

LISTENING WITH - A SEQUENCE OF ATTUNEMENT EXERCISES



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C O M P L E T E S C R I P T

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WINDS:

We are a strong creature before the flood, without flesh, without bone, without vein, without blood, without head, without feet, in a field, in a forest, without hand, without foot, we are as wide as the surface of the earth. We were not born, nor are we seen.

We are since the earth knows its atmosphere. Some of you categorized us, gave us names. Cut what's impossible to separate. As we move, we change names. Some of you call us wind, which stems from the latin word ventus and the indo-european «ue», meaning blowing or waving. Some of you named us Aeolean, «of the wind» from Latin Æolus «god of the winds or from Sanskrit Vayu, translated literally into «the Changeable». We move between language, beyond place and time. We move through cuts. Many associated us with the movement of breathing – and through that with spiritually: «spirit, ghost». We were not born, nor are we seen.

*Sound organ pipe
& breathing*

EXERCISE:

Wind/Relationality

Begin by listening to your own breathing. Amplify the sound of your breath by placing the palms of your hands over your ears. Listen as the sound of your breath turns into the sounds of wind. A gentle wind, a howling wind or some other kind of wind. Make the wind sounds audible. Open your ears gradually as your wind sounds join the wind sounds of the people around you. Afterwards, listen for the wind.

**HISTORICAL
NARRATION:**

Millions of years ago. Below your feet. Glacial deposits. Palimpsests of stone. Erosion continues steadily, drones, deep and dull. Imperceptible movements. Reshaped moraine. Glacial deposits. Eroding movement. Sihl. Valley. Sihl. Bed. Altered by water. Winding itself around us.

WINDS:

Us winds, us winds. When you hear us, you call us eolian sound, which is the sound produced when we encounter an obstacle, or matter. We become perceptible upon encountering you. We are only one part of the countless layers that form your spacial perception. Through us, you become perceptible to yourself. We co-compose your attentiveness toward relation. Relation to place, or the vastness of space, or your own physical boundaries. We are ongoing change beside you in place.

*Sound organ pipe
& breathing*

EXERCISE:

Body/Earthing

Close your eyes. Focus on your breath. Stand on your feet or touch the ground with any part of your body in any way that feels most comfortable for you. Begin to notice your body and how it's feeling and start to tune into its sounds or sensations. From your head to your neck to your shoulders, slowly down your back to your stomach, along your legs, your thighs, your calves, your toes. Then, slowly try to lead your breath into the ground and listen.

**HISTORICAL
NARRATION:**

Below your feet. Eroded. Extracted. Transported: Sandstones. 17th century. Bollwerk zur Katz. The terrace you're standing on is built for the emplacement of cannons. To prevent sneak attacks. The Thirty-year War. Reformation. Envisioning a Protestant Rome. Mighty defense. Proclaiming the power of the Republic. Below your feet. Kasematten. Chásma. Crevices in the earth. Underground cavities. Defensive use remained absent. Later, reopened during World War 2. Converted into bomb-shelters. Protective use remained absent.

WINDS: *Us winds, us winds. We cause spatial differences in the speed of sound. We create vibrations in the air as we pass through and around the branches and leaves. Back and forth movements generate longitudinal pressure waves which travel to your ears as soft rustling or loud whooshing. We are feared opponents of your microphones. We can amplify or impinge on sound transmission, by causing noise, attenuation, or change in direction of the sonic path. Refraction. We are co-composing your surrounding. We carry the air you are breathing, converted into oxygen by the surrounding Lebanese Cedar, Chinese Dogwood, Japanese Camellia, Persian Ironwood, Osage Orange and Weeping Beech.*

HISTORICAL NARRATION: Which all carry given names. Collected, shipped, planted, categorized. Selective perception embedded in their denominations. And yet, you are held by them in each breath. Witnessed through times.

WINDS: *We were not born, nor are we seen. We are ongoing breath beside you in place.*

*Sound organ pipe
& breathing*

EXERCISE: *Immediate Surrounding/ Impact* Bring your listening-attention to sense the sounds and vibrations of your immediate surroundings. Try to include all the perceptible sounds and vibrations into that attention. (Birds, insects, air pressure, traffic, wind, feelings, people, energies, temperature) See if you can listen to the sounds without attributing any meaning to them. When you find yourself building a narrative, forming words or ideas, gently bring your attention back to just perceiving vibrations as coming and going. Stay with them for a while.

