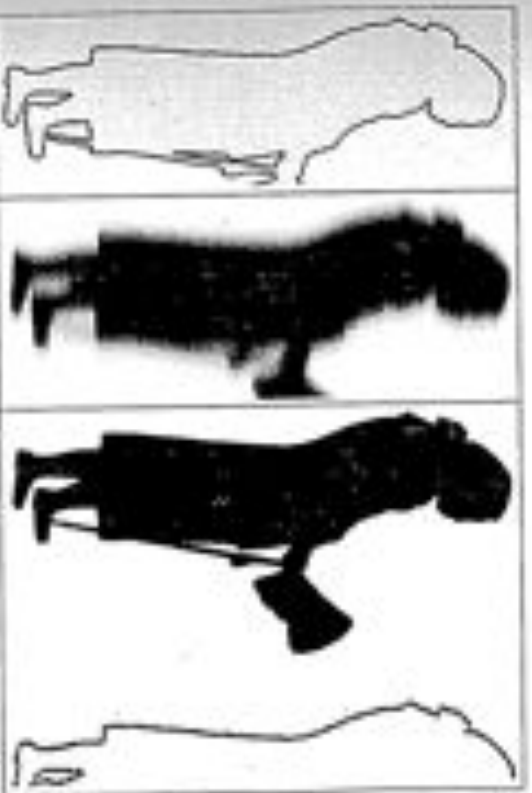


Pietro Perconti

Kantian Linguistics

Theories of Mental Representation
and the Linguistic Transformation of Kantism



**Materialien
zur Geschichte der Sprachwissenschaft
und der Semiotik**

Hrsg. v.
Klaus D. Datz
Ludger Kaczmarek

Band 10

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At the level of reality

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INTRODUCTION

The title of this book contains an ambiguity. There could be at least two types of 'Kantian linguistics': a linguistics by Kant and a linguistics inspired by Kant. We shall look at both, maintaining that a linguistics by Kant does not exist, although there are numerous theories of language inspired by his philosophy. According to our approach, really one can talk of 'Kantian linguistics' only in the sense of Kantian perspectives in linguistics. N. Chomsky in *Cartesian Linguistics* (1966) upheld a similar theory concerning René Descartes (1596-1650): 'Cartesian linguistics' is not so much the theory of language elaborated by Descartes, as the linguistic theories which were formed after Descartes on the basis of his philosophical programme. To use the Cartesian philosophy as a basis for linguistics is a task that impressed the Cartesians more than Descartes himself. I believe that the same can be said about Kantian and linguistics. While Kant was relatively uninterested in the elaboration of a critical theory of language, some scholars after him have considered his philosophy as a good starting point for working out a theory of language.

But is Kantian philosophy really a solid basis for someone who sets himself this objective? There are various arguments which could be brought to bear against this possibility, above all the fact that Kant himself did not follow this path. After all, if even Kant did not trust the possibilities of a critical theory of language there should be a reason why. But this is an argument *ad personam* that might be leveled. Kant might not have wanted or not have had the time to elaborate a theory of language, even if his philosophy is a formidable generator of linguistic theories, or he might

have formulated a semantic theory almost without realising it. These are less fantastic hypotheses than might seem, as we shall see. Another by-product is that the nature of transcendental philosophy is incompatible with the explanation of the facts of language, since these are empirical facts, while transcendental philosophy is concerned solely with a priori conditions making certain phenomena possible.

The (in)compatibility of Kant's philosophy with the understanding of linguistic phenomena is a problem that will occupy the reader until the end of the book. My theory is that in the original formulation (especially in *Critique of Pure Reason*) critical philosophy is not a good generator of linguistic theories, even if it is an extraordinary generator of questions about language. Even if we admit – as U. Eco suggests (1997, 1998) – that Kant would be embarrassed if confronted with the contemporary nomination of a bizarre animal such as a duck-billed platypus, nevertheless the questions provoked by the comparison with his philosophy and above all with the transcendental schema produce a “devastating” effect on the theory of language (according to a suggestion by Charles S. Peirce [1839-1914] mentioned by Eco). The fact is, even if we recognise that Kantian philosophy finds itself in difficulty in accounting for a few important linguistic phenomena, the solution could not be simply doing away with the Kantian approach. Perhaps Kant is not enough, but we cannot do without him. If we accept this perspective it is necessary to establish what transformations critical philosophy must come up against so that it can propose itself as a model for the theory of language.

During the twentieth century many theories of language have been proposed which for various reasons refer to Kant. These theories can also be considered just as many replies to our question. In this book, however, we shall follow a different path: we shall verify what transformations critical philosophy was subjected to by the first generation of interpreters after Kant. We shall therefore examine how the first Kantian philosophers also became exponents of theoretical linguistics. To choose such a viewpoint brings with it some benefits, among which there is the possibility of being less conditioned by the many interpretations of Kantian philosophy which have been worked out in the last two centuries. It is a matter of verifying the possibilities of a linguistic transformation of Kantianism within Kantianism itself.

To adopt a ‘behind the scenes’ perspective of Kantianism is not a theoretically neutral move. The dominant interpretations of linguistics from the German classical age go in another direction. A ‘standard historical

interpretation’ (Pozzanigari 1999: 277) is in force according to which this period is characterised by just two trends: historical-comparative grammar and linguistic idealism. Thanks to the first trend linguistics would have finally become scientific: works such as *Comparativumsystem* (1816) by Franz Bopp (1791-1867) have been proposed as the first example of rigorous linguistic research. If this idea is to be accepted, Bopp – or Friedrich Schlegel (1777-1839), Jacob Grimm (1785-1863), Joseph Severin Vater (1771-1836), Rasmus Rask (1787-1832) and many others still – would be to linguistics what Isaac Newton (1642-1727) and Galileo Galilei (1564-1642) have been to physics or what Antoine Lavoisier (1743-1794) has been to chemistry.

Historical-comparative grammar aside, the other trend characteristic of this period would be linguistic idealism, whose main exponent is Wilhelm von Humboldt (1767-1835). The Goethean philosophy of language has been labelled as ‘linguistic idealism’ as a consequence of the fact that the history of linguistics has developed as a branch of the history of philosophy. Only then, in taking its method from the history of philosophy, the history of linguistic ideas also adopted many results from the same field. In general this assumption can reveal itself to be quite appropriate: if the seventeenth century in England is characterised by an empiricist approach, it is reasonable to expect an empiricist linguistics as well. The risk, however, is to conceive the history of linguistics as putting the different linguistic and language philosophers in the pigeonholes of their corresponding philosophical movements, and considering linguistic debate as an appendix of philosophical debate.

Unfortunately, the model which considers the philosophy of language of the early nineteenth century as the application of philosophical idealism to the study of language reveals itself to be unsatisfactory. The idea that the birth of scientific linguistics coincides with historical-comparative grammar depends on a certain idealisation which is typical of comparative thought. Comparativism intended to measure the scientific level of a research activity by the criterion of historical-comparative linguistics (Aronson 1994). Moreover, the general grammar of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries by no means became extinct with the advent of the comparativists (Formigari 1997). The university chair in *Oratioale litteraturae* and *affigative Sprachkunde* – instituted in 1821 for Bopp – carries in its title an explicit reference to that research tradition. Confronted with so many elements of continuity between the seventeenth and eighteenth century and Romantic traditions, the break between the two fields

appears in a totally different light.¹ The presence of a renewed general grammar at the beginning of the nineteenth century is only an example of the fact that not all the contemporary linguistic movements can be called 'idealist'. L. Forstgatter (1994) has demonstrated that empiricist sciences were still very much alive and was experimenting with an autonomous research path. Karlsten linguistics is another piece of the same jigsaw, another trend irreducible to linguistic idealism. All things considered, such factors taken together should lead towards a comprehensive rewriting of language theories of the German classical age.

Despite the elements of continuity just mentioned, the epistemological break between the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries is patent. The birth of philosophical idealism and the application of this paradigm to linguistics in effect represent an important change with respect to the eighteenth-century tradition. The Kantian notion of 'transcendental' is one of the principal causes of this transition. It is responsible for the transformation of a natural into a transcendental history of language,² as well as for the separation between empirical psychology and linguistics (Forstgatter 1994). But it also marks the transition from the eighteenth-century appreciation of the formative role of language in thought to nineteenth-century representational theories of language and the mind. One has the impression that the notion of 'transcendental' was at one and the same time too noble a target and too constant a reference point for Kant's contemporaries, to be able to trace in it the primary cause of the epistemological break between the Enlightenment and the German classical age.

Aside from the notion of 'transcendental', many other observation points for motivating the gap in the transition of seventeenth and eighteenth-century linguistic theories to the German classical age can be proposed, such as the preference for the comparative method and the cartedly towards distant, mainly eastern civilisations, the pervasiveness of the idea of 'activity' in all fields of knowledge or the application of the epistemological model of natural science to the humanities.

There are paths which have been travelled a thousand times. In the pages which follow we shall attempt another, less travelled and a slightly more imperious path. We shall try to trace the subterranean lines which guided the transformation of philosophical Kantian towards a Kantian linguistics. Some of these lines can already be found in Kant himself, but the majority become manifest in his first interpreters. Our attention will be

turned above all to Georg Michael Rott (1760-1817), August Ferdinand Bernhardt (1760-1820) and Karl Leonard Reinhold (1758-1823). In their works Kantian becomes a theory of mental representation that faces up to the difficult problem of irreducibility of internal states. This theory of mental representation is then used as a basis for a theory of language which considers the linguistic capacity as a specification of the capacity to generate mental representations.

