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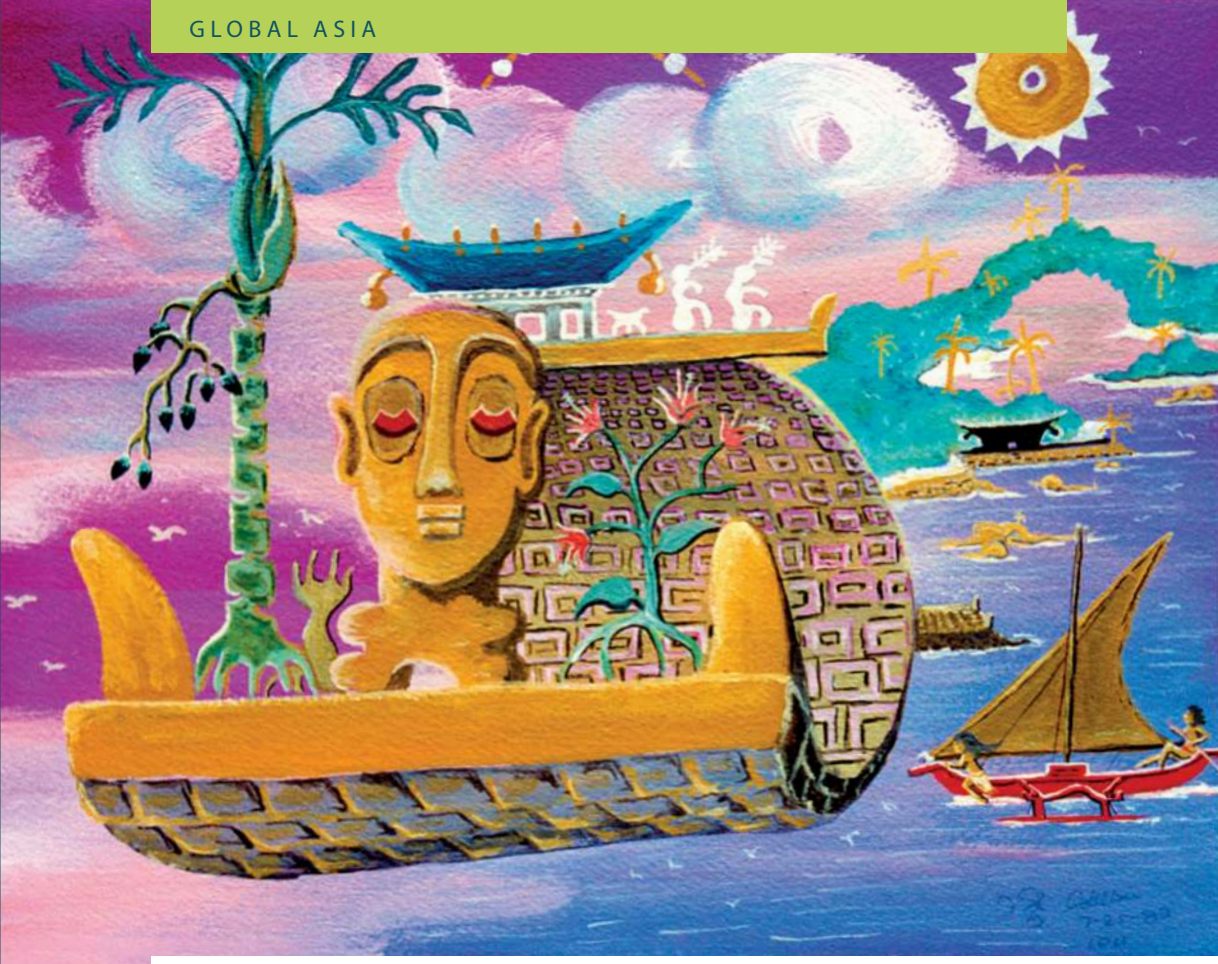

Birgit Abels

Music Worlding in Palau

Chanting, Atmospheres, and Meaningfulness

Amsterdam University Press

International Institute for Asian Studies

Music Worlding in Palau

Publications

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GLOBAL ASIA 14

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Acknowledgments

Many, many people in Palau have, each in different ways over the past seventeen years, let me into their lives, spent time and shared their knowledge with me – meral ma sulang. My dear friend Simeon Adelbai has allowed me to use one of his paintings as the cover image for this book. It's full of Palauan oral history, depicting two spirits chanting in front of a bai while facing mesikt el btuch – the Pleiades; in front is Temdókl, guardian at the entrance of the divine other world. Thank you so much, Sim.

I am also grateful to the European Research Council (ERC) for generous research support through a Consolidator Grant; this book is a part of the *SoundKnowledge* project which the ERC made possible.

Barbara B. Smith has supported my research in Palau from the very beginning, and I have had the privilege to work with Barbara's Micronesian sound recordings from the 1960s since the very beginning of my research. In chapters 2 and 4 of this book, too, I discuss some of them. I've always felt honored to be receiving her support and considered her a role model in many ways. Barbara passed away, at age 101, just a few days after I finished writing these acknowledgments. Mahalo me ke aloha la, Barbara. You will not be forgotten.

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The manuscript for this book was finished in the middle of the first European COVID-19 lockdown in spring 2020. During that time, I often thought that someone should write a book about atmospheres of the pandemic (and I'm sure very soon someone will). With life as we knew it turned upside down for months on end, people around me reacted very differently to the eerie atmosphere all around. No one would have denied the impact of that atmosphere, and many people I know turned to music much more attentively than they had before: to realign with the situation, to cope with their anxieties surrounding the virus, and to *feel* themselves more closely amidst the public panic characterizing those days. My own lockdown experience was infused by all those sentiments. But it also included, and that part effortlessly

put those bleaker aspects in perspective, the life-affirming and energetic presence of my three children Leonhard, Hannah Lou and Karla, who taught me more than anybody else. My husband Patrick Eisenlohr I can't thank enough for everything including his unwavering support and encouragement, but also for the many, many discussions on sonic atmospheres we had and continue to have. They've altered my course of thinking more than once. It has been a wonderful journey.

Birgit Abels, July 2021

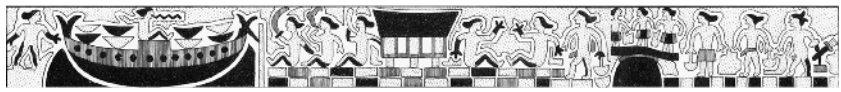

Figure 1 Bai ornament in Ngril as documented by Augustin Krämer during the Hamburg South Seas Expedition. (Krämer 1929b, double plate 26) Krämer's dscription: "A depiction 'of the singer Goldegól, who came from Nggə̂iangěl to the south on the old kaberúŏg [kaberruuch] boat with his baskets full of songs to help build the dock of Ngarekamáis (right), left Ngarekobasáng'." (KETC 2017c, 41)

Music Worlding in Palau: An Introduction

Abstract
The introduction sketches the book's theoretical framework and trajectory, outlining its rationale and aim. I introduce the notions of meaningfulness and atmospheres and position them vis-à-vis Pacific Islander and specifically, Palauan ontologies.

Keywords: meaningfulness, atmospheres, Pacific Islander ontologies

It was a cool and quiet February afternoon in Melekeok, with a soft breeze from the east coming in from the sea. We were sitting under the palm trees, shaded from the sun, and, like all the other women around, 82-year-old Victoria was chewing betel nuts. She was pondering how to respond to the question I had just asked her: How would she describe the musical genre I had come to research, *omengeredákl*? She was a well-known omengeredákl singer and clearly did not find it an easy question.[1] I was expecting to hear about the omengeredákl songs she liked the most and perhaps the vocal qualities and musical skills she was looking for in fellow singers, but she had something else on her mind. "You know", she said slowly after a while, "in omengeredákl, there's the *esbe* [a solo part in the vocal ensemble performing the omengeredákl]. The word esbe is related to mengesb, and it has to do with that lunar constellation when the moon stands right in the centre of the sky. We call [that part of the vocal ensemble] esbe because its sound is almost like the moon up there…" – while talking, Victoria had begun to wave her left hand in a

1 In this book, I italicise terms from other languages than English the first time they appear but use roman type whenever they occur again later. For quick reference, all words from Oceanic languages used in this book are listed in the glossary.

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semicircle, slowing down the gesture and pointing to the sky as her hand reached the highest point – "… and we're down here". Her hand dropped into her lap again. She continued to chew her betel nut and, nodding slowly, after a while added: "But really, we're all the same." A number of the women sitting around us nodded approvingly, but I was a little puzzled at first by Victoria's response. Later on, we all engaged in a conversation about specific omengeredákl songs, talking about the lyrics and how the voices were sometimes supposed to blend in with one another but remain discernible at other times. I asked a couple of questions about the individual parts of the vocal ensemble, trying to identify the rules for individual voices, and the women answered them patiently for a while. However, at some point, 80-year-old Oribech seemed to feel that I was completely missing the point. With a wave of her hand, she laughed and said, "Look, [when you're singing omengeredákl] you simply know how it's supposed to feel. Everybody knows. And when you know that, it'll make a lot of sense to you. You'll know what to do."

The scene I just described took place at the Melekeok Senior Citizen Center in Palau, Western Micronesia, in 2005. Six women from Melekeok, the Palauan state situated on the eastern coast of Palau's "big island", Babeldaob, had come to talk to me about the repertoire of traditional Palauan singing groups. They were elders, aged between 70 and 89, and known for their knowledge of traditional Palauan songs. We listened to historical recordings from the 1960s[2] and talked about them. The women would then perform a number of songs for me to record, explain the repertoire they chose and tell me about the individual songs. Several of the women made a comment about omengeredákl similar to that of Oribech's in the previous paragraph: While they all agreed that its characteristic musical structure and the musical responsibilities of individual singers were, of course, central to omengeredákl as a musical form, omengeredákl performances were supposed to have a certain "feel". That feel, to them, was constitutive of omengeredákl as a genre. In other words, the women suggested that the whole of omengeredákl is much more than the sum of its (musical) parts. The "indeterminate quality of feeling poured out into space" (Böhme 1995, 27)[3] that, to Victoria, Oribech and the other women, was so crucial to omengeredákl was what made performing it so meaningful.

2 These were recordings from the Barbara B. Smith collection (see Koch and Kopal 2015).

3 Original text: "[…] eine unbestimmt räumlich ergossene Gefühlsqualität". All translations from the original German text in this book are my own.

Meaningfulness

This sense of meaningfulness as a self-explanatory yet obscure phenomenon is at the heart of this book (I will explore the atmospheric workings of omengeredákl in greater detail in Chapter 3). Such meaningfulness is not normally distinguished from meaning in music research. Meaningfulness, as I use it in this book, draws on neo-phenomenological accounts of diffuse significatory complexity. Neo-phenomenology, in the broader sense, and the theory of atmospheres, in particular, have grown into a burgeoning field in recent years across disciplines ranging from philosophy (Böhme 1993a, 1993b, 1995, 1998, 2000, 2017; Hauskeller 1995; Griffero 2014, 2016, 2017, 2019a, 2020; Krebs 2017; Schmitz 1990-2014; Slaby 2020), cultural geography (e.g., Anderson 2009; Anderson and Ash 2015; Bissell 2010; Closs Stephens 2015; Edensor 2012; Kazig, Masson, and Thomas 2017), sociology (e.g., de la Fuente and Walsh 2020; Thibaud 2014, 2015), anthropology (Eisenlohr 2018a, 2018b; Ingold 2015; Julmi 2017; Rauh 2012, 2018; Schroer and Schmitt 2018, Sumartojo and Pink 2019), architectural studies (Borch 2014; Bille 2015, 2020; Bille and Sørensen 2016; Pallasmaa 2014, 2020; Pallasmaa and Zumthor 2013; Tidwell 2014; Zumthor 2006) inter alia. The neo-phenomenology of atmospheres has also begun to inform music research (Abels 2013, 2017, 2018b, 2020a; Herzfeld 2013; McGraw 2016, 2020; Riedel 2020a, 2020b; Riedel and Torvinen 2020; Schulze 2020; Turner 2020; Vadén and Torvinen 2014).

A general characteristic of the anglophone discussion surrounding atmospheres is that, with few exceptions, it tends to treat atmospheres as a particular register of the affective and/or collective feeling in a broad sense. This is an intuitive move often linked, in one degree of intellectual kinship or another, either to Kathleen Stewart's wonderful book *Ordinary Affects*, published in 2007 or those of Gernot Böhme's texts that are available in English (1993a, 1998, 2000, 2017). Böhme, philosopher of science and nature as well as a key figure in German ecocriticism, develops the notion of atmospheres into an *aesthetics* of atmospheres. Böhme's work is better known by far in the English-speaking world and, accordingly, his name is associated with the neo-phenomenology of atmospheres much more than that of Hermann Schmitz. One reason for this is rather mundane – unlike Schmitz, Böhme's work has circulated in English for more than two decades. Schmitz's enormous body of work, by contrast, is only slowly being translated into English (e.g., Schmitz 2020; Schmitz, Slaby, and Müllan 2011). Schmitz's ideas, which in most instances predate those of Böhme and Böhme-inspired work, have increasingly been garnering scholarly attention lately (see Riedel and Torvinen 2020) and are slowly beginning to enter the

said anglophone discussion of atmospheres. But until now, a great deal of that discussion is really far away from Schmitzian atmospheres. Owing to the language barrier, there will often be no references to his oeuvre at all. More importantly perhaps, however, Böhme's theorising of atmosphere is much less idiosyncratic than Schmitz's and certainly more easily adaptable into theoretical frameworks that are current in contemporary scholarship across the range of the humanities and social sciences. I will explore some of the ideas that set Schmitz's work apart from more established understandings of phenomenology in Chapter 1. Böhme's work "mitigate[es] Schmitz's radicalism a little" in the appraisal of philosopher Tonino Griffero (2020, 6). Such mitigation arguably also takes away some of Schmitz's acuity and ability to think against the grain of categories and ideas that have been foundational to an entire tradition of thought.

An implicit or explicit assumption in much of the recent anglophone work on atmospheres, whether it has grown out of Böhme's aesthetics of atmospheres or builds on anglophone scholarly traditions of thinking about emotion and affect, is that the sonic and, by extension, the musical afford a recomposition of affective publics by way of a (felt-)bodily impact that takes place prior to any discursive framing of an acoustic or musical experience (see, e.g., Szarecki 2017; for a critique of this assumption, see Eisenlohr 2018b). All of this work is relevant to this book. However, my interest is different in *Music Worlding in Palau*. I am less concerned with the intellectual history of the notion of atmospheres (for that, see Riedel 2019), its positioning within the field of affect studies or the study of emotion, or its compatibility with postmodern cultural theory. I regard Schmitz as the prime figure in the neo-phenomenology of atmosphere, but I turn to him not so much for that but because of the originality and chutzpah of his thinking. The true analytical value lies in the unfettered radicality with which Schmitz follows the phenomenological "logic" of atmospheres (which sits uncomfortably with a number of the analytical core categories that inform much of anthropological scholarship) throughout his work. That logic, owing to the surfaceless nature of both sound and atmospheres, is very akin to the rationale inherent in a truly musical comprehension of the world, which is what *Music Worlding in Palau* is all about. If, then, my trajectory in this book is much closer to some of Schmitz's ideas than to a lot of the current literature on atmospheres, then that is because my thinking begins with and always returns to sound as a relational phenomenon. Accordingly, my interest is in the sonic and, specifically, musical workings of meaningfulness. Böhme's aesthetics of atmospheres is a fine piece of scholarly work, but it is philosophical at heart. This does

not make it an unproductive framework to think with. But exploring music-making with Schmitz will yield a different and arguably more profound type of insight as both music and Schmitz's neo-phenomenology are ways of comprehending and making sense of one's imbrication with the world. As one makes sense of Schmitz through music, and of music through Schmitz, the real intellectual takeaway crystallises in their in-between as a meaningful Gestalt. And this, in turn, is very much in keeping with the logic of atmospheres, as *Music Worlding in Palau* seeks to demonstrate.

Music Worlding

This is what the title of this book, *Music Worlding in Palau*, refers to: echoing the new materialist idea that body and world are not separate entities but co-create one another, I turn to meaningfulness for it to help me unpack how Palauan music-making and lived realities are constitutive of one another, one with another yet always co-present. Kathleen Stewart (2010), describing the affective nature of the world, has emphasised how the forms, rhythms and refrains of life climax into an intense sense of legibility for an individual person. As people interact with these processes, worlding "takes place" – and life-worlds emerge. Worlding, then, implies not being but becoming; a "mobile but more or less stable ensemble of practices, involvements, relations, capacities, tendencies and affordances" (Anderson and Harrison 2010, 8). To make music, then, is to partake in a process of "becoming with" a world in which "natures, cultures, subjects and objects do not pre-exist their intertwined worldings" (Haraway 2016, 13) but enter into a co-constitutive relationship in which together, they "evoke, trigger and call forth what-and-who-exists" (Haraway 2016, 16). Worlding is also a by-product of attunement to an experiential dimension or specific situation which involves an active interaction with the materiality of the processes we are encountering. "Worlding is a particular blending of the material and the semiotic that removes the boundaries between subject and environment, or perhaps between persona and topos. Worlding affords the opportunity for the cessation of habitual temporalities and modes of being" (Palmer and Hunter 2018). This makes worlding a deeply embodied process of enactment: material-body-world encounters emerge through performing arts inquiry and "material-body-world encounters emerge, become known, felt, described and relayed both within and beyond the ephemeral moment of movement/encounter" (Hunter 2018; Palmer and

Hunter 2018). *Music Worlding in Palau*, in turn, is an intellectual attunement to Palauan music and dance.

Schmitz explores meaningfulness as internally diffuse signification processes. I will explore this idea in greater detail in Chapter 1. In this, he differs significantly from earlier understandings of the term, for instance, Schleiermacher's nineteenth-century classic distinction between meaning and meaningfulness. Against the backdrop of post-Enlightenment hermeneutics, Schleiermacher's meaning was more objective and qualitative in nature, accessible to anyone who understood the language in which that meaning was expressed. Schleiermacher's meaningfulness, by contrast, was a rather subjective and quantitative phenomenon that cannot be understood without consideration of its concrete historical audience (Clancy 2000, 8; Schleiermacher 1998). By contrast, musical meaningfulness, as I use it throughout this book, refers to the layered complexity through which music makes sense, via the felt body, in a *distinctly musical* way: no other cultural practice, including language-based ones, will be able to give you the same sense of meaningful communion in which music allows you to partake. They will offer you other, no less significant, shared feelings. However, whatever, in a given musical situation, has just meaningfully manifested in sound will never fully translate into a different medium. Naturally, this also means that language, including scholarly language, is forever bound to fail musical meaningfulness. Bookshelves have been filled with work exploring the intricate relationship between music-making and the descriptive language that seeks to capture its essence. This is an issue that will surface here and there in the course of this book, but it is not central to my pursuit here. This is because I am not so much interested in the *what* of meaningfulness: *what* does music mean? Instead, my aim is to draw closer to the *how*. *How* does musical meaningfulness come about? *How* does it give rise to an affective efficacy, the power of which is categorically unique enough for people to speak proverbially of *the power of music*? *How* is it that seemingly complex musical situations become self-explanatory the moment we partake in joint music-making, as Oribech suggested? And *how* could Oribech be so sure that music's meaningfulness would become unfailingly obvious to me if only I immersed myself in omengeredákl's musical structures?

These questions anticipate the analytical trajectory of this book. Exploring musical meaningfulness, the chapters of this book will inquire into that emotive quality of chants that my Palauan interlocutors found so essential to their singing. However, while the central questions I pose in this book have grown directly out of my ethnographic work in Palau, which spanned a period of more than ten years, this book will not be a

musical ethnography in the traditional sense (see Abels 2008 for a more traditional and systematic exploration of music and dance in Palau). In addition, the neo-phenomenologically inspired conceptual apparatus I employ in this book is, for the most part, not Palauan but European-derived. And yet, the key concepts that have marked the book's intellectual pathfinding process have originated in my ethnographic work. I came across the notion of meaningfulness in a number of conversations with my Palauan interlocutors and friends long before I immersed myself in the neo-phenomenological exploration of this term. My interlocutors would very casually speak of the characteristic atmospheres only specific chants could evoke and how those atmospheres were meaningful to them without me ever mentioning either term. I would not have turned to neo-phenomenology, and specifically the theory of atmospheres, if it had not been for my Palauan friends who used those same categories in our conversations that neo-phenomenologists explore so systematically. In fact, many of the neo-phenomenological ideas share a significant overlap with Pacific Indigenous conceptions and belief systems. Examples include the Schmitzian notion of sonic historicity and Oceanic ideas, such as *tauhi vā,* about temporality as a spatio-temporal dimension with an aesthetic element engrained in it (see Chapter 2); and the idea of suggestions of motion as kinetic atmospheric energy feeding into the rhythm of a person's vital drive with *he'he nalu*, Hawaiian surfing. A Kanaka epistemology, he'he nalu, is based on the notion of a "center that is always moving, seeking to grasp a mobile but determinate complexity" (Ingersoll 2016, 109). He'he nalu comprises practices of bodily motion in attunement with the sliding ocean; these practices produce an open "body-ocean assemblage" and afford affective immersion (Ingersoll 2016, 109; also see Shapiro 2000). Pasifika research has espoused indigenous epistemologies and research methods for a number of years now (e.g., Smith 2012; Tamasese Efi 2005; Thaman 2003; Vaioleti 2006) in an attempt to foster and further self-empowering research agendas (Matapo 2016) for very good reasons. They have not *enriched* previous scholarly methodologies, which came from the philosophical traditions of the Global North. Rather, they have served as a much-needed and sometimes radical corrective, calling out normative and latently (neo-)colonial scholarly frameworks and suggested that we all explore viable alternative knowledge systems (also see Hereniko 2000; Hviding 2003; Banivanua Mar 2016). The underlying concern is, of course, epistemic in nature, reflecting an Indigenous effort "trying to validate indigenous epistemology that was undermined in the very histories of colonization and imperialism" (Matapo 2016). There is much more to come

and to look forward to. On Palau, however, there is no Palauan technical vocabulary for musical structures or for the phenomenon my interlocutors have described to me as meaningfulness. It is just not needed. However, we need to describe in a scholarly context before we can research. This is why I turn to the neo-phenomenology of atmospheres as both a language and resource for analysis in this book, and why I choose to traverse a very divergent set of onto-epistemologies. My goal is to not conflate them but, instead, to allow them to speak to one another. In this way, I hope to open this research into onto-epistemological multiplicity and the wisdom engrained in the appreciation of difference. It would be naïve, however, to ignore the manifold academic dilemmas, even dangers, this entails. The intellectual traditions of Oceania may well be much better equipped than many others to think in terms of intellectual genealogies and relationships even across great distances rather than hierarchies (Armitage and Bashford 2013a, 13). I, therefore, hope that both the junctures and the disjunctures between the various intellectual frames of *Music Worlding in Palau* add, in one way or another, to the book's value. In any case, there is no denying that one could have adopted different approaches which would have turned out to be just as legitimate and productive as the analytic of atmospheres, which I am opting for in this book. Such approaches would probably have yielded different but not categorically incompatible results.

As a firm believer in explanatory pluralism, I find this reassuring. I take seriously the synchronicity with which approaches from vastly divergent areas of research have, for a while now, all been pointing to the same dimension of the human existence that seems worth much more scholarly attention than it has received so far, and I believe a neo-phenomenological approach to music-making has a lot to offer to these burgeoning debates. I am referring specifically to what has been described in many different ways as the imbrication and interlacing of the felt body with its material and social environments (e.g., Manning [2009] 2012); a type of sensory intensity by means of which the body's boundaries dissipate in a Bergsonian ever-present now (Bergson 1911; Kapchan 2015); or the Extended Mind Hypothesis (e.g., Clark and Chalmers 1998; Greif 2017), to name but a few. With the steady dissolution of the now-historical subject/object divide that has undergirded much of North Atlantic philosophy for centuries, the focus has now irreversibly shifted from monist issues centred around ontological subjectivity, intentionality and consciousness to questions of interrelation, process and becoming. Explanatory pluralism originated in the philosophy of science (Gijsbers 2016; Mantzavinos 2018; Marchionni 2008) and was readily adopted

across psychiatry and the cognitive sciences (Gervais 2014; Marshall 2014; McCauley and Bechtel 2001). Essentially, an explanatory pluralist perspective not only accepts but also appreciates the coexistence and diversity of potentially valid explanations for a given phenomenon. It cherishes the thought that simultaneous explorations of a given phenomenon at multiple analytical levels at a time may aid one another not in spite of but owing to their methodological and theoretical diversity and complementarity. Mantzavinos (2018, 32-34) suggests we think less in terms of explanations and more in terms of explanatory games which are structured by means of normative and usually disciplinary rules. The players of explanatory games are constrained, at any moment, by the rules they play by. These rules "divide, in principle, the innumerable possibilities of providing explanations into those that can be undertaken and those that cannot" (Mantzavinos 2018, 36). Seen this way, not only do the rules of the respective explanatory game become crucial background information to any specific explanation but, more importantly, the social component of any explanatory activity moves into focus and with it, the relationship between explanatory rules and their cognisant agents. Heeding explanatory pluralism's call for theoretical and methodological multiplicity, I have always found it encouraging that my own research into the neo-phenomenology of music-making has led me to ask questions which seem, on a meta-level, so akin to questions at which scholars have arrived whose journey began in completely different intellectual environments; at the same time, the repercussions between the key concepts of my neo-phenomenological analytic and the ideas my Palauan interlocutors shared with me have been the buoys that consistently reassure me of the course my work has been taking. It is in this spirit, then, that this book seeks to put forth its ideas about the complex ways in which music means: If music's meaningfulness is internally diffuse by definition (see Chapter 1), then the very nature of this phenomenon resembles the internal diffuseness of both Palauan and scholarly perusals of explanatory frameworks, in that, clearly, there is meaning to be found in the in-between of taken-for-granted epistemological categories and disciplinary approaches. If there is resonance between ideas, then that which resonates in the space between them might be worth exploring. In the case of this book, I am pursuing the resonances between various explorations of how the (felt) body interlaces with the surrounding worlds: the cultural, social, material, historical and affective environments, in which we live in. I use meaningfulness as the funnel to listen out for these resonances, which I believe are deeply atmospheric in nature.

Intensity

One of the premises of this book is that music lets us access something opaque, an intense experiential dimension that we cannot otherwise feel to the full. I suggest we explore this uniquely musical experiential intensity as musical meaningfulness. Meaningfulness is a neo-phenomenological term that has received systematic attention, especially in the work of philosopher Herman Schmitz. He proposed that we pay much greater attention to the atmospheric dimension of the human lived experience than most twentieth-century philosophers have bothered to, and to him, meaningfulness is key to understanding the affectivity of atmospheres. I will explore both the term meaningfulness and its conceptual baggage in greater detail in Chapter 1. Schmitz himself has consistently referred to musical examples throughout his oeuvre, but a systematic consideration of music and sound has not been high on his atmospherological agenda. As a philosopher, cultural practices and frameworks beyond the experiential and situational have not been a central focus to him either (see, for instance, Schmitz 2014, 9). This is where *Music Worlding in Palau* takes up some of the loose threads. At the same time, my approach builds on extant work from various disciplinary fields on music and emotion. But I also move beyond it in a perhaps somewhat unusual way.

Over the past thirty years, intellectual approaches across a vastly divergent range of disciplines have pointed to the inseparability of lived experience from its multiple environments. I have mentioned some of them in the preceding paragraph. The insights this research yields are all signposts pointing to the intellectual territory into which this book seeks to forge a path by suggesting we consider meaningfulness a major analytical category.

Against the backdrop of new materialist approaches to entangled human-world relationships, process-philosophically inspired notions of the felt body's imbrication, sometimes thought of as interlacing, with its material and social environments, often focus on the motional energy that drives the continual unfolding of "the movement of life", in anthropologist Tim Ingold's words (2011b, 72; also see Manning [2009] 2012). The incipience of renewal provokes experiential excitement that manifests as intensity – an intensity that accounts for the overwhelming experience that music and dance can afford. This approach suggests a type of *intellectual deep work* that is most conducive to thinking with atmospheres, I believe, because it necessitates thorough consideration of the medium-specific affordances of any given cultural practice (sound and movement, in the case of music-making) and how they intersect with the wider world. In Ingold's words

again, "[t]he practice of theory, in short, must be a modality of habitation – a way of thinking and working with stuff – on a level with the materials of its trade" (2017).

The idea of sensory intensity as a key force in the dissipation of the boundaries between the body and its life-worlds has found scholarly interest in music studies in recent years, for instance, in the work of Deborah Kapchan (e.g., 2009, 2013, 2015; for preceding explorations of the role of embodiment in musical meaning, see Johnson 2007; Meintjes 2004; Mrázek 2008; as well as the useful overview by Berger 2015). This body of work has grown from in-depth explorations of music and embodiment through affect theory in a broad sense. An affect, after all,

> [...] is a non-conscious experience of intensity; it is a moment of unformed and unstructured potential [...] Because affect is unformed and unstructured (unlike feelings and emotions) it can be transmitted between bodies. The importance of affect rests upon the fact that in many cases the message consciously received may be of less import to the receiver of that message than his or her non-conscious affective resonance with the source of the message. Music provides perhaps the clearest example of how the intensity of the impingement of sensations on the body can "mean" more to people than meaning itself. (Shouse 2005, § 5, § 12-13)

The distinction here between musical meaning and something that goes beyond the idea of meaning surfaces explicitly. Recognising the transformative potential of these ideas, Kapchan points out that what she calls the "sound body" is "a material body that resonates [with] its environment, creating and conducting affect" (2015, 41). The material body "is a permanently fluctuating, continually deferred assemblage [...] The body is as much a biological matrix of structurally and functionally differentiated cells as discursively fragmented and semiotically synthesised manifold, reconfigured again and again by the most current conventions and ideologies" (Kozak 2020, 108). I propose the term meaningfulness to suggest that the ensounded, dancing body, "launched into sound [...] like a kite in the sky" (Ingold 2011a, 139), goes beyond the creation and conduction of affect: it embraces the complexity of lived experience and comes about in that intensity. However, the dancing "body" here refers to Schmitz's notion of the *felt* body as meaningful sensation:

> [S]ensing by means of the felt body is a holistic exchange of corporeal dynamics, a vibrant attunement to meaningful surroundings.

> Correspondingly, the world shows up not as a neutral realm of already separate entities but as the atmospheric fields of significant situations, opportunities or quasi-corporeal forces or 'opponents' that in the first instance become manifest to the conscious person in form of the 'internally diffuse meaningfulness' of holistic corporeal impressions. (Schmitz, Slaby, and Müllan 2011, 244)

The relationship between theories of affect and meaningfulness is a complex one and has given rise to heated debate (see Eisenlohr 2018b; Leys 2011; Riedel 2020a; Slaby 2016). It will be a reoccurring theme throughout this book, however, as will become clear, it is not really a key issue for the exploration of meaningfulness. Meaningfulness is not about a specific significance or a set of significances; it is about the process of something significant becoming manifest.

The Extended Mind Hypothesis is a mostly cognition-driven approach to rethink human embeddedness in the world. Where it takes music-making into account, it builds on the long-standing acknowledgement that music-making is a powerful tool of emotion regulation (e.g., Becker 2004; Bicknell 2009; Krumhansl 2002). Based on the idea of music-making as an active engagement, in the sense of Christopher Small's musicking (1998), a general consensus is that we intentionally engage in musicking to create an emotional resource from which we can then develop novel experiences, "thus granting phenomenal access to experiences that we would be otherwise unable to develop" (Krueger 2014, 1). Scholars have explored both the specifically musical affordances, in a Gibsonian (Gibson 1979) sense, that enable us to do so, on the one hand, and the multilayered regulative strategies that serve to expand the range of both individual and collective emotional experience, on the other. In these approaches, music emerges as the essential gateway to the possibility of accessing an experiential realm that remains otherwise obscure. Speaking from a cognitive-psychologistic perspective, Krueger goes as far as to speak of the "musically extended mind":

> Music serves as an external (i.e., outside-the-head) resource that can profoundly augment, and ultimately *extend*, certain endogenous capacities. When we engage in bouts of musicking, we potentially use music to become part of an integrated brain–body–music system – and within this extended system, musical affordances provide resources and feedback that loop back onto us and, in so doing, enhance the functional complexity of various motor, attentional, and regulative capacities responsible for generating and sustaining emotional experience. It is thus sensible to

> speak of the musically extended (emotional) mind. (Krueger 2014, 4, italics in the original)

Krueger, while carefully trying to circumnavigate the question of the representation issues lingering in the inside vs. outside binary, emphasises that the question of whether music is representational of emotions is not essential to his ideas (2014, 5). Clarifying, indeed justifying the trajectory of his approach, he refers to John Sloboda's well-known Rorschach comparison:

> Very often we feel that there is an emotion present […] but we cannot quite tie it down. In such a state of ambiguity […] we may well expect the profound and semi-mystical experiences that music seems to engender. Our own subconscious desires, memories, and preoccupations rise to the flesh of the emotional contours that the music suggests. The so-called 'power' of music may very well be in its emotional cue-impoverishment. It is a kind of emotional Rorschach blot. (Sloboda 2000)

Music for Krueger, then, is an

> information-rich perceptual object. But representations of emotions need not be part of its informational structure. Rather, what matters is that music affords a sonic profile enabling the listener to *use* it to cultivate and refine specific emotional experiences. Music, when being used by the engaged listener, therefore becomes part of the extended vehicle by which these experiences are realized. (Krueger 2014, 5)

Putting forth the notion of the musically extended mind, Krueger, thus, subscribes to the hypothesis of extended cognition, a well-established (and well-debated) theory from cognition studies according to which human cognitive processes can extend outside our head and include objects in the environment (Clark and Chalmers 1998; Theiner 2011; also see Forlè 2016; Sprevak 2010, 353). Naturally, the hypothesis of extended cognition straddles internalist vs. externalist debates in the philosophy of mind: It walks the middle ground between the two, in that it suggests that "some phenomena strain externalist explanations because what's inside the head is often supplemented by what's outside" (Kersten 2014, 193). Musical experience, thus, involves both the non-neural, extended body and the musical environment (Matyja 2014, 203). From an extended cognition theory point of view, Gibsonian ecology, including affordances, is not necessarily incompatible with the notion that music processing extends beyond the confines of the

material body; after all, a key aspect of Gibson's work is his recognition of the interaction between the environment and cognising agents, which has found significant repercussions in ecological approaches to music as well (see Clarke 2005). Quite the contrary, some scholars from within the field have taken the stance that the way in which we perceive music is, to a significant degree, informed by the feedback loops co-produced by human bodies and their environment (Maes et al. 2014). Similar arguments have been made by organologists vis-à-vis the role of the musical instrument as an extension of the musician's material body (e.g., Cochrane 2008, 2009).