HISTORICAL NARRATION: Above us: 16th century Medieval herb garden. 1833: 50 medicinal plants. Re-planted in memory of a naturalist and protestant city doctor. Historicised as universal scholar and inventor of zoology. Observing. Drawing. Describing. Systematizing. Comparing. Naming. Verified through networks of exchange: Europe's Educational Elite. Networks through Letters. Mutual reassurance. Monkey, zebra, buffalo, giraffe, camel, squirrel, bear, shutterbug, newt, forest devil, sea monk, unicorn. Subjects of research: Often neither encountered, nor experienced.

WINDS: *We were whirling in the medieval herb garden above your heads long before it was a memory. We tickled the thorny Rosemary, stroked the velvety salvia, and carried its smoke through your darkened dormitories and barns, charged with hopes of healing.*

EXERCISE: *Breath/Certainty of knowing* Listen to your breath. May your breath release you from certainty of knowing.

HISTORICAL NARRATION: The naturalists' Herb Garden: Scientific plantings. Medicinal herbs. The knowledge of Kräuterfrauen, herb women. Collecting local wisdom. Studying flora. Das neue Pflanzenbild. Simultaneous illustrations of plants in all developmental stages. Analysing Nature. Systematising. Classifying. Distributing. Publishing. Compiling encyclopaedias. 1545 Bibliotheca universalis. 1551 Historia animalium. Pre-Enlightenment. Growing Scientific revolution. Protestant Switzerland involved in imperial scholarly networks of its time. Plague. Same period. The ongoing witch hunts. Just around the corner. Juridically backed murders committed by zwinglian Zurich. Witch Burnings.

On the Gravel bank of the Sihl next to the Sihlbrücke. Where the Rivers Sihl and Schanzengraben join. – And then the ashes spread out anew.

Sound organ pipe
& breathing

EXERCISE:
Ancestral
Listening/
Positionality

Come back to your breath and listen to your immediate surrounding. Meditate on the following question: What are ancestral patterns and habits of listening that you carry with you? These might be patterns and habits from your family, friends or chosen families; the societies, cultures you have been raised in and live in; the educational models you have experienced; the material environments you have shared. Go back as deep in time as you can to a time far before you were born.

**HISTORICAL
NARRATION:**

1815: Foundation of the «Schweizerische Naturforschende Gesellschaft». An Influential scientific society that founded museums, botanical gardens and later universities. Nodes of knowledge. Natural history museums, ethnographic collections and libraries filled up with natural specimens, ethnographic objects, letters and statistic data from overseas. Collected materials by Missionaries, Traders, Mercenaries, Scientists. Collecting Objects of investigation. Observing. Comparing. Recognizing. Evaluating. Measuring. Systematizing. Mediating. Die Erfindung der einheimischen Natur. Rural knowledge feeding sciences in European metropolises. Systematic collection of plants from overseas as old as European expansion. 1833: Botanical garden Zürich. Botanical gardens: Also sites of education for Missionaries, Traders, Mercenaries, Scientists. Botanical gardens: Also sites of Distribution for seeds used in the colonies. Entangled colonial Empires of Collecting.

WINDS:

We are moving molecules. We carry heat, we carry moisture. We carry voice, we carry sand, anemochorous we carry seeds and spores and fruit, we carry histories, we are simultaneity.

Sound organ pipe
& breathing

EXERCISE:
Transtemporal
Listening 1

Try to activate a sonic memory from your past that is emotionally significant to you. (A song, a touch, the voice of a person, the sounding of a landscape) Try to feel into that memory while listening to your breath and your immediate surrounding at the same time.

WINDS:

Us winds, us winds. We are the atmosphere trying to reach a pressure equilibrium. Horizontal movement driven by difference and circulation. Becoming alive when high pressure moves towards low pressure. A constant dance. High temperature low pressure, low temperature high pressure. Cold mingling with heat. Neither-nor but the relation of the many: Circulating simultaneously. Driven by difference. Caressing your hair here and rattling the glass-house on the other side of the slope. If pressure would be equalized, we would be gone. We might not always be strong, but we're always circulating beside you in time.