We shall stress on 'external representation' (Darstellung) above all. While internal representation (Vorstellung) is a non-modal mental content, external representation is a representation 'mounted' on a given material substrate in accordance with the nature of that substrate. External representation can take form in many ways, giving rise to various symbolic forms. For example, we have *figural* representations when the material substrate is of the spatial type, and linguistic representations when it consists of articulate voice. The theory of external representation regards the conditions that make a given non-modal mental content linguistic (or figural). The problem of external representation is therefore first of all the problem of representational *form*.³ At the beginning of the nineteenth century the way of facing such problems was different from that of cognitive science today. But the analogy of these questions is much more than a suggestion: when one works to elaborate a theory of language based on mental representation the same issues always come up. If one translates the respective terminologies, the problems of *form* and *substrate* representation, the *intentionality* of internal states, recognition of objects are all the questions of reference and meaning emerge once again.

Paying attention to the theory of external representation also allows us to retrace a philosophical linguistic trend the traces of which were lost. It follows the evolution of certain ideas in given contexts, sometimes even following the use of a word, we discover phenomena which have long remained obscured by tradition. The notion of Darstellung is one of these special observation points. Taking into consideration the notion of Darstellung, even when expressed in other words, helps to bring to light some interesting historical and philosophical phenomena. The current I am alluding to is made up of Rott, Bernhardt, Voss, Karl Heinrich Ludewig Politz (1772-1838) and Georg von Reichebeck (1766-1809). The theory peculiar to these scholars can be summarised in the following definition of 'language': 'language is the external representation (Darstellung) of internal representations (Vorstellungen) by articulate sounds'.

Some pieces of evidence allow us to identify this trend with a good degree of approximation. Two of these - both dating from 1815-16 -

1. Aesthet (1782), Dialectic (1784).

2. Forstgatter (1990: 230, 11993).

when most of these authors' works had been published, and particularly significant. In *Gesamtl. der reiner allgemeinen Sprachlehre* of 1815, Roß claims the merit of having already set going the trend of *Überwindung* twenty years earlier (Roß 1795) and is delighted to have had in the meantime a certain number of companions along the way: "this is why everybody who from then onwards wished to establish a general grammar (Vater, Bernhardi, Politz and Reinbock et al.) had to take their starting point from the concept of external representation" (Roß 1815: v-vi).¹ In 1795 Roß's proposal to base linguistics on a theory of external representation was still isolated and perhaps even a little daring. Roß did not belong to the German cultural establishment, and his competence above all concerned linguistics in the strict sense of the word, while the proposal he advanced had an explicit philosophical intent. On the basis of Reinbock's elementary philosophy, he characterized himself as an exponent of the Kantian school, without then having the weight of Reinbock or Johann Gottfried Herder (1744-1803). Because of this, in his last work (1815) he is happy to have had some followers in considering language as a means of external representation.

A year later Reinbock refers to the same philosophical-linguistic trend in *Das menschl. Erkenntnisvermögen aus dem Gesichtspunkte der durch die Wortgebrauch hervorgehenden Zusammenhänge zwischen der Sinnlichkeit und dem Denkvermögen* (1816). In an addition "on the different views of the essence of language", the author compiles a sort of catalogue of contemporary linguistic trends, with the aim of comparing his theory of language with the dominant perspectives. Among these are also included those linguists who define language as *die Darstellung der menschlichen Vorstellungen*, that is "as the external representation of man's internal representations" (Reinbock 1816: 218-219). According to Reinbock, the exponents of this trend are Vater (*Lehrbuch der allgemeinen Grammatik*, 1805), Bernhardi (*Anfangsgründe der Sprachwissenschaft*, 1805) and Reinbock (*Handbuch der Sprachwissenschaft*, 1811). The omission of Roß is strange because, as we have noticed, he was the 'founder' of this movement and based his theory on Reinbock's elementary philosophy. However, Reinbock's testimony is significant because it is extraneous to the trend and inserted in a sort of catalogue of "different views of language" of the early nineteenth century. Reinbock includes the *Darstellungstheorie* among the main linguistic trends of the early nineteenth cen-

tury. This means that at the time he was writing his book, this trend was already firmly established.

This book is divided into two parts. In the first part I shall discuss the problems and presuppositions of Kantian linguistics; in the second I shall discuss the proposals of Roß, Bernhardi and Reinbock. The first chapter deals with the old and complicated problem of Kant's opinion of language. I shall distinguish between two possible approaches to this problem. According to the first approach, Kant did not formulate any hypothesis on the nature of language. His silence is at the same time disconcerting and indicative: disconcerting because it signals the extraneity of one of the greatest exponents of western thought to a problem which from the time of Plato as Aristotle had been at the centre of theoretical reflection. But it is just this extraneity which is indicative, since it signals a scorching defeat of the transcendental claim of putting aside empirical conditioning in the site of knowledge. In other words, if in order to keep faith with the transcendental method it is necessary to keep quiet about an aspect of knowledge which is so clearly important, this same transcendental method proves to be irreparably weakened.

The second approach refutes the premise of the first thesis, i.e. that theory of language is lacking in Kant. Ever since the history of linguistic theories asserted itself as a mature discipline, the attempt to rewrite the history of philosophy starting from the linguistic problem has found many followers. Thus scholars have sought to track down everything that Kant writes about language and signs, using instruments of the most sophisticated Kantian philology. In this way a kind of 'transcendental semantics' has resulted, an articulate theory of the meaning hidden in the folds of transcendental philosophy. Incidentally, similar attempts have also been made regarding other German classical philosophers, above all Hegel.²

In the third section I shall put forward an intermediate and (I hope) moderate theory. Although it is not possible to deny that in Kant's work there are interesting statements about the working of the language faculty, to elaborate a theory of language on the basis of such statements is no very feasible. It seems to me, rather, that in Kant there are only the presuppositions of a theory of language, and that he was at most interested in tracing the pre-linguistic conditions making linguistic meaning possible. The reason why a theory of language is missing is probably that Kant con-

1 Cf. Marbach (1996: 479).

2 See also (1997b), Bachmann (1994b), Cook (1997), Wübbeler (1998).

shared language as an empirical condition of experience, and therefore from his point of view unsuitable for research on the *a priori* conditions which make knowledge possible. Kant stepped on the threshold of language, to go beyond that threshold, a rethinking of the theoretical presuppositions of Kantism was necessary.

This rethinking is based on a re-examination of the problem of schematism. In his *Critique of Judgment* Kant goes as far as maintaining that for the connection of concepts and intuition perceptible symbols, such as linguistic ones are needed. The possibility of re-examining schematism is thus opened up, verbal language being entrusted with a significant role.

There thus arises the possibility of a theory of language based on the capacity to generate linguistic schemata. However, so that Kantism could transform itself into a representational linguistics it needed first to be transformed into a theory of representation. This work was carried out by Reichhold in his first writings. The second chapter is devoted, precisely, to the Kantian-Reichholdian theory of mental representation. With Reichhold the Kantian doctrine becomes a scholarly philosophy, thanks to his analytical vocation and the search for argumentative rigor. Once all the presuppositions implicit in the Kantian theory of mental representation are thoroughly examined, the problem of reference of mental states becomes urgent. Reichhold attempts to provide a solution to this problem, but he must have found it still unsatisfactory. If in his successive writings he elaborates a comprehensive rethinking of his position.

The third chapter is devoted to the figure of Roach and his attempts to solve the problems left open in Reichhold's elementary philosophy. The role of Roach in our story is like that of two-faced Janus: on one side his approach has decidedly innovative elements, on the other he is contradictory and obscure. The most innovative aspect of Roach's proposal lies in the idea that the intentional capacity of mental states depends on the production of symbolic forms such as verbal language, figures in space and meaningful although inarticulate sounds. On the basis of this idea the reference of internal representations coincides with linguistic meaning and the semantic content of visual and auditory mental images. In this way Roach gives his own version of an idea which was widespread during the eighteenth century, according to which language carries out a formative role as regards thought.

Unfortunately, all this is expressed in an obscure and complex way. But what is unsatisfactory is, above all, the claim to ensure the intentionality of representations to the production of perceptive symbols (external representations), and at the same time not to accept that empirical condi-

tions can also be counted among the conditions of knowledge. In this way Roach is forced to maintain (implausibly) that the production of symbolic forms - such as verbal language - is an activity independent of any empirical conditioning.

In order to apply schematism and the theories of representation to the theory of language, it was necessary to enounce a few transcendental claims. The Kantian presuppositions probably needed to be constrained with some elements of eighteenth-century empiricism and with that part of empiricism which had survived transcendental philosophy. This path implied a certain amount of eclecticism, a risky operation and one full of traps. The first part of the fourth chapter is devoted to the description of Reichhold's theoretical linguistics which courageously and successfully follows the pathway of philosophical eclecticism. Reichhold's approach holds together an opportunistic theory of mind and a mentalistic theory of language. He refutes the idealistic theory of the speculative identity of language and mind, considering the latter as a device endowed with numerous resources, which are more or less opportune according to the stimulus to which the mind must respond. Besides, his theory of language is mentalistic since the linguistic faculty greatly depends on the capacity to form and manipulate mental representations.

The fifth chapter returns to Reichhold, examining his philosophy of language. As we have noticed, his theory of mental representation provided the theoretical basis for Roach's and Reichhold's positions. In the last phase of his life Reichhold devoted himself to logical and linguistic studies, profiting by the debate which had developed in those years. Reichhold's theory presents itself as a linguistic interpretation of Kantian schematism. While Kant entrusted the role of connecting perceptible intuitions and categorical forms to transcendental schemata, Reichhold maintains that this task is carried out by verbal language. If the schema is a generator of images suited to the concepts to be employed, verbal language is a generator of 'language common images', that is of devices for semantic shifting between an abstract concept and a perceptible intuition to be sought. In this way, Kantism is a framework of reference to a set of puzzles yet to be solved and hints to be exploited, but it is also subjugated to the new requirements of studies on language.

