

13 Mapping the burden of vocality

French seventeenth-century vocal lamentations, Japanese meditation and somatic intra-action

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Prologue

*This chapter has been composed as a performative and in-the-moment narrative, based on a practice-led artistic investigation of a French seventeenth-century manuscript of vocal lamentations titled *Leçons de Ténèbres* by Michel Lambert (Lambert, c. 1662–1663; Massip, 1999, 215–244), somatic experiences from Alexander Technique lessons (Alexander, 1985, 1997) and feminist new materialist and physics agential realist theories (Barad, 2007, 2010, 2012, 2014; Arlander, 2014). Accordingly, this chapter is an intricate performance and a complex sample of thinking through praxis. The chapter also indicates how a diffractive methodology (Barad, 2007, 2014) can be used for articulating artistic and somatic praxis in an academic context. Rather than describing what has already occurred in the near or far past or reflecting comparatively on the practical aspects with already existing theories (as in practice-based research), words have been carefully selected and performatively shaped in order to meet the reader in the current moment. This allows for the writer and reader to engage, entangle and reason with both heads and hearts. The chapter is a bold attempt to dissolve all thresholds between any agents, including writer and readers. The theoretical terminology is exposed in more detail in endnotes and the text has consciously been framed and figured as an essayistic poetics rather than a regulated description of a practical process eagerly trying to fit into a theoretical standardized format. The notion of somatic as reconfigured in this chapter involves a materialization of thoughts, vocality, movements, physical practice and theory – creating a sensation of a psycho-physical whole: thoughts emerge as a matter of fact, as a burden or a weight, causing an inseparable reaction of body and mind. In other words, a thought becomes a physical matter impossible to separate from a vocal movement. Thought and vocal movement appear psycho-physically united as one.*

Argomento

Let me tell you, dear reader, something very important. This chapter is not meant to explain anything. It will describe a series of events, yes it will. But most of all, this chapter is a performance based on somatic

experiences. It is important to tell you this at the very beginning, since most probably you will find yourself both confused and wondering. You might think that explanations would have helped to clear out questions or theoretical concepts. Well, it is in fact the state of wonder I am trying to create in myself while writing and in you while reading. Through the words you are reading right now, we are entangled and actively part of a common dynamic landscape: our ways of breathing while writing and reading; the ways we move in and out of our habits and thoughts.¹ I am trying to make words come alive, breathe, move and grow. Like living bodies. Through words, I try to create meaning as somatic experiences. Allowing words to touch and perform, simply by appearing as words. The writing act can be compared to an act of performing vocal sound. When vocal sound appears, the result emerges as a somatic whole. It appears as a materialized burden produced by a voice practitioner.² What I try to accomplish with this chapter is to build a bridge between the somatic experiences of voicing and writing. Trusting that you as a reader can engage with these words as you do with a sounding voice. Allow yourself to be touched (and inspired). To let go of old habits (and critical ways of judging). To stop. And to let new directions move through your somatic self. Allowing you neck to be free, your head to move forward and up, to let your back be long and wide, to let ...

A seventeenth-century French vocal lamentation: a point of departure

I open the music manuscript (Figure 13.1) and scribbled signs appear on the page in front of me. Codes to be translated, reconfigured, decoded, analyzed, interpreted, described, explained and performed. Hierarchies are immediately constructed from this simple act of looking into the manuscript. We can decide that this is completely the way it should be, the way many of us are taught to live and learn about most things in life. In terms of two. In terms of oppositional dichotomies. In terms of separation. Categorically, there are many of us – particularly in Western societies – who at this moment are reasoning critically based on dualistic preconception. We have been accustomed within certain cultures to accept both separation and categorization. Body *and* mind. Me *and* you. Him *and* her. Us *and* them. Separated from one another. But, as an experiment, let us take a new look at the manuscript. Let us cut-every-act-apart-and-glue-it-together-in-the-same-breath. Cutting together-apart.³ Let us start from the beginning.

