Let's Talk About Unspeakable Things

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Introduction

Even though voice is a medium for collective practice, as Walter Ong argues in his book *Orality and Literacy*, it is situated in a context that tends towards social binary structures and oppositions that restrict its possibilities. These binaries have structured Western thinking since antiquity and favor the 'civilized white male' subjectivities. Nevertheless the nature of voice and its mediation overpass these oppositions of gender, nationality, culture, space, technology and power relations. My research seeks to unravel these political capabilities of voices, with the intention to explore democratic ways of communication that embraces excluded forms of address. It deals with a voice that transcends the dichotomies of male/female, public/private, expert/amateur, rational/ irational, ordered/wild.

This thesis is a series of three essays which relate to the female and collective voices, and their mediation. They address the voice as a feminist tool for communicating, creating the conditions for forms of listening, and inhabiting/making space. Historically, some modes of address have been marginalized and shut out of the public domain. The opposition between private and public space has played an important role in gender separation. The collective voices are marginalized under the realm of the patriarchal individualistic society. The female voices are part of it. The texts deal particularly with the voice as a medium for collective practices. I will investigate this in further detail in *The Monstrosity of Female Voices*. Technology expands the possibilities of those voices, for example by helping to their mediation and tranition/access to other places and audiences. Their engagement with media happens with an agonistic attitude, that resembles 'second orality'- a concept that Walter Ong has developed. Collective vocalization affords the amplification and multiplication either with the aid of technology or plural embodied practices that refuses dominant ways of establishing presence and dialogue. I will investigate this in further detail in *Multiplication vis a vis Amplification*. In our democracy there is a fear of 'ugly' modes of address which are connected to the female body- blood, birth, death, mourning- and other dark aspects and passions that are perceived as threatening to society. They allow a direct/unfiltered continuity between the 'inside' and 'outside'of the body and this seems irational. These forms of vocalization are excluded from a public discourse which since antiquity have centered on 'self-control' and 'reason'. Such things are seen to create noise and disorder and "have to be kept" silent according to the patriarchal norms. But alternative mediums and forms of communication have been developed against this. Here I will make a parallel between the technology of streaming and female continuity. I will talk about this in further detail in *Transmitting Ugly Things*.

In recent years my concern has been with the presence of the female voices in public.

During my previous studies I came to realize how my gendered body had been silenced or marginalized through slight gestures from male figures or institutional powers. By also observing women in their roles as members of my family, teachers, workers and immigrant neighbors of my youth, I discovered different types of marginalization and silencing. Examples would be women working at home, taking care of everything in the family and neglecting their own desires and interests, men interrupting them when articulating arguments in a political or formal dialogue and routinely underestimating their knowledge. Growing up, I also came accross with other forms of feminine/female expressions that get suppressed. The mediation of their voices and the way they became present, active participants and visible in public spaces and spheres became one of my principle interests. My past artistic projects reflected and responded to that concern while I worked with voice and sound which, as forms of art, are underestimated in the context of Western visual culture. As this text will outline, they are forms connected to irrational attitudes and oral cultures. Because of its temporariness, non-linearity, invisibility and border-less character sound can exist and travel within multiple dimensions of spaces simultaneously, creating bonds between them. Throughout history, oral cultures, by being based on vocal expression, differ from more recently established literate cultures in that they embrace the collective sharing of knowledge. More specifically they create "personality structures that in certain ways are more communal and externalized, and less introspective than those common among literates" (Ong, 2002, pg. 67). In recent times, feminists have included and embraced voice in their practices because there is a uniqueness in it, that embodies the speakers and their personal stories, while connecting the present listeners. Together with these concerns, about the exclusion of women's voices, I also experienced a gender-based differentiation between amateur and expert knowledge, particularly when approaching telecommunication networks and technologies, with the intention of learning to build and use them for my artistic practice. This division of labor goes together with the gender exclusion. I quickly found out that I was not alone in this regard. The volunteers of an activist collective, Prometheus, expressed similar concerns in the construction of a radio station:

> "The radio activists presented the work of soldering a transmitter, tuning an antenna, and producing a news program or governing a radio station to be accessible to all. Nevertheless, they were conscious of patterned gaps in their organization and volunteer base: men were more likely than women to know how to build electronics, to be excited by tinkering, and to have the know-how to teach neophytes.This troubled the activists"(Dunbar-Hester, pg. 53-54).

In one of my projects, *Sound Acts in Victoria Square* I 'inserted' the recorded sounds of women's voices into existing conversations at a public square in Athens that was male dominated. Most of the frequenters were immigrants and refugees from different periods of migration to Greece. They had come from Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq, Pakistan, Syria, Albania, Georgia, Russia and other countries. The gender bias and the way they used the public space differed according to their country of origin. However, it was common that many of the young women visiting the square were just passers-by with shopping bags or kids in tow. The men, on the other hand, were hunging out with their friends, occupying many spots of the square for hours. My intervention was like so; first, I realized and recorded conversations, over two months, with women I met in the square, as well as archiving and ordering the material I collected. Then I planned and realized the in-situ broadcasting of the collected

sound material and directed the new relations and conversations with the public for one day in June 2015. The intervention lasted for some hours and different people, mostly men, were participating in conversations that would include the women's voices or not. Their voices came from a past time of the same place, when they were physically present, as distant voices. At another time only their words were there and 'participated'. In my description of the project, I wrote: "The broadcasted female voicess were abruptly intervened with the existing conversations in the specific places, giving the impression of an non-invited 'absent' guest" (Diakrousi, 2015). The audio speaker and myself were mediating them in the then-current public space. My general approach involved the practice of listening- to women's concerns and voices, soundscapes of the square- and participation of the people 'inhabiting' Victoria square. In my thesis I will refer also to my current work regarding similar approaches and topics.