This book is the result of work begun five years ago and presented in partial versions and with various modifications on different occasions.¹ I

¹ *Protono (1994a - b, 1998, 1999).*

have taken into account the criticisms and observations that different people have brought to my attention. I would like to thank for this Marco Carpiterra, Felice Cimatti, Tullio De Mauro, Francesco Ferreri, Daniele Gambiara, Patrizia Lapina, Antonino Perrini, Francesca Piazza, Settimio Vecchio. But above all I would like to thank Franco Lo Piccolo, from whom I acquired the tone for and method of philosophical research, and Lia Ferreligari, who followed with great care and attention the researches that have come together here. I would also like to thank the Catholic University Centre of the Italian Episcopal Conference for their financial support in the publication of the volume. My wife Liliانا gave me a different kind of support, which was no less effective. A final thank, you goes to Laura Brömmelg for translating the manuscript and Denis Gahler for editing the translated text.

PART I

PROBLEMS AND PRESUPPOSITIONS

contained in the fulfillment of the Kantian principle of moral liberty in the philosophy of the spirit of G. W. F. Hegel (1770-1831) (Serra 1966: 6 ff., 81-83), now seem too vague to describe such an articulate and penetrating debate as the German classical one. It is true, however, that the role of Kant and the transcendental point of view was strategic. The influences of Kantianism are evident in every field of philosophy: in metaphysics, in moral, political and juridical thought, etc. Everywhere, except in linguistic studies, at least according to the traditional interpretation.

A question arises here: if critical philosophy provided the framework within which the German classical age developed, how is it that Kantian doctrine did not exert its influence on linguistic and the philosophy of language as well, which also had spectacular developments at the beginning of the nineteenth century? Is the matter of interpretations there are three replies to this question, and there are as many theories on the Kantian options on language.

According to the first approach, Kant did not exert any significant influence on the linguistics of the early nineteenth century because he himself was not interested in the language theory. Since a theory of language is missing in Kant, an important influence on successive linguistic theories is also missing. The second approach denies this lack of interest and traces an articulate semantic theory in Kant's work. Naturally this second interpretation also attributes to this sort of "transcendental semantics" an influence on post-Kantian linguistics.

In this book we shall defend a third approach, on the basis of which there are only the premises of a theory of language in Kant's work, which however is never developed. Kant stopped on the threshold of language, investigating only the *pre-linguistic conditions* making linguistic meaning possible. Even if Kant's reflections are not explicitly on a linguistic level, they are taken by some language theorists of the first post-Kantian generation as a basis for a linguistic theory inspired by critical philosophy. In this perspective we can therefore talk of a "Kantian linguistics": not in the sense of a linguistic theory hidden in the folds of transcendental philosophy of mind, but with reference to all linguistic theories elaborated immediately after Kant and used in the linguistic conversion of his philosophy.

The thesis of Kant's silence has its roots in the first interpreters of critical philosophy. In two works with similar titles both Johann Georg Hamann (1730-1788) and Herder through the same charge against Kant of re-

CHAPTER 1

Kant and Language

1.1 "Kant's Silence": A Defeat of Critical Philosophy

In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries Germany witnessed an extraordinary cultural scene. The universities were re-founded and as a result different branches of knowledge, among which there was linguistics, started to become institutionalised. Historical and juridical studies received a new impulse above all thanks to F. K. von Savigny's work (Dobbo 1996: 35-54). The natural sciences witnessed a development which often involved a radical change in perspective. If we add to this the works of Goethe and Schiller, Hölderlin and Kleist, Mendelssohn-Bartholdy and Schumann, these results a framework which the word *Romantik* at hardly covers. Romantic circles tried to interpret these transformations in the light of a few profound and generalised drivers, so that, on the whole, all the "spiritual climate" of the beginning of the nineteenth century can be called Romantic.

Unlike France, Germany did not show the conditions for a social and political revolution (cf. Meier 1974: 7 ff.), but it seems to have experienced at least a "cultural revolution". What did this revolution consist in? The interpretation of neo-idealism, according to which the revolution

pecting the linguistic aspect of knowledge.⁸ Even Karl Leonard Reinhold (1757-1823), another early appreciator of critical philosophy, reproaches his old master with the same neglect (Reinhold 1816). He even maintains that Kant's silence (Schlösserworte) on language is the most negative aspect of his philosophical inheritance. According to Reinhold, the Kantian attitude was the main obstacle to language studies in following decades (Reinhold 1816: 203).

After these initial protests, the question of Kant's silence remained in the shadows for a long time. With the insertion of bringing the problem to the centre of attention once more, T. De Mauro complained that until now "Kant's silence on language has not in general constituted a problem for philosophical historiography" (De Mauro 1965: 77). Furthermore, according to his point of view the slight attention that Kant gave to the linguistic problem is an inevitable fact. The structure of transcendental philosophy would have obliged Kant to assume this attitude. Kant's conduct is therefore seen as a sign of the weakness of his position. He was not really able to take the linguistic phenomenon into consideration because otherwise he would have been forced to revise his system radically. In reality, Kant's silence is the clearest proof of an internal difficulty in transcendental philosophy.

His silence on language [...] appears to be a tribute to the validity of the argument put forward by Berkeley and Hume against the notions of 'transcendental ideas' still present in Leibniz and Locke. Perhaps this silence is a sign of the highest recognition that has ever been granted to the irrefragable, inevitable historical interest in the human faculty of producing meaning. (De Mauro 1965: 81)

Kant's silence is thus seen as a (tacit) surrender on one of the defining points of transcendental philosophy, that is the possibility of considering human reason independently of its historical and empirical uses. With the weight of his extension, Rush's position, which we shall examine later, seems to represent the fate which would have befallen Kant, had he dealt with the theme of the linguistic faculty and had he really taken the danger of natural languages into consideration. Instinctively realising what he would have been up against, Kant therefore preferred to keep himself to himself at Klettberg, far away from the linguistic classrooms at the heart of Göttingen.

8. Massimo (1780), Humboldt (1796), cf. Wollsten (1786: 119 ff.).

The theory is without doubt fascinating, and besides, is based on criticism of Kant made even by his own contemporaries. Perhaps we are only a little unjust with Kant if we believe that the under-evaluation of the linguistic problem is an implicit admission of guilt. If Kant had really accepted, even tacitly, the impossibility of studying human mind while doing without empirical conditioning, he would have declared all his own philosophy devoid of substance. The possibility of this paralyzing is essential for transcendental philosophy and it seems unlikely that Kant could have given way on this point. We shall look more deeply into this topic regarding the third approach, but first it is necessary to take into consideration a more radical objection, according to which Kant did not keep quiet about the topic of language at all.

1.2 Transcendental Semantics

The second approach completely overturns the traditional idea of the absence of a reflection on language in Kant's work, challenging its central theme: is it true that "Kant kept silent on language", that "a really is a question of silence"? (Di Cesare 1996: 181). In criticisms of the theory of Kant's silence, the fact that numerous Kantian ideas are at the basis of the philosophy of language in the last two centuries has had a great impact. No modern philosopher has played such an important role as Kant in the linguistic change of perspective in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, so much so that the historiographic criterion "before Kant - after Kant" can be used as a term to identify the moment of that change.⁹

In effect, following Kantian influences on linguistic and semantic thought from the nineteenth century to the present day means following the entire history of linguistics and semantics in the last two centuries. Kant's traces are already evident in Humboldt, as E. Cassirer (1874-1945) noticed (1923). One of the fathers of modern semantics - C. Peirce - in an 1897 fragment recognises that he was influenced by Kant more than by any other author: "I devoted two hours a day to the study of Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* for more than three years, until I almost knew the whole book by heart, and had critically examined every section of it" (Peirce 1897: ix).¹⁰ That similar considerations could be made for Martin

9. Di Cesare (1996a: 182), but previously Agel (1813: 1025), Cassirer (1977: 1976).

10. On the Kantianism of Peirce cf. Agel (1877).

Heidegger (1889-1976), Ludwig Wittgenstein (1889-1951) and other proponents of the philosophy of language in the twentieth century.

Is it possible that Kart did not realize the enormous linguistic value of his own assertion? Strange as that may seem, some scholars have maintained that Kart was not wholly aware of the role that language plays in the transcendental experience (Dascal/Sendrowska 1997: 135). Kart is therefore said to have elaborated a scenario theory despite the general denunciation of his own philosophy.

Those who maintain that a real theory of language is conceivable in Kant have quoted various passages to support their thesis. Sanderowicz and Ducal stress one passage – the only one, however – of transcendental deduction in the first edition of *Critique of Pure Reason* (CPR) in which the role of verbal language in the empirical synthesis of apprehension is discussed.

Not could there be an empirical synthesis of reproduction, if a certain sense were sometimes given to fish sometimes to that object, or were one and the same thing named sometimes in one way, sometimes in another, independent of any rule to which appearances are in themselves subject. (A, 301)

According to the interpretation given by Sanderowicz and Dascal, absence of ambiguity is therefore to be included among the conditions making empirical synthesis possible. Critical and linguistic research therefore seem tightly bound. In *Prolegomena* this link is even more explicit and Kart claims that the investigation into the actual use of words and compilation of the grammar are conditions for tracing those concepts which occur in all knowledge coming from experience.⁹

The passage in the first edition of *Critique* and the one in *Prolegomena* just referred to show that Kant is aware of the role played by language in empirical knowledge, but they do not at all show that Kant entrusted a transcendental role to language. The point in question, in fact, is that Kant believes that verbal language is a condition making every experience possible. Only if language had this function could one talk about a "transcendental semantics" and one could maintain that language performs a strategic role in critical philosophy. But Kant never makes clear and uncontroversial assertions in this connection, and this is the essential reason why a thematic treatment of the role of language is missing in his critical works and especially in *Transcendental Logic*.

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In works dedicated to the question of the Kartian opinion on language, two distinct problems are often mixed together: on one hand the question of the importance of the linguistic phenomenon and on the other the question of whether language is also a condition making every report correct possible. It is necessary to keep these issues distinct, since they concern spheres which from Kart's point of view are completely different. As a matter of fact it is possible to reply positively to the first question and negatively to the second. Take history and society, for Kart language too is an important phenomenon, but not a transcendental element.