I open the music manuscript and scribbled signs appear on the page in front of me. I touch the ink with my fingers. As if to make sure the black color has dried into the paper. I see codes that someone has drawn by hand, by body, by mind, by memory. A living movement finding structures on a paper. There is not a single line equal to another. The edge of a tool touching a surface. Fingers touching a paper. It is something in this very moment that



Figure 13.1 Score. Seventeenth-century manuscript *Leçons de Ténèbres* by Michel Lambert.

brings us all together. We are entangled through the score and through these words that we are all performing together while reading. We are all part of the same map and of the same event. As for our method, we are intra-actively diffracting, since we all are agents and actors in the same play.⁴ Our eyes are not the same, but all eyes are part of the same apparatus.⁵ The same can be said about our bodies and minds. We see, we sense, we reason and we unreason here and now. We are diffractively engaged through a seventeenth-century music score, shaped by a hand that was occupied with many different actions in a very different time than the time we live today. We are part of a historical time, where the past is inseparable from our present and our future.

What has been understood by the hand that placed the ink and the codes in the score does not only have to do with creating a musical score that should explain the ultimate reason for how to sing or play. The hand has lived a life as part of a living-sounding-speaking-moving-writing body. A body/mind has taught a hand to translate memories of living,⁶ to silently sing the somatic awareness of a living being into codes and traces for others to take over; for voices to encounter across spacetimes and presumed

boundaries. Somatically and diffractively, we all learn to decode the process of living, precisely because we are living and breathing. A hand becomes part of a voice reading/hearing/sensing a text. Because a voice, no matter if silent or sounding, cannot be separated from the living body/mind. Voicing then becomes the intra-acting tool of body/mind for translating the experience of sound. A tool for articulating and structuring the movement of thinking/breathing/acting.

Voicing: an act of transitioning from one place to another as part of the same apparatus

The sound that emerged from her throat was her issue, her task and her cause for action. The materialized yet silent waves passing through her body/mind as thoughts had to be transformed and translated into codes that could be read and understood. That could be listened to. That could be observed as knowledge structured and disseminated to the field for whomever would find the topic of interest. These codes of music on the seventeenth-century surface were not meant to be understood in the same way for everyone. They were meant to be understood and reconfigured individually, somatically, imaginably, speculatively over and over again.⁷

Her feet moved across the large wooden theatre floor. She had been told that her walk should not interfere with the upper part of her body. Only her feet should move. The rest of her body should float above. She searched to focus her eyes somewhere at the back of the stage. Somewhere in between the branches of the large tree painted on the wall at the back of the theatre space. *Suriashi*. This was the specific name of the very slow walk across the Noh stage. The whole foot caressing the floor until the toes at a certain point would leave the ground leading the rest of the foot into a very small step forward. An experiential fragment written by dancer and choreographer Skånberg-Dahlstedt emerged:

I walk with my teacher, Nishikawa Senrei. Students call her Senrei sensei. The lesson had thus begun, manifested in and with *suriashi*. *Suriashi* coordinates our bodies and holds us together. The silence in the dance studio is emphasized through our serene walk. Under my skin however, it is all but quiet. There is an arch in my upper body, a vigorous muscular activation between, and at the back of, my shoulders, but this is not something easily noticed by the naked eye. A physical impetus disseminates my spine whilst I tilt my pelvis backwards and push my chest forwards and upwards. A considerable amount of energy is generated by the intense muscular activity. The posture, the *kamae* in Japanese, is all about action. Senrei sensei and I walk at the same pace, we turn at the same time. Our white tabis brush the floor, creating a smooth rhythm. Our bodies tremble inaudibly and imperceptibly on the inside from the physical challenge of keeping our rigorous posture.

(Skånberg-Dahlstedt, 2017, 29)

Brushing the floor. The memory of the almost imperceptible touch while slowly sliding forward was now somehow translated into the reading of the music manuscript. The rigorous control of moving between musical notes had to be almost inaudible. The slides indicated in the vocal score had not been of such a great importance until the very moment she understood the movement of her body sliding through the brushing steps of *suriashi*. The *portamento* (the common seventeenth-century ornament allowing for a vocal sliding from one note to another) suddenly informed her how to pass from one place to the other.

Portamento, cariage, portage, bearing, bringing. Also sufferance. Also the cariage, behaviour or demeanour of a man. Also any fashion or habite of the body. Also any fashion or manner of garment or any this else.