1. The Monstrosity of Female Voices

What modes: the annoying noise

Throughout this thesis, I am referring extensively to Anne Carson's text *The Gender of Sound*, because it indicates the false association of the quality of the voice with the use of it under the aspect of gender and brings many examples of the binaries I am referring to. Here I list, from her text, how, since ancient times, female voices have been described;

> high-pitched, loud shouting, having too much smile in it, decapitated hen, heartchilling groan, garg, horrendous, howling dogs, being tortured in hell, deadly, incredible babbling, fearsome hullabaloo, she shrieks obscenities, haunting garrulity, monstrous, prodigious noise level, otherwordly echo, making such a racket, a loud roaring noise, disorderly and uncontrolled outflow of sound, shrieking, wailing, sobbing, shrill lament, loud laughter, screams of pain or of pleasure, eruptions of raw emotion, groan, barbarous excesses, female outpourings, bad sound, craziness, non-rational, weeping, emotional display, oral disorder, disturbing, abnormal, "hysteria", "Not public property", exposing her inside facts, private data, permits direct continuity between inside and outside, female ejaculation, "saying ugly things", objectionable, pollution, remarkable
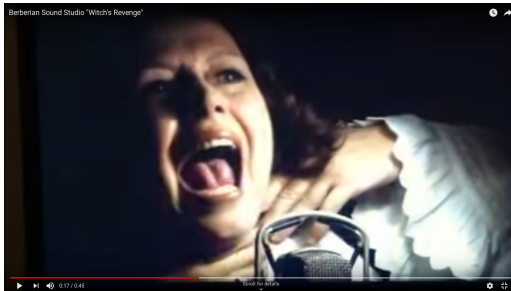
In Ancient Greece, there was a superstition that associated high-pitched voices with evil. Humans, as defined by patriarchy, differ in their nature to other animals, by virtue of their ability to articulate with sound and create 'logos' (speech). In the primitive stage of consciousness, "the brain was 'bicameral', with the right hemisphere producing uncontrollable 'voices' attributed to the gods which the left hemisphere processed into speech" (Ong, 2002, pg. 30). It was after the figure of Odysseus appeared that these voices didn't matter any more and the self-conscious mind was established. The story of Odysseus symbolizes the beginning of Western society, that is based on rationality. He, as a clever man, can resist in any temptation his body falls in- the primitive mind would be allured- by using his brain and speech, and that is why he manages to reach safe to his destination. Through 'logos', humans can develop dialogue and democratic processes of communication and decision-making. All the other forms of expression are considered wild and therefore irrational. Aristotle and his contemporaries believed that vocal sounds were based on the genitals of a person, which is why men speak at a low pitch, because of "the tension placed on a man's vocal chords by his testicles functioning as loom weights" (Carson, 1996, pg. 119). The high-pitched utterance of women, called 'ololyga', which was a ritual practice

dedicated to important events of the life, like the birth of a child or the death of a person, was considered a 'pollution' of civic space. If expressed in public, they would create chaos and provoke madness. In mythology, when Odysseus awakens on the island of Phaiakia, he is "surrounded by the shrieking of women (…) and goes on to wonder what sort of savages or super-natural beings can be making such a racket". These women were Nausica and her girlfriends, described by Homer as "wild girls who roam the mountains in attendance upon Artemis" (Carson, 1996, pg. 125). Similarly Alkaios, an ancient poet that had been expelled from the city, where public assemblies took place, was disgusted by the presence of women's voices talking 'nonsense'. In the ancient world, women were excluded, occupying the margins of society, the dark and formless space where speech, and thus politics, were absent. This disorderly, loud female noise was related to an uncivilized, wild space and sound deemed politically incorrect. It seems like these primitive 'uncontrollable voices' became related to some modes of address that were reminders of the past condition of the human brain, judging it as having a malignant influence.

Today women in public life worry if their voices are too light or high to command respect. Politicians, like Margaret Thatcher, for instance, were trained to learn how to speak in public, to deepen their voice, in order to be taken as seriously as a male speaker would be. Anne Carson (1996, pg. 120) observes that the female voices in public is related to madness, witchery, bestiality, disorder, death and chaos. And thus has to stay hidden from sight.

Mechanisms of marginalization

The mechanisms of marginalization of these specific modes of address are based on control and filtering. One example is the repetitive action of self-control that comes from the ancient tactic of controlling emotional exposure of one's own. Carson (1996, pg. 126) says that patriarchal thinking on emotional and ethical matters is related to 'sophrosyne', or self-control of the body. A man is feminized when he lets his emotions come out, and so he has to control himself. "Females blurt out a direct translation of what should be formulated indirectly" (Carson, 1996, pg. 129). It was believed that the masculine deep voice, by default, indicates self-control. So, the doctors of archaic periods would suggest exercises of oration to men to cure the damage inflicted by repeated use of a loud, high-pitched voice. This means that they would practice public speech so to learn how to filter their inner emotions when they were externalized. In addition to that, a low-pitched voice signifies authority and would be appropriate to use in public assemblies.

The female version of this practice was perceived more as a way for men to silence women when they were loud or screamed from pain or pleasure. Because they weren't able to control themselves by nature, this inability was related to animal and 'primitive' human behaviors. Silencing women, the female 'sophrosyne', had been an object of legislative arrangements in the ancient world. Women didn't have the license to express their 'noise' in specific places or events, and there was also a restriction on the duration, the content and the choreography of their rituals in funerals so that they wouldn't create chaos and delirium. Silencing, today, has also to do with the interruption of women's voice when they express an argument in a dialogue. Normally, these unpleasant female tendencies remained hidden from the men's view because they were deemed annoying, non-human and disorderly. But there was a way to cure the women and city from the chaos. In Dionysian festivals, the task of one selected woman would be to discharge the unspeakable things on behalf of the

city, in a practice which was called 'aischrologia', that lead to 'katharsis', which means the purification of the soul. She was free to express all these weird noises but only then and for the benefit of society. 'Aischrologia' seems similar to the therapeutic practice of hypnosis on hysterical women by Freud, who aspired to resurrect this ancient idea. Their emotions, and unspeakable things, were polluting them inside, and employing a 'talking cure' or in other words, 'katharsis' would help them. Freud's 'talking cure' was concerned with channeling these negative emotions through politically appropriated containers, through 'speech'(Carson, 1996, pg. 132-133).