In the last thirty years the attempts to reconstruct Kant's linguistic theory have however multiplied. Many scholars, especially in the Anglo-Saxon countries, have indulged their fancies in the operation "which consists in reformulating certain Kantian problems in the terms of philosophy of language" (Formigari 1994: 15). The paradoxical result of all these attempts has been that the traditional image has been completely overturned. So much so that, from the idea that Kant was entirely uninterested in the linguistic phenomenon we have gone as far as believing that all his philosophy can be translated into linguistic terms. In reality Kant, under the disguise of a transcendental philosophy of mind, is said to have wanted to formulate a precise semantic theory. Recently scholars have sought in various ways to remedy these excesses, which go against all evidence.¹¹

There are as many Kantian theories of language as there are interpretations: each time light has been shed on Kant's relation with the hermeneutic tradition and idealism¹⁷ or with analytical philosophy,¹⁸ or a "transcendental semantics" inspired directly by Kant has been proposed (Hogrebe 1974). If the Kantian critique of knowledge leads to something which *pre-*cedes experience and conditions it, in the same way transcendental semantics goes as far as assuming a "pre-semantic phenomenon" which precedes any given sign as a condition of possibility. According to W. Iffig, this pre-semantic phenomenon is "the signifying materiality of signs before their establishment, as signs, in constitutive phenomena" (Hogrebe 1974). In short, he thinks that before signs there must be, as a

For example, see Bates (1960), April (1973), Hagopian (1974), Nelson (1979), Pagan (1982), Terasvirta (1984), Copeland (1987), Engle/Granger (1992, 1993), Chow (1996).

III. P. a. 1746011990, T. 1746011990, 1746011990

Customer (1971b, De Cooze (1976))

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condition of their being possible, something that already has meaning. The duty of transcendental semantics would be exactly to explain what this something means, which is then taken on as signifier, *beforehand*. But if one supposes that the signifier has a sense before it really becomes one, then it is not clear why this process cannot be taken as far as one likes. One cannot see therefore why one must not suppose that the meaningfulness of the signifier before its assumption in a sensuous code does not imply a further meaningfulness which must exist even before. The abolition in Hegel's view is clearly implicit in this regression to infinity; indeed, in his last writings he admits that a sign that already has meaning before becoming a sign, in reality has no meaning (Hegel 1992).

1.3 At the Threshold of Language

As we have seen, both the interpretation of Kant's silence and the interpretation of transcendental semantics come up against great difficulties. The principal defect of both theories is their exaggeration: on one hand, in the light of more recent research we can no longer maintain that very interesting observations on the theme of meaning and signs are lacking in Kant; on the other hand, it seems excessive to fully insert such observations in the programme of critical research, since verbal language does not have the essential characteristics to make it a transcendental element.

In order to overcome the difficulties involved in the two interpretations that we have just examined, we must take a third possibility into consideration. It is a more moderate position and in a certain sense more the middle way with respect to the other two, the principal characteristic of which is simplicity. Kant may have undervalued the function performed by verbal language, although in his works there are very significant observations on this topic, simply because he believed language an essential for the formation of human knowledge. From his point of view language is an epiphenomenon of reason, conditioned by the structure of the latter but at the same time not influencing its working. Kant's main purpose is not to explain the behaviour of language, but the functioning of what today we would call 'mind' (cf. Brock 1994; Kitcher 1990). His transcendental view led him to rebar the possibility that such an 'impute' element such as language, linked to the diversity of languages and the fluctuations of vocabulary and syntactic rules, could be considered a condition that precedes experience and conditions it. According to him lan-

guage is rather an object of experience conditioned by deep rules of the mind that he had investigated in *Transcendental Logic*.

Though Kant's influence on contemporary linguistic theories is remarkable, his position contrasts with contemporary relativistic sensibility and the idea that every event can be interpreted as a sensuous and linguistic process. If one believes that the entire cognitive process is a linguistic activity or that it is not possible to consider mental representations independently of their use in a linguistic system, then Kant's observations seem unsatisfactory. However, from the point of view of a transcendental theory of mental representations, they seem plausible and consistent. Unfortunately, the question of Kant's philosophy of language has often been dealt with starting from linguistic expectations in the strict sense and not from a theory of representation with linguistic aims, which would seem instead the more suitable perspective for appreciating Kant's observations.

In other words, the best point of view for evaluating the Kantian contribution to the successive philosophy of language consists in not paying too much attention to what he explicitly said on the theme of language, and move to his contribution to a theory of mental representation in which there is a place for the formative role of symbolic systems. This perspective has been clearly formulated by L. Forstgatter.

In the history of linguistic ideas, *Wortbedeutungstheorie* or the theory of representation, is a branch which allows us to reconstruct a continuity in semantic studies. [...] The study of *Wortbedeutungstheorie* on the other hand, allows us to follow up this line of development of semantic theories which sees *Wortbedeutungstheorie* as a starting point, passing through Stoicist and flourishing in the philosophy of symbolic forms. During this process, ever and above his "silence" on language, Kant has played an extremely important role in finding a basis in the formal components of mental operations.

(Forstgatter 1994: 29)

If this view is accepted, we can also abandon the often fruitless attempt to make the scattered Kantian assertions on language consistent. Kant's role in the theory of language is entrusted not so much to that which he explicitly maintained on the role of verbal language or signs. Some of his assertions are hardly original: for example, in the classification of different types of signs in *Anthropology* (artificial, natural, prodigious, etc.) he inherits seventeenth-century sensuous taxonomy. Neither is it useful to try to reconstruct a Kantian linguistic theory from the more or less guarded uses of 'linguistic' terms or from the attention to terminological precision and absence of ambiguity. Such attention is more at home in that "neglected analytical heritage", the value of which is being

discovered above all thanks to studies by H. J. Chomsky (1972, 1975; 1988), and of which Fregehold is the principal post-Kantian inheritor.

The most significant aspect from this point of view is the Kantian theory of mental representation, especially his thought on the use of representations in empirical tasks, such as the recognition of objects or the use of empirical concepts. In coming to grips with such tasks, Kantian pure reason proves to be much less contaminated by concrete elements than one would expect. In these aspects of Kant's work, the author often uses symbolic forms, either linguistic or pre-linguistic, that prove necessary for the functioning of a priori forms. Reflection on the role of such symbolic forms in the generation and use of mental representations is perhaps his principal contribution to creating linguistic theories.

1.4 The Issues of Schematism

In this perspective what Kant says about schematism is very important. The task of the transcendental schema is to connect through subsumption (Subsumtion) or application (Anwendung) the forms of the understanding and sensible intuitions.¹⁴ But the nature of this connection is quite problematic: the non-empirical concepts of the understanding and perceptible intuitions are, Kant admits, completely heterogeneous elements. The transcendental schema, which should be the third term of the connection, homogeneous on one side with the categories and on the other with appearances (B, 177 ff.), risks increasing the fracture, instead of repairing it.

Since critical theory has a distinctly dualist theme (perceptivity/appearance; intuitions/concepts, etc.), a device is needed which is able to explain how the concepts apply concretely to intuitions or how a concrete individual can be recognized starting from an abstract class. But the possibilities of mediation by this device are limited: schematism risks sharing all the problems of transcendental deduction that it sets out to solve. Deduction too, as a matter of fact, regards the question of the extent to which, and above all the terms in which, the claims of various conceptual forms in the field of perceptible experience are founded. The most radical criticisms brought against both theories regard their presumed weaknesses. Schematism appears to be a superfluous duplication of deduction

and, in any case, instead of joining the two areas between which it is placed, to end up increasing the fracture.

After having been an enthusiastic disciple of Kant, Herder was the most radical critic of schematism. He casts doubt on the gap between mental and physical, intellectual and perceptible, a priori and a posteriori on which the very need for transcendental schematism is based. On the contrary, for Herder, "the meaning includes modes of inexact experience and pre-conceptual structures of sensibility and corporeality" (Tassi 1996: 204), so that it is not necessary to suppose any element of mediation.

In trying to solve these problems Kant must have had in mind above all the debate on generality developed between John Locke (1632-1704) and George Berkeley (1685-1753). According to Locke, general ideas are nothing but the meaning of general terms and generality depends on abstraction. The latter is the process thanks to which ideas taken from particular individual things become representative of all the objects of the same species and their names become general names, applicable to everything that conforms with those abstract ideas. For Locke, however, the general triangle does not exist, since in reality only individual triangles exist. Therefore the general abstract idea of the triangle is something imperfect which does not exist (Locke 1690, IV, VIII, § 9).

Berkeley's objections are directed against the very possibility of abstraction and try to demonstrate that general abstract ideas are inconsistent, in the sense that they are ideas of something that is psychologically and logically contradictory. They are based on the possibility of separating the modes and qualities of the substance to which they refer. But, according to Berkeley, the qualities and modes of things can never exist separately: colour, for example, cannot exist independently of a (coloured) surface. Nor can qualities and modes exist independently of other qualities: for example, colour cannot exist independently of extension. The mind can separate only those things which can exist separately in reality, but, if it is impossible for two things to exist separately in reality, it is also impossible for them to exist separately in the mind. The problem that Berkeley raises regards disjunction, i.e. the impossibility of possessing a complex disjunctive property without possessing any of the properties which make up the disjoined things.

The solution proposed by Kant is innovative with respect to this debate – however one wishes to interpret it – inasmuch as the schema is accurately distinguished from the image. While the image is a mental representation, the schema is a rule for generating mental representations. It

14 Cf. from the studies most useful in our perspective Baum (1968), Lamerchia (1971), David (1977), Kung (1987), Capuzzi (1987), La Beca (1989).

other words, Kant believes that in order to explain the tasks of recognition and to resolve the problems of generality we need to pass from the representational paradigm to the operative one (Tani 1996: 202). Trying not to fall into the trap of the preceding debate on generality, Kant affirms that "no image could ever be adequate to the concept of a triangle in general" (B, 180).

