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Whistling girls and crowing hens...

Amoral male remarks on a tricky proverb concerning anti-daughter tendencies of a certain species of mothers

“Whistling girls and crowing hens always come to some bad ends”: That’s the English equivalent to the well-known German proverb “Mädchen, die pfeifen und Hühnern, die krähen, denen soll man beizeiten die Hälse umdrehen.”¹

A crowing hen and a whistling girl are both exemplary for a way of action we usually call pretentious and which consists in a woman’s imitation of male behaviour, either by whistling or respectively by crowing – in short: a mix-up of sex-specific behaviour.

But what about the pretentiousness of those who feel entitled to wring someone else’s necks, the inventors or preachers of the proverb quoted above? Isn’t the sentence of death for a trifle of pretension based on quite a similar mix-up, confusing the enforced (subsistent-‘sexual’)² owning of poultry as laying hens (sacrifice of labour) or as boiling fowl (sacrificial substance) with the providing for one’s own female offspring (reward for sacrifice), a radical mix-up of the means of survival and one’s aim in life, as though the girls were the food of their parents? A mix-up of the pretension of crowing hens which take themselves for the cock and the pretension of whistling girls who know very well that they are still girls, a mix-up of nature and culture, animal and human being? And moreover: Isn’t this kind of egalitarianism of chicken and girls, foodstuff for survival and aim in life, much worse than the one of whistling girls just levelling down an allegedly sex-specific behaviour, unmasking it by doing so.

Which kind of person quotes such a proverb, what’s her/his aim and what’s the urge which enforces her/him to do so?

It’s easy to find out who wouldn’t quote it: the girls wouldn’t say so, because they could only say it to themselves – a self-centredness similar to whistling, with the already well-known consequences for their own necks.

This problem is represented in the penalty exposing the desire underlying the act of whistling: to wring someone else’s neck as materialization of the desire to see everything, the panorama view following the previous articulation by sound. But if the articulation is that of the own (subject’s/cock’s) body (object/hen), the magical banning of the view literally breaks the neck wrung before: the wish of seeing one’s own back and furthermore of looking into one’s own beak. (crack!)

The girls, thus, wouldn’t say it, but who else does so?

It’s of course the mother, a certain species of mother, who tells the daughter so. However, why is it the mother and not the father? Maybe, there are/were in fact some fathers who say/said so, as a quotation of the mother’s words. Why the mother and not the father? The

¹ Never hesitate too long to wring the necks of whistling girls or crowing hens.

² Annotation of the translator: the term *subsistent-‘sexuality’* implicates that the oedipal desires are not only related to sexual needs but rather to subsistent requirements. As a result there is no sexual phantasma, which is not based on this dimension of the *conditio humana*.

answer “is whistled by the sparrows on the roof and cackled by the chicken in the shed”³ (as a German idiomatic expression puts it). We are dealing with the sphere of the household, of the provision of food. And this sphere – which is at the same time that of the memory providing its contents on call – is that of the woman, of the reproductive mother. As we all know by now, the female reproduction of the species is the original one and any other production is just based on male mimesis of this female primeval production of bringing offspring into the world.

So, as we have seen, it’s the mother who quotes the proverb (herself being the judge) as an order of summary punishment to the father (the executioner) and as a threat to the daughter. She stresses that the daughter is a hen and not a cock, a boy.

The proverb suggests an opposite, ideal behavioural role to the daughter which is that of a calm and modest girl preparing herself – similar to the neat, quietly cackling hen – for the future “sitting on the eggs”, in other words: the duties of a mother. Crowing and whistling is left to be done outdoors, not at home. The whistling girl would refuse to do the housework and prefer to idle around in open spaces proving herself to be an adept of Artemis. Thus, the proverb tells us something to the disadvantage of men/ cocks, because obviously the demerits of the hens’ unproductive crowing pass to the common, representatively crowing cock (only one of the species is needed to be cock of the walk). After having wrung their necks, the superfluent cockerel will be processed elsewhere.