The field of music studies has offered numerous responses to work from the cognitive sciences more broadly (e.g., Becker 2004; Clayton, Dueck, and Leante 2013; Feld 1996) as well as the Extended Mind Hypothesis and parallel developments in music studies specifically. In a sense, Feld's acoustemology (e.g., 1996, [1982] 2012, 2017), seminal as a way of thinking, a milestone for the field and in its impact, anticipated and guided some of this work. In the early 2000s, the latter contributed to the increasing popularity of the notion of entrainment in music studies. Entrainment occurs when several independent oscillatory processes synchronise with one another to gradually adjust toward a shared periodicity (Clayton, Sager, and Will 2005). An often-cited historical example of entrainment describes the movement of two pendulums which gradually enter phase-synchrony through subtle vibrations in the walls and floor (Bennett et al. 2002; Krueger 2014; Winfree 2001). Dance is also a technique of bodily entrainment, one that is closely related to the desire to draw closer to meaningfulness as a peculiar spatial phenomenon: "[T]he coordination between sonic pattern and bodily movement […] is an inactive gesture, a perceptual exploration of the piece's sonic topography" (Krueger 2010, 18). The phenomenon can be observed across a wide variety of domains. Krueger (2014) quotes scholarly work from the natural sciences, psychology, linguistics and the social sciences which addresses phenomena ranging from fireflies flashing in synchrony and synchronised communication gestures to synchronised clapping. He also, somewhat surprised, notes how "Music studies have thus far made little use of the notion of entrainment" (Krueger 2014). Entrainment is a way of

> coordinating our reactive behavior to the music […] a way of bodily gearing onto musical structures. This process emerges and takes shape as the music unfolds around us in acoustic space, where we (often unthinkingly) coordinate our movements with the dynamics of this unfolding – much the way that a dance between two partners emerges dynamically, in real-time, from the ongoing interplay and synchronization of each partner's

> movements and their individual responses to what the other is doing. Temporality is thus a key feature of musical entrainment. (Krueger 2014, 3)

Entrainment, in this sense, can be described as a felt-bodily latching on to suggestions of motion, another Schmitzian key term that I will explore in the chapters to come. As a matter of fact, it has also been used to explore affective synchrony (Krueger 2014; Phillips-Silver and Keller 2012, 1), i.e., shared feeling states that emerge when people entrain their physical movements with one another, for instance, when tapping their feet to music together or walking with a partner. The term, thus, describes a felt-bodily programme to navigate and mould the atmospheric stirrings we encounter. It describes a physical manifestation of the felt-bodily communication processes which are at the heart of meaningfulness: the felt-bodily attunement to atmospheric affectivity. Interestingly, Krueger concludes that

> [w]e engage with music because, unlike most other non-musical sounds, it affords synchronously organizing our reactive behavior and felt responses; and we take pleasure in letting music assume some of these organizational and regulative functions that, in other contexts, normally fall within the scope of our own endogenous capacities. In other words, we 'offload' some of these regulative processes onto the music and let it do some of the work organizing our emotional responses for us. (Krueger 2014)

The felt body's attuning to a complex, motion-laden situation, this suggests, is an embodied strategy geared toward the reduction of situational complexity. In musical terms, then, musical and choreographic genre conventions – prescriptive of the entrainment responses considered *suitable* for specific musical styles and vastly different in the cases of, say, Argentine tango and Māori haka – can be understood as cultural practices designed to domesticate and, at the same time, savour the complexity and creative chaos of situations saturated with diffuse meaningfulness.

Atmospheres

This book suggests that neo-phenomenology can help one understand the atmospheric framework of cultural practices. These cultural practices themselves can be viewed as localised strategies that serve to unpack the atmospheric density of musical situations. Zooming in on the processes of felt bodily communication, the analytic of atmospheres focuses on dimensions

of cultural attunement otherwise rarely acknowledged in the humanities and social sciences. While the term has begun to receive increasing scholarly attention in music and sound studies in recent years (e.g., Abels 2013; Eisenlohr 2018a, 2018b; McGraw 2016; Riedel 2019; Riedel and Torvinen 2020; Vadén and Torvinen 2014), there continues to be debate, if not doubt, about the methodological usefulness of the approach. This book seeks to break a path here. While I strategically depart from Hermann Schmitz's ideas and terminology here and there, his foundational work on atmospheres provides a rough roadmap for many of the ideas contained in this book. Hence, a brief review of some of his key terms is in order (Chapter 1 will explore some of them in greater detail).

Hermann Schmitz's atmospheres are attractive and notorious at the same time. A neo-phenomenological key concept, they offer truly novel perspectives on human ecologies, emphasising the relationality intrinsic to the human experience of being-in-the-world. They facilitate an analytic redirecting attention toward the in-between rather than the categorical: toward co-occurrence rather than causality; half things rather than subject vs. object; texture and process rather than shape. In many ways, as long as one resists the temptation to use them metaphorically, I believe that atmospheres are a missing link between the various categories more conventional approaches in the analysis of cultural practices draw on. Additionally, they potentially open promising new perspectives for a whole number of current debates: the auditory culture vs. sound studies discussion (Kane 2015); the omnipresent affect debate (Massumi 1995, Eisenlohr 2018a) and, in particular, the affect/interpretation divide, which is related to the older cognition/emotion binary, and the relationship between reason and knowledge (Mercier and Sperber 2017), to name but a few. They speak directly to the issue of human entanglement and imbrication with the surrounding world paradigms, such as those the Extended Mind Hypothesis seeks to explore. But their greatest strength is simultaneously their greatest weakness. Atmospheres are, to a considerable extent, vague; on the other hand, they reach beyond the confines of verbal description, which is where music arguably does its main work. They seem very abstract, yet they are concerned with the immediacy of felt-bodily experience. A common critique of atmospheric theory is that the various neo-phenomenologies of atmospheres may be theoretically convincing but ultimately lack analytical merit.

> The academic debate centred around atmospheres, building on the so-called New Aesthetics of Gernot Böhme, philosopher of culture and technology, holds quite a lot of allure for an empirically minded cultural

> analysis. While atmospheres are theoretically convincing, however, we have to say that it is difficult to operationalise them. What is more, they lose their meaning once one tries to explore the practical dimensions [of cultural practices] through in-depth ethnography. Put differently and in a nutshell: Where a cultural analysis of everyday practices seeks to reach beyond representation, symbolic forms and rational practices, we will need to sharpen precisely those tools and methods which have the potential to productively combine phenomenological and praxeological approaches. [This is necessary] to make the often vague concepts of late modern cultural theory more concrete and methodologically more accessible.[4] (Tschofen 2017, 19)

Cultural anthropologist Bernhard Tschofen is referring to Gernot Böhme here. His concerns are not specific to Böhme's work. Hermann Schmitz – one generation older than Böhme, still untranslated for the most part (but see Schmitz, Slaby, and Müllan 2011) and a key figure of German neo-phenomenology – is also decidedly unanalytical and unethnographic. For him, culture is a broad container term both largely dependent on and posterior to what he calls the "abstraction base" ("Abstraktionsbasis") of a given social entity: a "set of fundamental ideas or concepts so deeply entrenched in common experience that they provide a deep framework of intelligibility in which all things appear in experience and that shape the terms in which everything is routinely understood and interpreted" (Schmitz, Slaby, and Müllan 2011). It is the "filter that determines which elements of immediate lived experience pass in a manner for them to enter concept formation and appraisal"[5] (Schmitz 2004). Schmitz's approach

4 Original text: "Die an die ‚neue Ästhetik' des Kultur- und Technikphilosophen Gernot Böhme anschließende verstärkte Rede von ‚Atmosphären' hat auch für die empirisch arbeitende Kulturwissenschaften etwas Verlockendes. Es handelt sich dabei jedoch, wie wir immer häufiger bestellen müssen, um ein zwar theoretisch überzeugendes Konzept, das aber schwer operationalisierbar ist und noch dazu an Bedeutung verliert, wenn man in höher aufgelöster empirischer Arbeit nach den Praxisdimensionen zu fragen beginnt. Anders und nun ganz kurz gesagt: will sich eine Kulturanalyse des Alltags nicht auf Repräsentationen, symbolische Formen und verstandesmäßige Praktiken beschränken, wird sie nicht um eine Schärfung gerade jener Konzepte und Methoden herumkommen, die phänomenologische und praxeologische Zugangsweisen produktiv zu verbinden wissen, um so die oftmals diffus bleibenden Konzepte spätmoderner Kulturtheorie konkreter und vor allem methodisch zugänglicher zu gestalten."

5 Original text: "… ein Filter, der darüber entscheidet, was aus der unwillkürlichen Lebenserfahrung so durchgelassen wird, dass es in die Begriffsbildung und Bewertung Einlass findet" (Schmitz 2004). One of Schmitz's central assumptions is that one cannot understand phenomena detached from the "corona of meanings" (Hof der Bedeutungen: see Schmitz 1990, 20; also Andermann 2007, 257) that surrounds them as implications and preconditions.

is in keeping, in a somewhat idiosyncratic way, with Foucault's critique of phenomenology. Foucault takes into account the epistemological character of any phenomenology, which, according to him, necessitates an inquiry into the power and knowledge relationships within which a given phenomenon is situated (see Andermann 2007, 257). Schmitz's radical focus on the immediate lived experience grows from his critique of what he calls the "dominant European intellectualist culture"[6] (Schmitz 2009, 7): the historical ontological and epistemological assumptions that form the exclusive foundation of North Atlantic philosophy, namely, that discipline's abstraction basis. In his words, "the tenaciously powerful layer of things taken for granted that forms a filter between the immediate experience of life, on the one hand, and concepts, theories and evaluations, on the other hand. The abstraction basis decides what is taken to be important enough to enter theorising and evaluation through words and terms"[7] (Schmitz 2009, 11). In his project to inquire into the immediate lived experience, which according to him does not pass the said filter, he reaches for what is prior to the hegemony of the abstraction basis. He dates the emergence of the dominant European intellectualist culture, with its emphasis on reason and quantification, to the ancient Greece of the second half of the fifth century BC. Since then, he claims, the abstraction basis has not changed to any significant extent (Schmitz 2009, 12). This makes the history of European thought dangerous, he warns: "Under the surface of rationalization, the unseen dynamics of the affective involvement [of the felt body] accumulate. They will eventually burst through, uncontrollable, as in Germany under the reign of the Nazis"[8] (Schmitz 2009, 12). It is absolutely imperative for him that we identify the intellectual roots of the tough lessons the European twentieth century has taught us. For Schmitz, this entails a radical rethinking of the entire European philosophical tradition and a return to ideas that, for all we know, predate a history of ideas gone terribly wrong.

6 Original text: "[die] dominante […] europäische […] Intellektualkultur."

7 Original text: "[…] die zäh prägende Schicht vermeintlicher Selbstverständlichkeiten, die zwischen der unwillkürlichen Lebenserfahrung einerseits, den Begriffen, Theorien und Bewertungen andererseits den Filter bildet. […] Die Abstraktionsbasis entscheidet darüber, was so wichtig genommen wird, daß es durch Worte und Begriffe Eingang in Theorien und Bewertungen findet."

8 Original text: "[…] weil sich unter der Oberfläche der Rationalisierung die ungesichtete Dynamik des affektiven Betroffenseins staut und irgendwann unkontrollierbar durchbricht, z.B. in Deutschland unter der Herrschaft der Nationalsozialisten."

This Book

As a cultural musicologist who works both ethnographically and music-analytically, I think through music and through people's complex relationships with musical practices. My primary interest is in those distinctly musical epistemologies which even music studies have not been able to address on their own, sonic terms. This interest in the specifically sonic workings of music-making is what has always sparked my curiosity about atmospheres: I believe the phenomenology of atmospheres can make a vital contribution here. Eisenlohr, addressing this question, makes a similar argument when he posits that

> atmospheres as synesthetic characters and holistic phenomena [...] are prior to single, definite sensory impressions. [...] I contend that the sonic plays a privileged role in generating such holistic Gestalten. This is because the sonic, traveling vibrational phenomena that very often exceed the limits of the acoustically perceivable, are intimately linked to the suggestions of movement that atmospheres exert on felt-bodies, and that in turn provoke and interact with resonant stirrings of the felt-body. (Eisenlohr 2019a)

Here, we are presented with a truly novel opportunity to think about atmospheres as a spatial phenomenon through and not only with sound. For music does not only precisely "[provide spatial contexts] with a range of ecological and textural qualities [...], and these, in turn, shape perceptual and agential involvements in everyday spaces" (de la Fuente and Walsh 2020, 3). In a radically neo-phenomenologist approach, atmospheres are far from a merely added textural quality. Instead, they are constitutive of both lived space and the felt body and their mutual imbrication; hence, they can also make a valuable contribution to the acoustemology of place (Feld 1996). The value I see in the neo-phenomenology of atmospheres is analytical, in what it offers vis-à-vis the ethnographically specific and its definitive lack of explanatory qualities. You will never be able to explain or predict atmospheres, you will only be able to trace them. Explanations and predictions are, of course, precisely what Tschofen and other critics expected and were disappointed to miss in current discussions on atmospheres. This is why it is crucial to emphasise right from the beginning that atmospheres are not and never will be an explanatory model. Neither do they provide a methodologically sound framework or a ready-to-use theoretical agenda.

Atmospheres are not *an approach*. All they do is sensitise one to medium-specific aspects of cultural practices that are not normally considered in more conventional analyses. One cannot *apply* atmospheres, one can only try to make them work toward a specific set of analytical questions.

It is important here to note the relationship between the musical and the sonic. In this book, I consider musical conventions to be strategies to discipline and steer the energy flow of the sonic in its very incipiency; musical genres to be strategies to tap into and mould this energy. Krueger argues that to explore structural features of music bodily is to bring "musical content" to phenomenal presence (Krueger 2011, 63), a way of enacting that content. This renders music-making practices a cultural strategy to work with the meaningfulness inherent in the sonic and to transform that meaningfulness. In neo-phenomenological terms, one of the main characteristics of sonic meaningfulness is that the sonic is potentially always already historical: "[sound's] history often lives on"[9] (Schmitz 2016, 88; see Chapter 2) in the sonic. This is an idea that is very much in keeping with Palauan notions about the performing arts and chanting in particular. It opens up a number of vistas analytically on the meaningfulness of music-making. For this reason, it will prove crucial for the intellectual journey and overall trajectory of this book.

Schmitz is far from being a post-colonial philosopher in even the remotest way. And yet, in its desire to enable a philosophical apparatus alternative to the dominant mainstream of the North Atlantic tradition of thinking on which the humanities and social sciences are built, his project resonates with the decolonial dream: to introduce subaltern epistemologies and ontologies into the academy, not as ethnographic whimsicalities but as sound correctives to the hegemonic. Schmitz asks his readers to think radically differently than the North Atlantic tradition of thinking has taught us to. His may not be a post-colonial philosophy, but it is one that invites post-colonial perspectives that speak to his ideas.

Music Worlding in Palau

The ethnography presented in this book began with my doctoral fieldwork, which first incarnated in writing as my PhD dissertation (Abels 2008), an ethnography of Palauan music-making with an emphasis on *chelitákl*

9 Original text: "Weil (die früheren Abschnitte des Erschallens) in der intensiven Dauer aber zu einem absolut unspaltbaren Verhältnis zusammengebunden werden können, lebt im augenblicklichen Schall oft noch seine Geschichte."

rechuódel, the traditional song repertoire. Chelitákl rechuódel are creations of the Palauan gods. As such, they work magic on both gods and men, and Palauan oral history is full of stories which illustrate how this happens (e.g., Krämer 1929a, 283-92; KETC 2017b, 208-15). Like other people who have worked with Pacific Islander communities, I am not quite comfortable using the term 'magic', which is essentially a North Atlantic concept and a problematic "baseline" (Stephen 1995, xii) from which to understand other people's cultural practices. I would prefer to simply speak of Palauan ritual, belief or cosmology instead. I agree with Michele Stephen, however, that "magic" is still a useful concept as long as it is used thoughtfully. The reason for this is that it provides some level of analytical specificity: Referring "to a belief system that assumes that through specific actions on the part of a human agent, involving incantations or spells and the use of magical substances and the performance of specified ritual actions, desired changes can be brought about in the material world" (Stephen 1995, xiii), it helps me to point out a particular way in which chelitákl rechuódel exude complex meaningfulness – one which is truly essential to music worlding through the traditional performing arts in Palau.

One of those many stories is the one of "Goldĕgól", a singer from the northern Kayangel atoll, who once brought eight baskets "filled with songs and securely locked" (Krämer 1929a, 226[10]) to Koror. The purpose of the chants was to help the men's club of Koror build a new stone bridge; they had sent for Goldĕgól to come and bring them songs "to secure a perfect outcome with the help of the magic of his songs" (KETC 2017b, 164). The bai, men's house, of Ngri(i)l (KETC 2017a, 21-3; Krämer 1919) in Ngarchelong had a wooden carving of this story (Krämer 1929b, double plate 26; reprinted on the first page of this introduction). In order for the songs not to work their power in an undirected manner, they had to be stowed away safely. Such a repertoire is often of divine origin, brought by gods or ancestral spirits who will usually enter dreams to convey the chants (see Parmentier 1987, 301). Palauan oral history consistently suggests that the efficacy of chelitákl rechuódel is an inexplicably overwhelming one. The repertoire is also suitable as a human offering to the gods and a means to invoke and appease ancestral spirits, which are co-present in the world and not inhabitants of some separate realm. *Music Worlding in Palau* is centred around chelitákl rechuódel as well; however, its analytic and intellectual trajectory is very different from this earlier study. Still, the present book remains based on the music-analytical groundwork presented there, and

10 Original text: "[…] gefüllt mit Gesängen und gut verschnürt".

small bits and pieces of it appeared there for the first time in an earlier form. Some parts of Chapters 1 and 3 appeared in an earlier form in Abels (2018b). Parts of Chapter 1 relate to Abels (2016) and (2020a). An earlier version of Chapter 2 appeared as Abels (2020a), and Chapter 5 is related to Abels 2020b.

Following this introduction, Chapter 1, *Latmikaik's Children and Their Music,* provides a conceptual and ethnographic view into the world of this book. It introduces the historical and cultural settings of music-making in Palau. I provide a historically informed perspective on the relationship between the role of Palauan chant traditions and musical structures and textures. Exploring the competing music ontologies and epistemologies that have been formative to current performance practice from both historical and post-colonial perspectives, I draft to what extent the neo-phenomenological concept of meaningfulness might prove helpful to unpack the central role traditionally attributed to music-making in Palau.

Chapter 2, *Vaguely Specific: Resonant Historicity with* Chesóls*,* proceeds to explore the conceptual ramifications of meaningfulness as an analytical concept for musical performance. Expounding the concept's scope, the chapter introduces the neo-phenomenology of atmospheres (Schmitz, Böhme) more systematically and proposes ways of thinking through music with atmospheres. Based on an in-depth analysis of *chesóls* (pronounced e-sols), a Palauan solo chant, I flesh out the layered complexity of musical meaningfulness: It often presents itself as an atmosphere that will be experienced with the felt body, leveraging both affective and interpretative frames but exceeding both by way of its primarily corporeal experiential quality. This finding opens vistas to overcoming several of the binaries (materiality and immateriality; affect and interpretation; the prepersonal and the signified) lingering in more dominant scholarly traditions of thinking through affective publics. The analysis of chesóls shows how both atmospheres and meaningfulness as analytical concepts implicitly address a much broader discourse straddling psychology and philosophy: They have the capacity to open new ideas about how music can mean things to certain people because it has "no object other than the situation's own intensity" (McGraw 2016, 142). This chapter also demonstrates how very disparate layers of meaning and meaningfulness coalesce in the experience of sound in situations characterised by musical atmospheres.

Chapter 3, *Listening with the Dancing Body: Ruk and Movement's Incipiency*, takes the discussion to an inquiry into the bodily dimensions

of the interlacing of world with self, into the role of bodily experience in negotiating historical and cultural configurations, and further into the imbrication of bodily practices and complex social systems. Exploring the ruk (Palauan men's dance), I show how both music and dance are cultural practices enacting the already motion-laden body. Beyond the flesh, they actualise the human body in movement, allowing it to continually transform in sound while recomposing along historical, social and cultural configurations. When musical movement acts on bodily movement in this way, music and dance create resonances *between* the divergent registers from which lived experience emerges and which I have explored in the preceding chapters. Resonance, here, refers to "a type of relational dynamics of affecting and being affected" and can be "characterized as a process of reciprocal modulation between interactants" (Mühlhoff 2015, 189). The registers from which lived experience emerges include emotion, discourse and memory as they correlate with Palauan temporo-spatiality via felt-bodily attunement to traditional chant repertoire. The chapter concludes by showing how these resonances themselves are intrinsically atmospheric.

Chapter 4, *Rak, Where Is He Now?" Presence / Present*, explores the nature of the coalescence identified in Chapter 2 by systematically positioning meaningfulness vis-à-vis the history of musical meaning, both philosophically and as a searchlight for music studies since the discipline's early days. How do meaningfulness and meaning relate in music, and how, structurally and texturally, does music 'have meaning' and yet mean far more beyond this meaning? Presenting an exploration of omengeredákl, women's group chants, I single out "effects of meaning" and "effects of presence" (Gumbrecht 2003), showing how the dynamics arising between them lead to the emergence of a distinctly sonic atmosphere. There is no such thing as binary opposition in atmospheres.

Chapter 5 on *Resonance. Co-Becoming with Sound* provides an account of resonance as the key force bringing about musical meaningfulness. I argue that music-making in Palau is primarily a becoming, an incipience of renewal regarding musical structure, form and texture. As this incipience of renewal actualises across sense modalities, such as in music and dance, it becomes an overwhelming experience, one that accounts for the power of music and dancing experiences – and, in the case of Palau, for the meaningfulness of music and dancing.

Chapter 6, *Of Magic and Meaningfulness. Chelitákl Rechuódel and the Felt-bodily Dimensions of Spiritual Practice*, explores musical *ólai* practices. The practice of magic in traditional Palau required for spells not only to be

recited but to resound as chelitákl rechuódel, traditional chant repertoire. The reason for that is that the magic could be implemented only through the repertoire's capacity to link, via the felt body, the present moment experientially with Palauan 'deep time'. This shows to what extent the meaningfulness of chelitákl rechuódel resides in music's capacity to connect the categories of time, space and sociality into a whole. That whole emerges as a deep sense of Palauanness. Chelitákl rechuódel make Palauanness felt in an encompassing sense. This is how "music worlds".

The conclusion revisits the book's central argument, considers the key concepts used towards the analysis of musical meaningfulness, and addresses a few theoretical and methodological implications for music research beyond the Western Pacific ethnographic context.

Music Worlding in Palau: The Background

Music Worlding in Palau offers a music scholar's narrative of music-making in Palau, a small island group in Western Micronesia. The book explores the manifold and sometimes contradictory ways in which musical experience suggests meaning atmospherically. I first became interested in the music of Micronesia, and Palau in particular, in the early 2000s. I vividly recall reading an article, written in the 1960s, which openly decried all of Micronesian contemporary music-making as "inauthentic" bad copies of North American popular music. While I could not take this piece of writing seriously in any way, it did pique my curiosity and led me to do some initial research into the ethnomusicology of the Pacific Islands. I quickly discovered, to my amazement, how little had been written about the music of the Western Pacific Island world (the only systematic work regarding Palau was by Osamu Yamaguti in 1967). This was all the more striking to me as there were a number of historical recordings, some of them from as early as the first decade of the twentieth century, to which no one seemed to have paid any real attention. This is how my doctoral project was born, which grew into an inquiry into the Palauan traditional performing arts, chelitákl rechuódel, exploring twentieth-century performance practice from the earliest available wax cylinder recordings to then contemporary performance. I focused in my early field research between 2004 and 2007 on systematically exploring chelitákl rechuódel, documenting contemporary performance practice and conducting restudies of historical recordings together with my interlocutors. From 2006-2007, I had the privilege of working with my Palauan interlocutors on their oral traditions as an ethnographer for the Bureau of Arts and Culture, part of

the Ministry of Culture and Community Affairs, Government of Palau. We spent a lot of time in the field collecting oral histories and conducting interviews. At that time, I was already intrigued by how regularly my interlocutors would refer to what they considered chelitákl rechuódel's self-explanatoriness: if you immerse yourself in the music, the bottom line was, you will not need to ask so many questions! I returned to Europe in 2007 and completed my doctoral work. But I kept coming back to Palau regularly for additional fieldwork and collaboration with Belau National Museum. Drawing on these sixteen years of work on and off the islands, *Music Worlding in Palau* mobilises the analytical distinction between the established concept of musical meaning and the much more recent and original notion of musical meaningfulness as a gathering of meanings which cannot necessarily be specified or even distinguished from one another. Meaningfulness is so telling because as a sum of many, typically indistinguishable meanings, it communicates more than could possibly ever be said about its single constituents (cf. Schmitz 1990, 19). Musical meaningfulness, unlike musical meaning, works by reaching people both corporally and affectively; it is also simultaneously subject to interpretation. However, in being subject to interpretation, it is prior to the contingent, historically and culturally specific interpretations that inform musical meaning. In other words, the musically meaningful is that powerful dimension of music which music scholars have not been able to put their finger on, referring it to the realm of the unspeakable and the ineffable instead.

All interviews quoted were conducted in Palauan and the translations are mine unless otherwise noted. I refer to my interlocutors by their first names only, foregoing their hereditary titles, to protect their privacy. In addition to my own fieldwork recordings, I have also used a number of historical collections of recordings from Palau:

(1) The *Hamburg South Seas Expedition* recordings (1909). Among the six wax cylinders in the collection that, according to the expedition members' field notes, were recorded in Palau by Augustin Krämer and his colleagues, four contain Palauan music, while the remaining two contain pieces from other Micronesian islands. One of these was in all likelihood taken on Tobi, one of Palau's Southwest Islands. Paul Hambruch, a member of the *Hamburg South Seas Expedition*, used the phonograph to play German military marches to a bewildered audience on Tobi. Hambruch's subsequent attempt to record Tobian chants, however, was less well received by the islanders; only one person, his local interpreter,

eventually volunteered to recite into the device. Tobian oral history recounts how a "shaman" was forced to chant for the ethnographers to record. However, instead of providing the chant requested, he recited a curse on the device and, thus, put a spell on the phonograph. Hambruch himself does not relay any information on the content of that recording.[11] The *Hamburg South Seas Expedition* collection of sound recordings itself is currently stored at the Phonogramm-Archive Berlin, Germany, under the name of "Hamburger Südsee-Expedition" ("Hamburg South Seas Expedition"); some of the Palauan recordings have been published on CD (Koch and Ziegler 2011). For a critical historical and ideological contextualization of this and other ethnographic expeditions to the Pacific Islands in the early twentieth century, see Diettrich 2021 and Agnew 2005.

2) The Muranushi recordings (1936). Iwakichi Muranushi was the director of a Japanese anthropological excursion to the Micronesian islands in 1936. He recorded 36 Palauan songs and stories on Dictaphone cylinders. Owing to major differences in the speed among the recordings, many of the recordings appear distorted; the collection was published (Tatar 1985).

3) The Siemer recordings (1936). Wilhelm Siemer was a missionary in Palau for the Liebenzell mission from 1930 to 1938.[12] In 1935, Siemer was requested by Marius Schneider, then head of the Phonogramm-Archive Berlin, Germany, to document local music on behalf of the Archive. The collection, stored as "Siemer Palau" at the Phonogramm-Archive Berlin, includes 52 recordings originally taken by means of a phonograph.

4) The Barbara B. Smith recordings (1963). Barbara B. Smith, then professor at the University of Hawai'i, undertook a field trip to Palau among other islands. Her intent was to document Micronesian music for preservational rather than scholarly purposes. Smith went at the request of student members of the Micronesian Club of Honolulu at the University of Hawai'i, who had expressed their urgent wish that music-making in the West Micronesian islands be documented as soon as possible.[13] The Barbara B. Smith collection includes six CDs with digitalised reel-to-reel recordings that were prepared by Smith herself, and three CDs with dubbings given to her by the Palauan radio station WSZB Palau. This

11 Peter W. Black, personal communication, 5 September 2006; also see Buschmann 1996, 330. My thanks to Peter W. Black for pointing me to this significant detail.

12 See the personal communication between Sr. Ilse Szaukellis and Susanne Ziegler, 22 April 2002. Letter contained in the documents belonging to the *Siemer Palau* collection, Phonogramm-Archive Berlin, Germany.

13 Barbara B. Smith, personal communications, 11 February 2005 and 10 May 2006.

collection is stored in the Pacific Collection of the University of Hawai'i at Manoa, USA; a copy is held by the Belau National Museum, Koror, Palau. A part of the recordings has been remastered and published by the Phonogramme-Archive Berlin in collaboration with Belau National Museum. (Koch and Kopal 2015)

5) The Yamaguti recordings (1965-66). Osamu Yamaguti (previously: Yamaguchi), then a master's student at the University of Hawai'i at Manoa, went to Palau in 1965 as part of the preparation for his Master's thesis on Palauan music (1967), which was supervised by Barbara B. Smith.

6) Local Palauan recordings. These include private recordings not generally available to the public and recordings prepared by and stored at the governmental Bureau of Arts and Culture, Koror, Palau, where I was employed in 2006-2007.

I try to conform to the orthography of Lewis Josephs (1990, 1997) throughout the book, which is also the spelling convention the Palau Language Commission endorses. However, this is not as straightforward a strategy as it may seem: Many Palauans like to spell differently and, to complicate matters, the spelling used in historical sources varies from author to author. Moreover, the language of chelitákl rechuódel is deeply archaic and unintelligible to many, if not most, contemporary Palauans. For these reasons, the spelling I use in *Music Worlding in Palau* is basically Josephs's but simultaneously also a reflection of the spelling choices the chanters I have worked with make. Where I quote historical sources, I mostly retain the spelling used in the source.

And finally, a word on data protection: While some of them will be easily identifiable to many, I generally try to safeguard the anonymity of my interlocutors. In keeping with anthropological protocol (de Koning et al. 2019), I do not disclose their full names nor do I refer to them by their traditional titles.

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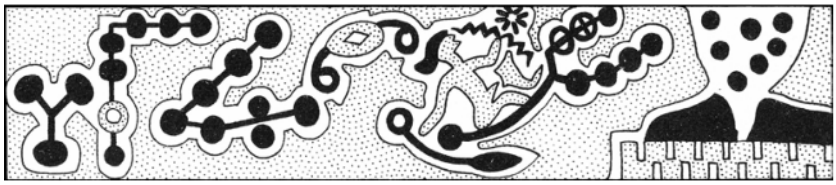

Figure 2 Bai ornament in Gurdmâû (in Ngardmau) as documented by Augustin Krämer during the Hamburg South Seas Expedition. (Krämer 1929b, double plate 14) Krämer's description: "[T]o the left the Pleiades which the god steers, to the left of his head a figure resembling a nose clamp = the crab *gamáng* [*chemáng*], to the left of it a pair of fire tongs = the angle *gogádu*, far upper left (right angle) *bar aikngot*, below *aingúkl* (the 3 "fire stones)." (KETC 2017c, 63; italics in original)

1 Latmikaik's Children and Their Music

Abstract
This chapter provides a conceptual and ethnographic view into the world of this book. It introduces the historical and cultural settings of music-making in Palau. I provide a historically informed perspective on the relationship between the role of Palauan chant traditions and musical structures and textures. Exploring the competing music ontologies and epistemologies that have been formative to current performance practice from both historical and post-colonial perspectives, I draft to what extent the neo-phenomenological concept of meaningfulness might prove helpful to unpack the central role traditionally attributed to music-making in Palau.

Keywords: chelitákl rechuódel, chanting, neo-phenomenology, atmospheres

E-Reberbong obom ngasech ra ngesechelel a meseksikt
e tourengreng er kau obil meaii mang
arturang el ngara sob a chilat er kau e Reberbong
el kmo ngika ngelekel a chelid,
mengdi imong ra delal e,
e meremang ngera kosisiik --- iiang.

Reberbong, when you go on top of the Pleiades,
there we sing to you that you are high,
respected people show respect to you.
And they say: You are the son of an *chelíd*.
You're only one son of your mother
and now you're coming. What are you looking for?

When I first met Wilhelm, a *rubák* I visited quite often to discuss everything related to chelitákl rechuódel, he already knew that I had come to talk to him

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Sound example 1 *E-Reberbong*. Chesóls chanted by Wilhelm Rengiil, Koror/Palau, recorded on 14 February 2005.

about traditional chanting. Several people had referred me to him, a highly respected chanter known for his vast knowledge of traditional repertoire. His wife and another woman were also present. Before I even had a chance to introduce myself, he gestured for me to sit down and for everyone to be quiet so that he could chant. He smiled when he realised I understood, and so did the two women. And then Wilhelm started his chant: "E-Reberbong obom ngasech ra ngesechelel a meseksikt…"

E-Reberbong is an chesóls, which is arguably the most traditional and political genre of chelitákl rechuódel. I discuss chesóls in greater detail in Chapter 2. More specifically, *E-Reberbong* is an *otengelel a chesóls*, a "bringing down of chesóls". Together with the *okisel a chesóls*, the "rising of chesóls", the otengelel a chesóls is the traditional preamble preceding the performance of a full chesóls. The okisel a chesóls, also featured in sound example 1, continues to be a standard element of contemporary chesóls performance. It consists of the chanter's exclamation "o-desuokl", to which everyone partaking in the situation will respond, "huei!". The okisel a chesóls is a historical performance practice described in some of the earliest descriptions of Palauan music-making, including that of Captain Henry Wilson of the *East India Company* ship *Antelope*, shipwrecked in Palau on 10 August 1783 (a few years later compiled and published by George Keate as *An Account of the Pelew Islands*, see Keate 1788). This sequence will typically be repeated, with slight alterations ("o-desuoklel", response: *"hu-a-huii"*). Contemporary Palauans are unsure about the exact meaning of these words, but the "o-desuokl" is taken as an opening marker signifying to everyone around at the beginning of an chesóls performance to call them into the appropriate state of mind. "Hm… huei!" is an expression of approval and encouragement for the chanter and a required response at the end of every chesóls stanza until the present day. "O-desuokl", by contrast, is not necessarily a part of contemporary chesóls performances, even if elder chanters tend to regard performances lacking the okisel a chesóls as disrespectful.

The otengelel a chesóls, of which "E-Reberbong" is an example, is a particular type of chesóls with which it shares the same musical structure.

Directly following an okisel a chesóls, it is supposed to be delivered before the performance of the actual chesóls, i.e., the main chesóls of the performance. Chesóls are often political in nature, detailing decision-making processes or the mythological or historical background of a given situation. Created by deities, they are not human-made. This makes them powerful interpolations in legal disputes and communal decision-making processes alike: They stand for the divine origin of Palauan order and social structure, and, as such, they demand unreserved respect. It is this sense of respectfulness and humbleness that an otengelel a chesóls is supposed to establish prior to the performance of a main chesóls: its purpose is to establish a connection, through its own resounding, with the spiritual world, seeking the deities' and ancestral spirits' blessing for the ensuing performance of chesóls. Rarely sung today, an otengelel a chesóls tells of a traditional worldview in which mundane practices are shot through with spirituality. It only took a chant to conjure up the sensation of that interconnection between daily life and the divine. This is, quite tangibly, what *E-Reberbong* does: The chant reminds hereditary title holders (here, reberbong of Melekeok) to be mindful of their traditional responsibility and origin when they are about to make a political decision: "You are the son of an chelíd/ You're only one son of your mother." The general sentiment, powerfully resounding in the unfolding of the otengelel a chesóls, is clear: remember the divine origins of the islands, honour your ancestors, respect the laws of the land and the sea, know your place in history and, against the backdrop of all this, take responsible stewardship of your community according to your place within the social hierarchy.

My Palauan interlocutors have connected "the feel" of specific Palauan musical genres in many different ways with a sense of revelatory value and importance that only music-making could provide them with. The otengelel a chesóls above points to how deeply this sentiment is entangled with traditional Palauan notions of both history and community. In many ways, some of the Palauan traditional chant repertoire is historiographical in nature, encoding historical narratives in "physically manifested vehicles that bear cultural endowed meaning" (Parmentier 1987, 11), i.e., structured sound in the sense of musical genre conventions and their performative enactment. Anthropologist Richard Parmentier referred to the Benjaminian aura to describe the prime functioning of non-linguistic narrative modalities of Palauan history. They are "extensionally deployed in social action, and by encoding the layered course of historical change they make possible an intentional sense of cultural continuity through time"

(Parmentier 1987, 12). Such a narration of history can occur through objects, such as wooden carvings, pottery or pictures, or through cultural practices, such as music-making and dance. Beyond their role as a historiographical device, the Palauan traditional performing arts "come to play a vital role in social action, because they are constantly modified, manipulated, contested, and concealed. There is, in other words, a constant interplay between the 'sedimenting' power of contexts of action and the 'typifying' function of historicizing representation" (Parmentier 1987, 13). *Music Worlding in Palau* extends, or perhaps twists, Parmentier's argument by suggesting that the sedimenting power of music-making and dancing in Palau resides primarily in their capacity to manifest atmospherically. By manifesting atmospherically, chants do not only open space for modification, manipulation, contestation and concealment. They also (re-)build their many contextual frameworks and, in return, themselves, and create possibilities for robust change both of historical narratives and possible future realities.