(Florio, 1611)

Her eyes were fixed on the painted tree on the wall, as her feet moved her body across the stage. She moved, with the speed and manner of a snail, into the branches of the tree in front of her. She remembered what she had been told earlier in a lecture about the Noh play. That the tree could be found at the back of all Noh theatres. It was painted as a reflection of a tree that had been planted outside the theatre building. This reflection now called for a reflective extension performed by her own body/mind. Curiously she, herself, became the invisible tree in the garden. She turned to her every-day-mantra, "to let the head go forward and up, to let the neck be free, to let the back be long and wide, to let...". These words came naturally to her body/mind after studying Alexander Technique for almost thirty years. They were part of her somatic system, very much in the same way as her legs and arms were physical extensions of her body. Without moving her upper body, she slowly allowed her arms to stretch into the clear air. Her arms had transformed into moving branches. Branches that made her forget about fixing herself and her breath throughout her action.

As a tree with branches stretching out into the sky, she moved between the notes in the manuscript. She could feel the air supporting her on all sides. Her voice had received the space required for making the path from one place to another. Transitioning between musical notes and experienced realities. Voice carried the air and the life of the tree she had consciously become. A tree firmly rooted in the ground but with branches sensitive to the force of the wind that moved and touched every surface exposed to any external encounter. Her movements were enacting the force of the wind. Slowly, not as a storm. She had become the wind itself. The somatic experience of moving between notes in the musical manuscript had become synonymous with the movement of the wind transitioning between the branches of the tree in the Noh theatre. The somatic experience of becoming a tree became the actual singing of the score (Figure 13.2).



Figure 13.2 Breathing. © Elisabeth Belgrano.

Alexander Technique and the art of touching

The mantra taught to her throughout her many Alexander Technique lessons had become part of her everyday life. Every word in the mantra had become a touching act in itself. This mantra had been incorporated into all possible movements she carried out, in any situation. Into every meeting with any subject/object. The mantra had been a conscious act at the beginning, but over time it had unconsciously become a habit or rather a re-turning to a familiar space where she was allowing herself *to let go*. The space she had become accustomed to enter was not really a physical space. She used to call it her own specific somatic *spacetime* which she tried to explain as a moment of total sensuous awareness – both inward and outward. This awareness occurred to the recitation of the same words: *to let... to let... to allow... to let...* The simultaneous chanting of directions in the end had been reduced to thought provocations. Touches. Somehow these words triggered a realization in her somatic system to occur. Articulations for doing. The event in itself was continuous. Sometimes, she would ask herself how this somatic practice had turned into such groundbreaking stimulation. The continuous practice had allowed a psycho-physical growing initiated by a single touch in the form of a word, a hand or a sound.

When two hands touch, how close are they? What is the measure of closeness? Which disciplinary knowledge formations, political parties, religious and cultural traditions, infectious disease authorities,

immigration officials, and policy makers do not have stake in, if not a measured answer to, this question? When touch is at issue, nearly everyone's hair stands on end. I can barely touch on even a few aspects of touch here, at most offering the barest suggestion of what it might mean to approach, to dare to come in contact with, this infinite finitude. Many voices speak here in the interstices, a cacophony of always already reiteratively intra-acting stories. These are entangled tales. Each is diffractively threaded through and enfolded in the other. Is that not in the nature of touching? Is touching not by its very nature always already an involution, invitation, invisitation, wanted or unwanted, of the stranger within?

(Barad, 2015, 1)

Touch was the key. The touch in her Alexander lesson, when her teacher had placed her hands at the front and back of her head, on the lower back, on her chest. Their spoken dialogue during the lessons had traveled into many different directions, often seemingly irrelevant to what was going on inside her body or in relation to her skin. It was the touch of the hands of her teacher (often unconsciously sensed in relation to the spoken words) she would always remember. A gentle touch. A touch reminding her that her body was so much more than simply just a body. And, when touched, she suddenly recalled a whole new field growing out of her being – simply due to a single touch. She sensed it as a field of aliveness. The measure of closeness was the actual vibration of warmth and care that gave life to new directions. The somatic experience materialized in every cell of her skin. It caused her to react emotionally and actively. Aroused by memories, sometimes touch made her weak and tearful. Sometimes, sensations caused her to see a light moving above her head or right in front of her eyes. As if someone kept telling “don't stop listening. If you care long enough, you will see. Make sure that you don't forget to breathe”. While voices echoed inside her, the ongoing dialogue with her teacher kept moving on. It was as if voices gave hidden directions from behind the stage while she herself was busy acting out her role as an attentive student.