The cock, answering the threat of his replacement by crowing out his claim for owning all the hens, thus overcompensating for the superfluosity of his equals by posing as “the amazingly great guy”. Megalomaniac crowing to the awakening of himself, not just an announcement of the dawning day and the owning of the henhouse, the hens and the eggs (“all mine”), but a claim for the origin by means of the voice (“all me”), he turns out to be a bogeyman, with swollen cockscomb, who gets on everyone’s nerves and who doesn’t even own the dung heap on which he stands while crowing.

I must admit having meanwhile shifted from a rural proverb to another sphere of mass-produced neck-wringing, namely the sphere of war. If the crowing hens were (gelded) cocks, the proverb would turn out to be the outspoken version of the secret female order to men to wage war. The primeval form of war is the cockfight (at least in form of a singers’ contest), of men fighting for the owning of women.

From the women’s point of view, the cock of the walk is the denial of this order, for exculpation’s sake, they admit him as representative of the crowing cocks which have already been killed. Now, should he be warned of the female superiority, then? Such a warning would be a few centuries late – in China, for example, the situation is quite different: there’s a surplus of millions of men, the result of another collective wringing of necks in good time and even before the unwanted female offspring could ever think of whistling. Moreover, the opposite idea of a “female mafia” ignores the function of the previous war, which led to the role of the cock of the walk. The more or less controlled war is a question of killing the other men, generally to cut down the supply of men per woman, and of taking hold of the widows in view of sexual award, sexual reproduction and sexual subsistence, in other words of being licensed to kill and to rape. The result of the economic misery of the women left alone with the wartime children induces the revaluation of the surviving men – revaluation which is

³ “Die Spatzen pfeifen’s vom Dach und die Hühner gackern’s im Stall”

waiting to be transformed in might. So, both options are made up to maintain the predominance of patriarchy by overcompensation.

Now, a whistle is not any kind of sound production whatsoever, but, analogous to the crowing at dawn, it's an emphatic awakening, a martial order to wake up, an incision, an establishment of a difference:

“[...] kein traumatisierendes Differenz erleben ohne die interne Unterstellung der gegenteiligen Indifferenz des so erzeugten Differenten”⁴. On which occasions do you whistle, e.g. using a whistle? For example in barracks at dawn, at the time of a kick-off or an intervention in team sport (we call it “interruption of the flow” in case the referee is too pedantic). The alleged indifference is that of the *one and only* (forever male) gender, either collectively sleeping (“resting”, as they put it in military slang) or in the heat of the moment during the battle, the one and only male gender, admonished to be decent by the sound of the whistle, to a reduced difference, called fairplay.

What does it mean then, if you whistle after a pretty girl? You seem to admire her being of different gender: She's pretty and feminine, in short: “the fair sex”, desired by the other, whistling one, due to his sex-specific difference. And even more precisely: It's the difference of being pretty carefully constituted by the object of desire (at least by her refraining from making herself more ugly or just from whistling) which is rewarded by whistling. But!: (*da capo*: “die interne Unterstellung der gegenteiligen Indifferenz des so erzeugten Differenten”⁵;) You whistle *after* a girl, when seeing her back – and her bottom! Concealed voyeuristic homosexuality of whistling men, indeed. And: She just passed by without realizing the great guy, the different man! As if he wasn't amazingly great – and different! Having the nerve of indifferenciation (“you aren't exceptional, not worth while attracting my attention”), so the whistling is at the same time a repair of a previous insult telling her: “Hey! Wake up! It's me, the man of your dreams standing right behind you!” To whistle after a pretty woman is simultaneously always an indirect admiration of oneself. However, the feeling of having been insulted is a reflex of the rejection of the general male fear of women (of the threatening resorption by them)...

Would a man whistle right face to face with a woman? Rather not, because by doing so the levelling down of difference and indifference of the voyeuristic whistling-after from a distance to the wartime's face-to-face either of the overdone indifferenciation – the object of desire is pouncing on me right on the spot – or of the overdone differenciation – the object of my whistling kicks me right in the ... (cock-a-doodle-doo!)