"That's an excellent suggestion, Miss Triggs. Perhaps one of the men here would like to make it."

Shut out of the public: Opposition of public and private space

Ancient Greek thinkers had set the gender binary and its reflection in space. The very first example of silecing of women indicated in literature, is in *Odyssey* where the young son of Odysseus, Telemachus, is in the great hall of the palace and describes the difficulties of Greeks warriors to return home. Then his mother,Penelope, asks him to change subject, because it is sad, and he says to her that speech is a man's business and that she should return to her private room and do her own business (Beard, 2017). This is how Western society starts with women's voices being excluded from public sphere. According to Kevin Fox Gotham (Ελιάνα Καναβέλη, 2012), territorial restrictions, identities and meanings are negotiable, as they are defined through social interaction and controversy. Thus, space is the material of human action and the outcome of social interactions. Western philosophical thought, based on ancient social structures, supports the division between the private and public domains. In public space everybody should be civilized and resolve conflicts through dialogue, but the interior of private spaces is ruled by a domestic power where violence is permitted. This separation has reached a point where men are the main political operators in public space. Representations of gender and space are not immutable, but they consolidate dominant realities because of their repetition. Outside public spaces have historically been the main arena for male-gendered subjects. Public spaces reflect gender constructions that privatize men, and female subjects are expressing their needs and desires through them. The social life of the latter is restricted by the 'housewifization' and the private abode of the house.
The dominant notion that men are the main operators within the public sphere, together

with the idea that women are vulnerable and weak, leads to the normalization of fear of women in outside spaces and this dichotomy. The idea that women are excluded from public space because of male violence doesn't mean that men directly exclude women. There are complicated power relations that create this exclusion. Freedom of speech relates to political participation, and in theory everyone can have it, but in practice unwritten rules and power relations define what is going to be said, and to whom. The factor of fear intervenes in this. These rules construct the public sphere and restrict female, transgender, queer subjects in expressing harmless thoughts. Throughout history, women, for example, can defend publicly themselves and their concerns in extreme circumstances, like when they have been raped, but not speak for men or their community (Beard, 2017). The voices and speeches of these subjectivities in public are directed to 'non-listening ears'.

In Radio Fresh in Syria- an example that will be mentioned in the next chapter- when women started to broadcast and host their own radio programs, an extremist group stopped them from keep speaking on air. They refused to listen to whatever they want to say, because they are women. They perceive female voices in public as a form of 'nakedness', that should not be exposed. However, when women transformed technically their voices to male- technicians helped them to change electronically the quality of their voice as they speak in the microphone- everybody would listen carefully to their words. For the purpose of making their own radio programme and include their voices in airwaves they changed the gender of their voice. Their female body accepted a distortion in male. And in extend, the distorted mediation of their voice broke the fixed gender binary regarding their bodies being in public.

The Roots of Collective Voice

The voice is a medium for collective practice. According to Walter Ong (2002, pg. 67), "[o]ral communication unites people in groups. Writing and reading [of literate cultures] are solitary activities that throw the psyche back on itself". Orality, or thought and verbal expression which is not based on writing and reading skills, has still a presence in contemporary Western cultures. It has been transformed into a new orality that "has striking resemblances to the old in its participatory mystique, its fostering of a communal sense, its concentration on the present moment (…) But it is essentially a more deliberate and self-conscious orality" (Ong. pg.13). However, the rational individualistic democracy stands against this collective vocalization that includes the sounds of all the other species and marginalized genders. But mainly it is a reminder of a primitive human mode of address that creates alienation and feelings of fear of looking back.

Conclusion

The association of the female voices with bestiality and disorder justifies the tactic of patriarchal culture to 'put a lid' on the female mouth since ancient times. Different mechanisms have been developed to exclude specific forms of address from the public which are based on complicated power relations in society. Collective and female vocalizations are perceived as threats to society and thus they are undergoing filtration and 'normalization'- in a way of silencing and self-control. They get regulated and rational, with restricting included passions and desires. From my percpective the female utterance was embracing the primitive and irational human nature, but articulating their own form of speech- although it was a tool of the rational contemporary man- and challenging the dichotomy between the past and present.

2. Multiplication Vis a Vis Amplification

Ong mentions that "[a]t the same time, with telephone, radio, television and various kinds of sound tape, electronic technology has brought us into the age of 'secondary orality'" (Ong, 2002, pg. 13). 'Second orality' includes elements from oral cultures, but with the use of the high technology of media and exists in the literate cultures. In this new orality, the use of media has affected the performance of speech and verbal communication. One of its main characteristics is the telepresence of the speaker. Television, for example, allowed politicians to speak, from one place, to a larger audience, which is spread around the world. The technologies of amplification devices, that relate the embodied and the distant voice, enhance the presence of the person carrying it. They give the ability to be here now and at the same time elsewhere. The mediating role of all kinds of media that detach the voice from its physical proprietor, enables "its circulation in places and contexts in which physical bodies may not have access" (Panopoulos, no date) and enables others to listen to that speaker even if they are not sharing the same space. The medium still creates bonds between them, and channels for sharing knowledge, it always relates us to the absent other through the sense of listening.