This chapter establishes the ethnographic and conceptual context for my subsequent analysis of meaningfulness in the Palauan performing arts. In two main sections, I look at the ethnographic and cultural setting of music-making in Palau and then the key concepts of the neo-phenomenology of atmospheres with which these settings resonate. Neither section is meant to be comprehensive in any way (for an encompassing overview of the first, see Parmentier 1987). They serve more as a means to sound out to what extent the neo-phenomenological concept of meaningfulness can help unpack the central role traditionally attributed to music-making in Palau. All of this serves to set the scene for the remainder of this book, which probes the scope and intellectual implications of meaningfulness as an analytical concept for Palau.

Palau

Palau is situated some 800 kilometres southeast of the Philippines and is currently home to a population of about 21,000. Palauan oral history details the creation of the islands, and many historical sites continue to remain as visible evidence of those stories. Three charter myths are central: they tell of Latmikaik, Chuab and Milad, respectively. Each of them, along with their stories, mark distinct *renged*, historical polities, in Palauan history (Parmentier 1987, 128). There are a number of conflicting varieties of the

charter myths. Japanese anthropologist Hijikata, who first arrived in Palau in 1929, recorded the creation as follows:

> In the beginning was *Uchelianged*, the god of heaven. *Uchelianged* caused a *btuch* (star), driven along by an *eabed* (squall), to fall from heaven. This resulted in the creation of the island of Ngeriab on the island of Beliliou [Peliliu]; then, the shallows of Mekaeb were formed next to it. *Uchelianged* then sent a *kim* (giant clam) from heaven down to the world below. The *kim* gave birth to *Latmikaik*, who lived in the sea. However, when *Latmikaik* became pregnant and the time of birth was near at hand, she was troubled because, lacking a vulva, she had no way of giving birth. She thereupon consulted with *kim*, which agreed to let her use its *berdel* (mantle). *Latmikaik* mounted the mantle between her legs and was then able to give birth. (Hijikata 1996; italics in original)

Other versions of the myth insist that Latmikaik first gave birth to a great number of children that were both fish and human: they were human on the land but fish in the sea (Umetaro 1974, 10). Uchelianged asked Latmikaik to have her children pile up rocks and then make the pile collapse; the scattered rocks became Chelbacheb, Palau's Rock Islands. They dot the area from Southern Koror to Northern Peleliu. He then ordered them to pile the stones so that they would create a path between Angaur and Babeldaob. In this way, the vertical structure of the cosmos from Latmikaik's residence at the bottom of the sea to the seat of Uchelianged in the heavens shifted to a horizontal emphasis (see, e.g., Dobbin and Hezel 2011, 166-76). Latmikaik is also the mother and source of all life on the Palauan islands, which is why one of the coronae of Venus, all named after fertility goddesses, is named after her. Her dwelling deep in the ocean seals the Palauan people's visceral connection with the ocean, a theme that resonates with similar notions across Oceania: "In the beginning was the ocean" is how the Tongan creation story begins, and "Tongan deep history states that people originated in the *moana* (deep sea), and that *Limu* (seaweed) and *Kele* (sea sediment) are our primordial parents" (Kaʻili 2017b); "we sweat and cry salt water, so we know that the ocean is really in our blood", says Teresa Teaiwa (in Hauʻofa 1997, 124), and Tongan and Fijian writer and anthropologist Epeli Hauʻofa states,

> Oceania is humanity rising from the depths of brine and regions of fire deeper still, Oceania is us. We are the sea, we are the ocean, we must wake up to this ancient truth and together use it to overturn all hegemonic views

> that aim ultimately to confine us again, physically and psychologically, in the tiny spaces which we have resisted accepting as our sole appointed place, and from which we have recently liberated ourselves. (Hau'ofa 1993, 16)

Hijikata continues:

> The child was the goddess *Obechad*. *Obechad* was the progenitor of *chad* (human beings) and, since there were no male gods, brought the goddess *Turang* into the world by virgin birth. Then, *Turang* likewise gave birth on her own to the great goddess *Chuab*. (Hijikata 1996, 9; italics in original)[14]

Chuab, who had an insatiable appetite, rapidly grew larger. At some point, she toppled over and her body parts became Palau: Ngarchelong is her head, Ngetkib in Airai her genitals (Hijikata 1996, 10). Uchelianged had ordered Chuab to create chiefly councils, an assignment which Chuab passed on to her four to five children. They travelled up North and along their route created the councils. These two first myths, thus, "describe the foundation of the Belauan cultural order in the 'era of *Chuab'* as a loosely knit string of eight villages located along the eastern side of the archipelago" (Parmentier 1987, 128; italics in original). The long story of Milad, many versions of which are probably the least coherent (for Krämer's version, see 1929a, 61-7 and KETC 2017b, 46-50; for an overview, see Parmentier 1987, 157-96), while the story itself is the most complex and marks the next era – or more aptly perhaps, the transition between the "archaic world and the new world" (Parmentier 1987, 156). Milad initiated another reconstitution of Palauan

14 Cf. the version recorded by anthropologist Augustin Krämer, who headed a fieldwork expedition to Micronesia in the first decade of the twentieth century:

> "Story 1. The Creation of The Spirits of the Land.
> In the oldest days there was no land and people did not exist, only a volcanic rock, the *risóis*, rose out of the sea. *Galid* spirit *Tpereákl* and the woman *Latmikáik* originated from it; he went to heaven, from where he often came down, and she lived at the bottom of the sea. In due course she created numerous fish and the first human beings *arúgel*. First she gave birth to two sons, a *Ugéliángĕd* and a *Ugéldátk*, then two girls. In addition, many sons and female creatures in the form of fish were born. The first two sons married the two girls and the other man the fish-women. Now the long fish, the eels and rays, etc., started to build a house for the couples, while the other fish fetched stones from the bottom of the sea and piled them up, until an island appeared above the surface of the sea; this is today's *Ngeaûr* [Angaur]. The *galid* spirit piled up more and more, until a high tower made from sand and stone was created; [s]he had the form of a human being and was called a *Guáp* [*Chuab*]. When the giant had been completed, they started a fire at his feet so that he toppled over. The debris created the *Gogeál*-islands and the *Pélau*-land. The *galid* spirit spread all over Palau. There still existed no sun." (Krämer 1929a, 1; see also KETC 2017b; italics in original)

Figure 3 An illustration of the story of Chuab. Gable detail of the Belau National Museum bai at Koror. Photo by author.

social order, and historical sights continue to embody her story all the way into the present. For example:

> at the rocky peak of Roismlengui range [...] a goddess named Milad [...] landed after a great flood, and [...] gave birth to four children in the form of stones at the foot of the mountain. These four children were to become "cornerposts" of the Belauan political order – in fact, Milad's eldest son was Imeiong, the capital of the district [...]. (Parmentier 1987, 4)

The physical world is deeply entangled with social and historical patterns which, in turn, were determined by mythological cosmology. Palauan political structure, hierarchy and laws are of divine origin, similar to a lot of Micronesia. The gods also appointed the village rubáks (chiefs). The latter have decision-making power through the institution of the klobak, the village council bestowed with judicial, legislative and administrative power. The klobak held meetings in the bai (community house). Such meetings followed prescribed patterns regarding seating arrangements, food distribution, etc.; they also formed the exclusive performance space for particular types of chants. The mode of communication was *kelulau*, 'whispering principles': a rubák whispered his statement to a messenger, who, in turn, proceeded to pass it on to the rubák who was supposed to receive that information (Palau

Society of Historians 1997, 63; also see Rechebei and McPhetres 1997). Kelulau was used in a broader sense to describe the process of decision-making and legislation in the bai.

The gods also created dance and, subsequently, music. Oral tradition stresses the connection between dance and nature: the god Uchelechelíd coincidentally watched a bluefin jack jumping after a sardine and was so amused by what he saw that he turned the wooden replica of a mackerel into an insigne, which dancers still carry today (Krämer 1926, 315). There is also a story detailing how Uchelechelíd was inspired by the hunting movements of a fish and modelled the ruk dance after it. The linkage between dance and divinity, as well as its nascency in the mythical age where gods and men coexisted in the physical world but which is not entirely separate from the present, adds up to a legitimising power that lends meaningfulness to dance. The past is no different from the present *per se*, and events largely follow a "replaying pattern well documented in myths, chants, and narratives" (Parmentier 1987, 3); the performing arts are crucial to energising this cyclical structure.

A number of traditional musical genres, including omengeredákl, are considered *olángch* (Palauan: "mnemonic marker"; "external sign"). Olángch is a complex Palauan term. Richard Parmentier translates it as "signs of history", further qualifying it as those "representational expressions which, through their iconic, indexical, and residually symbolic properties, record and classify events as history, that selective discourse about the diachrony of a society" (Parmentier 1987, 11). Their aura is what engenders objects or cultural practices with an encompassing power to stand for Palauan historicity at large. This aura, which is "[…] derived from their contiguity with the original context [, …] makes these objects appropriate signs of history" (Parmentier 1987, 3). As such, they are "frequently considered to be concrete embodiments or repositories of the past they record, that is, to be endowed with the essentialized or reified property of historicity" (Parmentier 1987, 12). The historicity of signs of history, thus, resides in their specific materiality. Drawing on neo-phenomenologist Gernot Böhme, I will add to this that with their materiality come the atmospheres that emanate from their materiality (Böhme 1995). In the case of omengeredákl, singing is "aesthetic labor" (Böhme 1995, 35-38), a process in which spaces, people, objects and, in this case, cultural practices are given qualities that make them exude something through their specific material form – something vague and unspecific, perhaps, but something significant nonetheless. This significance is inextricably connected with the materiality of the object or practice in question. This is why musical

analysis in this book will address the intertwining of the sonic materiality and atmosphere. After all, this was what made Victoria, Oribech and their fellow singers think immediately of grander schemes within which current musical practices "made sense", as they put it on that February afternoon in Melekeok: the musical form and structure of omengeredákl and their enactment in sound.

In twenty-first-century post-colonial, and to a considerable extent, neo-colonial Palau, however, singing as aesthetic labour is a type of labour that carries the weight of a great many contradictions – both past and present. History in Palau knows several frames; in fact, there is a multiplicity of historical narratives enveloping contemporary Palauan cultural practices. As for most Pacific Islanders, history for Palauans certainly "did not begin with the arrival of foreigners, as most non-indigenous histories do" (Salesa 2014, 36). Still, North Atlantic historiographic narratives are a part of the islands' post-colonial entanglement.

North Atlantic narratives of Palauan history

North Atlantic scholarly accounts of Micronesia's earliest human history are still largely unclear and sometimes contradictory. However, there is academic consensus that traffic and migration, particularly from Southeast Asia, laid the foundations of West Micronesian cultures. To date, scholars do not agree about the exact beginning of migration into West Micronesia, but 3000 to 1000 BC evolves as a reasonable approximation. Long before Europeans first took note of the Palauan islands in 1522, the Palauans were part of an inter-island trade and communication network, especially with the islands of Yap, according to linguistic and archaeological evidence (Abels 2008). In 1686, Francisco Lazcano seized the Palau islands for the Spanish crown, terming them "the Carolinas". Spain took virtually no action to actually colonise its newly acquired territory, and missions were not significantly successful until the late nineteenth century. In 1783, four years after James Cook's second voyage, when mutual violence between European explorers and Pacific Islanders had thoroughly dashed the European dream of an earthly Eden in the Pacific Ocean, Captain Henry Wilson of the British East India Company and the *Antelope* made the first thoroughly documented contact between Palauans and Europeans. The *Antelope* was shipwrecked on 10 August that year just off Koror Island, which remains the centre of the island nation. The Palauans helped Captain Wilson to build a new ship, named *Oroolong*, with the *Antelope*'s

Figure 4 Unidentified crew members and brass band of the German *MS Condor* on a visit in Palau in 1911. From the collection of Dieter Klein, Düsseldorf (Germany).

remnants. Ever since the *Antelope* incident, Europeans have maintained a relatively constant presence on the Palau islands, but that did not affect Palauan everyday life to any significant degree. This situation changed when Germany bought Spain's Western Carolina territory for a bargain in 1899 and immediately established a colonial government on neighbouring Yap with outposts on Palau, which increased German marine traffic in the area (see figs. 4 and 5).

In 1914, at the outset of WWI, Japanese forces displaced the militarily unprepared German administrative staff in Micronesia and occupied all of Micronesia except Guam. Until WWII, Japan had been allotted a Class C mandate by the League of Nations. The Japanese presence changed Palauans' lives profoundly. A Japanese educational system was implemented, and Koror, which remains the most populated area of Palau, became not only the administrative headquarters of the Japanese Pacific territory but also a small metropolis with paved roads, electricity, cinemas and geisha houses by 1940 (Parmentier 1987; Rechebei and McPhetres 1997).

WWII brought massive violence to Palau, which was caught in the midst of a war between the world's largest nation-states. While the early war years were mostly quiet, toward "the middle and end of the war [...] the

Figure 5 Unidentified Palauans with an accordion. Undated (but most likely from the first decade of the 20th century). From the collection of Dieter Klein, Düsseldorf (Germany).

suffering caused by American bombing attacks, hunger, repression by the Japanese, and dislocation from their villages brought a new perspective in the lives of the Palauans at the time" (Rechebei and MacPhetres 1997, 179). As early as 1939, the Japanese military had begun to increase their military presence in Micronesia, but it was really the Japanese surprise attack on Pearl Harbor, Hawai'i, on 7 December 1941 that marked the beginning of WWII in the Pacific. The move to push the Japanese military out of Micronesia was initiated only three years later, in 1944. Starting in Kiribati, the US Airforce began attacking Japanese military bases and industrial sites across Micronesia. One of the most bitter battles of WWII in the Pacific was fought in Peliliu, Southern Palau. "Operation Stalemate II" took place from September to November 1944 and cost more than 12,000 lives, by far the most on the Japanese side. The Japanese government formally surrendered in September 1945, and the US Navy became the interim administrative authority until 1947, when the United Nations and the US signed the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, which gave the US full power and authority over, among others, the Palauan islands. Tiny Palau opted to re-establish her political independence in the final quarter of the twentieth century when the Trust Territory became its present political organisation instead of joining the Federated States of Micronesia. This political status was eventually achieved in 1994, putting an end to nearly a century of Spanish, German, Japanese and US

colonisation. Palau has been dependent on the USA's economic assistance, stipulated in the Compact of Free Association, ever since the early 1980s. The Compact provides several million US dollars annually in subsidies and grants. The US insisted when negotiating Palau's status of political independence that they (the US) be given the right to store and operate nuclear vessels and weapons on Palauan territory. They continue to hold this right.

Palau's rapidly growing main industry has been tourism in the twenty-first century, with the majority of visitors coming from Japan, Taiwan and the US. The number of annual visitors currently outnumbers the overall population by far. Under the aegis of the semi-governmental Palau Legacy Project, the country has been trying to boost its own brand of ecotourism, in which traditional chants (chelitákl rechuódel) and dances play a particular role. The relationship between Palauan cultural history and tourism, however, has been complex. Addressing the islands' encompassing vulnerability as a Small Island Developing State in the face of climate change and environmental challenges, including the impact of large-scale tourism on natural resources, the campaign video revolves around one central question: "Legends help Palau preserve its past. But can they protect its future?"[15] This question refers to the complexities of Palau's post-colonial present: climate change, a seemingly uncontrollable growth of tourism and the injustice of global market economies, all against the backdrop of a turbulent colonial history spanning several centuries that has left its lasting mark on the islands. In tarrying with twenty-first-century reality, initiatives such as the Palau Legacy Project and the rising number of traditional arts performances suggest that chants such as olángch seem to provide a resource to which to turn. One reason for this, *Music Worlding in Palau* suggests, lies in what I call meaningfulness.

Meaningfulness

This meaningfulness is, by definition, experiential. A key argument of this book is that meaningfulness, manifesting as musical sensation, is a prerequisite for *knowing* through music: only where things fall into place, where it all makes sense in the sensation of a musical event, can knowledge

15 The campaign video is available at https://palaupledge.com, last accessed 20 March 2019. See Abels (2018a) for an in-depth exploration of the campaign and the role attributed to the performing arts within the initiative.

emerge from the diffuse energy circulating in the feedback loop between musical structures, historical narratives, social formations and cultural meshworks in the Ingoldian sense. Musical meaningfulness, that is to say, gives rise to the Gestalten at the heart of what we think we comprehend through music (and only music). This book is invested in exploring these Gestalten.

Scholars in Pacific studies, and Western Pacific music studies in particular, have long observed that music constitutes a distinct type of knowledge in many Pacific cultures, offering nuanced accounts of the relationship between knowledge and sound-based performance practices (e.g., Diettrich 2016, 2018a, 2018b, 2021; Drüppel 2009; Parmentier 1987; Steiner 2015; to name but a few). They have also suggested more recently that music's relational and ecological complexity is a central category for the analysis of traditional performing arts in the Pacific Islands (Diettrich 2018b; Rehuher 1998; Schwartz 2012). Extending this work, I argue that Palauan chelitákl rechuódel enable a deeply relational and, importantly, uniquely *musical* way of comprehending the world (cf. Ingold 2013). If the intellectual project of this book is to better understand the distinctly musical workings of this comprehension that, by all evidence, forms such an important epistemic register in twenty-first-century Palau, then the notion of musical meaningfulness may be a missing link. The sensation of musical meaningfulness results from the transductive process in which a material sound event becomes a shared feeling loaded with historicity, relationality and connectivity. The notion of meaningfulness suggests that music-making is a felt-bodily practice moulding the lived experience of being in the world: It brings out the turbulent complexity of one's relationality and reaches out actively to one's surroundings. One could argue that music and dance are also dwelling practices: They do not merely represent or occupy time and space. Instead, they are strategies of (felt-)bodily practising and rearranging time and space and, as such, of world-making through the felt body (Abels 2020a). Emphasising the inseparability of (felt-)bodily practices and world-making, process philosopher Erin Manning calls this process "body-worlding": a movement that gives rise to a sensation of self that "is one with the world, not body/world but body worlding" (Manning [2009] 2012, 6). I believe that thinking with meaningfulness can be crucial to making this rather abstract idea analytically productive in the Palauan context.

The importance my interlocutors attribute to chelitákl rechuódel suggests that this is a repertoire allowing navigation, if not temporary integration, of the competing frames contemporary Palau is made up of.

To them, the meaningfulness with which the traditional performing arts are imbued does not resolve any of the frictions and contradictions that arise between these frames. Instead, it renders the connection between the fixed bits, the scattered pieces and their in-between experienceable: somehow, they seem to suggest, it all belongs. In making meaningfulness felt, the performance of a traditional chant seems to offer a fleeting sensation of belonging in the post-colonial predicament of Palau; a vague and unspecific moment of atmospheric meaningfulness where it all makes sense. The sonic, and more specifically the musical, seem to be particularly capable of rendering this meaningfulness experienceable. Eisenlohr has called this the "sonic privilege" vis-à-vis the holistic character of sensory experience. Referring to the sensory dimensions of religious experience, he argues:

> The sonic [...] lies in close proximity to the holistic Gestalten, the atmospheric core of the sensory spectacle of religion. This atmospheric core cannot be reduced to single sensory impressions, but emerges prior to the singling out of such impressions, whether visual, auditory, or otherwise. (Eisenlohr 2019)

What is this sonic meaningfulness? More specifically, what is musical meaningfulness?

Schmitz on Meaningfulness

I adopt the term meaningfulness (Bedeutsamkeit) from the work of Hermann Schmitz, who himself derived the term through Heidegger (see Riedel 2020a, 268). Schmitz is an unusual figure in German-speaking philosophy and arguably one of the most radical and iconoclastic thinkers in the field. His interest as a neo-phenomenologist is in the immediacy of the lived experience and the material *a priori* of phenomena and sensations (Andermann 2007, 254). His fascination is in the qualia of phenomena-as-experienced. Schmitz's focus on the immediate lived experience grows from his critique of what he calls the "dominant European intellectualist culture"[16] (Schmitz 2007, 7): the historical ontological and epistemological assumptions that form the exclusive foundation of North Atlantic philosophy. He calls

16 Original text: " [die] dominante[...] europäische[...] Intellektualkultur".

these assumptions the "abstraction basis" (Abstraktionsbasis), by which he understands

> the tenaciously powerful layer of things taken for granted that form a filter between the immediate experience of life, on the one hand, and concepts, theories and evaluations, on the other hand. The abstraction basis decides what is taken to be important enough that it finds its way into theories and evaluations through words and terms.[17] (Schmitz 2007, 11)

Schmitz is interested in the immediate lived experience precisely because it does not pass through the filter he describes above. He, thus, deliberately reaches for what is prior to the hegemony of the abstraction basis. He dates the emergence of the dominant European intellectualist culture, with its focus on ratio and quantification, its disregard for the lived experience and the felt body, and its latent mind/body divide, to the ancient Greece of the second half of the fifth century BC. Since then, he claims, the abstraction basis has not been changed to any significant extent (Schmitz 2007, 12), and it has managed to systematically mute the significance of the felt-bodily experience from North Atlantic thinking:

> 2400 years later [the abstraction basis of European thought] still profoundly distorts our experience of ourselves and the world. The conceptual outlook in which we find ourselves is dominated by the mind/body dualism in its various guises and with its consequent conceptions of both the person (as split up into the two fundamentally distinct spheres of body and mind) and the world (as split up into the domains of res extensa and res cogitans). What gets lost from view, on these dominant perspectives, is the felt body with its quite specific dynamics, rhythms of stirrings and corporeal movements, and its ways of being constantly involved in the manifold forms of holistic sensing of situations – rich modes of experience that cannot adequately be narrowed down to perception by means of the sense organs. Instead, sensing by means of the felt body is a holistic exchange of corporeal dynamics, a vibrant attunement to meaningful surroundings. (Schmitz, Slaby, and Müllan 2011, 244)

17 Original text: "[…] die zäh prägende Schicht vermeintlicher Selbstverständlichkeiten, die zwischen der unwillkürlichen Lebenserfahrung einerseits, den Begriffen, Theorien und Bewertungen andereseits den Filter bildet. […] Die Abstraktionsbasis entscheidet darüber, was so wichtig genommen wird, daß es durch Worte und Begriffe Eingang in Theorien und Bewertungen findet."

His project, in short, is to leave behind everything that has gone wrong in the North Atlantic philosophical tradition – and to him, that is nearly everything that happened after about 500 BC. Working toward this goal, Schmitz's lifework amounts to

> a systematic phenomenology of the felt body and the various forms of embodied experience [... It] draws out several implications of this broad approach, resulting in phenomenological theories of subjectivity and personhood, of emotions and feelings, of space and time, of art, of religious and spiritual experience, of morals and law – to name just the key themes. (Schmitz, Slaby, and Müllan 2011, 242)

It is important to note that the felt body, to Schmitz, is not an oppositional binary to the material body. Schmitz's felt body's

> mode of existence cannot be separated from its becoming manifest to the conscious subject in specific kinds of corporeal feeling. These corporeal feelings are crucially distinct from what usually gets described under the term 'bodily sensations' (in psychology or the analytical philosophy of mind): the [felt] body becomes manifest in holistic corporeal stirrings such as vigour and languidness, in one's being corporeally gripped by emotions and room-filling atmospheres, and equally in one's corporeal orientation in the world in contexts of perception, action and spatial navigation. Moreover, the [felt] body presents an absolute location of subjective orientation and opens the dimension of a predimensional, surfaceless space.[18] (Schmitz, Slaby, and Müllan 2011, 245)

This notion of surfaceless space is crucial to the key concepts of Schmitzian neo-phenomenology: the felt body, atmospheres and, in the context of this book, musical Gestalt. Schmitz's space is primarily not locational, measurable Cartesian space ("Ortsraum"), which he regards as a reductive representation of space. Instead, the felt body encounters space as pre-dimensional and surfaceless. To Schmitz, these are the "deeper layers" of spatiality (2016, 83): superficial, locational space and deeper space are separated by the surface, the category any measurability relies on. Measurable space is insignificant to felt-bodily experience: "The alienation of space from the felt body begins

18 Schmitz, Slaby, and Müllan (2011) translate the German "Leib" as "feeling body" in this text. I have used "[felt] body" in the quotes above where Schmitz, Slaby, and Müllan use "feeling body" to avoid terminological confusion and maintain consistency.

with the surface",[19] he contends. Conversely, this means that the felt body is particularly receptive to surfaceless phenomena, and these include, for instance, not only the wind and weather but also the sonic and, by extension, music. Indeed, sound itself has an aspatial phenomenology (Krueger 2011, 64; O'Shaughnessy 1984, 199). Music, a surfaceless phenomenon, thus, allows for the temporary familiarisation of time and space with the felt body; as such, it also allows for the temporary familiarisation of the felt body with its own spatiality, its own temporality. The key mechanisms in this process are atmospheric suggestions of motion (Bewegungssuggestionen). Chapter 2 will offer a more practical exploration of the concept. Here, it is important to note that sonic events exude suggestions of motion, which people can then take in felt-bodily; in Schmitz's terminology, they "encorporate" (einleiben) them. The moment several people encorporate a given musical situation's suggestions of movement in a similar manner, motional patterns emerge – patterns which interrelate and connect those who are encorporating the suggestions of movement. Schmitz calls this communitization process "solidary encorporation". The latter creates shared situations in which people temporarily unite in a "We-Leib" (Wir-Leib) – a felt-bodily collective that includes all the individual "I-Leiber" (Schmitz 1978, 96). The solidary encorporation of musical suggestions of motion, thus, holds an intrinsically social dimension, which is central to the communitization capacity of music. Music, and dance, in other words, have the capacity to render one's being-in-relation experienceable through solidary encorporation; moreover, they also allow for the modulation of this situational relationality. This is where music's transformational potential lies. From the perspective of Schmitzian neo-phenomenology, music is social becoming rendered aesthetically experienceable in a distinctly sonic way.

Surfaceless: Beyond the Binaries

Conceiving both the sonic and the felt body as surfaceless, Schmitz's ideas open up analytical avenues leading beyond the binaries of subject vs. object and the internal vs. the external. Schmitz defines the felt body as everything a person experiences within the vicinity of their body as belonging to themselves "without drawing on the five senses and the perceptual body schema parasitic on them" (Schmitz, Slaby, and Müllan 2011, 253). "Within the vicinity" here does not mean within the boundaries of their material

19 Original text: "[M]it der Fläche beginnt die Entfremdung des Raums vom Leib".

body: the felt body is a surfaceless phenomenon independent from relative positionality measured as distance.

> The felt body is, for Schmitz, neither physical materiality nor a regime of the senses (Schmitz [1978] 2015, 17); its very essence is, instead, *dynamism*. This dynamism of the felt-body (*sic*) centres in an axis Schmitz terms vital drive ("*vitaler Antrieb*") which unfolds in the "intertwined tendencies of contraction and expansion" of "tension and swelling" (Schmitz 2009, 34). Since the felt-body is not a secluded entity but is, instead, an organic bundle of dynamics, it is structurally open to situational dynamics. Crucially, sound, music and atmosphere are also essentially dynamics – they all take shape in expansion and contraction, tension and swelling, and operate by way of stirring and [suggestions of motion] (Schmitz [1978] 2005, 245). (Riedel 2018, 178; italics in original)

The felt body manifests in corporeal stirrings, such as affective involvement. It extends, indivisible, as pre-dimensional (i.e., not three-dimensional) volume; its dynamism unfolds as expansion and contraction (Schmitz 2009, 16). Schmitz clarifies the relationship between expansion and contraction using the example of inhalation: One feels one's intake of breath as a "felt-bodily isle" (Leibesinsel) near the chest or stomach. In this isle,

> contraction and expansion compete, with first expansion and then, towards the end of inhaling, contraction dominating; this island is voluminous, but it is not surrounded by surfaces or dissectible into surfaces. Hence, it is not three-dimensional. […] Such a pre-dimensional volume also appears in other areas of [felt-bodily] experience, for instance, […] as the volume of sound, which, is sharp, pointed and narrow in the case of a shrill whistle, but expansive and soft in a dull gong or chime. The felt body is nearly always occupied by such felt-bodily isles.[20] (Schmitz 2009, 16)

20 Original text: "[Das Einatmen wird in der Leibesinsel gespürt,] in der simultan Engung und Weitung konkurrieren, wobei anfangs die Weitung und später, gegen Ende des Einatmens, die Engung überwiegt; diese Insel ist voluminös, aber weder von Flächen umschlossen noch durch Flächen zerlegbar und daher auch nicht dreidimensional […]. Solch ein prädimensionales Volumen kommt auch in anderen Erfahrungsbereichen vor, etwa […] als Schallvolumen, das beim schrillen Pfiff scharf, spitz und eng ist, beim dumpfen Gong oder Glockenschlag aber ausladend weit und weich. Der Leib ist fast immer […] von solchen Leibesinseln besetzt […]." (Schmitz 2009, 16) For more on Schmitz' felt-bodily isles and on feeling oneself as a felt body, see Griffero (2017, 59-65).

If the pre-dimensional volume of Schmitz's felt body is not bounded by surfaces, then the felt body cannot, unlike the material body, be defined based on its distance to objects, people or anything else. Its boundedness lies more in how it sets itself apart from the surrounding vastness

> in an absolutely local way, as is also the case in the perception of the climate, such as when one steps out of an airless room into the open and, inhaling deeply, feels liberated because one can now unfold felt-bodily into a vastness that accepts [one's felt body into it] but does not dissolve [one's felt body].[21] (Schmitz 2009, 17)

So, the felt body's dynamics of contraction and expansion are stimulated by the vital drive. The latter mediates the motion of both expansion, which widens the felt body, and contraction, which keeps together the felt-bodily isles. Schmitz compares the vital drive to the pressure of the "steam under which people are like a kettle"[22] (Schmitz 2009, 19). At the same time, the vital drive requires the antagonism of contraction as tension and expansion as swelling. However, it is not the only mediator between contraction and expansion. Another is felt-bodily direction (leibliche Richtung), which, unlike geometric direction, does not rely on lines (and, hence, superficial space) in any way. Felt-bodily direction leads out of contraction and into expansion, for instance, in the case of the gaze. It constitutes a non-cognitive body schema. Schmitz calls this schema the motor-bodily schema. The motor-bodily schema offers "orientation vis-à-vis the spatial relations of the limbs" (ibid.). In addition to the neural processing of sensory stimuli, it is the mechanism which, among many other things, prevents pedestrians on the streets from bumping into one another. It is the motor-bodily schema that makes them follow the co-ordinated human flow of movement that prevents this from happening. This is a rather literary example of the more abstract mechanism at work: the motor-bodily schema modulates, through the felt body, a person's connectedness with other people, which itself is in a constant state of flux. At the same time, it is related to the phenomenon Schmitz calls solidary encorporation (solidarische Einleibung): through the

21 Original text: "[Leibliche Abgrenzung] ist vielmehr in absolut-örtlicher Abgehobenheit aus seiner umgebenden Weite begründet, wie sie auch in der klimatischen Wahrnehmung vorkommt, wenn man z.B. aus dumpfer Luft ins Freie tritt und sich im tiefen Aufatmen befreit fühlt, weil man sich in einer aufnehmenden Weite leiblich spürbar entfalten kann, ohne in ihr zu zergehen."

22 Original text: "Dampf, unter dem ein Mensch wie ein Kessel steht".

latter, the vital drive brings people into experiential connection with one another without creating a hierarchy among the encorporated.

Against this backdrop, a Schmitzian take on music would be as follows: When people participate in music, they feel the music within the realm of their felt bodies as belonging to themselves because they are – potentially or actually – engaging in contraction and expansion and, therefore, inseparable from the music in their felt-bodily experience. Music suggests motion to Schmitz. Such suggestions of motion are "prefigurations of motion on resting or moving *Gestalten,* or on movement; [they always extend beyond] the movement that will possibly be executed"[23] (Schmitz 2016, 67). Suggestions of motion are the mechanisms that enable felt-bodily communication (Schmitz 2014, 85) and, like Schmitz's synesthetic characters, they have bridging qualities (Brückenqualitäten) which facilitate encorporation in the first place. Synesthetic characters are intermodal properties of sensory qualia. Schmitz gives the example of the adjective "cool": one can only describe a person as "cool" if one knows about the felt-bodily experience of coolness. Synesthetic characters, therefore, invest a category of felt-bodily experience in sensory qualia (Schmitz 1964).

Bridging qualities are key to musical meaningfulness: They are what makes a specific musical, for a specific person, so much more than a mere 'carrier' of meaning. They enable music to seize a person and their entire being felt-bodily. Suggestions of motion, in short, stimulate contraction and expansion; bridging qualities modulate them. This is the mechanism through which music speaks to the vital drive. In itself, the vital drive is neither facing a specific direction nor directed in any way. It is located more in the dynamic interlocking of contraction and expansion. It can transcend the boundaries of bodies and connect felt bodies with one another and with, in Schmitz's words, "felt-bodiless Gestalten" (leiblose Gestalten). This connection, in turn, potentially facilitates solidary encorporation. The category facilitating the most immediate type of encorporation are Schmitz's half things:

> Half things are different from things primarily by virtue of two properties: 1. Their duration may be interrupted, i.e., they go and return but it does not make any sense to ask what they did in the meantime; and 2. while the causality of things is tripartite, divided into cause (e.g., a falling

23 Suggestions of motion in the original German text are "Vorzeichnungen von Bewegung an ruhenden oder bewegten Gestalten oder an Bewegungen, immer über das Ausmaß der eventuell ausgeführten Bewegung hinaus".

> stone), impact (e.g., you are being hit) and effect (e.g., the item that was hit breaks), the causality of half things is bipartite and immediate: i.e., cause and effect are one and the same thing.[24] (Schmitz 2014, 84f.)

Sound is a half thing for Schmitz. As a half thing, it modulates contraction and expansion as a dialogical dynamism; the vital drive keeps this dynamism going; and the motor-bodily schema, finding orientation in music and musical structures, offers the sensation of being-in-relation with others whose motor-bodily schema finds orientation in music. This is the process facilitating the solidary encorporation of music. This particular mode of being-in-relation can only be experienced through sound, which makes it a distinctly sonic experience.

Any experience of sound is obviously intrinsically synesthetic. And yet, there is something uniquely sonic about it that accounts for its central role in creating atmospheres. The atmospheric Gestalten characterising a musical situation cannot be reduced to single sensory impressions but emerge prior to the singling out of such impressions, be they visual, auditory or other. But if the sonic lies in close proximity to those Gestalten, then sound is situated at the atmospheric core of sensory experience (Eisenlohr 2019). The notion of a sonic privilege points to the immediacy of the sonic experience as central in the transductive process that turns a material sonic event into an atmospheric Gestalt. This immediacy is why the sonic, for Schmitz, is a half thing. When listening, we experience our felt body in its temporo-spatial directionality: listening to it, we hear a voice within ourselves, but simultaneously, that voice is also coming from a particular direction and is itself in the continuous process of contraction and expansion. The felt body's directionality, that is to say, goes far beyond cognitive aspects of perception and affect in the psychological sense.[25]

Musical structure unfolds through specific parameters. These parameters modulate, both temporally and spatially, contraction and expansion as well

24 Original text: "Halbdinge unterscheiden sich von Volldingen durch zwei Eigenschaften: 1. Ihre Dauer ist unterbrechbar, d.h. sie kommen, gehen und kommen wieder, ohne dass es Sinn hat, zu fragen, wie sie die Zwischenzeit verbracht haben. 2. Während die Kausalität der Dinge dreigliedrig ist, gegliedert in Ursache (z.B. fallender Stein), Einwirkung (z.B. Stoß) und Effekt (z.B. Zertrümmerung oder Verrückkung des getroffenen Gegenstandes), ist die Kausalität der Halbdinge zweigliedrig und unmittelbar, indem Ursache und Einwirkung zusammenfallen." Griffero (2017) translates half things as quasi-things.