What about a girl whistling to itself, then, and what exactly is so scandalizing about it? Not the whistling itself, but, as the proverb suggests, the result of it: Wring the necks of such poultry now – or never! The daughter's whistling is a question of emancipation, especially from the mother, at least from the point of view of the latter, of rejecting to be like her, of an escape.

A whistling girl considers herself to be independent of other people's whistling, of the constitution of difference, representing the acceptance of one's own “being different” in relation to the conformity of the (and to the) mother (at least of thinking so), already having

⁴ “[...] no traumatizing experience of difference without secretly alleging, on the contrary, the indifference of the thus created different object...” Rudolf Heinz, *Zur traumatologischen Gedächtniskonstitution im Ausgang von der Psychoanalyse*, in: André Karger/Rudolf Heinz (Hg.) *Trauma und Gruppe*. Gießen: Psychosozial-Verlag 2004, 38.

⁵ “secretly alleging, on the contrary, the indifference of the thus created different object...”

constituted the difference right on her own, that means: having escaped, a little bit, from the mother, grown out of her reach. (“You may outgrow me, but you mustn’t grow out of the reach of my hands!”) And beyond that: where and on which other occasions do we whistle? We do it inside the natural representation of the mother: in the dark forest, to its loss of power, announcement of the dethronement of the mother’s position of indifference. Mind that having whistled in the forest means having dwelt in the forest, in the shelter of difference: with a man (generally the father) (who found a substitute in the whistling girl due to the whistling itself).

How do men feel about whistling girls? “*Mädchen, die pfeifen, soll man in den Hintern kneifen*”? (“You should pinch the bottom of whistling girls”?) That’s what the father would like to do, because of his own replacement by the girl’s whistling. But from the son’s point of view the knowledge about his own position, reaping the benefits of the mother-daughter conflict is predominant, and that’s why he appreciates the sister’s whistling (due to his approval of the father’s replacement), still the mother mustn’t realize that, which the sister, for her part, mustn’t realize, for both would be contrary to the son’s desired conquest of the intermediary position abandoned by the father.

Laius knows that his son is about to kill him, but he ignores that the stranger is in fact his son. And Oedipus knows that he’s about to kill his father still ignoring the fact that his father isn’t his father and that it doesn’t matter whom he’s going to kill: if there is the slightest chance – within the bounds of possibility – that it has been his father, then it must have been his father, and that’s always true. Should we believe, then, that mothers are completely unaware of their daughter’s desires? Why doesn’t Klytemnestra wring her daughter’s neck in good time? Now, she knows about Electra’s desire, but she thinks that this desire is paralyzed, (due to the father’s absence and the lover’s presence, and finally by the murder of Agamemnon). Klytemnestra doesn’t take into consideration the son’s position, the eventual replacement of the (oedipally desired) mother-son incest by the brother-sister incest being the “light version” of it.

Whistling is a kind of this replacement, simulating and preventing at the same time the performance of the mother-son incest which – in case it’s non-mediated, non-memorized – is a phenomenon of deep sleep: in other words it’s the short circuit of the subject “son” and the object “mother” without a mediator (father or sister/daughter) in between. An incest which can’t be one, so to say, of a subject which is pure, i.e. not self-aware, completely identical with itself, and an object, the world, which has no representation, just consisting of a veil of sleep, as it was in prenatal state. The memorial link of both of them is interrupted, the contact is only maintained by the sound dimension which is the core of the incestuous character of all sound production: the perpetuated short circuit of the inside and the outside. The trade secret of sleep’s sound production is the double function, the conflict of the deepening of sleep (considered as a symbol of the mother’s sphere) and the waking-up (symbol of the son’s sphere).