She turned her eyes back to the musical score. What her eyes did in that very moment was not so different from what the hands of her teacher did in the Alexander lesson when they moved on her body. Her eyes adapted the same force. They touched the page in an immediate glance. They carefully moved across lines, notes, words and indications of various vocal ornaments. Her eyes did not try to solve anything specific on the musical page. The page did not explain anything to her, but she knew she was part of a silent performance. Where was she meant to go? What and who would she encounter inside her musical adventure? What was hiding in the shadows behind the articulations – both musically and literary? She found specific points of interest she could not just leave. In her diffracted reading of the score, every detail intra-acted with her somatic self: the score with her eyes;

the indicated ornaments with her neck; the memories of the lyrical context (words, story, content – both vocal and narrative). Her somatic sensation of walking through the melody intra-acted with the sensation of her own experience of an expanding vocal somatic instrument. This whole experience was complex indeed and had to be investigated in all its complexity. Her desire for voicing and re-voicing over and over again made her stay and move further into the musical symbols. Each sound complemented the next one. She had to stop, touch and sense specific fragments. She had to explore the context that was not given. There was always something more and something else to learn and to live through. The score gave her impulses. The score opened up a window for her curiosity to continue moving.

Her sincere sensitivity to the act of touching was a necessary measurement for her practice as a singer and a researching artist. She used to look at herself and others. Being touched by minimal details in any situation triggered her to build structures and draw lines, throwing out invisible garlands to attract new attention. She would move around observing. Her garlands structured themselves into words and narrations. Into ornaments. Words entangling into sentences and eventually into short stories. She had become a critical monster. One who always kept looking under the table for the unexpected to be found. As Alexander points out, she had become one of them who had found out

that the process gives them the opportunity for testing continuously the validity of their sensory observations and impressions of what is taking place, because all the time that they are consciously projecting the directions for the new and improved use they are obliged to go on being aware whether or not they are reverting to the old instinctive misdirection of their use which, associated with the sensory untrustworthiness, had led them originally to be deceived in what they were doing with themselves.

(1985, 108, original emphasis)

Translated into her own words, she knew that every single one of her acts was never separated from her own processes of judging. Her process involved a continuous moving, removing, configuring, reconfiguring and translating. Every act included a row of continuous encounters or events that created a paradigmatic impact on all following acts. It was, as Erin Manning suggests, “an attunement to the differential of the minor gestures” (in Zegher et al, 2017, 367). Naturally, this kind of attunement followed her everywhere in her work as well as in her everyday life. Applied to her vocal studies, the sensitivity into the score made her realize that the manuscript in itself was only a fraction of what the whole musical experience could become. And what she saw when reading the score was a million and more stories enfolded into her own. Stories that she had to figure out in relation to her readings. In relation to the *spacetime* she inhabited. In relation to the

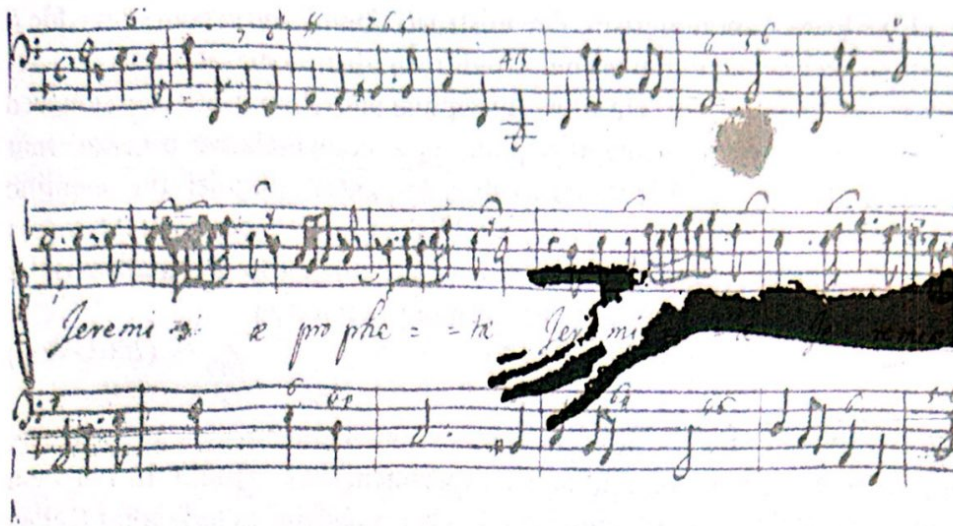


Figure 13.3 To let. © Elisabeth Belgrano.

roads she decided to walk. In relation to her companions. In relation to the community she belonged to. But also in relation to feelings, to silence, to longing and to vocal sounds that grew and dynamically evolved from inside her. She knew that her voice, so real and determined to her in all its aspects, was like an eternal yet limited story in a limitless *spacetime* (Figure 13.3).