**HISTORICAL
NARRATION:**

1718: Early comparison of the Alps with the Tropics. Systematic measurements of air pressure and temperature. Conclusion: Zona alpina and zona tropica have both a strikingly low air pressure. Consequently, Nature overseas must be a prehistoric version of Swiss nature.

EXERCISE:
Breath/
Certainty of
knowing

Listen to your breath. May your breath release you from certainty of knowing.

WINDS:

We are softly rattling on and sneaking through the bamboo forest, where our gusts are diverted, diffracted by the conserving museal walls. Simultaneously, on the other side, we swirl along the mossy stone statues of the comparers echoing patriarchal narratives of anachronicity. Those, who have written and rewritten the stories of power and turned the deviant into myths. Stony remnants of those who denied coevality and who are meant to be remembered in a state of frozen future-progress.

But we erode, co- and decompose in a temporality imperceptible to you. Erosions and Deflations and Corrasions. Transtemporally. Imperceptible simultaneity: Like the bamboo, that flowers only every 12-120 years, but grasses who share the same origin, flower at the exact same time, no matter how far they grow apart from one another.

Sound organ pipe
& breathing

EXERCISE:
Transtemporal
Listening 2

Re-visit the sonic memory that is emotionally significant to you, that you sat with in the earlier exercise. Let it affect you in the present.

Now, include listening to what's around you in this moment. With both of those soundings in mind, travel back to that moment in the past. Feel the past and the present, at the same time. Feel the present into your memory.

**HISTORICAL
NARRATION:**

1834: First director of the botanical garden Zürich. 1865: Publishes «Die Urwelt der Schweiz», «The Prehistoric World of Switzerland». Widely recognized theory. The country's geological and botanical past. An asynchronous arrangement of objects from different time periods. Fossilized remains from the Alps and contemporary animal and plant findings from overseas. Led to the Thesis: Ancient Switzerland was once a tropical world. Inhabited by insects and plants in a hot and humid climate. As time progressed, the climate became more «temperate». Leading to the emergence of more highly developed creatures and plants. More temperate. Climate: Progress, Cultural evolution, Interfolding of Biology and Anthropology. Colonial interfolding of space and time. The inequality between those, whose history is reconstructed and those who serve as its fossils. Fabulating advanced European civilisation versus backward societies. An anachronistic space within a synchronous palimpsest including people, cultures, geographies, landscapes, flora and fauna. Moveable along different points on a historical axis of progress. The Implimentation of «tropes», like overseas then and the alps now, have remained static. Denial of simultaneity. Panoptic time.

WINDS:

Us winds, us winds. Whisking along the grass toward the pond, whirlwinding our soft gusty blows across the green shimmering waters, forming ripples on its sunheated surface. Swaying the Nelumbo lotus in our warm breath, wiggling its shield-shaped leaves providing shade to the newts resting below.

**HISTORICAL
NARRATION:**

Lotus effect: Complex micro-architectures on the surface of the plant minimize the adhesion of dirt particles, that run off and leave no traces. Strategic Neutrality. Switzerland. Post-colonial Amnesia. Keeping a surface that absolves itself of accountability. Violent enforcement of and utter involvement in the European enlightenment project. Selbstreinigungsfähigkeit. Stagnating breath. Strategic Neutrality. Embedded in sticky intergenerational hierarchies of knowledge and the ongoing denial of its multivocality.