Whistling means to represent, to simulate, to mediate this double function, *crazily speaking*: it’s a question of substituting the object (/the world) corresponding with the mother by the pretence of intersubjectivity, i.e. the (imaginary) company of brother and sister. (You’re not alone in the dark forest any longer: the whistling is by your side being the imaginary brother/sister). Every single whistle is the equivalent of the awakening function. On the other hand, whistling, regarded as a sequence of individual whistlings, dethrones this function and puts it into perspective. The series of whistled waking-ups corresponds with the lulling to

sleep, the endless indifferenciation of incisions on the behalf of the simulative way to reduce the gap in between difference and indifference, incision and flow.

As the series of whistlings, just because of every single whistling, is a question of the simulation of falling asleep and not of falling asleep in the true sense, it is not a dethronement of the subject in the state of dozing off, but an enforced top performance of the disposition of the whistling subject: dethronement of one's own "Ent-nächtigung"⁶.

It's obvious that the correspondence of the mother-son incest and deep sleep is a metaphor of the backshift into a threatening sleep-without-waking-up, reminder of prenatal, intrauterine times, assuming more or less a memory of the latter beyond the reaches of the memory of the subject. Kind of metaphysics? Yes, but a very specific one, for there isn't any memory without the assumption of an unconscious prehistoric time, regarded as a retroactive construction of the memory. The incest taboo and the incest desire are human reflexes to the genuine somatic genesis of the memory, the desire to dispose of the body, the wish to cover up the body and the urge of covering up the desire itself (as cult of the body, pornography etc.)

The scandal about the whistling girl is its occupation of the position of the subject (/of the son) by the aforementioned prevention of the incest – notorious power of the female sex to take hold of all the the positions of the family pattern: to be a mother, to go to work and earn money like the father, to be a subject oneself (i.e. a consumer) like the son.

Now, the problem is all about the question of the mother's desire in the mother-daughter conflict, for on the face of it her desire – which is exactly to be a mother – would be fulfilled by the transmission of life, answering the guilt (guilt beyond morals and beyond any ethics) of one's own sacrifice-bound existence, not with dying but with giving a new life for one's own life, by the fact of having given birth to a child. Fulfilment, which evidently always turns out to be a deception. As the whistling daughter puts it: "Mother has given birth to my body and that's it! But by the act of whistling I have just created myself as conscience, as perception of myself, as subject."

From the mother's point of view whistling would be a radical expropriation, a loss of identity in view of her motherhood. The girl is on top like the sparrow on the roof and whistles her claim (for waking up) to the yard (turning into lulling to sleep), or, respectively, "sie pfeift drauf"⁷ (lulling to sleep turns into waking-up, becoming a grown-up person and leaving the yard like Artemis).

That means that whenever the daughter claims the position of the subject (occupied by the brother) for herself – the non-acknowledgement of it: the daughter should rather be psychotic or in a coma, is thoroughly absurd (but revealing) – the mother should immediately feel under threat: the daughter, Electra and Orest at the same time, a crowing hen, taking hold of the shed, claiming to be the cock and the hen all in one.

Whistling as a reminiscence of the "danse macabre"? Of course, but "auf dem letzten Loch gepiffen"⁸ which means that all the other orifices, that's to say the mortal body, are ruined, locked up. The last orifice is the mouth, left over in the sequence of mortality (mixed up with

⁶ Deprivation of sleep

⁷ She doesn't give a damn to it.

⁸ German idiomatic expression meaning "to be on one's last legs", the word-by-word translation would be: "to whistle on the last hole that's left"

that of immaterialization) from the bottom to the top. The spirit “above the waters”, whistling itself into being, rid of any sensation of the body, needs nevertheless a medium of its own, i.e. a proportion to itself which would be the vocal organs as a remaining quantity of the organs.

Once more, whistling minimizes the remaining, self-denying quantity of the voice bound to the body. At the last transition boarder of the whistling lips, transition from the disembodied body to the outside, to the element of the invisible and indifferent air, where the individual voice, the timbre (difference!) vanishes in favour of a kind of transpersonal, objectified sound production (indifference!). Whistling regarded as a voice having become a thing, in which the cut-off/the necrotizing of the abdomen is self-referentially represented in the loss of the deeper frequencies.