Meditating as meaning-making

She followed the handwritten vocal melody on the music sheet. Connecting and translating. Never comparing. Only moving, relating, learning and growing based on a combination of previous experiences and a strong energy of desire. Melodic patterns became clear the more she intra-actively engaged in her practice. She started to understand the logic of disguising “irrationality” (Massip, 1999, 228).⁸ Music was structured in such a way that nothing made sense at first, but slowly the score and the sound taught her about the process of meaning-making. The art of impatient learning for the sake of doing and becoming whole. Becoming alive in its stillness. She feared that her voice would make a boring impression, but what did that boringness and dullness mean? She had a feeling it had to do with a Western fear of missing out on the blissful and sparkling event a happening could be and become. Or what did a happening-encounter mean? She turned to the happening master Allan Kaprow for an answer. Jeff Kelley writes in the acknowledgments of Kaprow’s book *Essays on the blurring of art and life*:

If Dewey’s influence upon Kaprow can be reduced to a single phrase, it would be that ‘doing is knowing’. What Kaprow hopes to know is the meaning of everyday life. To know that meaning, he must enact it every day. This is where pragmatism becomes a practice. [...]

A methodological verification of existence takes sustenance from Zen. Like Dewey's pragmatism, Zen mistrusts dogma and encourages education, seeks enlightenment but avoids formalistic logic, accepts the body as well as mind, and embraces discipline but relinquishes ego-centered control. In establishing discipline as a contemplative practice that opens the practitioner to knowledge, Zen loosely parallels the scientific method, in which controls are established in an experimental process that opens the researcher to phenomena. For Kaprow pragmatism is the mechanics of Zen, and Zen the spirit of pragmatism.

(2003, xxiv)

Kaprow found in the music of John Cage "the merger of Zen and science, of passive contemplation and active experimentation" (Ibid.). In her own study, seventeenth-century music allowed her practising exactly what Kelley describes. She experienced her own vocal existence while meditating herself through the musical score, while being engaged in a lively dialogue about the meaning of every sound, slide and movement. Her praxical exploration was a meditation on and study of being human.

She had made an appointment with a doctoral student at the University of Kyoto. He was studying Japanese philosophy as well as practising *zazen* – Zen Buddhist sitting meditation – in a temple in Kyoto. She would for the first time experience this form of meditation. A little anguished, she felt she was embarking on something very important but also something extremely new to her. She felt as if she was in no man's land. An in-between feeling. She set off in the morning allowing herself plenty of time to arrive. The temple was situated behind a large wall with a wooden gate. There was no possibility of getting a glimpse of the place from outside. While waiting outside the gate, questions kept coming to her: who was the person she would meet? Where would he take her? What would she experience? What kind of place was she about to enter? The wall kept all secretly away from her until the moment the gate opened and she was invited to step inside. She followed his steps along a path in the midst of a carefully raked garden. She found a sense of peace. They walked onto a wooden terrace that seemed to surround the main temple building. He indicated that she should take off her shoes. By mistake, she started to put on a pair of slippers but soon enough she realized that she had committed her first error. That memory stayed with her for a long time after she had left the temple. The memory of committing an error.

They turned to the main temple hall and went inside. She felt the soft wood under her feet and was suddenly recalling the memory of moving in *suriashi* across the theatre floor at the Noh Theatre in Tokyo. The two experiences of moving occurred simultaneously. Intra-actively entangled into one another. This sensation of being in an endless spacetime encounter blurred when she forced herself to focus on the fact that she was in a temple in Kyoto walking behind a person who was going to guide her into her first experience of *zazen*. There was a large Buddha seated in the middle of the

