

Island in between crossings

It's awfully loud in here. Somewhere where I'd rather not stay. But I do. It's the sound of cars, elliptic – what I hear, is it the engines or tires rolling on the pavement? – it comes, peaks, and then goes. But they're many and pass successively on both sides and underneath. At times the sound of metal – tan-tan, tan-tan, then several beeps, the volume of the cars is turned down, but people are now louder.

They're crossing in both directions. The ones that walk in groups talk to each other. Some loners too, into their phones. Children's vocalizations stand out. They scream and shout. Their voices have it easier piercing through all the noise. I hear a bicycle bell. In fact, there's a bike track crossing this island, and people walk there too. The sound of bikes rolling, also when they're taken in the hand. The soft rattle of a baby stroller. The louder rattle of a suitcase taken on its wheels. A scooter descending from the sidewalk to the road. Wheels to be seen and heard everywhere. A glass bottle is stepped on. The cracking sound of a plastic package being opened: someone is gonna have some snacks!

Meanwhile the choir of the walking crowd was drowned out by the intense traffic... And there it comes again. I realize that the flow of people is unbalanced. Most of them are walking towards a rectangular portal bordered by lights and with "Alexa" on top, written in neon lights. Honk! Wait... Is this birds chirping? Looking around, there's actually a flock – could have been them. Another ambulance. It's the third one passing since we arrived here. Shamelessly taking all the sonic space.

At this point it's clear that time in this island is not linear. While the day is getting darker and the artificial lights all around are popping out more – "oh! it's the train passing over there" – the sound moves in circles. The sound of traffic dominates, then the beeps of the green traffic lights, then people affirm themselves until traffic takes over again. And so on, and so on. In cycles.

From time to time some hard soles hit the ground marking someone's walk, and once it's the rhythmic tap of crutches. The rest of the people, the vast majority wears foamy, soft-soled sneakers, so it's like they're walking on clouds.