

Ralf Peters

Ways to the Voice

Journeys into
the Human Voice



translated
by Ania Dardas and Ralf Peters

In the book „Wege zur Stimme/ Ways to the Voice" that was published in German in 2008 (new edition 2018) I put into words my understanding of the Roy Hart approach to the voice that is at the very root of all my voice work as an artist and a teacher. Although my understanding has continued to develop since then, "Ways to the Voice" is still valid as the basis to this further development. You will find philosophical aspects of the voice, a historical overview, anthropological and psychological questions and ideas, and some thoughts concerning the artistic potential of the voice as we understand it in our work.

Reading this book again now shows me how much I was trying at that period of my work with the voice to put the approach of Wolfsohn/Hart into a wider context. I still think this was an important idea because an adequate contextualization of this work from a cultural and historical point of view is still missing. Neither Alfred Wolfsohn nor Roy Hart have the attention that they should have for their pioneering exploration of the human voice in general and for vocal art of the 20th and 21st century.

The first chapters of this English version have been translated by Ania Dardas, not only a professional translator and copywriter but also someone with a deep and long experience of Roy Hart work. She is part of the "friends", a group of people that worked together for more than 15 years with Jonathan Hart Makwaia and Rosemary Quinn as teachers. It was in this group that I first met her. She lives, works and sings (mainly jazz) in Switzerland.

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I hope very much that reading my reflections will inspire you to think about the fascinating phenomenon of the human voice. I am happy to have comments on these texts and look forward to discussing them with you, either on e-mail ralf-peters@stimmfeld.de or face to face, maybe at the Roy Hart Centre in Malérargues.

More about my work at: <http://stimmfeld.de/> (German and English),
 <http://hoerfeld.de/>
 <http://stimmfeld-verein.de/>

Köln, December 2023

for Paul and Clara Silber

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...and of greatest importance in philosophy are the cries around which concepts transform into song.

Deleuze/Guattari

Orpheus could be the eponymous, the mythical hero of theory, as he is the one who turns to that which he loves, even at the risk of destroying it.

Roland Barthes

Part 1:

Voice and Thinking

A Day in the Life of a Voice

The alarm goes off, barely half awake he stretches, got to put a stop to that racket fast! The first vocal expression of the day is somewhere between a mumble and a sigh. The woman next to him rolls over and pulls the covers over her head. The man – in his early 40s – whom we are observing waking up belongs to the species of frustrated late riser who has gradually turned into a chronic morning grouch. In the minutes directly after getting up, all that can be expected is a low growl or a few signals expressing the thought “leave me alone!”. In the bathroom in front of the harshly illuminated mirror, the first deep breath is followed by a long drawn-out sigh. Silence on the way to the kitchen that is briefly punctuated by another sigh on seeing the empty bread bin. A trip to the shops needs to come first. And that is where the first sentence of the day makes its appearance: “Five rolls and a newspaper, please”. The gravelly sound of his own voice startles the man, who hastily clears his throat and makes an effort to sound a little more human when he says goodbye. Back at home, his daughter has occupied the bathroom. “For heaven’s sake, would you get a move on. I need to get to the

office”. The voice thunders through the door with ease; the daily outburst makes a vocal warm-up superfluous. The voice moves back into low gear to fulfil its limited needs during breakfast – planning the family day needs no special vocal input. But why does his daughter need to squawk so early in the morning? A soft and loving, if already slightly stressed, “Bye, see you this evening!” to his wife, who in the meantime is also up, and then it’s off to work. In the car, the radio is playing familiar old songs and the man hums along, using his hands to beat the rhythm on the steering wheel. At the office, the attractive new secretary says hello. She always makes him nervous although he would actually like her to find him cool. As there is a strange wobble to his “good morning”, he decides not to get involved in a longer conversation. Team meeting at 10 am to discuss a major new project. A serious attitude is the order of the day. No exaggerated enthusiasm. The voice needs to sit as securely as his belt. During a break, a conversation with a colleague about football and the appalling game played by the local football club on Saturday. The voice sounds relaxed, loud and unrestrained, at times so forceful that it almost breaks. The people at neighbouring tables are looking around to see who is shouting. Back at the office, a few important calls during which the voice functions perfectly. He’s noticed that on the telephone he sounds a lot more calm and collected than face to face. He simply feels more comfortable if no one is watching him when he’s speaking. Perhaps he ought to do that workshop on body language that the company regularly offers ...

Time to go home, the car radio plays the same songs as in the morning, but he’s too tired to sing along now. He has to pick up his daughter from tennis. Her voice suddenly sounds suspiciously friendly and smooth. His, in contrast is almost resigned: “OK, what do you want?” His “No” explodes like a shot – hard and un-compromising. Directly afterwards he is almost sorry. His daughter is close to tears. Just great!

In the evening it’s choir. Once a week, two hours of singing. Not at a professional level but still quite demanding. He’s a tenor along with three other men and has to make himself heard among around 20 female voices. The basses don’t have it much easier. Men are in short supply in choirs. Despite all that, he wouldn’t want to miss a choir evening. Regardless of how tired he is beforehand, after an evening of singing, he feels refreshed and alive. Afterwards it’s off for a quick drink; with the first gulp of cold beer, the throat releases a long

sonorous aaaahh! The noise level and poor air quality make communication quite difficult. His voice is gradually getting tired and is sounding strained and tight. He starts off for home soon after. At home, he makes conciliatory sounds in his daughter's direction. The voice now has a lower timbre, smooth, almost velvety – it helps to smooth ruffled feathers. Later on he lets himself collapse with a grateful sigh into bed, has a short conversation with his wife, who already has her bedtime reading open in her hand. This in turn settles the question of whether the tonal universe of amorous play will find its voice tonight and shortly afterwards the only sound to be heard is that of gentle snoring that follows the rhythm of relaxed breathing.

The small sortie into a day in the life of a European voice allows us to get a sense of the diversity of sounds produced by this most important human organ of expression. If a recording were made of all the sounds a person makes over the course of a day, the accumulated results would surely amaze. We normally only hear those sounds that are directly associated with speech and we build up a picture of the voice that allows us to recognize a person. We only become aware of all the other sounds and voices when they force themselves into the foreground because they are very loud or occur in an unexpected context. We also take a subjective approach to how we perceive our own voice, which normally does not fully correspond to what we would hear during a recording made of the day's sounds. In order to become aware of the world of sound that a voice produces on a daily basis, we have to soften up and adjust the routine settings of our sense of hearing. Unlike a microphone that records all that is acoustically available, our sense of hearing functions according to settings that develop out of general beliefs based on our culture, as well as our personal habits and convictions. We hear only those things that we believe – at a more or less sub-conscious level – are good for or important to us.

Thinking about the Voice

Every sound made by the voice is embedded in a net woven of beliefs, convictions, opinions, decisions and questions. In other words, the results of thinking that mould our lifeworld. We hear the voices of others as well as our own against the background of our lifeworld, of our culture in general and our specific life situation in particular. But it is not only our sense of hearing that is culture-dependent, the voice also adjusts its tonal possibilities to that zone that appears to be socially and personally normal or appropriate. While, on the one hand, many sounds produced daily by the voice are filtered out by culturally biased ears, on the other, we make use of only a fraction of the potential that lies deep in every voice. How our voice sounds also depends on the range of the sound spectrum that is acceptable to us and to our self-image. Although sounds do manage to emerge other sounds in the acoustic world, in the back-ground there awaits an entire universe of volume, pitch and timbre that is also at our disposal! And much of it, when it is finally allowed to make itself heard, sounds too strong, too interesting, too special to miss out on.

We are, to a large degree, unaware of how our vocal world is conditioned and restricted. A characteristic of our lifeworld is that its 'building blocks' are taken for granted. We would be unable to function if we continuously had to question and challenge every aspect of daily life. As long as we are not in any difficulties, we do not question the structures that go to make up our life. However, when searching for the whole voice – which is what all that follows is about – we will have to penetrate some cultural layers of our lifeworld that have covered and hidden large parts of the voice in order to seek out possibilities beyond those implicit in our modern existence inherent in our voice ... By taking this approach we are drawing on that area of philosophy that is always on the hunt for the *thing itself* and doggedly challenges everything that is simply assumed to be so. The discipline of philosophy has a number of fascinating and difficult questions up its sleeve for a subject like the human voice that is so intimately involved in our lives, our senses and the world we experience. For example, what do we mean by: *the* human voice? First of all, it de-notes nothing more than a general term defined by philosophy in order to be able to reflect on the subject. *The* human voice, in the sense of the billions of vocal organs with which humanity (yet another general term) is equipped and that are all unique, does not exist. The general term for the human

voice cannot be heard. There is a big gap between the theoretical discussion of our topic and the phenomenon itself. Reflecting on a subject by making use of words does not enable sensory experiences to be communicated. In this way, a discussion or discourse on French cuisine and the composition of a five-course meal is clearly not the same as enjoying the meal it-self. A theoretical interpretation of Beethoven's fifth symphony or a folk song, however brilliant, can in no way replace listening to the symphony or singing the song. The curious quality of the experience that is conveyed by the senses and the associated activities cannot be experienced or brought to life simply by thinking. The idea that thinking can provide an adequate image of the world in all its aspects clearly does not apply to experiences connected to the body (such as those cited above). At least, not if one adheres to the philosophical notion that dominated the western philosophy of thought until the 19th century. Thereafter, thinking was capable of adequately rendering the state of being and the world. It's simply a matter of thinking correctly, or, put with a little more passion: thinking the truth. Philosophy shows the world as it is! With the oeuvre of Friedrich Nietzsche, the scepticism always felt in regard to this concept became a real threat to the old way of thinking. Philosophy in the 20th century represents, to a large extent, the attempt to re-define the relationship between thought and being and to discover what the original function of thought is, if not to represent being. And that makes philosophy once again useful to us in terms of exploring the human voice and its anthropological significance. If one accepts that thought is not able to adequately represent every aspect of being or, in terms of our investigation, the human voice in a universal sense, one can begin to reflect on the benefits that a philosophical approach to studying the whole voice might bring. One particularly fruitful approach was put forward by the two French philosophers Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari in their work: *A Thousand Plateaus*.

A Map instead of a Copy

In the introduction to 'A Thousand Plateaus', Deleuze and Guattari discuss the philosophical question of how the relationship between thought – together with its verbally expressed results – and that notorious 'being' – the sum of every-thing that *is* – used to be understood in occidental philosophy and how it could be understood today, long after the much publicised death of metaphysics. To describe the traditional and the new approaches that they contrast against each other, Deleuze/Guattari introduce the concept of the *tracing* and the *map*. The tracing stands for the idea of the representation, whereby the thinking-speaking expression of an object is supposed to be as accurate a reproduction of the original as possible. Creating a tracing means making a true copy of an existing original. Here once again we are talking about a notion with which we are familiar that thinking and being correlate with one another. A traditional philosopher would say: true thinking is thinking that which *is*. With their metaphor of the tracing, Deleuze and Guattari are relocating the old philosophy at a more mundane level; they are, so to speak, dispersing the clouds of incense in order to see the intellectual approach more clearly. Copying being via thinking follows a similar process to making a Xerox copy in which the original is made according to a different process than its copy. The sheet of paper that we lay in the photocopying machine may contain handwriting or have come out of a computer printer, the copy, on the other hand, results from a different process entirely. There are, however, copies that are created in the same way as the original. Copies of oil paintings are painted using oils; handwritten documents – Kujau's Hitler Diaries spring to mind – on original paper, or as close as possible, and written using identical ink. But thought does not make use of the same "material" in order to make a faithful reproduction.

A copy quasi duplicates the original object. A copy produced in this way should show the original as it is. By producing this copy, the copier proves that he knows the object and knows how to make a facsimile of it using his tools. If he makes a good copy, then he has understood the original object and classifies it within his sphere of competence. This turns understanding into a form of epistemological power politics.

Deleuze and Guattari put forward the map as an alternative to the model for the copy that is now obsolete, not only in the eyes of the authors. Maps do not duplicate the object in a true to original way. They act more like an aid on the journey through the territory under investigation or the universe of discourse being represented and provide guidance on how to behave in that world. In the words of Deleuze and Guattari, the map is not primarily proof of *expertise* (“I have understood my subject”), but of *performance* (“I indicate pathways through a subject area”). Unlike with the copyist, the object is not available to the cartographer or map reader and the universe on the map is not reduced to a simple scientific object. Theory and practice are no longer sealed off from one another but permeate each other mutually. The map metaphor takes leave of the traditional subject-object separation in favour of an integrated structure in which each contribution to the subject affects its form and the reactions to this change will in turn shape later activities. In this way, maps prescribe how one gets to a region and which paths one can take. While the travelling map reader is exploring, new things will come to light that will be integrated into the next map. This is a process that continues for as long as there is interest in the quest. The map will never become a tracing as this cognitive process is not the search to find an eternal truth but rather a scene that is set in a particular time and history. The conditions change with each new contribution, each new map and each further journey. Seen from this perspective, there is no true essence of the human voice. The result of the expedition into the landscape of the voice depends on who is carrying out the expedition and which map is being used.

The cartographer draws the areas in which he has spent time, tries to show how one gets there and what awaits one on arrival. However, everyone must make the journey into the world and foreign countries for him- or herself. Only practical experience can bring to life the insights gleaned from the map. This particularly applies to the human voice. One cannot get to know the human voice by reading a book. A study such as the one presented here is no more, but also no less, than a source of in-spiration for one’s own journey of discovery. Whether the reflections that I present here are consistent with the experiences of readers can only be decided once these experiences have been had. According to Heidegger, one could say that the landscape of the voice appears as a result of experience; the expedition into the unknown creates that which will be recorded on the map. The map of the voice that I am

presenting in this book takes its reference to me as its cartographer. In this way it resembles every map that was drawn from ancient times up to the early middle ages. The result of painstaking efforts, the style and workmanship of these hand-drawn maps revealed the identity of their author.

Up until the middle ages, maps were drawn in the expectation of making new discoveries. Fantasy and imagination accompanied the process of creation. These maps can be said to have a degree of personality. In regard to details, the cartographer from the past took the liberty of disregarding the constraints of drawing to scale. The things he found important are therefore drawn so large that they cannot be ignored. Alfred Wolfsohn, one of the great explorers of the territory of the whole voice, wrote texts that are like maps, and which include many features that one would not expect to find on a map of the voice – because one is not familiar with the territory, has not been to the places where Wolfsohn spent much time and made his home. The quality of the map can only be appreciated once one has started one's own journey and can then see whether it shows the way or leads one astray. Maps of the voice cannot and do not want to be objective. Showing readers *one* path and in this way encouraging them to follow their own path is, to my understanding, the task of a “reference work” that deals with the human voice – a subject that holds myriad surprises for everyone who undertakes this journey.

But why draw comparisons between the voice and unknown territory that needs to be charted? Every human being uses his or her voice on a daily basis; it is a trusty companion in virtually every situation. Normally speaking, we require no special resources in order to use and make use of our voice. Just as we need no map to find our way around the neighbourhood in which we live except when occasionally searching for an unfamiliar side street, our voice moves confidently within its environment. Why draw a map of an area with which everyone is apparently familiar. The question points directly to the heart of the matter. To what extent can it be claimed that everyone is familiar with the human voice or at the very least one's own voice? Our knowledge is rarely the result of research that we have personally under-taken. As part of education and socialisation, we are faced with the prevailing understanding of the voice that we accept, more often than not, without question or object-

tion. This understanding is the result of a cultural process where the notion of which areas of the voice are socially acceptable or what is appropriate or beautiful for a voice is governed by an unspoken agreement that is binding for that particular time. Our understanding of the voice is part of the network of attitudes towards the world and life that are only partly individual and which we absorb from the society in which we were born and raised. And if we want to take a fresh approach to the voice, we are confronted with a horizon of the mind that carries with it a long history. The voice as such, as a quasi-natural phenomenon does not exist. The task faced by a cartographer of the voice has a (cultural) historical aspect. He must study all the old maps that have served to date and then compare his own findings with that which is already known. This is the only way in which to gain an overview of the general context of understanding in which the current approach to how the voice is used and perceived is anchored. In terms of the voice, this context comprises preconceptions that are not questioned in daily life and work as they are the means that allow us to operate with a degree of success in the world. Remarkably, even professional researchers into preconceptions – philosophers – have relegated the voice into the corner of unquestioned assumptions. This is a blot on the study of philosophy that becomes increasingly untenable the more one grapples with the phenomenon that is the voice and begins to comprehend the meaning the voice carries for man at both the individual and anthropological level. After sexuality, the voice represents the second largest blind spot in the eye of occidental philosophy. The refusal to address the voice as the voice rather than as the carrier or servant of language or music has had enormous repercussions on the way we understand it. Expressed in the metaphor of cartography, the task today is also to bring to light that which, to date, maps have tended to conceal. This process of concealment found its beginning in antiquity, which is why we will now be taking a look at how the voice was regarded (rather than heard?) by Plato.

Voice in the Shadow of Language

Plato

The English philosopher Alfred N. Whitehead (1861-1947) once commented that the entire western philosophy consisted of footnotes to Plato's oeuvre. It is indisputable that, in terms of philosophy, Plato set the course for everything that was to follow in the two and a half thousand years after his death. His influence even extended to areas with which he had little to do directly. In this way, although he never made the human voice itself a subject of consideration, until recently his philosophical principles dominated the understanding of the voice in our culture. For Plato and his teacher Socrates both placed *language* at the centre of their philosophical reflections. The voice was only referred to in terms of deliberations relating to the philosophy of language, and the voice did not emerge from under the long shadow of language for many centuries — in point of fact not until the 20th century, when artists and psychologists began to take an interest in it. In his dialogue *Protagoras*, Plato clarified how he saw the relationship between voice and language. He recounted the myth of the beginning of the world created by the (in this case, Greek) gods. The two fraternal deities Epimetheus and Prometheus from the House of Titan were given the task of assigning gifts to all the animals. At his own request, Epimetheus takes personal responsibility for this task, distributing all the gifts until at the end all the animals have been provided for with the exception of man. Naked and defenceless, there he stands — man, the imperfect being. Prometheus decides to take man's part and from Mount Olympus he steals fire and the "the artful wisdom of Hephaistos and Athena." In other words, an ability for handiwork, technology. Thus equipped, man sets out on the road to be-coming man, a part of which — to put it Platonically — also involves assigning sounds to the voice and forming words.

According to Plato, man requires a voice whose task it is to function as the medium for the spoken language. One of the fundamental functions of the voice is to give language audible form. And that is the sum of its potential for him. This narrow view of the voice has fatal consequences. For logocentrists in the wake of Plato, the voice that serves unstructured

sound rather than language stands for all that is pre-human, indeed even inhuman. It is language that makes man what man is, language ennobles the voice that as part of this philosophy loses its own individual value. Strangely, this leads Plato to the view that speech and use of the voice did not necessarily emerge at the same time and the voice here forfeits even its supportive function in favour of speech. For Plato, thinking carries with it the idea of a dialogue of the soul with itself. Speaking aloud serves only to put out into the world the thought that has already been formed. In this way the voice is downgraded to an accessory of thought that has no influence over what is said and is merely the neutral servant of the thought expressed in words. On the whole, this idea of how language and the human voice are understood has prevailed for centuries. The first signs that its grasp was weakening appeared in the Renaissance, when a culture of the voice developed in which the sound produced was taken as seriously as the text of the song. In philosophy, the formulation of doubt in regard to the Platonic understanding of the voice is attributed to Nietzsche. Nietzsche always speaks of language, but he senses that there is more to the sound of words than can be perceived if one only pays attention to the words and their content.

There is yet another reason for Plato's neglect of the voice that is strongly anchored in his understanding of philosophy. Plato attaches great value to the human *senses* in the development and progress of philosophy. But he is convinced that *sight* represents by far the most important source of awareness for philosophy. For his idea is that laws or the proper functioning of world affairs can be achieved by simply observing nature. By observing the movement of the heavens and the regular alternation between night and day, for example, we will grasp an idea of time and lessons that will guide us from all that is visible to a "singular approach to philosophy".

In Plato's dialogue *Timaeus*, from which this derivation of the philosophy of observation is taken, there is also a scientifically erroneous theory of voice generation according to which sounds are produced by a puff of air. These puffs of air reach the ear, which passes them on to the soul. The reference for this model was the flute. The human voice however, actually functions more like an oboe in which sound is generated by the vibration of the reeds in the mouthpiece. Plato's theory held sway until far into the 18th century when the vibrating nature of sound and the functioning of the human vocal folds were discovered.

Plato's preference of sight over hearing would have drawn loud protest from his teacher Socrates. His background is one of the natural philosopher, the seer, through to a philosopher of the Agora, the market place, who seeks to investigate the essence of ideas and knowledge in discussion with others. Accordingly his dialogues depend much more on hearing than seeing. But even if Plato's philosophical classification of seeing and hearing is questionable, when one regards the effect it has had to date on philosophy and the history of ideas and therefore also on culture, his approach has nevertheless asserted itself. In other words: the preference Plato gave to seeing over hearing has over the course of time in a manner of speaking become truer, it has *proved itself to be true*. Philosophy has to a great degree become a philosophy of seeing. All the way through to the philosophical metaphor, seeing has become the dominant sense for the way the world thinks. Hearing has been subordinated to seeing. And one must also ask oneself whether Plato was right in a further aspect. Until Nietzsche, philosophy was concerned with universal, timeless truths. True thinking that embraced being and the world. The realization of the nature of things. That which endures. Seeing offers the best possibility to perceive what is (apparently) enduring, constant and reproducible. Hearing, in contrast, is directed towards that which is fleeting. Sound fades, it is not tangible, cannot be determined in the same way as the observable world. A piece of text, such as the one that you have just read, is unchanging. Whether tomorrow or in a year, it will be the same as at this moment. In making my thoughts visible, I fix them. If we were to discuss the same subject, it would not be possible to pre-serve it in the same way as a written text. At the very least, before the era of modern recording techniques, it was not possible to listen to something that had been said at a point later on in time. Today it has become possible to preserve acoustic material. Perhaps the invention of the microphone and audio-tape were necessary in order to overcome philosophical ignorance in regard to the voice and hearing. Interest in the voice on the part of the humanities, how-ever, has been increasing over recent decades. But the question whether the nature of hearing and what is heard — in other words the nature of the voice — contradicts the essence of philosophy, whatever that might be, should be taken seriously. This would still mean that any philosophy that looks seriously at the voice and hearing cannot avoid undergoing change and becoming something different. New insights alter the path to knowledge. And this brings us back to the metaphor of the map proposed by Deleuze/Guattari, who raise the interconnection

between awareness and life, thinking and the world to a guiding principle of philosophical action that therefore serves us as a model for thinking about the voice.

Herder: The Discovery of the Language of Feeling

Despite the principle concern in regard to its philosophical ascertainment, in the long history of philosophy there have always been thinkers who assigned a more important role to the voice than Plato. At the end of the 18th century a movement swept through Germany that marked the beginning of the modern philosophy of language. A historico-cultural approach was taken to the question of how language emerged and how it evolved in the course of history. Almost inevitably, the spotlight of interest fell on the spoken word. As the focus shifted from the written to the spoken word, for the first time attention was also directed to the human voice. Its place in the shadow of language did not change, but nevertheless investigation began into the role played by the voice in human communication. In his “Treatise on the Origin of Language” from 1772, the philosopher and theologian Johann Gottfried Herder postulates that there was a language *before* language, one that required no words and consisted of vocal communication, cries, whimpers, groans and sighs, laughing, inarticulate sounds of joy and cries that gave vocal expression to the physical and mental state of man. This “language of feeling” does not represent an achievement that is exclusive to man; indeed, it is in no way an achievement, that is, something that needed to be acquired, but is directly given by nature. According to Herder, nature had made it possible for all the members of the animal kingdom, including man, to express their current state by way of their voice. The closer a species is related to us by evolution — as one would say post Darwin — or is connected to us on an everyday basis, the better we are able to interpret its cries. We are closer to land animals than aquatic and flying animals. Of the land animals, we best understand the sounds made by herd animals — to which group man belongs. Through daily contact with animals we develop a fine sensorium for the sounds they make. A farmer is immediately able to interpret the sounds made by his cows, the hunter understands the sound made by his game, and a city dweller has no problem understanding his dog’s bark. The socio-biological function of the language of nature is the same for both animals and man: it evokes empathy in those who hear the sounds of their companion. If we hear someone give

a cry of pain, we feel involuntary sympathy and even the whining of a dog does not leave us indifferent. If the sound of joyous song comes to our ears, it slowly infects us, whether we like it or not. In our natural state, we cannot do otherwise than react with sympathy. In cultures with highly complex verbal languages, this naturally present ability is forced into the background and our modern, refined and “humanised” languages, the product of reason and society, make hardly any reference at all to their wild sister. The ability to give expression to mood using the voice is a legacy that still appears to hold sway with so-called primitive peoples. Their languages sound livelier than our emotionally restrained tools whose chief task it is to communicate intellectual content; feelings only appear as an often inconvenient sidebar. According to Herder, the language of feeling is not the original root of human language — that according to him developed more in response to reason and differentiates man from the rest of the animal world so strongly — this vocal expression that is so drenched in feeling represents “the juices that bring life to the roots of language”.

There is little room in verbal languages led by reason for the lively sounds of nature as they tend to challenge the space for development of our repertoire of vocal expression. The process of civilization that took up the cause of progress leads to a general suppression of the language of feeling and in this way to a step backwards in human communication. Today we know that a large proportion of the information that we infer from what is said by an interlocutor lies not in the content, but in the way it is said, the sound of the voice, the intonation, tempo and rhythm. All that which — as Nietzsche pointed out — cannot be written down. Despite all the limitations placed by civilization, our receptiveness to aspects of speech beyond that of the word has remained high, even if we perceive only a fraction of all that we actually hear. However, Herder’s view that modern man’s ability to express himself in the language of feeling has atrophied does not lose any of its authority. On the contrary, a good 200 years later it appears to be more relevant than ever. So much for cultural criticism. Time and again, this same culture has shaped tendencies that assist in giving vocal expression to repressed perceptions, such as in the art of romantic song, or in the rock and pop music of the 20th century. Our journeys of discovery through the landscapes of the voice also belong to the attempts to do justice to the complete voice with its multifaceted possibilities of expression. From Herder we can learn that the mere sound of a voice carries with it meaning that is comparable to language and that wordless sounds are able to convey meaning. Because

the voice in sound can awaken feelings in us, we are able to understand the meaning of sounds directly. We hear more than mere acoustic impulses. Every sound made by the voice, whether clad in words or not, goes beyond the sound to tell us something about the person who has given expression to his or her voice.

Derrida “The Voice and the Phenomenon”

When philosophers apply themselves to a subject, they begin by defining the key expressions that crop up most frequently as precisely as possible in order to avoid the possibility of misunderstandings in regard to the area under discussion. In everyday conversation with no pretensions to philosophy, such measures are generally unnecessary. When we feel comfortable with a language, we have an intuitive feel for the right word and can be sure that our dialog partner understands us fairly well. In philosophy, the everyday definition of a word is the point of departure. And then this usage becomes the subject of scrutiny. One questions its usage. According to the school of philosophy, one either wishes to show how and in which situation the expression is actually used – this is the way modern analytical philosophy proceeds – or one tries to find a universal definition of the expression that shows how that expression is used “correctly”. The latter strategy is the one that was used by classic philosophy as long as it retained enough self-assurance to determine what the meaning of an expression represented. Philosophical definitions have the goal of reflecting what an expression denotes. They aim to illustrate as comprehensively as possible the object that is represented by an expression. Such definitions appear to deal purely with descriptions, but a normative component creeps in here: the attempt to show the precise meaning of an expression and how it is used quickly gives way to specifying how the expression should be used. The philosophical definition becomes the criterion for the correct and appropriate meaning of the word. Moreover, philosophers have a tendency towards developing systems of thought in which the meaning of the key expressions owe at least as much to the philosophical system as to the thing being identified. The expressions should fit with the other expressions in the construct of ideas in terms of their meaning, and it happens that the thing being identified ends up being adapted to the terminology rather than the other way round. In such cases, there is a yawning gap between the everyday and philosophical usage of an

expression. If it is not borne in mind that one is dealing with a philosophical text, this inevitably leads to those misunderstandings that one was taking such pains to avoid. The situation becomes even more complicated when two philosophical approaches collide in which one and the same expression is used within differing contexts.

I would now like to speak about the French philosopher Jacques Derrida and his use of the word Voice that differs from the way it is used in everyday language as well as from the way I understand the expression. If one studies the literature on the subject of the human voice, one inevitably stumbles on Derrida's text "Voice and Phenomenon", one of the few titles in the collective history of philosophy in which the word voice actually appears. Under the heading "Problems connected with the voice", Aristotle gathered a number of remarks on acoustic phenomena, in which observations on the human voice can be found. Roland Barthes' volume of interviews "The Grain of the Voice" belongs only marginally to philosophy and more precisely to semiotics, but is worthy of mention here because Barthes is one of the few thinkers who saw the significance of the voice itself, independent of music and speech, and was interested in it.

Initially what interested me most about the voice is that this cultural object is in some way an object marked by its absence (much more so than the body that is represented in a thousand different ways in mass culture): we rarely hear the voice in itself, we hear what it is saying; the voice has the very status of language, an object thought to be graspable only through what it transmits; however, just as we are now learning, thanks to the notion of "text," to read the linguistic material itself, we must in the same way learn to listen to the voice's text, its meaning, everything in the voice which overflows with meaning

Roland Barthes

Derrida's essay is a work rich with postulates that can only inadequately be summarised in a few sentences. In brief: in dealing with Edmund Husserl's school of phenomenology, Derrida states that the voice is crucial within this system of theories. The central concept in Husserl's phenomenology is that of consciousness. All the subjects of knowledge/perception are present in us in our conscious awareness. This presence is what makes consciousness what it is. Consciousness is always an awareness of something, of an object in the world, a memory, a feeling or a thought. According to Derrida, presence understood in this way as human

consciousness could only have established itself via the medium of the voice, without this aspect ever having been noticed by the phenomenologists themselves. Accordingly, in philosophical approaches like that of Husserl, mute consciousness is not possible. The fact that we are able to express our ideas in words with the help of the voice is precisely what allows the development of this complex consciousness that is possessed by man.