25 Addressing the ethical dimension inherent in the Islamic cultural history of listening, anthropologist Charles Hirschkind identified a number of bodily predispositions for listening practices (2006, e.g., 82).

as tension and relaxation, and this modulation is experienced in and by the felt body: changes in pitch, the dynamic friction of tonal complexity, rhythmical fluctuations, changes in volume, etc. Through these modulations, music's complex suggestions of motion seize the felt body. The moment they seize several felt bodies, they orientate those felt bodies' dynamics of contraction and expansion, establishing a relationship between them. The result is a specifically musical form of solidary encorporation, which is prior to the strategies of identification, affiliation and discrimination that are often taken to be central to musicological narratives of musical meaning. Music also mediates the connectivity of felt bodies as experiential fields (Erlebnisfeld). This is, not least, a precondition for the phenomenon of musical intimacy: only through such mediation can experiential fields shared felt-bodily, in which bridging qualities can yield particular effects, e.g., affective proximity, come about. The immediacy of this involvement accounts for its considerable and, simultaneously, fragile, atmospheric potential – an atmospheric potential mostly asubjective in nature.

Musical Meaning | Musical Meaningfulness

Such a fragile atmospheric potential is naturally difficult to describe in words, let alone in scholarly language, which is invested in argumentative unambiguity and logical clarity. This, however, does not necessarily make it less accessible for scholarly inquiry than other phenomena. Quite the contrary, I believe that it is a commonplace but misleading assumption, cultivated, not least, by music scholars, to think that music's efficacy ultimately derives from a powerful and enigmatic quality which cannot possibly be specified (Kramer 2012, 396; also see Riedel 2015). Such a perspective implicitly or explicitly distinguishes musical meaning as signifié from that ineffable quality of music which, in this way, becomes the mysterious, by definition inaccessible proprium of music studies.

Meaning has been the subject of a great number of long-standing discussions against the backdrop of a range of intellectual traditions, including structuralism, semiotics, discourse analysis and hermeneutics. These discussions all consider meaning but are subject to a highly restrictive discourse that regards music as interpretive (e.g., Kramer 2011, 65): meaning can be hermeneutically specified, circumscribed or even described if only to a certain degree (cf. Chapin and Kramer 2009; Goehr 1993; Kramer 2002, 2011). Foregoing most of the complex history of the term for now, I do not intend to essentialise the complex history of theories about musical

meaning in music studies and beyond. Instead, focusing on the corporeality of what music means, I try to take a different perspective: one addressing meaningfulness as atmospheric manifestation and corporeal impression. Schmitz characterises meaningfulness as "internally diffuse" or "manifoldly chaotic"[26] (1990, 19). Meaningfulness consists of a "whole gathering of meanings", but these meanings are not, or not necessarily, individually identifiable or describable, except in metaphorical terms. Instead, they may be experienced as atmospheres or themes. Meaningfulness, thus, refers to loaded impressions of a whole, according to Schmitz. These impressions are loaded because they communicate more meaningfulness than people can "tease out using language" (Schmitz 1990, 19) – in other words, meaningfulness goes somewhere words cannot follow. We are dealing with

> something manifold which is tersely closed and detached, on the one hand, and peculiarly internally diffuse, on the other: The situations in question are not all discrete and, hence, they cannot be specified, for it is not always clear in the way they relate to one another which is identical to which and which is different from which.[27] (Schmitz 2005, 104)

Meaningfulness is, therefore, by no means an opposite of "meaning" but one possible manifestation of what music means. If the "mind/body problem" (Crane and Patterson 2000; Leys 2011) is still prevalent in the North Atlantic academy, then "meaning" has been associated with "mind". Meaningfulness, however, leaves the "mind" part of the dichotomy; if we consider the felt body (Leib) to be the nexus between an atmosphere and an individual, then it is located in between the body and mind and relates to both. This in-between space is where atmospheres do their work (cf. Vadén and Torvinen 2014). Music's internally diffuse meaningfulness may, at times, present itself as an atmosphere that will be experienced with the felt body, leveraging both affective and interpretative frames but exceeding both by way of its primarily corporeal experiential quality.

What might be the analytical merit of the term meaningfulness? Schmitz's notion of meaningfulness hinges on the definition that feelings "are atmospheres poured out spatially that move the felt (not the

26 "Binnendiffus" and "mannigfaltig chaotisch" in the original text.

27 Original text: "[M]an hat es also mit einem Mannigfaltigen zu tun, das prägnant geschlossen und abgehoben ist, aber doch eigentümlich binnendiffus: Die vorschwebenden Sachverhalte usw. sind nicht alle einzeln und lassen sich deshalb auch nicht aufzählen, weil in ihrem Verhältnis zueinander nicht oder nicht in allen Fällen feststeht, welche mit welchen identisch und welche von welchen verschieden sind."

material) body" (Schmitz, Slaby, and Müllan 2011, 247). Feelings are "out there", in other words, and, as atmospheres, they have the capacity of drawing in people who happen to be located in the place inhabited by these feelings. With this, Schmitz takes a tough stance on what he calls the "psychologistic-reductionist-introjectionist objectification" prevalent in North Atlantic philosophy, which, according to him, results in "the consequent dogma that man consists of body and soul" but "fails in that the relation of the conscious subject to their private inner sphere cannot be adequately characterised, even though a number of suggestions are in place" (Schmitz, Slaby, and Müllan 2011, 247). Looking at the various ways in which the felt body affords corporeal sensation and, with this, corporeal dynamics, Schmitz directs his analysis toward the (felt) bodily practices involved in humans' interactions with the world. The felt body, to Schmitz, is highly sensitive to the space around it, and especially to the spatially "poured out" feelings often called atmosphere. Its involvement with its surroundings is "both realized and mediated by corporeal feelings that in turn make manifest (disclose) goings-on in the environment" (Schmitz, Slaby, and Müllan 2011, 245). These corporeal feelings react to the environment's suggestions of motion by expanding or contracting vis-à-vis the world. This is an immediate, pre-reflective way of intermingling with the world that Schmitz calls "self-consciousness without identification [… I]t can be characterized further by noting the irrevocable 'mine-ness' that is stamped upon every experience of a conscious subject" (Schmitz, Slaby, and Müllan 2011, 245).

Suggestions of motion, according to Schmitz, are "prefigurations of motion of figures that are either in repose or motion, or of motions; [these prefigurations] always exceed the scope of the motion that may actually be executed" (Schmitz 2014, 76; translated from the original German). This facilitates encorporation and is, thus, the key to understanding how a specific atmosphere's musical suggestions of motion are capable of taking hold of people completely and making them want to dance and sing along; or, in the case of the omengeredákl example I quoted at the beginning of this chapter, of suggesting an encompassing sense of belonging to them. To participate in this way is a manner of knowing and relating to the world with the felt body, "a mode of thought, already in the act" (Manning and Massumi 2014, vii) that takes place in the felt body. Atmospheres do not dictate feelings; they are, instead, spatially present feelings that activate modalities for the (felt) body to align with the world. These modalities are experienced as musical meaningfulness – the sensation of everything making sense to which the omengeredákl singers in Melekeok referred.

Meaningfulness in music, thus, may be experienced as atmospheric suggestions of motion. The key difference between musical meaningfulness and musical meanings is that the latter are the result of interpretive techniques attributing meaning, whereas meaningfulness emerges from their specific forms of articulation and manifests as a corporeal experience. Still, meaning and meaningfulness are not entirely separate because the attribution of meaning is always taking place vis-à-vis the (felt) body. Their relationship is one of both tension and simultaneity. This is what makes culturally specific atmospheres, such as the ones I will describe in the following chapters, possible. Meaningfulness highlights other facets of the complex ways in which music has meaning: those that the felt body immediately tunes into and resonates with but that largely escape interpretive techniques. The moment music becomes manifest as an atmosphere, it charges situations with complex meaningfulness. This happens through the experience of music's distinctive aesthetics, as Victoria, Oribech and the other women suggested when they said, "[And] when you know [how you're supposed to fill in your vocal part], it'll make a lot of sense to you. You'll know what to do." It also manifests in an otengelel a chesóls, making the visceral connection of contemporary life on the islands, with its spiritual history, tangible in the lived experience of the chant. This statement aligns with anthropologist Karen Nero's observation that in Palau, as in much of Micronesia,

> [...] aesthetic emphasis is on the perfection of the performance rather than the creation of a lasting object. When perfection is achieved, the thrill of recognition in the audience fulfills local sensibilities, but translates poorly into academic discourse. (Nero 1999, 257)

Meaningfulness, thus, is the sum of several layers of meaning that cannot necessarily be identified or described. Typically experienced as atmosphere or theme, it refers to the manifold impressions of a whole, which "become meaningful because they communicate more meaningfulness than we can possibly describe with words"[28] (Schmitz 1990, 19). We are, thus, dealing with

> a manifold phenomenon that is clearly bounded and detached, yet unmistakeably internally diffuse: The phenomena in question are not separate from one another. Hence, they cannot be specified. This is because it is not or not in all cases clear in their relationship with one

28 Original text: "[...] die dadurch vielsagend sind, daß sie uns mehr an Bedeutsamkeit mitteilen, als wir sagend aus ihnen herausholen können."

> another which is identical to which and which are different from which.[29] (Schmitz 2005, 104)

The internally diffuse meaningfulness of music yields its effect through suggestions of motion as atmosphere. This means that it is experienced felt-bodily, affectively and, at the same time, interpretatively.

Musical Meaningfulness and Atmospheres

The sonic immediacy and affective power of a sensation of belonging, such as the one described at the beginning of this chapter, derives from the felt-bodily communication among those present in the situation. The situation was a classic example of the process Schmitz calls "solidary encorporation". However, simultaneously, that same sensation of belonging lies latent in the sonic materiality of the chant-as-cultural-memory itself. To chant omengeredákl is to enact the experiential knowledge of how to evoke that latency atmospherically. The audience, felt-bodily attuned to responding to that memory, increasingly encorporated the chant's sonic suggestions of motion. They were affected by and themselves co-produced the atmosphere of the Schmitzian we-Leib. This is how the omengeredákl became meaningful in this particular situation: in felt-bodily feeling itself, for the we-Leib, the past, the present and the future coalesced in a shared sonic experience for the fleeting moment of the chant. The meaningfulness arising from that experience was brought about felt-bodily, rendering the material sonic connection between one's thrownness, in the Heideggerian sense, one's affective arrangements (Slaby, Mühlhoff, and Wüschner 2019) and sensual perception, and historical and cultural narratives experienceable in the felt body. It brought to the fore, in other words, the felt-bodily imbrication of individuals and community with their life-world. Music as atmosphere, thus, is profoundly relational in nature. Music's capacity to render this relationality felt in both all its complexity and specificity is what accounts for music's supposedly ineffable qualities to a significant extent.

29 Original text: "[M]an hat es also mit einem Mannigfaltigen zu tun, das prägnant geschlossen und abgehoben ist, aber doch eigentümlich binnendiffus: Die vorschwebenden Sachverhalte usw. sind nicht alle einzeln und lassen sich deshalb auch nicht aufzählen, weil in ihrem Verhältnis zueinander nicht oder nicht in allen Fällen feststeht, welche mit welchen identisch und welche von welchen verschieden sind."

Meaningfulness, internally diffuse, is experienced mostly as atmosphere. As such, it affects the felt body: Musical suggestions of motion generate and emphasise relationships and, in doing so, they render possible both friction and resonance between the divergent frames that make up the human experience. In the case of the omengeredákl performance, suggestions of motion affected I-Leiber to join and form a we-Leib. As part of the we-Leib, they also evoked narratives of the (colonial) past and (post-colonial) present as discursive formations, rendering both the omengeredákl and the encorporation process intrinsically political. But they also opened resonant spaces (see Chapter 5) for felt-bodily attunement. A we-Leib, that is to say, offers strategies of social positioning within historical and political formations through atmosphere. Importantly, such atmospheric positioning through attunement to meaningfulness is inseparable from the affective and felt-bodily experience of the latter. As music suggests motion through its structure and acoustic qualities, it is capable of bringing people together in the experience of such motion. The encorporation of musical motion, thus, is social becoming rendered as aesthetic experience. To listen is always also to potentially belong.

Music not only co-produces atmospheres, it also allows for fresh analytical approaches to their workings. Historicity, spatiality, temporality, sociality – they all have a feel, a temporary atmospheric nature springing from a given situation. As music leads these and other felt dimensions of human life beyond what they stand for, it is a cultural practice of Böhme's aesthetic labour. The aesthetic labour of music has affective capacity precisely because it cannot necessarily be broken down into specific signifiés. This is because both music and atmosphere are located in the space of the unspecific, characterised by an in-betweenness that makes it both an objective and a subjective experience (Vadén and Torvinen 2014, 211), and something that is neither. Capable of rendering this unspecific yet powerful atmospheric meaningfulness experienceable, music 'knows' something about atmospheres, and this invites further inquiry into how these processes work. The following chapters will pursue this avenue by addressing various dimensions of music in Palau as meaningful.

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Figure 6 Bai ornament in Galáp (Ngaraard) as documented by Augustin Krämer during the Hamburg South Seas Expedition. (Krämer 1929b, double plate 16) Krämer's description: "The terrible singer, right Ngardórok, left Ngarsúl, right center dance platform with men in women's skirts performing the ruk dance, far left the singer, who when his wife (left of him) came, went away with her, after which the remaining also left before the performance was finished and complained." (KETC 2017c, 82)

2 Vaguely Specific: Resonant Historicity with Chesóls

Abstract
This chapter explores the conceptual ramifications of meaningfulness as an analytical concept for musical performance. Expounding the concept's scope, the chapter introduces the neo-phenomenology of atmospheres (Schmitz, Böhme) more systematically and proposes ways of thinking through music with atmospheres. Based on an in-depth analysis of chesóls, a Palauan solo chant, I flesh out the layered complexity of musical meaningfulness: it often presents itself as an atmosphere that will be experienced with the felt body, leveraging both affective and interpretative frames but exceeding both by way of its primarily corporeal experiential quality. This finding opens vistas to overcoming several of the binaries lingering in more dominant scholarly traditions of thinking through affective publics.

Keywords: chesóls, resonance, historicity, Hermann Schmitz, meaningfulness

The girl getting on the stage is about 12 years old. Anxiously, she reaches for the microphone. We are in the early 2000s, and this is Palau's annual Women's Conference. The daughter of a hereditary leader and, as such, a prospective hereditary leader herself, she is about to perform in front of a good hundred women in the audience. Not quite comfortable, she starts her chant. Her voice is a little shaky, and her vocal rendition is closer to a melodic tune than a traditional chesóls recitation, which would be narrated rather than sung. As she concludes the first verse of her chant, silence ensues. A little coughing here and there, someone spitting out their betel nut quid. The chanter gazes at the audience; the audience seems confused. Finally, one of the women responds: "hm… uei!"; others join in. The chanter proceeds to

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Sound example 2 Chesóls, chanted on the occasion of a Women's Conference in Koror/Palau, early 2000s.

the second stanza, the words of which are familiar to everyone in the room. As the verse is nearing its end, she is getting increasingly uncomfortable, anticipating another awkward moment of silence. But a few of the older women seated in the first rows have started looking at her reassuringly, smiling. As she finishes her verse and raises her eyes to the audience, they respond loudly and clearly: "hm… uei!".

In this chapter, I am interested in the mechanics that bring about shared sensations through music. That morning at the Women's Conference, that sensation was one of confusion – and then a discrete yet powerful we-spirit emerged. Both took a powerful hold of the audience in the course of the chesóls performance, even though, at first, the audience seemed to have difficulty identifying the chant as chesóls. To unpack the efficacy of the performance, initially unlikely at first but received overwhelmingly positively in the end, in the following, I will, firstly, introduce chesóls as a genre. It will become clear in the course of the chapter that musical meaningfulness is never straightforward but always a matter of layered complexity. It often presents itself as an atmosphere experienced with the felt body, leveraging both affective and interpretative frames but exceeding both by far owing to their primarily corporeal quality. An audience may not yet quite understand what exactly is going on in a musical situation such as the end of the first stanza of the girl's chesóls. But their felt bodies are already in the process of attuning to the situation, exploring it with their own means. My analysis of chesóls will show how both atmospheres and meaningfulness as analytical concepts implicitly address a much broader discourse straddling psychology and philosophy. The two concepts have the capacity to open new ideas about how music can mean things to certain people because it has "no object other than the situation's own intensity" (McGraw 2016, 142). This chapter, thus, demonstrates how very disparate and often existential layers of meaning and meaningfulness coalesce in the experience of sound in situations characterised by musical atmospheres. Musical meaningfulness is transformative but it is also simultaneously always transforming itself. Musical atmospheres, as they

probe Indigenous and contemporary frameworks of temporo-spatial felt-bodily alignment, lay bare a process which opens analytical doors to much wider experiential dimensions. Given the competing nature of Indigenous and contemporary temporo-spatialities in the post-colonial Pacific Island world, an analysis of musical meaningfulness in chesóls also leads right into issues located at the heart of layered post-colonial epistemological configurations.

In the following, I will trace the atmosphere of belonging and solidarity that the chesóls performance at the Women's Conference produced back to the distinct sense of historicity exuded by the chant itself. This chapter, thus, also begins to explore the conceptual implications of Schmitz's stance that "[sound's] history often lives on"[30] in sound (Schmitz 2014, 88), which will come back time and again throughout the following chapters. It also analyses the meaningfulness of musical atmospheres as latently historical, an idea which will be discussed in a later chapter. The chapter will conclude that music, in itself a time-based performance practice, enables the sensation of meaningfulness as borne mostly from the intensity, not the extensivity, of temporal experience as intrinsically historical. As meaningfulness oscillates between the various registers of the experience it leverages, among them the affective and interpretative, it becomes much more than the sum of the parts of its experiential complexity, and the musically meaningful experience of temporality becomes 'deep', in the sense of Pacific Indigenous conceptualisations of time-space. As a result, the felt-bodily experience of the musical situation intensifies significantly. This oscillation is, in many ways, metaphorical. Importantly, however, it is also sonic vibration and, as such, of a very material nature. It is a type of kinetic energy enveloping, penetrating and infusing the human body it encounters both physically and felt-bodily. The oscillatory nature of this movement is the reason for the internal diffuseness of meaningfulness. At the same time, the double nature of this oscillation as both a material and an immaterial energetic force accounts for the overwhelming intensity musical situations produce. The processual character of this experience of intensity, finally, makes musical situations resonate with their own dynamics and becomings.

30 Original text: "Weil (die früheren Abschnitte des Erschallens) in der intensiven Dauer aber zu einem absolut unspaltbaren Verhältnis zusammengebunden werden können, lebt im augenblicklichen Schall oft noch seine Geschichte." (Schmitz 2016, 88).

Chesóls Meaningfulness

To this day, chesóls form one of the most formal musical genres in Palau. As a genre, chesóls are a "core concept" that will feature "in any Palauan discussion about the essential Palauan way" (Nero 1992, 243)[31]. When the English word 'chant' is used in a Palauan conversation, the intended meaning will often be 'chesóls', even though there are a number of other musical genres that are also considered chants. Chesóls are a metonym for traditional Palauan culture and an authoritative resource for culturally legitimised knowledge to the extent that they have been used in court as evidence in defence of Indigenous land rights. Structurally, they are recitations divided into verses. An chesóls's formal parts subdivide into a recitative line and a final line and not all the formal parts of a given chesóls have to be presented together: the performance of only one formal part at a time is just as possible. Formal parts are not necessarily identical in melodic or rhythmic details. Technically, the performance of chesóls has to be preceded by the okisel a chesóls ("rising of chesóls") and the otengelel a chesóls ("bringing down of chesóls"); see the beginning of Chapter 1.

An chesóls' recitative line consists of a loose sequence of variations on the tonal material of chesóls, the basic shape of which is standardised. This melodic cell is characterised by the repetition of one central tone in simple punctuated rhythm. To conclude such a melodic unit, the recitative line invariably bends down, roughly a whole-tone, to reach its final note. Repetition of the nuclear cells results in phrases, and the latter generally display a descending melodic line. The tendency to shift downward in pitch, already evident in the nuclear cell, is mirrored in the overall descending spatial movement of the verses. Verses generally proceed from the upper framing tonal spectrum of the tonal inventory at the beginning to lower pitch spectra, thereby producing a slightly downward-arching melodic shape. The ambitus of this movement and, thus, of an chesóls, does not normally exceed some 500 cent. Overall, the chesóls' musical style is highly recognisable to the Palauan ear: the audience will usually recognise the chant as an chesóls only a few seconds into a performance.

That day at the Women's Conference in 2005, however, the audience took a little longer to realise the performer was presenting them with an chesóls, because traditional performers usually avail themselves of a vocal style heavily shaped by the sonic peculiarities of the speaking voice. The

31 For a more detailed description of chesóls practice, see Abels (2008, 74ff).

Sound example 3 Chesóls, chanted by Rengulbai Ruluked (* around 1900 in Melekeok) on 28 September 1963. Recorded by Barbara B. Smith.

chanter here, by contrast, clearly focused on melodic movements and vocal timbre, as a singer would. Additionally, in her rendition, the chant's tonal ambitus consisted of intervals. Melodic development, for her, consisted of intervallic relationships, not of a tonal framework for vocal recitation. As a result, her vocal rendition was much closer to a melody than a recitation in its sonic effect. Furthermore, five of the six phrases that made up the first part of her chesóls finished on a strong beat, but the phrases of chesóls traditionally end on weak beats. These five phrases contained five beats each, and she accentuated each of them like a 4/4 metre. Both strong endings and regular metre are means to establish a melodic flow; however, the structural design of the traditional chesóls form and performance practice prevents exactly that. Finally, the melodic motive the singer used to begin her chesóls was characterised by an interval of a little less than three half-tones (290 cent). This is an interval that does not normally feature in chants outside of their final phrase. The inner-phrasal melodic stream commonly employs pitch distances that do not normally exceed the interval of a major second. In fact, an interval of roughly 290 cent would signal the final development of a verse in the traditional chesóls musical form. The singer was, thus, using a familiar marker of structural form in an unfamiliar structural place.

Therefore, the first line of this chesóls was bound to puzzle the listeners. And yet, once they had realised what the performance was supposed to be – the context of the formal event helped infer this situation required the performance of an chesóls – they were willing to follow customary protocol and partake in the chesóls. This affirmed the chesóls and supported the chanter by delivering the responsive shout required even though the performance departed substantially from conventional genre expectations. As selected women began to respond, "hm… uei!", and an increasing number of members of the audience joined in, a sense of community began to fill the room. It seized seat row after seat row felt-bodily, allowing the community, which from this moment on explicitly included the chanter, to reaffirm itself. This was a process of solidary encorporation of suggestions of motion.

Suggestions of Motion

Suggestions of motion, according to Schmitz, occur in pre-dimensional, surfaceless space. Owing to their diffuse nature, verbal description cannot describe them exhaustively. However, it is possible to describe their mode of operation. In contrast to suggestions of motion, both the sound and the body occupy dimensional space. To Schmitz, the felt body (Leib), however, belongs in surfaceless space, i.e., in the space of suggestions of motion. Accordingly, the felt body and suggestions of movement are potentially "becoming with" one another, in Donna Haraway's sense: they are mutually constitutive processes, a sym-poietic assemblage (Haraway 2008). The material body, dwelling in dimensional space, perceives sound as actualised movement. Specific musical parameters, such as timbre, pitch, intervallic relationships and loudness, are not themselves suggestions of motion; they are sonic enactments of suggestions of motion. Suggestions of motion, that is to say, are prior to any material manifestation in dimensional space. Only when suggestions of movement actualise into sound events, does sound becomes prehensible. Any sonic event is composed of a series of sound waves actualising. As sound waves actualise, crossing over from surfaceless to dimensional space, they blur the threshold between the felt body's pre-dimensional space and the material body's dimensional space. Musical suggestions of motion, as enacted suggestions of motion structured along cultural conventions, have the capacity to seize people felt-bodily. For this to happen, however, they first need to "pass through [felt-] bodily attunement and interact with [...] values and ideologies that mediate the power of sound" (Eisenlohr 2018b, 4). Felt-bodily attunement, thus, is the key for atmospheres to invite encorporation processes, affect people and create those shared feelings we perceive as atmospheres. If sonically enacted suggestions of motion are able, via felt-bodily attunement, to affect the felt body, then this is owing to the oscillatory dynamism that is characteristic of sound: this dynamism is closely interrelated with the Schmitzian vital drive (Schmitz, Slaby, and Müllan 2011, 45), that sequence of contraction and expansion that forms the phenomenological lifeline of human experientiality.

Where musical atmospheres seize people felt-bodily, suggestions of motion, enacted in sound, interact with their vital drive. Motion, in this context, is not a metaphorical phenomenon. It is materially palpable motion, manifesting as both sound's incipiency and that incipiency's enactment as a sonic event. To inquire into the becoming of musical atmospheres, it makes sense to identify instances of heightened structural motion in the course of a musical event, for instance, an chesóls. By that, I mean significant changes

of intensity in any acoustic parameter and, certainly, also instances where several parameters display a significant decrease or increase of energy simultaneously, thus, bundling motional energy. With a view to Mauritian *na't* recordings, Eisenlohr (2018b, 96) argues that such a multi-parameter manipulation of energetic intensity is how sound engineers manipulate sonic atmospheres creatively. It is important to note here that the resultant musical 'event-as-enacted-suggestions-of-motion' will release suggestions of motion itself. Sonic events are always a succession of physical motions; musical events are conventionally structured sonic events. This is how an atmosphere can change profoundly in the course of a performance: it is a participatory process potentially involving a multiplicity of (felt) bodies. They, in turn, depending on their individual attunement and directionality, will feed the atmospheric space with additional suggestions of motion. A motion-laden atmospheric energy loop fills the space, infuses the situation with musical meaningfulness and rearranges the temporo-spatial positionality of those it envelops and pervades.

I have non-exhaustively identified several musical parameters above which the singer of this particular chesóls performance at the Women's Conference treated somewhat unconventionally in her performance: (1) the melodic (as opposed to recitative) arrangement of the tune; (2) timbre; (3) tonal ambitus and intervallic relationships; (4) beat accentuation; and (5) phrasal design. It was the momentary discrepancy between the suggestions of motion the genre chesóls exuded and the chanter's enactment of them that caused the audience's initial confusion about their own participatory role in the chant, the genre conventions of which required their interpolating the customary shout, "hm… uei!". This was a dense moment of atmospheric disruption. It decelerated the situation's motional energy; however, this did not lead to a decrease in atmospheric density. Once the audience members had begun to attune to the new situation felt-bodily, however, the atmosphere settled. A process of solidary encorporation of the chant's suggestions of motion ensued. I argue that the olángch character of the chesóls played an important role in this process. It provided the atmospheric stability that allowed the audience to accommodate the atmospheric instabilities of this particular performance.

While structural and musical markers matter, a chant's meaningfulness arises from more than its structural recognisability. In fact, as this performance demonstrates, meaningfulness can arise even if musical characteristics are altered beyond recognition. Music, therefore, is not meaningful per se. Meaningfulness arises in the processual interlacing of suggestions of motion, their sonic enactment and manipulation, and the

resonances they yield within surrounding ontological and epistemological frameworks. This imbrication of cultural practices with their life-worlds gives rise to situations in which musical experience manifests as a corporeal experience of meaningfulness.

The chesóls performance at the Women's Conference underlines two main characteristics of musical meaningfulness: Firstly, meaningfulness is a matter of musical becoming, not of genre, repertoire, form or structure. This means that it has an in-built capacity to change and adjust quickly to any situational dynamics that might arise, such as the bewilderment and then delayed affirmation the audience granted the chanter. Secondly, as meaningfulness comes about, the felt body does not act primarily as a site of experience but as a nexus of relational complexity, which, in turn, allows meaningfulness to manifest. The realisation that we were witnessing an chesóls being performed enabled an experiential sensation of all the connections the sonic event made tangible in sound: socially, a community; historically, a shared vision of the past; culturally, a joint set of familiar practices and conventions. In a way, the audience's late and gradual comprehension added to the situation's overwhelming intensity precisely *because* of the delay in realising this was an chesóls. Like a slow-motion replay of the same video footage they had previously viewed at standard speed, the significantly reduced speed of the situation's unfolding allowed the viewer to discover details and connections they had not previously noted owing to the fact that there is such an overwhelming wealth of information in every audio-visual moment. What initially seemed to be interpretive confusion was, at the same time, a gradual and, hence, intensified becoming aware of sound's capacity to act as a liaison between the various frames of human sociality. That capacity was not readily identifiable; it unfolded gradually as the listeners attuned to the situation. This performance not only echoed the phenomenological insight that musical meaningfulness is intensity-becoming, it also demonstrated rather tangibly how such intensity-becoming manifests situationally.

This intensity-becoming is inherently linked with chesóls' historicity: they are olángch, signs of history (Parmentier 1987, see Chapter 1). Chesóls as olángch allow for material intensifications to emerge not just as representational expressions (Parmentier 1987, 11) but as dynamic manifestations of, in the case of this particular chesóls' performance, belonging. Such manifestations work atmospherically – auratically, as Parmentier called it in 1987 for the want of a more specific term: through material suggestions of motion, such atmospheric manifestations link felt bodies

both with one another and with their deep (his)stories, agonies, pleasures and attunements in sound. That link is not metaphorical in nature. It is experiential, mediated via sound. The result is a "we" (Wir-Leib): a shared feeling of age-old interconnectedness that spans past(s) and present(s), gesturing toward the future. We feel in chesóls how we have always been becoming-together. This process is circular, in that for that feeling to manifest, the chesóls' sensation of belonging together and chesóls as a musical phenomenon reverberate with one another. This reverberation, in turn, accounts for the emergent intensity and, as such, for the musical meaningfulness of chesóls.

Sound's History Lives on

Samoan historian Damon Salesa has advocated the notion of Oceanic 'deep time'. Originally a term from geology (see Mawyer et al. 2020, 25), 'deep time' refers to the ancient history of Oceania. Salesa, evoking traditions and genealogies spanning millennia, emphasises how colonial rule and its predecessors, including Euro-American maritime exploration, imposed a sense of time on the region that before their arrival was utterly alien to Oceanic peoples: a time measurable in linear concepts such as seconds, minutes, hours and chronologies. Indigenous Oceanic concepts of time, by contrast, revolve around "genealogies which connected gods and ancestors to the living and invoked ages and periods (but which also insisted on their copresence in the present" (Jolly 2018, 34). Genealogy, Salesa argues, "orients time towards ancestors and descendants, not to an external systematic or a disembodied calibration of time" (Salesa 2014, 41). Space-time, a word well-known to many Oceanic languages (Salesa 2014, 41), implies that the past is not just a time but always also a place. "The *vā* [i.e., space-time in Samoan and Tongan, see Staley 2017] is necessarily relational, implying not a static point of observation but a movement, or possible movement between" (Salesa 2014, 43; italics in original). More specifically, *vā* perceives space as points and their interrelationships rather than a bounded area (see Staley 2017, 52; van der Ryn 2007, 3). Tevita O. Ka'ili sees the Tongan practice of tauhi vā, "the nurturing of socio-spatial relationships", as a cultural practice of establishing and strengthening beautiful sociospatial relationships (Ka'ili 2008, 33). He emphasises how it is impossible to think of vā, space, without *tā*, time, both in Tonga and Hawai'i, calling "attention to notable Hawaiian scholars and activists Lilikalā Kame'eleihiwa and Haunani-Kay Trask in their descriptions of time-space conceptualisation

in Hawaiian culture where the past is the time in front and the future is the time that comes behind" (Ka'ili 2008, 26, quoted in Staley 2017, 53; also see Ka'ili 2017a, 23 and Kame'eleihiwa 1992, 22-23; Kame'eleihiwa 2009). Ka'ili's thinking is closely related to Tongan historical anthropologist, Ōkusitino Māhina's tā-vā theory of art (see Lear 2018; Māhina 2010). Māhina sees tā and vā as the common medium of all things natural, mental and social that exist. Accordingly, all things unfold in time and space, with nothing whatsoever existing above or beyond this realm. All things in nature, mind and society have four dimensions: three spatial dimensions (height/depth, width/breadth, length) and one temporal dimension, which is form (also see Ka'ili 2008, 36-7; Staley 2017, 54). Ka'ili explains how tā-vā is "collective and communal but [...] also arranged in a circular fashion" (2008, 41): "The purpose of ontologically organizing these concepts in a cyclical fashion is to bring multiple entities into harmonious relations with one another (Ka'ili 2008, 41). This is made visible in the practice *of* tauhi vā, especially among closely related people in a 'aiga or kin group." (Staley 2017, 55). At the same time, tauhi vā underlines the social importance of tā and vā, which literally mean "beating space": As a cultural practice, tauhi vā regulates and maintains social relations between groups by performing reciprocity. The symmetry or asymmetry of such exchange-based relationships leads to either a harmonious relationship or conflict (see Ka'ili 2008, 42). This illustrates the deep entanglement of notions of time-space and sociality in Tonga.

Similar ideas are reflected in Tongan anthropologist Epeli Hau'ofa's well-known and highly influential re-imagination of space and sociality in Oceania as a "sea of islands" that enables connection rather than separation. "The sea is our pathway to each other and to everyone else, the sea is our endless saga, the sea is our most powerful metaphor, the ocean is in us" (Hau'ofa 2008, 58). Hau'ofa, more interested in temporality than in the competing and latently colonial concept of linear time, emphasises how time is space and community in "Pasts to Remember":

> To remove a people from their ancestral, natural surroundings or vice versa [...] is to sever them not only from their traditional sources of livelihood but also, and much more importantly, from their ancestry, their history, their identity, and their ultimate claim for the legitimacy of their existence. It is the destruction of age-old rhythms of cyclical dramas that lock together familiar time, motion, and space. (Hau'ofa 2008, 75)

Oceanic temporalities tend to emphasise the interlacing of the cultural, the ecological and the spatial with the temporal. Owing to this inseparability of

time, space and relation in Oceanic thinking, Tongan tauhi vā, the nurturing of socio-spatial relationships, is "relational as well as aesthetical in its practice as a performing art" (Staley 2017, 53). It is no different in Palau: traditional Palauan

> culture unites [the two categories of space and time] through the notion of a journey (*omerael*, from the verb *merael*, "to walk, to travel," itself derived from the noun *rael*, "path, road, way" [PAN **dalan*]). The journey of a god, person, group, or mythological creature provides a basic space-time continuum for conceptualization and discourse. (Parmentier 1987, 134; italics in original)

The key category linking space and time into one continuum in Palauan traditional thinking is movement. This is not surprising for a culture whose ancient history is rooted in voyaging and migration. The 'place' Palau only came into existence through the maritime voyage there, which, in turn, as a traditional seafaring practice, was a movement through space that was deeply relational: determined by the correlation of movement on the surface of the water in relation to the journey's duration in relation to the spatial alignment of both with the visible stars. The motion-oriented conceptualisation of space-time in Palau is reflected, for instance, in the deictic and verbal forms that distinguish between "in front of, before" and "in back of, after" based on "the model of motion of elements along a linear path. Anything ahead (*uchei*) on the path will arrive at a given location before (uchei) anything traveling behind (*uriul*)" (Parmentier 1987, 134; italics in original). Similarly, traditional time reckoning depends on the correlation of the relative motion "of stars, sun, and moon with periodic regularities of fish spawning, growing seasons, tidal fluctuation, and climatic variation" (Parmentier 1987, 134). Parmentier also gives the example of the correlation between lunar cycles and the *rak*, the six-month periods marked by shifts in wind direction (Parmentier 1987, 134). It is in this context that the olángch quality (see Chapter 1) of chelitákl rechuódel becomes central to the emergence of musical meaningfulness. As olángch cultural practices, Palauan chants are

> capable of transforming temporal sequence into spatial organization, because once established, the points of connection continue to exist as a stable, structural linkage which transcends the particular founding act [...] spatiotemporal linkages once established can become the template [...] for future actions and relationships. (Parmentier 1987, 136).