Still the desire of immaterialization unconsciously implies

1. matter and maternity as agents of death (dualism of the body and the soul)
2. “immaterialization” (*Ent-mutterung*), the abolition of the mother, not referring to the person itself, but to the maternal body in general regarded as the origin of mortality itself.

Consequently, the best things are those which cover up their own materiality such as music. In the realm of music, whistling should be either on top or, conversely – being a human pretension of divine sound-production – right at the bottom of the list. The latter is, of course, true, and that’s why this pretension is reserved exclusively to men and not to girls, but still, once again dialectically speaking, the women are those who whistle (like e.g. once upon a time Ilse Werner⁹) in the shelter of medialization, representing the whistling of the medium itself. In a way, men don’t go beyond a whistle (difference/waking-up/representation), women go even further in whistling (indifference in the shelter of difference/lulling to sleep in the shelter of waking-up/presence in the shelter of their presentation by media).

“If the cock crows on the dung heap...” (“ändert sich das Wetter, oder es bleibt, wie es ist”)¹⁰
– ... Petrus just isn’t interested.

But if the hen does so, what does that mean then? It tells us the whole truth about the place of this representation: the chicken coop is a dung hill!

In other words: As far as male representation is concerned, everybody will know that the representation, taking itself for the represented, is actually not identical with the latter, that signifier and signified are two different things. (The mix-up of the signified and the signifier is nevertheless as necessary as the distinction of them for the signified only exists in the form of a signifier: there’s nothing but representations.) Everybody knows that, but keeps his mouth shut. (You know, but you don’t know if the others do so, as well; you suspect that the others know it, too, but it’s better not to be forced to find out, for this way you would have to make a final choice, whereas there are still two options left open to hypocrites: to go on with hypocrisy and to give the spoilsport a slap in the face or to drop one’s mask, likewise. The one who’s hypocritical is still free to be sincere as long as he doesn’t make use of it and that’s why the world is so mendacious.) But what about the representations of the women? (How to explain a virgin becoming a mother?) It can’t be different (for the woman, especially for the daughter) and still it must be different (with reference to the mother).

⁹ A German female entertainer from World War II until the 80ies who became popular for whistling.

¹⁰ German proverb meaning literally: “the weather will change or stay the way it is.”

Because of this dilemma which refers back to the trauma of the constitution of the memory, to the non-represented, non-memorized experiences of mortality of the intrauterine and early childhood stages, there was/is the tendency in patriarchy, to forbid representation to those women who are in the mother's position which is the origin of this trauma.

On the other hand, it's impossible to prohibit the mother from representing: women who represent are in the daughter's position, for the term "mother" doesn't make any sense to her in view of her own identity: a woman is a mother only for her children and not as such. Of course, it can be internalized by the woman for herself and there's scarcely any good mother ignoring the fact that she actually is one. For herself, in the sense of an identity which is independent of the Other, in the sense of a desired autonomy, a woman is whatever she wants to be, except a mother. *Daughter/son* on the other hand are given positions a human being can't get rid of. You can deny your parents but not the fact that you were born. That's why all representation necessarily arises from this derivative, filial perspective. The filial state clings to the person in every single statement and the representations of the mothers as such are their children.

But as the position of the daughter – being the negative of the mother – doesn't differ from the male negatives of the mother (the relevant difference is that of the position of the origin [mother] and that of the position of the offspring [father, daughter, son]), the problem arises that the woman, if representing in a way that is different from being reproductive, appears in the negative of the mother and at the same time *as a woman in a male position* (father or son).

So what if the identity of a woman for herself is limited to her motherhood? If there is nothing else except for her motherhood, being the only proof of her identity? My goodness: That's just the sort of woman who said/says the proverb, just the sort of woman who prohibited/prohibits their daughters from every kind of representation.

