly and intensely as rainfall. The one I am experiencing right now, at the time of writing these words, is taking place in a dense forest area.

Pouring rain produces sound contrastingly by both covering a wide area and by being composed of countless pinprick-like percussive micro-events, which are also known as raindrops. Each raindrop, if falling on leaves, acts a lot like a finger strumming a chord, vibrating the leaf that is brought back to its original position by the flexible yet firm fibrous material it is made of; if falling on stone, or falling on dirt and mud, each drop is a tiny fist, a hammer or the felt head of a mallet, punching a drier soft thud. The waterfall or wavelike fullness of sound the gathered mass of all these tiny percussions created in any given day of cloudy sky can be overwhelming in its complexity, if listened to attentively, or completely bypassed by the lack of attention usually devoted to the banality of background sounds.

Rainfall also reminds one of the gardener's work, distributing water for the life of the crop. In the present inquiry, rainfall has sometimes been the predominant weather companion, but more often than that it has been a recurring metaphor for the kind of work here presented.

The interdisciplinary broadness of the theme was probed by a succession of incursions, whose goal was to try to map out some of the most relevant complexity of the theme by bringing out the dialogical tensions of its multiple facets. A broad approach composed of a constellation of small movements, some more conceptual than others, some more explicitly philosophical in their method, others belonging to a less traditional hybrid mode of question.

Although this inquiry is not framed as an historical study, Part I was indeed devoted to the gathering of remarks on sound and voice gathered from sources

esteemed to belong to the earliest practitioners of Philosophy. Through the mapping out of concrete references to sound and voice, these appear definitely as the specific manifest territory of thought made public, brought into a situation of dialogue and intersubjectivity, and likely also as the silent yet loquacious resonance of inner thought as experienced by private self.

In these early philosophical excursions into meaning, inner and outer voices communicate through discourse yet the sonorous quality of voice itself seems to pass unnoticed, or unreflected. However, there is opportunity for investigation in what is found lacking as much, or even more, than in what is explicitly stated.

It is this sense of opportunity and renewed curiosity that crossed over into Part II of the present research. In it, we took a long and occasionally jarring detour from a strictly philosophical territory, while aiming the effort of conceptualization into a charting of the specific sensorial experience of sound and its phenomenological implications.

In Part II we explored acoustic spatiality and the situation of being deposed in the world of sound, synchronicity and the temporality intrinsic to sonic experience, the dynamic between individuated sounds and the immersive acoustic background as experienced from a proprioceptive perspective, sounds as events, the resonating tangibility of sounds as effects, the parallel between the description of the human phonation and listening apparatus and the conceptual description of the very experience of listening and sounding out, among others.

In Part III we finally turned to the phenomenological specificity of the current inquiry, investigating presence, in-betweenness, the complex play between mutuality and individuation, and the voice as an intensifier of transgressive permeability and manifestation of intentionality and agency.

Part III concluded with a focus on the interdisciplinary context of the present exploration, exemplifying how a broad method, including not written reflection, but also situated artistic experimentation, can expand and nurture a radically experimental understanding of the meaning of philosophical practice.

This interdisciplinary context was underlined via the presentation of a series of performative sound experiments, dealing in practical, technical and embodied terms, with the complexity of the multiple uses of voice, their nuances and consequences, and their potential as instruments of revelation when it comes to engaging critically with the structures of being, awareness and corresponding living processes.

2. Scope of practice

Although the present is a theoretical inquiry, offered here in a written form and as such not deviating too much from the conventional format of what an academic research thesis is usually expected to be, it has been developed in parallel with an intense interdisciplinary practice.

This interdisciplinary practice does not merely mean that the research happened in a crossover territory between disciplines such as Philosophy, Sound Studies, and Artistic Research, and in a collaboration expanding three distinct institutions, namely the Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities of the Universidade Nova de Lisboa (PT), the Center for Subjectivity Research of the University of Copenhagen (DK), and the School of Culture and Education of Södertörns University (SE).