was
singing
for
naming

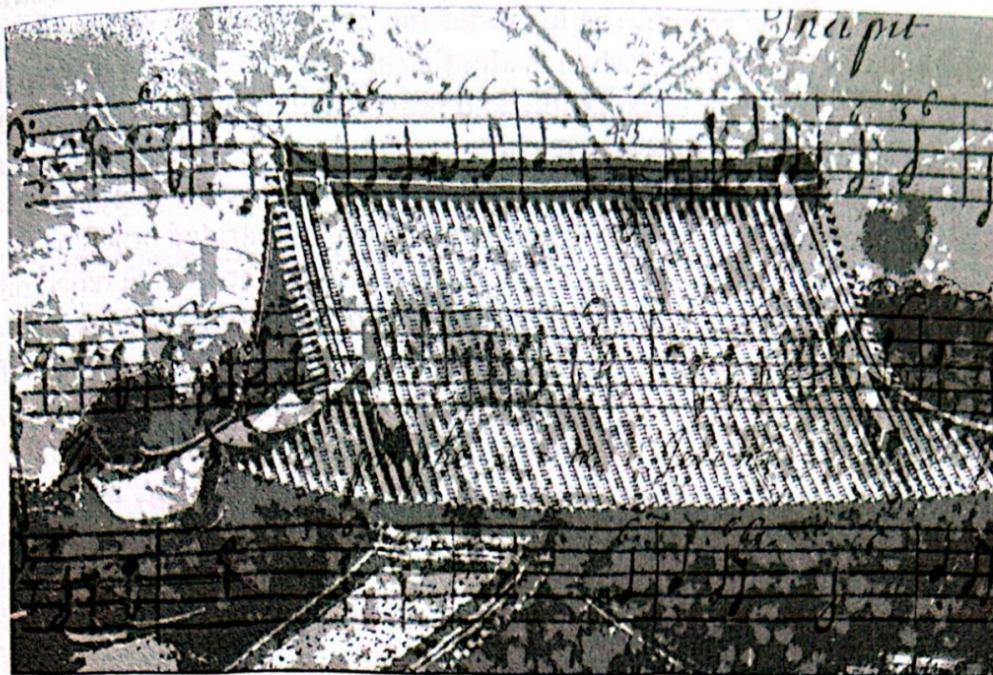


Figure 13.4 Meditation. © Elisabeth Belgrano.

room. Two places were prepared. One right in front of the statue, the other placed a little to the side and in a ninety degrees angle from the first place. The seats were arranged so that they could see each other.

The meditation session lasted all together thirty minutes divided in two separate parts. During the first part, they sat together counting their breath. In the second part, she sat on her own, meditating, while he was walking around the temple hall. The whole experience brought her into a silent engagement with stillness and motion. She later recalled the words of Thomas Hanna: "A soma is any individual embodiment of a process, which endures and adapts through time, and it remains a soma as long as it lives. The moment it dies it ceases to be a soma and becomes a body" (in Eddy, 2016, 5). Sitting in zazen became an active shaping of spacetime itself. Time had no great importance in her meditation. She knew that somehow her guide had full control over their time together and that she, through her breathing, kept a certain rhythm that indicated her spatial situatedness in time. Her somatic being inside time might have been her greatest sensation in the temple. Spatiality was acting through her whole being. Her silent voice sounded endlessly, bringing both a state of relief and a profound sensation of active wholeness. Meaning emerged as a sounding voice without voice (Figure 13.4).

Epilogue: mapping the somatic burden of vocality

After her meditation experience in the temple, she had found a translation of the word *sóma* in Florio's seventeenth-century Italian-French dictionary. Here, *sóma* was described as "any kind of load, burthen, fraught or charge

that any beast doth beare. Used also for man's bodie or mortall vaile" (Florrio, 1611). For some reason, the load and the burden related to the silent activity she had experienced while meditating in the temple. Soma belonged to the spatial encounter of breathing and hearing her silent voice vibrating through and around her. Soma was heavy and desired at the same time. It had aroused a sensation of living and hoping in her, even if it all happened in silence. No part of the experience had been separated or left aside. What had been materialized as part of the ontological experience relied on a psycho-physical unity. Burden became meaning-as-mattering or materializing-in-itself. The experience of soma had sedimented in her a sense of weight but in a mature and complementary way. The somatic burden was the sensation of a phenomenon produced by "the ontological inseparability/entanglement of intra-acting 'agencies'" (Barad in Arlander, 2014, 28). The somatic sensing of voice without voice and the lamenting meditation from the seventeenth-century score contributed as agencies producing load (*soma*) as intra-acting phenomena. Through the specific intra-action of these agencies, "the boundaries and the properties of the 'components' of phenomena become determinate and the particular material articulations in the world become meaningful" (Ibid.). The somatic burden made sense through its specific vocal materialization.