This kind of prohibition leads to the following dialectical capers:

If women who represent are daughters, the girls who *don't* whistle, don't represent, are not. (This reversal conclusion is only valid insofar every kind of representation implies a certain self-referential representation of the position from which is represented. It's only valid for all the girls/daughters but only partially for every single one.)

If the girl whistles to a mother whose existence is limited to her motherhood, she represents in her daughterly state that her mother's motherhood depends completely on the daughter herself: "If you are nothing else but my mother, your identity is thoroughly based on mine."

But if the girl doesn't whistle, such kind of mother is – being the mother of a girl that, as it doesn't whistle, is not a daughter – then she is, contrary to her self-image, no longer a mother. In that case she would only be a mother being mother of a son, if there is one.

Why is such kind of mother able to deal with a whistling son? Because the representing son – as representing son – always holds the status of mere representation which can't be that of the represented: it (not him!) is meaningless. Whereas the girl itself is meaningless, but not what she does: she discloses by her whistling the humiliation of her mother: "Look, mom, what you've left out, what you've sacrificed: you sacrificed yourself for my existence, your other identity as a daughter/as a woman."

And the ambition-eaten mother? The mother expecting of her daughter not calm modesty, but on the contrary perfect representation? For whom nothing about her daughter seems to be good enough? Isn't she the real prototype of an "absolute" mother deprived of her own identity? Yes, she is. Such a mother establishes her own identity exclusively as her own ideal by means of the perfect daughter, which is obviously quite an unstable position. For the decline of the rural world which the proverb derives from didn't cause the possibility of such a failed constitution of identity, confusing the constructed element of identity, mediated by culture, with the other aspect of culture, the phantasmatical immediacy of nature.

Without further do this kind of mother can fish out the old proverb, for in this case the whistling girl doesn't only represent the mother's exuberant being-for-herself, but she doesn't even give a damn to it (*sie pfeift darauf*). Any genuine representations of the daughter are not desirable, for what she's supposed to represent has got nothing to do with herself. The same procedure under different circumstances (*Be-ding-ungen*). Ice-skating-stadiums, sports stadiums, universities, television studios: such patriarchal stages of the representation of women (in the double sense of the absolute genitive) had to be invented for ambitious mothers who want to trim their daughters (or have them trimmed). The same about the base techniques of emancipation, starting with the ancient warp-weighted loom, ending with the postmodern Internet which paves the way for finding one's own identity by cutting down this identity on the other hand. The feeling of the mother to be born too early for such kind of self-representation (chosen by her own free will), to be late, to be too old for it on the other hand, turns out to be, from the subject's point of view, the basis of an embittered knowledge of one's own sacrifice-bound non-identity. (The older you get, the more you regret that this or that formerly wasn't at your disposition and at the same time you feel sorry for the youngsters who, being helplessly surrendered to the state-of-the-art, ignore that they're living in an impoverished *and* at the same time luxurious world.)

The claim for perfection refers to the fundamental urge to get rid of imperfection. Perfection refers to the complete cultural disposal of what clings to mankind as a rest of nature: the experience of our own mortality in all forms of our own failure and that of the others. But shame over the imperfection of the mother!: the daughter should live perfectly which was denied the mother; what's left to her is the feeling of the imperfection of this renunciation. Why is the mother still denied an own professional work? Because in her self-image, the feeling to be too old for what she expects of the daughter, the knowledge of the near coming of her own death is implied. To slave oneself away means to insert death itself, in the form of suffering, of pain etc., in other words the concrete knowledge of one's own mortality in order to defeat it at least temporarily. The consciousness of the coming of death in the foreseeable future gives rise to the wish to get rid of it, to keep it at arm's length, regarded as a sacrificial offering to its own postponement, merged into the knowledge of its coming. And in training, without which you can't overcome even the beginner's status, let alone perfection, you do nothing but minimize any shortcomings of life by the acknowledgement of your own shortcomings. You do so by means of intensifying the knowledge of it, in other words the underlying knowledge of your own definite mortality. Perfection is, as long as it is trained, the absurdity of definite helplessness. That's why the daughter should endure the whole burden of it: she's still young, she'll presumably put up with it.