It means above all that there was collaboration, there was dialogue, there was a shared critical engagement with a nomadic community of peers and practitioners, themselves representing a broad and varied field of interdisciplinarity, with whom discussion ensued, with whom walks and travels were undertaken together, and with whom artistic experiments were made. To this aspect of research attest the examples of critical artistic production previously described in Part III, Chapter 4.

This engagement with a community of peers, within and beyond academic context, was also willingly and productively embraced in its more potentially antagonistic critical stances. The work leading up to the current text was presented

in its varied nuances and at different stages of research, in the international conference circuit, more than thirty times in fifteen different countries. It lead up to six publications including one book chapter and an on-going editorial role in an anthology on artistic research in the Nordic and Baltic context. It benefited greatly from the continuous and renewed critical response to the repeated exposition of its main guidelines to varied audiences, from strict academic peers to interdisciplinary practitioners, across different cultures, languages, and philosophical traditions.

This radical experimental process, where philosophical work is understood as being both something that materializes in embodied practice, in a critical investment in a community and in the solitude of one's written reflections, and where research happens between academia and society, in a celebration of permeability and the complexity of multiple contexts, underlines every chapter of this text as an implicit manifestation of living processes binding work and authorship.

3. Furthering of knowledge

In philosophy, and maybe ideally in ever other discipline, furthering of knowledge is bound to the intent of asking better questions. Not only better questions than have been asked before – whenever "before" might refer to – but more incisive and relevant questions than the ones that can be asked by other disciplines bound by their distinct implicit constraints.

Asking better questions is a requisite condition towards providing better answers. When a better question and a better answer come together, quality of life, in its full and broadest human sense, improves. That the conditions to bring out the better questions and the better answers are provided, and that they reach those which most can benefit from them is the essential role of academia.

There is necessary arrogance in any attempt to further knowledge, therefore there must also be equally necessary humility. The present inquiry is definitely set in an unsteady balance between these two research attitudes.

To the initial question – can voice be inquired into as a philosophical problem? – the most compelling argument we have found in this inquiry is the combination of the pervasive presence of acoustic phenomena and vocal manifestations in so many areas of philosophical interest, and the irregularity of its being taken up as a valid theme in itself.

From Sound Studies to Gender Studies, from Anthropology and Sociology to Critical Theory and Political Science, voice as been discussed recently with enthusiasm, most often than not in metaphorical terms, standing in for something else, for representation, or individuality, for ethnical or cultural specificity, but also for itself as an acoustic phenomenon relating to Media Culture, Material Culture, etc.

Comparatively, the relative indifference and absence of engaging critical attention bestowed upon it by Philosophy in its contemporary branch of Philosophy of Mind is maybe the only exception, but it has approached voice, tendentiously, from the problematic and scientifically hyper-annotated territory of mapping the brain as the singular organ of the synthesis of perception.

We have tried not only to show how much sound, and concretely voice, can be profitable themes in and through which philosophical discourse might thrive, but also how much already well established areas of inquiry such as intersubjectivity, individuation, self and other relational dynamics, proprioception, spatial awareness and embodied situatedness, can benefit from the agility of the innovative conceptual approaches which an inquiry into the multiple roles of voice can bring.

Subtle enough to be included in the most ineffable and near unutterable ethical-aesthetical conundrums, yet tangible enough to provide ample breadth of embodied examples and practically engaged strategies, voice in the context of the explorations of artistic research, opens up avenues of investigation of great philosophical potential.

Above all, this is manifest when it comes to how voice embodies both the individuated presence of the body-self in the communal sound-field of shared acoustic space, as well as its border piercing, highly permeable, transgressive

potential of self in relation to non-self, in an broad understanding of presence that includes both transcending openness and inclusive mutuality.

A mapping out, an approximation to multiple possibilities, a broadening of an unconventional field of inquiry – these are the ways in which the present inquiry aims at the furthering of knowledge about and through a critical care for the voice, in a philosophical context and beyond.

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