We know enough about Derrida's approach to understand how he sees the voice – it is always with reference to words and language; for him the voice is the living expression of the word. Derrida turns the written word — the other way of bringing words into the world and the form to which he gives preference — into the opposite of the voice. In order to clarify what Derrida means when he refers to voice, the term “oralcy” would be more apt. However Derrida equates this with phonocentrism — the focus not on the voice but on the oralcy associated with language — and logocentrism — the occidental tendency towards reason, logos. Derrida claims that in philosophy, phonocentrism and logocentrism have been inseparable since antiquity. This conclusion arises less from an examination of the history of philosophy and more from the definitions Derrida ascribes to his terms.

Phoné strictly defined can be taken as oralcy, which in Derrida's understanding can also be translated as speech, which is also a possible translation for logos. We, on the other hand, are interested in the voice as something that has meaning even when not in connection with language. We are looking to uncover the intrinsic importance of the voice that exists beyond speech. The way Derrida understands the voice does not align with the associations we have, and the various aspects related to the voice to which we wish to draw attention are precisely those that his orientation to the voice actually obscures. Derrida too places the voice in the shadow of speech and in so doing aligns himself with a long tradition that began with Plato.

Despite this, Derrida is enough of a phenomenologist to speculate about a couple of purely vocal aspects of speech that are interesting to our discussion. Derrida wants to make it clear that the role of phoné in the history of philosophy is most closely related to the traditional concept according to which truth and appearance are in opposition. In this way truth does not disclose itself naked, it can never be directly perceived. In that which our senses can perceive, we never recognize the essence but rather an image of the substance. Plato's

concept of ideas presents the prototype for this philosophy. The world that can be perceived is a combination of images of ideas reflecting the highest and only true condition. Initially only a general direction can be delivered towards re-cognition of these hierarchically ordered intellectual entities, and true insight comes only as the result of reflection. In this regard, Derrida accords the voice a central significance because it represents the medium through which ideas and “ideal objects” can be expressed. At this point Derrida makes a noteworthy observation: Speaking or generally making sound using one’s own voice results in a strange self-reference of the subject that is making sound. In expressing oneself vocally, one hears oneself without mediation from an external source. The voice travels along the boundary between the inside and outside and at the same time sets this boundary aside for those who have raised their voices. My voice, and with it the words, do not leave me. Yet I am affected by them. When speaking and making sound, I am the one who reveals and, at the same time, also hears. This unity of action and perception where the vocal expression is simultaneously created and perceived by me and in me — or in Derrida’s words heard by me — is a unique quality of the human voice. It indicates a physio-logical and psychic connection between voice and hearing, two organs that can only be understood when taken together.

Jean-Jacques Rousseau had already alluded to this:

We have an organ that corresponds to hearing that is the voice. We do not have the same for the face as we cannot reproduce colours in the same way as sounds.

J.-J. Rousseau

And this is why Hegel sees in the voice “a condition for the possibility to experience the self”. The crucial question for us is therefore: What is simultaneously being revealed and examined? And this is where Derrida takes a very traditional approach, differentiating strictly between what is shown — for him this is the content of what is being said, that means the linguistic signs — and a mere carrier for that which is shown: the voice. This confronts us with the old prejudice that reduces the voice to a medium for speech in which the vocal sound should play no role in either self-affection or communication. However, if the voice is released from its function in service to language to become a thing in its own right, the

independent and meaningful quality of the vocal sound can be recognised and Derrida's observation on how self-hearing and self-expression dovetail acquires a different weight. In and with the voice, man can hear himself directly without recourse to other media. The 'I' hears itself. Although strangely enough it does not hear everything that it shows vocally. In the self-affection of making vocal sound, the voice is not, as Derrida believes, a "signifying substance that is absolutely available". The limitation on vocal availability results from its own history, the history that is simultaneously that of the person to whom the voice belongs and who both reveals and conceals him/herself in his/her voice. Contrary to Derrida's clear assertion, the voice is not consciousness itself but an expression of the interwoven nature of the conscious and unconscious. Based, then, on the voice's individual history, the act of hearing my voice becomes a unique experience. This means that I cannot hear my own voice without screens. The parts of my voice that are "mute" to me are often perceived by other listeners with different vocal histories with much greater accuracy. At the same time, aspects of my voice can sound very alien to me, as if they did not belong to me at all. In short: expression and perception of one's own and other voices form a complex arrangement in which the conscious and unconscious aspects go hand in hand and can never be assigned completely to the entity either making or hearing the sound. Neither one's own nor any other voice can be consciously heard in its entirety. What is heard depends not only on the object of perception — that is the vocal sound. The vocal background history of the listener that also shapes the experience of hearing a voice is of equal importance. Derrida's observation regarding the particular character of vocal self-affection has led our discussion to the intrinsic importance of the voice as part of perception of the self and others and thus away from the philosophical aspect that Derrida deals with.

We are still at the beginning of evolution. We still closely resemble animals. The only difference is that god gave us a voice.

Franz Beckenbauer (13.09.2004 dpa)

Vocal Concepts in Transition

Let us take note: In the intellectual history of the occident, the human voice has never been treated as an independent subject of consideration in its own right. It has led a shadow existence since Plato's time. The shadows are thrown by language. In the development of our culture, the voice has always stood on the sidelines and its role in man's self-concept has always been underestimated. Only since the beginning of the 20th century have there been diverse efforts to shine a spotlight onto the voice and to carry out research into its role for man beyond that of carrier of language and musical instrument. Later on, we will be looking at the pioneers of this movement — the singing teacher Alfred Wolfsohn, the linguist Karl Bühler and the American psychoanalyst Paul Moses — each of whom in his own way began to reflect on the voice in new and different ways.

Reflection on the human voice inspired by philosophy must ask itself from where such thoughts on the subject stem, how could they arise, and what is the history that enabled them. Even if to date there has been no philosophy of the voice, we do not have to start at the very beginning. Thoughts are embedded in the context of an intellectual history. In order to see and better understand our own position, it will be useful first to examine and question our thoughts in regard to the voice a little more closely. Questioning does not mean we are criticising the intellectual history of the voice, it is much more a case of be-coming aware of how the voice was regarded and its functions in order to be able to integrate the results into our own thought process. After all, our cultural history forms the foundation for our way of thinking and influences it considerably, regardless of whether it is at a conscious level or not. However, the more we can find out about this influence, the more we know about our own contentions and the suppositions that fuel them.

Let us therefore take a closer look at the cultural concepts for the human voice that previously existed and whether, as well as in which way, they still influence us today. The lack of philosophical concepts for the voice to which one can refer and review has led to the situation that the “self-evident” ideals of the voice have decided how we approach the voice without there ever having been a discussion of our convictions in this regard. A strong role in the relatively unconsidered history of the voice is played by the category of beauty. Naturally this holds particularly true for the singing voice, on which I will be focussing next. The by no means less important speaking voice is informed by a different history, but how it changes follows a similar path. The practice of differentiating between beautiful and ugly sounds extends across centuries, but the definition of what is beautiful and ugly has repeatedly changed radically. What has, however, remained relatively constant in this variation over time is the preference given to high over low voices. For a long time, it was not considered unusual for men to sing soprano. There was no call for the bass and baritone register in serious music until the mid-15th century. In the 16th century there was a school for sopranos that trained boys whose voice was breaking in such a way that they were able to continue singing soprano — a much more humane technique than the practice of castration that was commonly accepted until well into the 19th century and lent men a level of power when singing soprano that is not normally available to boys and women, albeit at a high price. It did not seem odd for castratos to play and sing the role of lovers in opera. In Italian opera, the role of hero was also reserved for castrati. At the time, the only call for natural male voices in opera was in supporting roles. The vocal ideal represented by the castrato was thus not a substitute for the female soprano. The high voice of the “emasculated” singer became a symbol of masculine Eros. While tenors and basses played only the captain of the guard, the king’s trusted confidant, shepherds and messengers. At the beginning of the 18th century in Italy bass voices could only be heard in church, they were virtually never assigned a leading role. A bass playing the part of a hero would likely have provoked hysterical laughter from the audience. They were reserved the role of magicians, giants or devils. Although the bass voice is the exclusive preserve of men into which women intrude only very rarely, in the European tradition of song it never took on the role of expressing the erotic dimension of masculinity — with the exception of the baritone in Mozart’s *Don Giovanni*. Basses took on the role of the voice of social authority, while sexual potency was not granted to them — at least not on the stage.

The idea of the tenor as we know it from operas of the 19th and 20th century — that sounds high in the chest with brilliance and strength but is also comparatively inflexible — emerged at the end of the 18th century. Since then it has remained the personification of masculinity. Since it was toppled from power by the tenor, the high male voice has, in the meantime, recovered its own niche and presented more and less impressive testimonials of vocal artistry through artists ranging from the Bee Gees through Michael Jackson and Simply Red to Modern Talking. Deep male voices such as those of Barry White and Johnny Cash remain the exception in this field.

Excursus: The Song of Angels

How do angels sing? – angels? Those androgynous humanoids in white robes with a pair of wings sprouting out of their shoulders who, when the going gets tough, carry divine messages to man? The chubby infants that cluster around the edges of baroque altars? Yes, those are the ones I'm talking about. And the others, the Seraphim who are completely covered by the feathers of their six wings and who fly about crying to each other: "Holy, holy, holy, is YHWH of hosts: the whole earth is full of His glory." In the book of Job, rejoicing to god after he created the world is the domain of the "sons of god" – a problematic description for later interpreters who then swiftly demoted them to angels. The evangelist Luke provides entire celestial hosts to announce the birth of Jesus Christ to the shepherds in the fields. But just how did it sound, this angel song? How do angels sing? What kind of question is that? Angels can't sing because they don't exist – so say today's joyless rationalists. Better than most of what passes for singing today say those who lean towards romanticism infused with a dash of religion and who are somewhere along the spectrum between petty bourgeois and philistine. Although both answers address a number of aspects worth discussing, neither is entirely satisfying. Angels do exist. Their presence, to a greater or lesser extent, has accompanied the cultural history of the western world for thousands of years. After a long phase of niche existence during which the sciences asserted the undisputed sovereignty of their world view, more recently feathered and feather-free angels are enjoying growing popularity in popular theology, the self-help genre and television. With their help, in-creasing profits in the field of insurance advertising and films with titles like "A heavenly gamble" reduce these heavenly beings to deceased but still all-too human beings – a misconception that, although theologically indefensible, has enjoyed a resurgence in the residue of what were referred to in less secular times as 'popular beliefs'. Other examples populate our daily life with guardian angels in the form of a beloved partner or child but also as angels of death who through murder and assassination bring death and suffering down on man. But this new version of heavenly being cannot sing, although singing the praises of God used to be one of the most important of an angel's tasks. The last angel in (German) popular culture confronted with this form of song and who failed spectacularly was "Ein Münchner im Himmel" ... zifix! H'luja, sog i!

At the purely physical level, a naturalistic understanding of the question of how song could be produced by angels has always been avoided in sermons and tracts. Generally speaking, angels do not normally have bodies that bear any comparison to human bodies. Given the lack of larynx, tongue, lips and vocal cords, the idea of a singing angel takes on a puzzling aspect. And these heavenly beings were apparently capable of much more than innocent song in praise of God. According to Genesis (6,1-4), after the creation of the world a particularly wild band of these "sons of god" had their way with a group of defenceless women with the result that a new species of giant came into the world. And all of this without physical bodies? And even if the physical process of angel song was never discussed in detail or clearly explained and any witnesses are sadly unavailable, the old texts leave no doubt that

angels can sing. The question *how* has more to do with the musical style in which their voices are raised. Do they sing in the style of Bach, Hildegard von Bingen, or perhaps in the style of a Gregorian chant? Why not in the style of Stockhausen? If angels are regarded as purely spiritual beings then perhaps they particularly like the music of Schönberg and Webern. The strange absurdity associated as much with the second question as with that of the physical aspect takes us to the point where we can bring the relationship between man and angel into play. We find ourselves close to a possible culturally intrinsic speech on aspects of this culture. In our culture angels act as beings that appear and take action without actually belonging to this culture. They stand beyond the world of humans and mediate between it and the sphere of the divine. They stand outside of human culture, yet are a part of it but as outsiders. They stand beyond history but influence it. Just think of the Angel Gabriel's visit to the Virgin Mary. This outsider position is due to the fact that on the one hand we think nothing of accepting stories in which angels come into contact with humans and can make themselves understood, while at the same time, as soon as we question "how" they manage to do so, we run the risk of spiralling down into the absurd, regardless of the manner in which this "how" is interpreted. This has, however, never stopped people from maintaining bilateral relationships with these kindred spirits from the upper spheres and attributing to them a caring, supportive or even destructive influence on earthly relations. The angel – as a role model – has been extraordinarily important to western song and therefore on the local development of music as a whole.

Already in the second century before Christ, the apocryphal Book of Enoch underlined an aspect that would characterise how Christian angels are presented: their unceasing songs to the glory of the Lord. These songs of praise would become the angels' most important task. In a later version of the same book penned around 70 years after Christ, this aspect is even more clearly present. Singing is also the way the angels fulfil other tasks such as monitoring the course of celestial bodies and maintaining order on earth. Through their song, angels bring all of heavenly life in harmony: "so wonderful and marvellous is the singing of those angels, and I was delighted listening to it." For the Christian church the obvious step was to take the choirs of angels as the role model for the praises sung by man. And that is what subsequently took place. To the Christian understanding, the liturgical song during mass is the participation of man in the angels' songs of praise. Mortal and immortal beings join in one choir in that man adds his voice to the song of angels. And not only in liturgical song, the idea of music at all becomes a gift made by winged beings to us mortals. According to Hildegard von Bingen, the world was created from words that resound and human music from the choirs of angels. Similarly, Martin Luther is also familiar with the idea that music was brought to man by the angels:

"He who chooses music has won a heavenly treasure, as its source is heaven and the dear angels themselves are musicians."

A number of legends tell how saints were taught certain songs by angels. Parts of the Catholic liturgy such as the Sanctus and the Gloria are traced directly back to the angels. Monks'

chants emulate the songs of angels. Monastic life in general was initially understood as the human equivalent to the angels' ministry and certain sources state that, when singing, the monks sounded like angels.

Liturgical song encompasses the idea of kinship with the song of angels. Less perfect but still close. There can be no fundamental difference as it would have been a hopeless endeavour to emulate it without an acoustic reference. While it is often said that man is not able to sing well enough to do justice to the object of his praise, namely God, nevertheless he was on the right path. Hildegard von Bingen has left us with the wonderful notion that, in song, the soul is reminded of sounds from its heavenly home. However, in order to give man any chance at all of emulating angelic songs of praise in a recognisable form, first of all the sounds that issue from the heavenly home must be translated into human terms with concrete points of reference in terms of their musical-tonal structure. In the earlier writings of the Old Testament that dealt with acoustic experiences with angels, the audible results could not be called beautiful in any musical sense nor could any individual join in with this song. When the first instances were recorded, the voices of angels, along with every other sound they produced, such as that issuing from their wings, were shattering, terrible, it sounded like a thundering army, the roaring of mighty waters or the boom of a great earth-quake. The first angels, those who hadn't been through the Western program of cultivation, don't actually sing, they call, cry out, their voices sound like that of a lion. Of music, the gift made later by angels to man, there is not a single trace. With this experience, it is no surprise that angels in the New Testament mostly announce themselves with a "Fear not!" Until then the advent of an angel connoted something terrible that also went far beyond the human scale in acoustic terms. Over time, a friendlier and more moderate note began to characterise the visual and acoustic world of angels throughout Christendom. The unceasing songs of praise remained "indescribable" and the first attempts to place the song of angels into an aesthetic category cannot have been very encouraging to the fallible human singer: perfection, ineffability, sounds that had never been heard before, *una voce* (with one voice), *sine fine* (without end), *alter ad alterum* (dialogical, alternation between two choirs), were the conditions applied to the song of angels and were therefore also applied as an ideal for man to fine singing and songs of praise. "Sweet" as an attribute would soon also follow and is one that would develop to be a consistent characteristic in regard to the song of angels over the centuries.

The aesthetic definition of songs of praise also included disparaging the areas of the human voice that had not contributed to the ideal of fine singing and disputing their suitability for the liturgical art of song and indeed for several centuries for art at all. It resulted in a complete separation of the part of the voice that best suited the world or other-world view: the ugly part of the voice was simply attributed to evil in the form of the devil. When they were consigned to hell, the fallen angels – led by Lucifer, the devil – lost their ability to sing beautifully. In direct contrast to the song of angels with their harmony and purity, the sound of the devil's voice was all shrieking and dissonance. The howling of the fallen angels is so terrible that it defies description using the human voice. As with everything else, the devil

also corrupts music, he cannot sing properly, instead he hisses, howls and cackles; he is incapable of making true music. Hell is filled with deafening noise. One hears coarse animal sounds, from grunting pigs through to roaring lions, and the acoustic space resounds with the rattling of chains and gnashing of teeth. This horrifying pandemonium is reminiscent of those first angels, whose “song” was anything but harmonious and sweet. Before the rupture that split the heavenly hosts into good and evil angels, the messengers of God had every possible sound available to them without anyone defining them as godly or diabolic. What was central, however, was the shattering impression they normally left behind them.

Already in medieval times, descriptions of the devil’s music were likely regarded with greater interest than talk of the sweet song of angels and peace and harmony. The distinction made by the church between good music inspired by the songs of angels and the evil “rasping” that must have been contaminated by the devil was unable to hinder the development of a secular tradition of song and dance to which high art was of little consequence and in which vocal expression could sometimes be given to the coarseness associated with the body and real life. Angelic beauty was less important to the musicians who travelled from place to place singing their songs and *cantastoria* than real life. The aesthetics of beauty were in conflict with the aesthetic of life and the prevailing aesthetic categories of ritual song that were represented and propagated by the spiritual and artistic elite in medieval western culture could not accommodate a larger dose of real life. But life cannot so easily be stifled. In the niches that escaped the watchful eye and absolute domination of high art, naturalistic song has always found a voice and developed further. The pre-Lenten carnival must surely be the most impressive proof of this strong counter-movement. These colourful singing subcultures of the middle ages could not, however, prevent the idea of a good, precious and beautiful sound as separate from the evil and ugly voice being burnt deep into the collective psyche of the Western world. We know to a relatively precise degree which sounds are acceptable to our fellow men and which are not. This is currently felt to a lesser degree in the public arena as the boundaries separating art from popular culture have relaxed considerably. The conflict between the good and the forbidden voice that was reflected over the centuries in the metamorphosis of the song of angels is played out today principally in the way we deal with our own voice. This is where the forces that want to preserve the beautiful, risk-free voice clash with those that want to enforce the rights of that other voice that did not lose its vitality while underground. The images that illustrate this battle emerge in the dreams of those who seek that voice. When exploring the dark side of the voice, it is not unusual for all the animals, demons and devils whose intention it is to put the integrity of the beautiful voice at risk to appear during the hours of sleep. However, the more success one has in integrating the supposedly dangerous aspects of one’s voice, the more peaceful become the dream beings. Its malicious character turns out not to be the reason why this part of the voice was banished, but, to the contrary, its consequence. The fallen angel is not banished from honourable society because he is evil but becomes a demon because he has been banished. Our efforts to make the entire human voice resonate can be viewed, from the angels’ perspective, as an attempt to erase the division within the world of the angels. The acoustic results of this liberation of the voice bear some similarity to that primal song of angels rather than clinging

to the dulcet tones of the angelic choirs after the fall of Lucifer. Beauty is released from its one-sided dependence on harmony and filled with vitality in which all the feelings and sounds have the right of expression.

The Female Singers are Appearing

We cannot say whether the changes in the ideal of the beautiful artistic voice in the past have been reflected in everyday singing, because until the invention of electronic recording there had been no direct evidence of human voices. But we do know that the idea of a professional singer offering vocal art as an available product is relatively new. Although there was evidence of the appearance of professional singers as early as the 12th century, the underlying idea of commercialising the voice remained socially absolutely unacceptable until the late 16th century. Until then, the voice was primarily used for the glory of God, and of course this was not allowed to be commercialised. The freelance singers therefore initially had no chance of asserting themselves against their often well-educated competitors from the clergy and the nobility. However, this changed abruptly through an initiative of the Italian prince Alfonso II of Ferrara, through which, moreover, female singers finally found their leading role in the history of the singing voice. In the spring of 1580, the prince began to assemble a group of female singers who had no other task than to sing for the entertainment of his young wife. The prince's real aim was to ensure that his wife, only fifteen years old, would bear him the long hoped-for heir to the throne. This never happened, despite the use of the high art of singing. But the musical-voice legacy that the prince brought into the world still has an effect today. The singers developed a vocal virtuosity never heard before, which inspired the specially hired composers to write unique vocal pieces. In the course of professionalisation and the new quality of vocal training, the limits of vocal possibilities were significantly extended in their height, suppleness and speed. The example of the prince soon set a trend, and soon singers from different courts were competing with each other. The high voice was now finally elevated to the undisputed ideal of the art of singing. The concerti delle donne with their highly virtuoso vocal parts were the first time in European vocal history that the voice was fully emancipated from speech. Until then, the function of the singing voice had also been limited to serving the language conveying the content. The voice's hidden status in music continued to be effective until the modern era. For this reason, the emergence of melismatic singing - in which several notes are sung on one syllable - and polyphony, which today is the epitome of European music, was initially viewed with extreme scepticism by the medieval church.

So I waver back and forth, considering the danger of sensual pleasure, soon the experienced salvation, and am no longer inclined to the admittedly not irrevocable view of approving the usual church singing. A weaker mind may be stimulated to pious feelings by the ingratiating melodiousness. But if it happens to me that I am gripped more by the singing than by the sung word, then I must confess that I am severely sinning, and then I would prefer not to hear any more singing.

Augustine

As late as the 16th century, the Tridentine Council recommended a simple voice leading for the chant, oriented towards the text. With the secular compositions for the first professional female singers at the Italian courts, however, the voice gained a new, strong significance of its own for the field of artistic singing. The sound of the voice and the aesthetic experience associated with it now stood on an equal footing with the expression and understanding of the content of the songs and madrigals. This did not change the fact that the voices were only experienced and evaluated according to the standard of beauty, which of course changed continuously. But at least the beautiful voice now became a value in itself. Strictly speaking, however, only the beautiful soprano voice remained the object of evaluation for a long time. Men hardly had a chance to make a living as professional singers. Only with the advent of the castrati, the male sopranos, were men granted entry into the halls of fame of singing, albeit at great sacrifice.

Why was the idea of the beautiful singing voice limited to the soprano in Europe for so long? What was special about the high voice compared to the other female and male vocal sounds? The answer seems obvious: the tonal height of the soprano voice literally sets it above the other vocal registers, for in the harmony of several voices, it is always the highest that is heard best. But if the purely acoustic fact of voice pitch were sufficient as an explanation, then there should be no preference for low voices in any singing culture in the world. In the Buddhist chants of Tibet, however, we find a convincing example of the superiority (!) of low singing. Voice pitch only brings us closer to an answer if we read it as a cultural phenomenon. There must be a culturally intrinsic reason for the dominance of high voices in Europe. In the Christian culture of medieval Europe, high voices had a higher (!) value per se than low voices, and this had an effect on the language in which we still refer to the better and more valuable as the higher. Our ideas and values are interwoven with what

one could call the vertical metaphor of Christian thinking, right down to the language. The archetype of this worldview consists in the idea, which admittedly existed long before Christianity, that the world is divided into heaven, earth and hell. Heaven denotes the high residence of God, earth the home of mortals and hell the subterranean realm of the devil. Christians have always taken it for granted that God resides on high, and in the days of the Ptolemaic worldview this idea was not even a metaphor but a literal worldview. Up to the end of the Middle Ages, art song was consistently a religiously influenced praise of God, and so it was natural to orientate singing upwards, to the heights and to the high registers of the voice. Good is found at the top, evil at the bottom. However, this does not explain why the enthusiasm for the high voice increased in later secular singing. Was a traditional idea carried on as a stowaway, from which one wished to liberate oneself?

Despite all the changes in the ideas of the appropriate voice in medieval and modern Europe, some parameters of the vocal sounds that were given preference apparently remained stable. First of all, there was the search for the beautiful voice, which was never abandoned, and the consequent demonisation of the so-called ugly voice. Until the 20th century, the strict division of the voice into sounds that are in accordance with a work of art and the praise of God, and the chaotic rest, seemed so self-evident that no one had the idea of doubting it and asking whether the non-beautiful voice could have an interesting meaning for humans and art.

The second largely stable parameter is that within the field of the beautiful voice, the dominance of the high voice has remained unshaken to this day - another supposed self-evident fact that has not been problematised until the recent past.

On the foundation of the aesthetic axioms of the beautiful and the dominant high voice, there have been transformations in the evaluation and treatment of the human voice that have taken on a rapid pace since the Renaissance. However, the claim to validity of the prevailing aesthetics was never questioned with regard to the cultural-historical relativity of its own evaluations. Of course, there were always critics of the zeitgeist who propagated other ideas of beauty. The much-celebrated ideal of the castrato's voice, for example, called

up a whole series of contemporary sceptics who not only raised the obvious ethical concerns, but also formulated their artistic doubts. But this is something different from claiming that the ideas of the beautiful voice are in principle subject to cultural-historical relativity. This could only happen in the 20th century, when the previously valid frameworks became too narrow in all areas of art and thought.

The Idea of the Whole Voice

Alfred Wolfsohn

The beginnings of the paradigm shift from the beautiful voice to the whole voice are associated with the names Friedrich Nietzsche and Alfred Wolfsohn. Let's start with the younger. Wolfsohn was born in Berlin in 1896 to Jewish parents and had to serve in the trenches of the First World War at the age of 18. His experiences forced him to explore the phenomenon of the human voice in a new way: As a medical orderly on the Western Front, he was repeatedly exposed to the heart-rending screams of soldiers who often enough were lying between the fronts, dying and calling for help. The war left Wolfsohn with a war psychosis. He could not get rid of the voices of the dying, which drove him into unconsciousness again and again. The doctors were at a loss, and Wolfsohn set out on his own in search of a cure. After various attempts at therapy and a trip to Italy, he began to realise that artistic confrontation with the world and himself could be a way to close the "wounds of his soul". The artistic medium that offered itself to him for his journey was the human voice. He had experienced first-hand the destructive power of voices crying out in agony. Now he discovered their creative potential, which can unfold when one begins to listen to all the sounds that find their way from within the human being into the world. This was the birth of the idea of the whole voice. Wolfsohn had not only found his life's mission; he also succeeded in looking at the human voice in a completely new way.

He was forced to realise that people in extreme situations are "capable" of a vocal expression that seems to sound inhuman in comparison to the so-called normal voice, because it leaves the culturally set and usually untouched boundaries far behind. But with Wolfsohn for the first time these voices do not appear to be inhuman. On the contrary, they are the expression of a humanity which, in its directness, touches the listener as well as the person making the sound.

Until then, Wolfsohn's story could only be seen as an interesting individual psychological case of healing from a war psychosis. To draw general conclusions from this about the human voice and its possibilities of expression in life and art would probably be quite bold. However, Wolfsohn's life-changing experiences ran parallel to a general phase of cultural upheaval, which, as always, found expression in the fates of many individuals. Wolfsohn was one of those who literally had to experience the collapse of the old world on the front line and who, out of their own need and motivation, sought a framework and foundations that would offer new support and orientation. It is no coincidence that the events that led Wolfsohn to his new approach to voice development took place during and after the First World War. The First World War represented the first widespread and probably already decisive shake-up of the classical European ideal of humanity, education and beauty: the true, the beautiful, the good. Nietzsche, with his seismographic sense for cultural movements, was probably the first to see the future upheavals coming and played no small part in intensifying them. The First World War paved the way for artistic modernism. Shortly before the war, there were already signs of a revolutionary break with traditions that did not seem to offer any opportunities for development. One is reminded of Schönberg's first atonal compositions, Picasso's and Braque's first cubist works or Marcel Duchamp's "Nude Descending the Stairs". After the war, the realisation that things could not go on as before became a broad social trend that had an impact on all cultural fields.

Alfred Wolfsohn's achievements are part of this movement. He was the pioneer of a vocal development that wanted to free the beautiful voice from its cultural limitations and create space for the whole voice. In order to appreciate his achievement, we must realise today how few opportunities there were in the 1920s and 1930s to hear music and singing that did not conform to traditional European ideas. With American swing and singers like Josephine Baker, a completely new style had just triggered a storm of enthusiasm in the major cities of Europe, but rock 'n' roll and pop were still "music of the future" for decades to come - not to mention today's world music movement and our ability to listen to practically all the songs that exist in the world on recordings or even in concerts. At the beginning of the last century, the horizon for vocal sounds that were categorised as singing was much smaller than it is today, as you could hardly hear anything other than the singing of your own culture. And -

in Wolfsohn's case - the death cries of the soldiers in a war that marked the end of the Old World.

Friedrich Nietzsche

On his gravestone, which can be found today in a cemetery in north London, Wolfsohn had a quote from Friedrich Nietzsche chiselled: "Learn to sing, O soul!"