The story of Latmikaik, which is a part of Palau's origin myth, is instructive here. Latmikaik was a sea goddess who lived at the bottom of the ocean and the first to come into being. She incarnates as a giant clam, which even nowadays is the Palauan symbol of fertility and abundance. Latmikaik gave birth to lots of fish, but also to the first Palauans. Her human children are the first humans and the ancestors of today's Palauans; her fish children built houses of stone for themselves by piling up rocks until an island emerged above the water surface, today's Angaur (and, later on, the other Palauan islands, including Babeldaob) (see Krämer 1929a, 1f.). Latmikaik's human children moved to Babeldaob, "but they are not exactly foreigners, since they originated within the archipelago. Similarly, they came from the sea, but crossed a bridge which initially stretched to the heavens" (Parmentier 1987, 137). Movement along a path in time remains the founding process throughout Palauan traditional historiography. Palau's social hierarchy ensued from the journey of Latmikaik's children along the path. Traditional chants are "points of connection" between spatio-temporal order and the relationship network engrained in that order and sonically olángch. The neo-phenomenological notion that history lingers on in sound and spatio-temporal relationality renders it experiential is immediately intuitive within both Oceanic and, specifically, Palauan epistemological and ontological frameworks. It was the lingering olángch quality of the chanter's performance at the Women's Conference which, as movement referring to prior movement that co-constituted Palauan spatio-temporality and relationality, made the performance meaningful beyond any doubt. To perform an chesóls as olángch is a temporalizing act of the Palauan felt body engaged with its temporo-spatial environment.

Intensity: A Closer Look

With reverberation at the heart of chesóls' meaningfulness, the analytical focus now moves on to the dynamics arising between the layered felt-bodily sensations, remembrances and ideas that enter into the energetic conversation manifesting as musical meaningfulness. In the chesóls situation at the Women's Conference, meaningfulness arose when the audience crossed the threshold and joined that conversation felt-bodily, encorporating the chesóls' suggestions of motion as well as partaking in the complex situational reverberations those suggestions of motion enabled. Suggestions of motion and sonic events both occupy surfaceless spaces

in Schmitzian neo-phenomenology. To attune to a sonic event felt-bodily, an chesóls performance in this case, is to temporarily prioritise one's experience of felt-bodily surfaceless space over that of dimensional space and to explore one's relationality from the threshold in their in-between. Surfaceless space and dimensional space are concurrent and in no way consecutive to one another. An infinite number of suggestions of motion is unfolding in surfaceless space at any given time. Some affect felt bodies and are experienced as atmospheres, some do not; some affect some felt bodies and not others. For Schmitz, feelings are 'out there'. As atmospheres, they have a capacity to draw in people who happen to be located in the space inhabited by these feelings. To attune to an atmosphere, therefore, is to dwell on the thresholds between diverging types of spaces. Atmospheres point to how experiential spaces, that are typically thought of as disparate, interrelate in an intimate manner. That is where they become potentially productive for the analysis of sound-based cultural practices: As they transform those they affect, they too transform, always becoming something new.

Such atmospheric transformation is taking place on the level of surfaceless space. As it manifests in terms of continuous intensity fluctuations, it provokes new encounters and modulations within the we-Leib. The oscillatory nature of this fluctuating movement is the reason for the internal diffuseness of meaningfulness and, simultaneously, for its overwhelming intensity rather than extensivity. As music is itself a time-based performance practice, specific musical events enable the sensation of meaningfulness born mostly from the intensity, not the extensivity, of temporal experience. Meaningfulness oscillates between the various affective and interpretative frames of experience it leverages and to experience this meaningfulness sonically is to exceeds them all by way of the primarily corporeal experiential quality of the sonic as a medium. This is why sonic atmospheres and musical meaningfulness have the capacity to open new ideas about how music can mean things to certain people because it has "no object other than the situation's own intensity" (McGraw 2016, 142).

Musical Meaningfulness as Latently Historical

The audience at the Women's Conference embraced the unconventional chesóls performance because it enabled them to find one another felt-bodily in a sonic event that self-referentially suggested a sense of shared history

to them: this is where we are coming from as a community. If history often lives on in sound, then this is not owing to a structural-material quality of sound; instead, it is an example of what Tim Ingold (2011a, 2012, 2015) has described as material activities which are co-composing the world. Thinking about sound's latent historicity as a material activity in Ingold's sense underlines how musical atmospheres do not work according to a cause and effect logic. They move, instead, within those unstable "and active assemblages" of structured sound "with their own potentials of activity" (Löffler and Sprenger 2016). In other words, there is no cause and no effect in musical meaningfulness, only the mercurial movement of material activity. Again, Ingersoll's exploration of Kanaka he'e nalu as an epistemological practice resonates loudly (also see Diettrich 2018b, 44): as the surfing body

> merges with the seascape into an ocean-body assemblage, ways of knowing and being are opened up to innumerable ways of moving, pausing, constructing, and deconstructing tempos as Hawaiian rhythms of cultural sovereignty are both disrupted and enabled. (Ingersoll 2016, 109f.)

While the material structures of both he'e nalu and music-making are based on the notion of linear time and, hence, the experience of surfaced space, their material activity is not. As they are atmospheric in nature, they move between surfaceless and surfaced space, sometimes lingering on their thresholds. This process renders our own temporal positionality experiential across both types of spaces. This is what accounts for the often overwhelming experiential intensity of music's inherent historicity. In the words of Hermann Schmitz,

> Of all other *Gestalten* which atmospheres convey, the acoustic ones and the musical ones in particular are characterised by the fact that they are not simply there. They also grow, i.e., they bring their own history with them. This enables the expansive scope of musical composition, which finds no equal in the materiality of colours. Music forms *Gestalten*. Musical *Gestalten* are meshworks of suggestions of motion in the medium of sound, i.e., anticipatory impressions [Vorzeichnungen] of motion without motion that are created by music itself (through movement of the sound source).[32] (Schmitz 2014, 89; italics in original)

32 Original text: "Vor allen anderen Gestalten, die Atmosphären vermitteln, haben die akustischen, besonders die musikalischen, den Vorzug, dass sie nicht nur da sind, sondern

Therefore, the intensity inherent to music is double for Schmitz: the intensive expanse of the surfaceless acoustic space filled with atmospheres, on the one hand, and the intensive duration of sound as laden and lading with history, on the other (Schmitz 2014, 89). Schmitz further distinguishes between two types of intensities inherent to intensive duration: intensive density and intensive length.

> Regarding the emergence of the opposition of duration and ephemerality in music, the scope for the rivalry of intensive length and intensive density becomes incalculably larger through the transfer of executed motion onto merely anticipatory movement. Rhythm is such a suggestion of motion [...] and music adds to it by means of tonal suggestions of motion. In any rhythm of a process, length and duration work together antagonistically in pursuit of balance and saturation, which turns process into *Gestalt*.[33] (Schmitz 2014, 89; my italics)

It is here that a conceptual distinction between sonic atmospheres vs. musical atmospheres becomes productive. Musical conventions are cultural strategies to modulate the two types of intensity the sonic affords, i.e., density and length. They offer a framework from within which to work with sonic atmospheres in order to instigate the transductive processes at the heart of musical meaningfulness. Such work results in musical atmospheres, which are self-referential vis-à-vis their historicity. Sonic atmospheres, by contrast, "comprise the mechanism through which transduction creates new phenomena in a Simondonean sense" (Eisenlohr 2018b, 9), but they are not capable of self-referentially bundling diverging spatial and temporal modalities of experience as musical atmospheres are. This distinction will prove helpful in further disentangling the workings of music-making as an atmospheric practice as it allows us to distinguish

auch wachsen, d.h. ihre Geschichte mit sich bringen. Dadurch werden ausgreifende Bögen musikalischer Komposition möglich, denen im Material der Farben nichts Entsprechendes an die Seite gestellt werden könnte. Die Musik bildet Gestalten aus. Musikalische Gestalten sind Geflechte von Bewegungssuggestionen im Medium der Töne, d.h. Vorzeichnungen von Bewegung ohne von der Musik selbst (durch Wandern der Schallquelle) ausgeführte Bewegung."

33 Original text: "Der Spielraum für die Konkurrenz von intensiver Länge und intensiver Dichte, für die Ausformung des Gegensatzes von Dauer und Vergänglichkeit in der Musik, wird durch die Übertragung von der ausgeführten Bewegung auf die bloß vorgezeichnete Bewegung der Bewegungssuggestionen unabsehbar vergrößert. Der Rhythmus ist eine solche Bewegungssuggestion [...] (der) in der Musik durch tonale Bewegungssuggestionen ergänzt wird. In jedem Rhythmus eines Ablaufs wirken Länge und Dichte antagonistisch zusammen und streben einem Ausgleich, einer Sättigung zu, die den Ablauf zur Gestalt abrundet."

between the affordances of the medium sound and the specificities of a given musical atmosphere.

Conclusion

Musical meaningfulness, therefore, is a matter of intensity and oscillatory movement between the various registers of the complex experience the musical event offers. Both the phenomenon's intensity and oscillatory movement are experienced through the felt body by linking space and time with relational networks and genealogies. The oscillatory movement that bundles the divergent frames of the human experience into experiential intensity is in continuous motion for the duration of the musical situation. Or perhaps, as Oceanic ontologies suggest, these frames were never separate to begin with but always already connected with one another in aesthetic practice. Pacific Indigenous historiographers tell us how Oceanic peoples did not have a word for the bounded territory of the Pacific Ocean until foreigners introduced it. This is when "the abstract, wordless encounters of experience" turned "into [a] named, known, and narrativized" artefact of a place (Salesa 2014, 44). However, that which is taken to be "the Pacific Ocean" houses a diversity of other maritime places: "native seas", as Salesa suggests we call them. Native seas include huge maritime trading networks that could span millions of square kilometres and "places known and named, practiced and narrated" (Salesa 2014, 44). Such spaces are the "simultaneity of stories-so-far" and places are "collections of those stories" (Massey 2005, 131; also quoted in Salesa 2014, 44). They need to be acknowledged and explored. Native seas have been practised through a variety of cultural practices: traditional seafaring, techniques of orientation at sea, fishing lore or Indigenous marine biology, to name but a few, but also the traditional performing arts, which narrate voyages and routes, tell of relationships and recount shared histories through sound. Like Oceania's 'native seas', which sometimes nest in each other and overlap but are almost always connected to one another in some way, musical meaningfulness might also always already be both/and/but also (Soja 1996): both a feeling and a thought but also a story; both a physical sensation and a memory but also a historical fact; both unbounded and a definite genealogy but also attuned to the cyclical rhythm of the waves. If that is the case, then meaningfulness, or atmospheres more generally, for that matter, cannot be equivalent to affectivity or necessarily occur prior to any and all interpretative frames, as McGraw (2016) suggests. To

assume so is to conflate the notion of atmosphere with affect and, thus, to give away the analytical and truly fresh potential of atmospheres as an analytical framework for cultural practices. Neither are atmospheres an opposite to affect. Instead, they do not draw their might from whichever categories one is accustomed to thinking with but from the inevitable interconnectedness of these categories. Musical suggestions of motion during a chant performance make these connections resonate both with all they connect to and their own latent self-referential historicity, and the intensity of the situation emerges as a musical Gestalt.

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Figure 7 Bai ornament in Ngardmau as documented by Augustin Krämer during the Hamburg South Seas Expedition. (Krämer 1929b, double plate 23) Krämer's description: "[*R*]*uk* dancers with galéped clubs in the hands; far left the *galíd* [chelíd] Golongil […] in whose honor the dance occured." (KETC 2017c, 62; italics in original)

3 Listening with the Dancing Body: Ruk and Movement's Incipiency

Abstract
This chapter inquires into the bodily dimensions of the interlacing of world with self, into the role of bodily experience in negotiating historical and cultural configurations, and further into the imbrication of bodily practices and complex social systems. I show how the ruk (Palauan men's dance) is a cultural practice enacting the already motion-laden body. Beyond the flesh, it actualises the human body in movement, allowing it to continually transform in sound while recomposing along historical, social and cultural configurations. When musical movement acts on bodily movement in this way, it creates resonances that travel back and forth between emotion, discourse and memory as they correlate with Palauan temporo-spatiality via felt-bodily attunement to traditional chant repertoire. These resonances are intrinsically atmospheric.

Keywords: ruk, dance, suggestions of motion, atmospheres

It was one of those balmy, humid nights in the Western South Pacific. Koror's community meeting spots were bustling with activity, with people chatting, customers flocking to sales booths, children darting around, vendors preparing and selling food, stray dogs scavenging for food scraps at their premises, music blaring from loudspeakers and teens hanging out. This was the sound, sight, smell and flurry of the Olechotel Belau Fair (henceforth OBF), the Western Micronesian island nation's annual combined celebration of Palau's Independence Day, United Nations Day and World Food Day. The heart of the fairground was the central stage throughout the two-day celebration. Artists, bands and dance groups from across the Palauan islands performed traditional and contemporary music and dance here. Artists

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took quick turns, but, as usual, the traditional men's dance performances (ruk) reigned supreme.

Palauan oral history is full of stories about the importance of the ruk for traditional major village festivities (mur). Without an elaborately prepared ruk, a *mur* – no matter how glamorous – had not happened. Weeks before a mur, the whole village helped to build a wooden stage for this single, meticulously choreographed dance performance, which was the culmination of the festivities. Once a mur began, attendees were eagerly anticipating the ruk. During traditional mur festivities and this twenty-first century OBF alike, the ruk is performed for everyone to partake in klebelau, "Palauanness", "of or pertaining to Palauan culture" (Palau Society of Historians 1997, 94) or perhaps more specifically, a mindset ethically attuned to traditional Palauan notions of a good life. One of the main purposes of such performances is to raise cultural awareness

> [...] so that [Palauans] would not be lost on where they are from, whom and what they stand for. We must earnestly (*meral tekoi er a rengud*) teach our children our Palauan ways [i.e., *klebelau*] and instill in them the pride [to] honor our ancestors and stand tall among all the other peoples of the world. (Guest writer Ngarker Olbechel column 2016; italics in original)

Clearly, it is taken for granted here that the dancing body possesses experiential knowledge of how to "stand tall [... in] the world".

This existential meaningfulness Palauans find in the cultural practice of the ruk invites further inquiry into the bodily dimensions of the interlacing of world with self, the role of bodily experience in negotiating historical and cultural configurations, and the imbrication of bodily practices and complex social systems. In the previous chapter, I established the conceptual apparatus of suggestions of motion as an analytical tool. Its purpose is to complement what my Palauan interlocutors described as their personal sense of meaningfulness vis-à-vis specific chelitákl rechuódel performances. Throughout *Music Worlding in Palau*, my analysis of suggestions of motion follows my ethnography: I look for analytical cues that allow me to better understand what my interlocutors felt only when, at some point, they described their experience as meaningful or emotionally captivating in a broad sense. While it is an obvious first step to identify a musical event's suggestions of motion to converge on its atmospheric properties, such identification is not as methodologically straightforward as it may seem at first. A prime reason for this is that any structural analysis is confined to working with sonic events. However, suggestions of motion are of a

double nature: They are the nodal energy that potentially bursts into sonic events, but they also exude from material processes, such as sound waves. Eisenlohr has addressed this dilemma. "Just as discursive approaches to the sonic are inherently limited", he writes, formal analysis and their visual representations

> also have limits because they represent sonic movements as unfolding in a three-dimensional space. They do not exhaust what Hermann Schmitz has described as atmospheric suggestions of movement unfolding in a non- or pre-dimensional space. From a phenomenological perspective, the latter is upstream to the three-dimensional space of the sciences. (Eisenlohr 2018b, 97)

When the felt body encounters suggestions of motion, that encounter rearranges the felt space enveloping the felt body. This is an experience that formal analysis cannot claim to penetrate in any significant way. What formal analysis can offer, however, is to identify signposts that point to "how movements of sonic energy, unfolding along several acoustic parameters, can generate suggestions of movement that are central to atmospheres" (Eisenlohr 2018b, 98). It is important to keep in mind that the felt body registers suggestions of motion in surfaceless space, but formal analysis plots them on to dimensional space. Eisenlohr's response to this predicament is a call for multi-method approaches to the sonic, a stance that is sympathetic to an explanatory pluralist methodology and with which I concur. We might be able to find further clues somewhere between the ethnography and the structural analysis, between the diverging spatialities of sonic experiences and their affective efficacy.

In search of such clues, in this chapter I delve more deeply into suggestions of motion. I will do so by addressing the key energy behind the phenomenon: movement. Movement has already surfaced repeatedly in the preceding chapters' initial exploration of meaningfulness and the latent historicity of musical atmospheres, and in this chapter, I pick up a few loose threads.

A Sense of Klebelau: Going through the Motions

The phenomenological body (Leib), in general, and the material body dancing to music, in particular, churn with movement (e.g., Ingold 2016b). This is the bodily disposition that accounts for sensations such as klebelau

to emerge from cultural practices that involve the human body complex in one way or another. Music is material, acoustically palpable movement and dance, choreographed motion. In this chapter, I will argue that both music and dance are cultural practices enacting the already motion-laden material body. Beyond the flesh, they actualise the felt body in movement, allowing it to continually transform in sound while recomposing along historical, social and cultural configurations. When musical movement acts on bodily movement in this way, music and dance create resonances between the divergent registers from which lived experience emerges. The previous chapters have addressed the complex and layered temporo-spatiality of musical atmospheres; turning to what I call here 'registers'; this chapter explores the resonances arising between sensations and practices commonly seen as separate from one another. They include affect, emotion, discourse and memory (see Abels 2018b). The resonances themselves are atmospheric. Following Tim Ingold, I posit that, to a significant degree, lived experience emerges from the meshwork that comprises both cultural dynamics and affective-emotional responses as "interwoven trails rather than a network of intersecting routes [...] trails along which life is lived [...], knot[s] tied from multiple and interlaced strands of movement and growth" (Ingold 2007, 75). These intersecting routes, or, in Ingold's language, these wandering lines, "weave [...] and texture [...] the trails along which life is lived" (Ottersted 2016, 100). Lived experience, thus, is always already wrought with cultural dynamics and vice versa, sounding out the resonances pervading the folds and thresholds of their multiple temporo-spatialities while they "weave [...] the trails along which life is lived". We are leaving Schmitzian atmospheric theory behind here. Yet, to me, this is one of the fundamental insights yielded by thinking about the body through atmospheres. It is also a perspective that goes against the grain of conventional affect theory, which assumes a somewhat universal stream of affective bodily reactions that remains unactualised and obscure, for a brief while, until cultural dispositions provide the signifying orders along which these prepersonal bodily reactions actualise (Massumi 1995, 85).

This resonant reciprocity between the body, churning and swirling, and the meshwork allows the felt body to emerge from its complex relationality and temporarily recompose in movement only to perish and emerge anew. This notion of the body aligns with Deborah Kapchan's idea of the "sound body" to a notable extent. Recognising its transformative potential, she points out that the sound body is "a material body that resonates [with] its environment, creating and conducting affect" (Kapchan 2015, 41). Thinking

through Kapchan's sound body with atmospheres, I take her idea one step further by suggesting that the ensounded, dancing body, "launched into sound [...] like a kite in the sky" (Ingold 2011a, 139), does significantly more than "just" create and conduct affect. It embraces the complexity of lived experience and comes about in that embrace. It does so both intra- and intermodally: intramodally within one sense modality, e.g., the sense of hearing, which is central in music and dance experiences, and intermodally where two or more different *sense* modalities interact, potentially involving the entire sensory apparatus. For intermodality to occur, there must be a force that works across sensory modes. This force is the same resonance that ensounds the felt body with lived experience. Its initial impetus is the motional energy Ingold calls the movement of life, stating it "is specifically of becoming rather than being, of the incipience of renewal along a path rather than the extensivity of displacement in space" (Ingold 2011b, 72). As the sensation of Ingold's incipience of renewal actualises across sense modalities, such as in music and dance, it becomes an overwhelming experience – one that accounts for the power of music and dancing experiences – and, in the case of Palau, for the significance of chelitákl rechuódel experiences to the emergence of klebelau as a shared feeling. This is why klebelau cannot properly be described in words alone: it is deeply atmospheric in nature.

Kapchan's statement also raises other analytically consequential questions, which I will address in this chapter: How do these resonances come about? How is it that the interlacing of human beings and their environments becomes charged with movement? And, what does the human body complex, by which I mean all human bodily registers including the felt and material bodies, have to do with this? Ingold's movement of life, which bears a resemblance to Erin Manning's "preacceleration" (Manning [2009] 2012, 6), throws open important analytical avenues here. Suggestions of motion as an analytical concept can make these ideas analytically operable. Analysing how the dancing ensounded bodies on the central stage during the OBF ruk contributed to that unmistakable shared sense of klebelau among their audience, I argue that atmospheres are a conceptual key to unlock how "[s]ound brings the body home" before the body "returns to the world as vibration" (Kapchan 2015, 35). Atmospheric suggestions of motion bring about the intricate resonance that keeps reworking the relational complexity of which the world is made and from which the dimensional body emerges situationally. In return, suggestions of motion do their work via the felt body. In this way, the felt body becomes a relational nexus that is, to some extent, capable of modulating the suggestions of motion it encounters. The key force enabling this process and allowing for temporary connection is

resonance. It was in search of this meaningful resonance that the Palauan dancers entered the stage that night during the OBF, as others before them had done for many centuries.

The Body Complex and Sound

The past two decades have seen a steady stream of scholarly literature in sound studies (e.g., Erlmann 2004; Pinch and Bijsterveld 2012; Sterne 2003) and auditory culture (e.g., Bull and Back 2003). Both areas of research have transformed from burgeoning new fields into more systematic areas of inquiry. Yet, the soul-searching among scholars of both areas of expertise continues, indicating a general dissatisfaction with the field's disciplinary recognisability and disagreement over its intellectual challenges. One of the reasons for this may be that sound affects the body both affective-materially and phenomenologically. Scholars tend to investigate either one or the other, as Kane (2015) has noted; research within sound studies typically explores the affective-material workings, often interrogating the Deleuzian virtual in sound (Cox 2009; Kane 2015) and how it is capable of materially affecting bodies. Scholars within auditory culture studies tend to look for phenomenological effects, exploring bodily practices as techniques investing sound with power (e.g., Kane 2015). This split, even if taken with a grain of salt, suggests the extent to which academic reflections of sound and listening continue to be deeply rooted in the (profoundly European) enlightenment dualisms that have shaped scholarly modes of inquiry and, as such, are fundamental components of the humanities and social sciences around the globe.

However, as the growing body of scholarly work in New Materialism has not tired of pointing out, it may be precisely the inseparability of the human body from the world, the mind from the flesh and emotion from reason that accounts for the importance of music- and movement-based cultural practices. Referencing theories of the body which suggest paradigms of prosthetics and co-habitation, Kapchan's theorisation of the sound body fully acknowledges that the limits of the subject cannot be assumed. However, situating herself in a long tradition of theorising about the body, Kapchan continues to consider music one of the extensions of the body: "The visual limits of our bodies – the soft interface of flesh – are exceeded by technological, hormonal, and prosthetic extensions that respond to and act upon our worlds" (Kapchan 2015, 40). With this, she residually holds onto the notion of the material body as being home to a subject bounded

by the limits of its flesh: a material island that, at times, may extend, or be extended, a little farther into the world. Music and dance can help us think beyond this imagination of the human being, which lies at the core of the North Atlantic ontological tradition.

Some of these ideas current in sound studies and auditory culture align with notions central to recent movement-oriented process philosophy. However, scholars in this field tend to operationalise a dualism similar to that occupied by sound studies and auditory culture studies. For the latter pair, the question remains: how does anything turn from material force to immaterial idea? For Deleuzian process philosophy: how does the virtual relate to and eventually become the actual? In both instances, I believe New Phenomenology can make a productive intervention.

Schmitz and the Threshold

Schmitz's New Phenomenology directs analytic attention to how the fleeting boundary between bodily and felt-bodily practices in lived bodily experience may temporarily dissolve without ever becoming obsolete. As I have pointed out above, a significant problem with neo-phenomenological approaches to the body, however, is that they have great difficulty accommodating cultural practices as anything other than add-ons to the conditio humana. The trajectory of *Music Worlding in Palau*, by contrast, begins, ends and always returns to music as a cultural practice. In a sense, therefore, I approach the body complex from the opposite angle; as I hear and see the body come about in music, I want to learn more about the role of music in this process. Consequently, I have been using Schmitz's ideas alongside concepts from process philosophy and the philosophy of movement. What sets the project of *Music Worlding in Palau* apart from other adoptions of Schmitz's thinking vis-à-vis music (e.g., McGraw 2016; Riedel 2018; but also see Eisenlohr 2018a, 2018b) is an analytical focus on the material specificities and affordances of the medium of sound. I believe it is essential to making the notion of atmospheres operable for music studies to think through the specific and the particular (see Abels 2013), which is also the reason why *Music Worlding in Palau* combines ethnography with structural analysis. Extending an argument I made in the preceding chapter, the felt body is not merely a material, bounded entity but comes about in movement (Massumi 2002) or a flow of energies (Brennan 2004) to a significant degree. Massumi developed his whole theory of affect from this starting point, identifying movement, affect and sensation as the most salient features of embodied

existence. Ruth Leys critiqued his theory sharply for affirming the body/mind split (Leys 2011) and was, in turn, heavily critiqued herself. From his vantage point of cultural musicology, Lawrence Kramer added to Leys's assessment that "the moment one conceives of affect as preconceptual and prelinguistic, the mind-body duality has already been fully installed. (Affect thus understood occupies the place that music in its aesthetic dimension has often been assigned.)" (Kramer 2016, xv). I addressed this issue elsewhere (Abels 2018b), suggesting that atmospheres can help, not overcome, but reach beyond this lingering dualism (see Eisenlohr 2018a) which prevails in spite of the fact that affect studies have become a highly diverse field of academic inquiry within which the Massumi tradition forms but one, albeit influential, strand.

In this chapter, my analytical focus shifts to explore how atmospheres bring about resonances between the divergent dimensions of the lived experience through the human body, allowing cognition, affect and discourse, pasts, presents and futures, and the self and the world to coalesce in a given situation. This situational coalescence is meaningful and, hence, powerful. The body moving in sound is an intermodal movement actualising through music and dance. The actualisation itself happens atmospherically and, with this, through suggestions of movement. As Erin Manning puts it, "[m]ovement is one with the world, not body/world but body worlding" ([2009] 2012, 6). The ruk dancers on stage that OBF night were both body-worlding and music-worlding (and one could add dance-worlding to that), using movement to massage out the atmosphere that would allow the lived experience of klebelau to emerge for themselves and their audience.

The following sections looks at how all of this may have happened in the case of the Palauan ruk performed at the OBF. To prepare for the analysis, I will need to briefly specify the key concepts I am introducing into the theoretical framing of *Music Worlding in Palau* in this chapter. I will then move on to present a few analytical observations on a ruk performance performed during the 2012 OBF. Focusing on the sonic dimensions of the performance, I will identify material suggestions of sonic motion that account for the emergence of klebelau, exploring how they create resonance and examining the role of the dancing body in this process.

Preacceleration | Suggestions of Motion

A sound phenomenon, music is movement in the material sense: a movement capable of pervading the human body, of "ensound[ing] and enraptur[ing] it

[…] in the currents of a world-in-formation" (Ingold 2011b, 135, 129). Emphasising the reciprocity between the body and Ingold's world-in-formation, Erin Manning frames it in a more Deleuzian language:

> I propose that we move toward a notion of a becoming-body that is a sensing body in movement, a body that resists predefinition in terms of subjectivity or identity, a body that is involved in a reciprocal reaching-toward that in-gathers the world as it worlds. These bodies-in-the-making are propositions for thought in motion. Thought here is not strictly of the mind but of the body-becoming. (Manning [2009] 2012, 6)

Manning suggests that movements are events that create time and space, situating her work firmly in between Bergson, Whitehead, Deleuze and Guattari but also yielding unlikely repercussions with traditional Oceanic conceptualisations of time-space (see Chapter 2). The body does not enter an environment; instead, it creates it through movement. Scholars in music studies have acknowledged this process and identified sound knowledge as a crucial factor in this processual co-production of body and world. They have proposed thinking of sound knowledge in terms of a circulatory feedback (Kapchan 2015; Novak 2013) between bodies, body and environment, and body and machine. This process leads to a dissipation of the body's boundaries in a Deleuze-Bergsonian "ever-present-now" (Bergson 1911; Deleuze 2004; cf. Kapchan 2015, 38) that amalgamates pasts, presents and futures. With the past always already inherent in the ever-present-now, the latter generates futures in and of itself.

This insight needs qualification to become analytically consequential vis-à-vis the dancing body. The latter's boundaries dissipate in the ever-present-now because of the resonance that connects it with its (in this case, temporal) surroundings. In an ever-present-now, such resonance resounds with stories of the past, or histories, with possibilities of the future, or imminent becomings, and with the social and cultural conventions shared among co-resonating human bodies. (Cf. Byl 2014) Sound makes bodies resonate. Their ensounded bodies enable human beings to connect to these resoundings and experience them felt-bodily. This is what sets sonic suggestions of movement apart from other intramodal suggestions of movement. As they ensound the body as material sound waves, they performatively render the complexity of becoming experienceable in the body.

Using Bergsonian terminology, Manning identifies the key momentum in this process as "preacceleration" – how a movement can be felt before it actualises:

> Preacceleration refers to the virtual force of movement's taking form. It is the feeling of movement's in-gathering, a welling that propels the directionality of how movement moves. In dance, this is felt as the virtual momentum of a movement's taking form before we actually move. (Manning [2009] 2012, 6)

Manning's preacceleration happens completely beyond cognition, before there is something as organised as a sensation. It constitutes an impetus not yet fully formed. Manning sees it as the virtual fullness of a movement-in-formation. To Manning, to move physically is to engage "the potential inherent in the preacceleration that embodies you" ([2009] 2012, 6) and, hence, body-worlding because movement is one with both the world and the body. Preacceleration has atmospheric potential because

> our preacceleration already colours space, vibrates it. Movement quantifies it, qualitatively. Space is duration with a difference. The difference is my body-worlding, always more than one. Our embrace quickens the molecules that compose us. An adaptation occurs – we begin to recompose. Volumes, always more-than-one, emerge from surfaces, recombining with lines, folding, bridging, knotting. This coming-together proposes a combination of form-forces where preacceleration potentially finds passage. The passage flows not in a pre-inscribed direction: this is an intensive flow. (Manning [2009] 2012, 6)

Manning's notion of movement as quantifying preacceleration qualitatively refers to an intensity that concurs with the incipiency of movement, actualising preacceleration's atmospheric potential (cf. Manning [2009] 2012, 96). In some ways, her notion of preacceleration bears a resemblance to Schmitz's suggestions of motion. The previous chapters have detailed how the latter materialise as energetic spatial movement impacting the felt body, which can be felt prominently, for instance, in the materiality of sound. Preacceleration comprises "movement[s] of the not-yet that compose the more-than-one that is my body" (Manning [2009] 2012, 13), which is where the conceptual overlap with Schmitzian suggestions of motion as key in the emergence of atmospheres begins. Among the many

things Manning introduces into the debate, the process-philosophical notion of actualisation is one of the most fundamental: sonic events are always atmospheric potential that is actualising. Actualisation happens at the sensitive threshold between surfaceless and dimensional space and between suggestion of motions and their materialisation as a sonic event. As sound is a tangible form of material vibration, sonic events as actualised preacceleration and materialised suggestions of motion set up a temporary link. They enable the co-vibration between bodies, between bodies and environments, and between bodies and things. Both the self-reflective and the phenomenological experience of the self, thus, occur only in the "intimate connection between the moving body and its atmospheric potential" (Manning [2009] 2012, 15). One way to understand how music brings about the body in sound, therefore, is to inquire into the nature of atmospheres. And here, Schmitz's suggestions of motion offer analytical specificity.

Schmitz makes the idea of atmospheres analytically operable by introducing the notion of bridging qualities (Brückenqualitäten). Bridging qualities, by which he means (a) suggestions of motion and (b) synaesthetic characters (see Schmitz, Slaby, and Müllan 2011, 33), mediate between environment(s) and the felt body. They also mediate between sensory modalities. Bridging qualities are what allow music to "touch" you, both in the metaphorical sense and manifest as goose bumps.

As sound waves vibrate, they suggest motion. This is what enables sound to mediate between the diverging modalities of felt-bodily sensing, a process facilitated by bridging qualities. Bridging qualities enable resonances between different sensory and emotional registers. As bridging qualities connect suggestions of motion with ideas, emotions and perceptions, and vice versa, sonic suggestions of motion allow us to trace how atmospheric "intimate connections" enable the body complex to recompose in relation to its environment(s) in a specific musical context. In the following, I will trace this process for the 2012 OBF ruk.

The Dance of the Not-Yet in New Phenomenological Perspective: Suggestions of Motion in Palauan Ruk

> The two dancers have now taken a step forward. Their embrace connects them. It is not the touch "as such" that holds them to one another, but the movement-toward that is the continuous repetition of the touch. [… The] experience of touching awakens their bodies to all kinds of perceptions,

> alerting the dancers to the continuous recompositions of the spacetimes that world them. […] The dancers begin to feel the dance take over. They feel the openings before they recognize them as such, openings for movement that reach toward a dance of the not-yet. What takes place in this not-yet? (Manning [2009] 2012, 16)

We are now back in the South Pacific amid the hustle and bustle of the OBF. It is 2012. Colourfully costumed dancers, mostly young men and boys from Ngaraard, one of Palau's states, are on stage. They are waiting to begin their ruk. The ruk is a group dance format that accommodates a variety of styles and performance practices (see Abels 2008, 158-78 for a cultural history of the Palauan men's dances). As such, it is a container term used for formal male group dances. It usually consists of a series of dance pieces, and the dancers will accompany themselves with chanting and body percussion; they may also use wooden sticks both for their percussive effects and as props to enact war narratives for specific types of ruk. A missionary observed a formal ruk performance (in this case, an *oeáng*) during the German Kaiser's birthday party in Palau – in 1909, while it was a German colony:

> Then the dances began. A squadron of young, strong, beautifully built men, perhaps 70 in number, marched up in pairs. They were people from the area of Ngarart [Ngaraard], in the north of Babelthaob, the biggest of the Palau islands. They had really done themselves up: wide, red loincloths, a red tie around the neck, on their heads were rings and other figures from the thick, white pulp of a tree, arms and feet were decorated with bands from young, yellow coconut leaves. Of course, the war and celebration colour – yellow turmeric – was not missing but had been lavishly applied to the faces and chests of the warriors. They carried bamboo sticks, approximately one metre in length, and small paddles in their hands. They lined up in two long rows. A light, penetrating call opened the dance, which consisted only of body movements, facial gestures and marching back and forth. The accompanying song is very slow and monotonous and the rise and fall of the voices moved within few half tones. The text is most often an old war or epic song. Throughout the song, the words are so garbled, from the stretching of vowels, swallowing of short syllables and modification of the words through the melodious singing, that the Palauans themselves cannot grasp the sense of the song. One

Video example 1 Ruk, performed by dancers from Ngaraard during the Olechotel Belau Fair 2012. 0'00''-0'58''. Recorded by Simeon Adelbai, September 2012.

> must hear the text without the melody. This, however, makes the movements even more beautiful. So exact, so elegant and varied are the many gestures, steps and turns that one is amazed. (Müller 1910, 24-25; translation from the original German)

Other historical accounts of traditional ruk performance practice mirror Müller's amazement at what he saw. Japanese ethnographer Hisakatsu Hijikata, who observed in the 1930s what a guest writer for the Ngarker Olbechel column (Guest writer Ngarker Olbechel column 2016) would later describe as evocative of klebelau, emphasised the performance's elegance and grandeur:

> The [dance] song, performed with low voices, has such a richness that it makes you think that it is being sung in front of the gods. There is the solemn, deep feeling. [...] the *ruk* of Palau has [an] awe-inspiring feeling that the Palauan people normally don't exhibit. It even makes you feel strange. (Hijikata 1996, 191; italics in original)

Both descriptions account for the importance attributed to the historical configuration of the ruk in Palauan life. Musical and choreographic structures are designed to unhinge the body from its everyday flows, making room for it to recompose, always temporarily, in sound. This recomposing and its atmospheric aura account for Müller's "amazement", Hijikata's "awe-inspiring feeling" and the Ngarker Olbechel column writer's klebelau.