The mediation of voice through multiplication

Urban space hosts several political activities such as squatting, demonstrations, displays of the politics of culture and identity which are visible on the street and which are not dependent on massive media technologies. Since the beginning of human societies there has been a need for gatherings and sharing of knowledge through verbal communication. Today the agonistic dynamics of primitive oral thought, which have affected the development of Western literate culture, have been "institutionalized by the 'art' of rhetoric, and by the related dialectic of Socrates and Plato, which furnished agonistic oral verbalization with a scientific base" (Ong, 2002, pg. 45). On the other hand, speech act, based on Wittgenstein's philosophical theories, is distinct from rhetoric and reasoned argument in that it includes real-life interactions and requires appropriate use of language within a given culture or context. It expresses more than the description of a meaning; speech act embraces the way the language is used and communicates what should be done and not what does this mean. Speech act is a performative action, within which somebody performs, makes things happen and creates a space for them, rather than simply stating a fact. The presence of the bodies in a speech act provides a layer of trust and safety. These bodies with their voices create and inhabit the space they are part of. In this way they materialize their needs. In a contemporary context, public speeches are happening in both physical and digital spaces with the help of several media like internet (podcasts and live streaming) and radio (community radios). In the diverse media landscape individuals or groups can easily form and communicate speeches happening in a physical space by themselves without being dependent on a newspaper, publisher, state or other institutional power. In the Occupy Movement 1 both known and unknown public speakers would spread their messages to an audience by standing in a public square. This action followed the principles of the Speaker's Corner, which is an area where open-air public speaking and debate are allowed and it was first established in Britain at the end of 19th century. It "symbolizes the kind of forum for debate sought for today's post-industrial, highly mediated cities, encouraging face-to-face
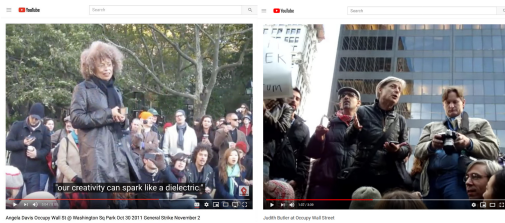
interaction and real-life conversation, albeit arranged by people texting each other, recorded by shooting and uploading video on YouTube, reported on twitter or documented on face book" (Speakers Corner Trust, no date). It is "the home of free speech, where anyone can get on their soapbox and make their voice heard" (Coomes, 2015). That is an example of the establishment of a speaking space, which is legitimate for public discourse and open for new forms of address. For example, in my project, *Sound Acts in Victoria Square*, I made a performative action of speech and vocal dialogue, which created a temporary space that revealed excluded forms of address in the square. My actions were conversations with women and broadcasts of their recorded voices back in the square, in a form of speech act but without their presence. This performative action opened a discussion in the square, changing for a while its character, about their exclusion and how voice occupies space. In my current project, I create, again, temporary spaces that occupy a proexisted public space for a while, like Leeszaal (a self-organised library in West Rotterdam). There I explore with others the capabilities of public voice, with workshops and meetings, intervening in moments of the library's life.

A space, where is open for dialogue and speech acts, can facilitate a democracy of agonism. Part of the occupy events would be public speeches in the context of public assemblies, often delivered by philosophers, writers, academics, resistance figures on the site of the occupied space. The audience would often be very big and thus an amplifier was needed for the voice of the speaker to be heard by everyone. However, in the case of Occupy Wall Street, amplified sound devices, like microphones and megaphones, were only allowed outside in public spaces when special permission from the municipality was given 1. But "when the technologies above them are removed somehow, the foundational elements remain embedded and embodied in our cyborg bodies and brains" (Pages, 2011). The participants of #occupy became the 'human microphone', as they called it. This means that all together they would repeat the words of the speaker for the benefit of those located in the rear. "Even given that many of the participants of #occupy are in full possession of smartphones, verbal address to the crowd from a singular source is still important" (Pages, 2011). The public space seems to exist in a more 'primitive' and embodied expression for the ones that lack platforms of representation.

Saskia Sassen ('Saskia Sassen', 2012) observes that in the cities today a big mix of people coexist. The ones who lack power can make themselves present through face-to-face communication. According to Sassen, this condition reveals another type of politics and political actors, based on hybrid contexts of acting, outside of the formal system. Kanaveli (Ελιάνα Καναβέλη, 2012) maintains that something that is visible and can be heard is reality and can create and give power. Site specificity is also very characteristic in these cases.

From my point of view, the Occupy Movement revealed a lot about the relation of media technology to presence and resistance, as an amplified process, in public. Those people, because of their multilayered relation to technology, like social media, are able to spread words and make them disperse virally on the Internet. As it can be seen from the Youtube videos documenting #occupy, the crowd uses a lot of different media technologies, like their smartphones, to record or stream the words of the public speakers on Livestream platforms. This process was also a way to archive and make public bottom-up initiatives in public spaces in diverse networks. At the same time there is a temporariness in this action as internet platforms are constantly changing or disappearing. So, the events and speeches appear in fragments of videos, transcriptions, and conversations in forums. It is more

likely that the users, protesters are leaving as many traces online as possible; fragments of resistance. The multilayered communication of events is manifested in their urgent and fast multiplication, in different forms and spaces. Together with the public event of a crowd protesting, "there is also a media event that forms across time and space, calling for the demonstrations, so some set of global connections is being articulated" (Butler and Athanasiou, 2013, pg. 197). The use of all these media doesn't require any special skill and the presence of an expert is not required. So, mainstream media journalists are not always needed for news to spread to a wider public. This also means that messages aren't always edited or altered by large news media companies. "With cellphones, iPads and video cameras affixed to laptops, Occupy participants showed that almost anyone could broadcast live news online. In addition, they could help build an audience for their video by inviting people to talk about what they were seeing" (Preston, 2011)

Angela Davis Occupy Wall St @ Washington Sq Park Oct 30 2011 General Strike November 2   Judith Butler at Occupy Wall Street

Multiplication could be seen as a way of manifesting parallel, multiple presences in diverse private and public places. For example radio and television allowed public speakers, such as politicians, to speak simultaneously to so many people, situated in diverse places, than ever before. There are two ways of multiplication in the above examples. One is through a unified collective voice in public, and the other is messages through a networked web. The first one is about a performative action based on plurality of the 'bodies' involved. It includes the example of the 'human microphone' and 'ololyga', the female collective utterance. Even though the last may not be a direct expression of resistance, it was an alternative temporary and informal mode of address that was suppressed and used only for specific occasions, that became acceptable to the society at those times. The second case, the web, reminds me of the very ancient practice of gossiping. It has a negative connotation especially when connected with women. However, sometimes this is more an attempt to claim and exchange knowledge when there is no platform for those that practice it. In the relay of messages, the Internet and social media have the same 'baton effect' and even though this is misused by mainstream political voices, it also serves the voiceless.