Alongside Goethe and C.G. Jung, the philosopher Nietzsche probably had the greatest influence on Wolfsohn's intellectual development, which also affected his ideas on the human voice. In fact, there are some parallels between Nietzsche's sporadic remarks on the voice and Wolfsohn's systematic approach. Nietzsche already emphasised the importance of the intrinsic meaning of the pure sound of the voice for the human ability to communicate, and recognised that the linguistic content of information - that which can be written down - is only a fraction of what is communicated in speech. Wolfsohn took up this idea and set about exploring the world of meaning of the pure voice. He was never merely interested in the self-congratulatory search for new, extraordinary vocal sounds. Only by discovering the significance of every vocal sound for the person speaking or singing do the voices gain their vitality and become an integral part of human expression. However, it is not only the similarities in content between Nietzsche and Wolfsohn that suggest that the philosopher should be counted among the intellectual fathers of the paradigm of the whole voice. What Nietzsche meant for Wolfsohn - and large parts of the emerging modern age - is the new way in which he deals with the objects he chooses. Nietzsche's primary interest was not in the human voice, but in morality, a subject that - unlike the voice - has always preoccupied philosophers. But Nietzsche was attempting something completely new: a moral philosophy from an extra-moral point of view! He rightly criticised the traditional moral philosophers for not being concerned with a philosophical clarification of what morality is or how and under what conditions it arises. Until Nietzsche, moral philosophy was a justification of existing morality with the means of reason, in other words itself a highly moral matter. Philosophy took the side of good morality, i.e. it was always assumed that the prevailing morality or the version that was being advocated by the philosopher in question was the only correct one and that it was possible to prove this correctness on rational grounds. Although

no one could overlook the fact that morality has undergone changes over the course of time, these were often explained by the fact that they were preliminary stages or simply false morals, and that in the present the ultimate morality had finally been found and philosophically secured. However, the phenomenon of morality itself, its emergence, its history and function in a society were never problematised.

Nietzsche set his philosophical programme against this, in which he relativised all moral rules and traced them back to the instinctual structures of societies and their individuals. He was not interested in the justification of moral rules. He wanted to find out under what conditions these rules exist, how the differences are possible and what role morality plays in a society. He also dared to ask what influence and function so-called evil had and has on the development of human cultures. Nietzsche's answers need not be shared. He soon believed that he had arrived at a fundamental classification of "slave and master morality" and was, of course, an advocate of the latter. But in doing so, he came dangerously close to the moralists, who were concerned with justifying morality and not analysing it. But the question of how to integrate the dark sides of humanity, everything that can hardly be described as true, beautiful and good, became topical at the latest after the collapse of the humanistic view of man through the catastrophes of the 20th century, of which the First World War was only the beginning.

Nietzsche thereby broke the mould of traditional moral teaching and set an example for the examination of culture and art in modern times. He wanted to talk about his topic of morality from a standpoint "beyond good and evil", i.e. from an extra-moral - not immoral! - perspective. In the case of Alfred Wolfsohn and his work with the voice, one could speak in parallel to Nietzsche of a starting point "beyond beautiful and ugly". What does that mean in concrete terms? Wolfsohn was not an academic philosopher. He was not interested in theoretically analysing the phenomenon of the voice. He saw himself first and foremost as a voice teacher and, through painful personal experience, came to the conclusion that the categorisation of the voice into registers, registers and characters, or more precisely, the categorisation of a voice into one pitch, one register and one character, were outdated limitations of the prevailing culture and its ideal of beauty. According to Wolfsohn, every voice is naturally capable of singing almost all humanly possible registers and pitches and of producing countless vocal colours and timbres, which admittedly do not necessarily fall into the

aesthetic category of beautiful singing. Until Wolfsohn's time, the theoretical study of the human voice - insofar as it took place at all - was merely, to paraphrase Nietzsche, a learned form of good faith in the prevailing ideal of beauty, i.e. a fact within this category of observation as such. It was Alfred Wolfsohn who first questioned the restrictive idea of the vocal ideal, which is only orientated towards beauty, and expanded our horizon of how the voice can appear. Just as Nietzsche's change of perspective suddenly made people's so-called evil behaviour an equal object of moral-philosophical investigation, thereby gaining great insights into the psychology of modern man, Wolfsohn also turns his attention to the darker parts of the voice, listens where previously only defence prevailed, and thus discovers the whole voice with its diverse relationships to human beings and their personalities.

And in doing so, he was the first to shake the foundations of the self-evident on which since Plato all thinking about the voice and all culturally accepted ways of dealing with it had been based. Wolfsohn became the pioneer of a new paradigm that made it possible to understand the entire human voice. He freed it from the shadow of language and musical structure and liberated it from the focus on beauty and the preference for the high voice that went hand in hand with it. He thus opened our eyes, or rather ears, to the whole human voice, allowing us to find beauty in the voice in places where we would never have suspected it, and also offering philosophy good reasons to finally engage with the voice. Wolfsohn's approach reveals that the voice is more than just an aesthetically interesting phenomenon, that it refers to the human being in an existential way, both psychologically and anthropologically. But one thing was clear to Wolfsohn from the outset: the idea of the whole voice cannot be realised just theoretically. It is not enough to write about it, because the consequences of this new way of thinking must be made audible. You can't write a book about the whole voice without having had your own experiences with the vocal sound universe, and reading the same book only really makes sense if it encourages you to get to know your own voice in all its facets.

Dear Alfred Wolfsohn,

or rather: dear AWE! Because that's what your students in London called you, for whom a "Mr" or "Mr Wolfsohn" would have sounded too distant and an "Alfred" would not have been appropriate to your authority. Even if only very indirectly, I still feel in a certain way as your pupil and allow myself to use the appropriate form of addressing you.

I first came so close to my voice in a somewhat conscious way that it astonished me at a time when I was buried in highly intellectual philosophical studies. At that time I was writing my dissertation on philosophical theories of action, which demanded and received most of my energies. Which attitude to life dominated me at that moment? From what point in my life was I picked up to set out on the path to my voice? For reasons I only realised much later, I believed at the time that anything not directly related to philosophy, rational thinking and argumentation would distract me from my goal of successfully completing my doctoral thesis. Emotions, the body and vitality have their place in philosophy at best as objective things to think about. In a classic error of reasoning, I assumed that philosophers should also keep themselves away from them. There was no clearly formulated concept of life behind this, but rather a basic attitude that determined my behaviour but which, ironically, I was not even aware of despite all my efforts to pursue pure philosophy. The result of this top-heavy way of life was a chronic inner dissatisfaction and the feeling that something was missing, without being able to say what it was.

Salvation came in the form of an all too banal everyday need. I had to think about how I could earn a living alongside my unprofitable philosophy. In order to finance my doctoral thesis, I soon started working as a radio announcer. A job that provided me with economic independence and indirectly brought me closer to my life's theme, the human voice. I knew that my own voice sounded good and interesting to a certain extent because I was repeatedly asked about its pleasant, deep timbre. However, I had not developed a special interest in it up to that time. The idea of becoming a broadcaster came to me from a radio editor who happened to hear my voice and thought I could do something with it on the radio.

At the time, however, I was only thinking about securing myself financially so that I could continue my philosophical work. The idea of turning the voice into a research topic only came to me years later. After I started working as an announcer, it quickly became clear that it wouldn't do me or my career in radio any harm to do something for my voice. So, led by a few coincidences

I suddenly found myself in the summer of 1995 at a seminar organised by two Roy Hart teachers in Cologne: Paul Silber and his wife Clara.

Roy Hart, the name of this actor and voice artist who was your pupil and who carried on the idea of the whole voice you had developed after your death, was of course something I had never heard before. It wasn't that important. What could possibly happen in a voice seminar? A few exercises to make the voice more flexible, a lot of light work to open it up, work with text or with a song ... I had no idea that my whole attitude to life, in which I relied almost exclusively on my head and didn't value the emotional world, would be shaken by this course. In fact, the workshop was a kind of revelation for me. The voice told me a few things about my life that I had perhaps suspected, but which I had never realised before.

And in Paul Silber I had a teacher, to tell me a few things at the right time, that I could finally hear and that would change my life! In short, I realised that the way I had confined my life to philosophy was a dangerous path in the long run. That it was time to let a few other life instincts into play again. That, to put it metaphorically, the head took up far too much space and was about to suffocate the heart and stomach. To correct the direction my life was taking, and to gradually reawaken my vitality, there seemed to be no better vehicle than the voice that could always show me and those who listened to it where I was at the moment and in which direction it could be extended. I can still clearly remember a very strong image that came to me when I was standing at the piano with Paul Silber and was supposed to produce loud sounds: In front of me a door leading into another large room, and my task - I felt it clearly - was to go through this door. But I had an incredible amount of luggage with me and didn't know how to get through it at first.

And it took some time before I was able to part with some of the luggage and enter the new sphere. For my further journey to the voice it was of great that your student Marita Günther, whose student I was allowed to be for a few all too short years, introduced me to you, your life and your way of thinking.

I realised that the exciting field of voice research had connections to my "other" life, in which I had been dealing with philosophy and in which I had felt for so long that some of my life forces and capacities were not needed there.

At the beginning of my journeys of discovery into the landscapes of the voice, I often had the suspicion that I would have to free myself from philosophy altogether if I really wanted to find my voice. Sometimes it seemed to me as if I hadn't really lived at all during my philosophy studies, and only now could I reveal sides of myself, at least in seminars and later on stage, that would have seemed embarrassing at best in an academic setting. But as I learnt more about your life and saw how much you have engaged with the voice on an intellectual level by studying the Bible, ancient mythology, by engaging with Goethe, Nietzsche and C.

G. Jung, I slowly realised that philosophy does not necessarily have to be an obstacle for me on the path to the voice. On the contrary, philosophising is part of my path and gives me the opportunity to deepen my understanding of the human voice - and thus my own. The image that Marita Günther gave me of you became a model for me for the idea of integrating areas of life that had previously been almost irreconcilably opposed to each other. Even today, it is not always easy for me to accept with an honest "yes" in my mind the paths that life has sent me down - which in retrospect often appeared to be wrong paths. But the seriousness with which you dedicated yourself to your life's theme of the human voice and were able to understand the theoretical and practical explorations as part of your search for yourself gives me hope, even in the darker moments, that I have not completely lost my way. Sometimes I still get tangled up in the undergrowth of the philosophical world of thought, but I find my way out into the open more and more quickly and also try to utilise the results of my wanderings for the path of the voice.

Theory and Practice of the Voice

The brief excursion into European intellectual history has shown that there has been no philosophical examination of the phenomenon of the human voice. For anyone who is interested in the voice and has experienced at first hand how important the sound of the voice is for communication or how strong an effect singing can have on the mind, it remains a mystery that for so long philosophy was only concerned with what the voice does for language and completely overlooked how much more it means for human beings. Plato placed the voice in the shadow of language, where it remained for almost two and a half thousand years without anyone attempting to treat it as a subject in its own right. However, Plato's philosophical authority cannot have been the only reason for this lack of interest, as many later thinkers took a very critical look at him in other fields. So why was nobody willing or able to think philosophically about the whole human voice? What prevented philosophers from devoting themselves to it? I have already hinted at some of the answers: the intellectual climate of our culture, with its image of man characterised by ancient philosophy, Christianity and classical humanism, obviously did not allow the human voice to be considered outside the context of the philosophy of language. And when the development of secular art song in Italy in the 16th century took a first step towards emancipating the voice from language, only the beautiful and high voice seemed worthy of attention. The whole voice and its relationship to the whole person remained in the dark. Aesthetic considerations aside, the beautiful voice was not interesting enough to attract the attention of philosophers.

Before it became possible to formulate the idea of the whole voice, the so-called uncultivated vocal sounds had to resound so loudly that they could no longer simply be ignored or shut out as the evil part of man. The situation arose with and after the First World War, when it could generally no longer be denied that Europe would also have to deal with the dark sides of humanity in a new way - if it did not want to run the risk of being dominated by them. 25 years later, Hitler showed what the dominance of evil means. After the Second World War, there was a change in the cultural climate that was much less violent and decisively changed our understanding of the human voice. The convergence of different cultures in modern Europe meant that Europe was able to take note of songs that did not conform in the slightest to our ideals of beauty, but were clearly not uncultivated. Our ideas of beautiful singing were suddenly joined by Peking Opera arias, Mongolian throat singing,

African traditions and a whole range of other types of singing that must have sounded strange to Western ears, to say the least. And no one could claim that „our" ideal of the beautiful voice was binding for all people.

The field for the whole voice had been prepared, and even before world music reached Europe, Alfred Wolfsohn and his students had entered some of the furthest corners of this human vocal field. But philosophy continued to hold back noticeably. In addition to the cultural-historical circumstances mentioned above, there are apparently other reasons for the philosophical ignorance of the voice that concern the character or "essence" of philosophising. For philosophising in the classical sense requires an object - „Gegenstand" in German - a thing that confronts the philosopher and of which he can form a concept. But the voice refuses to do this, because it cannot simply be perceived and analysed from the outside.

As Derrida has shown, we perceive our own voice at the moment we let it sound, without it coming to us from outside. We hear ourselves directly in our voice and hear it, as it were, in a sphere between inside and outside. If we turn the voice into an object that we grasp philosophically from a neutral observer's position, we cannot understand it. There is no neutral position here. In order to understand the voice, we must remain close to it and want to recognise it in connection with our body, our emotional world and our reason. The voice undermines the division between theory and practice that was common in philosophy until the modern era, as well as the division between the general and the personal. It forces the philosopher back into the world from which he had withdrawn in order to be able to grasp it from the outside "without prejudice". In short, there is hardly a less suitable subject for traditional philosophy than the human voice. It is not so easy to make a copy of it - but a map, and this brings us back to Deleuze/Guattari, whose map metaphor stands for a philosophical approach in which the subject-object separation is cancelled. Thinking is now understood as a performative act, i.e. an action that does not leave the world unchanged. This alone brings the activity of the thinker closer to the life-world sphere. But if there is no separation of subject and object - in our case of voice and philosopher - every change in the object of cognition, the voice, leads to a change in the cogniser, the thinker! Nowhere can this strange interlocking of cognition and the cognised be better observed than in the human voice. For every person who thinks about the voice has a voice himself, and when she/he

uses it, it simultaneously comes from within her/him and is "heard" by her/him as if it came from outside. The ego hears itself and changes its self-image with every new aspect it hears.

The Singing Philosopher?

Nietzsche once called for the dancing philosopher, although he would have already been satisfied if the thoughts had increased their inner dynamism. But he did not go so far as to set the "great reason of the body" in motion by starting to dance himself, body and soul. He first had to go mad to be allowed to jump around his room naked and singing. It almost seems as if "great reason" had taken its dance and its share of life by force after Nietzsche had sketched out a philosophy on paper that was bursting with energy and life, albeit without giving it a lively expression in person. In Nietzsche's fate, one sees a confrontation of opposing forces that in earlier times would rightly have been described as a battle with the gods, whom man can challenge but not defeat. In any case, the singing philosopher would do well not only to let his thoughts "sing", but to open himself as a whole person to his own voice and its possibilities. However ridiculous this demand may sound in the ears of many academic philosophers, the human voice will not reveal itself to a merely theoretical observation far removed from the world.

Writing aloud: "It is not carried by dramatic modulations, mischievous intonations, pleasing accents, but by the roughness of the voice, which is an erotic mixture of timbre and language and can, for its part, like diction, be the material of an art: the art of leading one's body (hence its importance in far eastern theatre). With regard to the sounds of language, writing aloud is not phonological, but phonetic; its aim is not the clarity of messages, the spectacle of emotions; it seeks rather (in the pursuit of voluptuousness) the impulses, the language covered with skin, a text in which one can hear the roughness of the throat, the patina of the consonants, the delight of the vowels, a whole stereophony of sensuality: the combination of body and language, not of sense and language.

Roland Barthes

What is the aim of a philosophy of the voice that ventures back into the world? What is the relationship between theory and practice, a relationship that Aristotle already assumed

would have to be redefined depending on the subject under consideration? On the one hand, the ancient philosopher is regarded as the key witness in favour of pure theoretical thinking, because he was the first to claim that only thinking that no longer needs an external goal leads to eudaimonia, happiness. Thinking makes you happy! The gain in knowledge is self-sufficient. Until not so long ago, an echo of this idea of bliss was to be found in the famous freedom of science, which could choose its topics unencumbered by questions of practical utility - an idea which, in our now economised world, causes scientists to feel melancholy and the rest of society to mostly lack understanding. But even for Aristotle, theoretical eudaimonia was only one path of philosophy, and not the only one. He had recognised that different possible objects of knowledge require different methods of investigation. And the citizen of a Greek polis realised that theory was not sufficient for all aspects concerning man as a political and social being. At one point Aristotle says of virtue, which in this context could be described as the ability to act well, that he does not philosophise about it in order to know what it is, but in order to become virtuous! Otherwise his work would be of no use. This is because thinking about good actions can help people to put the right decisions into practice, but it is not a substitute for action. Aristotle calls for a necessary connection between theory and practice in the field of ethics. If it has no practical effects, the theory of ethics has no meaning, because ethical knowledge is not sufficient in itself. The parallel between Aristotle's ethics and a philosophy of voice lies in the fact that both areas require theoretical considerations to be close to life or relevant to life. But how do the theoretical considerations of voice have a concrete effect on the way we deal with our voices? What is the relevance of ideas about the voice for the voice itself? For Aristotle, the spheres of thought and action remain largely separate. Despite his plea for the relevance of ethics to life, Aristotle sees himself as a theorist and does not interfere directly in day-to-day political business. Through thinking, he wants to arrive at a knowledge of virtue that leads to a virtuous life. Theory comes first, then practice. In Socrates we find yet another understanding of the relationship between thought and action. He would not have shared Aristotle's assessment of virtue in its relationship to theory, because for him there is no theoretical knowledge of virtue in this sense. For Socrates, knowledge is virtue, i.e. every true realisation inevitably leads to the corresponding action. Knowledge that remains stuck in the sphere of theory is not only worthless, as Aristotle would say, it does not represent knowledge at all! Only through its application in the sphere of action does its character as true knowledge become apparent.

Only through our actions can we prove whether the assertions about the nature of good behaviour are true for us or not.

The relationship between theory and practice, as we strive for in the field of voice, is less like Aristotelian ethics than Socrates' thoughts on the connection between knowledge and virtue. Our ideas about the human voice in general and our own voice in particular inevitably have an effect on the possibilities of our voice. It does not matter at first whether we are aware of the effective beliefs about the voice or not. But as soon as we begin to think about the function and meaning of the voice and question our previous ideas, there is an interplay between the effects of our thoughts on the voice and, conversely, the effects of our more conscious use of the voice on our ideas and thoughts. We can go beyond Socrates: Not only does knowledge only prove itself when it becomes action - or thought only becomes voice when it becomes sound - but the expansion of vocal possibilities can change our access to ourselves and to the world and thus exert its influence on theoretical activities. Practical work with one's own voice will change our idea of the voice in a very concrete way. Theory and practice are closely interwoven when it comes to the voice, without forming causal one-way streets. Only in and with this interweaving can we hope to do justice to the subject of the voice.

Now, one could argue that this interrelation of cognition and subject matter is also present in any other subject - or should be, because otherwise we are missing the point. But Being, Becoming or Time, to name a few typical philosophical "objects", do not react directly to the process of cognition in the same way as the human voice.

The points of reference for metaphysical thinking remain rather unimpressed by the results of philosophising. Unlike anthropological themes such as the human being, action or the voice, they are designed to be copied by thinking. Until Nietzsche, it was assumed that an unprejudiced grasp of the world was only possible if the philosopher separated himself from the world, otherwise he ran the risk of only finding in the object what he himself had placed in it, a process that was given the name "projection" in psychoanalysis. For the exploration of the voice, however, philosophical and psychological projections pose no danger at all as long as one is aware of the power of projection and declares it to be part of the journey of discovery. The expressive process of the voice is so closely linked to the human being that it would make no sense to ignore the personal aspects. In connection with the realisation

that there can be no clear separation between subject and object in the study of the voice, the voice philosopher becomes the object of knowledge himself! And thus, incidentally, returns to "Know thyself!", which already marked the actual goal of all philosophising with the pre-Socratic philosopher Heraclitus.

One of the tasks of the voice philosopher is therefore to familiarise himself with the phenomena of the voice in a practical way and to acquire the diversity of the human voice through extensive listening experience. Despite the globalised world of hearing in which we live today, there are vocal sounds to be discovered that are important for a philosophical consideration of the whole voice. Without these experiences, the philosopher does not know what he is talking about. It would be like someone wanting to talk about trees but only knowing the leaves so far. He can draw some correct conclusions from this, but he still lacks a fundamental knowledge of the context in which the leaves must be seen. On the other hand, the practical confrontation with one's own voice, which provides experiences that cannot be replaced by anything else, is one of the prerequisites for its philosophical understanding.

Only the experience of my voice can make clear the close relationship it has to my body, to my emotionality and state of mind, to my own history and to my own thinking. The peculiar vocal self-reference and its meaning for the person can emerge appropriately in the concrete experience.

If we want to formulate the interim results of the previous considerations in the map metaphor, then the collection of external and internal vocal experiences can be equated with the cartographer's expeditions to the parts of the world he wants to map. When he returns from his travels, in the best case he has not only familiarised himself with the foreign countries, but has also settled into them and integrated them into his sphere of home. However, if he now begins to draw his map, he will encounter some difficulties. The newly discovered intrinsic meaning of the vocal sounds, which exists alongside and independently of language, presents him with the problem of how he should appropriately draw the non-linguistic field of expression and meaning with his instruments - the "meaning-laden" language. Can the meaningfulness of the voice be translated one-to-one into language? Or what is lost in the translation? The way in which voice and language coexist could be com-

pared to a marriage in which great value is placed on the separation of property and both spouses are granted a private realm, e.g. in the form of their own room in the shared home. You live together, you naturally appear as a couple to friends and in public, you have children together and share the small and big worries of life.

And yet both sides protect their own space, in which they alone are responsible and where the other has no business being, unless they are expressly invited to visit. Perhaps the couple view each other's space with loving incomprehension, because it conceals a part of their loved one that will always remain alien to them to a certain extent. But the spheres of autonomy guarantee a certain independence from the spouse on the one hand, and on the other hand they contribute to the success of married life! This is because much of what is created in one's own sphere is brought into the shared space. The centre of the marriage-like existence of language and voice is the conversation, the speech, every language-bound vocal utterance, i.e. the area that we have called orality in the discussion with Derrida. In orality, voice and language are dependent on each other. Here they cannot exist on their own. Language needs the help of the voice in order to enter the world at all, and the voice needs language in order to be able to communicate. However, both sides also maintain their own sphere in which the other side is only tolerated as a guest. Language withdraws from the voice into the written word, albeit without being able to completely forget its partner, because every written word recalls its sound through its typeface. Nevertheless, the written fixation of linguistic content is possible without the help of the voice. Writing has its room in the shared flat with the voice, but it does not have its own house. Pure vocality resides in the room of the voice, which encompasses the area of vocal expression that does not require the use of words. The sound of the voice, which shapes every conversation by means of its facets and colours, forms an independent field of meaning where the language of words does not reach, which is extremely complex and eludes a residual interpretation through language. As Nietzsche said: "That's why writing is nothing!" We don't need to go that far, but language-bound thinking must learn how to deal with voice and recognise that there are fields of meaning that it cannot reach. Another reason to switch from the idea of the copy to the map, where thinking does not have to do everything on its own, but is supported by life in the joint search for the whole voice!

When attempting to approach the human voice philosophically, one encounters yet another difficulty. The idea of the whole voice goes hand in hand with the demand to free

the voice from cultural, mental and habitual limitations or concepts. Only then can it find itself and "speak" for itself. However, philosophy has a conceptual character, because by committing itself to certain ideas, it naturally excludes others that cannot be harmonised with them. It is true that there are no eternal truths in a map of the voice such as the one we have in mind. New things can always be discovered that show the familiar aspects in a different light. The landscapes themselves can change. New paths and clearings are created, the vegetation changes due to (spiritual) climate changes, and in the long term rivers are shifted and mountains removed. Nevertheless, the maps assert a validity that not only concerns the voice of the cartographer, but is also relevant for others. But how do we know whether the personal voices of other people correspond to our general ideas?

Being able to say how the human voice should sound better than the individual in his or her particular life situation is one of the ideas we finally want to say goodbye to. In order to avoid replacing only one restrictive concept with another, thinking about the voice must open up to the possibility that its liberation can also take place in ways other than the one it favours. People's personal experiences of the voice can be at odds with both the general understanding of the voice that we take as a basis here and the idea that we have of our individual voice. However, this does not make the opinions that differ from ours any less correct and they should be given the chance to be put into vocal practice. Any philosophical (and even more so any psychological, aesthetic or ethical) conception, no matter how much it is geared towards the liberation of the whole voice, would otherwise have a restrictive effect on specific voices. Finding the courage to find one's own voice - whatever it may sound like - is much more important than following the guidelines set out by voice experts and philosophers. In thinking about the whole voice, personal experience must therefore be left free. Of course, this does not exclude the possibility that the maps of the voice that we make will provide orientation for other journeys of discovery - on the contrary, that is the reason why we want to draw them! But in order to remain true to our ultimate goal of liberating the voices, we must keep open the opportunity for everyone to find their own way. And who knows? Perhaps we will suddenly meet again elsewhere in the field of voices!

The Vocal Field

Human vocal sounds are "signs of the ideas evoked in the soul". This sentence, which can be found in Aristotle, offers a promising introduction to thinking about the voice. However, it must be taken out of the context in which it was originally written, as Aristotle, according to philosophical tradition, only speaks of the vocal sounds that belong to speech; for him, the "ideas of the soul" are all such that they can be transformed into speech. However, the significance of vocal sounds is not limited to speech-related sounds! All human vocal utterances are "animated", or to put it in more modern terms: the voice has an inherent intentionality, i.e. apart from the linguistic content that it the voice always points to something that goes beyond its tonal character - to the person who is expressing the voice, to their state of mind, to their history and to the culture and society in which they live. Intentionality is built up from layers in which there are collective and personal areas. A large part of the vocal meaning is not bound to the surface phenomenon of intentionality, but points to these deeper layers of intentionality. The intentional structure of the voice means that I cannot completely "determine" the meaning of the vocal sounds I make myself. There is more to it than what I intentionally put into my voice. Conversely, this more makes it easier for us to understand the vocal sounds of people I don't even know, because a considerable part of the intentional layers from which the foreign voice expresses itself is known to us from our own. The greater the cultural affinity between the person making the sound and the listener, the greater the likelihood of grasping the meaning of the vocal sound. Whether the listener's understanding corresponds to the intentions of the voice producer is not guaranteed, but the common field of meaning, which is based on cultural affinities, predetermines certain variations of understanding and misunderstanding and excludes others. Sometimes listeners understand the vocal sounds of another person better than the person who expresses himself vocally. This applies to the individual aspects of the voice's meaning, which lie in the dark for the voice producer, as well as to the collective parts.

The term "vocal field" originally comes from medical phoniatics, where it refers to the range of a voice in terms of pitch and volume. In order to determine a person's vocal field, they are asked to produce the lowest and highest tone they can spontaneously sing in a soft and loud voice, record the results with a microphone and then visualise them graphically.

For certain medical purposes, it may make sense to make do with this narrow vocal field, but in the search for the whole voice, we need many more parameters to draw an appropriate field. The highest and lowest tones that I can produce in a laboratory situation only show a very small section of what my voice does in normal everyday life when it sings, speaks, screams, tones or calls, when it sighs, croaks, laughs and groans. In addition, there are all the sounds that I have not yet let into the sonic world, but which lie dormant in my voice as a possibility. In addition, the vocal field that we want to draw has a depth dimension that determines which sounds "grow" on it and which wither away. In other words, the vocal field has a history that is made up of the sum of all the influences to which the voice is exposed. This truly opens up an "extended field" that covers cultural and individual history and encompasses our ideas of the right, appropriate or beautiful, ugly and unbearable voice as well as its relationship to the body and "soul". On the way to the whole voice, we are not content with mapping the vocal field, but it is much more important to work on the field, to cultivate it, possibly to enlarge it and to ensure that it grows and flourishes well. The soil can be loosened or fertilised; we promote the growth of the voice through irrigation systems, and it is up to us whether we allow a monoculture to develop in our field or also give the so-called weeds room to sprout and develop. However, the field does not only consist of clearly delineated plots on which the plants we cultivate there grow. These relatively small crops are surrounded by areas of wild growth, where the familiar stands next to the foreign, paths have to be created and a surprise can lurk behind "every tree". But as strange, dangerous and unfathomable as the landscapes of the voice may seem, the elements of each voice field are always grouped around two poles that are aligned with each other and move freely across the field. On each voice field there is an I that produces the voice and a you that perceives it and possibly reacts to it.

Individuality and Communication

I and you represent the simple framework on which the complex structure of human voices and their significance for people and the world is built. From the very beginning, the voice refers to its individuality (the I) and its social and communicative character (the You). The polarity is in constant motion on the vocal field, i.e. the relationship between I and You is constantly changing and the quality of the poles themselves changes. Their distance is very variable both spatially and temporally. Thus, an acoustic contact can take place without being accompanied by another sensory perception through sight, touch or smell; however, isolated hearing has an influence on what and how the voice is perceived. In the vocal field, the simultaneity of voice production and its perception is the normal case, because we hear every voice that is raised in our presence immediately. However, in the age of the technical reproducibility of sound phenomena, we can still perceive voices when they and their producers have long since "faded away". The ego entity is present as soon as the voice becomes audible.

Let's sit down for a moment at a kitchen table where two friends have come together to chat. Over a substantial breakfast, the two have had a lively conversation, refreshing shared memories, talking about their current lives, discussing their worries and plans for the future. Their voices were in constant use and created a colourful field full of interesting sounds, on which the friends were constantly switching between the I and you, i.e. between voice production and voice perception. Most of the time, the voices remained within the framework of what the two expected from each other, and therefore there was no reason to make them the subject of the conversation, unless the breakfast was a meeting of singers, voice teachers or speech therapists! The situation did not require any special attention to the voice, and both naturally assumed that they understood each other's vocal utterances immediately. If you had asked the friends afterwards whether they had noticed anything about their own or the other person's voice, one of them might have remembered that the other person always cleared his throat when talking about his wife and that he himself had wanted to shout out loud at some points, but hadn't dared to do so. The other still remembers that his throat went dry at times and he could hardly continue talking and that his friend laughed far too loudly and somehow fake at one point - which was quite embarrassing for him, the listener.