If five points be not altogether one another, then, [1...], I have an image of the number five. But if, on the other hand, I think only a number in general, whether it be five or a hundred, this thought is rather the representation of a method whereby a multiplicity, for instance a thousand, may be represented in an image in conformity with a certain concept, than the image itself. For with such a number as a thousand the image can hardly be surveyed and compared with the concept. This representation of a universal procedure of imagination is providing an image for a concept, I create the scheme of this concept. (B, 179-180)

Herder denies that it is possible, "to represent to oneself images in abstracto without any sensible image in concreto (as the general rule, a dog that does not have the figure of a dog)" (Herder 1799: 115). Furthermore, Kant had recognised that his theory was more obscure on this point:

This schematism of our understanding, in its application to appearances and their mere form, is an art concealed in the depths of the human soul, whose real studies of activity must be barely likely even to allow us to discover, and to have open to our gaze. (B, 180-181)

The scholars of the generation after Kant contended to discover how this obscure mental faculty works. It was too enticing an opportunity: being at the same time a crucial point of the argumentation of the CPR and one of the rare passages in which Kant renounced his usual argumentative rigour and explicitly admitted difficulty.

The productive imagination, or rather the capacity which generates schemata, is one of the devices of schematism on which the interpreters concentrated most attention. It is a theme which involves both cognitive and aesthetic aspects, and which thus meets the favour of all Romantics, such as August Wilhelm Schlegel (1767-1845), who mixed genealogical curiosity with literary interest. The case of the young Humboldt can be included among these: his transformation of transcendental philosophy in a linguistic direction starts precisely by basing itself on the interpretation of the notion of *Eindeutigkeit*¹¹. Using the notion of imagination he enacts a redefinition of the distinction, dear to Kantians, between receptivity

and spontaneity, conceiving both of them as modes of the imagination (Di Cesare 1991: xxxiv). His own interpretation of the imaginative faculty is based on the theory of sexual distinction, according to which the power of imagination (*Eindeutigkeit*) is comprehensible only in terms of the sexual generating force (*Erzeugungskraft*).¹² This original interpretation, a little eccentric even compared to Humboldt's later development, made Kant lose his patience and write a letter to F. Schiller (1799-1800), who was the editor of the journal in which Humboldt had published his essays (*Mooren*), to protest against the interpretation given by the young and careless Humboldt. Even if he recognised a "good head" in Humboldt, Kant could not accept such an unrigorous version of his own philosophy (Kant 1795: 604).

1.4.1 *Eindeutigkeit* symbolica

There has been much discussion in Kantian studies on how the imaginative faculty produces schemata. It has been observed that this was one of the main points in the development of linguistic studies deriving from Kant. All this is all certainly correct, but there is another question regarding schematism which has not been sufficiently considered and has not been adequately linked with the linguistic conversion of Kantian: the theory of *symbolische Symbolik* or theory of external representation (*Darstellung*). It is a doctrine, present from *Psychology Lessons* to *Outline of Anthropology*, which proved to be one of the principal points in the more towards the later linguistic theories inspired by Kant.

The core of this doctrine is the notion of *Darstellung*, a word which Kant took from recent philosophy. To appreciate the theory of *symbolische Symbolik* in the Kantian formulation and in the later ones by Roß, Bernhardt and Reischoldt, it is indispensable rapidly to trace the history of this word, which moreover began just a few years earlier, and to examine how Kant uses this notion. The starting date of this brief history could be 1774, when *Deutsche Gelehrtenrepublik* by F. G. Klusstock appeared. The first person to draw attention to this date was M. Kierstien (1928). According to his thesis, before 1774 the term *Darstellung* is not of any importance in German literature: "we must absolutely maintain that until 1774 in poetic-artistic culture the use of *Darstellung* was unknown" (Kierstien 1928: 173). The merit of introducing the word into the literary

11 Humboldt (1790: 201, 275; 1794: 277).

debate should therefore be attributed to Klopstock. It is an opinion that has had a certain following, and has recently been supported by W. Menninghaus who – in an essay on the notion of *Darstellung* in Klopstock – has spoken, in the wake of Kutschera, of the “opening of a new paradigm” (Menninghaus 1994: 205).

But is it really true that before 1774 the term was unknown? There are some elements which contradict this statement. B. J. Harter opposes Kutschera's theory, maintaining that the discovery of the concept of *Darstellung* was made, before Klopstock, by Gotthold Ephraim Lessing (1729-1781) and Herder (Glatzer 1976: 314). In effect, in *Laokoön* Lessing had tried to describe the rules of the single arts as rules of *Darstellung* (Lessing 1766: 98). Moreover, in *Kritische Mäße* (1769), precisely in *Wertes Wärdchen, über Aesthetische Theoretik der schönen Künste*, Herder also defined poetry as an art of *Darstellung* (Herder 1769: 129-130). And, if it is true that the occurrences in Lessing are only rare (Kutschera 1978: 175), it is also true that – as Kutschera admits and as L. Müller-Bach later amply demonstrated – there are quite important examples (Müller-Bach 1992: 341 ff.). Kutschera's theory, as often happens with extreme opinions, is easy to remember but a little exaggerated.

It is more reasonable to think that there was no “invention” of the notion of *Darstellung*. Rather, a process of semantic change occurred in cultivated German language which, in the space of a few years, brought the term to the centre of attention in the cultural debate. Klopstock, Herder and Lessing all contributed at first to the process. Besides, they did not have to radically modify the meaning of the word, which on the whole has remained fairly stable in the German language since the sixteenth century. As early as 1582, in *Sines vocabularium et phrasium oris linguarum*, at the entry *descriptio* we find: “*caligare, effectum dare, ob oculos ponere, oculis subicere, proponere, representare, ostendere, exhibere, demonstrare*”.¹⁷ Perhaps the most appropriate image of the phenomenon we are trying to describe is contained in the *Deutscher Wörterbuch* by the Grimm brothers. Rather than going in search of imprecise inventors of this idea, a descriptive attitude is adopted with the intention of explaining an important change in linguistic use. In one meaning of the entry *vorstellen* it is noted that when it is a question of representing something, “through a drawing, picture or sculpture”, the verb had been supplanted by *darstellen* (Grimm/Grimm 1951: 1679).

Even if we choose to leave aside the question of the “invention” of the notion of *Darstellung*, the strangeness of the original absence and the sudden success of the idea remains. Until 1770 *Darstellung* was not a significant notion in German literature and philosophy. In the last decade of the century the use of the term is instead frequent enough to seem almost a fashion. It is such an unexpected success as to have an extraordinary quality: around 1800 *Darstellung* even ends up as a definition for a group of linguists and a way of conceiving linguistic ability.

In identifying with an idea, two roads are usually followed. At times one consults oneself to well-known terms which present the advantage of being very rich from a semantic point of view, but which for this very reason are easily misunderstood. Other times a new word is coined, so as to be easily recognized and to lessen the risk of misunderstanding. The term “phenomena” in L. Hjelmslev (1899-1965), for example, belongs to the second case. In the theory of *Darstellung* neither of the two roads was followed: though quite new, the term was not coined by the scholars who are identified with it. Rather, when they decided to adopt it in the last five years of the eighteenth century, it had already made a name for itself elsewhere.

All things considered, it seems to me that in the history of this idea three phases can be identified (1774-1795-96; 1795-1805; 1805-1815). The first lasts little more than twenty years, going from *Deutscher Gentiv-novels* by Klopstock, which notwithstanding everything represents a change in the use and meaning of the notion, to *Fischer-Graffen* by Novalis (1773-1801).¹⁸ The distinctive feature of this phase lies in the success the idea had. The principal exponents are, in addition to the previously cited Lessing, Herder and Klopstock, as well as Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph Schelling (1775-1854),¹⁹ Novalis and, above all, Kant.

The second period begins around 1795, from the first work by Bach, *Anmerkungen über philosophische Untersuchungen über den reifen Begriff der menschlichen Sprache und der allegorischen Sprache*. From this work onward *Darstellung* is no longer an idea, even meaningful, which one refers to in discourse centring on other questions, but becomes the thematic object of interest to some scholars who see in this notion the key to understanding the linguistic phenomenon. Other than Bach, the principal exponent of this second phase is Bernhardi. His *Ästhetik der Sprache* (first published in 1805) closes the most important decade in the history of this

[17] Novalis (1795-96, no. 128, 131, 183, 185, 215, 249, 250).

[18] Schelling (1793), cf. Pöschel (1988).

[19] Novalis (1795-96, no. 128, 131, 183, 185, 215, 249, 250).

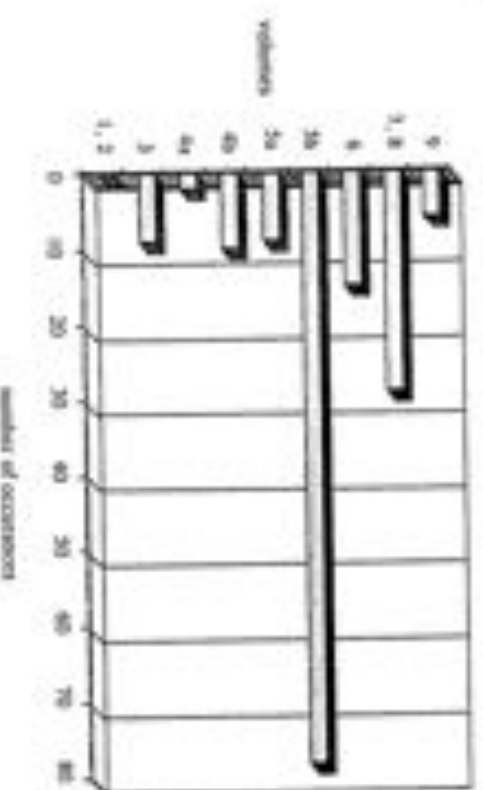
idea. Following Bernhardt's work, and thanks to the authority that he had acquired in the meantime, various other scholars refer to this idea making it the basis of their own linguistic theory (Vater, Reinbeck and Peltzer). The fact that these scholars share the same research path shows that they can be considered, as we shall see, a philosophical-linguistic movement. But by this time the debate on external representation goes well beyond the corresponding current and involves very different authors such as Reinhold, Humboldt, Hegel or even Karl Wilhelm Ludwig Heyse (1797-1855). It is exactly this widespread debate, conducted in a linguistic, aesthetic and speculative direction, which constitutes the third phase in the history of this idea in the German classical age.