Musical events, such as melodic progressions, rhythmic pulses, changes in timbre or acoustic intensity, are dynamic material movements. Singling out a few of these many sonic suggestions of motion, in the following I will focus on three interrelated performance elements, exploring them through the acoustic properties of sound intensity, timbre and rhythm: (a) body percussion, (b) group shouting and singing, and (c) the rhythmic arrangement of suggestions of movement.

Body percussion

Body percussion is an element integral to Palauan dance and male dancing in particular, including foot stamping, clapping and slapping one's hands against one's thighs. South Pacific war dances are often analysed in terms of the representation of masculinity (e.g., Chen 2014; Jolly 2008), with stamping, slapping, puffing out one's chest and thrusting one's arms as performative displays of the male body, virility and physical strength. Recall the earlier discussion of Manning's interpretation of the not-yet. Drawing on Whitehead's notion of subjective experience, Manning argues that we apprehend a chair as a chair once it "brings with it the capacity to experience" (Manning [2009] 2012,7). We do not apprehend the chair as an object but as a potential relationship between body and chair, movement and chair-as-object; in this sense, chairs are relational. Similarly, I argue that the dancing body, stamping, clapping and slapping recomposes in its sound- and danceability; just as the body recomposes in its sitability vis-à-vis the chair. However, it is not the actual body percussion – the singular clap or the specific stomp – that is relational but body percussion's preacceleration, namely, its suggestions of motion, which allow the dancers and the audience to anticipate the next clap and the next stomp. As previously noted, Schmitz calls this process of anticipation "encorporation" (Einleibung) (e.g., Schmitz 1992, 190f.) and the process of shared anticipation within a group, "solidary encorporation" (solidarische Einleibung). Relationality for Schmitz comes about in the social process of the solidary encorporation of suggestions of motion. This is the work of atmospheres.

Following my earlier deliberation about suggestions of motion as analytical clues toward the manifesting of atmospheres (Chapter 2), I will now identify material suggestions of motion in the ruk. To do this, I will single out moments in which suggestions of motion 'take form' as body percussion. While the surfaceless suggestion of motion precedes the percussive, dimensional sonic event, a dance based on a regular (in the case of the ruk performance, duple) metre is always essentially a patterning of the flow of sonically actualised suggestions of motion to the extent possible. In the case of the ruk, body percussion materialises as a punctuation of this flow. This punctuation exudes suggestions of motion itself, which happens inframodally (Manning [2009] 2012, 16, 231). This is the reason why the emergent musical form-becoming can have atmospheric impact: the suggestions of motion "play between different levels of dominance in sense perception" (Manning [2009] 2012, 231). The punctuation can be

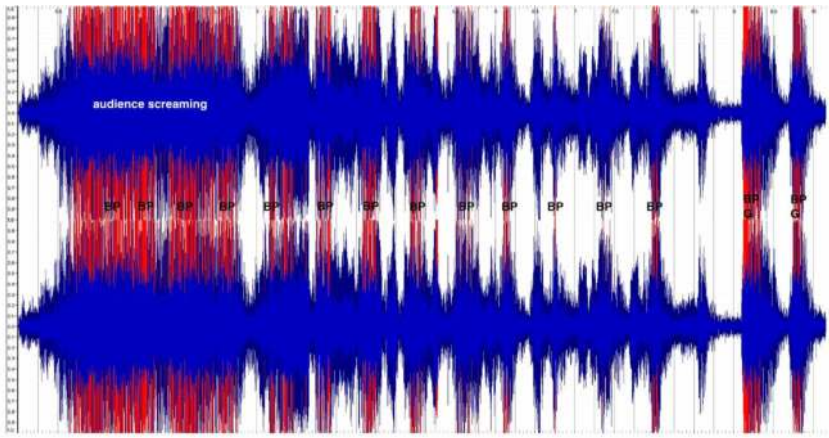

Figure 8 Waveform of 0'12"-0'22", Video example 1, two-dimensionally displaying time (horizontal axis) and acoustic intensity (vertical axis). G = group (i.e., all dancers shouting/singing); BP = body percussion.

visually represented in terms of its acoustic qualities, for instance, as sound intensity (see Figs. 3 & 4).

The body-percussive interpolations accentuate the culmination points of suggestions of motion: their becoming begins. The emerging rhythmic pattern pulls the dancers and audience towards the next culmination point, establishing a rhythmic flow that facilitates resonance and, with this, relationality between the dancers as a group, between audience and dancers, but also between dancers, audience and various discursive, affective and emotional registers. Actualised in sound, suggestions of motion have a material impact on the human body complex as sound waves. The dancing body reacting with co-ordinated movement enacts the atmospheric potential inherent in these suggestions of motion. In the case of this ruk, the potential is klebelau – "the traditional Palauan way". At the same time, the dancing body itself actualises in its sound- and danceability, recomposing as it gives form to suggestions of motion. In sharing that sound- and danceability with others in co-ordinated movement, the individual and the collective arises: "From the beginning, subjectivity emerges from intersubjectivity, the one is born from the many. We resound together" (Kapchan 2015, 33). Ruk choreographic and musical genre conventions are, thus, responsive to the resonance they enact. This is also why ruk as a genre has changed over time, responding to the possibilities of the incipient renewal inherent in the suggestions of motion upon which it draws. The felt-body experience a ruk performance affords, therefore, is not merely an actualisation of sonic suggestions of motion but

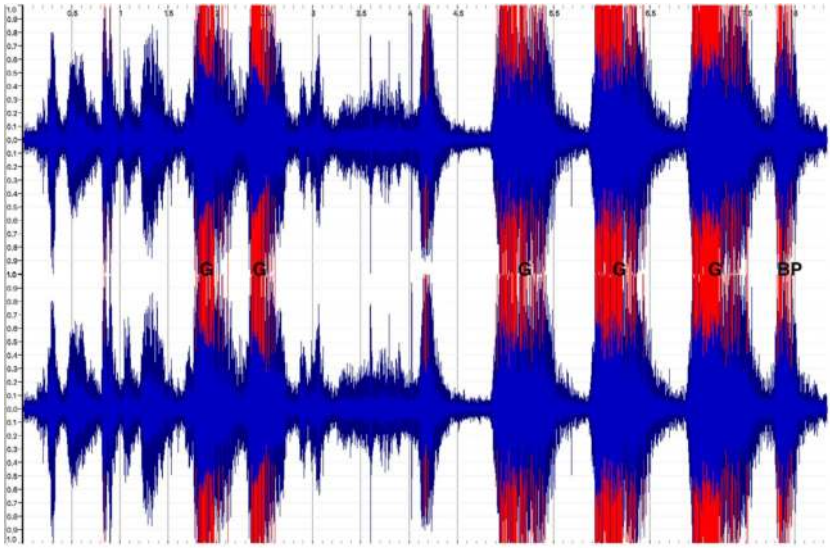

Figure 9 Waveform of 0'04"-0'12", Video example 1, two-dimensionally displaying time (horizontal axis) and acoustic intensity (vertical axis). G = group shout (i.e., all dancers shouting/singing); BP = body percussion.

of suggestions of motion resonating with cultural configurations, among other things. Therefore, resounding together in a ruk performance can render klebelau into a felt body experience. This makes the ruk dancer's body a Palauan body.

Group shouts

Group shouts are another musical flow punctuation. Call and response structures dominate in the ruk. These are sometimes referred to as ongúrs in Palauan. Group shouts differ from other ruk group chanting in that they are shorter, typically covering only two to three beats. Unlike other group responses, they are musical form markers, typically opening sections or bringing them to a close (Abels 2008, 163). Group shouts also suggest movement as sound intensity.

The actual sonic event during group shouts can manifest as decidedly more prolonged than in body-percussive suggestions of motion; unlike body percussion, the voice can sustain a sonic event. Characteristics specific to sonic suggestions of motion become obvious here. In the case of Manning's chair, "[o]nce the actual occasion takes form (as a movement of thought, or as an actual experience of sitability), it perishes" (Manning [2009] 2012, 7). A sound event, by contrast, is a series of material vibrations travelling

through air. A sustained ruk shout is a high-density sonic event-becoming, with each new vibration being preceded by a suggestion of motion. It is intense. Group shouts in the ruk open and close phrases and sections by means of sustained intensity at the relational nexus of bodily experience. In this sense, musical form is a complex layering of suggestions of motion, a complex shape-taking process. Once Manning's chair is prehended, it is relational; once suggestions of motion have started to actualise in sound, the prehension process has begun.

At the same time, group shouts add other acoustically palpable events to the overall ruk performance. As timbre modulations, for instance, they emphasise a high range of frequencies at regular intervals and ensound the human body at a high pitch by expanding beyond the tonal spectrum of the remainder of the ruk, creating another possibility for temporary human-bodily concrescence (i.e., the process of forming an actual entity; see Whitehead [1929] 1978 for both the dancers and the audience).

Rhythmic layering and densification

Both body percussion and group shouts in the ruk punctuate the performance sonically, organising suggestions of motion rhythmically. Table 1 shows how musical form in the ruk emerges to a significant degree from modulations in attack density. It charts the sonic attacks visually over the duration of the first item performed in the ruk of Video example 1 and demonstrates that an increased amount of body percussion (i.e., an increased number of attacks over time), together with group shouts, concludes form parts.

Table 1 Rough visual presentation of attacks (x) over time per part, 0'00"-0'57" of Video example 1. C = clapping; s = stomping; g = group shouts/singing; *m* = mesuchokl (soloist).

The table, like the waveform and spectrogram images above, documents sonic events as they took shape, not the suggestions of movement that precede them, the incipient shape-taking where relationality occurs. It, thus, identifies heightened sonic density phases, palpable as highly divergent

acoustic and, hence, material parameters. Such musical densifications typically arise due to an increased number of preceding suggestions of motion. Their heightened occurrence does not qualify these suggestions of motion in any way; as they dwell "in the milieu of [their] process" (Manning [2009] 2012, 97), one "cannot foresee how the future will inhabit it, what qualitative magnitudes will divert it, how elasticity will alter its process of taking form" (Manning [2009] 2012, 97). But as relationality-becoming occurs just before the genre-conventional execution of the next dancing step or the next group shout, the sonic events let us trace the becoming of the suggestions of motion that precede them. "Events are never relational in their actualization: they relate across the nexus of experience in their incipiency – their pastness – or in their perishing – their future-pastness" (Manning [2009] 2012, 7). At the same time, identifiable sonic events exude suggestions of motion themselves, perpetuating Ingold's movement of life as resonance. This thickens and complicates the layering of suggestions of motion in music.

Musical form arises from this complexity. The table, thus, helps to answer this chapter's initial set of questions: how do these resonances come about? How is it that the interlacing of human beings and their environments becomes charged with movement? And, what does the *body* have to do with this? As musical form comes about, so does the body. As the ruk proposes a culturally specific order for an infinite multiplicity of suggestions of motion, it initiates a co-ordinated actualisation in sound. The dance needs the body for resonance to resound with this actualisation, linking the becoming on the OBF stage with past and future becomings. Resonance lets suggestions of motion take temporary shape by rendering relationality experienceable. This resonant force is not internal or external to the body. The body is embedded in it. However, if suggestions of motion are neither predictable nor, as for Manning [2009] (2012, 6), directional in any way, then they are arbitrary motional events. If this is the case, then why dance?

Schmitz thinks of direction (Richtung) as a property of the felt body (e.g., Schmitz 2009, 21). Direction, for him, is a form of mediation between closure and expansion, the oscillating motion he considers to be the vital drive. He offers the gaze and exhalation as examples of such direction; exhalation follows a path leading away from the body, leaving it behind and vanishing into the surroundings. It leads the felt body into the open world (or, in fact, into nothingness, such as the direction of a blank stare). Felt-bodily direction is not necessarily sensate, according to Schmitz, who categorises direction as a non-perceptive body scheme essential for

motor activity (see Schmitz, Slaby, and Müllan 2011, 250-252). Felt-bodily direction is what enables the body to transduce suggestions of motion into actualisations and experiences. Resonating with suggestions of motion, the body-directing reflects and deflects its own resonance's echo. This process does not render the suggestions of motion refracted by the body unidirectional in any way. However, as it dances, the body becomes a part of the continual motion of the world-becoming, aligning with it. This is the vital drive and energy of life (Schmitz's "vitaler Antrieb"). Oscillating and aligning with suggestions of motion, the vital drive allows for encorporation – which is nothing less and nothing more than the felt body making sense of being alive. This is how the dancing body is capable of inspiring awe as Hijikata felt, of exuding beauty as Müller thought, and evoking klebelau as the Ngarker Olbechel commentator framed it. It redirects and, hence, recomposes in motion. Music and dance are, thus, bodily techniques to enact the body in its experiential complexity.

Conclusion: The Body in Sound and Motion

The human body is not sovereign, bounded by skin. It is amorphous, relational and, among other things, recomposes through cultural practices of musicking (including dance). Music and dance are techniques enabling the body to align directionally with the resonance brought about by suggestions of motion and latch onto this resonance. In this sense, performing arts enact, perform and reinvent the human body. "Despite its cultural ubiquity, however, the sound body – a body able to transform by resonating at different frequencies – is the *marked* status of human beings, that is, a state socially designated as standing apart from the norm" (Kapchan 2015, 38).

However, sound is not all there is. My analytical observations were all intramodal, singling out only sonic suggestions of motion and leaving out kinetic and choreographic dimensions of the process, for the most part. As atmospheres work across sensory modes, the body comes over as an intermodal phenomenon. Other sensory modes include the visual sense, with suggestions of motion emanating from the trajectory of light within the visible spectrum reflected within the environment; olfaction, with suggestions of motion entering the physical body as odorants along with breath; and the haptic, with suggestions of motion resulting in the sensation of touch. All of these play a part in body-worlding through

dance. Does travel across sensory modes refract suggestions of motion? How do sensory modes intersect? Thinking the body through music and dance suggests that it has the capacity to bundle suggestions of motion by giving them shape, namely, in sound, colour, smell and touch. The moving body seems to be an atmospheric kaleidoscope, intermodally and inframodally deflecting suggestions of motion. It is a place of great turbulence, full of unsettling movement. Matter is always in motion. Hence, matter can only be followed, never defined, and hence, bodies are always itinerant. The dancing body, choreographing the (hi)stories of its own ever-present-now, seeks its own resonances. Joining with these felt-bodily resonances is a sensation of great intensity. Awe-inspiring, beautiful and sometimes, on a few small islands in the South Pacific, klebelau.

I have shown in Chapters 1 and 2 how music-making is a cultural strategy to modulate the intensity of a given situation in the phenomenological sense. The musical Gestalt emerging from this modulation harbours a resonant self-referentiality that indicates a historical framework from within which historical positionalities become possible atmospherically. Several such positionalities can coexist concurrently in musical experience, with or without tensions arising between them. They are never static but transform in response to the musical situations they encounter. I have also emphasised how the key category linking space and time into one continuum in Palauan traditional thinking is movement. This chapter has shown that perhaps this is nowhere as obvious in the twenty-first century as in dance performance. The sense of klebelau that arose in the course of the performance suggests that movement does not only link space and time but also temporo-spatialities. In the case of the 2012 OBF, this means that the ruk, for the temporariness of its performance, unfolded in the resonances emerging between the competing temporo-spatialities that both belong to post-colonial Palauanness. This chapter has also shown how the body composes alongside this process of musical self-referencing: the resonant meaningfulness of the musical event that allows for musical structures to tell the story of their own becoming atmospherically also allows the human body to nurture its vitality by attuning to the suggestions of motion that emerge from the same musical event. Latent historicity unfolding and body-worlding are, thus, processes which inseparably intertwine, meander and find new possibilities for future unfolding in sound. The body in sound is always historically atmospheric and atmospherically historical simultaneously.

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Figure 10 Bai ornament in Galáp (Ngaraard) as documented by Augustin Krämer during the Hamburg South Seas Expedition. (Krämer 1929b, double plate 14) Krämer's description: "[T]he woman who guides the Pleiades; left the rock Gogibërámes with the 2 trees, then following on at right the stone pier Gades a galíd, at the head of which the woman guide sits, enchanting / charming the Pleiades, the star constellation to the left of the heavens' guide Derungúl'lau (center), to the right the constellation *gogádu*, named after the fire tongs, as that tool forms an angle; behind him Derungúl'lau the jar-shaped *gongau*, far right the large star *gomeráed*, to the left of the woman guide her son, who is scaring her, so that her hair turned white, to the right of her a half moon." (KETC 2017c, 56; italics in original)

4 “Rak, Where Is He Now?” Presence | Present

Abstract
This chapter explores how meaningfulness and meaning relate in music, and how, structurally and texturally, music may ‘have meaning’ and yet mean far more beyond this meaning. Presenting an exploration of omengeredákl, a type of women’s group chant, and exploring Palauan notions of temporality, I single out “effects of meaning” and “effects of presence” (Gumbrecht 2003), showing how the dynamics arising between them lead to the emergence of a distinctly sonic atmosphere. There is no such thing as binary oppositions in atmospheres.

Keywords: omengeredákl, temporality, presence, meaningfulness

“A rak, Ngar ker re chechang?” “Ngara beluu ra Ollei.”
“*Rak*, where is he now?” “He’s in Ollei village.”
(Cf. Klee 1976, 221; italics in original)

Traditional Palauan time reckoning was based on a correlation of the relative motion of the planetary bodies with the periodic cycles of nature, including fish spawning cycles (Klee 1976) and +mythological stories (Parmentier 1987, 135). The traditional Palauan lunar year illustrates the link between these three dimensions. It consists of twelve lunar months, each of which, in turn, consists of thirty darknesses. The first half of each lunar month belongs to Rekil Ongos, the time of easterly winds, and the second, to Rekil Ngebard, the time of westerly winds. Iechadrengel had made *búil*, the moon, but Rak, a major Palauan God, took her away from him and left for Ngetmel village in Ngarchelong, Northern Babeldaob. When búil is in Ngetmel for thirty darknesses, placing her in a house called Iromel, the Palauan year begins (Klee 1976, 220). An alternative version of this

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myth says he was entrusted with búil by the high god Uchelianged, and left for his journey from his home village of Ngetmel (see Parmentier 1987, 135), which, in this way, becomes the first stop on his journey. On his way onwards, he passed through five more villages, where he places búil in a specific house. Then the wind shifts direction from Rekil Ongos to Rekil Ngebard, and the second half of the lunar year begins: Rak and búil travel to six more villages, and Rak again places búil in six specific houses. Once the twelfth set of thirty darknesses has been completed, the wind direction changes back to Rekil Ongos and, with the cycle complete, Rak and búil return to Ngetmel (Klee 1976, 220). This itinerary of Rak with búil , which led them southerly along the Eastern coast of Babeldaob, is the foundation of the Palauan lunar year (also see Parmentier 1987, 135). It makes sense that the Palauan noun for "year" is also rak (Josephs 1990, 285). To ask, "A rak, Ngar ker re chechang?"/ "Rak, where is he now?", therefore, is to ask what month of the year it is; to answer, "Ngara beluu ra Ollei" / "He's in Ollei village", is to say that the moon is in its second set of thirty darknesses, i.e., lunar month, of Rekil Ongos, the time of easterly winds (Klee 1976, 221). As Parmentier points out (1987, 135), Rak's journey does not coincide with the motion of any celestial body. Instead, the narrative connects *Rak*'s journey with temporal units and specific places in Palau and with social hierarchy marked by the house placements of búil . It is a technique aiming to correlate temporal and spatial categories, and an illustration of the traditional Palauan conceptualisation of temporo-spatiality. The underlying 'model of the path' (ráel) is a central trope in Palauan mythology, evoking people and objects moving in a linear fashion, thus, inscribing their mark into the landscape and engraving the natural world in cyclical time. In contemporary Palauan, ráel simply means "path", but also "way out", "way to someone's heart" and "connection" in the sense of family ties (Josephs 1990, 285). The idea of a mythological journey only becomes the model of the path through narrative culture, which is an integral part of ráel. As storytelling and chanting tell of Rak's, or any other mythological figure's, journey, their olángch character "anchor[s] these mythological narratives in perceived experience" (Parmentier 1897, 135). The current time, Rak's location, only becomes meaningful for the present moment when the suggestions of motions emanating from a sacred object or the sound of a chant being recited fills the space, envelops people and seizes them felt-bodily. It is no coincidence that at the mythological beginning, "the voice of the high god Uchelianged rings out across the empty sea to command that a piece of land be brought out of the depths" (Parmentier

1986, 172). The combination of the model of the path with the sensations evoked through olángch cultural practices

> is capable of transforming temporal sequence into spatial organization, because once established, the points of connection continue to exist as a stable, structural linkage which transcends the particular founding act. A journey along a path is thus the paradigmatic cultural act, since it is the simplest form of presupposition; spatiotemporal linkages once established can become the template [...] for future actions and relationships. [...] And more importantly, the fact of static, structural homology among linked points in the system [...] can be read as evidence for temporal sequence by simply postulating the prior existence of a journey. (Parmentier 1987, 136)

To encorporate olángch suggestions of motion via felt-bodily attunement seizes the felt body and infuses it with an encompassing sensation of temporo-spatial sequence resonating with Palauan cultural history and social fabric. A Palauan chanter, like the Palauan elders Victoria and Oribech chanting omengeredákl I described in the ethnographic vignette at the very beginning of this book, is a part of the latter: in flesh, genealogy and feeling. As the sound of Victoria and Oribech's omengeredákl singing pervaded their material bodies in the form of sound waves and affected their vital drive through suggestions of motion, their own song made it all come together for them. This is why they found chanting omengeredákl to be so vastly meaningful and also self-explanatory: they did not have the words to capture the experiential intensity of that fleeting omengeredákl moment in which, for them, all times and places and stories Palauan entered into resonance – olángch while it lasted.

Present, Presence, Meaningfulness

To understand this phenomenon better, in the preceding chapters I have explored meaningfulness with Schmitz, exploring the historicity and temporo-spatialities of Palauan musical atmospheres and identifying atmospheric suggestions of motion and heightened motional energy. Broadening the discussion, this chapter introduces an alternative concept, namely, the asignifying intensity literary scholar Hans Ulrich Gumbrecht (2003) has called "presence effects". Introducing the term into the discussion will help to open new vistas on Schmitz's notion of the "primitive present".

This, in turn, will allow me to think about musical meaningfulness more systematically against the backdrop of Hermann Schmitz's philosophy of time. In a sense, I am using Gumbrecht's presence effects as a searchlight to further sound out the temporality of musical meaningfulness in Palau and highlight its entanglement with both Palauan spatio-temporalities and Oceanic 'deep time' (see Chapter 2).

'Presence effects' is a container term that includes, among other things, moods and atmospheres. Gumbrecht's work, widely read and much quoted, shines through in a significant amount of recent work on atmospheres, most notably perhaps the work of philosopher Tonino Griffero. Griffero, in suggesting the idea of "pathicity" as a "pathic-aesthetic notion of felt-bodily presence" (Griffero 2019b; also see Griffero 2020), draws extensively on the work of both Gumbrecht and Schmitz. Griffero's pathicity is

> the affective and life-worldly involvement that the perceiver feels often unable to critically react to or mitigate the intrusiveness of [... This] complicity with the atmospheric world is for me the core of the aesthetic sphere (in the etymological sense of *aisthesis*), much more so than art and beauty. But it is also a real phenomenon [...] philosophically rehabilitating pathicity means valorizing the ability to let oneself go. (Griffero 2019b, 415; italics in original)

In Gumbrecht's work, and specifically in his notion of presence effects (2003, 2014), Griffero finds a rehabilitation of the presence which, to him, resonates well with an ongoing theme throughout Schmitz's oeuvre: for the latter, to "be" is "to be-present" (Griffero 2019b, 417). However, Gumbrecht is interested in presence; Schmitz's inquiries, by contrast, are directed toward the "present". The common ground Griffero detects between the two is one of affective enactivism (Griffero 2019b, 418). This, to him, means that

> whether one surrenders to situations full of atmospheric energy, or fulfills (more or less voluntarily) the "affective action" through which they consolidate our incipient and vague emotions, without the external conditions and constraints provided by atmospheres one wouldn't experience certain feelings, or, at least, one would not feel them as something precise and authoritative. (Griffero 2019b, 418)

In this chapter, I will explore omengeredákl with both presence effects and sense effects. The discussion will lead more deeply into the layered

complexity of the resonances that musical atmospheres evoke in the in-between of the divergent registers from which lived experience emerges. I have argued in the preceding chapters that these include temporo-spatiality, affect, emotion, discourse and memory. I have also established how the felt body, which is where suggestions of motion manifest atmospherically, continually forms in and remains laden with movement. Movement is also the force that enables a feelingful felt-bodily ability to respond to suggestions of motion. This response ability (Brown and Dilley 2012; Haraway 2016) is a prerequisite for the possibility of resonance. Exploring how music may "have meaning", yet mean far beyond such meaning, this chapter now turns to the mechanics of how these resonances come about, and why their imbrication with one another in music is intrinsically atmospheric. In the following, I will briefly introduce the genre of omengeredákl before I proceed to discuss Gumbrecht's sense and presence effects in relation to omengeredákl's meaningfulness. Situating the discussion with the long and elaborate debate on musical meaning across the various branches of music studies will allow me to conclude the chapter by sketching the analytical potential meaningfulness holds for a music scholarship sensitised for phenomenological aspects of music-making.

Omengeredákl

Omengeredákl is a group chant. The word omengeredákl implies that something is sung in a loud voice, and it means 'to begin a song' in the context of music-making. One singer in the group inserts spoken interfaces between the formal units of an omengeredákl, usually by clapping their hands at a certain point, and underlines the lyrics through gestures and dance movements. Other singers may join in by clapping their hands. Historically, gestural dance seems to have played a considerable role in the performance of omengeredákl, but its importance varies in contemporary performances. My interlocutor, Riosang, who was in his sixties at the time of our conversation, described the genre as follows:

> [Omengeredákl] are sung by a group: the leader explains the verses, and one person 'deviates' from the group, keeping the rhythm. The leader starts the chant, the 'paddlers' continue the chant – [the 'paddlers' are] the crowd, at least four people – and then there is the person who departs from the main melody. (Personal communication, 15 February 2005)

There are Palauan terms for the vocal parts Riosang describes. The *melemótem* prompts or 'explains' the song's lyrics between the formal parts of the omengeredákl. The *meruchodl* is a solo singer who commences the sung section of an omengeredákl. The esbe is the 'counterpart' singer (the person who 'deviates' from the group', as Riosang put it), ideally a male performer with an exceptionally high-pitched voice. The *melíkes* is the leader of the chorus, and the *rokúi* – Riosang calls them 'the crowd' here – is the chorus itself.[34] Melemótem, meruchodl, esbe, and melíkes are referred to as the lebuchel, or the 'leaders' (Palau Society of Historians 2002, 21). The primary function of the melemótem is to remind audiences of the lyrics, which may be lengthy. The lyrics in omengeredákl are recited in full by the melemótem between the formal units before they are sung by the chorus. Recited and sung lyrics may overlap slightly. They perform these lyrics in a number of ways, from ordinary speech to parlando singing. He or she is followed by the meruchodl, who starts the sung part of the omengeredákl. Melíkes means 'to speak (i.e., words of song which others will sing in response)' (Josephs 1997, 163). This word primarily means 'to pole (a canoe)'. This metaphor illustrates the function of the melikés neatly: to guide the 'crew' or chorus through the 'water' or music.

As mentioned above, esbe, which is related to the Palauan word mengesb, refers to a lunar constellation in which the moon is positioned in the centre of the sky.[35] The word esbe also means "to sing 'with an especially high-pitched voice' as the only person in the group" (Josephs 1997, 179). The esbe is an important part of the omengeredákl; it shapes the musical form significantly and functions as a marker of form in the musical texture, as will be seen. If the esbe does not function successfully, however, the piece is still distinguishable to the Palauan listener as omengeredákl. As a matter of fact, the esbe part is often omitted owing to a lack of suitable singers. Rokúi simply means "all of them" (Josephs 1997, 190, 293). In the context of omengeredákl, it refers to the chorus. The rokúi singers usually join in *un à un*; there is no clear 'rokúi entry' that demarcates the formal units. Given the tonal characteristics of the chorus part, this leads to a gradual building of a frequency band rather

34 Osamu Yamaguti recorded a slightly different Palauan terminology in 1965. According to him, the mesuchokl prompts or 'explains' the lyrics between the formal units of the omengeredákl; mengíder is the 'start-off' that commences the bóid; the meliikes is the leader of the chorus; and the mengesbch is the 'counterpart singer' (see Yamaguti 1967). This terminology was not approved of by my interlocutors, and they proposed the one I give here instead.

35 The term also means "to sing out of tune" in English, which does not necessarily have a negative connotation in Palauan.

Sound example 4 Omengeredákl/keredekiil, performed by Lucy Orrukem (*1907 in Koror), Cheluil (*1894 in Airai), Diratuchoi (*1904 in Koror), Risong (*1903 in Melekeok) and Dilliaur (* 1902 in Peleliu) on 20 September 1963 in Koror/Palau. Recorded by Barbara B. Smith.

than a rapid entry. Canoeing metaphors are a popular means across Micronesia to describe the social dynamics of group actions, and Riosang's comparison of the rokúi with paddlers is revealing in this regard: every paddler's position has an important role in safely navigating the canoe, yet, the overall safety of the journey depends entirely on how the group interacts.

The musical form of omengeredákl consists of a flexible sequence of four roughly standardised structural units and interpolated spoken or recited melemótem passages. These five elements can be interpreted as the building blocks of omengeredákl. The melodic progression of the four units (A, B, C and D) generally follows a scheme that is roughly uniform throughout the same piece but may differ to some degree among different performances. In any case, the contours of the phrases are recognisable across different performances.

The sound example suggests how a central feature of the tonal language of omengeredákl is the rendition of the chorus part. While the main melodic line serves as a point of reference for all singers, only one singer typically follows it. The remaining singers, except the esbe, perform slightly higher- or lower-pitched variations of that line, typically close to either the main melody's pitch or a fellow singer's intonation of the same line. The musical result is a thick texture that can be described as a frequency band. The esbe, entering either roughly on the beat with the chorus or with a slight time displacement, adds another vocal part to the thick musical texture, which usually commences on a pitch spectrum above that employed by the rokúi. In the following, the esbe melody slowly descends in pitch towards the phrasal ends, while the chorus remains around the established frequency band. The esbe and chorus parts slowly converge within a phrase. As the esbe part draws nearer to the rokúi throughout the course of the musical phrase, it evokes a frequency band with narrowing upper contours. Two descending melodic esbe phrases usually occur in each formal unit. In this regard, the esbe part may be viewed as a quasi-diminution of the chorus's part, which occurs solely on the level of musical form and does not affect the (inner) tempo. The end of the first esbe phrase is an interior phrase

conclusion. The final movement of the phrase differs from this conclusion as the rokúi narrows the frequency band. An interior phrase conclusion in omengeredákl can, therefore, be identified by the convergence of the contours of the frequency band and concurrent maintenance of tonal friction generated by a frequency band with stable contours. In the concluding part of the phrase, the frequency band appears to be narrowed to a width that is perceived by the listener as a distinct (and consonant) pitch, not a dense frequency band. In this way, the development of tonal friction serves as a marker of musical form as it defines the shape of those musical phrases that involve the rokúi. Singers focus on specific structural parameters in the rokúi parts in order to make the omenegeredakl feel 'how it's supposed to feel', as Oribech put it. Firstly, there is the considerable spectral friction within the frequency band that builds up to the final plateau at the phrasal end. In the case of sound example 4, this creates a single suggestion of motion that lasts for the whole phrase. This suggestion of motion can quite literally be described as roughly 11 seconds of contraction followed by about 2.5 seconds of expansion. A brief increase in spectral friction at 14" marks the end of the phrase and the suggestion of motion. This process of contraction and expansion is a tangible manifestation of the way in which individual voices behave both towards another and together. It brings into existence the rokúi, the key auditory body of the performance. The emergence of the rokúi requires all singers to contribute to a musical event that occurs only *between* the vocal parts. It cannot, therefore, be analysed in terms of individuals' parts. This also explains why Victoria and Oribech did not deem it relevant to explain the rules for the melodic progression of the individual vocal parts to me (see Chapter 1). It did not make sense to them to elaborate on that because they found that clearly, the music could not properly be described in these terms.

A rokúi phrase suggests motion, musically conveying that thickly textured relationality is the primary structural element in the performance: it is relational not as a metaphor but as an atmosphere. According to Schmitz, suggestions of motion modulate the singers and audience's vital drive with its continuous oscillation between contraction and expansion, which responds to a stimulus beyond affect and perception. Paraphrasing anthropologist Charles Hirschkind,[36] this suggestion of movement stirs up "latent tendencies of [...] response sedimented within the mnemonic regions of the flesh"

36 Charles Hirschkind refers here to the affective intensities of the body rather than the responsiveness of the felt body. In keeping with the discussions of affect presented by Deleuze and Guattari (1987), Massumi (1995, 2002) and others, McGraw (2016) and Vadén and Torvinen

(2006, 82f.). The mnemonic regions of the singers' felt bodies resonate here and remember the Palauan concept of community, which was developed when the gods created the islands and their societal hierarchy. As *mechás* (a respectful Palauan term for elder, knowledgeable women), omengeredákl singers often consider it their responsibility to pass on the experiential knowledge about such traditional key concepts through song. As Oribech said to me in a conversation a few weeks after the one I described at the beginning of this book, "we can only sing [to the young people]". She meant that some traditional values cannot be fully translated into words. They require a different medium, in this particular case omengeredákl and the encompassing felt-bodily experience of Hirschkind's responsiveness they afford. The particular notion of community that, as the mechás suggested during our conversations, is embodied by the rokúi can be traced all the way to the gods and is present throughout Palauan oral history and mythology. By modulating the felt body's rhythm of contraction and expansion, the rokúi's suggestion of motion causes the felt body's knowledge of this origin and cultural history of the notion of community to resonate in a diffuse way with the musical experience of singing omengeredákl. If the musical texture of the rokúi phrase exudes a sense of community, as my interlocutors kept emphasising, then the spectrograms above show how this happens: primarily through a modulation of the rokúi's frequency band and its internal tonal tension. This modulation is a suggestion of movement that, in omenegeredakl, resonates with Palauan notions of societal structure, community values, spiritual obligations, social responsibility and historicity. This resonance is possible because of the confluence of two historicities: the historicity of these notions themselves and that of a musical genre that is olángch and, as such, capable of resounding these notions: omengeredákl. The materiality of the latter suggests movement. In a traditional context, Palauan listeners' felt bodies experience these suggestions of movement powerfully as an atmosphere that is inseparable from the affective and emotional qualities of the former. This is also why omengeredákl items will be performed during official events of a political nature if at all possible, in order to evoke that shared feeling of belonging to one and the same community.

The esbe part is illustrated as a clearly discernible, two-part melodic line that is 'poured' on top of the rokúi's frequency band. In sound example 2, one can hear those two parts from 2-8" and 8-12", including the melodic arch of the second esbe part, which commences around 8" and reaches

(2014) assume that affect is sensed before interpretive frames are leveraged. I, however, contend that both processes may happen simultaneously and interrelate (also see Eisenlohr 2018a).

its highest pitch at around 10". The women's use of the esbe to refer to 'the moon up there', together with Victoria's hand gesture (see Chapter 1), seems to become self-explanatory: the uplifting melodic movement that reaches beyond the upper contours of the frequency band suggests a spatial expansion that links the rokúi to a wider sonic space. But that is not all there is. Beyond the isomorphic metaphor, the esbe further reinforces the felt-bodily experience of the grander frame of reference, that is, the Palauan concept of historicity that is closely linked to spirituality. This is why the structure of omengeredákl simply 'makes sense', in the words of my interlocutors. Palauan spiritually is deeply intertwined with cosmology and its coming into existence. The moon is a central luminary both mythologically and spiritually throughout Palauan mythology and oral history. Accordingly, the lunar cycles are the primary markers of time, and these cycles simultaneously explain the structure of Palau's divinely created societal hierarchy (cf. Parmentier 1987, 134-136). The reference to the moon in the word esbe, thus, is a reference to one of the guiding principles in the Palauan traditional worldview.