These small breaks, the irritations that you hardly notice, make it clear how much the voice intervenes in communicative events and shapes the image we form of others and ourselves.

The linguist Roman Jakobson once called the voice a vocal identity card that represents the person's identity. However, this image conceals a very static concept of the voice. It is true that, like an identity card, the voice contains a whole series of recognisable features that make us unmistakable and ensure that we can be recognised. But firstly, not all characteristics of the voice are suitable for identifying the person behind it as the one we know. On the contrary, the voice in particular is capable of revealing to us the alien and disconcerting sides of a person - sides that even the person showing them would not have readily suspected in their vocal identity card. And secondly, the data on an identity card is more or less limited to a person's characteristics which never change or only change very slowly. In contrast, we hear the small changes of everyday life in the voice as well as the major movements in its history. Life shapes the voice. But one of the central theses that I would like to put forward here, with Alfred Wolfsohn as a key witness, is that this history of effects can be reversed. By this I do not mean that we can turn back time, but that the voice can also have a direct influence on life. If we embark on an active search for the whole voice, learn to listen to it, unfold its possibilities and explore the meaning of its sounds, then the effects will not be limited to the voice, simply because our voice accompanies and actively supports us in almost all areas of life. The expansion of vocal possibilities goes hand in hand with the expansion of a person's scope for life and action, provided that voice development is not limited to technical issues, but always keeps the meaning of vocal sounds within the horizon of attention. This is a thesis that goes beyond the understanding of the voice development as it is practiced in an artistic or medical context. We do not see the human voice as an instrument that can be repaired or even "tuned" so that it functions as well as possible. Only if we focus our "ear" on the fact that the voice is in constant interaction with the person to whom it belongs, and incorporate this insight into the concrete development of the voice, can we find living, animated voices that are capable of expressing and living out their potential on stage or in life. The exploration of the human voice field thus requires a great expedition into the areas where voice and personality meet.

"When we, of the Roy Hart Theatre, talk about 'singing' what do we mean? This is, unfortunately, a difficult question to answer which is why we are not concerned with the normal job of what singing teachers are doing all over the world. For us the word "singing" means vocal action and the object of this vocal action is to recontact us to our intuitive mind, to our body, to remove ourselves a little from our over dependence on our brains, which so often project us into the virtual world of illusion which always ultimately collapses into disillusion and disappointment. The voice resonates within our body and, given enough time and effort, resuscitates our original relationship to our sensory feelings. This can only be achieved through the use of our voice, since the voice is the one real bridge which links our heads to our bodies. By LISTENING to our own sounds coming from our own bodies we can, slowly, retrace our connections back into our feelings and the possibility of expressing them again."

Paul Silber

PART 2: VOICE AND PERSONALITY

Voice: Mirror of the Soul?

I recently came across a book entitled "On the Face", which already states on the dust jacket that the face is the mirror of the soul, the epitome of individuality and surprisingly little researched. I immediately thought that the same could have been said about the voice. And a dancer or a body therapist would probably and rightly so recognise a mirror of the soul in a person's body posture and movement patterns. In a newspaper article about manicures that I happened to come across, it was even claimed that fingernails are a mirror of the soul! The list could go on, as the mirror metaphor is apparently applied to all possible physical aspects of the human being. The image of the soul mirror stands for the idea that the perceptible expressive movements of a person can be interpreted by the perceiver as a kind of "inner" movement. The physical expression indicates a movement of the mind or a state of the soul. How does it do this? What is being mirrored here and how? And how is the mirroring process organised in the case of the voice, an acoustic phenomenon for which a metaphor from the realm of the visible world can only apply indirectly? The idea that the voice is an echo of the soul would actually be more obvious. But the image of the soul mirror has also become established for the human voice and there are probably convincing reasons for this. Let's take a closer look at what can be meant by the image of the mirror of the soul.

Excursus: Echo and Narcissus

In Greek mythology, the nymphs - all of them daughters of Zeus - are nature deities who usually live near water. For some reason, the nymph Echo had the misfortune of angering the great Hera, who then took away her ability to speak her own chosen words. Since then, Echo has had to make do with parroting the words of others. One day, the nymph fell in love with Narcissus, a young man who must have been so handsome that men and women fell for his charms by the dozen. When the two met in a forest where Narcissus was hunting deer, Echo managed to confess her love to him by repeating her lover's words in such a way that they carried her message of love to him. For unlike the mirror image, the echo has a creative power in its depictive character. But the use of all acoustic tricks ultimately did not help the nymph Echo. Narcissus spurned her and, in prototypical Narcissistic fashion, fell in love with his own reflection instead, which he saw in a lake, perished out of grief that his self-love would remain eternally unfulfilled, accompanied by Echo's cries of "Woe, woe!" and became a narcissus.

If he had listened to his voice, which knew how to tell him something surprising in the reverberation of the echo, the young man might have fared better. The mirror image refers only to itself and leaves out the world in its constant change, while the echo is variable enough to produce something new and unexpected that points beyond the small self and allows it to grow. The echo echoes the result of re-creative listening, which challenges the self-image to be ready for development instead of remaining trapped in its own reflection.

The voice the mirror of the soul? No, this metaphor does not include it! Rather, it is the echo of the soul that can have an effect on the "soul" with its creative potential. The sound of the voice does not simply reveal a person's state of mind and character, but if you can listen to it, the voice has an influence on the development of the personality of the person who makes it sound. A look in the mirror sticks to the surface, the voice goes deeper and reveals things that remain hidden from the visible world.

A mirror generally refers to a smooth surface that almost completely reflects the light that falls on it, thus reproducing an image, albeit inverted, of the objects that appear on it. The word mirror (German: Spiegel) goes back to the Latin *speculum*, which can also mean mirror image and copy. The German word *Spiegel* can also be used in the sense of *Spiegelbild*/mirror image. Applied to the voice, one could say that the sound of the voice corresponds to the mirror image that is reflected in the mirror of the voice, which is "set up" in every person. Does the mirror show a kind of inverted copy of an original mental process? What does the unmirrored soul look like? Things that appear in a mirror can normally also be seen

without a mirror - with the important exception of our own face, which we could hardly visualise without the mirror from which we look at ourselves every morning in the bathroom. But what should correspond to the unmirrored soul? The soul does not represent a concrete object, but is itself a metaphor that can symbolise many things.

Sometimes it stands for the totality of a person's psychic aspects and processes (which is to say nothing, because psychic is just another word for soul), sometimes it also encompasses mental processes. Sometimes it represents an undivided, even immortal substance and sometimes a universal principle. With Plato, it becomes a part of man capable of knowledge, which can dwell in the sphere of ideas after death. Modern philosophy and psychology have abandoned the metaphysical concept of the soul as a substance in favour of a purely functional concept. According to this concept, there are human emotions and states whose quality can be characterised by the term soul/psychic.

What is supposed to be reflected in the expression is therefore not immediately clear - regardless of whether the mirror is the voice, facial expressions or posture. But despite all the difficulties we have with the mirror metaphor, there does seem to be a plausible core to it. Our belief that the voice, face and body say something about the person to whom they belong is strong enough that we cannot discard the idea that a person's expression reveals their "inner self" without having to revise our self-image - a possibility that should never be ruled out. The voice is an expression of a person's personality! But this is not the same as saying that it is a mirror of the soul. Although both sentences belong to the same language game, as Wittgenstein would say, they are not aimed at exactly the same thing. There are two areas about which we can obtain information by means of human expressive movements through voice, face and body: the area of a person's more or less fixed character features and that of his emotional movements, which are in a constant state of flux. About the interpretation of his expression we should be able to recognise what kind of person is standing in front of us, how their personality is structured, and we should be able to see and hear how this person is feeling at the current time, what feelings and moods are moving them.

In contrast to the more mobile soul stands the almost engraved personality of a person. However, the two areas do not exist independently of each other. Roughly speaking, mental states of mind are emotional reactions to an external situation, which can be expressed

through gestures, facial expressions and vocalisations. There is more than one appropriate response to every situation. For example, if someone unexpectedly gives me a nice present, I can express my surprise and gratitude with a beaming face and loud exclamations. However, I may also be moved to tears and my vocal response is rather restrained. The range of my responses is immense, but not arbitrary. Within a cultural framework, inappropriate reactions are registered immediately. On the other hand, it is very difficult to identify completely senseless behaviour. When communicating with people, we always assume that at least our counterpart sees some sense in their behaviour, even if we do not understand their actions. However, the closer we are culturally and socially to the person reacting, the lesser this assumption of understanding becomes. Let's assume that someone reacts to a gift from me by spitting at my feet and shouting three times „hey". If it is a person from a culture and language community that is completely alien to me, I may be tempted to assume that this is an appropriate response to my gift. But if a good friend or family member had the same reaction without a hint of irony, I would have to be seriously concerned and advise them to see a psychiatrist soon.

If certain situations with the corresponding emotional reactions are repeated frequently or if there are events that trigger particularly strong or even traumatic experiences together with the associated emotional states, the original cause-and-effect relationship, in which the event determines which reactions would be appropriate, is reversed. Now the reaction patterns that have been recalled (too) often in the past determine the emotional response to the event - more than the events themselves! The boundary between emotional states and character traits, between soul and personality begins to blur. Frequently experienced emotional states form character traits, which in turn delimit the scope of my emotional life. In the long term, this interplay will characterise facial features and body posture as well as the sound of my own voice. The way I use my voice in life has a medium-term effect on the range of my potential vocal action radius. Every life demands a unique concentration on a selection from the pool of "voices" that are in principle available to me. This is how vocal traits develop.

In short: my voice has a story. The dominance of certain event patterns in a person's young life influences the development of personality traits that go hand in hand with typical attitudes and reactions. This can lead to situations in which new responses would be appropriate, but the person actually reacts in the old, familiar ways. In pathological extreme

cases, this results in neuroses, compulsive behaviours that are triggered by external events but no longer have a generally understandable connection to them. The psychological imprints of good and less good experiences affect the young person's voice in two ways. Parts of the personality that have room for free development are given the opportunity to develop the corresponding part of their sound field. The psychic facets that are separated and blocked silence the corresponding parts of the voice. But the voice also functions as an object on which the process of unfolding and suppressing vitality takes place directly. The history of the voice begins with birth. However, the pre-history reaches even further back into the mother's womb, where the foetus' hearing is already fully formed! The surprise of being born into a world of confusing soundscapes is therefore not too great, and the baby is not afraid to immediately enrich the acoustic environment with the sounds of its own voice. Because you don't have to learn how to use your voice! As soon as a newborn baby begins to breathe, it usually starts screaming. Long before it can see or even walk. The playful use of the voice, which is not yet regulated by any social or aesthetic guidelines, produces sounds that a socially integrated, grown-up and "sensible" person no longer allows themselves. The first chapters of the history of the individual voice recount the early discovery of one's own voice, which initially goes hand in hand with its tonal development. The small child tries out all the sounds it can produce with its voice without restraint, often enough without regard for the parents' hearing. However, this is soon followed by the progressive reduction of the vocal sound range to what is socially and culturally appropriate. The more children become social beings, the more their vocal utterances are modelled on the sounds they experience. Learning the mother tongue plays an important role in this process. The child predominantly hears the spectrum of the voice that is offered to it by the people speaking around it. And it is encouraged to train precisely this spectrum and forget the rest of the vocal possibilities. Some other voices save themselves in the reserve of laughing, crying and screaming, but as the children get older, these areas of retreat are increasingly restricted. Growing up means not being loud, but being sensible. A boy doesn't cry! A good girl doesn't shout! We probably all had to listen to these or similar sayings in our childhood. Singing is one of the few open spaces left for a child's voice. Singing is also a cultivated form of voice use and requires familiarisation with the respective musical system in which the singing takes place. You learn to hit notes, to hold them, to repeat melodies and to memorise them, to sing in a group with other voices and against other voices. But singing is often the only socially accepted niche in

which children - and adults! - are allowed to be loud with impunity and, despite all the restrictions, activate parts of their voice that are not wanted in normal life. But especially for children who have difficulties learning to sing in the way they are taught, singing no longer opens the door to free and playful vocal expression. I regularly have people come to my lessons who were told as children that they couldn't sing and should keep their mouths shut. A sentence like this can have fatal consequences for the child's development. If children are denied this niche due to their supposed lack of musicality, a very important means of expression is ignored, which can have a lasting effect on a child's development - with consequences that extend into their adult life. But what happens to the "voices" that are no longer made to be heard? Have they been forgotten? Are they lost? Can they be found again? Is their re-appropriation a matter for psychoanalysis? To what extent do rehearsal and training play a role?

Excursus: Pitch and Timbre Listeners

In my seminars and vocal groups, I am lucky enough to come across people relatively often who can't hit a note, who are usually labelled as unmusical and have often been told since childhood to keep their mouths shut when others are singing. In trying to find out why these people can't hit the note you give them, I have so far come to two conclusions. The first is that two groups of listeners can be distinguished: pitch listeners and timbre listeners, i.e. there are people who, for every tone they perceive, first and spontaneously identify the pitch of the sound and, if it is within their vocal capabilities, can also reproduce it. I am not talking here about the extremely rare phenomenon of absolute pitch, where you can hear the pitch of a sound and tell whether it is a G or an E flat - without necessarily being able to sing the note. My point is rather that in our culture the vast majority of people have the ability to abstract from all characteristics of two sounds - the one that is played to them and their own vocal sound - and to compare them only in terms of their pitch. The small group of timbre listeners, on the other hand, spontaneously focus their attention on the colour of a sound and find it difficult to perceive the rudimentary similarities between a piano tone and "the same" sung tone. This is because the piano has a completely different timbre spectrum to the human voice. Many timbre listeners find it easier to pick up a note "correctly" from another voice than from the piano. In other words: timbre listeners do not hear worse than pitch listeners, they just hear differently and have the misfortune of living in a musical culture that has elevated pitch to the most important aspect of sound. This is not the case everywhere. In Africa, there are cultures that don't even recognise the idea of pitch and don't understand what is meant by it. When trying to put the very complex sound of the Bushmen's language in southern Africa into writing, European ethnologists also introduced signs to indicate the descending and ascending melody of sentences and words, but the Bushmen who were taught the written language were unable to recognise these signs. Our idea of pitch remained completely alien to them, although even the meaning of the words in their language depends on the pitch and melody in which they are spoken. We, on the other hand, are so fixated on pitch that we are unable to understand the criteria by which the Bushmen differentiate their sounds. Perhaps we could learn a thing or two from our supposedly unmusical tone colour listeners!

Sound colour listeners usually have to get used to being denied any musicality very early in their lives. They are not allowed to sing in children's choirs, and it is not uncommon for them to be more or less kindly asked at home to hold back vocally. No wonder that as adults they themselves believe that they can neither sing nor hear properly. Therefore, when working with them, a second highly interesting phenomenon arises, which could be called the conflict between hearing and thinking. As a result of their painful experience, they do not trust their own hearing, and every act of hearing is accompanied by a thought about what the person should actually be hearing now.

The thought is followed by the fear of once again having missed the most important thing, and under the layer of expectations and fears, the hearing actually has no chance of working

well. This can look like this, for example: A person hears the first note and sings it reasonably accurately; when I play the second note for them on the piano, you can literally see them thinking: aha, that note was higher than the first, so I'll try a higher one! The result is that the second note she sings is far too high, because this thinking hearing is far too vague to recognise and implement the subtle differences that free hearing can perceive without difficulty. In addition, the next note, which has to deal with the disappointment of the previous false note, is only hesitantly let into the world and therefore often enough the pitch that was actually intended is not reached for energetic reasons, so to speak, and he or she then sings too low instead of too high. However, if you manage to stop the person from thinking, the result is sometimes astonishing. Suddenly they no longer have any problems hitting the right note! However, the task of developing confidence in your own hearing is not just for people who can't hit a note. A well-trained musical ear often makes it just as difficult to listen without judgement, because the internal correction mechanisms are so well-rehearsed that you first have to learn to put them aside. This is a great challenge for many singers, especially when it comes to hearing their own voice. In our search for the whole voice, learning to hear does not so much mean being able to distinguish a fifth from a third, but rather trusting that our hearing works best when it is left alone and not burdened with expectations, ideas and fears.

The story of the development of one's own voice tells of the shifting boundaries and relationships between the spheres of one's own and the foreign, in which the processes of appropriation and alienation of vocal parts are constantly at work even without explicit instruction.

The voice, from the most outrageous noise to the most noble song, always means something, always refers to something else outside itself and creates a wide range of associations of a cultural, musical, everyday, emotional, psychological nature.

Luciano Berio

With increasing age and a well-defined self-image, there is a growing danger of vocal boundaries hardening and losing their permeability. This can lead to vocal difficulties that make it necessary to consciously engage with the voice. The exclusion of sound spaces from the active sphere of the voice indicates that certain areas of one's own life are not being entered. However, if a person's life situation changes and new options for action are required, then some of the vocal restrictions become a hindrance. A computer specialist, for example,

only has to use a fraction of his vocal potential behind his computer. Not much more than talking on the phone and occasionally saying goodbye to the computer is necessary. Let's assume he joins a consultancy firm and one of his new tasks from now on is to provide training for customers. Now he stands in front of 10, 20 or even 100 people once a week and has to teach these non-experts how to use the new software. The unfamiliar situation places completely new demands on the dynamics and flexibility of the voice, which can only be met in the long term without more or less serious vocal damage if these new vocal aspects are also "connected", i.e. if they are based on an appropriate inner attitude. With mere vocal technique and a few little tricks, it is at best possible to change something in the short term. This involves the whole person, who has to face up to the new task and, for better or worse, expand their self-image by a few hidden facets.

However, the moulding of one's own voice does not take place exclusively in a personal or individual context. If we want to hold on to the parallel between voice and soul/personality, this means, almost paradoxically: Personality development is not a purely personal matter! We are born into cultural and social patterns that help determine how personality traits and vocal characters develop over the course of our lives. The voice is moulded by the respective culture in which it is embedded by the same factors to which a person is generally exposed. This prepares the ground for the strange expressive process in which the voice can reveal aspects of a person's inner world. This inner world is formed from elements that other people know more or less well from themselves because they belong to a common lifeworld. In addition, the synchronous socio-cultural development of voice and people means that more is "reflected" in the sound of the voice than the mere individual "soul" or "personality". In the vocal expression of a person, facets can be heard that go beyond the individual-psychological. From the vocal colouring of a voice, for example, we can hear the affiliation of the voice to its cultural and linguistic community. Trained opera listeners recognise from the voice which country a singer comes from. An Italian tenor sounds different from a French, Russian or Korean opera singer, who all have their own specific sound. The timbres of the different voices give clear indications of which sound spectra are favoured in the culture from which the voice originated. Culture and language give form to the voice and thus set a certain framework for the sonority.

However, the voice not only reflects what is openly revealed in its sound. The hidden also shines through in the sound of the voice - regardless of whether we are paying attention to the individual or the trans-individual sound range. You can hear what you can't hear right now! It is precisely here, in this place where the concealment is expressed in the sound, that a path opens up to reach the concealed and buried parts of the voice, the large field of unknown voices in the voice that have not yet been utilised by the person in question. Sometimes the cover-ups in the voice actually sound as if there is a "blanket" or a "lid" on the voice. The voice seems to be covered, the vocal sound gives the impression that there is something on it that does not belong there, a feeling that is often accompanied by a corresponding physical sensation. There is also sometimes talk of furry voices, whose sound really does evoke the association of warm, soft fur. A fur under which it is difficult to sing with an open sound! Covering up certain pitch ranges, which you simply cannot reach with a loaded voice and which you would therefore not expect to hear in your own voice, is usually associated with less favourable images that clearly appear before the inner eye of the singer and the listener while working on the voice. You stand in front of locked doors, walls or fences, and there seems to be no way over or through the barriers. Giant guards with weapons, border police, mythical creatures and demons appear, who seem to have only one task: to prevent the person from entering the new, strange vocal areas by any means necessary. But it is precisely in the images and their individual manifestations, which are provoked by the utterance of the so-called false or ugly voices, that the key to open the door, the ladder to get over the wall or the trick to get round the border post is often concealed. Properly read, the concealment of the voice contains the means for its uncovering and liberation, namely when we are prepared to take every aspect of a vocal sound seriously and to understand it as an utterance that tells of the person who makes it. Every association, every image and every thought evoked by a voice in action points a possible way into the still hidden areas of the voice. These signposts do not necessarily have to come from the person whose voice is at issue; often enough, the images and thoughts of the listener help quickly and directly on the way. The alien parts of your own voice, which hold many a surprise, not only of an acoustic nature, can be accessed via the difficulties you have with your voice. Because this is where the exciting stories are hidden! The path to the whole voice therefore also leads via the problems that your voice is currently causing you, via the constrictions, blockages, obstacles and limits that prevent a free sound. Our aim is not to avoid these

sounds, but to understand them and use this understanding to achieve a conscious approach to this sound range of the voice. The aim of voice development is then not to train a sound apparatus that is as perfect as possible, with which you can do everything you want to do, but to allow and get to know all the voices that show themselves in the one voice without prejudice, in order to then be able to deal freely with these voices. The longer and more intensively you work with your own voice in this way, the wider its range will become and, even more importantly, the more soulful, meaningful and personal your voice will sound.

The Foreign Aspects in our Own Voice

In a vocal development process that aims to liberate the whole voice, we inevitably encounter areas of sound that seem completely alien to the person making the sound. In such situations, phrases such as "That's not me" or "That wasn't my voice", "This sound is strange to me" or "It feels as if someone else has sung out of me" are heard. The discovery of strange sounds triggers different reactions: excited curiosity, but also uncertainty, defence, aversion to the voices or even a strict refusal to accept that this voice belongs to "me". Especially at the beginning of a vocal research journey, the alien sounds lead to a strange contradiction: of course the person whose voice sounds so alien knows that the sounds were produced by themselves and are part of their voice, and yet they can hardly believe it because they have so little to do with their own vocal self-image. What is going on there? How do these strange sounds get into my voice? They have probably always been there! It's just that until now there has been no opportunity for them to reveal themselves. The search for the exact personal reasons for the masking of the now alien vocal ranges takes up a large part of the process of exploring and integrating the whole voice. At the beginning of this process comes the realisation that there is much that is alien in one's own voice. There are parts that you immediately feel belong to you, and others that you can work towards belonging to. The vocal sounds are assigned differently to the realms of one's own and the alien by the person making the sound than, for example, by acquaintances and friends who are listening. What I perceive as alien in my voice is sometimes well known to them, because we often use very strange vocal sounds in our everyday interactions without paying any particular attention to them. If we consciously listen to them, this can trigger one or two surprises as to how our voice apparently "actually" sounds.

The alien is a relative concept. What seems strange to one person sounds familiar and well-known to another. In our voice seminars, we use the different listening experiences to make the individual boundaries between the familiar and the alien in one's own voice more permeable. By using imitation exercises, for example, you can playfully learn to do things with your voice (and your body) that you would never have thought of on your own. And it's not about any acrobatic feats. Our vocal behaviour patterns are already shaken by small shifts, because our habits are so ingrained that we often only come up with the idea of making

a sound differently, trying out a new timbre or accompanying a sound or melody with a different gesture as a result of an external impulse.

However, imitation does not exactly have the best reputation in our culture and society. Imitation is quickly seen as cheap and fake, the opposite of what we normally strive for, namely to be and appear authentic. When working with the voice, however, the focus on authenticity has a negative effect, as it often stands in the way of playful curiosity and openness to new, unknown sounds in one's own voice. The desire to be authentic is confused with not being allowed to leave the realm of the familiar and known. This makes it difficult to seek out sounds, feelings and room for manoeuvre in the alien and unfamiliar that could strengthen and expand the sphere of authenticity. Our relative self-image then prevents us from getting to know our extended self. This quickly leads to identification snapshots that leave us stuck in the familiar! This can look like this, for example:

In a seminar, a woman takes part in a free vocal improvisation in the group and suddenly drops out without warning. She sits down at the edge and no longer wants to participate. When we ask her, she replies that she can no longer take part, she doesn't feel anything. But in a tone full of anger and displeasure. This woman's "authentic" self-image categorically excludes certain unpleasant emotional qualities; they don't exist for her. When they do emerge through the back door of a supposedly harmless exercise, they are denied. The participant had a self-image in which certain things did not belong. If they occur anyway, as they obviously do in improvisation, the authentic feeling is switched off and the new one is not allowed, even though it is clearly in the foreground for outsiders. However, voice work is never about categorising any feeling or the lack of a feeling as wrong or right. The interesting questions are: What vocal sound is the current mood associated with? What can I learn about my voice here? Which voices within the improvisation exercise were responsible for the emotional blockage? Did the woman make it herself or did she just hear it? In the situation described, how does the voice affect the mood as soon as it is in motion again? The confusion of authenticity with a self-image narrowed by habit often has a very restrictive effect on the freedom of movement of the voice, so that it is sometimes literally brought to a standstill. This is accompanied by a blockage of the mind, which wants to hold on to the old self-image at all costs and shies away from any movement out into the open. Incidentally, this is a fairly

common phenomenon. In voice work, however, it is particularly evident because voice and personality have a mutually illuminating relationship.

During individual work with a participant in a seminar, her voice opens up in a very impressive way that nobody in the room had expected. The woman had never been heard to sing like that before. When I asked her how she felt about producing such big notes, she said: "It didn't bother me!" Here the realm of permissible authenticity is so firmly established that no matter how impressive the experience, it is not allowed to reach the consciousness and the emotional world. But unlike in the first example, psychological and vocal blockage do not correspond with each other. In this situation, the woman had enough confidence to allow herself to be guided into sound areas of her voice that she would never have reached on her own. But her "soul" could not follow so quickly. But this is precisely one of the great qualities of the human voice. Like a scout, it is able to penetrate unknown territory quickly and allow the rest of the travelling party to follow slowly. With a good dose of confidence and time in the luggage, the woman will be able to recognise the disturbing character of the newly discovered vocal sounds and gradually make herself at home in the vocal range. An isolated experience is hardly enough for this, but if the work can be continued, the new vocal sounds will ensure an expansion of the self-image in the long term.

Actively listening to other voices has a great influence on the scope I allow my own voice. Experiencing an alien voice in free action often opens the door to one's own vocal potential in areas that have long been closed and unused. In voice development, we are not dependent on drawing everything out of ourselves, out of our dark inner selves. The social and communicative quality of the voice allows us to expand our personal vocal horizons through contact with other voices, which sound different but always have facets that are similar to our own voice. This is where the imitation exercises come into play again, which are a very suitable means of making the boundaries between the familiar and the alien in my voice more permeable. Normally, imitating other voices doesn't require any great leaps, but rather enables a smooth transition from the familiar to the new spheres of one's own voice. Once you have reached the alien, access to the authentic note of the new sound character is only a matter of time filled with practice.

In some other cultures, particularly in Asia, imitation has traditionally enjoyed a status that is not generally recognised in the West. Singers from different schools in Japan, China

or Korea spend decades learning a vocal technique until they sound exactly like their teachers or how they are supposed to sound in the role they are rehearsing. Only when they have progressed to perfect imitation are they allowed to add a personal touch to their vocal artistry. But even in our classical singing tradition, artists must first learn a very specific way of singing that concentrates on a relatively small range of tone colours before they can find their own individual sound within this given framework. For many singers, however, the restriction to the classical timbre range virtually chokes them off, and many singing students sing better before they start their studies than they do after their exams. In our work with professional singers, we experience again and again how liberating it is to leave the classical sound space and let the parts of the voice sound that don't really belong in opera, oratorio and art song. This in turn benefits the sonority of the classical voice.

The Soul out of the Body: Physiognomics of the Voice

The idea that facial expressions, gestures, body and voice say something about the person who displays them or who is characterised by them has a long history. Even in ancient times, people thought about the relationship between a person's appearance and expressive behaviour and their character and psychological characteristics. Since these beginnings in ancient Greece, these considerations have been summarised under the title of physiognomy or physiognomics. Physiognomy has had a remarkable history in which it has given rise to boundless enthusiasm among those who believed that it held the key to genuine knowledge of human nature. Others were no less consistent in their uncompromising rejection of "charlatanry". However, neither the supporters nor the opponents were particularly interested in the special physiognomic aspects of the voice. The organ of expression par excellence was once again only mentioned in passing, if at all. Systematic physiognomic observations were made almost exclusively on the face and body, and the voice was left only with its familiar place in obscurity, this time cast not by speech but by the visible aspects of the human body. Once again, the ephemeral nature of acoustic phenomena meant that people avoided the audible and focussed on researching what was in front of their eyes and much easier to capture than sound. Even in the earliest times, it was possible to record a person's face and body with simple means and then look at them again and again. In contrast, the technical possibility of recording the voice has only been available for a good hundred years, and the increased interest in it in the 20th century is partly due to the fact that it was suddenly possible to preserve the fleeting sounds of the voice on disc and tape. But even in the centuries before that, the physiognomic potential of the voice was recognised and addressed by individual researchers and scholars. On our expedition through the landscapes of the voice, we now want to study some old "maps" of the physiognomists who at least came close to the voice with their journeys between the so-called interior and exterior of the human being, and in these documents we will look for approaches, excerpts and sketches that we can use for our own journey, for small orientation aids with which we want to penetrate into areas that the physiognomists and their critics themselves only saw from afar and mostly left behind.

Aristotle: Similarities between Animals and Humans

The first systematic outline of physiognomics, in which the voice also has its place, was written by Aristotle. Here too, the Greek philosopher is not exactly fascinated by the phenomenon of the human voice and nowhere asks about its special features that set it apart from the physiognomy of the body and face. Aristotle categorises the voice as part of a collection of characteristics, including the face, hair, skin, eyes and physique, to name the most important. In Aristotle's approach, the voice functions as one field of expression among many and is treated in no more, but also no less detail than the other aspects.