- WINDS:** *Us winds, us winds. Across the pond, we're finding our ways through the cracks in the museal walls, moving through crevices in doors and windows, keyholes locked but passing unnoticed. Stirring up the stagnant air which holds the diasporic objects in place. We're blowing strongly across these walls, high up on Beaufort-scale. When we blow forcefully, waves start forming. Pressure forces change. Corrasion. We are always changing beside you in time.*
- HISTORICAL NARRATION:** 19th century. Geographical-Ethnographic Society laid stock. 1980. Völkerkundemuseum. Around the corner. 50'000 objects. Preserved and conserved. Objects temporally frozen in their vitality. As if inherent life and change is vacuumed in a state of discovery. Stagnated breath.
- WINDS:** *Us winds, us winds. This corpus of science. We hold. We decompose. We defy. Simultaneously. We co-compose its unseen. The informal, the oral, the presumably non-scientific, the rural, the in/audible. Whispering transtemporally.*
- Sound organ pipe & breathing*
- EXERCISE:** Breathe.
- HISTORICAL NARRATION:** Objects as depositories of flows and energetic fields. Vitality. Animated objects. Active forces. Bearers of Imaginaries. Material manifestations of forms of knowledge. Mediators between different orders of reality. Of correspondences. Of Metamorphoses. Passages within ecosystems characterized by fluidity and circularity. In a reticular universe, objects become the operators of a relational and plastic identity.
- Sound organ pipe & breathing*
- EXERCISE:** *Transtemporal Listening 3* Close your eyes. Listen to your own breath and the soundings of your immediate surrounding. (That can entail the liveliness of your environment, the person next to you, the warmth in your body, your own feeling-tone). Anchor that memory. Re-visit it internally later in the day.
- WINDS:** *We are intangible, Changeable. We travel beyond place and time. We are neither only here nor there. We are a strong creature before the flood, without flesh, without bone, without vein, without blood. We move through cuts. We stroke your soul and your skin, as though it were the same thing. Yet you forget us, and we forget you. Us winds, us winds had meant to be, our aim is song, we winds could see.*



Q U E S T I O N S :

How might your presence affect your immediate surroundings? How might your immediate surroundings affect you?

*How can we learn listening as processes of sensing, attuning and noticing?
Listening as sensing relation?*

How can we engage the imagination with/out the intellect?

How can we learn listening as attention towards how energy is transferred?

How can we imagine education with/out the European Enlightenment?

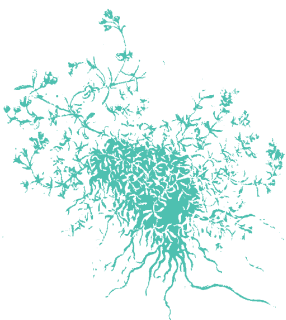
What are ancestral patterns and habits of listening that you carry with you?

What happens if I listen towards all that isn't calling or sounding in my attention?

In what ways could you be operating from an assumption of self-transparency (that you can see yourself objectively)?

How can we unfold existence with/out separability?

What might improvising with listening positionality feel like? What shapes may improvising with listening positionality take? And what might the limits with such improvisation be?



SMOKED HERBS FROM MEDIEVAL HERB GARDEN:

SPRUCE RESIN (PICEA):

Grounds and gives new courage.
Expels old and makes room for new.
Promotes concentration.

ROSEMARY (ROSMARINUS OFFICINALIS):

Clears the mind. Supports change and letting go of old burdens. Strengthens concentration, memory and self-confidence. Helps with problem-solving. Was used against the plague.

SAGE (SALVIA OFFICINALIS):

Promotes concentration. Invigorates. Refreshes. Helps with conflicts. Expels negative energies.

DANDELION (TARAXACUM):

Helps to bring hidden and unconscious knowledges to the forefront.

BEECH (FAGUS):

Promotes judgment and sense of justice. Leads you from ratio into body.

COMMON PEONY (PAEONIA OFFICINALIS):

Strengthens sensitivity and creativity. Helps with anxiety, depression, insomnia, melancholia.

LADY'S MANTLE (ALCHEMILLA):

Has purifying effects. Enhances intuition and sensitivity.

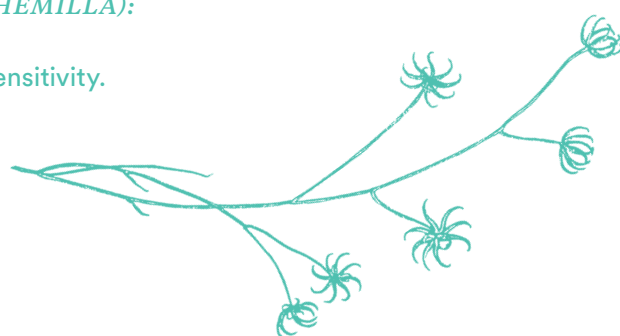
ST. JOHN'S WORT

(HYPERICUM PERFORATUM):

Brightens, calms and warms. Helps to relieve tensions and helps with depression. Clears spaces from electromagnetic pollution.

CORNFLOWER (CENTAUREA CYANUS):

Calms circling thoughts. Resolves deep-seated grievances. Sharpens the senses. Supports lucid dreaming.



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