The mediation of voice through amplification

At some occasions, the amplification of the voice, as a mode of prohibition and presence, becomes possible both literally and metaphorically. This means that somebody can amplify their voice with the use of a microphone and megaphone so to strengthen the signal on the spot, and at the same time to make themselves loud and present, so as to be heard. For example, anti-fascist microphonic demonstrations in Greece, occupy a public square for a couple of hours using speakers, microphones or megaphones broadcasting music and speech. It was first Nazis, who used amplified technology to occupy public space. For example, in 1932, Nazis used vans with loudspeakers attached to the outside, in order

to attract attention of the citizens. During the election campaign, they would rent a van like that and play speeches, songs and party slogans. This *Lautsprecherwagen*, as it was called, "opened up the possibility for penetrating public and private spaces with amplified sounds" (Birdsall, 2012, pg. 39). At the same time, the amplification achieved by the vans intensified an 'acoustic conflict', which means that Nazis would dominate the city with mediated acoustic technology, overriding the sounds of political opponents. Hitler would use multiple technologies- such as radio, loudspeakers, Lautsprecherwagen- at the same time and constantly. Multiplication and amplification were his main approaches for establishing presence over others and influence the citizens. The difference with the examples given above is that he would enforce silence on the citizens, who were listeners and never broadcasters of their own speeches. The Nazi party had the economic capability to use advanced technology for propaganda. Later on, these technologies became more accessible and used by protesters, anarchists and leftist groups to declare presence and being heard in private an public spaces of the city, resisting the dominant voice of the state.

Suffragette speech-making workshops were a way to provide women with tools "with which to take their concerns out into the public domain" (Rose Gibbs, 2016), or in other words to amplify their voices in public. In 1912, Sylvia Pankhurst and The East London Federation of Suffragettes would organize these workshops in private spaces, to encourage women to practice speech and feel comfortable with it before they spoke in public. They would read speeches out loud to other women. Like Suffragettes, women, even today, struggle with lack of confidence, when appearing in public. Back then, feminist Margaret Wynne Nevinson, "once wrote she felt a 'dizzy sickness of terror' the first time she stood up to speak publicly" (Cochrane, 2013). Some of them would feel anxious because of male eyes looking at them intensively. This emphasis on speech was an extension of a non-violent political philosophy of early feminism. They focused on the voice because there is a uniqueness in it, that embodies the speaker when entering a dialogue. It is an approach that rejects the abstract and bodiless universal identity of one's person that has been developed by Western thought. By such an identity, I mean that one person is represented as a universal entity that shares the same characteristics and problems with all the people. So, this person can be represented by somebody else by proxy, such as a politician or family member, in a conversation concerning her/his own body. But from a feminist perspective, each individual is unique and carries personal and situated problems and principles, so they are the only one that can represent themselves. Even more, the voice through speech- that can take the form of songs passing from one to the other or the collective voice of protesting- links one another and at the same time keeps the individuality of the speaker. In contrast to mainstream political spheres, feminists, like anarchists, look for horizontal ways of communication where no voice dominated over others (Gibbs, 2016). Listening and waiting for everyone to speak, even the

most timid, is a basic element of these kind of practices. To be able to listen and include somebody in a conversation requires constant practice. I realized that after starting working with voice and sound. Listening and patiently keeping notes are one of the most important methods in my approach. I listen sounds and voices of the places I am intervening in and I invite other people, mostly those related to that area, to do the same. Right now I am using that method in an area of West Rotterdam, with the intention to create dialogues and explore practices with others. This practice can reveal many unexpected narratives from a place or a person and helps to avoid faulty prejudgements for that person or the area. Then, the ground is ready for a dialogue to begin. The topic of the discussion I want to open is about the exclusion and silencing of female and transcedent voices- I a voices that break gender and social binaries- in public.

In the examples of radio art and pirate radio activism, the temporariness and site-specificity of these actions- of prohibition, sharing of knowledge and communicating through voice- were tangled with the materiality and specificity of the medium. Reni Hofmüller, for example, together with others, made pirate radio in 1990s when the frequency bands were not open for everyone, except the state and companies. She would describe her experience like that:

> "We started doing it in the 1990s that the machinery was already quite small. It was simply easier to hide the transmitter, when it has the size of a cigarette pack. The transmitter they used before it was much bigger and it needed more electricity. So, we had this small transmitter, which had five watch power, so it was really weak- it just reach parts of the city of Graz- and then additionally we had a tape walkman to that. You have to think it's the beginning of the 1990s, so there is no mobile computers, accessible to us. (…) We have this small

cigarette pack size transmitter more or less. And we have this also very small walkman. Both can function with batteries, because it was also not very long time that we broadcast. And the antenna, it is a Yagi antenna, but it is not the fixed one. (…) its foldable (…) And we would hang it on a tree. We would go to one of the hills outside the city, surrounding the city. And we knew those who control the frequency band. (…) The moment you switch on an additional transmitter they immediately see the pick and in a very short time- and I've seen them once doing it live- it takes them seconds to find out where you are. It is frustrating because 'chack' [sound of fingers] they have you. But then of course to actually catch you they have to physically go where you are. (…) we always broadcast on Sunday noon, 1 pm, so we knew this is when people have this Sunday late breakfast/brunch think and they can listen to us and that it would take the controlling body about 20 minutes to get from the place they are, a tower in the center of town, to the hill we were. So we had 18 minutes of broadcasting time and then we had to pack and disappear. (…) And then you just pack it in a little backpack, because it is so small, you can fold the antenna the two things are really small and you are taking a stroll in a Sunday afternoon" (Hofmüller, 2018).