In his *Physiognomics*, Aristotle compares the physical and vocal characteristics of humans with those he finds in animals, then examines which traits are associated with the physical characteristics of animals and draws conclusions about human character traits on the basis of the physical similarities between humans and animals. For example, if a human being has a loud and deep voice, Aristotle suggests that he is probably overconfident, because among animals the donkey is considered to be overconfident and also has a loud and deep voice. Soft hair is an indicator of cowardice because the deer, hare and sheep - all cowardly animals - have soft hair, while the brave lion and wild boar have hard hair. Aristotle is clever enough to recognise that one characteristic is not enough to attribute a character. It always takes several signs pointing in the same direction. Even for Aristotle, a person with soft hair does not necessarily have to be a coward. Furthermore, it is not enough to have found the right connection in just one animal species to attribute a characteristic to an external feature. It must occur in several animals and there must be no known association to the contrary in any other animal. Only one courageous animal species with soft hair would prove that the nature of the fur has nothing to do with the courage or cowardice of the animals. Despite these methodological safeguards, the aristotelian procedure seems rather obscure to us late-borns. We do know expressions from our everyday language that allude to similarities between animals and humans. A bull's neck, for example, denotes more than a physical characteristic, as it points to a physiognomic peculiarity. Looking at the similarities between a dog's face and that of its master can be very amusing and quickly leads to physiognomic judgements that should not be taken too seriously. But the assumption that all physical features have physiognomic significance because they appear in animals in connection with character traits goes

far beyond what we imagine and desire in terms of kinship with animals. However, Aristotle sees the animal-human parallelisation as a way of explaining why a physiognomic sign has a certain meaning and not another. After all, why should we be able to deduce a "suitable" character trait from a facial feature, a tone of voice or a posture? What reason is there for soft hair to indicate a cowardly character and not a courageous one? Aristotle's answer is: because the same combination of physical trait and character trait can be found in different animal species, but combinations of this trait with opposite characters cannot! In his opinion, there are no cowardly animals with hard fur and no courageous animals with soft hair. The answer may seem strange to us, but at least Aristotle was still looking for an explanation. Later physiognomists, on the other hand, often had nothing more to offer than rather nebulous talk about intuition and genius when they were asked to explain why they were so sure of their physiognomic assertions.

However, the great logician Aristotle undertakes the comparison between animal and human characteristics and traits in a very questionable way. He contrasts the individual traits of a human being with the characteristics he finds in an animal species! According to Aristotle, if a "specimen" of the human species has a loud and deep voice, there is something to suggest that it has a tendency to be overconfident, because the donkey - or more precisely: all donkeys - also have a deep and loud voice and are considered to be overconfident. The conclusion is thus drawn from one species to an individual of another animal species, namely man, without Aristotle explaining why all the characteristics of the different animal species can manifest themselves in individual mixtures in man! Aristotle's physiognomic studies are logically based on clay feet, not because they compare apples with pears (which is not a problem at all, by the way), but because they only consider the species-relevant aspects of the animal as a comparative instance and disregard the individual characteristics of individual animals and, conversely, only see individual characteristics in humans and ignore the general human traits!

Behind this strange comparison of characteristics of animal species and individual or typical aspects of people lies the Aristotelian image of man, in which we are very close to fauna on the one hand and at the same time stand out from the community of animals to an extended degree. Aristotle understands the physiognomic relationships between body and character

to be basically the same for animals and humans. However, only humans are able to possess all the characteristics and traits that are limited to the individual species in animals.

The lion is brave, the hare is cowardly. Among humans, however, there are both "brave lions" and "hare's feet". And what's more, the same person can change from a coward to a hero in the course of their life and vice versa, or even appear courageous in certain situations in one phase of life and not dare to leave cover in others out of fear. This flexibility of the human personality is expressed particularly clearly in the voice, which, in comparison to eye and skin colour, hair structure, foot size and chest circumference, is an extremely variable characteristic that reacts very precisely and spontaneously to new influences and situations. The man with the loud and deep "donkey voice" can learn to sound high and low. Unlike the donkey, he is not limited to just a few possible sounds. The human voice is capable of producing countless tone colours and an enormous range of tones. From a physiognomic point of view, this means that it can take on a multitude of different characters. The range of possible personality traits is immense, not only in the human species, but in each individual! With this realisation, we are already moving out of the area that physiology normally deals with. The voice not only shows us what is currently present. It also reveals a person's potential, which can be discovered and practised. Physiognomics of the voice is therefore never a mere "art of spying out", to use Immanuel Kant's term, but aims at a joint search for human and tonal possibilities.

Pros and Cons: Goethe and Lichtenberg

From Aristotle we take a leap into the 18th century, when physiognomy had its heyday for a few decades. In the circles of the Enlightenment and at the same time as part of an anti-enlightenment counter-movement, it briefly became a real fashion, and its czar of fashion was Johann Kaspar Lavater. We won't dwell on him for long, because his physiognomics, in which he seeks to recognise a person's character with scientific precision mainly on the basis of facial shape, facial features and bone structure, has long since been rightly exposed as a pseudo-scientific manipulation of clichés. Moreover, he has contributed nothing worth mentioning to the physiognomy of the voice, although he knew that the voice also speaks about the person to whom it belongs.

If man were only ear or only wanted to use the sense of hearing, he could go a long way in physiognomics through this sense alone. If he had accustomed his ear to observation, he would be able to determine precisely many of the characteristics of the speakers in front of the room in a company of people who were completely unknown to him or who even spoke in a language that was completely foreign to him. The tone of speech, the articulation, together with the rapidity and height or depth, all characterise very much ...

Johann Kaspar Lavater

More interesting than Lavater himself is a look at two thinkers in his circle, one a supposed supporter, the other his fiercest contemporary adversary: the young Goethe and Johann Christoph Lichtenberg. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe worked on Lavater's "Physiognomic Fragments" at a young age and contributed a few principled ideas to the project that were not Lavater's cup of tea. Even in these early writings, one recognises the great thinker of the connections between effects and origins, the natural scientist and poet of coming into being and becoming, who leaves Lavater's approach far behind. Goethe, too, was first and foremost a man of the eye who had little sense of the peculiarities of the human voice, but his general considerations shed an interesting light on the physiognomy of the voice. His teacher and mentor at the time, Lavater, saw man first and foremost as a moral being whose moral character could be read from his facial features. He therefore saw no need to establish a connection between man and the nature that surrounds him, as his research was aimed less at

psychobiology than at Christian ethics. Aristotle's idea of explaining physiognomic qualities from the similarities between animals and humans remained unthinkable for Lavater.

Excursus: Goethe's Voice

Goethe's lack of interest in the human voice is all the more surprising as, according to his contemporaries, the poet had an impressive organ of speech that he knew how to use. His speaking voice sounded like a sonorous bass. According to Heinrich Voss Jr., Goethe "spoke not only with the organ of the tongue, but also with a hundred others, which are mute in ordinary people, and the most soulful fire radiates from his eyes. (...) It is marvellous when Goethe intones in his deep, clear bass". Another of Goethe's contemporaries, Friedrich Wilhelm Riemer, reported that his voice "knew how to rise from the softest emotional tone to a thunderous voice when he was in a state of affect, anger or passionate excitement". "He has a tremendous voice, and he can scream like ten thousand fighters," wrote Moses Mendelssohn to his sister in 1821.

The writer Johann Wilhelm Ludwig Gleim, the proverbial old Gleim, left us an account of an evening party in Weimar at Duchess Amalie's house. They read poems to each other. Goethe was also present and at some point it was his turn to read. Old Gleim only knew Goethe from hearsay, but did not realise that it was this famous young poet who was about to recite. But no sooner had Goethe raised his voice than the visitor realised who he had before him: "Suddenly, however, it was as if the reader had been taken by the hand of the Satan of mischief, and I thought I saw the wild hunter in flesh before me. He was reading poems that were not even in the book, he dodged into every possible tone and manner ... "It's either Goethe or the devil!" I shouted to Wieland, who was sitting opposite me at the table. 'Both' - he replied."

Goethe is much closer to the ancient philosopher in this respect, as he interprets man primarily as a natural being. However, his approach goes beyond Aristotle and the physiognomist in an extended way: for Goethe, man is integrated into the - in modern terms - evolutionary development of life. Nature and man have a history! In the organic context, which is in a constant state of change, everything has its place and its meaning. Only this comprehensive context of development means that a person's physical characteristics can point to their inner traits and that physiognomics can provide usable results.

The Goethe biographer Gundolf summarises the difference between Lavater and the Goethe when he claims that Lavater understood man as an isolated soul being and that he took him morally and statically, whereas Goethe understood the natural being man dynamically and physically. Dynamics! Goethe is the first physiognomist to focus on the movement and development of man as a species and as an individual. Unlike the body and face, however, the voice - which Goethe ignores - is in motion as soon as it appears. The dynamic moment is an essential feature of vocal presence, because the voice never presents itself to us as a static object that we can place on the dissecting table for examination and then analyse. The dynamics of becoming are revealed directly and unfiltered in the voice, and every influence, no matter how small, leaves its mark on vocal expression. As soon as it sounds, the voice tells its story of the old, long-past and current, everyday events with which it was confronted. A dynamic physiognomy, which neither Goethe nor his successors developed, would have found a particularly expressive organ of expression in the voice. But it has not yet been proven that it is even possible to make solid physiognomic assertions! We do not yet know whether physiognomics as a whole, or at least in certain areas, has arrived at comprehensible assertions that could expand our understanding of the human being. The Göttingen scholar Johann Christoph Lichtenberg was keen to vehemently deny the value of physiognomy, denying it any scientific status. On what basis, he asked, should it be possible to make reliable statements about the relationship between the length of a person's nose and his or her character? Lavater was content with his "ingenious intuition", and Goethe's considerations ultimately go well beyond the narrow physiognomic goal, as his early studies already contain the core of a comprehensive theory of form, morphology, in which Lavater's question has no place. In his critique, Lichtenberg does not deny that we constantly make physiognomic judgements in our everyday dealings with other people. We almost reflexively infer a person's so-called nature from their appearance or their voice. However, these judgements usually turn out to be simply wrong! "We judge from the face every hour, and we are wrong every hour." Our physiognomic conclusions are usually based on previous personal experiences in which we have seen that a physical feature was associated with a character trait, and now we mistakenly believe that the observed relationship is based on a lawful necessity. According to Lichtenberg, however, the only thing we can read with some certainty from the physical and vocal characteristics are a person's momentary emotional states and moods. I can recognise a lot about a person's current state of mind from the way they are

speaking or "acting" today. For Lichtenberg, however, this is something quite different from obscure character studies based on bone structure and tone of voice. Lichtenberg distinguishes the nonsensical physiognomic examination of physique and character from the much more interesting pathognomics, in which the moving vocal and physical expression provides clues to a person's inner state. We can draw conclusions about a person's current emotional state from his or her expressions, i.e. the way he or she moves, acts and facial expressions. And perhaps we can also indirectly learn something about a person's character by observing his/her mental state, but the body does not provide us with any direct information about personality.

However, Lichtenberg's distinction proves to be unsuitable for the area of the voice, because where should we draw the line between physiognomic and pathognomic characteristics? Unlike the body, the voice is never motionless; vocal expression is necessarily linked to a certain activity. While we look at a face and try to interpret its features physiognomically, it can be completely static, dormant or even dead. Goethe's observations of Schiller's skull are a famous example. There is nothing to interpret about a sleeping or dead voice; it has to show itself, it has to be alive in order to be perceived. Physiognomics and pathognomics are therefore much more difficult to separate in the case of the voice than in the case of other physical personality traits. The boundary between the areas that Lichtenberg wishes to distinguish is particularly permeable in the voice, and the effects of the soul on the personality and vice versa are particularly diverse. We have already seen that individual vocal utterances, which often recur, can develop into character traits over time and that the physiognomic characteristics of a voice can change as a result of new life circumstances. This does not necessarily make physiognomic judgements about the voice any less questionable. In his radical criticism of physiognomics, Lichtenberg perhaps therefore goes into detail about an example in which the voice plays the main role. In it, he recounts his own experience with physiognomy long before it had "become fashionable": for years, Lichtenberg had to suffer under a night watchman who woke him from his sleep every hour of the night to call out to him and the city what time it was. One night, Lichtenberg set about drawing the person he suspected was behind this voice and whom he had never seen before. The result was sobering, to say the least. He had visualised a tall, lean and healthy man "with an elongated face, a downturned nose, straight unbound hair and a slow, sowing, grave step". When he met the

guard on the street a short time later, he saw a man who looked nothing like his sketch! He was neither tall nor lean, neither his hair nor his stride matched the image he had been given by the sound of his voice at night.

Lichtenberg describes an experience that we have every day in the age of telephones and mobile phones. We hear a voice, imagine a face or a stature and are almost always surprised by the real appearance of the person we heard on the phone. Our imagination usually has nothing to do with the real image of the person. But for or against what is this example an argument? Lichtenberg cites the story to prove how uncertain physiognomic judgements are. However, in the case of the night watchman, he does not draw a comparison between external features and inner character traits! Instead, he tries to draw conclusions about the watchman's physical appearance from his voice. The relationship between the inner and the outer is not the issue at all, but Lichtenberg merely provides an argument in favour of the fact that the sound of the voice does not allow any conclusions to be drawn about a person's appearance. The question of the value of physiognomic judgements is not directly posed in the example. But for Lichtenberg, the mere possibility of physiognomy presupposes that body and voice express the same thing about a person.

If I were in a position to say something correct about a person's character on the basis of his voice, then in a further step I should also be able to reproduce his characteristic facial features and physical characteristics. With his example of the night watchman, Lichtenberg believes he has proved that precisely this is not possible. But do body and voice always show the same aspects of a person's inner self? Isn't the picture that the various human media of expression paint at the same time sometimes extremely contradictory? Can there be situations in which the physiognomic and pathognomic judgement of the voice comes to different conclusions than the interpretation of the face and body? Can the face laugh while the voice cries? Can the body appear courageous and energetic while the voice sounds anxious and hesitant?

Lichtenberg provides us with another starting point for our own research into the landscapes of the voice. In the example given, he is roused from sleep by the night watchman in the middle of the night and immediately begins to sketch the man. For the making of a portrait, the initial situation seems quite unusual. Three o'clock in the night, sleep in his eyes,

annoyed to have been woken up again! You have a different picture of the author of all this unpleasantness in front of you than on a warm, sunny afternoon, when the same man calls out the time and you know it's time for coffee. The afternoon drawing would probably be different from the night drawing, because the situation determines what and how you hear! The idea of an objective perceptual authority that sees and hears people as they are was one of the wishful dreams of some physiognomists who wanted to see the scientific nature of their discipline in this. But not only do different people hear "the same thing" differently; as we learnt from Lichtenberg's example, one and the same person hears different things depending on the situation and life situation.

Is this a deficiency? Does the listening interpretation of human voices require scientific objectivity in order to have value? On the contrary! It is precisely listening, which remains integrated into the respective situation, that provides new and interesting insights for the person showing their voice. This is exactly what voice research is all about: vocal self-knowledge, getting to know your own voice better and thus being able to use it more effectively. There is no room here for a mere "art of spying", to which physiognomics has generally been reduced by its advocates and critics. Physiognomy was often enough used as a political tool to give a negotiating partner and dialogue partner a knowledge advantage over the object of observation. As early as 1228, the Scottish scholar Michael Scotus wrote a long influential physiognomy ("Liber physionomiae"), which he recommended to his employer at the time, Emperor Frederick II. He recommended it pointing out how important physiognomic knowledge was for political business: from the facial features and voice of his interlocutors, he could recognise the disposition, virtues and vices of people and thus better assess who he was dealing with and how best to deal with his counterpart. A few hundred years later, the German Enlightenment philosopher Thomasius used similar arguments to praise his physiognomic findings. Nowadays, it is no longer just "dukes", "emperors" and other members of the political class who can use physiognomic knowledge about the face and voice to spy out the true intentions of their counterparts. In business, too, seminars and training courses are organised to learn to read the intentions of business partners from their body language and to align the "readable" aspects of one's own appearance as effectively as possible. Voice seminars with comparable promises are just a short distance away.

Of course, we also want to gain knowledge about the voice, but not in order to use it against someone else. For us, hearing is part of the process of interpersonal communication.

What and how someone hears a voice says something about the voice and its bearer and almost as much about the listener themselves! The exchange about what is heard is informative for everyone involved and promotes the development of the voice even of those who only listen. This process of listening and sounding together is at the centre of our practical research into the human voice. Physiognomics with an uninvolved observer who interprets a research object is completely useless for us. For this pseudo-science makes no contribution to the liberation of the voice to itself, our primary goal.

Lichtenberg's night watchman example has made it clear that the particular situation in which a voice is heard will have an influence on its interpretation by the listener. Conversely, the sound of the voice also depends on the internal and external circumstances in which the night watchman finds himself. If he feels fresh despite the late hour and is walking through a warm summer night, bathed in moonlight, then his voice will sound different than on a wet, stormy night when he also has a headache. On another level, however, the night watchman's voice will remain recognisable, because many aspects of a vocal sound have become ingrained over the years and can only be changed slowly. This brings us back to Goethe, who pointed out that the subject of physiognomy is not actually the naked body. The human being is always perceived "clothed". Not the naked figure, but "status, habits, possessions and clothes" cover the person and form the surface that we perceive. However, these covers do not conceal his "true nature", rather they are part of his existence and show just as much of his personality as his posture or movement patterns. The external circumstances have an effect on a person's existence, but they help determine which factors influence their life and which should be kept out of their living environment. Clothes make the man, but people have a greater or lesser degree of freedom to decide which clothes they want to wear.

Such coverings can also be found in the area of the voice. The "clothes" with which people clothe their voices are linked to their speech, to style, melody, dynamics and sound character! Just as no-one chooses their first clothes, we are also given our mother tongue, which sets the course for a person's vocal development through its tonal character. But everyone is able to develop their own individual version of their mother tongue, which has very personal characteristics. We recognise another person not only by the sound of their voice, but also by the way they speak. Language shapes people, people shape language. The

"language game" in which we move is embedded in a form of life, as Wittgenstein would say. The ways of speaking and living influence each other, just as the world of life and the other people around me have an effect on me and my self-image and I help to shape this world of life. And that is why the peculiarities of linguistic dress physiognomically point to the characteristics of the speaker, just like the way he dresses or the car he drives. In addition to speech, singing is a second possible dress for the voice - compared to speaking, it is more of a light garment, the summer dress, so to speak, which reveals a little more of the "naked" voice. The way in which someone handles a song or an aria also says something about the singer, who gives every musical performance their personal character. Up to this point, the extended physiognomy of the clothed person, as Goethe understood it, evidently offers the same opportunities for understanding the voice and the body. But the voice can do more. It can free itself from a large part of its clothes of language and music and reveal the quasi-naked sound of the voice. The human voice allows us to show the "naked" version as well as the clothed forms without much effort. This brings us to the description of a primal situation of our voice development: instead of speaking or singing, our lessons are often simply about opening the mouth and allowing the voice to "emerge freely". This is usually easier said than done. Because the voice stripped bare in this way is actually perceived as naked by the singer at the beginning. Nakedness leads to shame, and for many, the naked voice is more likely to cause shame than the naked body. Once the shame has been overcome, the voice provides an acoustic insight into the person making the sound that does not remain stuck on surface phenomena. The voice that emerges from the shadows of language and music tells something about the person to whom it belongs, about their wishes, fears and dreams, about the conflicting forces they sometimes have to contend with and about their strengths in dealing with others. But she never tells this to anyone who wants to eavesdrop on her. The scientific physiognomist is at a loss here. The situation of voice exploration must be one of trust, and the primary goal is and remains the self-knowledge of the person making the sound by getting to know his or her own voice, which only speaks openly to an audience when this audience supports the goal of self-knowledge. Before I go into this basic situation in more detail and explain why only a non-scientific interpretation of the human voice can be considered for our idea of voice development, I will look at some psychologists who have made the voice their subject.

Dear AWE,

Lately, I often find myself recognising a certain necessity when I look back on my life so far, which has brought me so close to the subject of the voice. Is that always the case? Does the same chaos that sometimes roars around you when you are in the middle of this life sometimes appear so clear and structured because in reality there has always been some kind of predetermined path? Or because hindsight has an organising effect? I don't know. In any case, the universe of the human voice seems to be large enough to link the strands that run through my life. But let's start at the beginning, which had relatively few signs of a vocal career. After all, my father came from a musical family which, with his seven brothers, was an entire men's choir in which every voice was represented. He, the youngest, sang in the bass and passed his voice on to me, certainly not the worst part of the legacy I inherited from him. I still remember one of his performances at a village festival in his home town very well. The festival hall was packed with people and my father sang a song on stage with a large wine glass in his hand. Probably "In the deep cellar I sit here ..." Alone, without instrumental accompaniment and in a vocal range that was certainly a lot lower than the original notation. When I was about seven or eight years old, it made such a strong impression on me that the memory is one of the clearest of my childhood. Unfortunately, my father only very rarely had the idea of singing with me and my siblings, and at the gatherings at my grandparents' house, when the uncles got together and sang one song after another, I remained an onlooker, watching the goings-on rather sceptically and feeling no impulse to join in. But somewhere inside me, an interest in the voice seemed to develop and I started listening to music that favoured voices very early on, mostly male voices. My favourites were Heino and Ivan Rebroff, both singers with deep voices. If there wasn't a longing for the often absent father involved! But Ivan Rebroff not only had a brilliant bass, he could go all the way up to soprano and put the whole "Russian soul" into his songs.

My own singing career began in the children's choir at primary school and continued shortly afterwards in the Schola, the church boys' choir in my home town. Without attracting any further attention, I sang there until my voice broke, and as far as I remember, I thoroughly enjoyed it. My mother would probably have liked to hear me sing the Gloria as a soloist in church, but my ambition was not sufficient for that, and the talent of some of the other boys was already so advanced that there was no need to fear any shortage of soloists. My mother's more or less subliminal disappointment that I didn't sing the solo part in Ave Maria confronted me early on with an experience that I share with many people who were completely denied the opportunity to sing: The pressure to perform, with which childlike singing is burdened, inhibits joy. Every "Do it better!" or "Leave it better!" stifles the original spontaneous impulse to let the voice run free.

I stuck with it anyway and sang in the boys' choir until my voice broke. Even after that, I knew how to continue to use the chancel as a stage for myself by switching from singing to speaking and was now able to act as a soloist in front of the audience. For two or three years, we put on a nativity play with a youth group at Christmas. One of my parts was to send a few sentences loud and clear into the rather large church without a microphone. It gave me great pleasure and enjoyment to have a fairly large crowd of people listening to me! When I was about thirteen, I started reciting the readings at Sunday Mass, which in retrospect was ideal preparation for my current activities as a broadcaster and reciter!

Singing was out at the time, though, because it was stupid and not cool, and as I was a rather repressed teenager in some phases of my puberty, I wouldn't have been able to show as much of myself as I would have had to when singing anyway. I resorted to playing the guitar, but only until I couldn't go any further without regular practice, and as I was not only quite uptight but also had a tendency to be lazy, Johnny Guitar Watson was quickly removed from the list of possible role models. My relationship with music was limited to listening to the radio and cassettes for a few years, without any particular preference for a group or singer. After all, the focus was on singing, mind you in pop music, I had no access to classical music at the time. But the songs had to be sung in such a way that I could at least begin to understand what they were about. In other words, Bob Dylan was never my thing, but Cat Stevens was - before his father complex led him to Islam.

After the worst seemed to be over in terms of growing up, the idea of forming a school band was born at a party at the high school where I had been hanging around more or less regularly for a few years. I was probably sitting at the table with the three candidates, a guitarist who looked harmless but played like the devil, a pianist who listened to people like Jerry Roll Morten and played the keys just as wackily, a drummer who wasn't exactly consumed by musical ambition, and me with rudimentary instrumental experience on the guitar and recorder, who at best would have been suitable for a trashy Jethro Tull revival band, but who wanted to hear that?

You play the bass, I was suddenly told, because every band needs a bass.

And so it happened, my music teacher lent me the school's own double bass and gave me a few hours of free lessons, for which I am truly grateful. Later I bought myself

a bass guitar and played what the guitarist suggested to me. It didn't sound virtuoso, but it wasn't completely out of the framework of our sometimes quite experimental music. For the one or two conventional pieces from our repertoire, a singer was soon needed, and as I was once again sitting at the table, the choice

was not difficult, and I warbled "Ich brech die Herzen der stolzesten Frau'n" (I break the hearts of the proudest women), which was even less true for me at the time than it was for Heinz Rühmann, whom I saw as a brother in spirit.

I can remember that singing on stage seemed much more exciting and frightening than playing bass, although my electric bass skills would often have given me much more cause for concern than my singing. But I probably already suspected that the voice doesn't simply function like an instrument that you hang around your shoulders.

In any case, I had to summon up more courage for my singing than for my bass lines.

At the beginning of my studies, after a few years of abstinence from singing, I came up with the idea, seemingly out of the blue, of looking for a choir in which I would not stand out as a singer and where I would have the opportunity to make new friends. Both of these things worked out more or less straight away: the University choir with its approx. 130 singing students guaranteed that I would not stand out from the crowd either positively or negatively, and at the same time offered the chance to make new friends in a city that was still foreign to me. At the same time, I experienced the tremendous power that comes from singing together in such a large group. A force that carries you and moves you along, an energy, that, especially when you really sing together, brings sheer joy! When my new friends left the choir after two semesters, I looked for a new place to sing and soon found a jazz choir, which became the seed for the social network in which I still feel part of today and which still has the voice at its centre. Singing together led to friendships that still exist today.

Opening our voices together and letting them resound creates a very special feeling of togetherness that I had never experienced in my other life to this extent. I have learnt more about this strange power of the human voice over the years with the various voice teachers who are committed to your tradition. When I had my first encounter with Paul and Clara Silber from the Roy Hart Theatre, my enthusiasm for their vocal work was great and contagious. Their vocal work was great and infectious enough to entice almost half the choir, including the choir director, to attend their courses the following summer. I soon began to organise the Cologne workshops for Paul and Clara and set up an Easter course, during which we took a group from Cologne to the Roy Hart Centre in southern France for a total of seven years. Slowly but steadily, the voice with all its revelations and secrets moved to the centre of my life, and you can still find it there.

Do these episodes from my vocal life explain why the human voice is at the centre of my existence today? I don't know.

Voice in Psychology

After the precise criticism of Lichtenberg and a few others, including Immanuel Kant, physiognomy disappeared from the public intellectual consciousness, although researchers continued to ponder the unsolved problem of how soul and personality are reflected in physical expression. Among them were scientists of the calibre of Charles Darwin, but for almost 150 years it was not enough for an independent physiognomic discipline to work continuously on the questions. At the beginning of the 20th century, the subject once again aroused wider interest, now under the mantle of the newly emerging field of scientific psychology. At last, the human voice also moved closer to the centre of physiognomic research. There was a good reason for this. The invention and rapid spread of recording and playback devices for voice and sound, radio and gramophone, made it possible for the first time to listen to the same acoustic material several times and thus to analyse it much more precisely.

Karl Bühler: The Acting Voice

The Viennese psychologist and linguist Karl Bühler soon recognised the opportunities opened up by the new techniques for a physiognomics of the voice - even though he was not interested in the voice as such, but rather thematised it, like so many of his predecessors, within the framework of a theory of language. However, his considerations come very close to the voice in its own way. Bühler makes the speech act the subject of his investigations alongside the speech structure, which normally attracts the full attention of linguists. He is not primarily interested in the grammatical structure of language, but wants to find out how language works in action. What happens when we speak to another person? What makes speaking an action? Bühler is talking more or less about the same thing as which the American philosophers Austin and Searle who brought the idea of "speech act" to philosophical prominence decades later. However, the distinction between speech act and speech structure goes back to the Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure (1857-1913), who spoke of parole (action) and langue (structure). Speech action involves the use of the voice, and Bühler sets out to define its role in speech more precisely. In doing so, he identifies three basic language functions that rarely occur completely separately from each other, but are nevertheless consti-

tutive for the human use of language: the representational function, expression and appeal. In the representational function, language and speech reflect how something exists in the world, what is currently happening or what properties an object has. Sentences such as "It's raining" or "The traffic lights are green" initially describe certain circumstances in a very matter-of-fact way, they represent a factual situation. But if you have forgotten your umbrella and are crossing the road during a shower, the first sentence can also be an expression of surprise and annoyance. The expressive function is then added to the representational function, although this can also occur without being tied to a linguistic representation. Sometimes the speech act of swearing quietly is enough to make it clear what is going on. The reference to the green traffic light in the second sentence conveys the mere information of the traffic light colour. However, just as the traffic light itself already has the character of an appeal, the uttered sentence, when uttered by a passenger, for example, implies the request: You can drive off now!

According to Bühler, the language theory of the past concentrated too much on the representational function and failed to recognise how important expression and appeal are for human communication, which is largely oral - functions that already exist in animals. Although Bühler also maintains that representation - showing and symbolising - is the most important function of language, expression and appeal are the basis of language and form its foundation. However, the metaphor of foundation and superstructure, which Bühler uses here to illustrate the connection between the various language functions, suggests that the lower parts of the structure do have an influence on what the upper part looks like and whether it will be stable. However, the foundation itself, once it has been erected, no longer changes. The direction of effect is one-sided, from the lower to the so-called "higher", in our case from mere, almost animal expression to the specifically human function of representation. As natural as the talk of higher and lower functions and of foundation and structure may seem to us, it is misleading when considering the voice and language. The increase in the complexity of human communication through the emergence and development of the representational function of speech also expands and differentiates the so-called lower functions, which are regulated by the variations in vocal sound. This even applies to animals that have to find their way in the social context of humans. For example, it has been found that the vocalisations of domestic cats, such as meowing and purring, are much more differentiated than those of their wild counterparts. With their larger repertoire of sounds and rhyth-

mic figures, they are in a position to demand and receive what they need from their owners at any given moment - food, exercise, being stroked. The living conditions influence the repertoire of expressive and appealing sounds of social animals, including humans. Another question is whether these greater possibilities of vocal expression are recognised and used by cultivated humans in the western hemisphere. The metaphor of superstructure and substructure, in its various forms, has characterised our thinking and self-image to such an extent that we tend to ignore the fundamental, ancient, so-called lower aspects of our humanity. The history of the non-existent philosophy of the human voice provides a very vivid example of this. In any case, we will have to come up with other metaphors for our map of the voice in order not to run into the same philosophical wall again and again.