But let us turn to Kant. Although Herder, Lessing and Klopstock made important contributions to the success of the notion of *Darstellung* in German classical culture, critical philosophy represents a change. One of the merits which can certainly be attributed to Kant is his contribution to the formation of a new philosophical terminology. This result, valid first of all for the German language, thanks to the importance of critical philosophy was extended to philosophical terminology as a whole. This aspect of Kant's theory, pointed out by Ch. Garve, the first reviewer of *Critique of Pure Reason*, became as a result the object of close analysis. Among Kant's merits there is also that of having contributed in a decisive way to the success of the term *Darstellung*. Furthermore, his contribution was independent of observations by Klopstock and other predecessors (cf. Heider 1991: 15).

To appreciate the impact of the notion in the Kantian system it is useful to begin with a few lexical observations. In the first nine volumes of *Alteutsche-Abgaber* the word appears 158 times in all. The most curious circumstance is that it is completely absent in the pre-critical writings which, as is well known, cover a good thirty-five years of scientific activity. In these writings only twenty-four occurrences of the verb *darstellen* appear in a non-technical sense. The term *Darstellung* appears for the first time in 1781, in the first edition of *Critique of Pure Reason*, in which, moreover, there are only two occurrences. The appearance of the term coinciding with the opening of the critical phase of Kantian philosophy is not casual but rather suggests that it contributes to the formation of the conceptual apparatus of transcendental philosophy. From the absence in the pre-critical writings, the occurrence in fact grew slowly as the

shift in the transcendental direction is consolidated. The following graphic figure shows this circumstance.

Figure 1: Occurrences of *Darstellung*, -en in the *Alteutsche-Abgaber*



- Vol. 1, 2: *Verstehtliche Schichten* 1767-1777
 Vol. 3: *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* (2nd ed. 1787)
 Vol. 4a: *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* (1st ed. 1781)
 Vol. 4b: *Prolegomena, Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten, Metaphysische Anfangsgründe d. Naturwissenschaft*
 Vol. 5a: *Kritik der praktischen Vernunft*
 Vol. 5b: *Kritik der Urtheilskraft*
 Vol. 5c: *Der Religion innerhalb der Grenzen der bloßen Vernunft, Der Metaphysik der Sitten*
 Vol. 7, 8: *Der Geist der Fiktionen, Anthropologie in pragmatischer Hinsicht, Abhandlungen nach 1787*
 Vol. 9: *Logik, Physische Geographie, Pädagogik*

Information taken from Martin (1967)

If we bear in mind that in order to perceive the correct temporal succession, columns 3 and 4a should be inverted, the hypothesis that we have just advanced appears to be confirmed. The frequency of use reaches its peak with *Critique of Judgment*, where almost 50% of all occurrences are found (78 out of 158).

In Kant the term is usually accompanied by three expressions taken from Latin and Greek: *exhibito*, *hypothese* and *subiectio* sub adpoc-
tate. It seems that Kant is doubtful about leaving the term on its own and
prefers to accompany it with other explanatory locutions. He probably did
not then consider 'Dermithing' a philosophical term with unambiguous
meaning and preferred to support it with more consolidated expressions in
order to specify the sense. The use of the Latin word *exhibito* could make
one think that Dermithing is something immediate, a direct exhibition of
the concept. In this case the words 'exhibition' and 'presentation' would
be more suitable for an English translation. I prefer to adopt a different
solution: instead of 'exhibition' and 'presentation' - which allude to an
immediate activity - I shall use the expressions 'external representation' -
in that this expression alludes to a mental activity consisting in a media-
tion. This preference is due to the fact that I consider the Kantian exhibi-
tio symbolica a representational activity mediated by the production of
symbolic forms. Moreover, this expression allows us to highlight the con-
tinuity between Kant and post-Kantian linguistics that use the term 'Der-
mthung' exclusively to indicate an external representation.

[illegible]

But exactly what did Kant mean by *Darstellung*? As a first approximation one could reply that it "must be understood as the whole of the possible direct or indirect forms of schematisation".²⁰ Although this is appropriate, it is a definition which shows how vast the field of mental operations is that is included in it. What strikes us most is that the notions of *Darstellung* and *schemata* end up having the same meaning. A series of Kantian concepts, such as the following, lead us to this conclusion:

Where the measure of an object is given, the fraction of judgement, in its employment of that concept for cognition, amounts to Derrubling (realisation), i.e. in placing beside the concept an instance corresponding to it.

The action of the imagination consisting in providing an intention for a case
(Kant 1788-91: 237)

These definitions have become standard in the Kantian philosophical sphere, as the *Langenscheidtsches Wörterbuch der kritischen Philosophie* by O. S. A. Meißner shows.

[External representation diagrams] the work of the faculty of judgment consisting in placing a corresponding intuition here so the concept that it must be put in connection.

(Metaph. 1797-1804.2: 6)

In addition to the activity of schematization, *existitio* is also connected with the activity of constructing concepts. For Kant, indeed, "to construct a concept means deriving *a priori* the intuition which corresponds to the concept" (B, 741). However, if the exhibition must take place *a priori*, then it needs non-empirical intuition. The concepts of mathematics and geometry prove to be the most suitable for this construction operation, since they are based on pure intuition. "Mathematics gives us a shining example of how far, independently of experience, we can progress in a *priori* knowledge (B, 8). For mathematical and geometrical concepts there is the possibility of an *exhibitio a priori* in concrete, or rather a connection between intuitions and forms of the understanding which fill the positions of form with the corresponding content (*concreti modo determinati*) (B9).

In this case exhibitor designates the activity of 'giving an object (where *Gegenstand* refers), in the sense in which this activity is found in the first Critique, that is to say with the reference of the representation of

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the object to actual or possible experience (*als ob* *denn* *Vorstellung* *mit* *Erlebens* - *es ist* *wirkliche* *oder* *denk* *objektive* - *bestehen*) (M, 195). In the same passage Kant specifies that the operation of 'giving an object' does not regard the case of objects understood indirectly, although exhibited immediately in intuition (*sondern unmittelbar* in *der Anschauung darstellend*). In these cases Döring designates an actively deprived of mediation, more in conformity with the use of the Latin word *subiecto*. A reason which is capable of an a priori exhibition, and therefore capable of constructing its own concepts exclusively using its own means, is an autonomous reason which has no need of any mediation. Nevertheless, even admitting that such a reason works in mathematics and pure geometry (as Kant imagined), it is doubtful that it works in all other cases.

The problem is that in explicating the connection between the understanding and sensibility different levels of analysis coexist: on one side there is the problem of convergence and of the very legitimacy of applying categorical forms to sensible data (*transcendental schematism*), and on the other side the problem of the subsumption of intuitions to empirical concepts, for example in the case of object recognition (*empirical schematism*).²³ Section fifty-nine of *Critique of Judgement* - traditionally a major reference point for the transcendental semantics position - must be taken into consideration in this light. Here Kant formulates his theory of aesthetic symbolism, also presented elsewhere (see for example the *Psychology Lesson*), in the best possible way.

1.4.2 Words as *Darstellungen* and Words as *Charakteristiken*

Section fifty-nine has a title that on the face of it does not say anything of interest about the questions we are examining: 'Beauty as the symbol of morality'. It seems to introduce a treatment of the old question of 'the beautiful and the good', i.e. the propensity to believe that beautiful people and things are also good. It is undoubtedly a stimulating problem (cf. Vossenkuhl 1992: 94), but one which is a little eccentric with respect to linguistic questions and the theory of representation. Notwithstanding this, it proves to be an important opportunity for the reformulation of the problem of schematism. The opportunity is given by the fact that what is beautiful is so thanks to some physical or perceptive characteristics, while what is good seems to be so thanks to imperceptible values or ideas.

In other words: beauty always produces some intuition, whereas goodness is much thanks to a conceptual categorisation. Not that beauty evokes categorisation and goodness does not become concrete in bodies or behaviours capable of producing a intuition, but on the whole the relationship between the elements seems unequal. In short, there are some physical characteristics of beauty which seem to recall some non-physical aspects of goodness. Kant sets out to understand how this relationship works.

The section begins with the theme of 'proving the reality of our concepts' (*die Realität unserer Begriffe beweisen*) which, from the transcendental point of view, is the same theme as 'giving an object'. Kant starts that to prove the reality of our concepts it is necessary to refer to intuition, which are the part of the human mind closest to experience. The fact is, to prove the reality of our concepts, it is enough to connect them to intuition. However the situation changes radically according to the type of concepts that search for their own intuition. There are at least three types of concept: empirical concepts, pure concepts of the understanding, and concepts of reason or ideas. In the case of empirical concepts the corresponding intuitions are examples, while in the case of pure concepts of the understanding they are schemata. In both circumstances knowledge can be called by extension *schematic*, in that it looks for an objective correspondence between concepts and intuitions.

Things become a good deal more complicated when we no longer find ourselves faced with concepts of the understanding, either pure or empirical, but instead with ideas. In this case the link between concepts and intuitions cannot be established in an objective way and give birth to well-formed knowledge. This reasoning in the first *Critique* had led Kant, as is well known, to give a very critical opinion of the possibility that there is a *wise* knowledge of ideas of reason. Later the judgement on this point is a little mitigated: although he does not give a schematic and objective *entailment* of ideas of reason, it is nonetheless possible to give at least an *entailment* symbolic of them. The latter, however, no longer seems, as instead happened in *Transcendental Dialectic*, a surrogate of well-formed knowledge, but a different and nonetheless essential way of *normal* knowledge.