Since 1920, radio was criticized as a wasteland of commercials and state propaganda. It was Bertolt Brecht (Kanouse, 2011, pg. 87) who perceived it as transceiver to experiment with, and questioning its use, and Walter Benjamin who noticed that it would fail as long as the separation between practitioners and public persisted. From early on, tight regulations restricted the electromagnetic public sphere so that artists didn't engage deeply with its elements and it was constantly seen as "an unrealized and undertheorized social and aesthetic space" (Kanouse, 2011, pg. 87). Only pirate radio practitioners, with their low-tech practice and self-broadcasting, could interrogate the public, critical and political aspects of radio, as Brecht and Benjamin would imagine. Sarah Kanouse sees the use of prohibited technologies and the confrontation with these restrictions as a political act, one that can propose an "anti-authoritarian radical democracy" (Kanouse, 2011, pg. 89) through the formation of small groups that learn to broadcast and produce alternative media cultures. She brings the example of a project, called *Talking Homes* by John Brumit, which was realized under the residency of the Neighborhood Public Radio (little NPR) arts collective of Detroit. The inhabitants broadcast personal stories through transmitters located in their houses and other buildings, revealing the struggle and the daily routine of these people living in degraded neighborhoods. The interviewers were trained by the artist to use their transmitters. It seemed that the exposition of the private sphere, reflected in the localization of the media and the gossip produced, to the public more clearly re-framed clearer the struggle for the neighborhood than big radio networks had. The public engagement, which was not of the typically privileged audience of art spaces, was deep even though the broadcast may have been illegal. The project embodied the spirit of NPR, characterized by the smallness, site-specificity and listener's participation. Even though these small transmitters don't have many listeners because of their small range, NRC sees that as a way to link people and thus negates the previously mentioned separation of practitioner and public mentioned before. The little NPR, in contrast to National Public Radio (the big NPR), embraces amateurism on the base of its 'polymorphous' structure. In other words, it embraces the instability, diversity, discomforts and the contradictions it produces. Similarly,

as a practitioner, I approach neighborhoods and specific places to try actions of listening and participation, as an attempt to eliminate the binary of expert and amateur, artist and audience. Some times this approach means that I have to reduce my ambitions and the media used and listen to the choices of the people. In the project I am working right now I build up a set of workshops with others and I gradually introduce more ways of mediation of our voices, as a way to learn our tools and use them as we wish to mediate our messages. The second project that Kanouse talks about is *The Public Broadcast Cart* made by Ricardo Miranda Zuñiga, which is a portable home-made radio, broadcasting the voice of someone driving a cart in several places. The voice of the participant becomes public on site through speakers and extends to radio frequencies and the Internet. The legality of the radio cart doesn't concern the present, public and this unusual object attracts their attention even more. Based on an open- source, pirate radio spirit, this offering of access to the technology refuses the specialization and the prohibition of the airwaves. The parallel expanses of the voice and the uncensored speech in three different public spaces occupies at the same time the physical, on-line and electromagnetic realm. The DIY electronic media empowers both individual and collective voices.

During the conflict in Syria, a group of people that wanted to broadcast their own news for the safety of the citizens and the avoidance of more killings, set up a radio station. Its programs would include urgent announcements of battles, strikes, and skirmishes, tutorials for medical care, music and other topical issues. The station, which was called *Radio Fresh* 1, ceased to exist in 2016 because of a sudden intervention from Nusra, an extremist Islamist group. While it was on the air the male initiators invited women, who were mainly hidden in their houses, to produce their own programs. Some groups of women decided to first learn vocal techniques. They then broadcasted their own music and speech, but after a while Nusra threatened to close the station if women didn't leave. "Nusra considered their voices shameful, a form of nakedness" (667: Wartime Radio, 2019), similar to the political nakedness that Anne Carson refers to in her text. When Alkaios, an archaic poet, was exiled in the outskirts of the city, he is surrounded by the cries of women- "[n]o proper civic space would contain it unregulated" (Carson, 1996, pg. 125). A man would not make a sound like that and for Alkaios to be exposed to it is a condition of political nakedness. Pythagoras had a similar opinion about his wife's voice; he believed that her speech like her body should not exposed to public, "and she should as modestly guard against exposing her voice to outsiders as she would guard against stripping off her clothes" (Carson, 1996, pg. 129).This appears to be a shameful act, even today, given the example I mentioned before. But, then, doesn't this assumption establish that the female voices lacks political connotation? This kind of male extremist group aspires to preventing women from political expression. After these threats, these women were helped to electronically re-modulate their voices from female to male. They felt weird with this transformation, but everybody was taking their words seriously and after a while they got used to it. It became part of themselves, " it just became normal, and it literally got to the point where I could tell you which girl was which voice" (667: Wartime Radio, 2019)

Conclusion

The mediation of marginalized forms of voicing is happening in conditions that escape the traditional ways of mainstream public platforms, which are dominated by expert males. The collective, or individual concerns of the ones that lack power is spread through different ways of mediation of their voice that bypass these mainstream, dominant modes. In this essay I have separated the examples of amplification and multiplication, but in conclusion these two terms are easily mixed together. All of them have in common the localization, the small scale, the refusal of prohibition and specialization, the participation and presence of people and temporariness. But they also have in common the spirit of oral cultures in the form of a 'second orality', that are based on presence and vocal expression, though they exist in a contemporary Western context that differs from them.

3. Transmitting Ugly Things

What ugly things, and the medium

Marginalized people vocalize things that are unacceptable for the society, unspeakable, politically incorrect, emotionally overwhelming, disorderly. They are too personal, too emotional, too embodied. In *The Gender of Sound*, Anne Carson explains how the direct mode of address of women's voices has been an annoyance for patriarchal society since the time of Ancient Greece. A woman would expose her inside truths that were supposed to be kept private. For example, emotions that reveal pleasure or pain either from sexual encounters, or the birth of a child. "By projections and leakages of all kinds- somatic, vocal, emotional, sexual- females expose or expend what should be kept in" (Carson, 1996, pg. 129); this reveals society's fear of death, blood, darkness, birth, the female body. This direct continuity and linkage between the inside and outside has been a threat for human nature and society as it is not filtered through the rational tool of human communication, 'speech'. It has been established that our inner desires and needs have to be expressed indirectly through speech, and in the case of women, through their men's speech or as Eliana Kanaveli says, "the interests of women are represented by men and are a partial expression of patriarchy" (Kanaveli, 2012). Through speech and language people can construct their identities and claim their own presence and voice in public. There is a connection of sound and voice with externalizing our inside subjectivities, that remain hidden. One of the principal characteristics of sound is its unique relationship to interiority. According to Walter Ong (2002, pg. 69) "[t]his relationship is important because of the interiority of human consciousness and of human communication itself". Human consciousness is internalized and inaccessible to outside people. Hearing a sound or voice can expose inside structures of something or somebody without violating it. Sound, in contrast to vision, comes from any direction to the human ear and in primary oral culture was affecting deeply the way humans perceived their own existence and presence. Thus, the voice mediated trough the body transfers the inside resonance, that is connected to consciousness and physical elements, to the outside, contributing to human communication.