By turning to the act of speaking, Bühler has brought to light a matter of course that has been almost completely overlooked - or overheard? It is part of the nature of every human action that it pursues an intention, and the intention of a speech act or a vocal utterance is usually, if not always, aimed at another person to whom one has something to communicate. The "sender" needs a "receiver" if the transmission is to have any meaning. Hearing is part of the voice! Vocal utterances come to nothing if there is no one to hear them. However, hearing is not a purely bodily-mechanical matter of eardrum, cochlea and all the little bones in the ear. Rather, the concept of hearing stands for a process in which the whole person, body, soul and spirit, is involved. It would therefore be the ideal subject of a reverse physiognomy, in which research is conducted into how the external stimulus is characterised by the inner disposition of the perceiver. The soul and personality - even if we still don't know exactly what they are - listen in and determine what and how we receive what we hear. There is no pure, objective sound in vocal communication, because the "acoustic material" is characterised by the listener as much as by the person performing the voice. Every interpretation of a vocal utterance contains physiognomic information about the person who makes the voice sound and about the person who hears it. Objectivity in the evaluation of a voice does not provide a meaningful yardstick here. Although the possibilities for interpreting the sound of a voice are not unlimited, and different listeners often understand a voice in action in a very similar way, it is sometimes more interesting for the person presenting the voice to receive many different comments on the effect of their own voice. The differences result from the different voice histories of the listeners. Let's assume, for example, that a person presents vocal sounds that are clearly aggressive in character to the

participants of a seminar in individual work. The associations this triggers in the listeners depend on how they relate to aggression. While the aggressive voice has a liberating effect on some, it may trigger defence reactions in others. In addition, experienced listeners can specify the sound of the voice more precisely and detect hostility, courage or resentment in the sound, and these interpretations in turn influence their own reactions. Depending on the situation, the reaction may consist of a purely vocal response, or the listener may use linguistic utterances to reproduce an impression left by the voice. However, because language also makes use of the voice in order to be heard and because it echoes moods and sensitivities that do not necessarily occur in the words, the verbal reaction of the listener always tells more than could be read from the pure content of what is said.

The Voice from the Off / Radio Experiments

Let us return to Karl Bühler's attempt to use radio and gramophone for a physiognomic interpretation of the voice. One advantage of the new techniques for Bühler was that he was no longer forced to place the test subjects in a laboratory, whose artificial atmosphere makes a natural voice sound almost impossible. The vocal expression becomes "consumptive" in the laboratory, it lacks all "warmth of life", and thus the vocal testimonies obtained there are not suitable for psychological analysis. It is doubtful, however, whether the recordings in front of the microphone in a studio provide the warmth of life that Bühler misses in the laboratory. A microphone changes every situation abruptly, and it takes a lot of experience in the studio to sound reasonably natural there, unless you are persuaded by good interviewers to almost forget the microphone.

In any case, during his time in Vienna, Bühler supervised and accompanied several experiments in which the relationship between voice and personality was investigated using radio and gramophone. Under the leadership of his colleague Herta Herzog, a major experiment was carried out in 1931 in which nine people from different social classes and educational levels read a text on the radio on three consecutive days. The radio listeners were asked to fill in a specially designed questionnaire on the voices of the readers, which was published in a Viennese newspaper. As many as 2700 Viennese took part!

Excursus: The Questionnaire

The evaluation of the questionnaires showed that the audience was able to state the height of the speakers very accurately, both in absolute terms and in relation to the other speakers. "Fat" speakers were also recognised; whether someone was lean or medium could not be heard in their voice. Female / male did not cause any difficulties except in the case of a pubescent young man who sometimes passed as a "housekeeper" and "Naschmarkt woman". The additional comments even included information on hair and eye colour - with a significant number of correct guesses! The voice apparently does not reveal age. The tendency was towards the mean, the older respondents were rated younger, the younger ones older. The occupational classifications tended to be correct: intellectuals were more or less recognised as such, as were manual workers. The dialect colouring was obviously an indicator for the listeners. A merchant speaking High German was often categorised as an academic.

The question of whether the speaker was "used to giving orders" was understood in two ways. Sometimes the ability to give orders was only a consequence of the presumed profession - academics and intellectuals are more likely to give orders than labourers. Often, however, the answer was an inference from a "domineering voice", for example, to the personality of the speaker. It is not clear from the study whether the information was correct and whether the domineering voices were the result of people who were used to giving orders.

Ms Herzog published the results in an article entitled "Voice and personality" in a psychological journal. What was the experiment about? What landmarks can we take from the results for our map of the human voice? Herzog wants to make a contribution to the question of whether a physiognomy of the voice is possible or "to put it more precisely: To what extent is the voice of a speaker an expression of his or her personality?", i.e. she asks the very question that interests us. She seeks her answers in two ways: Firstly, in a so-called quantitative procedure, the answers of the radio listeners from the questionnaires are statistically analysed. In the second, phenomenological approach, Herzog wants to use detailed subjective individual analyses of trained listeners to find out "what happens in the listener when they hear the voice". Herzog also wants to find out some data from the people who send in the questionnaires in order to at least begin to analyse which listeners or groups of listeners heard what.

The questions to the listeners relate to three areas, which Herzog titles body type, environment and interiority. Physique refers to the size and girth of the body, the gender and - not quite appropriately - the age of the speaker. These physiological data are not actually part of physiognomics. Similar to Lichtenberg with his night watchman, they draw conclusions from one appearance, the voice, to another appearance, the body. Nevertheless, the answers on physique form the focus of the analyses of the experiment because, in contrast to the information on milieu and especially the area of interiority, they provide statistically reasonably clear material. Moreover, according to Herzog, interiority was "such a controversial problem in psychology at the time of the experiment that we did not want to and could not push it to the forefront of the survey". I suspect that little has changed to this day, but that should not prevent us from continuing our search for the relationship between the voice and the so-called inwardness of the human being. We can at least learn from Herzog not to neglect the body in the exploration and development of the voice.

In the phenomenological part of the study, Herzog described 30 radio voices in transcripts that she made while listening to the voices. The experience reports were compared with the comments made by numerous radio listeners in addition to the questionnaire entries. The result is the outline of a law-like structure of the reports, which all have more or less the same course: They begin with a "resonant impression", an initial, relatively generalised reaction to the voice. This is followed by a phase in which individual aspects of the voice stand out and are interpreted. Listeners have "ideas" about the voices; sometimes the voice also reminds them of other familiar voices, usually ones they heard not so long ago. Herzog quite rightly notes here that these "ideas" point to the individuality of the listener and often say more about him or her than about the speaker. In a third and final phase, an attempt is made to arrive at a final judgement about the voice. This almost always leaves an unresolved residue, something about the voice that cannot be interpreted. Herzog assumes that the interpretation of the voice through the remarkable moments that the listeners notice also represents a typification of the voice. As a unique phenomenon, it is not completely tangible. Although listeners hear more than the typical parts of the voice, they cannot include everything they hear in their description.

If we now set out in search of the ideas and landmarks from Herzog and Bühler's study that fit into our map of the voice, we must first realise that we are dealing with a scientific

study. What does that mean? Bühler and Herzog want to discover objective findings about the relationship between voice and personality that are valid regardless of the situation in which they were found. To do this, they construct conditions in which the so-called object of research can show itself as it is, uninfluenced by the observer.

It must be isolated from all 'disturbing' influences without changing its characteristics through isolation. Modern recording techniques offer the possibility of isolating the voice from the speaker to such an extent that the listener is not distracted from the sound of the voice by visual stimuli. In turn, the listener is isolated from the speaker so that the voice does not react directly to the presence of the listener. The scientist is separated from the whole system of speaker, voice and listener in such a way that he or she cannot distort the results through his or her presence. With the help of radio and gramophone, this should finally be possible without cutting off the "warmth of life" that the voice needs to sound natural.

However, voice research, as we are striving for, is not at all about objectivity. We are not interested in scientific findings and try not to isolate listeners and observers of the voice and the person behind it, but to integrate them into the situation! External instances are of no help if they cannot directly feed their ideas, comments and reactions into the process of voice exploration. This may not lead to objective results, but instead we achieve results that are relevant and often vital for those involved. A scientific copy is not our goal, we want to go on expeditions together, carrying our own experiences and the maps of other travellers in the landscapes of the voice. However, we also isolate ourselves. We separate the voice from language and music so that we can first hear it as itself. This is the constantly repeated first step, followed sometimes earlier and sometimes later by the reintegration of text and melody. In some situations, the sound of the voice virtually forces certain words or sentences on the listener; they are heard almost before they are spoken, whispered, shouted or screamed. At other times, the voice moves freely for a long time without wanting to approach language or music in the usual sense.

But regardless of the different claims and approaches, there are some very important points of reference in the studies by Herzog and Bühler for our journeys. Bühler's discovery of the listener for researching the voice is of existential importance for our voice work. However, we go beyond Bühler's intentions by leaving the listener in the situation that is characterised by the vocal utterances. We also make the person showing the voice a listener

too! Learning to listen to and interpret one's own voice is an indispensable part of the path to one's own voice that I am proposing here. We only follow the three-phase process of voice experience, which according to Herzog is made up of "resonant" impressions, ideas and final judgement", in the first two phases. However, after the "idea" phase, we are concerned with bringing the associations of the listener - including the person who is currently making the voice sound - into contact with the voice and hearing how the voice sounds when it follows an image, an idea or a feeling. There cannot and should not be a final judgement because the voice never brings the process of its development to an immovable final state. The voice is constantly changing through the course of life, ageing and new situations. The only question is whether we want to intervene in the process or let it go its own way.

The body plays an important role in voice exploration and development, but not primarily, as in Herzog's case, as an "exterior" whose condition can be deduced from the voice. The body represents a part of the personality which, like the voice, has great flexibility and changes its expression in movement. The voice will support the body in these movement sequences and, conversely, the body will help the voice to flow and move. The body does not interfere with the exploration of the voice, but provides important information about the meaning of the vocal sounds. Does the body emphasise the "message" of the voice? Or does it counteract it? Does the audible aggressive mood meet a restrained, hesitant gesture? Or does the sad tone of voice meet an uninvolved face? What happens to the voice when the body starts to move? How can the body support the intention of the voice and how can the voice activate the body? It is not the hidden body, but the integrated body that is part of the research into the connection between voice and personality.

Paul Moses: Voice as a Symptom

A good twenty years after Bühler and Herzog, the relationship between voice and personality has become the subject of a researcher who is much less shy of the realm of inwardness. In his book "The Voice of Neurosis", the German-American laryngologist Paul Moses argues in favour of diagnosing mental disorders on the basis of the patient's voice. In contrast to his medical colleagues, most of whom still limit themselves to visualising some

parameters of the voice with more or less complicated measuring devices, Moses advocates trained listening on the part of the doctor, which can provide much more meaningful results than oscillograms, however precise they may be. Psychological difficulties, including pathological neuroses or psychoses, are expressed in the voice; voice disorders often indicate underlying psychological causes.

In short, the relationship between the sound of a person's voice and their psyche is ideal for psychosomatic diagnostics. Moses wants to provide the tools for this. In a review of the book, the German philosopher Theodor W. Adorno remarked that Moses "delivers more than he promises"! According to Adorno, he sketches a physiognomy of the voice that eclipses all previous literature on the subject by overcoming the static view of the voice in relation to the body and personality. The physiognomy of the voice becomes part of an anthropology that places the decisive influence of the respective culture and its changes on the expressive behaviour of the human being at the centre of its considerations. It is therefore not surprising that Moses was probably the only one of his guild to take note of Alfred Wolfsohn's work in London in the 1950s, which was concerned with dissolving the cultural and psychological limitations of the voice in order to allow the whole - or as he says: the human - voice to resound. Moses saw Wolfsohn's then unique approach to voice expansion as a far-reaching practical realisation of his own ideas. If this is the case, then it must be recognised that Moses' own medical practice, insofar as it can be read from his writings, falls short of his ideas on the psychology of the voice at key points. As with Karl Bühler, the reason for this lies primarily in his endeavour to do justice to the criteria of an objective science. The book is a mixture of extremely witty remarks on the function of the voice in culture and the psyche and, at the same time, methodological instructions on the diagnosis of the voice that verge on narrow-mindedness.

Analysing the Voice?

Let's go in search of landmarks and orientation points for our map of the voice. In voice diagnosis, Moses, like Bühler, relies on the possibilities of modern recording technology - in the 1950s on tape rather than gramophone! He records conversations with patients so that he can listen to them later on until the content fades into the background and he can con-

concentrate fully on the characteristics of the voice sound. Here, too, we are dealing with an isolation of the voice from the language, only Moses does not allow the person giving the voice to reduce it to the "naked" voice as we do, but the listener or diagnostician learns to disregard the content aspect in the process of listening. The isolation of the voice from the speech is therefore not absolute, as the type of speech - speech melody, speed, accuracy or the pauses between words - remains the focus of the listener. It can't harm a voice teacher if he or she is able to recognise anomalies in a pupil's speaking mode and place them in the overall picture of the voice. However, we are neither doctors nor scientists, and the "advantage" of Moses' diagnostic strategy proves to be anything but desirable for us. By taking the patient's voice out of the actual conversation situation and listening to it on tape as often as needed, Moses ensures the objectivity of his diagnostic findings, which was already a priority for Bühler and Herzog. All subjective and emotional "prejudices" that spontaneously arise when listening to a voice are pushed aside by the trained listener of the isolated voice in order to make room for the sober analysis of verifiable parameters of the voice. What does Goethe say? Rationality is thinking without experience. Modern rationality depends on the belief that true knowledge can only be gained by freeing thought from the "disturbing" and contaminating affects, instead of consciously dealing with the emotional sphere - and incidentally also with thoughts, which one often experiences rather than creates! - to weave an integral picture of oneself and the world. From the perspective of a physicist, the accusation may sound ridiculous. Whether it is justified is open to debate, but for the voice psychologist? In any case, I will not follow Moses on this point - just as Wolfsohn did not fulfil this "ideal" in his work.

Moses opens a small window out of his strict objective methodology: he brings "recreative listening" into play, which comes one step closer to integrating the affective realm into listening by involving the body. Recreative listening works on the same principle that stimulates a person's salivation when another person bites into a lemon - an old trick to annoy singers or the wind players in the orchestra. When listening, the sound of the voice fulfils the function of the lemon. If, for example, a tenor "gags" during a vocal performance, i.e. constricts the throat, there will inevitably be a significant increase in throat-clearing and coughing in the audience. The audience also constricts its throat, the base of the tongue comes closer to the throat, the throat becomes dry and the audience restless. However, the tenor does not necessarily find the "lemon" taste of his own voice sour, he can strangely believe that he is singing with an open, sonorous voice. The listener experiences an effect on

a physical level that only belongs to the singer in purely physiological terms. If you couldn't hear the sound of the throat being tied up anyway, you could point out the constriction of the throat to the tenor based on your own physical reaction. However, this recreative hearing does not only work on a physical level, the emotional reaction to a voice can also be recreative. The feelings that I experience when I hear the sound of a voice can run parallel to the feelings that are partly responsible for the specific sound of the voice. The emotional reaction to a voice may give the person making the sound information about their own feelings! This is why recreating emotional listening, which largely includes physical reactions, is a fundamental element of our way of exploring and developing the voice. In seminars in which several participants listen to a voice in action, the listeners' involuntary reactions to the sound of the voice are often themselves emotionally coloured. It is not possible to create an objectively distanced situation in which one can safely articulate one's own feelings, so to speak. On the contrary, it can become very lively! Recreative listening works in a similar way to an echo, in which the meaning of the sounds shifts and changes slightly through the temporal succession of their repetition. The echo does not mean the same as the original sound because it sounds later and is therefore heard and interpreted in the context of the original source.

Excursus: The Archetypes of the Voice

The psychologist C. G. Jung developed a vocabulary that can be used to describe the relationships between individual and supra-individual aspects of personality and to which voice teachers such as Alfred Wolfsohn and Gisela Rohmert (functional voice training) also refer with good reason in order to better understand the relationship between voice and person. Jung's psychological approach centres on the idea of the collective unconscious, in which every person, or rather every individual "soul", participates. The unconscious realm of the psyche is therefore larger, more primal and older than the conscious mind. The psychic structure is built up from psychic archetypes that belong to the collective unconscious.

These archetypes represent an unchangeable material for shaping the soul. Which archetypes from the immense pool come to influence in a person depends on the culture in which he or she lives and on his or her life history, in which certain events activate the psychic energy of the appropriate archetypes. These influences all take place in the realm of the unconscious, i.e. they cannot be accessed with language, an instrument of consciousness. For this reason, all attempts to summarise the archetypes in a theoretical psychology are doomed to failure. Nevertheless, Jung has no choice but to characterise the archetypes linguistically in his writings. To do this, he makes use of a very richly visual terminology in order to at least come close to what he "actually" wants to say. At one point he speaks of the archetypes as old, dry rivers that bear the traces of (life) water that once flowed through them. But only a new dynamic of psychic events can help the rivers to come alive again. The mythologies and religions of mankind ensure that the riverbeds do not dry up, because they are based on the archetypes of the collective unconscious. However, no culture other than ours could have formulated this in these words. In order to arrive at concepts such as archetype or the unconscious, a lot had to happen in the history of ideas. Only in a world that has been "disenchanted" by enlightenment and science can the sphere of gods and spirits - or whatever the active forces that elude our control are called - be shifted completely into the human soul and transformed into a purely inner-psychic phenomenon.

The influence of what is now called the collective unconscious on modern man is certainly not diminished by this. On the contrary! It therefore seems wise to deal with the unconscious forces. In the process of individual development into personality, individuation, as Jung calls it, the search for the relevant archetypes that are active in one's own soul and the integration of the soul parts symbolised by them into the overall personality represents the decisive challenge. Let us consider, for example, the anima/animus archetype, one of the archetypes that more or less actively shape the psyche in every person and to which Jung therefore devoted a great deal of attention. He used it to describe the opposite-sex part of a person's psyche. Anima stands for the female part of a man's soul and animus for the male part of a woman. From the point of view of analytical psychology, a person's gender is not one hundred per cent clear-cut. The opposite-sex parts are no less a part of a person's personality than the supposedly problem-free aspects, which are assigned to one's own gender without hesitation. This is an idea that, following the renaissance of androgyny in Western culture in the late 20th century, no longer seems as alien and provocative as it did when the psycho-

analytical movement was born at the beginning of the same century. But how do the archetypes of the collective unconscious manifest themselves in a modern person? According to Alfred Wolfsohn, this is where the voice comes into play again, because it is a medium in which the archetypes can show themselves clearly and recognisably on the surface of consciousness. In order to search for a man's anima, the man's female voices must be made to resound, usually the high-pitched voices that are generally avoided by men today. And conversely, women will focus on the low part of their voice to bring out their masculine side. However, the division of voices into male / female is not simply the same as low / high. There are very low female voices and very high male voices. The categorisation depends solely on how the voices are actually heard, namely by the person raising their voice and by the other listeners. Sometimes those who raise their voices are not able to hear the female or male colours of their own voices, even though the listeners assign them to one gender. In the practical work of voice development today, unlike in the days of Wolfsohn and Jung, the first task is to awaken and integrate one's own gender voice potential. Shyness towards the voices of the opposite sex is often overlaid by the search for one's own identity as a woman or man. Awakening men's willingness to express the different varieties of masculinity and women's willingness to try out vocal forms of expression for their femininity are often at the forefront of synchronised voice and personality development.

The insecurity about one's own gender identity that we observe today echoes a cultural reorganisation of the ideas of what is considered masculine and what is considered feminine. Another symptom of the shift in gender identities can be seen in our everyday singing culture: the chronic shortage of men in high tenor choirs is now taking on disastrous forms, whether among amateurs or professionals. German tenors seem to be dying out.

The archetypes that express themselves in the high tenor voice - in earlier times the very epitome of the man, the hero and the lover - hardly seem to exist in the modern male psyche.

Alfred Wolfsohn took up the idea of archetypes and made it fruitful for his approach to voice development. Wolfsohn focussed on the relationship between voice and personality from the very beginning. He was never interested in training mere vocal apparatuses that could produce a particularly large number of sounds. Rather, he wanted to explore and awaken the spiritual quality represented by the sound of a voice and integrate it into the context of a person's life with the help of the voice. As soon as the search for the hidden voices in one's own voice is orientated towards discovering the archetypes that express themselves in the sound of the voice, there is no longer any danger of aiming for mere acrobatics. With the connection to the archetype, the respective vocal facet gains its meaning, which goes beyond the purely acoustic event and becomes understandable for both the singer and the listener. The archetypal images help to locate and grasp the new voices in order to integrate them into one's own vocal corpus. And conversely, the voice proves to be an extremely useful "instrument" for bringing a person into contact with what psychologists call the unconscious. With the extended voice, the mental and spiritual horizon is also more

extended. In this way, the liberated voice opens up completely new possibilities for action and life. In short: the development of voice and personality remain linked.

Of course, not all emotional reactions to a voice are re-creative. However, it is not the teacher or the listener who decides whether a feeling that arises in a listener refers to a similar feeling in the person who made the voice sound, but only the person making the sound. He or she retains the exclusive right to interpret his or her own voice. This does not have to coincide with what the listener experiences, but it does not help anyone to impose any "truths" on the singers, which only draw them away from the point at which their own vocal exploration must begin.

In the situation of joint voice exploration, the voice teacher has a clearly defined task that sets him or her apart from the other participants. In principle, he or she hears in the same way as everyone else: subjectively, with the possibility of emotional involvement. At the same time, he or she should be specially trained to consciously perceive his or her own reactions and then be able to decide which ones can help the student's voice development in the respective situation. The voice teacher does not have to be the undisputed diagnostic expert in comparison to the so-called pupils like a doctor. Rather, his competence must lie in guiding the emerging vocal and emotional "material" in directions that are favourable to the voice or voices in question. This includes bringing in one's own strong emotional contributions or holding back completely and giving the pupil's impulses the space to express themselves. To achieve this, it is necessary for the teacher to create an atmosphere of trust. The participants should feel that they are in good hands and gain the impression that the teacher can also handle tricky situations. But this probably applies to any lesson that goes beyond the teaching of data and invites the pupils to make a personal contribution.

For all his understanding of the interconnectedness of a person's voice and personality, Moses only uses the voice as a diagnostic tool. His therapy for voice disorders and psychological difficulties relies entirely on classical psychology and psychoanalysis, apart from a few "technical tricks" to get the voice moving. For example, one of the dimensions that Moses analyses in the voice is rhythm, a characteristic of singing and speaking that is closely linked to the movement of the voice. Rhythm is movement in time; it gives form to the dynamics of the voice. Moses understands the rhythm that is audible in the voice as a mixture of three

rhythmic elements: the "biological rhythm for the individual", the rhythmic specification of the language in which one expresses oneself, and the use of speech rhythms to support the understanding of what is said - the semantics. In the voice diagnosis, the voice specialist will want to find out whether the patient is using the rhythmic elements adequately and whether the content of the spoken text is conveyed appropriately and comprehensibly through the rhythmic form. If there are problems, he will diagnose the underlying psychological disorders and treat them relatively independently of the voice. In our voice work, we are dealing less with patients than with travellers on the path of the voice, for whom the teachers are the tour guides at some passages. By encouraging people to let their voices sound and move for a change without linguistic and musical guidelines, we create space for their own rhythms. If I give the pulse of my own rhythm the chance to unfold and express itself, the linguistic and musical rhythms will then combine in speaking and singing to form a mixture in which the personal remains audible instead of being completely subordinated to external circumstances.

Only when I trust my own rhythm I can get involved in larger rhythmic contexts in groups, choirs etc. without losing myself in them. If I know where I'm starting from, it's not difficult for me to go to a different rhythmic place. Of course, my rhythm is not always the same. It is constantly influenced by my current state of mind. But the more I am able to notice my rhythm, the more I can consciously modify it and thus influence my mood rhythmically. At this point at the latest, breathing comes into play in voice exploration. Breathing is the basis for all vocalisation and requires a great deal of attention in voice development. However, this is not about learning so-called correct breathing techniques, but about discovering what rhythm my breath takes on when I release it.

Turning the voice into a medium with which the psychological status quo and its movement tendencies can not only be read, but further developed, is a core aspect of Alfred Wolfsohn's understanding of the voice. But Moses summarised the essential similarity between voice and personality, which is what opens up this path of voice development in the first place: "The dynamics of the voice express the psychodynamics." For Moses, voice dynamics are the "mirror image of psychodynamics", which brings us back to the mirror metaphor with which we began our reflections on the relationship between voice and personality. This time, however, with the decisive addition of dynamism! Movement! The in-

clusion of the dynamic dimension of voice and personality is what makes the relationship between the two understandable. Personality is not a thing, not a stable construct! Personality has a history, which also includes the hardenings and adhesions that soften and set in motion the goal of every personality development. The path of the voice is so well suited to this goal because it allows precise snapshots to be taken at any time, in which the moving and hardened parts can be heard. Voice physiognomics discovers the significant connection between a person's inner movement and the associated blockages and their moving vocal expression. In addition, the voice indicates the best direction for synchronised voice and personality development. If you concentrate on listening to the meanings of the old and new vocal sounds in the joint voice exploration, you are already on the predetermined path to expanding your personality and voice. The mutual influence of psychodynamics and voice becomes particularly clear when - as in the above-mentioned example of rhythm - we first free the voice from language and musical guidelines. For many participants in voice seminars, it is a very impressive experience to hear their voice "undressed" for the first time and to present it to others. There is hardly anyone who is not excited, because you realise very quickly - usually before you have made the first sound - that this voice shows much more than its sound. The almost physical experience of the close interplay of voice and personality by "simply making a sound" reaches almost everyone who tries it in the right context.

(In the German version of the book you will find here a text of Nietzsche from his Zarathustra, "About the Great longing". It is one of his writings where he combines the ideas of soul with singing, which later became Wolfsohn's famous "Learn to sing oh my soul!" I don't dare to do a translation of this text but there are surely professional ones to find!)

The dynamics of the voice and those of the personality correspond with each other, and the landscapes of the voice that we want to transfer to our map gain their specific character through these correspondences. The constant interaction between the voice and the person to whom it belongs has a similar effect to the climate of a region of the world, which determines which plants grow there, which animals live there and whether or how the region can be cultivated. This climate has an influence on the course of the paths in the landscape

and on the distances between the waymarks and artefacts. The discoveries that we have made so far with the help of the "masterminds" from Aristotle to Paul Moses are coloured by the climate; they appear in a special light that helps to determine their significance. If we consider the voice and personality not as stable objects, but as dynamic phenomena that "communicate" their movements and changes to each other, then the artefacts are grouped into a new field of meaning. We leave the field of physiognomics, in which an expert claims to have a set of instruments that enables him to decode the so-called interior of another person. A dynamic approach to voice exploration requires all participants to go on a journey, the course of which cannot be determined in advance. There are more or less experienced travellers, and the voice teacher should know the one or other route from previous journeys and know what to expect for the "expedition group". Objective diagnoses of the vocal sound have no place here, we need the subjective reactions that provide new material for the next steps on our explorations. There is no final destination of the journey, such as climbing a high mountain, in the landscapes of the voice. The somewhat overused phrase "the journey is the goal" is justified here. Every path into the voice and to the voice is new and different. There is always something new to discover, even on supposedly well-trodden paths, because the voice is constantly changing through its exploration - whereby we naturally have the expansion of vocal possibilities in mind and in our ears. With the expansion and partial liberation of the voice, however, the field of possibilities for action and life also becomes larger. Once I have experienced the correspondence between vocal and inner movement in my own body, the expansion of my lively radius of action also affects the scope of my available vocal potential. The voice supports the development of a "wide" personality, and the extended inner horizon of a large and flexible sphere of action allows the voice to unfold more freely. This process is not without conflict, and often enough old behavioural structures that restrict life to regions that the voice has long since expanded prove to be extremely stubborn. Patience and the willingness to engage with the voice for a long time and at length are part of the path of the voice!

The metaphor of the voice as a mirror of the soul has not been refuted in the explorations of other researchers and cartographers. Something from within a person is expressed in their voice. But both voice and "soul" are not fixed objects that I can analyse and possibly press into a form that suits me. Both are more like a river that is constantly in motion. There are

natural and artificial dams where the river is slowed down, side arms where the movement comes to a standstill, but the river cannot be stopped. Voice and personality are manifestations of the same river. They correspond with each other and influence(!) each other. The mirror metaphor is too narrow to adequately depict this living interconnectedness. The phenomena we are dealing with here are far more diverse. We can only get close to them if we enter the flow and become part of the living process. An observant look in the mirror is sometimes part of this, but it alone does not provide any truths, only starting points for the next journey with the flow of the moving voice!