Loudness, related to the modulation of spectral friction, can also be observed in the figures. Harmonics – appearing in the spectrograms as horizontal lines – generally tend to have comparatively constant frequencies but, as can be gleaned from the spectrograms, their loudness increases proportionally more than that of the lower frequencies. Hence, there is a greater concentration of acoustic energy in the higher band of the spectral envelope. Due to the frequency band's continuous movement of internal pitches – voices shift constantly within a very close intervallic range – the acoustic result of the phrase is complex, constant modulation between brighter and darker timbres. These oscillations form another suggestion of motion that is much quicker and more varied than the suggestions brought about by play with spectral friction and the distribution of the esbe's phrases across the rokúi part. They also cause the part preceding the final plateau to become louder, while the final plateau itself, featuring many fewer oscillations of this kind, is quieter. This emphasises the largest suggestion of motion in the rokúi phrase: the one marked by spectral friction, which creates the impression of a frequency band shaped like a melodic arch. In this way, a hierarchy is established between the various suggestions of motion that unfold simultaneously: the suggestion of motion brought about by tonal friction marks the formal parts of the performance, whereas the other suggestions of motion shape the phrase's inner Gestalt. These musical suggestions of motion (and others) comprise a musical event, the diffuse meaningfulness of which is made up of layered felt-bodily sensations

(such as expansion in space) and remembrances (such as experiencing the specifically Palauan notion of community through the felt body).

Victoria and Oribech deeply appreciate omengeredákl as a musical genre for its cultural value and its olángch nature. But it is only through the encorporation of suggestions of motion in the musical experience of singing omengeredákl that its full meaningfulness became tangible to Victoria, Oribech and their fellow singers: It does not get more intensely olángch in the now than when your body is one, connected via suggestions of motion, with chelitákl rechuódel as much as Ollei village is one, via the story of Rak, with the second lunar month of Rekil Ongos.

Sense Effects | Presence Effects

The preceding analysis invites a fuller exploration of the role of presence, in Gumbrecht's sense, within the framework of an Oceanic 'deep time'. Gumbrecht's sense effects appeal exclusively to the senses; his presence effects, by contrast, provoke asignifying intensity.[37] Sense effects, for Gumbrecht, arise from the interpretative acts attributing meaning to a given phenomenon (2012b, 15); presence effects, on the contrary, "inscribe themselves into their articulative forms as aesthetic experience" (2012b, 15). This is possible, argues Gumbrecht, because everything has always already had a relationship to our bodies, simultaneously with the involuntary habit of ascribing meaning. In proposing his terminology, Gumbrecht makes a

> pledge against the tendency in contemporary culture to abandon and even forget the possibility of a presence-based relationship to the world. More specifically: to make a pledge against the systematic bracketing of presence, and against the uncontested centrality of interpretation, in the academic disciplines that we call 'the humanities and arts.' (Gumbrecht 2003, vx)

Gumbrecht ultimately argues for "a relation to the things of the world that could oscillate between presence effects and meaning effects" (2003, vx). While meaning is intrinsically relational for Gumbrecht, it is also clearly a sense effect: "If we attribute a meaning to a thing that is present, that is, if we form an idea of what this thing may be in relation to us, we seem to

37 Gumbrecht 2011, 2012b.

attenuate, inevitably, the impact that this thing can have on our bodies and our senses" (Gumbrecht 2003, xiv).

While Gumbrecht's project to direct scholarly attention away from meaning and on to presence has obvious connections with the neo-phenomenological attentiveness to lived experience, his latently introjectionist categorical distinction between presence and sense effects makes it difficult to do analytical justice to the complexity of the latter. With a nod to Heidegger, Gumbrecht's set of binary opposites seeks to emphasise the bodily, pre-hermeneutical and non-interpretative as constitutive to human world-making. A few years later, this project led Gumbrecht to try and "read Stimmung" in contemporary literature, as the title of his book reads in the original German (2011; *Stimmungen lesen. Über eine verdeckte Wirklichkeit von Literatur*); the English translation complicates the concept of Stimmung into *Atmosphere, mood, Stimmung. On a hidden potential of literature* (2012a). Stimmung, in both cases, is what in a given literary text connects us with the text's time, renders it alive for the reader and allows it to speak to us with affective immediacy (Huntemann 2011). To read Stimmung, to Gumbrecht, means to get involved affectively and bodily with that time and to single it out (Huntemann 2011). Gumbrecht's notion of both Stimmung and affectivity are, thus, far removed from Schmitz's atmospheric theory and highly specific to literature and literary analysis.

And yet, the idea of presence effects can point toward a more nuanced understanding of atmospheres, and musical ones in particular. To suggest that cultural practices afford a condensation of linear time and temporality into presence effects is to move the focus to how temporal latency actualises as condensed Gestalt and experiential intensity. Such latency is not temporal in Palau but deeply temporo-spatial and infused with mythology, as I have established in the preceding chapters. Chelitákl rechuódel are olángch. What distinguishes them is that they can render the sensation of olángch experiential in a distinctly sonic way, pervading felt bodies and linking people and things with stories. However, with these stories comes a very particular, 'deep' temporo-spatiality, one that is both surfaceless and dimensional. Palauan spatio-temporality, I argue, straddles the thresholds of neo-phenomenological pre-dimensional space and Cartesian dimensional space. So does sound, emerging from pre-dimensional suggestions of motion as a dimensional sonic event which, in turn, harbours new pre-dimensional suggestions of motion. This is why chelitákl rechuódel render the depth of Palauan time-space experiential *as the present moment*.

This is also how chelitákl rechuódel effortlessly bracket discursive layers, memories, emotions, narratives and ideas and transduce them into

sheer intensity. The intensity becomes meaningful the very moment it is being bracketed atmospherically because this is when resonance emerges. Paradoxically, as musical presence effects temporarily intensify the temporo-spatial experience, they expose the illusory quality of linear time but conceal it simultaneously: As a given musical experience merges pasts, presents and futures, the experiential intensity that emerges belongs to none of these three categories. Instead, it constitutes a fleeting manifestation of presence in Merleau-Ponty's sense: presence, for him, is a "zone in which being and consciousness coincide" (1962, 424).

The dissolution of temporal linearity into experiential intensity, therefore, is an effect that is pivotal to the efficacy of musical atmospheres. The mercurial quality of the distinctly musical temporal experience that sound-based cultural practices afford also points to the mechanics of Schmitz's bridging qualities. Awash with multilayered suggestions of motion, the felt body's temporary familiarisation with time–space as well as with its own temporo-spatiality through music is a twirling process in which meaningfulness and resonance co-produce one another through structured sound.

Such an understanding of presence effects is, of course, in stark contrast to Gumbrecht's usage of the term. This is also reflected in the fact that atmospheric presence effects, as I have described them above, are in no way an opposite to sense effects in music. Quite the contrary: meaningfulness and meaning go hand in hand in music. In the following, I will briefly explore how this discussion relates to the scholarly debate on musical meaning as it has developed in twentieth- and twenty-first century music studies. While the earlier stages of this discussion are certainly relevant to the emergence of atmospheric theory to begin with (see Riedel 2019), I am focusing here on the developments of roughly the past three-quarters of a century. With this, my aim is to maintain, for the moment, a clear focus on the conceptual implications the resonances between the notion of music as atmosphere and the scholarly pursuit of musical meaning might yield.

Music, Meaning, and Meaningfulness

Coming from a scholarly tradition used to charting meaning as mostly hermeneutic and semiotic in nature, the discussion of musical meaning in twentieth- and twenty-first century North Atlantic music studies continued to centre around the notion of music as a representational practice for a long time. These discussions, exploring music as quasi-linguistically referential and/or emotionally expressive, have situated musical meaning as primarily

referential to something 'outside' the music(al event) itself. Around the turn of the millennium and well into it, many scholars continued to frame musical meaning as attributed value: "musicians and listeners ascribe significance and value to music, to the events in which [it is] performed, and to contexts, ideas and objects associated with it" (Clayton, Dueck, and Leante 2013, 1). While this dominant conception prevailed, work of the time emphasised the reverse process, in which "music also gives meaning to events, imbues contexts and objects with values and reinforces social bonds and distinctions" (Clayton, Dueck, and Leante 2013, 1). They also increasingly broadened the discussion to include issues of embodiment in the sense of musical meaning tied to physical experiences of musical performance and largely independent from linguistic mediation (Clayton, Dueck, and Leante 2013, 1). This is an intellectual trail that had also inspired key figures of the New Musicology movement. The overall tendency to shift analytic attention to process and away from being, for instance, is also reflected in the extensive work of cultural musicologist Lawrence Kramer. He argued prominently that meaning is not primarily a product of signification, or a signified, for that matter. To him, meaning is a

> product of action rather than structure. It is more like a gesture than like a body. […] Meaning is not produced via a linear derivation from a core of certainty, whether semiotic or hermeneutic. Nor is it produced via a one-to-one matching of less certain interpretive claims with more certain evidential ones. Meaning comes from negotiation over certain nodal points that mobilise the energies of both text (image, dramatic action, musical unfolding) and context. I once called these points hermeneutic windows – partly to counter the idea of music as purely self-sufficient and self-reflective, a windowless monad – and the term seems to have had some currency. (Kramer 2011: 68)

If movement is like a gesture, then it is motion. Accordingly, some ten years later, he argues: "The movement of meaning, that movement that *is* meaning, […] also depends implicitly on a refusal of a Cartesian mind-body distinction in any of the myriad and annoyingly persistent forms this distinction takes" (Kramer 2016, xv, italics in original; also see Kramer 2002). With this, Kramer takes a clear stance against the omnipresence of affect theory in discussions of musical meaning in the second decade of the twenty-first century. His thinking resonates with and partly inspired approaches that chose to centre around framing in the sense of Mieke Bal (2002) and Goffmann (1974): framing as a dynamization of ascription processes that happen through,

not so much around, music (e.g., Richardson 2016a, 2016b). Nina Eidsheim in her *Sensing Sound* (2015) also departs strategically from the idea of meaning as an external reference and something with which people endow sound. Challenging conventional meaning-making paradigms, she emphasises the material dimension of sound-based meaning. Musing about the words 'mama' and 'papa' being said out loud, Eidsheim diverges radically from a semiotic definition of meaning in music: "[T]he physical unfolding of those words – or even a timbral modulation in their pronunciation, or even a timbral modulation that is not attached to a recognizable word – causes physical changes in the speaker or vocaliser, and it is from the sensation of that changed corporeal environment that we build meaning. […] Speech is […] not arbitrary in relation to meaning making and reality, but neither does it unfold through a casual and nonmaterial chain of relationships between concepts" (Eidsheim 2015, 124). As she brings the material body into the discussion, Eidsheim identifies the central challenge and certainly also opportunity for music studies when she suggests "that if we reframe musicking's core, understanding it as a constellation of corporeal activities and sensualities, we accomplish nothing less than a reconfiguration of the body's position in relation to sense and meaning making" (Eidsheim 2015, 127).

While phenomenological ideas began to inform (ethno-)musicological work in the nascent stages of the field, it was only in the late 1970s that they began to have a substantive impact on the field at large. Berger attests in the conclusion of his review piece on phenomenological approaches in ethnomusicology that phenomenological ideas across the breadth of their spectrum have the capacity to open vistas on music as "elements of experience that contribute important threads to the texture of everyday life and as phenomena that stir our deepest passions" (2015). He adds that music "serves as an entry point to the rest of the social universe, a starting place for inquiry that draws the researcher beyond the music event to areas as diverse and significant as the affective life of capitalism, the neurobiology of trance, the nature of time, or the paradoxes of embodiment" (Berger 2015). Importantly, however, music retains an object quality in most of this work, an idea that reflects in the notion of the entry point to the social world awaiting us behind the door of music. If we push open the door of music, we may find a whole new world of social experientiality.

But perhaps the metaphor of the entry point is ultimately not as far from Schmitzian thinking as it may seem at first glance, at least if one thinks of the entry point as a quality rather than a place or an object. Berger's entry point is, after all, reminiscent of Kramer's nodal points, those "hermeneutic

windows" that stir the energies of what Kramer, in keeping with the discursive framework of New Musicology, refers to as text and context. This is where energies begin to twirl and churn. From a Schmitzian perspective, the crucial aspect of this incipiency of motion is what Eisenlohr (2018b), with Simondon, has called transduction: the sonic event builds up meaningful intensity because its suggestions of motion are modulated by the bridging qualities of the sonic. It is only through its bridging qualities that music-making can seize people felt-bodily, entering their phenomenological body and modulating their felt-bodily experience of a given situation. Similarly, through its bridging qualities, one of music-making's most pivotal characteristics could be said to be its capacity to playfully jump back and forth, subvert or completely transform that which could at one point be identified as either sense or presence effect in Gumbrecht's sense. It is this unruly habit of music-making to disturb any sense of stability in meaning that marks its intensity and felt-bodily impact: as the sonic event keeps oscillating in the form of sound waves, so does its meaningful intensity. The colourful kaleidoscope of meaningfulness keeps spinning because it is resonant motion, layered, condensed, terribly unsettling and ever-transforming.

To think with atmospheres is far from an attempt to find a "solution" to dualist thinking, as Riedel (2020a, 263) suggests. In Lawrence Kramer's succinct words, "no one has a solution" to binarist ideologies such as the mind-body dichotomy, "and by now the possibility is real that no one ever will" (Kramer 2016, xv). Instead, it is based on the conviction that a focus on process has to be radical in nature if it is to yield fresh analytical insights. Atmospheres are no longer about who or what relates. They are about relationship as motion and process in the abstract and in the concrete.

Meaningfully Present

Music-making's meaningfulness is more than a conduit for something else, such as the ultimately ever-evasive musical meaning; it is an intrinsically felt-bodily effect. And yet, its kaleidoscopic becomings are deeply entrenched with that meaning and, similarly, meaning is imbricated within meaningfulness in music in the way in which the spatial parameters that shape an echo are inscribed in that echo. As they both create and, simultaneously, originate from auditory and kinetic atmospheres, the effects of musical meaningfulness transcend the idea of the material/immaterial dichotomy. Through its very materiality, the musicking body is capable of resounding with an experiential knowledge brought about by the body's response ability

(Ingold 2016b) to situations: When the music resonates with your flesh and your bones, "you'll know what to do", in Oribech's sense, if you take a dive into the music. The felt body knows how to respond to the suggestions of motion it encounters, and that felt-bodily knowledge of how to respond is at the heart of the sensation of meaningfulness. When we experience musical meaningfulness, we experience our felt body making sense of something that we cannot make sense of other than felt-bodily. As the esbe's voice climbs up and gives the rokúi its distinct melodic contours, we relish in the meaningful Gestalt that emerges: we anticipate it, we get surprised by it, we recognise it, we feel it in us as our bodies recompose along the suggestions of motion they encounter. This is how musical meaningfulness weaves it all together: the structures, the resonances, the material, the felt, the knowable, that which will not stop twirling, the fixed bits and those that do not seem to make sense. The focus, thus, shifts on to auditory ambiance and away from the *ideas* transmitted through music. But it does not disregard the latter. Music-making is primarily about making music present in the world and only to a lesser extent about communication, the manipulation of discursive configurations or directed interventions aimed at altering the social frameworks that characterise our life-worlds.

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Figure 11 Bai ornament in Keklau as documented by Augustin Krämer during the Hamburg South Seas Expedition. (Krämer 1929b, double plate 11) Krämer's description: "[T]he spirit in Ilëtemú; left Ngardmau with flying fox, house with spikes, to the right cave of the mother and she herself, center: a man with Gólei and fishing nets, finding the bowl with the stomach, right Gólei, high spirited people." (KETC 2017c, 60)

5 Resonance: Co-Becoming with Sound

Abstract
This chapter provides an account of resonance as a key force bringing about musical meaningfulness. I argue that music-making in Palau is primarily a becoming, an incipience of renewal regarding musical structure, form and texture. As this incipience of renewal actualises across sense modalities, such as in music and dance, it becomes an overwhelming experience, one that accounts for the power of music and dancing experiences – and, in the case of Palau, for the meaningfulness of music and dancing.

Keywords: resonance, meaningfulness, musical structure, suggestions of motion

The preceding chapters have charted the complex relationship of meaningfulness and temporality. The latent historicity that is inherent in sound-based practices, or more accurately perhaps, that is deeply inscribed into their medium sound, unhinges linear conceptions of time. Time in music-making does not unfold from past via present to future; instead, in music they exist all at once and with them, all the paths not taken, dreams undreamt and futures unimaginable. What seems contradictory on a surface level is not necessarily so if we think it through music and dance. Musing about the relationship between memory and physical movement, Erin Manning writes:

> When a dancer moves, the movement is implicit in her perception of it, which is itself part memory. When we watch a dancer move, the movement perceived is similarly already imbricated in the memory of the previous movement coursing through it (and through us). Each movement is alive with a memory that activates the becoming-body, including that of the spectator. His activation is not the recall of an actual movement [...]. The memory is always living, a force of activation ensconced in the future-presentness of discovering the feeling of movement again for the first time. (Manning 2013, 84)

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Movement in sound, in this sense, is an operationalisation of Benjamin's time-of-the-now (Jetztzeit), which, in a Messianic moment, suspends the distinctions between the past, present and future (Benjamin [1940] 2007). But to operationalise the time-of-the-now through music and dance is more than an evocation of an alternative temporal register. Manning continues, "[l]iving in time means activating, in the moving, the déjà-felt in all of its uncanniness [...] In the context of a choreographic practice, memory [... creates] a platform for a body to become an ecology of a multitude of durational times interwoven" (2013, 84) Manning's notion of the déjà-felt goes right to the core of the matter: It points to the feelingfulness that is the heartbeat of the human experience of this temporal register. Musical atmospheres emerge precisely here as a potent analytic. Musical atmospheres, as shared feelings energised by resonance and actualising in sound, enable a unique analytical approach to the complexity of the temporo-spatial experience. If the ideas I put forward in Chapter 3 already resonated loudly with Manning's thoughts about the becoming-body's relationship with choreographic movement, I will develop these thoughts further here. I will argue in this chapter that music-making in Palau is primarily an incipience of renewal along musical structure, form and texture. As this incipience of renewal actualises across perceptive modalities and the diverse registers of the human experience in music and dance, it becomes an overwhelming experience, one that accounts for the power of music and dancing experiences – and, in the case of Palau, for the meaningfulness of music and dance.

Resonance is the key energising force that links incipience with musical actualisations of meaningfulness. Therefore, I will now proceed by exploring the concept of resonance vis-à-vis the neo-phenomenological analytic of atmospheres. From there, meaningfulness will emerge as a presence effect, this time in the sense of Gumbrecht, of the incipience of resonant renewal. While this chapter is mostly conceptual in nature, its journey will begin in the ethnographic setting of the opening ceremony of the new government complex in Ngerulmud, Palau, in 2006.

Ngerulmud 2006: The Mother Bat

A strange sense of tacit, critical, yet light-hearted irony took hold of the ceremonial ground as many people in the audience chuckled but immediately worked to restore their composure. It was early one evening in October 2006, and a rubák (traditional high-chief) in Ngerulmud, Melekeok/Palau, was chanting an chesóls, a traditional recitation. The occasion was highly formal:

The government of the Republic of Palau was relocating to the newly-built government complex on the Eastern shore of Babeldaob, the island nation's largest island, and this was the opening ceremony of the highly prestigious new seat of government. A member of the traditional government, the rubák had been asked to endorse the politically much more powerful elected government on the occasion of the opening ceremony. A rubák (hereditary leader) does not need the blessing of the elected government, but in public opinion the elected government certainly benefits from the blessing and advice of the rubáks. This particular rubák complied, and he chose to do so by the traditional means: he offered an chesóls, the historic solo recitation appropriate to the occasion. It was the particular chesóls he had chosen and the way he was delivering it that conjured up that fleeting moment of silent understanding among the audience. In keeping with the genre's style, his voice recited the familiar and appropriate tune characteristic of chesóls, but the vocal timbre and rhythmic inflections he added gave it a tongue-in-cheek flair that was impossible to miss yet difficult to pin down. As the chesóls unfolded, the lyrics confirmed that none of this was unintended: the chesóls the rubák performed told the parable of a mother bat mocking the father bat, who she considered lazy – while the mother bat was carrying their offspring and taking care of their well-being, the father bat was only "playing pocket pool", the lyrics complained. This analogy was the traditional government's (the mother bat) unshrouded criticism, and perhaps mockery, of an elected government (the father bat) and their useless decorum, epistomised by the not particularly modest building complex the rubák had been asked to help open. It resonated well among the audience.

Such resonances are atmospheric. With this, I am positing that lived experience emerges from what Tim Ingold calls the "meshwork" that comprises both cultural dynamics and affective-emotional responses as "interwoven trails rather than a network of intersecting routes [...] trails along which life is lived [...], knot[s] tied from multiple and interlaced strands of movement and growth" (Ingold 2007, 75). Lived experience is always already enwrought with culture and vice versa. But as tempting as the notion of resonance is, it is also complex, particularly when used metaphorically. In the following, I will offer a few thoughts on the concept's usefulness for understanding musical practices beyond the metaphorical and the descriptive. I will start by briefly sketching prominent explorations of resonance as an analytical term within (neo-)phenomenological and socio-philosophical debates centred around music. My focus will be on scholarly discussions of roughly the past two decades; I forego most of the earlier work on resonance. Grounding resonance in the recent intellectual history of the term in this way will allow me to

distil a number of conceptual implications the concept holds. These will aid me in looking to explore its usefulness for the atmospherological analysis of sonic practices and specifically music and dance. Briefly returning to the opinionated mother bat, I will then think through performing chesóls again, this time with resonance. In conclusion, I will come back to my initial question: what is the merit of resonance within neo-phenomenological explorations of sonic practices?

Resonance

In the wake of what some like to call the acoustic turn, the notion of resonance has received increasing scholarly attention in the past ten years. Early on in the debate, Lichau, Tkaczyk, and Wolf (2009) proposed exploring resonance as model, metaphor and method against the disciplinary backgrounds of acoustics, organology and composition. German sociologist Hartmut Rosa, arguably one of the most prominent contributors to the discussion in recent years, has attempted in his *Resonance – A Sociology of the Relationship to the World* (2016) to reposition resonance as a potential key category for the social sciences. In the spirit of the aged Frankfurt School with its latently normative bias particularly when it comes to the relationship between knowledge production and social transformation (see Dhawan et al. 2016), Rosa mobilises the concept of resonance here in an attempt to offer a somewhat half-hearted critique of capitalism: "the good life", he argues, is a matter of resonance both in terms of quantity and quality, not of resources, options or instant gratification. Instead, the book's blurb argues, "we should turn our attention to the connection to the world that informs […] life and which, so long as that connection is intact, is an expression of stable relationships of resonance" (Rosa 2019).

Resonance, according to Rosa, is modernity's promise; modernity's disappointing reality, however, is a deep and encompassing sense of alienation. Meditating on the binary of resonance vs. alienation, Rosa explores the numerous ways in which he sees humanity establish a connection to the world both in the general (and openly universalist) sense and within specific contexts such as family, religion and work. "We" yearn for resonance, he implies; but, "we" find it less and less. This is due to the "accelerationary logic of modernity, which is both the cause and the effect of a broken connection to the world, individually and collectively" (Rosa 2019). Dieter Thomä (2016) muses in his review of Rosa's analysis about the latter's metaphorical use of resonance, pointing out that its vagueness leads to a dangerously uniform

perspective on societal complexity. Resonance à la Rosa, he argues, implies unison and hence, boredom: tuning forks only resonate with one another when they are tuned to the same pitch, after all. This runs counter to, or perhaps simply ignores, the consequential Deleuzian insight (Deleuze 1991) that the majority is always a matter of resonant intensity not of frequency. In days of right-wing populism and demagogic Big Man politics around the globe, the latent danger, disguised here as naivety, of Rosa's thinking is immediately tangible: Rosa's resonance metaphor leaves barely any room for diversity and complexity, which also accounts for his unapologetic universalism.

At the same time, Rosa casually builds on the long-standing phenomenological debate surrounding felt-bodily responsiveness, including theories of atmospheres and Schmitzian neo-phenomenology (see Rosa 2016, 94, 458) as well as Waldenfels's explorations of the felt body's capacity to resound with otherness (e.g., Waldenfels 1991). As a matter of fact, one could see similarities between Rosa's pairs of opposites and Schmitz's: Both Rosa's alienation (bad) and resonance (good) and Schmitz's contraction and expansion, for instance, describe binary modes of relating to one's surroundings and of co-becoming with them. For Schmitz, felt-bodily alienation begins where three-dimensional space starts, which makes his notion of felt-bodily attunement to atmospheric situation akin to Rosa's situational experience of resonance in some sense. Reading Rosa with Schmitz, one could think through resonance as a primarily felt-bodily experience. Rosa's resonant relationships emerge through "processes of adaptation [*Anverwandlung*] or of mutual attunement [*Einschwingen*]" (Rosa 2016, 36, translated from the original German).[38] Rosa's resonance is a responsive relationship between a subject and their self as well as the world they encounter; clearly a phenomenon arising between bounded subject and the outside world they face, not one dissolving the conceptual boundaries between them.

Rosa's thinking throughout *Resonance* is also indebted to Peter Sloterdijk's work on several levels. Sloterdijk, in the first volume of his spherology (2011), positions resonance as key to the human condition. To him, it is the "vocal, tactile, interfacial and emotional games of resonance" (Sloterdijk 2011, 535; also see Sutherland 2018) between mother and child, already in the womb, that instils in the latter a constant yearning to return to the prenatal co-presence of another being in the same body. Therefore, "[t]he desire for dwelling, and with it a longing to belong absolutely, as we have already seen, is thus understood [by Sloterdijk] as a ceaseless quest by

38 "Prozesse der Anverwandlung oder des wechselseitigen 'Einschwingens'."

the factical subject to regain this seemingly lost wholeness" (Sutherland 2018). Resonance, for Sloterdijk, is, thus, constitutive to human existence and foundational for human Dasein – a stance reminiscent of Deleuze's suggestion that we should think of resonance as the "intrinsic beginning" (Deleuze 1993, 239; also see 1991, 132).

Sociologist Dietmar Wetzel, building on Rosa's work, takes resonance to the field, exploring the fitness cult (Wetzel 2014a) and polyamorous relationship models (2014b), respectively, as a set of social practices responding to the yearning for resonance. Resonant relationships, for him, are libidinous relationships in that they are *expected* to be meaningful (2014b, 3). Ethnomusicologists have attended to the more material aspects of resonance (Csikszentmihalyi and Bennett 1971; Erlmann 2010; Meintjes 2003; Ramella 2019), while philosophers have explored resonance vis-à-vis affective arrangements (Mühlhoff 2015). Anthropologist and critical theorist William Mazzarella adopted Sloterdijk's "constitutive resonance" to trace the uncanny "intimate anonymity" with which mass media yield that sense of personal immediacy that seems so paradoxical given their impersonal nature (2017). To him,

> constitutive resonance suggests a relationship of mutual becoming rather than causal determination. Not all people or things are capable of resonating with each other [...]. But resonance, once established, is a source of both actualization and anxiety. I become myself through you, but I also lose myself in you. By the logic of constitutive resonance, if "I" and "you" can appear as "subject" and "object" then it is only by means of a shared field of emergence in which no such boundaries can be taken for granted. (Mazzarella 2017, 5)

Resonance, here, becomes an ambivalent force in that it is simultaneously constitutive and destitutive. It heightens the experience of self in the encounter with the other, while it simultaneously dissolves the boundaries of that same self (Mazzarella 2017, 5). Resonance makes and unmakes people and the lived environments through which they move; it pushes and pulls toward the Other and the encounter. It is this ultimately quasi-erotic force that brings about the zoon politikon. Resonant situations, for Mazzarella, are formative to the phenomena social theory understands as identity, subjectivity or even culture (Mazzarella 2017, 9). In Mazzarella's intellectual project, resonance is key to the becoming of both the individual and world through the lived experience: it moves from an ontological to an ontogenic category, from being to becoming. This is where resonance

becomes potentially useful for neo-phenomenologically inspired analyses of atmospheres as half things as it might open vistas to the mechanics of the emergence of meaningfulness through atmospheres and, at the same time, to a more integrated understanding of social, affective and discursive being.

In a Schmitzian neo-phenomenological vein, philosopher Tonino Griffero thinks of resonance as a core responsive capacity of the felt body. Joining Schmitz in his directed move against introjectionist approaches to lived experience, Griffero posits the felt body as a "sounding board of outside atmospheric impressions" (2016, 22). The felt body's responsiveness to atmospheric suggestions of motion, here, becomes its ability to enter into felt-bodily communication with the surrounding physical and social space. In an attempt to categorise atmospheric qualities, Griffero uses the term "correspondence" to describe the relationship between the felt body and a given atmosphere when the latter seems unintrusive in that it does not evoke sensations of unease or disagreement but instead feels pleasant. Resonances, to Griffero, are

> the demand-qualities of atmospheric spaces, and at the same time an ecstatic extension in accordance with the felt-body's own lived directions. Through this (anti-solipsistic) felt-bodily communication, the body embodies not just its tools, but also all the things we experience in the pericorporeal space and whose peculiar voluminosity we sense: the car we drive, the by-stander we miraculously avoid on the sidewalk, and so on. (Griffero 2016, 14)

Directionality is the key here: Griffero claims that for spaces to work a resonant atmospheric effect on felt bodies, their ecstasies need to align with the temporo-spatial directionality of the felt bodies they encounter. To him, such alignment implies matching atmospheric qualities, for example, "pleasant" or "harsh" (Griffero 2016, 24): the ecstasies of quasi-things and the felt body correspond to one another. In this way, resonance becomes a key to Griffero's "pathic aesthetics", which focuses on "the affective involvement that the perceiver feels unable to critically react to or mitigate the intrusiveness of" (Griffero 2019b: 415). Positioning the felt body firmly in the realm of the pre-reflective, Griffero, thus, uses resonance as a felt-bodily communicative tool that is categorically prior to language. My own usage of the term 'correspondence' throughout this book has been significantly different from Griffero's and much more Ingoldian: I have used it to describe the responsiveness between the various strands that make up the lived experience as a continuous process of formation.

Ingold's thinking has followed the three basic intellectual shifts debate in the field has undergone in the past twenty years: (1) a move away from the analysis of things and towards material, here: sonic, flows of energy; (2) the abandonment of Aristotelian hylomorphisms in favour of a multiplicity of concurrent formative processes; and (3) thinking in terms of ontogeneses rather than ontologies (see Ingold 2016a). Ingold, writing on dwelling, introduces the taskscape. The intrinsic temporality of the taskscape, he writes, "lies in its rhythmic interrelations or patterns of resonance" (2011b, 154).

> [In] the performance of their tasks, [people] *also attend to one another.* [...] By watching, listening, perhaps even touching, we continually feel each other's presence in the social environment, at every moment adjusting our movements in response to this ongoing perceptual monitoring. For the orchestral musician, playing an instrument, watching the conductor and listening to one's fellow players are all inseparable aspects of the same process of action: for this reason, the gestures of the performers may be said to *resonate* with each other. In orchestral music, the achievement of resonance [...] is an absolute precondition for successful performance. But the same is true, more generally, of social life [...] Indeed it could be argued that in the resonance of movement and feeling stemming from people's mutual attentive engagement, in shared contexts of practical activity, lies the very foundation of sociality. (Ingold 2011b, 196; italics in original)

Resonance, here, is the force that temporarily dissolves the presumed boundaries between individual and collective, conductor and musician, and musician and orchestra. It is a material force whose efficacy goes beyond the material and has an ethical quality in that attentiveness to the other lies at its core. Its foundational nature, pointed to by Ingold, arises from the fact that it is the dynamic that allows Schmitz's suggestions of motion to work across divergent registers of experience and knowledge: the affective, the discursive, the sensory and several more. Resonance accounts for the responsiveness between these registers, triggered by atmospheric suggestions of motion.

Resonance: Conceptual Implications

Consequently, resonance becomes a technical term describing a very specific aspect of atmospheric becoming, one that is missing in Schmitzian atmospherology (which is conceptual not analytical in nature and

design). To have a phenomenological body is to be involved in a definite environment (Merleau-Ponty 1962, 82) and to be involved in a definite environment is to co-become, on many levels, with one's surroundings, including people and things. The human experience, therefore, is one of continuous transformation in response to the changing dynamics of their environment – of lifelines corresponding and reverberating with one another, to put it in Ingoldian terms. Resonance, thus, allows me to focus on the transductive process taking place *between* the divergent registers of the human experience of the world: where a sonic event conjures up a memory, an emotion becomes inseparable from an idea and a historical narrative becomes the present. It leads to that part of atmospheric dynamics which seizes people felt-bodily, and it inquires into how that happens and what is involved in that process.

Regarding analysing musical atmospheres, resonance can, therefore, serve the double purpose of attending to the complexity of relationality as a process and, at the same time, grounding that analysis in the actual workings of its primary medium, i.e., the sonic. On the conceptual level, it makes atmospheres as an analytical perspective a bit less vague, yet, it retains the holistic sensibility that sets atmospheres apart from other modes of analysis. On the analytical level, it helps one to draw closer to the evasive yet powerful efficacy of music without losing sight of its ever-transformative ambivalence.

Revisiting the Mother Bat

Let us return to the mother bat for a brief moment. The efficacy of the moment at Palau's brand-new capitol building was multisensorial: the sight and aura of the rubák, the smell of the traditional food being prepared for the audience for after the ceremony, the mild temperature and earthy smell of an early February evening in the South Pacific. And then, the rubák's voice, which did something to the situation the very moment he started to chant: Tim Ingold's meshwork, that amorphous, complex and ever-moving entwining of lines, reacted. The meaningfulness that briefly came together and surfaced to make the audience chuckle was the meshwork's response to the sound and story of the chesóls. Ingold, in his *The Life of Lines* (2015), introduces the idea of mid-streaming – movements which interweave, forming knots with currents and answering one another. This process of answering, for Ingold, is correspondence, not resonance. Resonance in the sense I am using it offers something else: it grounds sonic atmospheres

in their own becoming. It accounts for responsiveness, but it is not the same as responsiveness. Both correspondence and resonance put their finger on the intensity of human becoming and sociality in that they both explore the coming about of the intense intimacy of being moved by the lines of the meshwork as they cling to one another and move on. Resonance, particularly in connection with musical atmospheres, pulls the abstract kite of correspondence down to earth: The sonic event of the chesóls at the new capitol building resonated materially, enveloping the audience and working the encompassing felt-bodily sensation on them that made them chuckle. Resonance points to the transductive process through which the sonic sensation of the rubák chanting makes divergent temporalities (e.g., the latency of the traditional past and the famous spur of the moment), experiential registers (e.g., emotional responses and discursively constructed notions about standing in the line of Palauan traditions), and social affiliations (e.g., the ones impersonated by the rubák and manifest in the new capitol building complex, respectively) coalesce. For a brief moment, they become inseparable. Unlike correspondence, that is to say, resonance traces the line all the way from sonic sensation to the audience chuckling and on to the chuckling fading and attentive listening taking over. Correspondence looks at processes at the heart of any sociality; resonance traces Ingold's lines into the felt body and follows the complexity of their mid-streaming: "[t]hat movement that ruffles every surface with which it comes into haptic contact" (Ingold 2015, 150). As the ruffled surfaces coalesce in the resonant moment created by the rubák chanting, human becoming becomes intensely tangible – atmospherically so.