One perceived 'ugly' form of address in Ancient Greece was an utterance, a high-pitched cry, called 'ololyga' which was a female ritual practice. This is still practiced in Greece and the Middle East, and it is related to mourning. In their rituals women would also say offensive things in the context of 'aischrologia'; a process whereby woman, acting as proxy, would freely discharge unspeakable things on behalf of the city. A more recent form of monstrous articulation is 'hysteria', as theorized by Freud, which connects the psychical events within a woman's body directly to the outside, her exterior behavior. The word of this disease connects to the inside of the female body as it "derives from 'hystera', Greek for uterus, and ancient doctors attributed a number of female maladies to a starved or misplaced womb"(Kinetz, 2006). The illness was based on sexual deprivation, because feminine sexual pleasure was considered taboo. Freud, in difference with other psychologists, theorized it as a way the interior (unconscious) conflict would manifest in the outside world into physical symptoms, so hysterical actions were mediations. It seems that the feminine consciousness through these processes was accused as something evil and its communication to the outside was happening through abnormal, exaggerating physical symptoms. Females are often associated with sins and evil within the collective memory. For example, gossip is

a form of address that reveals secrets that should stay hidden. It is an alternative form of communication which operates in the private domain and has been created in response to the exclusion of speech in public. Gossip "provides subordinated classes with a mode of communication beyond an official public culture from which they are excluded" (The Gossip, 2017, p.61). But even in Ancient Greece this form was undesirable; Plutarch (Carson, 1996, pg. 130) tells a story of how a secret is spread fast by women creating chaos and ruin, in contrast to men who refrain from revealing it. In contrast to this, the rational expression of speech is about restriction and self-control. In *Odussey* authoritative public speech is "not the kind of chatting, prattling or gossip that anyone – women included, or especially women – could do" (Beard, 2017).

Other ugly things are the private and hidden events of family violence. For feminists in the early 20th century, public speech, in a group of other women sharing the same problem, was a way to externalize the personal violence and suppression of women, without using violence in response. Protesters, respectively, protest in plural voices against the abuses of power by their government either by demonstrating or occupying public spaces, such as the recent Occupy Movement and Arab Spring. All these examples do not follow the rationalist approach of the context they are part of. They mobilize passion, dispair, vulnerabilities and unfulfilled desires with their voices and presence. The recent public expressions of ourage in Europe have been criticized by elit figures as immature, too emotional and non-political, while they should be rational and technocratic actions. Passion- associated with irrational sentimental femininity, uncivilized primitiveness, and an inarticulate working class- is being politically devaluated on the base of normalizing the shift from political to juridical reason(Butler and Athanasiou, 2013, pg. 177). The idea that democracy is a civilized way of making decisions that doesn't accept any form of over-emotion or overflow of expression, is nothing more than an illusion that actually threatens the existence of democracy by creating exclusion and disregarding the importance of passions and desires in politics. As Chantal Mouffe says, "[i]f there is anything that endangers democracy nowadays, it is precisely the rationalist approach, because it is blind to the nature of the political and denies the central role that passions play in the field of politics" (Mouffe, 2000b, pg. 146). Thus, democratic processes should take into consideration any irrational fantasies and desires that the public express. Their suppression may lead to repressed pain, fanaticism and totalitarianism, as there is no space for them to exist. The rationalist mind is connected to the contemporary literate and civilized individual, who has rejected the wild primitive subjectivity, as it belongs to the past. But, this Darwinian ideology of linear evolution rejects present abnormal- that cannot adjust in the current regime- behaviors, which may express minorities and propose new democratic practices. A strong critical relation with the past is needed, and even more, to embrace elements from previous and other more 'primitive' cultures in a non-linear way.

Streaming media in relation to female continuity

In ancient medical and anatomical theory women had two mouths, the upper and the lower, connected through the neck. The lips of both these mouths guarded a 'hollow cavity' and they had to remain closed. Having two mouths that speak simultaneously is confusing and embarrassing, and this creates 'kakophony'. Females were expressing something directly when it should have been said indirectly. Traditionally, this direct continuity between

the inside and the outside is repulsive to the male nature, which aspires for self-control, interrupting this continuity and dissociating the inside from the outside (Carson, 1996, pg. 131). Women 'transmit' unfiltered information. At this point I would like to draw a fantastic parallel with streaming media, which has been used as a tool of direct and urgent communication by protesters, as in the case of the Occupy Movement. Similarly with the continuity I described before, streaming protocols and processes deliver unedited live messages that sometimes disagree with the mainstream. At Occupy Wall Street, for example, streaming media, like Livestream, Ustream and Youtube, was a way for protesters to be immediately heard in public and to broadcast their own news online. Thus, experts or official media platforms were unable to filter their speech or alter messages before they were spread online. The companies providing online streaming didn't agree with the actions and messages of #occupy and thus they would publicly disassociate themselves from them. "Both Livestream and Ustream officials say they simply operate platforms and are not supporting the movements(…)[they] removed advertising from the Occupy channels after some brands complained that they did not want their ads appearing next to streaming video of protesters"(Preston, 2011). Similarly, radio streaming has been a way for activists, protesters and citizens to share their own news and program. In times of war, citizens set up their own radio stations, that proposes alternative source of news and can't be censored by the government- radio technology can escape mainstream platforms, such as Internet, and thus avoid part of surveillance from top. In Syria for example, during war, activists built a radio station, called Radio Fresh, which, besides other things, was announcing strikes and battles for the safety of citizens (667: Wartime Radio, 2019). I will elaborate on the example in *Multiplication Vis a Vis Amplification*. This unaltered and direct speech of (radio/streaming) broadcasting has similarities with the uncontrolled direct expression of the female bodies in public (like 'hysteria', 'aischrologia', 'ololyga'). There is a fear of continuity related to the message that comes out, unedited, from the inside of the human 'container' and its channels. This continuity seems to me to be like an 'embodied streaming' that relates the medium with the human body, based on the need for a message to be articulated and distributed to others. Live streaming provides the opportunity for a body to be present somewhere else, with a slight delay, through the voice or a video representation.