The Healthy and the Free Voice

In a study supported by the “German Singers' Association” it was found that prolonged singing stimulates the production of immunoglobulin A in the human body. This is a substance in saliva that protects the upper respiratory tract against colds. Does this scientific result finally prove the old claim that singing is healthy? Somehow this finding seems strangely modest. Did popular wisdom really mean nothing more than that people who sing a lot are more resistant to colds than others? Most passionate singers would probably insist that singing has a much broader effect on health and affects the well-being of the whole person. On the other hand, there are quite a number of professional singers who would not readily confirm that their profession promotes their health. Not to mention those who run the risk of ruining the sound and therefore the health of their voice through incorrect vocal training. The relationship between voice and health is obviously so complex that it cannot be adequately described in individual medical studies. Not only does a person's voice influence their health, but their lifestyle also has an effect on their voice, which can sound more or less healthy or sick. But in any case, the understanding of a healthy voice depends both on what we understand by health and on what idea we have of the sound of a healthy voice. In other words, in order to find out what constitutes a healthy voice, we must first clarify what we mean by health in this context.

In Western countries today, we invest an incredible amount of energy and time in looking after our health and our illnesses. It is one of the most loved and hated topics in our everyday conversations. Our multi-billion dollar, chronically indebted healthcare system reinforces our daily conviction that we must put in a huge amount of effort to combat the threat of disease and to protect our endangered health! With the memorable result of living in a society that is getting older and older, but at the same time more and more vulnerable to illness. Health has an enormous significance for the self-image of the affluent citizen, and the idea of a healthy voice does not exist independently of the prevailing concept of health.

What do we understand today by health in general and by a healthy voice in particular? How does the understanding of the healthy voice fit in with our idea of the free and whole voice, which we have presented in the previous chapters? Are the healthy, the free and the whole voice congruent? Are there differences?

A purely medical definition of a healthy voice would be too narrow for our purposes. Even the everyday understanding of health in general encompasses much more than can be formulated in a medical vocabulary. In the case of the voice, there is also the fact that it defies medical observation and treatment to a certain extent. Because it is not part of the body. There is the larynx, the vocal folds, the tongue, the mouth, the "vocal apparatus" and the whole body as a resonance chamber, but the voice represents more than these physical aspects and therefore cannot be operated on directly or given medicine. An attempt is made to do something about this by making a medical distinction in the area of the diseased voice. In addition to organic damage, where direct, visible impairment of the vocal apparatus can be demonstrated, there is also functional damage, which is audible but for which there is no physiological equivalent. The medical endeavour is to place visible, organic findings alongside the only audible functional disorders, which can then be measured and observed. Only what can be seen and, if necessary, directly manipulated therapeutically is medically manageable. In the ideal case, medical diagnoses are based on physiological findings; only functional diagnoses remain deficient, because the logic of Western medicine is physio-logic.

But health is not a purely medical category; it reflects social and cultural aspects of a society. The idea of a healthy voice encompasses more than can be recognised in purely medical terms and is made up of components that for the most part have no place in medicine: the prevailing notion of the beautiful voice, the underlying beliefs about the role of the voice in people's lives and the understanding of health that is currently represented in society. The judgement as to whether a voice is healthy or not depends not only on the physical integrity of the vocal apparatus. Of course, this does not mean that the vocal apparatus should not be cared for and protected. In a broader sense, however, we can call the voice healthy when it can give uninhibited expression to everything that offers itself to it as "inspiration". A healthy voice is largely free of blockages that stand in the way of its development and sounds correspondingly open and flexible.

Understood in this way, the concept of a healthy voice is broad enough to include the socio-cultural dimension as well as the medical and psychological aspects. However, this also increases the number of good reasons for not calling a voice healthy. Countless voices whose vocal apparatus shows no medical signs of damage sound anything but free of blockages. The healthy voice is apparently the exception in our society, the blocked voice the rule. How

did this come about? What cultural tendencies have taken away the space for the voice to develop freely?

The restriction of the voice is a phenomenon that can be found in all cultures. Every society distinguishes between vocal sounds that are permitted and desired and those whose expression is sanctioned. These judgements are based on various categories, the most important of which is the distinction between beautiful and ugly. In all high cultures, there are voices that are called beautiful and are emphasised above other vocal sounds. The good, well-loved voices are used in artistic or ritual contexts and function there as singing. The other vocal sounds and colours that lie within the human voice are excluded from the regions of cultural life. One technique of limiting human vocal expression is that certain forms of life, as Wittgenstein would say, permit and characterise the appropriate language games and exclude other possible ways of speaking. At the same time, however, these forms of life also determine which vocal sounds and purely vocal utterances are appropriate in the respective situations. Without the rules being explicitly formulated, we intuitively know very precisely how "one" should behave vocally and immediately register any deviation from the vocal norm in others: the guest at the neighbouring table in the restaurant who apparently wants to entertain the whole restaurant, the shop assistant who can barely be understood, or the colleague who suddenly talks much faster than usual for no apparent reason.

A strange discrepancy has emerged in modern Western culture and society over the past 50 years. On the one hand, the possibilities for vocal expression in art have become increasingly diverse. This began in the first half of the 20th century with Afro-American music, the blues and jazz and led to rock and pop music, punk and the experimental vocal art of the extended voice movement. In the non-artistic field of vocal expression, the exact opposite occurred at the same time. The range of possible vocal expressions in our everyday lives is becoming ever narrower. There is less and less room for manoeuvre in which you can do more and different things with your own voice than just what is allowed. The possibilities for variation in the "cultivated" voice are smaller today than perhaps ever before in our history. The pressure of cultural convention has a stronger or weaker effect depending on how the individual upbringing takes place and which personal events characterise life and the development of the voice. But it affects everyone: even the most tolerant and enlightened people quickly feel uneasy, for example, when they meet a group on a tram or in a market-place that comes from a culture in which a loud voice is still a means of communicating with

one another. This seems inappropriate and uncultivated to most of us. On holiday in the countries where these people come from, the loud and uninhibited is perhaps picturesque and "so original" for us, but here at home? It doesn't fit in here! The loud voice has disappeared from our everyday lives. We are not loud. There are, of course, important historical reasons for this. The time of the Nazi screamers has thoroughly ruined the loud voice. Accordingly, the voice of power no longer sounds loud and powerful today; the powerful now speak in a muted voice. People no longer make an effort to demonstrate their power.

The impoverishment of the everyday voice is supported by the tendency of our society to sing less and less. In recent decades, the gap between singing and speaking, between art and everyday life, has widened dramatically. Children of pre-school age are now characterised by a shortening of the vocal folds, which no longer develop to their normal size due to a lack of practice. There is hardly any everyday singing culture today. It is not without reason that phrases such as "having a funny song on your lips" seem so antiquated. The last refuge of sophisticated amateur singing are the choirs, which offer their singers the opportunity to open and move their voices at least once a week. There are only a few places where you can still find non-artistic singing, such as in church, in football stadiums and, limited to the "fifth season", at carnival! The church is the place where people still dare to sing songs because singing is part of the service. And probably also because as an inexperienced singer, you don't stand out in the crowd of churchgoers, if you can still find them. People don't actually sing in football stadiums, they shout. After all, there it is permitted to raise your voice in a way that would be inappropriate in any other context. The loud bellowing of club songs and the unrestrained cheering when one's own team scores a goal or wins a match exerts a liberating valve function on the otherwise culturally restrained voice, which can only be criticised for the fact that such a valve function is needed in an ultra-modern society. The healthier alternative would be an everyday world in which spontaneous vocal utterance is part of good manners and does not violate every etiquette of the cultivated human being. Instead, our everyday singing is characterised by a misconceived notion of performance that prevents any form of spontaneous, imperfect and flawless vocal expression. People often say that they no longer sing because they can't. You don't sing loudly because it's not proper. The reverse is actually true: you can no longer sing because you don't do it. And the less you use your voice, the poorer and more awkward people's voices will sound in this society. In my practice as a

voice teacher, I come across a surprising number of people who were forbidden to sing as children by parents, priests and teachers because their voice sounded "so awful" or they couldn't hold a note. "You sound like a rusty watering can," one mother said, as her now grown-up daughter told me. These "sins" committed by teachers and educators, whose actual task is to give children access to music and singing, often have lifelong consequences. Many children damaged in this way never dare to speak up again and express their feelings and moods freely through their voices. This is where the social tendency to only allow what fulfils the hardly questioned norms from the outset becomes manifest. In a corset that is so tightly bound, any voice will find it difficult to remain healthy. A corset cuts off the breath and robs freedom of movement in favour of a violent shaping of one's own (sound) body according to the general standards that decide how one should be and appear. The constriction of the voice leads to a flattening of the vocal sound, which is less and less suitable as a means of expressing one's own sensitivities. In other words, the state of mind that still finds expression is that of narrowness and immobility. Either you can hear precisely this narrowness in the voice, or the person has managed to cultivate a range of the speaking voice for everyday use that still sounds reasonably free within the corset. In this case, you initially hear an open voice, the limitations of which only become clear when you try to move from there into other tonal ranges of the voice. Men in so-called leadership positions often opt for a deep, serious voice whose pitch mobility rarely exceeds a third. In addition to the serious variant, women often prefer the light, nice girl's voice with a dash of childlike eroticism, behind which the adult woman remains hidden. Young female television presenters in particular seem to be the model for the squeezed voice, as they are fixed on the image of pure youthfulness, in which the slightest hint of maturity would have a disturbing effect. Any over-identification with a certain role in life leads to the vocal radius of action being reduced to the narrow range of one's own self-image. The corset that one puts on is then confused with the scope of the whole self, which is actually much larger and would allow one to sound different from time to time. Admittedly, this also increases the risk of offending vocally from time to time ...

The Sound of the Voice Between Restriction and Liberation

Every vocal sound has a specific volume, pitch and timbre. The three parameters constitute the tonal quality of a voice in that they interlock and together define the space for tonal changes. Every restriction on vocal freedom of movement is aimed at at least one of the three qualities and imposes its limits on pitch, volume or timbre in the actual use of the voice.

Loudness is the parameter that is easiest to measure because its changes are only one-dimensional in the direction of loud or low. In addition to the ability to measure loudness objectively in decibels, humans have the ability to subjectively assess loudness correctly in different situations. Measuring devices cannot tell us whether a voice has the appropriate volume in a situation or whether it is too loud or too quiet. We have a very fine sensorium for determining the appropriate volume of a voice. Our hearing registers very precisely when someone is too loud. Too loud is then synonymous with not fitting in with social convention, and for the integrated members of society this means: uncultivated. The standards for judging loudness have developed socially and culturally. They are not innate, and even between people of the same culture there are sometimes great differences in the interpretation of loud and quiet voices. A person who is too loud does not always have to be a troublemaker. Sometimes, by daring to raise their voice above normal levels, they act as role models. In the same way that the loudest voice can carry the staff of an entire party hall into a good mood, the voice of opposition and resistance also comes across loudly to encourage fellow campaigners and unite them. And if the voices alone are not enough, the famous whistle is sometimes used to help.

Excursus: Not Being Able to Hear

The auditory system is a highly complex selective organ whose task is not only to make sound audible, but also to prevent people from having to perceive all sound events that come close to them with the same intensity. Just as our memory allows us to forget things so that we don't drown in the flood of information that pours down on us every day, our hearing filters out the less important noises so that we can focus our attention on the sounds or voices that are relevant at the time. But what authority decides what is important and what is not? Where does the auditory system get the criteria it uses to make its selection? What are the criteria?

Two people meet in a pub and have a conversation. As usual, the pub is busy at the weekend and the volume level is correspondingly high. The two of them have to make a little effort to understand each other, but unless they suffer from conference hearing loss, they have no difficulty in picking out the other person's voice from the babble of voices and noise around them. The background noise only comes to the fore briefly when something special happens, a tray of glasses falls to the floor with a loud clatter and clink or a vendor of the latest newspaper passes by the table. It becomes problematic when there is a very loud conversation going on at the next table that literally forces you to listen. Meaningful sounds are much harder to tune out than mere noise.

If the neighbours at the table spoke in an alien language that they did not understand, the disturbance factor would be significantly reduced. The task of hearing is clearly defined: My mate's voice is the only thing that counts at the moment; everything else, however loud it may be, remains in the background unless the situation changes in a way that might make a reaction necessary. Let's assume the two of them are sitting in a kitchen, drinking a cup of coffee and chatting. The sounds around them, the fridge, the rain hitting the window, the stirring of the coffee and even the sounds they make themselves, such as loud breathing, coughing or slurping, will not attract the attention of either of them. Unless, for example, the breathing is the start of an asthma attack, which cannot be ignored. But normally these acoustic signals have no meaning during the conversation. We are used to simply letting certain everyday sounds happen without having to pay attention. Only when they move out of the sphere of the usual, change their volume or their sound colour, do we become alert. Everyone is probably familiar with the experience of hearing a sound only when it has just ended and only realising that there was a permanent sound in the background because it suddenly becomes much quieter. Only sounds that are associated with clear cues, such as the telephone ringing or the doorbell, cannot be ignored: In any case, they penetrate our consciousness and force us to decide whether to react to them or not, but this decision represents a conscious act for which the acoustic event must step out of the background. The ability to block out background noise varies from person to person.

There are people who are not the least bit disturbed by a radio or television playing during a conversation. Others are then unable to think clearly. But nobody needs an absolutely undisturbed environment to be able to have a conversation. Hearing ensures that the

concentration of the conversation partners can remain focussed on the flow of speech of the partner.

In conversation, we do not listen to the acoustic signals as such, i.e. the sound material, but to the words and sentences as carriers of meaning that want to communicate something to us. It is only when a sentence suddenly sounds different from what we expected, when the sound of the voice does not match the content of the sentence, that the listener becomes suspicious. They may begin to doubt the truth of what is being said. Is the person we are talking to actually trying to say something completely different from what can be read from the words? The art of irony is based on being able to vary the interplay between the content and tone of what is being said. A normal sentence is spoken with a slightly different tone of voice or a slightly different sentence in the usual style.

Although we only become aware of the sound of the voice when there are disruptions and surprises, the entire acoustic sphere in which the conversation takes place is very much present to us on a level below the threshold of consciousness. The success of verbal communication depends to a considerable extent on how someone speaks, how their voice sounds, which speech melody they use and the rhythm in which they speak. The process of hearing is not limited to the area that we are consciously aware of; by far the greater part of acoustic perception takes place subliminally, without us having to explicitly realise what is happening. The mechanisms and filters that select what is allowed to enter the conscious mind operate in the sphere of the unconscious. But there are no rigid boundaries between the conscious and the unconscious. We are able to direct our hearing to the purely tonal aspects of a speech and to push the actual content of the speech into the background. By focussing on the human voice, we begin to sense the richness of this organ and how much of it is permanently accessible to us with the help of our - so to speak congenial - hearing. In selecting the significant aspects that come to light in a voice, the auditory system allows the conscious mind to "have a say", but it does not rely solely on its decisions. Much more information is subliminally stored in the auditory system than that which reaches the conscious mind - information which, from the background, determines how we understand what we hear and how we react to it.

The human volume sensor also works for quieter sounds. We immediately recognise when someone is speaking too quietly. Someone's quiet voice shows shyness and hesitation. The other demonstrates that he or she does not need to speak louder and that the listener should make an effort to understand him or her. In our everyday world, this simple parameter of volume has a guiding function that should not be underestimated. The decision in favour of loud or quiet is the decision in favour of certain information that is conveyed regardless of what you want to say. In our living environment, the scope for using loud or quiet voices

is consistently limited. There are hardly any rooms in which loud voices are permitted and quiet ones are possible. Strangely enough, only electrical sound generators such as radio, television, music systems, subwoofers, walkmen or iPods are allowed to be loud - albeit incessantly. The unspoken ban on making our voices loud does not mean that we would find places of silence everywhere. On the contrary, the fear of silence has taken on almost paranoid proportions in our culture. Nothing seems more undesirable than a place without sound. Even in churches, we are no longer safe from canned sounds whispering in the background. In an electronically polluted sound environment, however, people have to keep a low profile. As I said, the everyday voice should be moderate. No outbursts, whether out of anger or joy! The restriction of the range of variation in volume means that more and more people have to learn to hear and accept the power of their voice and to use volume variations in communication again. The social restriction of the voice is internalised, and even in the few vocal ranges, the slightly stronger voice quickly sounds too loud for the person making the sound. Being able to move flexibly between loud and soft is often enough a completely new, liberating experience when dealing with one's own voice.

The parameter of pitch is divided into two aspects. We assign an approximate pitch to a voice, at which it usually sounds when we speak. There are people with high voices, women usually have higher voices than men, children higher than adults, old men's voices become higher, old women's voices often lower. The pitch of the singing voice is much more precisely categorised. The first and most important characterisation of singers' voices is based on the pitch and not on the specific timbre, which would also be possible. Designations such as soprano, alto, tenor and bass only refer to the pitch of a voice. Their tone colour is only introduced via the additional attributes such as lyrical or dramatic. In classical music, a singer is confined to his or her vocal range, which must be subordinate to the divisions. The vocal literature makes little provision for the voice to spread from its natural range to other pitch ranges. This also has to do with the limitation of the tone colours of the voices. The sound ideal of Western vocal music concentrates on very specific sound ranges of the voice, which actually make it difficult to leave one's own vocal range. This brings us to the second aspect of pitch, the tonal or vocal range, which refers to the free range of a voice that can move freely as long as one trusts in the stability of the base of the natural vocal range. The range of a classically trained singing voice is around two and a half octaves; it remains true to the

natural vocal range, so to speak. Alfred Wolfsohn, the pioneer of voice development that aims to dissolve the limitations of the voice, spoke of the eight-octave voice, which in principle anyone can develop. However, Wolfsohn's aim was not to set any records. Three of his students, Jenny Johnson, Marita Günther and Roy Hart, nevertheless ended up in the Guinness Book of Records: with the largest vocal range ever measured or, in the case of Marita Günther, with the deepest female voice! However, Wolfsohn was more interested in proving that the allocation of no more than two to two and a half octaves of range per voice is the result of cultural limitations and that the voice can show much more of itself. For Wolfsohn, the healthy voice was the whole voice, which is allowed to make all its facets heard - and with all these long unheard vocal sounds to bring hidden possibilities of being human to the surface. For Wolfsohn, the eight-octave voice included an eight-octave life, which has a much wider spectrum of possibilities for life and action than the so-called normal life in two octaves.

To an even greater extent than through pitch and volume, the lively variety of sound and fullness of life is reflected by the third parameter for determining a healthy voice: Timbre offers an almost immeasurable range of characteristics. The distinctiveness of individual human voices is due to the huge colour palette of vocal sounds. As with pitch, we can also differentiate between a main leg and a free leg when it comes to timbre. Every voice has something like its own natural timbre, which does not remain absolutely constant over the course of an adult's life, but usually guarantees the recognisability of the voice. In addition to this leg, the mobility of the pitch leg depends on how much the entire sound spectrum of a voice can be utilised individually and socially. Over the centuries, the singing voice of our culture has been subject to narrow limits that could be shifted, but did not expand the sound field of the voice. The colours that were allowed were called beautiful, the rest were called ugly. If you transfer this approach to the field of painting, from which the concept of colour was borrowed, you can clearly see how strange the idea of rejecting colour is. For one cannot actually say of a colour that it is beautiful or ugly; only the context permits such an assessment, if one wants to make one. In Western vocal art of the past 80 years, things have changed for the better. A much wider range of tonal colours is now part of the accepted culture of singing. Strangely enough, this has not had a revitalising effect on the everyday voice. The room for manoeuvre that the voice now enjoys in contemporary art has obviously been taken away from the range of the speaking voice. As already mentioned, this applies to

all three parameters of vocal sound; it becomes particularly clear with the timbre of the voice, because the potential reservoir of colour offers the greatest range of possibilities. Today it is almost a psychological commonplace that only about one third of the information conveyed in speech relates to the content of what is said. Two thirds relate to the way of saying, i.e. the voice, voice colouring and gestures with which the content of the speech is conveyed. Against the background of this realisation, it becomes clear how much our communication is impoverished when voices become flat. In other words, if the voices are not healthy in the sense that we have defined health above, it becomes much more difficult for the dialogue partners to get through to other people with their wishes, needs and thoughts in direct contact.

And this brings us to a fundamental problem with the definition of a healthy voice as we have formulated it above. If we maintain that only a voice that can flow freely without being inhibited by blockages is healthy, there are certainly countless voices whose vocal apparatus shows no organic damage but which are not healthy. Strictly speaking, there is probably not a single voice in our culture that can sound free in all respects. This would mean that there is no such thing as a healthy voice. We are dealing here with a regulative idea that reality is supposed to approximate, albeit without it ever being able to become congruent with the ideal. For a theoretical cultural critique of the voice, the definition may fulfil its purpose. But for the concrete work of liberating voices, which is our actual goal, this understanding of the voice has fatal consequences. If a healthy voice is an unattainable ideal, then the real voices are all sick. Instead of promoting vocal health, this consequence would make it more difficult to develop a good, relaxed and perhaps healthy relationship with the voice.

In doing so, we would have fallen prey to a health mentality that we wanted to reject precisely because of the way we use our voice. It degrades life to a kind of competitive sport in which we have it in our own hands how good, successful and healthy we are. This is not entirely wrong; a healthy lifestyle promotes health. But of course it cannot prevent illness. Illnesses, blockages and obstacles are as much a part of our lives as death, and nothing can be done to change that. Modern thinking, however, turns health into a moral category. If you are not healthy, you are responsible for it. The inhibited voice becomes a loud signal for our own misbehaviour.

Winston Churchill's famous answer to the question of how he managed to live to be ninety, "A good cigar every day and no sports", would cause an outcry of indignation today. Of course, I don't want to encourage people to smoke or to avoid all physical activity. But the concept of health must be understood according to culture, and the respective understanding of health does not necessarily support the free development of people and their voices! There is another aspect to this: Western medicine tends to equate healthy with conforming to standards. The idea is certainly sometimes justified, but by no means always. It becomes particularly fatal when the idea is taken out of the narrow medical field and the general self-assessment is based on it. In voice seminars, for example, there are often people with unusual voices who believe that their voices are ill simply because they sound different from the so-called normal voice or their own fixed concept of a healthy voice.

In order to liberate the voice from its old corsets, it is therefore advisable to be very careful with the healthy/ill category and, if necessary, to dispense with it. At the same time, we can try to create a relationship between voice and health in which the voice is not hindered in its self-development. We therefore need to rethink and expand our definition of a healthy voice: Voice development, as we practise it, shows without doubt that every vocal utterance is an expression of a personal state of mind and mood, regardless of whether the voice is open and sounds free. On the contrary, it is precisely the fixed, blocked or narrow voice that is meaningful. It reveals the person with all their quirks, rough edges and corners. And the voice that you can hear has been moulded by life sounds far more interesting than the clear, pure voice from which every difficulty has been trained away. Liberating the voice is therefore not about cultivating timeless and ageless sounds. It is not only the voice that can fully realise its potential that is free. A free voice is one that has sovereignty over the momentary possibilities of its own voice. In other words, the ability and courage to listen to one's own voice as it appears at the moment, without rushing to judgement, is the most important step towards freeing the voice to itself. A voice is healthy when its general ability to express sensitivities is accompanied by the fact that the person using the voice is aware of this ability, can hear it and knows how to use it.

The new definition is not intended to completely replace the first. The idea of the free-flowing voice retains its legitimacy; it just takes on a very peculiar meaning when combined with the second definition. The aim of voice development is then no longer a voice sound

that is virtually unencumbered by life and therefore free, but a voice in which, to put it almost paradoxically, the blockages and inhibitions of a person and their voice can find free expression.

The focus is no longer on avoiding so-called wrong sounds. On the contrary, the aim is to explore and appreciate the significance of those vocal sounds that one would actually prefer to avoid. Through this practical exploration, the vocal sound becomes an integral part of your own voice! It gains acceptance and significance and is more or less available to the person at any time as a tonal possibility. The explored voice quality then no longer has to assert itself against the will of the person showing it; voice and person now pursue the same intention in expression.

This understanding of the healthy voice, which takes some getting used to, leads to the assertion that there is no such thing as a sick voice! (Attention, this is not a medical statement!) The voice is always healthy enough to express a person's state of mind. Whether we always want to hear what it has to say is another question! A sick-sounding voice refers to the person to whom it belongs. Malfunctions that have become ingrained are indications of health problems in an broad sense in the person who has the voice. The voice is never the first cause of the difficulties it expresses. Exceptions also confirm this rule, and a change of perspective towards medicine would shed a different light on the relationship between voice and health. In any case, a lasting recovery of an ill-sounding voice cannot succeed unless the person in his or her life situation is included in the healing process. A liberation of the voice to itself, to the whole voice, is therefore never a purely technical or logopaedic matter.

But precisely because the voice provides such precise information about the current state of health, it is a good vehicle for self-exploration. The voice not only provides information about a person's current state of mind, it also tells us about its own history - and the life story behind it. And this is not the end of the joy and ability of the voice to provide information! The sound of the voice always says something about the relationship between the person who is speaking and the voice itself. About the resistance, the struggles, the demarcations, but also about the mutual support and the similarities. People and voices are in a relationship of tension with each other. The task of health-orientated voice development is to make this tension productive and beneficial for both sides.

When we say goodbye to the cultivation of a merely beautiful voice in this way, there is no longer any place for merely beautiful health. Health has nothing to do with a paradise-like original state without inhibitions and restrictions, even if our longing sometimes turns in this direction. Rather than a hoped-for state of life, health describes an attitude to life that does not shy away from confronting the challenges of illness and mortality. The voice is the medium that "exemplifies" this attitude, so to speak. We just have to listen to it.

Alfred Wolfsohn was probably the first to systematically turn his attention to the sounds of the voice, which would generally be labelled as sick, and to cultivate them in himself and his students. In the mid-fifties, he began to research "broken sounds", i.e. vocal sounds that emphasise precisely what should be avoided in singing lessons, namely all the sounds and noises that disturb a pure vocal sound. At this time, Wolfsohn was probably already very weakened by the illnesses he had brought back from the Second World War, and he was probably only able to produce pure vocal sounds with difficulty. The voice simply expressed his state of mind, and what could be more natural than to listen to it and also give the "sick" aspects the attention they deserved. Once again Wolfsohn experienced for himself that the human voice encompasses more than just beautiful sounds. Once again, life urged him to expand his ideas of the human voice and thus to arrive at the idea of the whole voice. For it is precisely in the rough, scratchy and broken sounds that the story of a person comes to light with particular intensity. The human voice also includes the weak, the sickly, the difficult, and the voice that knows how to consciously deal with these facets and is able to tell all its stories is a healthy one.

Dear AWE,

I would like to tell you about a dream that I am sure you would have liked. Dreams play a major role in voice work that you have initiated. When dealing with one's own voice, the dream experience is often very stimulating, and there are often astonishing parallels between the dream experiences and the respective state of voice development. My dream emerged from the depths of my soul when I was just beginning to approach my voice and attended the second seminar with Paul and Clara Silber. It has stayed with me ever since: I am taking part in a philosophy congress that is being held in a congress hotel somewhere in the countryside. In between, I go to my room, open the door and immediately hear strange sounds in a small corridor, apparently coming from the large, dark, wooden cupboard opposite me. I open the left-hand cupboard door and see a small yellow canary sitting in its cage. The poor animal looks rather haggard and dishevelled, and I say in my dream: Damn, I forgot to feed the bird! Then I open the right-hand side of the cupboard and see a big pile of rotten bird food lying there.

The bird has grown over the years. In later dreams it was sometimes an owl, sometimes even a whale, and it's no longer in the cupboard. But the questions "Where is my canary at the moment?" or "How much space does it currently have in my world?" keep cropping up, sometimes in dream language, other times through feelings or moods that indicate that new food is needed or that the cage door has slammed shut. In any case, I can say that I have a bird (a German expression for being a bit crazy)! Since I realised this, I have tried to look after him and give him the space he needs to sing freely.

The Whole Voice on Stage: Extended Voice

The human voice is the apology of music..

Friedrich Nietzsche

At some point in the late seventies, a man appeared on a German TV show, probably "Der Große Preis", maybe "Wetten, dass ...", who could imitate machine noises with his voice. Car engines, lawnmowers, hoovers. He was really good; the noises sounded amazingly real. Even back then, however, I asked myself what such an ability was good for. What was the point of being able to imitate the rattling of a VW Beetle? This man never made an appearance as a voice artist after that. But why not? He was able to do extraordinary things with his voice and clearly left the cultural barriers of beautiful singing behind him. What was missing from this man's vocal artistry to make it more than a curiosity?

In the search for an answer to this question, we will approach a direction in vocal art that is still young and encompasses a whole range of heterogeneous approaches under the title Extended Voice. What all extended voice artists have in common is the intention to artistically utilise those parts of the human voice that cannot be called singing in the narrow sense. Extended voice art thus offers itself as a counterpart to the idea of voice development as I have presented it here. Alfred Wolfsohn and Roy Hart therefore play an important role in the history of this young vocal art.

In terms of cultural history, the extended voice approach is a unique phenomenon. In all voice cultures around the world, certain spectrums of the human voice have always been favoured over others. Different cultures and different eras have had and still have their own vocal ideal. As different as the ideas of the beautiful voice may be, every culture recognises vocal sounds that do not seem suitable for singing and are therefore not used either artistically or ritually. The extended voice movement is the first attempt to make the entire human voice an instrument of artistic expression. Such attempts have been made before in the religious field, for example by the tongue-speaking Pentecostals or the "French Prophets", a group of Protestant French emigrants who caused quite a stir in London in the 17th century when they made the voice resound in their church services in a way that must have had a

downright shocking effect. Incidentally, these Frenchmen came from the Cévennes, the same region to which Roy Hart and his theatre group moved from London 300 years later. However, the religiously motivated escape from the confines of so-called beautiful singing never had any effect on the voice in art. At the time, the idea of bringing all these strange, irritating and often scandalous voices to the stage was simply not yet conceivable. So the religious groups were not concerned with the voice and its training, but with God and the attempt to get closer to him through ecstasy, which is expressed through the voice.