Conclusion

Musical efficacy, thus, comes about when musical atmospheres modulate and accentuate the latent resonance between divergent experiential and perceptive registers. From that resonance, meaningfulness emerges. In the context of neo-phenomenologically inspired analysis, resonance refers to a very specific capacity of sound, one which allows analytical approaches attentive to the sonic materiality pertinent to lines entwining, knotting and letting go of one another. Resonance's potency beyond the analysis of specifically sonic atmospheres lies in its pragmatic methodological value: as resonance leaves felt-bodily traces, such as recognition, alienation, bewilderment and many other things, sensations of resonance are much more

accessible through participant observation and other empirical methods than atmosphere is. In this, resonance has something to respond to the arguably most common critique of atmospheric theory, which claims that the various neo-phenomenologies of atmospheres are theoretically convincing but lack analytical merit. In the words of cultural anthropologist Bernhard Tschofen:

> The academic debate centred around atmospheres, building on the so-called New Aesthetics of Gernot Böhme, philosopher of culture and technology, holds quite a lot of allure for an empirically minded cultural analysis. While atmospheres are theoretically convincing, however, we have to say that it is difficult to operationalise them. What is more, they lose their meaning once one tries to explore the practical dimensions [of cultural practices] through in-depth ethnography. Put differently and in a nutshell: where a cultural analysis of everyday practices seeks to reach beyond representation, symbolic forms and rational practices, we will need to sharpen precisely those tools and methods which have the potential to productively combine phenomenological and praxeological approaches. [This is necessary] to make the often vague concepts of late modern cultural theory more concrete and methodologically more accessible.[39] (2017, 19)

Resonance, as an analytical concept, can do just that: combine phenomenological and praxeological approaches productively. It is capable of addressing the transductive process that links formal event and ironic subversion, historical narrative and emotional affiliation, affect and public debate, because it is the force that establishes a connection between the felt body and its surroundings.

39 Original text: "Die an die ‚neue Ästhetik' des Kultur- und Technikphilosoph. Gernot Böhme anschließende verstärkte Rede von ‚Atmosphären' hat auch für die empirisch arbeitende Kulturwissenschaften etwas Verlockendes. Es handelt sich dabei jedoch, wie wir immer häufiger feststellen müssen, um ein zwar theoretisch überzeugendes Konzept, das aber schwer operationalisierbar ist und noch dazu an Bedeutung verliert, wenn man in höher aufgelöster empirischer Arbeit nach den Praxisdimensionen zu fragen beginnt. Anders und nun ganz kurz gesagt: will sich eine Kulturanalyse des Alltags nicht auf Repräsentationen, symbolische Formen und verstandesmäßige Praktiken beschränken, wird sie nicht um eine Schärfung gerade jener Konzepte und Methoden herumkommen, die phänomenologische und praxeologische Zugangsweisen produktiv zu verbinden wissen, um so die oftmals diffus bleibenden Konzepte spätmoderner Kulturtheorie konkreter und vor allem methodisch zugänglicher zu gestalten."

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Figure 12 Bai ornament in Ngabuked as documented by Augustin Krämer during the Hamburg South Seas Expedition. (Krämer 1929b, double plate 1) Krämer's description: "[T]he Gomsaubukl magic, left Ngeaur, right Nggeiangel, under the palms the sea with the following fishes from left: 2 *gadéng* (shark), 1 *tungg, kemedúkl*, 1 *kilérs re komedáol,* 1 *gadéng l bial."* (KETC 2017c, 50; italics in original)

6 Of Magic and Meaningfulness: Chelitákl Rechuódel and the Felt-bodily Dimensions of Spiritual Practice

Abstract
This chapter explores musical ólai (magic) practices. The practice of magic in traditional Palau required for spells not only to be recited but to resound as chelitákl rechuódel, traditional chant repertoire. The reason for that is that the magic could be implemented only through the repertoire's capacity to link, via the felt body, the present moment experientially with Palauan 'deep time'. This shows to what extent the meaningfulness of chelitákl rechuódel resides in music's capacity to connect the categories of time, space and sociality into a whole; that whole will then emerge as a deep sense of Palauanness. Chelitákl rechuódel make Palauanness felt in an encompassing sense. This is how "music worlds".

Keywords: ólai, magic, music worlding, Palauanness

[K]e rekós bedagalára ngerém ë Mulbekl
meskók tial bedógĕl loloódo ra dáob
mak meloódo kur tial dáob ra gëlagá lë gëós
ë Sagageiegá me ke bedógĕl
a dalál a rul, a dalál a ra͡i
a dalám, a dalám, a dalám

You fulfil your command, Mulbekl,
give this fulfilment to beckon down the sea,
and now I beckon down this sea today.
Sagageiegang [Sachacheiechang], you fulfil it;
the mother of the ray, the mother of the flatfish,

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your mother, your mother, your mother.
(KETC 2017b, 214; also see Krämer 1929a, 291-2)

There is no extant recording of this chant to beckon down the sea which Augustin Krämer recorded in 1909-10. But from the poetic and rhythmic structure of the words, it is highly likely that this chant was supposed to be performed as a *kesekés*. Kesekés are of an open musical form that will easily accommodate any number of poetic lines without necessarily dividing them into stanzas. Usually performed in relaxed voice, their overall tone is calm, unfolding through melodic movement within a small ambitus. Regarding their soothing effect, they are often used as lullabies, and many Palauan today will translate the word kesekés as such. In worldly kesekés singing, the chant's inner tempo will be slower in the beginning and faster toward the end of the chant; meanwhile, the outer tempo remains generally consistent. A kesekés displays a slight intensification of rhythmic density across its unfolding, which emerges as a dramatic arc holding together the otherwise serene chant. The lyrics of [K]e rekós bedagalára ngerém ë Mulbekl mirror this nicely: the concluding lines a dalál a rul, a dalál a ra͡ĭ / a dalám, a dalám, a dalám reflect and reinforce the inner-rhythmic densification of the musical final phrase by way of rhythmic word repetition.

[K]e rekós bedagalára ngerém ë Mulbekl is a magical chant. As the lyrics suggest, it serves to calm down the ocean, which may be necessary, for instance, in the case of the beginning of a tsunami. The magical ability to prevent a tsunami from putting the islands at risk continues to be passed on along hereditary lines in contemporary Palau. The lyrics are instructive vis-à-vis the general structure of a magical chant: the chanter will appeal to a deity, usually an chelíd: "You fulfil your command, Mulbekl." They will then explain what their magic will be about and enlist the deity's help: "give this fulfilment to beckon down the sea", before they put the deity's "fulfilment" to work by uttering that they will now do so: "and now I beckon down this sea today". As most magical chants do, the chant continued by evoking Sachacheiechang's support of the spell: "Sagageiegang [Sachacheiechang], you fulfil it." Sachacheiechang is an chelíd from Peliliu (Krämer 1929a, 47), who, together with his sister Dilkedch (Krämer's spelling: Dile dĕgú), is considered to be the inventor of magic. Together, the two of them are also currently the deities that will be called upon in situations where general advice on magic is needed. Sachacheiechang had invented a spell to wake the dead (Krämer 1929a, 283-4), which was taken to be the ultimate magical act and imbued Sachacheiechang with absolute magical authority. This is why most chants will evoke him explicitly to fulfil their magic by including

the standard phrase Krämer recorded as "ë Sagageiegá me ke bedógĕl:" "Sachacheiechang, you fulfil it." Dilkedch is, among many other things, the mother of a number of fish. The next line, "the mother of the ray, the mother of the flatfish", evokes her as the mother and, thus, authority figure over fish, which, owing to their flatness, can help calm down the sea. The final line, "your mother, your mother, your mother", addresses those fish directly. In this way, the line ensures the olái, magic, establishes a direct link with the forces of the natural world – which is as much a part of Sachacheiechang and Dilkedch's world as it belongs to the physical surroundings of the chanter.

[K]e rekós bedagalára ngerém ë Mulbekl is one of many magical chants Augustin Krämer and his crew recorded during the Hamburg South Seas Mission (1908-1910), unfortunately only in writing. They range from spells waking the dead, counter-magic against malevolent spells, love magic, spells aiming to improve a person's public standing, defences against spell work, charms to invoke bodily strength or cure ailments, magic to beckon down the sea (see the chant above) to vegetable planting magic aiming to increase the crop. His reports and earlier accounts (Kubary 1873, 1885a, 1885b, 1888, 1969; Semper 1873) are full of descriptions of the deeply spiritual nature of Palauan oral history. Palauans are descendants of the Gods, their villages are the seat of Gods, and visible markers of divine presence on the islands, such as stones, extend their presence into the present. I have used the distinction between presence as an asignifying intensity and neo-phenomenological ideas of the present in Chapter 4 to inquire into the temporal axis of musical meaningfulness in its entanglement with Palauan 'deep time'. To account for the spiritual dimension of the depth of Palauan time, however, requires an exploration that goes beyond the narrative and the textual. Such an exploration needs to address the felt-bodily dimension of Palauan traditional spirituality vis-à-vis both Palauan 'deep time' as the central framework of musical meaningfulness, on the one hand, and sound-based cultural practices rendering musical meaningfulness intensely experiential, on the other. This is what this chapter sets out to do. It offers a source-based exploration of traditional Palauan magic, which will reveal how the sounding of the recitative voice is the agentive force awakening the latent divinity of chelitákl rechuódel.

Magic | Olái

"Magic" is a notorious term in the history of scholarly writing about the Pacific, with a long history of abuse at the hands of Euro-American

ethnography. Early anthropologists tended to conflate ritual and magical practices all together, and the rise of the evolutionary paradigm in early twentieth-century Europe reinforced extant ideas about the linkage between "magic" and "primitivity" in the social-evolutionary sense (see Kaeppler et al. 1998). At the same time, magic is arguably also one of the most researched aspects of Oceanic ethnography. Bronislaw Malinowski, against the backdrop of his rich and detailed work on magic among the Trobriand in New Guinea, famously described Oceanic magic as

> a specific power, essentially human, autonomous and independent in its action. This power is an inherent property of certain words, uttered with the performance of certain actions by the man entitled to do it through his social traditions and through certain observances he has to keep. The words and acts have this power in their own right, and their action is direct and not mediated by any other agency. (Malinowski 1922, 427)

Fortune, when working in Manus Province, Papua New Guinea, described local magic as something that needed to be "recited aloud. It cannot be stolen by another. Its power is dependent on its having been rightfully obtained in marriage exchanges, peace-making exchanges or by more outright payment" (Fortune 1935, 121; also quoted in Kaeppler et al. 1998, 186). Malinowski and Fortune describe the common ground of most magical traditions of the Western Pacific Island world: They are speech acts and, as such, performance-bound; their enactment requires the co-performance of prescribed accompanying actions (such as gestures); they are personal property and the right to specific magical acts is exclusive but often exchange- or saleable; the magical power resides in its structural make-up, which is why they cannot be mediated.

Most of Palauan traditional magic by far requires sonic enactment to work its power. Based on evidential reports, while it was technically acceptable to do so, it rarely happened for spells to be spoken, not chanted. Chelitákl rechuódel were the primary medium for acts of magic, specifically kesekés, chesóls and omengeredákl. Its potential to work magic lies in chelitákl rechuódel's rootedness in the realm of the divine and it is disclosed to humans mostly through visions and dreams. Chelitákl rechuódel are inventions of the chelíds, and they are olángch. However, unlike olángch objects, such as stone formations belonging to the earliest creation myths, chelitákl rechuódel do not only serve as correlational gestures whose

referentiality outstrips the intensity of the suggestions of motion they exude. The latent divinity of chelitákl rechuódel is in deep slumber until musically enacted through performance. Once the sound of the reciting voice, a vibrational energy travelling through space and enveloping the felt bodies contained in that space, resounds, it affects those present across the whole range of their sensory apparatus. Eisenlohr emphasises how as the sonic, those "traveling energetic and vibratory phenomena that include, but also go far beyond what can be heard and potentially be sensed by the entire body" (2019). The auditory, to him, is one element of the sensory complex of lived religious experience. The sonic, however, "lies in close proximity to the holistic Gestalten, the atmospheric core of the sensory spectacle of religion" (Eisenlohr 2019). This core of the spectacle of religion, churning with suggested motion as I would add, "cannot be reduced to single sensory impressions, but emerges prior to the singling out of such impressions" (Eisenlohr 2019), be they olfactorily, visual, auditory or something else. This is where he locates the power of publicly enacted religion: in the "seemingly ineffable holism" that resembles what Schmitz refers to as synaesthesia, a transcendence of separate sensory perceptive registers in favour of a "holistic character of atmospheric perception that is upstream from the singling out of particular sensory impressions" (Eisenlohr 2019). The holistic core of the lived spiritual experience, that is to say, interact atmospherically with felt bodies, pervading them as sonic suggestions of motion and reverberating in their material body at the same time. In the context of the enactment of magic through chelitákl rechuódel, the holistic core of the lived spiritual experience is a klebelau-laden sense of the interlacing of Palauan 'deep time' temporo-spatiality with the islands' mythology both as a narration and a cultural practice that weaves the practitioners deeply into the emerging relational construct. It takes chelitákl rechuódel to make this holistic core resound, in the flesh and beyond, to render it experiential. Once rendered experientially, all boundaries between the magic and people involved in it, between the mythological past and the experience of the present moment, between a chant and its mysterious magical efficacy have been torn down. As the sonic suggestions of motion exuding from divine chelitákl rechuódel repertoire being enacted vibrate through space and envelop everyone and everything in it, they connect everyone and everything. That sonic sensation of connectedness is awash with a meaningfulness that is distinctly and exclusively Palauan. Through it, Palau comes about anew, magically. This, too, is how chelitákl rechuódel music-worlds.

Present-day Magic

Magic in present-day Palau generally continues to be engrained in the daily life of a part of society. However, as in other parts of the Oceanic world, "the relationship between magic and modernity has been an uncomfortable one [...] Seen as an antithesis of modernity, magic was 'a production of illusion and delusion that was thought to recede and disappear as rationalization and secularization spread throughout society' (Pels 2003, 4)" (Eves 2010). Before the arrival of the Christian mission in the late nineteenth century, magical practices were an integral element of the traditional Palauan belief system. Palauans generally distinguished between two types of supernatural entities: gods and ancestral spirits. The latter comprised the *bládek*, consisting of all ancestral spirits of one's own genealogy, and *deléb*, all other spirits. Bládek were generally well-meaning and helpful, even though they were easily annoyed; deléb were potentially harmful. This division of the spirit world mirrors the social division of Palau into (often adversary) clans. The family's title holder and head of clan acted as the intermediary between the bládek and the family, making regular offerings and summoning the bládek for general communication or specific advice. This meant that each clan had a deity assigned to them via the creation myth as well as family-specific bládek. Chelíds (gods) were more powerful than bládek (see Barnett 1949, 79-80), but with the exception of the highest chelíds, who were not assigned to specific clans, they were part of a divine hierarchy that mirrored the hierarchy of Palauan clans. Clans also had clan-specific food restrictions preventing them from ingesting, and sometimes even making eye contact with, specific animals or plants. (Barnett 1949, 79-80)

The general Palauan word for magic is olái. A malevolent spell cast onto a person or thing is a *temáll*, which also simply means "damage" and "destruction," and malevolent magic cast on to food, including betel nuts, is *tebál*. Love magic is referred to as *ollák*, and *oeullák* means "to capture by means of love magic". Malevolent magic aimed at causing death or misfortune to someone is called *okodúis,* which is related to melúis, "to remove something filthy". *Mengelil/manglíl* is a container term for foretelling and other divinatory practices (also see Aoyagi 2002, 40-7), usually divination based on phenomena in the natural world, such as clouds, fish movement, spider webs or betel nuts (Kubary 1888, 40). *Melechólb* refers generically to benevolent magic, but in a narrower sense, refers to a bathing ritual aimed at getting rid of evil spirits. The word itself also means "to bathe", "to baptise" and, referring to plants,

"to shed leaves". Finally, magic to make oneself seem "inconspicuous" is called *orreuáes* (see also Josephs 1990). Magical practices involve spell recitation, for which a variety of chelitákl rechuódel genres is suitable: chesóls, kesekés and omengeredákl. In rare cases, spells can also simply be spoken. Some recitations have to be accompanied by gestures. In the case of the magic spell quoted at the beginning of this chapter, which Krämer recorded as a *goloódo ra dáob* ("beckoning down of the sea", see KETC 2017b, 214-5; Krämer 1929a, 291), this is a downward motion of the hands inviting the sea to calm down. Healing magic may involve suitable plants, often *sis* (ti plant); sis was also used in *gomóket* (the spelling is Krämer's, see KETC 2017b, 208; Krämer 1929a, 285), spells to wake the dead. Other paraphernalia could be used depending on their metaphoric properties, a practice reminiscent of Frazer's otherwise reductive and outdated principles of magic, according to which (1) like produces like and effect resembles cause, and (2) objects that have been in contact with one another will continue to impact on each other even when removed from one another (Frazer 1913, 12-4).

Barnett observed in 1948-49 that there was still

> a category of religious specialists properly called magicians. For a price, they used their knowledge to cast spells upon the enemies of their clients or employed counter-magic to break the spell of other magicians. Contagious magic seems to have been most popular. With this a magician effected his purpose through the use of some object that had been in intimate association with his victim, such as an article of his clothing, a hair, or, most frequently, his cast-off betel quid. (Barnett 1960, 82)

Barnett's "magicians" were the *kerong,* spiritual intermediaries whose mediumship would usually first manifest in the combination of some kind of unusual behavior, including seizures to fits, with claims of having been chosen as a medium by a particular chelíd (see Barnett 1949, 81; Kubary 1888, 31). Kerongs were an chelíd's delegate and would sometimes be possessed by the chelíd. Such bodily possession could go hand in hand with some kind of trance, tremor or body trembling. When in a possessed state, the kerong's voice was the chelíd's voice. A kerong's services were available in exchange for payment in the form of, for example, Palauan money, food or betel nuts.

Other magical practices were within hereditary responsibility, such as the ability to beckon down the sea (see the goloódo ra dáob chant collected by Krämer and quoted at the beginning of this chapter). Born into a specific position within a family and clan, it was the native's obligation

to act responsibly concerning their hereditary magic. The person endowed with the ability to magically beckon down the sea or divert a tsunami for instance, was obliged to stay on the islands and not leave for extended periods of time to make sure they were available should their magic be needed. This practice continues to be respected within sections of Palauan society. Traditional crafts and professions naturally included deep knowledge of the trade's proper magical rituals as well, and some of this ólai was also well protected property (Kubary 1888, 47). Barnett quotes canoe makers, house builders, midwives and fishermen, whose command of proper incantations was a basic skill (Barnett 1949, 82). Clearly, working magic according to one's social standing and professional capacity was a mainstay of daily life. Augustin Krämer noted how people in Ngardmau, at the time of his research, considered a special type of crab to be chelíds (KETC 2017b, 95; Krämer 1929a, 130); similar notions prevail, in varying degrees, all over contemporary Palau. Both the ubiquitous presence of magic and the framing of specific animals as divine in nature are cultural enactments of Palauan 'deep time'. They serve to correlate the temporo-spatial with the mythological in order to render the resonances arising between them experiential. In the case of magical practice, this process is mediated through chanting and, quite literally, set in motion through the vibrational energy of chant performance.

Magically Meaningful

Anthropology has long recognised the connectivity between ritual and communication with both the spirit world and spirit possession. The pivotal role of sound has been a main theme throughout this literature. Mircea Eliade, for instance, describes drumming as a means of taking a(ny) "shaman to the 'Center of the World,' or enabl[ing] him to fly through the air, or summon[ing] and 'imprison[ing]' the spirits, or, finally [...] enabl[ing] the shaman to concentrate and regain contact with the spiritual world through which he is preparing to travel" (Eliade 1989 [1964], 168). Music for Eliade is clearly the core shamanic technique of ecstasy. He argues that there is always a musical instrument and that it is always this that will eventually establish contact with the world of the spirits (Eliade 1989 [1964], 179). In a similar vein, Hunter summarises "that in spite of the many different techniques for the induction of contact with the spirit world, music is the most cross-culturally prevalent" (Hunter 2015). It is important here to note, however, that spirit possession is different from shamanistic

practices involving altered states of consciousness. While in shamanism, the shaman will always retain control of their body, spirit possession is based on the surrender of control of the possessed person over their own body to the possessing spirit or deity (Gauld 1982, 29-31). A shaman's role requires their ability to recall their journey, while a medium will have no memory of their possession whatsoever once they regain consciousness. Rouget (1985) and Hunter (2015) conclude that in either case, trance is "not necessarily an automatic response to particular musical forms, but rather is a learned response" (Hunter 2015; also see Becker 1994).

The preceding chapters have laid an emphasis on Palauan 'deep time' in exploring historicity, presentness, the body and resonance as key dimensions for the unfolding of musical meaningfulness, in the sense of a temporo-spatiality based on a correlation of directed movements along a path through times and spaces as a framework for musical meaningfulness in Palau. This temporo-spatial configuration is held together by a substantial body of oral history detailing everything from the creation of the Palauan islands to the emergence of the first humans on the islands, the divine origin of their societal structure and the alignment of both the social make up and cultural practices with planetary constellations and movement. It is important to note that the stories that weave these various strands together into klebelau do not do this only by their narrative functioning, even though that is a key element. Magical key phrases including the one recorded by Kramer as "ë Sagageiegá me ke bedógĕl", "Sagageiegang, you fulfil it", is an example here: A spell will remain ineffective without a direct link to the chelíd, without his presence and blessing. Establishing this connection is only possible through the cultural act of chanting. Chanting, here, is more than a speech act. It requires the sounding of chelitákl rechuódel, because only the latter are able to truly link the now with spiritual power of Palauan 'deep time'. I argue that this ability to establish the perhaps most essential link of them all is due to the felt-bodily dimension of chanting chelitákl rechuódel, which allows for the full-fledged experience, rather than explication, of everything regardless of whether or not it can possibly be expressed in words. Vice versa, the deep meaningfulness Palauans experience in chelitákl rechuódel is rooted in precisely this unique affordance of music-making to yield resonances, across every possible sensory register and beyond, that are powerful enough to bind together experiential dimensions and relational networks. By transferring divine magical power into the present experience, ólai chelitákl rechuódel not only describe how "it all makes sense"; they show it does.

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Figure 13 Bai ornament in Koror as documented by Augustin Krämer during the Hamburg South Seas Expedition. (Krämer 1929b, double plate 6) Krämer's description: "[T]he land Bigáket, the food land […], left women dancing, right men, center the sea as divider. The women most clearly show the begel […] as stimulants." (KETC 2017c, 117)

Conclusion

Abstract
The conclusion revisits the book's central argument, considers the key concepts used towards the analysis of musical meaningfulness, and addresses a few theoretical and methodological implications for music research beyond the Western Pacific ethnographic context.

Music Worlding in Palau tried to draw closer to the much mystified and powerful capacity of music-making to affect us in an ineffable way. I have proposed the notions of meaningfulness and, more generally, atmospheres as frameworks with which to unpack the felt-bodily significatory intensity music-making leverages: the 'power of music'. Music-making is not merely a representational technique 'expressing' something extramusical or articulating an identity. Instead, it is a self-referential mode of knowledge forming multilayered connections and ruptures with temporo-spatialities, socialities, affective responsiveness, surrounding sensory orders and discursive configurations, including ideas about nationhood, belonging, community and social problems. This imbrication with lived realities is what enables music-making practices to not only emerge as a world-building technique but also uncover felt-bodily knowledge as a potential resource for action: They enable people to make sense of and transform their surroundings because they put discursive and non-discursive dimensions of taking part in the world in conversation with one another. Meaningfulness, as an analytical concept, allows for an investigation of how this happens. *Music Worlding in Palau*'s exploration of the meaningfulness of music in Palau has uncovered affordances Palauan music holds vis-à-vis potential strategies of relating to and making sense of the world that often escape verbal description. Omengeredákl allows for a shared sense of Palauan historicity to resound within the (felt) bodies of the singers. Solidary encorporation ensues. As the singers immerse themselves in this strange yet fully cogent sensation, their sense of belonging with one another and with Palau manifests both (felt-) bodily and emotionally. Simultaneously, this same sensibility articulates

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itself as a motion-laden Gestalt in the sonic sensation and particularities of omengeredákl and its structural genre conventions. Musical meaningfulness, in Palau as much as elsewhere, is an atmospheric phenomenon which allows us to analytically draw nearer regarding the seemingly covert, specifically musical ways of comprehending our life-worlds in all their complexity and more general knowledge formations. To explore musical meaningfulness as a world-building practice, then, is to listen and feel out for those bits of the ethnographically specific that are hard to describe in words alone. Pacific Islanders' 'Indigenous times' are not "just smaller sections of larger histories, but dimensions of their own [… They] are entangled with other indigenous and foreign dimensions, but simply folding them into other narratives is to erase much if what is distinctive, and much that we might learn from them" (Salesa 2014, 32). Similarly, Pacific Islander music-making exceeds the analytical categories well-established in the music scholarship of the Global North both ontologically and epistemologically. Analytically attuning to musical meaningfulness, as *Music Worlding in Palau* has tried to do, is an attempt to listen against the grain of a neocolonial intellectual corset which, disguised as a disciplinary standard, accepts some analytical categories as relevant but not others. As "many of the grand narratives struggle to narrate the indigenous Pacific in their accounts of world or global history" (Salesa 2014, 32), it is virtually untenable not to try to sound out approaches alternative to the unapologetically hegemonial, certainly safer ones. There is a lot to learn from Pacific Indigenous knowledge systems and their post-colonial epistemological entanglements, especially vis-à-vis issues of relationality and sustainability. Thinking through music with atmospheres and meaningfulness gives rise to an ecological, and latently ethical, understanding that everyone and everything is connected (Titon and Bock 2017). It is no coincidence that this is an insight deeply resonant with Pacific Islander notions (e.g., Hau'ofa 1993; Yunkaporta 2020; also see Diettrich 2018b).

Writing against a long tradition of music scholarship that conceives of music-making as primarily representational – of an identity, a specific meaning or a Zeitgeist – as well as the recent trend to see atmospheres as a mere register of the affective, *Music Worlding in Palau* has tried to single out musical suggestions of motion without losing sight of the constitutive vagueness and, in fact, inherent ambiguity that form the heartbeat of atmospheric musical situations. This has led me to argue that music-making in Palau is primarily a becoming, an incipience of renewal along musical structure, form and texture. As this incipience of renewal actualises across sense modalities in music and dance, it becomes an overwhelming experience,

one that accounts for the power of music and dancing experiences and, in the case of Palau, for the meaningfulness of music and dancing.

Like music-making, atmospheres are always a process, not an effect. The felt body reaches out into the full complexity of its environments and towards other human bodies when experiencing an atmosphere. This happens via the perpetuum mobile of the neo-phenomenological vital drive: a constant but not at all regular rhythm of contraction and expansion. This rhythm, the powerhouse of experientiality, is not confined to the realm of the physical body. Quite the contrary, felt bodies interact intimately with the world when experiencing a musical atmosphere. Not only do atmospheres act as a bridge that emphasises the fleetingness of the connection between the body and its environments, they also show how the distinction between attributed meaning and felt experience may well be analytically useful at times but ultimately falls short of grasping the power of lived experience. Lived experience is characterised, among other things, by the inseparability of the experiential intensity and the discursive dimension of feeling in music. The countless meanings contained in suggestions of motion are internally diffuse, numerous and ambivalent. Through musical suggestions of motion, some of them will resonate with the social and cultural configurations they encounter; others will not. In order for felt bodies to react to suggestions of motion, they need to be responsive to them. Whether or not felt bodies are responsive depends on the social and cultural configurations that are inscribed in them and within which they move. This emphasises once more just how deeply intertwined atmosphere and discursivity are in the musical experience. It also underscores that the analytical merit of atmospheres for music studies is not in the general and the theoretical. Atmospheres only become useful vis-à-vis the particular and the ethnographic.

In the case of Palauan chelitákl rechuódel, the social and cultural configurations inscribed in the felt bodies that were responsive to the music's suggestions of motion included a set of traditional values, a distinctly Palauan notion of history and how it is constituted, and an equally distinctively Palauan sense of community. The meaningfulness Victoria, Oribech and the other women found in chanting came about in the resonances between the suggestions of motion and the various frames the suggestions of motion encountered. These resonances enable a not necessarily exhaustive but, nonetheless, discursive description of an atmosphere. In the case of chelitákl rechuódel, they pointed to a link between musical atmospheres and the concept of olángch. The atmospheres of chelitákl rechuódel in general and of specific chelitákl rechuódel performances in particular have multiple meanings because atmospheres are always internally manifold. To describe

the atmosphere of chelitákl rechuódel as one of olángch is to single out one of many possibilities. Individually felt experiences of an atmosphere are always already in conversation with several experiential, interpretive and affective frames at the same time. As in collectively felt atmospheres, they are always deeply relational.

Atmospheric effects resonate in felt bodies as meaningfulness. Meaningfulness emerges there in felt bodies, from resonating with, among many things, competing local discourses of musical meaning and the sensation of affect. It, thus, comes about in between experiential, interpretive and affective frames. This emergence yields an effect of both intensity and meaning that goes way beyond the effect these respective frames could possibly yield by themselves. This is what makes musical meaningfulness a true "in-between phenomenon" (cf. Vadén and Torvinen 2014, 3). Neither meaning nor meaningfulness are an either/or phenomenon, one representative and the other not, one material and the other immaterial, or one signifying and the other asignifying. Here, thinking through music with atmospheres can substantially further important earlier work on (a) musical semiotics (e.g., Turino 2014) by reaching beyond Peircean categories of signification (for an account of the analytical relationship between atmospheric theory and semiosis, see Eisenlohr 2018b); (b) entrainment (Clayton, Sager, and Will 2005), which focuses primarily on cognitive processes while encorporation describes a type of corporeal communication that becomes actualised as felt-bodily experience; and (c) music as an affective and aesthetic agent in everyday life (DeNora 2000), to which it adds a more encompassing perspective. Atmospheres point us to how the felt body thinks and the mind feels, how thought affects and how affective experience reasons. This itself has been amply theorised upon in various branches of philosophy, most notably perhaps in Richard Shusterman's pragmatist somaesthetics (2008). But atmospheres offer a number of novel and concrete analytical tools to music scholarship, as *Music Worlding in Palau: Chanting, Atmospheres, and Meaningfulness* has shown. With this, the notion of atmospheres allows us to draw a little closer, not so much vis-à-vis what music means to whom, but *how* it means so much in a specifically musical way.

What thinking with atmospheres offers to music studies, thus, is a layered account of meaningfulness that cuts across taken-for-granted binaries such as the body (which feels sensations) and mind (which attributes meaning) or affect and discourse. Atmospheres do not primarily account for what music means, nor do they account for the intensity with which someone experiences a musical performance. Instead, they allow for an

exploration of the workings of musical meaning(fulness) that sensitises us to the spectrum of ways in which music means and the varying intensities with which meaning may be experienced as atmospheric. Thinking about atmospheres invites us to look at music-making as cultural knowledge in action, in the sense of Manning and Massumi (2014): as a specifically musical mode of knowing in which musical experience converges with thinking and feeling.

Atmospheres have diagnostic potential. In times of renewed enthusiasm for populist rhetorics and nationalist agendas, which demonstrate a surprising degree of emotive power around the world, it is hard to ignore how atmospheric decision-making is currently shaping the future of our planet. Quite possibly, as we speak, atmospheric demagoguery is the single most powerful force that determines the future of the political landscapes, social justice and global health humankind will have to deal with in the centuries to come. It is no surprise that music and musical performance have always been part and parcel of political campaigning, human rights advocacy and activist agendas in equal measure.

Atmospheres make the weight of the past felt (Slaby 2019). Atmospheric weight, however, is not necessarily a burden. In musical meaningfulness, it merges with imagined pasts, felt presents and dreams of possible futures. Relishing musically in meaningfulness is a strategy to unhinge the seeming linearity of time. Experientially, we are fully in the flow of time, always already ahead of the present moment, yet, deeply caught up with the now. Just as the finite nature of human life adds meaning to our life choices, the ephemerality of the moment adds depth to our experiencing the present. Musical atmospheres infuse this ephemerality with sheer intensity because the spatialities of felt-bodily feeling and hearing are compatible in their surfacelessness and indivisibility (Pfeiffer 2007, 103). This is why the sonic, perhaps more than any other media, is so effortlessly effective in heightening situative intensity. Such is the work of musical meaningfulness. Playing around with, moulding and recomposing meaningfulness, music-making is world-building. And such, then, is the work of music worlding with atmospheres.

There is so much we can know about music-making in Palau and about music-making in general. And there is so much more we can discover felt-bodily, again about both. To know and to comprehend felt-bodily are two related and yet very different things. There is a lot of room for meaningful play in their in-between. North Atlantic musical scholarship has, for a long time, emphasised the former dimension of meaning musically. *Music Worlding in Palau* suggests it is time we take the latter more seriously.

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Glossary

Bai	(Palauan) traditional men's house
bládek	(Palauan) spirit of ancestors
btuch	(Palauan) star
buil	(Palauan) moon
chad	(Palauan) human beings
chelíd	(Palauan) spirit
chelitákl rechuódel	(Palauan) traditional chant repertoire
chemáng	(Palauan) large sea or mangrove crab; scylla serrata
chesóls	(Palauan) type of chant
Chuab	(Palauan) legendary giant child; daughter of Latmikaik
deléb	(Palauan) spirits
eabed	(Palauan) squall
esbe	(Palauan) vocal part in omengeredákl
haka	(Māori) dance
he'he nalu	(Kanaka Maoli) Hawaiian surfing
kaberruuch	(Palauan) large war canoe
kele	(Tongan) sea sediment
kelulau	(Palauan) 'whispering principles'; confidential (community) matter; political protocol
keredekiil	(Palauan) type of chant
kerong	(Palauan) spiritual intermediary
kesekés	(Palauan) type of chant
kim	(Palauan) giant clam
klebelau	(Palauan) 'Palauanness'
Latmikaik	(Palauan) mythological figure, born from a clam; she gave birth to the first Palauans
limu	(Tongan) seaweed
manglíl	(Palauan) divination
mechás	(Palauan) older woman
melemótem	(Palauan) person who 'prompts' the lyrics (in chanting)
melíkes	(Palauan) leader of the group (in chanting)
mengelil	(Palauan) see manglíl
meruchodel	(Palauan) solo chanter (in omengeredákl)

Milad	(Palauan) goddess; [milad el dil] name given to Dirrabkau after she died in a flood and was revived
moana	(Tongan) deep sea
mur	(Palauan) village festivity
Obechad	(Palauan) a god; progenitor of chad
o-desuokl	(Palauan) introductory exclamation (chesóls performance)
okisel a chesóls	(Palauan) 'rising of chesóls'
okodúis	(Palauan) malevolent magic aimed at causing death or misfortune
ólai	(Palauan) magic
olángch	(Palauan) 'signs of history'; sign; distinguishing mark
ollák	(Palauan) love magic
omengeredákl	(Palauan) vocal genre of chelitákl rechuodel
omerael	(Palauan) journey
orreuáes	(Palauan) magic to make oneself seem inconspicuous
otengelel a chesóls	(Palauan) 'bringing down of chesóls'
ráel	(Palauan) path
Rak	(Palauan) Palauan god; year
rekil Ngebard	(Palauan) 'the time of westerly winds'
rekil Ongos	(Palauan) 'the time of easterly winds'
renged	(Palauan) historical polities
rokúi	(Palauan) 'all of them'
rubák	(Palauan) traditional chief
ruk	(Palauan) men's dance
sis	(Palauan) ti plant
tā	(Tongan) time
tauhi vā	(Tongan) lit. 'beating space'; 'the nurturing of socio-spatial relationships'
tebál	(Palauan) malevolent magic cast onto food
Temdókl	(Palauan) guardian at the entrance of the heavenly realm. Has eyes made of Palauan money.
Turang	(Palauan) legendary figure; the first to give birth naturally; wife of Mengidabrudkoel in Ngiwal
Uchelianged	(Palauan) God of Heaven, creator
vā	(Tongan) space

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