Day 35
Live from Liberty Plaza

Occupy Wall Street News

LIVE 397 VIEWERS   CHAT SHARE

For an agonistic streaming

This uninterrupted continuity shows that what is important is not the message, but what is happening right now, at present. It also proposes practices of democracy. Allowing the message to be transferred unfiltered, suppressed needs and desires emerge. Thus, more people, with different needs, can be heard. This is akin to Chantal Mouffe's 'agonistic' model of democracy, in which there is not an external power that filters the message and no time for thinking about future utopias and realities, but only what is happening now (Mouffe, 2000a). It embraces a plural public space, allowing conflicts to happen naturally and diverse forms of articulation to exist. The democracy of agonism accepts all ideas, thoughts and concerns to be placed on the table. Streaming media, at the same time, reflects a sense of liveness and presence. As McLuhan says, media, like radio, are 'hot' because they are "bound to the

present moment of the radio event on a continuous time axis" (Ernst, 2016, pg. 103). This means, that they create a feeling of immediate presence of the voice being broadcast. There is no time to reflect or edit the message. The audience receives it directly from the proprietor and can see clearly who is broadcasting, what is the source, what it looks like. I like to call that 'agonistic streaming', a mediated democracy which is based on liveness and unfiltered communication.

Conclusion

Marginalized modes of address share concerns that seem uninteresting for Western, formal, civilized society, which supports a democracy rooted in the politics of Ancient Greece. Because of these disparities, these marginalized modes of address are suppressed and regarded as 'ugly' forms. They are accused as such, because they express fear and they don't resemble to civilized ways of communication. They rather seem like 'primitive' behaviors which belong to the past and skip the rational sphere of speech. Thus, they are routinely filtered and censored before finding their expression in public. From my perspective, the medium used by these modes reflects their character. They are based on instant and urgent communication, liveness and a guerilla approach- temporary, short actions that intervene into an established regime for a while and then they disappear. Today, streaming media is used constantly by protesters or citizens to autonomously broadcast news and avoid government censorship. Streaming media is characterized by the distribution of unfiltered data, the sense of liveness and the continuity- direct distribution- of the message. In my opinion, this character may not lead to the establishment of dominant voices and totalitarian political systems, because it gives space to more concerns to come to public and do not pay attention in canonizing behaviors and systems. In this essay I wanted to highlight how the use of streaming media and the concept of streaming in general can be related to these 'ugly' forms of mediation, which have been an unrecognized part of political discourse since antiquity. This kind of media transmit 'ugly' things, according to a rational society, and marginalized people need this to communicate and find space for their own desires. These ugly things may subvert, also, the formal society. I think that the acceptance of continuity and direct mediation can facilitate more democratic processes. As "the prime task of democratic politics is not to eliminate passions or to relegate them to the private sphere in order to establish a rational consensus in the public sphere. Rather, it is to 'tame' those passions by mobilizing them towards democratic designs" (Mouffe, 2000b, pg. 149). Focusing more on the media that facilitate this process to happen can open possibilities and alternatives of democratic processes. 'Embodied streaming' suggests resistance, with our unfiltered/uncontrollable mediated present selves/bodies.

General conclusion

Considering the question of what does female and collective speech acts reveal and suggest for our societies, I have mapped different approaches of marginalized voices to inhabit public space. These modes of address are taking into consideration their embodiment and their specificity. They give a great emphasis on participation and listening, as opposed to an exclusive emphasis on delivery of a message, that dominant forms of articulation do. This embodied and situated action is performative, in that it produces a public space from which to speak. This space differs from the established institutional forums on which democracy is based.

Looking back in time, ancient thinking about on the female voices- as an 'ugly' form of articulation- has affected the way women could speak in public up to the present day. Associating the female voices with bestiality and disorder provided an excuse for patriarchal society to silence women publicly and to restrict them in the private space of their homes. The female voices is associated with direct emotional vocalization, that resembles the vocal expressions of primitive oral cultures. The continuity of their speech, which connects their inside truths directly to the outside of their body, is confusing for men. Their mode of address is not the only, one that is submitted to filtration and control; the collective vocalization and any other form that deviates from the rational sphere of human nature, and threatens Western society, excludes them, despite its democratic profile. Women's messages contain 'irrational' passions and desires, and mediation of these messages, because of gender exclusion, happens outside of the main public platform, and with technologies that facilitate an expression characterized by urgency and directness. Practices, of those who are marginalized, embrace the multiplication and amplification of their voices in public, either using their bodies or low-tech apparatus. With these two ways they occupy the public domain. One of my main thoughts, has been around this idea of continuity of speech, that has been related to the two- mouthed female body. The relation between ways of prohibition of normative modes of address, and the mediation of a direct, unfiltered speech, suggests an 'embodied streaming'; a personal and horizontal way to express concerns in public uncontrolled by governments and representatives. All these approaches and practices are suggesting open and active spaces of democratic processes. Our society has entered a 'second orality'- a verbal expression that includes elements from oral cultures, but with the use of high technology- and its time that we take advantage of its agonistic dynamics.

Notes

1: It is an international movement since 2011 for social and economic justice and new forms of democracy with meetings in public spaces

2: "In NYC, a sound permit is required in order to use these devices in public, and the police may, or may not grant the permit" (NewYorkRawVideos, 2011, note)

3: https://www.thisamericanlife.org/667/wartime-radio

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pg.5
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pg.11
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