In her study of the vocal score, she realized that she had found yet another way of reading music. She had discovered that vocality was a somatic materialization of all intra-acting components emerging along the voicing research process. Her understanding of the load or burden of vocality was produced by readings and imaginative encounters, as part of her vocal acts, meditation and theories. The somatic burden she embodied through her voicing emerged as a fascinating sedimentation of vocal psycho-physical understandings. Somatic vocality could only become reality when all agencies intra-acted as one entangled unit. The agencies could never produce her understanding of somatic vocality as separated inter-acting "objects-in-themselves" (Ibid.). Instead, her understanding depended on the way she experienced everything around her and inside her as intra-actions rather than inter-acting components. She knew this was a significant key in her practice of voicing. Practice/theory could never be separated in order to produce her understandings. Nor could Eastern/Western meditative practices be separated in her meaning-making processes. Barad writes that

[a]gency is 'doing' or 'being' in its intra-activity. It is the enactment of iterative changes to particular practices – iterative reconfigurings of topological manifold of spacetime-matter relations – through the dynamics of intra-action. Agency is about changing possibilities of change entailed in reconfiguring material-discursive apparatuses of bodily production, including the boundary articulations and exclusions that are marked by those practices in the enactment of a causal structure.

(2007, 178)

The theory on intra-acting agencies helped her understand that her intra-active enactments, as a somatically-informed practitioner and a vocal performer engaged in critical research, produced her somatic vocality. Allowing agencies to somatically intra-act paved way for her voice to expand and for unexpected encounters to grow into a continuous meaning-making praxis.

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Notes

- 1 The term entanglement can primarily be related to physics. Physics and feminist scholar Karen Barad uses the term in her agential realism theory while referring to “the ontological inseparability” of phenomena (2007, 308); “the notion of entanglement needs to be understood in terms of the relational ontology of agential realism” (Barad, 2007, 388–389). She is talking about entangled practices as dynamic intra-actions where agents are *part of* a process of understanding certain phenomena, rather than being removed – positioned as distant spectators – from the object of study. To be entangled means to be dynamically involved and *part of* a meaning-making process. In this chapter, the words *I/we/us/our* indicate an ontological inseparability, meaning that we are not any longer seen as separated individuals through our practice of writing/reading, but rather dynamically entangled in the process of making sense of the words we encounter. We are *part of* each other’s practices of thinking, imagining or moving in our different ways of understanding and making sense of what we read, despite any physical or spatial distance. We are all part of an intra-active entanglement. For further discussion on the term intra-action vs. inter-action, see endnote 6.
- 2 I will return to the analogue between soma and the burden of vocality in the Epilogue of this chapter.
- 3 The term cutting together-apart is presented by Barad as follows: “[...] is about joins and disjoins – cutting together/apart – not separate consecutive activities, but a single event that is not one. *Intra-actions*, not interaction” (2010, 244, original emphasis). For the definitions of intra-action and inter-action, see endnote 4.
- 4 Barad explains intra-action and inter-action as follows:

The notion of intra-action (in contrast to the usual ‘interaction’, which presumes the prior existence of independent agencies or relata) represents a profound conceptual shift. It is through specific agential intra-actions that the boundaries and properties of the components of phenomena become determinate and that particular concepts [...] become meaningful.

(2007, 139)

Also see Arlander (2014). Another term that needs some clarification is diffracting or diffractive methodology: according to Barad, a diffractive methodology “is a critical practice of engagement, not a distance-learning practice of reflecting from afar. The agential realist approach [...] eschews representationalism and advances performative understanding [...] of knowledge-making practices” (2007, 90). Also, once more, see Arlander (2014).

- 5 "[A] pparatuses are not mere observing instruments but boundary-drawing practices - specific material (re)configurings of the world - which come to matter" (Barad, 2007, 140, original emphasis). Her terminology has been developed from Michel Foucault's use of the same term (2007, 199–201).
- 6 Throughout the chapter, you will find the use of slashes between words. They have consciously been used following Barad's theory "to denote a dis/continuity – a cutting together-apart" (2015, 12, n.6).
- 7 On the term *reconfiguring*:

Scenes never rest but are reconfigured within and are dispersed across and threaded through one another [...] The reader should feel free to jump from any scene to another (is there any other way to proceed?) and still have a sense of connectivity through the traces of variously entangled thread [...].
 (Barad, 2010, 244–245)
- 8 The music has been described as being both "irrational" and at the same time very much to the point through distinct clarifications and highly specific details (Massip, 1999, 215–244).

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