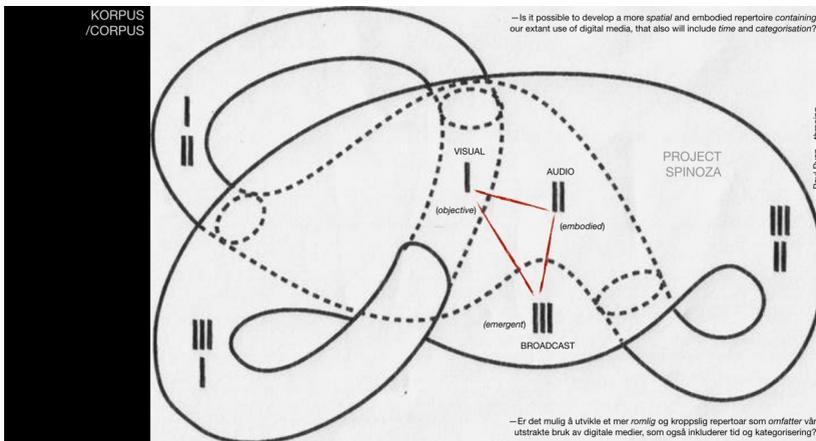


Is sound like *water* and what we see like *rock*? Sound is purer in the sense of the physical phenomenon, than what we can see which is a *composite* of light, pigment/materials and our own neurophysiology (Goethe). But what happens when we put them together, in space with people (agent/patient)?

In physics sound is conceived as travelling through something else: it travels *in* space—thereby visually contained—and *through* something (air, water or denser materials). Our conception of space is that it is silent, but silence is a state of sound. It is the equivalent of zero in math. It is not void.

If we take on this perspective sound is not contained in space, but defines it. We know that sound is ambient. But we also know that sound is a powerful locational device; it is readable. By listening to the sound of something happening we can determine where it comes from. Sound is embodied.



Sound affects space and mediates states of motion. It is not only our ears hearing but our entire body can be listening. Our bodies can hear sounds that are subsonic (Ikoniadou). Which means that we want to hatch spatial repertoires integrating digital use, we have to focus/work with sound.

Of course, this is a domain of experimentation more than anything else. But the way sound combines with existing digital equipment—for instance, Zoom conferencing—we also need a practical theoretical understanding, bordering unto ethics: to clarify some unethical aspects of the technology.

If silence is the equivalent of zero in space, the Italian philosopher Agamben claims that the object is the equivalent of zero in language. Where the object manifests itself, materially and expressively, it pierces and holes through language. It is not void. Where space *folds*, objects *traverse*.

In the realm of affect—which links, surrounds and contains objects and subjects—we cannot explain things in terms of subject/object relations. It is a realm governed by biological and sub-particular physics (Simondon): the realm of bodies, and embodiment. The Learning Theatre stages this.

Or, it attempts to. Whoever attempts to reduce vision to light, eschews the *stony* aspects of vision: form, structure and materials. That is, what has the potential of constituting the object as a body (as e.g. experimental volumes were called in physics and philosophy). How does sound square the object?

The ambient and locational aspects of sound home in on the object from two different sides: **1)** the ambient space that contains the object, **2)** the location and motion of the object in that space. These are somehow the *coordinates* of what we call a ‘body’: our own bodies, celestial bodies etc.

So, at the subsonic level of listening there is an *æcumene* of bodies. At least, it is a possibility we should/can consider. A world left to subject/object relations alone—ruling the ground exclusively—leaves a festering wound in the realm of affect. Which means that it is affective unworkable.

I consider this an aspect of the *ecological* crisis. A suicidal drift discarding the affect as what makes subject/object relations possible. The affect is the third element unheeded. Actually, this does not reflect a crisis in technology *per se*, but in the priorities of how we use and develop technologies.

For instance, in the programming of virtual reality the locational and ambient coordinates are currently designed in different plug-ins. Head-movements are programmed on par with locational cues, but at the same time need to be ambient for credibility. So, motion comes in as another active layer.

How to conceive three layers that link and contain one another? The lower picture (recto) features an attempt in this direction. Sound contains things seen. Motion contains things heard. Sound prompts embodiment in space. Motion parses categorisation in time. Objects pierce language. *Waterways*.