Today's extended voice movement, which has become ever more colourful and larger since the 1990s, is a highly individualised scene of which it is not yet possible to say for sure whether it will grow into an independent art form. There is no artistic necessity for this. Much more important than a fixed common identity is the great diversity of the scene! Artists such as Sainkho Namtchylak, David Moss, Phil Minton, Meredith Monk, Laureen Newton, Paul Dutton, Sidsel Endressen, Fatima Miranda, Jaap Blonk and Jonathan Hart-Makwaia perform very personal and very different programmes that can sometimes be classified as jazz or new music, sometimes as sound poetry or Dada, sometimes as theatre or performance and often enough refuse to be categorised. These diverse vocal artists are connected by a family resemblance in their vocal aesthetic principles and by a common curiosity for vocal sound potential. Our map of the human voice, for which we are travelling, will make it much easier for voice explorers to find their way to the whole voice by marking these common features.

Excursus: Vocal Encounters

If you meet a wild animal, a deer, a wild boar or an eagle during a walk in the forest, such an encounter in the so-called wild has a very special quality, a peculiar intensity that hardly ever occurs in contact with fellow species in a wildlife park or zoo. Animals living in the wild are surrounded by a peculiar aura that flavours every contact, however fleeting, with a strangely irritating note. In a fenced enclosure, on the other hand, you get much closer to the animals; sometimes they literally eat out of your hand. Up close, you can see things about them that remain hidden when the animals are free, at least as long as they are alive and keep a safe distance from humans. While you can study the details of the animals much better when you are in contact with them over a fence, the overall impression is much stronger in its emotional dimension in the unprotected landscape.

Very similar differences can be experienced in the various forms of encounter with the human voice. A live performance conveys completely different moods and vibrations than a recording of the same concert or performance on disc. Voice and music that unfold freely in space have a disturbing and moving effect on the listener, who is exposed to the event in the same place and at the same time, in a way that can be compared to accidental eye contact with an animal. In the enclosure of the electronic sound recording, the moving moment of the performance can sometimes be surmised, sometimes it even awakens the memory of similar experiences and reactivates the feelings that emerged at the time. But the experiences are never congruent. Why should they? Both media have their artistic justification. They just shouldn't be confused. Recordings on audio media can perhaps copy the sound of the voice more or less authentically, but the environment, the tension, the crackling between the actors and the audience remains tied to the time of the event. Since the sound on a recording is therefore always different from that heard in a concert hall, recordings from a studio without direct audience participation open up the opportunity for voice researchers and extended voice artists as well as listeners to experience new kinds of voice. The studio allows a very precise, almost intimate approach to the voice, for the voice artist no less than for the listener. Just as the deer in the wildlife park comes so close to the visitor that he can touch it, the voice in the studio will be able to try out the sonority of closeness and open up in a very special way.

Classical singers usually have a fairly clear idea of the sound spectra they use in their singing, i.e. the ranges of the voice that the tradition dictates for the repertoire they sing. It is well known how classical singing should sound, despite its individual character. There may be great individual differences between artists in timbre, tone colour and intonation. A Maria Callas sounds very different from Anita Cerquetti, a Bryn Terfel different from Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau. But doubts as to whether a voice is still in the field of classical singing or has left it are very rare. Despite the diversity of classical voices, the framework for this type of singing is clearly defined. Extended voice artists are different: the vocal sounds they use in their performances are so new to the audience and often even to the artist that the act of performance cannot be separated from the process of vocal research. At the end of a solo concert in Cologne, David Moss once remarked with satisfaction that he had produced two vocal sounds today that he had never heard before. An example of public voice exploration! The presentation of more or less alien voices on stage is part of the journey of discovery of the whole voice. The stage is the place where you can work and play with the possibilities of the voice in front of an interested public, but outside the protected space of seminars or re-

hearsals. In front of an audience, the explorer finds conditions through which completely new aspects of his voice can be brought to light and explored. Aspects that relate to the question of how showing and hearing the voice can influence each other. The tension between the audience and the artists creates an atmosphere that determines what is possible here and now, in this place and at this concert, and what is not. For vocal utterances, an anonymous audience represents a different touchstone than a voice teacher or the participants in a seminar, who have learnt a part of the vocal history of the person they are listening to while working together. Voice workshops function like research trips where the participants' ears and mouths are opened to the landscapes of the voice, i.e. the separation between those who show their voice and an audience that "only" listens does not exist in the seminar. In a public performance, on the other hand, the explorer(s) tell the audience what they have experienced on their journey. The audience has different prerequisites and expectations than the participants in a voice seminar. At the same time, for extended voice artists, every public performance is also a journey to their own voice, because while they are presenting their "travelogue", they are exploring new terrain for themselves and the audience - or familiar territory in a new way. Taking the audience along part of the way is a challenge that every voice artist must face. In short: for the curious voice explorer, the stage is a particularly attractive place where the voice reveals facets that remain hidden elsewhere.

The Aesthetics of the Extended Voice

The goal of developing the whole voice still indicates the direction of our journeys through the vocal worlds. What can the extended voice movement contribute to liberating us from the shackles of a culturally immanent conception that is too narrow, and from the habitual modesty in its so-called normal use? The first clues can be found in the musical-aesthetic ideas of John Cage, whose expansion of the concept of music had an enormous impact on the musical art of the 20th century.

Cage is without doubt one of the most important composers of the last century. But what does composer mean when it comes to the music he wrote? In his "Lecture on Nothing" from 1959, Cage says that the composer, in his sense, shifts the responsibility from making

to accepting. To the acceptance of sounds that present themselves in a particular compositional situation. The ability to accept presupposes that one frees oneself from all concepts of how to compose, from the tonal music of our tradition as well as, for example, from the twelve-tone music that he learnt from Arnold Schönberg in Vienna. Rejecting these musical ideas does not mean that they should not appear in Cage's music; on the contrary, precisely by not committing oneself to anything in advance, it becomes possible to allow everything - if it presents itself. The music theorist Daniel Charles speaks here of a connection between music and the memory of the human cultural being, between music and forgetting. The development of an aesthetic ideal in music or vocal art requires memory, because one must be able to remember what one calls beautiful in order to be able to hold on to it or change it. Cage asks us to refuse to remember, to forget the history behind the sounds and to hear each sound as if we were hearing it for the first time. Giving up the idea that one can own sounds, music or aesthetics, preserve them and at best develop them further is the core demand of John Cage. He refuses to continue to force sounds into aesthetic concepts that block the way to our open-mindedness. In favour of the freest possible exploration of the whole world of sound, he abandons the value standards of good, beautiful, appropriate sound. In this way, music approaches life again, from which it has distanced itself in the conception of the classical musical work. The musical world of the classical tradition virtually excludes life; in the concert halls, pure art is celebrated, to which the audience is allowed to listen devoutly and silently. Every noise and every sound that is not written down by the composer and intended by the conductor disturbs the artistic experience. Cage, on the other hand, wants to give every acoustic event the same importance. The tenor's high C has no more rights than the clearing of an audience member's throat or the creaking of a chair. Cage took his idea of free, true-to-life music to its peak in the famous piece "4' 33", in which a pianist sits down in front of the piano, opens the lid to the keyboard and plays nothing for four minutes and 33 seconds! Suddenly, the silence becomes music, a silence that is enriched with a kaleidoscope of sounds and noises that nobody would notice if the pianist were playing a "real" piece.

The sounds reach the harbour, the theatre, the ear, the great harbour of the theatre ear ... This is where the sounds return that have gone out from here at this very moment. My listening ear receives those sounds differently on their return than on their departure: the

sounds are multiplied by the hearing of the sounds. I am looking for something that is said to me between the sounds and of which I do not know whether I should expect it with desire or with fear. (...) There is a voice, hidden among the voices, which resounds and disappears again ... You, it says, or I, it says. Remember. I remember the memory, she says, but I don't want to remember the memory that rises up ... But perhaps instead of the memory it is the expectation, the moment at the end ... my end, yours ... There is a voice that speaks of me, buried under the voices in me, in the listening ... You are dying, she says. I am afraid.

Luciano Berio / Italo Calvino: the last words of Prospero in "Un Re in Ascolto"

Saying goodbye to the restrictive traditional concept of music in order to go in search of the sound of the whole world is very similar to Wolfsohn's idea of abandoning so-called beautiful singing as the only authorised form of vocal expression. Both lead to the liberation from traditional structures and concepts in order to come closer to the actual phenomenon, here the voice, there the world of sound, as a whole. Cage wants to free the sounds from the cultural-historical ballast that makes every note resound in a larger context of meaning and thus find his way back to simple sonority. Wolfsohn and Roy Hart want to give the whole voice the space to resound without being hindered by cultural guidelines as to what may or may not be called singing. But the voice has qualities that make it stand out from the general sphere of acoustic phenomena. Because it has meaning per se! The sound of the voice always points beyond itself to the person who produces it. Reducing the human voice to its pure sonority would be a violent "trick" that runs counter to the intention of its liberation. Voice minus meaningfulness leads to a vocal sound that lacks the most important thing: its very own history and thus its relationship to life. Of course, there is nothing to be said against cultivating and artistically utilising the vocal sound, which is reduced to its pure acoustic dimension. But Cage's aim of bringing music closer to life again cannot be realised in this way. Nevertheless, John Cage would not want to hear any talk about meaning. The omnipresent meaning with which every sound is infected has no place in his music. Here, sound is to become audible again as mere sound, free of any historical, aesthetic or musical function. In this radical sound aesthetic, important ideas can be found in Cage's Buddhist world view. For him, liberation from musical concepts boils down to recognising that we possess nothing and can therefore be open to everything. The realisation that every possession is based on an illusion frees us from the need to hold on to anything and gives us access

to the whole world. In this attitude, the juxtaposition of two sounds is experienced merely as this juxtaposition, without attributing to it any additional meaning such as beautiful, fitting or ugly. For every aesthetic attribute is based on a concept that we could just as well let go of from a Buddhist point of view in order to free the sound from its restrictive judgement. However, Cage's open aesthetic is accompanied by an extremely high demand on the training of our hearing! The pure spirit, freed from all concepts and ideas, cannot be realised so easily. It is only the one without possessions in the sense of Cage's Buddhism who enjoys every combination of sounds. Cage's compositions are therefore, strictly speaking, music for the enlightened. The rest of us will still have our difficulties with this for the time being. But fortunately, we don't need to follow Cage's direction to achieve an aesthetic of the whole voice. The voice is not a mere sound generator, and if it is "liberated" from the meaningful dimension of its sounds, it loses its charm, its timbre, its mystery.

But what does this meaningfulness, which is supposed to make the human voice so unique, actually "mean"? In any case, it is about more than a mere musical meaning, which was an important point of attack for Cage, because the musical context usually prevents the sound from being perceived in its pure sonority. In a conventional musical composition, a tone always stands in a functional context such as a chord or a melody. There it fulfils its task for the work. It derives its meaning from the tonal environment in which it sounds. However, the field of meaning of the voice has always encompassed much more than the purely musical realm! Let's come back to the voice imitator, who can imitate the sounds of machines. His vocal sounds undoubtedly have a meaning, but it is firstly too unambiguous and secondly too banal. Too unambiguous because it allows no other association than the machine that sounds like that. It is too banal because the imitated synthetic sound does not open up any space in which one could refer to something of one's own, one's own voice or one's own history. Imitated engine noises do not create any interesting fields of meaning; they may be curious, but they are artistically uninteresting.

The extended voice artist, who possibly makes much stranger sounds on stage than the engine imitator, moves in a vocal field in which meaning appears, a meaning to which the imagination, memory and fantasy of the listener can attach itself. The audience's associations sometimes have little to do with the concrete meaning that the vocal artist intends with his

sounds. But you can't misunderstand anything in a way in which you could hear a food processor instead of the not quite perfectly imitated Hoover in our vocal acrobat. An extended voice performance awakens memories or intuitions of one's own hidden voices and - who knows? - the hitherto undiscovered life possibilities that lie behind them. Meaningfulness is the bridge between the voice artist and the audience. In the unfamiliar voice, the listener recognises or senses the strangeness in his own voice, the areas of his voice that have hitherto languished. Like all good art, the performance of the whole voice confronts us with new, unused or repressed parts of ourselves.

Here one could argue with the French philosophers Jacques Derrida or Roland Barthes that the idea of meaning or sense, to use the word most often used in a philosophical context, is precisely the most serious obstacle to liberation from the boundaries of our culture, which prevent the hidden sides of the human being from unfolding. By insisting on the significance of the voice, I would then achieve the opposite of what I intend, namely remaining in a world that has already assigned the voice its place and scope. As long as we understand meaning as that which is always and everywhere born of European reason and its paradigms of truth and beauty, we remain prisoners of an old story that we actually want to continue with the whole voice in a slightly different direction. But what would the alternative to meaning be? The body? From our perspective of "thinking the voice", the turn to the body, mainly in French philosophy, was a correct and necessary step. But if we stop there, the recourse to the physicality of the human being falls short and excludes too much of what is humanly possible for living practice. If I dedicate myself to a text in order to get behind the superficial meaning of the language with the help of the whole voice, then the reference to the body is a means, but not the end. Even and especially in the "roughness of the voice" (Barthes) one hears the field of meaning of its sound. The meaningfulness of the voice encompasses much more than the meaning that can be expressed linguistically. The disturbingly alien sound that "speaks" to us in the voices of artists such as Sainkho Namtchylak or Roy Hart is so irritating because it echoes things that we could also recognise from ourselves - without us knowing what or who is imagining! The search for voices also goes beyond the body, the significance of vocal sounds points to a much larger field!

How do vocal artists succeed in defining the fields of meaning that make their performance more than mere artistry? I believe the key lies in establishing an intentional relationship between yourself and the voices you produce, in always being on the lookout for the meanings of your own vocal sounds. The clearer the vocal meanings are to me or the stronger the curious attitude towards my own voice appears, the greater the chance for the audience to enter into the field of meaning. The audience does not have to hear the same meanings that the artist has in mind. Therein lies the difference between meaning and meaningfulness. If meanings are relatively clearly preformed, meaningfulness leaves the freedom to combine one's own images, feelings, thoughts and stories with the sound of the voice. The liberation of music and the voice from the shackles of concepts predetermined by cultural history remains a common concern of Cage and the Extended Voice movement. But in contrast to Cage, who wants every sound to be reduced to its mere sonority, the voice is precisely about emphasising the field of meaning of the voice. The often so alien sounds of the voice, which cannot be easily categorised in the usual artistic categories, are so interesting, so strange, frightening or funny because their strangeness reveals a meaningfulness that can often only be guessed at. The strangeness of another voice always refers to the strangeness of my own, to the hitherto undiscovered worlds of sound within me. Hardly any of the strange impressions appear clear, well-formed or can even be described. The voice leads us into worlds where language seems to be overwhelmed. That is why interest in the fields of meaning of the voice has nothing to do with intellectualisation, which Cage denounces with good reason. Meaningfulness is not bound to the intellect alone. It is the path to closeness to life that Cage also wanted to take with his music.

The integration of the voice into the living field of meaning is one of the reasons why many extended voice artists make improvisation a pillar of their vocal art. Improvisation allows them to respond to the situation in a new way, to take up their own moods and those of the audience and transfer them into the pieces. In this way, the significance of the voice and the pieces is kept flexible. In this respect, John Cage is a good composer for extended voice artists. His method of integrating random moments into the music leads to an openness that makes every performance unique. Another possibility is the collaboration between composer and singer, as practised by Peter Maxwell Davies and Roy Hart in the piece "Eight Songs for a Mad King". As far as we can understand today, the composition process was

closely interwoven with vocal improvisations by Roy Hart on the themes and texts that Maxwell Davies wanted to set to music. In earlier pieces by Karl-Heinz Stockhausen, there was also some freedom, despite extremely precise instructions as to what the performer had to do. "Spiral" for voice and shortwave radio is an example of this, which was also performed by Roy Hart.

Steps towards the Extended Voice

Alfred Wolfsohn was interested in searching for the hidden meanings in the human voice, and in the relationship between the sound and the person making it. This is not yet an artistic, but rather a psychological approach. But just as Cage elevated the closeness to life of music to the decisive criterion for its value, Wolfsohn found the actual interesting point of voice development in the relationship between voice and life, which also gives the artistic exploration of the whole voice its appeal.

Excursus: The "8-Octave Voice"

The fact that men sing the Queen of the Night's aria is astonishing enough, but not entirely inconceivable against the background of a male soprano tradition, albeit one that dates back a long time. It is much more difficult to accept the possibility of women descending into the depths of Sarastro. For Wolfsohn, this mental barrier was not physiological, but entirely cultural. This did not make the path to the female low voice much easier. His student Marita Günther told me that Wolfsohn's group regularly celebrated when one of the women was able to sing the next lower note after months of searching. Wolfsohn and his students were truly pioneers. There were no role models for such low female voices at the time. Marita Günther, Jenny Johnson and the other female students were breaking new ground. Once the first people had been in the new territory, exploring the new areas became much easier for the following students. As Marita Günther used to say: "Today I can teach a woman in a fortnight what took me two years. However, the pioneers of the whole voice had the advantage over the later ones that their search for the new voices was always connected with the opening of new mental spaces of possibility. Only with a deep inner willingness and a genuine confrontation with the fears blocking the path to the new vocal sound they were able to find their whole voice. Today, voice lessons are often about not moving on to new areas too quickly so as not to get stuck in mere acrobatics. There is a

certain danger in this when the cultural and psychological barriers that held the vocal sounds in place are now suddenly relatively easy to overcome. It becomes more difficult to listen to the new sounds long enough to recognise what is behind them and what they have to do with "me".

In the tradition of voice development established by Wolfsohn, the liberation of the whole voice into an art form that breaks free from the framework of traditional forms of singing and recitation took place in steps. The first recordings we know of Wolfsohn and his students date from the mid-fifties of the last century. Not long after Wolfsohn began teaching students in London, some of them were able to sing the arias of all the roles in Mozart's opera "The Magic Flute", from the Queen of the Night to Sarastro! The voices covered the entire humanly possible pitch range! They were human voices in Wolfsohn's sense. The recordings of the time show an incredible tonal variety, and it would be difficult to find voices capable of doing the same today. At the time, Wolfsohn had obviously reached a point where he had long since practically overcome the classical idea of a voice that can only master one register, such as tenor or soprano. His pupils provided a living example of the expressive possibilities of the whole human voice! The new paths that this opened up for a completely unique vocal art only gradually emerged in the years that followed. At the beginning of the 1950s, Wolfsohn was still working relatively closely within the framework of a conventional conception of art, which expanded the forms of singing and recitation but did not go beyond them. Things were already quite different in lessons with Wolfsohn at this time! There was room for everything that wanted to be heard, regardless of whether it had any musical "value". The only important thing for Wolfsohn was the search for the meaning of every vocal sound and the question of how it could be made into a component of the voice that was available to the singer so that he or she could consciously deal with it. Whether this was a classical artistic utilisation was of secondary importance from the very beginning. Thus, even in the mid-fifties, tapes that reflect the practical development of the voice in the rehearsal room rather than the artistic use of the results contain vocal sounds that no longer have anything to do with the conventional idea of singing or speaking. The voices are not yet part of an extended voice art, but they open the doors to a vocal art that will leave classical forms far behind. From around 1958, Wolfsohn began experimenting with "broken sounds", i.e. sounds in which the so-called background noises, which traditional singing was designed to

avoid, became the main feature. We know of no recordings from these years, and it is not clear how close Wolfsohn came to the idea of an independent art form of the Extended Voice. The last step towards a creative approach to the whole voice on stage, which had to first find its own forms and rules, was taken by Wolfsohn's pupil Roy Hart, both with his later solo appearances and with the performances of the Roy Hart Theatre.

The theatre, which is not in something specific, but uses all languages, gestures, sounds, words, passions, cries, finds itself precisely at the point where the spirit needs a language to make its expressions known.

Antonin Artaud

How little the European audience of the mid-20th century was apparently prepared for extended voice art, or rather: how little they were thought to be allowed to expect, had to be painfully experienced by another artist who, as early as 1947, staged the first performance that gave vocal expression to the abysses of the human soul. In that year, the French actor, writer and director Antonin Artaud produced a radio programme for French radio entitled "Pour en finir avec le jugement de dieu" (To finish with the judgement of God). The broadcast was banned by the director of the radio station on the grounds that he had to justify himself to a broad public that should not be offended in its moral or religious views. The danger of offending artistic views apparently did not play a major role officially, although it was precisely here and not in the recitation of any supposed obscenities that the explosive power of Artaud's radio contribution lay. One contemporary witness, whose artistic convictions were apparently severely violated, accused Artaud of combining blasphemy with obscenity and broken language with shouting. At times it would seem like being in the mental hospital - where Artaud actually had to spend years of his life.

Excursus: Artaud and Roy Hart

In 1972 - one year before Antonin Artaud's radio play " Pour en finir avec le jugement de dieu /Schluß mit dem Gottesgericht" was heard uncensored for the first time on French radio - Roy Hart took part in a project by the German writer and radio producer Paul Pörtner. Pörtner produced a radio version of a libretto that Artaud had once written for Edgar Varèse, who had little use for it. Varèse never composed the opera for it. No musical instruments are used in Pörtner's version of "There is no more firmament/tEs gibt kein Firmament mehr"; in addition to the speakers, Roy Hart alone provides the acoustic landscapes of the radio opera with his powerful voice.

In his radio play, Artaud formally combines recitations that go far beyond the usual handling of texts with passages in which he lets his voice run free, supported by drums and xylophone. With " Cry in the Staircase", Artaud introduces unrestrained roaring into the vocal art. There is nothing cultivated to be heard, no beautiful art in the voice! This is precisely why it is still immediately moving today. The unrestrained voice confronts us with areas of our being that are generally ignored and suppressed in the cultivated world. Indeed, in the confrontation with a "wild" voice it becomes clear that it was the very self-understanding of culture to keep the dark sides of the human being small. Without realising that culture casts the shadows in the first place! No wonder that we initially react to these strange voices with fear and defence.

... It is only necessary to return a little, very little, to the plastic, active, respiratory sources of language; it is only necessary to reconnect the words with the bodily movements that produced them, to let the logical, discursive side of the word disappear behind its physical, emotional side. In other words, instead of being taken solely for what they want to say from a grammatical point of view, words need only be understood from their tonal point of view and perceived as movement, and the language of literature is formed anew and comes to life.

Antonin Artaud

Artaud's genius lay in his ability to be intellectually and artistically uninhibited. With this gift, which was completely indistinguishable from mental illness in the society of his time and probably also in ours, he did for the performing arts what Nietzsche had done for philo-

sophy two or three generations earlier: he brought down the heavy walls that were supposed to protect us from the intrusion of the wild and disturbing into our cultural enclosure. What was supposed to preserve truth and reason in philosophy fell to beauty and the right measure in art.

If I am a poet or an actor, it is not to write or declaim poems, but to live them. When I recite a poem, it is not to be applauded, but to feel how the bodies of men and women, I say bodies, tremble and whirl around, whirl around, like one whirls around, in accordance with mine (...) I want poems (...) to become reality and for life to escape from the books, the magazines, the theatres or the fairs that hold it back and crucify it in order to capture it.

Antonin Artaud

The story in which Artaud used a lecture entitled "La théâtre et la peste" in 1933 to literally embody the plague has become famous. He did not talk about what the plague does to people, but portrayed it with all his usual uncompromising behaviour! The result was that the entire auditorium, without exception, left the hall before the end of the lecture, disturbed, shocked or disgusted. In this way he demonstrated the deep gap that opens up between a well-mannered linguistic communication of a topic and its direct embodiment. As long as language only pursues the "bread and butter" of conveying messages, it is unsuitable for Artaud to come close to the human. Language also requires an uninhibited voice in order to be able to produce "magic spells" again.

Uninhibition describes a particularly charged version of the willingness to allow what wants to show itself. Artaud's uninhibited voice is free because it does not allow itself to be restricted in its diversity of expression by an artistically prescribed form. The voice creates the form! But in another respect, Artaud's voice still lacks freedom. With its own force, it shows a certain psychological state in which Artaud, according to his own statements, was almost constantly and which he once described as "perpetual raving". The raging voice sounds high-pitched. A "raving addict" will never reach the lower ranges of his voice. Artaud does have vocal facets at his disposal that terrify other people just by listening to him. But he is far removed from the idea of the whole voice.

Once again, it was Roy Hart who took the final step towards an art of the whole voice. In his work, the creative combination of freedom from vocal inhibitions and free access to the whole voice came together for the first time. At the end of the 1940s, Hart moved from South Africa to London with a scholarship to study acting at the Royal Academy for Dramatic Arts. He soon met Wolfsohn and, convinced that he could learn more from him than at drama school, he devoted 12 years to exploring and developing his voice together. After Wolfsohn's death in 1962, he took over some of his students and began to transfer his teacher's ideas to theatre. Perhaps this was the decisive turning point in the liberation of the whole voice from the constraints of a traditional understanding of music. The theatre offered a stage for the colours and facets of the voice that had previously remained in Wolfsohn's rehearsal room in the context of vocal and self-exploration, and Hart knew how to make use of the freedoms that the theatre stage opened up for the voice. With his theatre group, the Roy Hart Theatre, founded in 1968, he set about exploring the possibilities of the whole voice theatrically, and in his solo performances he transferred the newly discovered freedoms back into the musical realm. Especially with "Eight Songs for a Mad King", the piece that Peter Maxwell Davies had composed for him, Hart set standards for vocal artistry that have lost none of their validity to this day.

Roy Hart was the first vocal artist who was able to combine and utilise all the components of extended vocal art. His voice had an enormous range of pitches and a repertoire of tone colours that encompassed and at the same time far exceeded the range of so-called normal singing.

Always in search of new ways to use the whole voice artistically, he left the traditional guidelines of performing arts far behind. Conscious of the fact that the Extended Voice should not aim at mere vocal acrobatics, he never reduced the voice to its pure sonority, but rather formed vocal fields of meaning that point beyond the pure vocal sound into the light and dark spheres of human life. John Cage's call for music to be close to life is realised in a very unique way in the Extended Voice, as understood by Roy Hart and the artists who refer to him. We have seen that Cage wants to prevent a sound from being heard only in its functional context, which completely determines its meaning and thus cuts it off from the flow of life. The art of the whole voice is about using the voice to provide a framework in which every sound has the freedom to build up a field of meaning around itself and thus intensify

contact with the living. Freedom and closeness to life are the cornerstones of the extended voice. In order to fully utilise the tonal potential of the voice, the whole voice moves as free as possible from cultural and psychological restrictions and thus gains the freedom to become a meaningful voice whose significance is not completely controlled by the artist, but is consciously directed. This freedom can be heard! It is particularly evident in the sound of the voice where there is no longer any trace of vocal control. To reveal obstacles, constrictions and blockages vocally also requires freedom from traditional ideas of singing as well as from the inherited shyness to make these sounds public. Today, at the beginning of the 21st century, cultural barriers no longer hinder the development of the voice as much as they did fifty years ago. But dealing with the extended voice, the whole voice, is still not a self-evident fact. The liberated voice follows the vital impulses it encounters; it not only establishes proximity to life - it finds itself in the midst of life, which is given a new structure through the vocal fields of meaning that it unfolds. The voice moulds itself into a living form in which it can express itself freely. Here, strangely enough, we are approaching an understanding of art and beauty that one would actually have to assume to embody the exact opposite of what we have in mind. However, the demand for "living form" and "freedom in appearance" comes literally from writings on art theory in which Friedrich Schiller attempted to define the concept of beauty! Should the Extended Voice with its strange, weird sounds represent the perfection of the classical ideal of beauty? Has beauty re-emerged from the oblivion into which it had fallen in the modern age in a new, unfamiliar guise? Does the rejection of every conventional idea of beauty lead to true beauty? Both pairs of terms, freedom/creation and life/form, were intended by Schiller to illustrate the connection between spirit and nature in art. Mere imitation of nature is not enough for true art; the creative will of a free spirit must be added, which unobtrusively but strikingly gives the work of art its character. Schiller found his ideal of beauty best realised in the art of Greek ancient times, which was therefore the model for his present. We do not know very much about how singing was practised in ancient Greece. But if we consider how closely art and ritual were interwoven two and a half thousand years ago, how important the Orphic-Dionysian cults were, in which things were certainly less well-behaved than on the stages of German Classicism, then it becomes clear how close Schiller's idea of beauty was to the aesthetic guidelines of the Extended Voice, albeit without having the slightest idea of it. His definitions of beauty as "freedom in appearance" and "living form" are in any case open enough to encompass a late modern phenom-

enon such as Extended Voice art. The whole voice is the voice set free, which does not refuse to be guided by a "free spirit". Extended Voice on stage is a radical artistic contribution to approaching this double freedom and presenting it in an individual way.

Epilogue and Acknowledgements

Information about the history of Alfred Wolfsohn, Roy Hart and the Roy Hart Theatre can be found on the website of the archive of the Roy Hart Centre in Malérargues / Southern France roy-hart-theatre.com and www.roy.hart.com. There is also a selection of CDs with recordings from Wolfsohn's time to the present day.

Alfred Wolfsohn's writings can be viewed in the archive of the Jewish Museum in Berlin and in the archive of the Roy Hart Centre in Malérargues.

The seminars offered by the Roy Hart Centre can be viewed at www.roy-hart-theatre.com.

You can read about my activities with and for the voice (seminars, lectures, concerts, readings, art events) at stimmfeld.de and hoerfeld.de. Both websites have English sections.

Writing a book like this is probably always a joint endeavour, and the name above the title functions more as a placeholder for many and many other things than as the only binding indication of authorship. The thoughts in this book owe much to the ideas of Alfred Wolfsohn and Roy Hart, which my teachers, above all Paul and Clara Silber, introduced to me in practical work with the voice and in lively dialogue. Marita Günther gave me an insight into Alfred Wolfsohn's legacy that could hardly have been more authentic. To them, to Wolfsohn's pupil Sheila Braggins and the Roy Hart teachers Jonathan Hart Makwaia and Rosemary Quinn, my lifelong gratitude is assured anyway, even without this book. I would also like to thank all those who, have explored their voices with me in the role as voice teacher and given me insights into the voice that I would never have gained on my own.

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