Just as the schema allows the connection between intuitions and concepts, the symbol guarantees the connection between intuitions and ideas. This link, of an analogical type, does not regard the content of reflection, but its form, that is the way ideas and intuitions agree. Kant calls such forms of reflection 'rule of procedure' (*Regel des Verfahrens*), paying attention to the fact that the link, even though not schematic, is nevertheless regulated by precise norms. Beauty is the symbol of morality, since

the procedure through which the two concepts relate to sensible intuitions is analogous, so that it is natural to think that what is beautiful is also good.

The intuitive mode of representation is, in fact, divisible into the arithmetic and the symbolic. Both are hypotyposis, i.e. Düring's *Einbildung*, and more marks. Marks are merely designations of concepts by the aid of accompanying sensible signs devoid of any intrinsic connection with the notion of the Object. Their sole function is to afford a means of breaking the concepts according to the imagination's law of association - a purely subjective rule. Such marks are either words or whole (algebraic or even musical) signs, simply as expressions for concepts. (Kant 1790: 255-256)²⁴

Although the schematic mode of representation is different from the symbolic one, they have in common the search for corresponding intuitions, which indeed is more fruitful for schemas than for symbols. The first mode searches for intuitions in an objective way, the second in an analogical and subjective way. Thanks to this common search, both modes of representation are called *intuitive*, to distinguish them from a second mode of representation, made up of marks, which Kant called *artificial*.

The distinction between Düring's *Einbildung* and Charvat's *Einbildung* (marks, characteristics) is no less important than the distinction between schematic and symbolic Düring's *Einbildung*. We have noticed how deep the differences are between schematic and symbolic external representations. These, however, are still complex mental processes able to form semantic content. What distinguishes one from the other is the way in which they do it. Marks, on the contrary, do not possess the property of forming semantic content at all. They are limited to establishing a link between an already formed semantic content and a signal capable of bringing it to mind. To sum up, it is the basic structure of the semantic code, to which Kant did not attribute any remarkable cognitive role.

The common element for all external representations is the reference to sensibility and therefore intuition. This reference, enacted through symbols, seems to refer to the linguistic function. The examples given by Kant to explain this point of view are taken from precisely the linguistic field.

In language we have many such indirect Düring's mediated upon an analogy enabling the expression to contain, not the proper

reference for the concept, but merely a symbol for reflection.

(Kant 1790: 257)²⁵

The words examined by Kant are *Grund* (ground), *abhangen* (to depend), *folgen* (to flow from), and *Substanz* (substance), terms which - incidentally - are of strategic importance for philosophical research. According to Kant, the word *Grund* recalls the idea of support (*Stütz*) and thus (*Stütz*), perhaps because its primary meaning is that of 'basis', 'ground' and 'background'. *Abhangen* is a divisible verb made up of *abhangen* (to hang, to be attached) and the prefix *ab* (from) and therefore recalls the idea of being held from above. *Substanz* is proposed as the support of accidents in virtue of its original meaning of 'something that is underneath'. The case of the verb *folgen* is a little more complex: Kant notes how it is used instead of the more neutral 'to follow' (*folgen*), leading the simple occurrence of two events with the ulterior meaning of causality that they did not originally have. The echo of the discussion on the category of causality that Kant treated in his first Critique can be heard.

On the whole, the meaning of such words is suggested through a sensible metaphor rather than indicated through a convention. The process followed by the mind when it thinks of that which is underneath and which it takes to be substance, of something that is beautiful as moral good, and, let us say, of how the conductor moves his body to represent the music he is conducting, is a process that extends to more familiar and vivid elements instead of sensible and remote ones. Resorting to the sensibility of the symbol therefore appears to be a decisive ingredient for indirect Düring's *Einbildung*. It is because of these elements that Kant used the technical tradition of hypotyposis and *substantio* and *supervenire* to explain his point of view.

The mediated reference to sensibility is what distinguishes Düring's from marks. The latter have no objective element that refers to the structure of human reason, inasmuch as they are simply concomitant signs subjectively established. They are something which is in place of something else on the basis of a convention, or rather "according to the imagination's law of association". Marks distinguish themselves from symbols in that they have no intrinsic rule that leads the mind to a certain intuition (even indirectly), but rather they simply indicate one-to-one correspondences between concomitant elements. They are therefore mere expressions of concepts (*bloße Ausdrücke für Begriffe*). This specification on the differ-

²⁴ Transl. Marbach (Kant 1790: 221).

²⁵ Transl. Marbach (Kant 1790: 221).

ence between Anschauung and *Darstellung* was to accompany all the successive theory of external representation until Hegel (1836). It is a distinction already clearly outlined in Kant, and one which in turn was to be used to indicate the opposition between simple access to sensations and conscious and indirect representation with communicative intent.

Thus verbal language performs two distinct semantic functions. On one hand, there are words such as *Grund* or *Ursprung* that allow the assumption of a sensible characteristic from a certain area in order to fix an idea void of sensible intuition sensually connected to it. On the other hand, there are words that act as simple signs of concordance, in which there is no cognitive process able to form meaning. The former can be called *Darstellung*-words, the latter mark-words. Following the 'rule of procedure' of schematism, *Darstellung*-words contribute to the formation of ideas. Mark-words, on the contrary, find a ready semantic context and undertake in a more modest way the passage to the exterior through a certain code. Mark-words, unlike *Darstellung*-words, do not go seeking any intuition, even in an analogical way. The role of language remains therefore suspended between the formation of ideas and their simple expression.

In recognising two semantic functions which are so different in verbal language, Kant risks contradicting himself. If attention is paid only to the function of mark-words, there is the impression that he has seriously undervalued the linguistic phenomenon. In effect, sometimes it does seem that Kant considers natural languages as mere epiphenomena of reason in the field of history: "philology", which contains a critical knowledge of books and languages (literature and linguistics) comes back into historical learning as the science of the instruments of learning" (Kant 1800: 39). From this there comes an idea of linguistics, seen as an instrument of cognition for increasing historical knowledge, that could not satisfy contemporary linguists. On the other hand, if one takes the *Darstellung*-words into consideration, there emerges the formative role of language connected with a schematisation made up more of concrete symbols than a priori schemata. The linguistic reformulation of schematism in effect is based upon the admission of the importance of the role of perceptible symbols in addition to transcendental schemata. Kant admits that, at least in the case of ideas, to fulfil the operation of connecting concepts and intuitions it is not sufficient to put a schema into effect. It is necessary to resort to a symbolic *Darstellung* which, being based on the faculty of the imagination, is able to fulfil the operation of choosing a sensible characteristic instead of an abstract notion necessary for 'filling' the idea.

Yet even if we highlight the importance Kant attributed to analogical representations and to certain linguistic functions for referring concepts to intuitions, some difficulties remain which make Kant's position difficult. His idea of linguistics was not attractive enough for professional linguists as a model of their own discipline, but neither was his theory of representations at all satisfactory for scholars of the mind. He admitted the need for symbols in order to prove the reality of concepts and hence assigned to analysis analogical external representations and to linguistics a much more important task than that put forward in *Logic*. But he did not draw the necessary consequences from this.

The principal defect of the Kantian theory lies in not considering whether symbols, which are necessary for binding intuitions and non-corresponding concepts, have some retroaction on the formation of mental representations. In other words, does being subjected to resorting to perceptible symbols that do not correspond to the form of the understanding change the semantic content of representation or not?

Let us take the case of the idea of God, also discussed in section fifty-nine. On this occasion we cannot do without resorting to perceptible symbols. If one seeks to put a schematic procedure into action seeking for intuitions corresponding to the idea of God, one falls into anthropomorphism, since the only intuitions that we have at our disposal belong to the human sensible world. Moreover, if one wants to escape this risk by rejecting any possible intuition which recalls the idea of God, one falls into Dethism, "which furnishes no knowledge whatsoever - not even from a practical point of view".²⁶ The knowledge of God needs intuitions and therefore cannot be discursive. It is also necessary that such intuitions be sought using symbols, since schemata are not suitable for the purpose. Kant was engaged in excluding the extreme wings of schematic-intuitive knowledge and discursive knowledge for marks, but he did not worry enough about understanding whether symbols, like schemata and marks, have some retroactive effect on the conceptual content. Instead - as the Kant of *Transcendental Dialectic* certainly knew - knowledge of the idea of God is problematic exactly because of the influence of perceptible symbols. Perhaps Kant did not wonder what happens when an internal representation is formed through an extrinsic symbolisation because the latter, from this point of view, is not something formed and autonomous in the domain of representation. In a word, for Kant *Darstellung* is not a mental

²⁶ Kant (1790: 258). - Transl. Menden (Kant (1790) 1982: 223).

representation distinct from Wertheimer (contrary to Neurath/Clarke's opinion, 1996: 28).

Another weak point in the Kantian theory lies in the cannot for which one would resort to analogical perceptible symbols (*analogis symbolice*). The main cause would be the subdivision between concepts of the understanding, which require the schematic *enbelts*, and the ideas of reason, which require the *enbelts* symbolice. But this cause proves to be unattainable. Kant does not follow this distinction in a rigorous way: between the examples that he brings forward for *enbelts* symbolice there are cases that can hardly be seen as ideas of reason. The notion of 'to depend' (*abhängen*) and causality, recalled by the term *Grund* and the verb *hängen*, seems rather to be examples of categories of the understanding. Considering these elements, there is the impression that Kant has raised a problem rather than elaborated a theory. It is probably thanks to this indeterminacy that in the space of a few years the question of synthetic *enbelts* was to attract the attention of so many scholars.