Of course we all know that there is no perfection, that the girl will never satisfy the pretension of her ambitious mother. So, the structure will be maintained, a never-ending story, and that is the actual perfection: The girl will never be perfect, never be grown-up, her mother will always stay in the mother's function, everything will be the same – just that such magic arts

of death won't succeed which on the other hand makes all the urge of the desire for it: the despair of the mother.

Phantasm of the ambitious mother: her identity as a mother will survive the person in form of the perfect representation by the daughters and that's why the sacrificial award (which can only be paid in advance in the case of a desired perfection) can't be paid out in lifetime. Such pay-out to the daughter – like e.g. a praise for something she's already achieved – manages to introduce the difference between the for-herself of the daughter and the daughter as a representation of the mother. What the mother didn't have, an identity-for-herself – is denied the daughter in the sense of a fair swap: "I'm just your mother, so you can be either only my daughter or else my murderess." Such a logic based on the short word "only", of the "tertium non datur", transports the dialectical sudden turns e.g. of the purpose and the means. If the mother's unique purpose in life is her motherhood, she sees herself as a kind of medium of her children and the latter will merely be media of their mother's identity. The sacred desire "to-become-medium" conceals the pretension of being the absolute end-in-itself of one's own existence, projected on the offspring under form of a claim for perfection.

But why are there mothers who don't act like that? Who let their daughters whistle without any embarrassment, without wishing to get their whistling wunderkind a TV appearance? Who still have another identity and are busy with things – far beyond household, nursery and church-going – and know that their children are not necessarily neglected just because of this fact but that they can even turn it to profit? Just because of the things, those wonderful lethal lifesavers whose advanced state has to be taken into consideration (as actual pillars of patriarchy which is insofar unstoppable), things governing mankind – globally on a large scale as well as in everyday life – which do a double-bind groundwork in favour of the emancipation and suppression of the subjects, guarantors of the choice of a self in a endured freedom.

Come on, then, whistling woman, it's your turn now to fight at the philosophers' genealogical front line!

Propositions

Whistling is a sound production aiming at the difference, the incision, the waking-up.

The trenchant effect of this sound production – based on the lack of character of the single whistling determined by a threatening indifference which has to be rejected by the listener – is due to the pitch and volume overcompensating for the non-existing characteristics of the whistle.

The whistling's alleged character of indifference manifests itself in the lack of timbre. The whistles of different persons may possibly differ in view of the skill and the way of whistling, but it's impossible to identify the whistling person by her/his whistle.

Especially you can't make out the gender or the age of the whistling person. (Or are there any exceptional listeners and whistlers contradicting this thesis?)

That's why whistling reminds the listeners of the lack of identity of functionality (in our context, due to the proverb: the mother's position). Function (and, concealed behind that: the Other) isn't suitable for the constitution of one's own identity (which can't be effected just as little by the the denial of one's own function, i.e. the relation to the Other).

The *identity* of the person for itself dies with the latter, whereas its *function* as Other of the Others (as a mother, a father, a daughter, a son, an uncle, an aunt etc.) is apparently maintained in the memory of the surviving Other (generally the next generation). However, the error of a self-identification with one's own function for the Other which is implied by the attempt to survive in the form of the Other, consists in the denial of death, and therefore of the body and the self at the same time.

Whistling regarded as a sound production which is radically deprived of the lower abdomen (= "schamlos" having the double meaning of "shameless" and "lack of the woman's private parts"), a sound production of the lips (in this context you're allowed to think of those other lips) satirizes this denial of the self. Whistling is insofar a prototype of philosophical enlightenment.

That's the reason why whistling is devalued as a human and, above all, female pretension.

Translated by Susanne Vollberg