CHAPTER 2

Mental Representation: From Kant to Reinhold

2.1 Form and Matter of Representation

In the linguistics inspired by Kant much importance is given to the capacity to shape mental representations. The linguistic faculty is even defined as a specification of the representational faculty, so Kantian linguistics can be fully considered a representational linguistics. Kant's theory of representation and especially his thoughts on *enbelts* symbolice are the starting point for this perspective. The system of critical philosophy, with the distinction between an active and a receptive phase of cognition – the technical terminology used by Kant himself – are taken as a basis for reflections on language. Language scholars after Kant tried to work out, within the linguistic faculty, solutions to these problems which still seemed unresolved in the Kantian theory of mental representation, such as the question of the productive imagination.

In 1789 a work by Reinhold appeared which quickly established itself as the standard formulation of the Kantian type of theory of mental representation. The title of the work announces the search for a new theory of the human representational faculty, though in reality it is a systematic exposition of Kant's theory. However, Reinhold's exposition is so thorough

that the Kantian theory seems to take on new innovative contours. The canons of the orthodox idealist interpretation became a little too passe about the question of Reinhold's originality or faithfulness to Kant. Undoubtedly the Reinholdian reformulation of 1789 differs from its model in various respects, but on the whole the two theories prove to be complementary, so that it is worthwhile talking about a theory of mental representation common to both Kant and Reinhold.

As soon as it appeared, Reinhold's work bitterly divided the public: some found it remarkable, others a mystification.²⁷ Certainly, it was a book destined to provoke discussion, with it the author wanted to clear up the obscurity and confusion that in his opinion characterized contemporary philosophical systems, so as to transform philosophy into a rigorous science. Overcoming the misunderstandings that had clouded *Critique of Pure Reason*, it was finally possible to complete the Kantian design of a new philosophy. The basis of this ambitious project was the theory of representation, the investigation of which, in his opinion, was left a concretion in Kant's theory and therefore was to be faced as a new enterprise. He had to remain faithful to Kant's acquisitions, but at the same time provide some basis for the development of transcendental philosophy.

The Kant-Reinhold theory of representation is recognizable first of all in that it is clearly alternative to Hegel's theory. The main difference between the two perspectives consists in the larger or greater extension of the notion of *Verstehung*. While Kant and Reinhold maintain that any mental content is an internal representation, for Hegel *Verstehung* is the fruit of a specific faculty: the *reflecting understanding*. Because of his opposition to the philosophy of reflection, he was contrary to all the theories of representation, in that he considered them the result of scattered thoughts that cannot be put into the perspective from which single determinations proceed. By contrast, Kant carried a lot about his taxonomy of representations.

There is no lack of terms suitable for each kind of representation, that we should then methodically enmesh upon the province of any one of them. Their serial arrangement is as follows. The given is representation (*Verstehung*) in general (*repräsentativ*). Subordinate to it stands representation with consciousness (*perceptiv*). A perception (*perceptio*) which refers solely to the subject as the modification of its state is sensation (*Empfindung*) (*sensatio*), an objective perception is knowledge (*Erkenntnis*) (*cognitio*). This is either intuition (*Intuition*) or concept (*Begriff*) (*intuitus vel conceptus*). The

former refers immediately to the object and is single, the latter refers to it mediately by means of a feature which several things may have in common. The concept is either an empirical or a pure concept. The pure concept, in so far as it has its origin in the understanding alone (just in the pure thought of sensibility), is called a notion (*notio*). A concept borrowed from nature and transcending the possibility of experience is an idea (*idea*) or concept of reason. Anyone who has familiarised himself with these distinctions must find it undeniable to have the representation of the colour, red, called an idea. It ought not even to be called a concept of the understanding, a notion.

(B, 176-177)

Even if Hegel was less interested than Kant in the working of the human mind and considered classifications like the Kantian one the fruit of a sensual perspective, his proposal, however, is clearly identifiable. In his opinion, the *representative context*, raised to the status of intuition (*Intuition*), the *representational context* (*Empfindung*) is transformed into representation (*Verstehung*) and this in turn into thoughts (*Gedanken*), which in their highest form are called concepts (*Begriffe*) (Hegel 1827: § 440). This hierarchy of the different phases of the cognitive process shows that by *Verstehung* Hegel did not mean a generic mental content, but instead a particular moment of knowing – or rather the product of the understanding, while thoughts and concepts are produced by reason.

Representations are still the fruit of a subjective activity, which lays down its determinations keeping them clearly distinct and separate, and not grasping their internal relations. It is a moment of intelligence still endowed with unilateral subjectivity. It is the middle way between intelligence which is still fragmented, and free intelligence. In short the representation is not really 'being', inasmuch as it is still immediate with respect to thought. Hegel attributes great importance to the difference between representation and thought, considering it a decisive point for marking the difference between his position and the philosophy of reflection, which remained conditioned by the opposition between the knowing subject and the known object (cf. Clark 1971).

Representing has this sensible material for its content; but it has it with the determination of what (what content is in itself, and of universality, of the reference to one's self, of simplicity. [...]) The distinction between representations and thoughts of this content does not have as easy distinction. In those representations the content must be called thought even more, in that there is also the form of universality [...]. However, the possibility of representation in this regard also consists in finding in it this content as being intended [...]. Representation coincides here with the understanding [...]. The difference of representation and thought has special importance, because in

27) For a detailed reconstruction of the work's reception, see Pogg (1966).

general one can say that philosophy does nothing else but transform representations into thought - but, in truth, it transforms, furthermore, simple thoughts into concepts. (ibid. 1823: § 20)

The distance between Kant and Hegel on the topic of representation, although considerable, was destined to grow with Reinhold's interpretation of critical philosophy. Reinhold could easily boast of the merit of having contributed in a decisive way to the spread and understanding of critical philosophy in Germany. The followers of Wolfian scholastic metaphysics, confronted with Kant's rejection of their philosophy, reacted by publishing the *Philosophisches Magazin* edited by J. A. Eberhard, at that point Reinhold rose in defence of his master, asking him to be accredited as the official interpreter of his thought (Pogg 1966: 152 ff.). Kant, although appreciating Reinhold's opinion, refused to give him such an important role. With hindsight it seems that he really was right not to give Reinhold that recognition. With his numerous changes in direction, Reinhold would probably have confused his contemporaries on the meaning of critical philosophy. However, at least until the period of elementary philosophy, Reinhold would earn the role of official interpreter of Kantianism through the indefatigable work he did in popularising transcendental philosophy.

The Kantian-Reinholdian and Hegelian perspectives were not the only proposals concerning the representational faculty. Indeed, during the German classical age this question was such a controversial topic that it is difficult to remember all the different opinions. In *Über den gegenwärtigen Zustand der Metaphysik und der transcendentalen Philosophie überhaupt* (1797), Reinhold tries to define the debate and compiles a sort of catalogue of theories of mental representation. In all, he counts six: apart from his own, he mentions the theories of empiricism, rationalism, scepticism, materialism and idealism.

For the empiricist the mental representation (*Vorstellung*) is something given (*Gegebenes*) either by sensation or by reflection, and is a merely passive mental state; for the rationalist, it is something produced (*Hervorgebracht*) by the substance of the soul (*Seele*) and is a state of mere activity (*Tätigkeit*); for the sceptic it is in part an impression that has reached the mind once known not to be, and in part a copy of the impression; for the materialist it is a particular modification of the human organism; for the idealist all of this happens in the soul. (Reinhold 1797: 215-216)

In his book of 1789 (*Vorlesung über neuen Theorien der menschlichen Vorstellungsgegenstände*), in a similar index of positions on the theory of representation, spiritualist and dualist theories were also registered. The latter

separate the subject - made up of the soul (*Seele*) and the representational capacity - from the organism, which they consider a simple instrument of the soul. In this perspective, Reinhold notes, it is not at all clear whether the body is the seat of all types of representation or only of sensible ones. As for the spiritualists, they are especially interested in proving the immortality of the soul, so they attribute the representational faculty to a simple bodiless entity that - according to the various versions - is capable of either producing all types of representation or only supernatural ones, without the contribution of the impression on the senses (Reinhold 1789a: 196-198). Although it is very thorough, this list is still incomplete, since it does not consider the fact that many thinkers cannot easily be assigned to one of the aforementioned positions. But at least it gives an idea of the richness and complexity of the German classical debate on mental representation.

According to Reinhold's definition, "representation is that which in consciousness is made distinct, by means of the subject, from the object and from the subject, and, however, is related to both" (Reinhold 1790: 168). In other words, a mental representation is that which in consciousness guarantees the reference to external objects thanks to the resources of the subject, precisely through the difference operated between itself and external objects.

First of all a distinction should be made between representation as type, or rather what the various kinds of representation (intuitions, concepts and ideas) have in common, and representation as such, or mere representation (*bloße Vorstellung*). In Reinhold's perspective only the analysis of the latter can be transcendental and can therefore guarantee the identification of the characteristics that every representation must have in order to be such. Only the analysis of representation as such can avoid the confusion between represented object, representing subject and representation.

We know objects outside us and the same representing subject is us by means of the representations that we have of them, and that we must, however, distinguish from them, which as such are not like representations. Represented things, in that they are outside us, and the soul is not the representing consciousness themselves, that we have of them, and our consciousness must have itself in every way to absolutely avoid putting the represented object in place of the representation as such, or the latter in the place of the representing subject. (Reinhold 1789b: 4)

If we are not capable of this distinction we risk attributing exclusive properties of representation just only to represented objects and representing

subjects. To define the concept of representation just adds it is not enough to set aside the different types of representation (concepts, ideas, sensible intuitions); one must rather base oneself on the faculty of consciousness itself, as we shall see, is the only element which can be considered primitive at least as much as the mere representation (Reichhold 1790: 169).

In representation as such we can distinguish between *internal conditions* and *external conditions*. External conditions are necessary requirements for the existence of something, even if they are not constitutive characteristics. For example, for each human being his or her parents are external conditions, since without them that human being could never exist, even if they are not essential characteristics of a person once he or she is born. On the other hand, internal conditions are essential characteristics of an entity: for example, for each human being the body is an internal condition, inasmuch as a person cannot be separated from his or her body (Reichhold 1790a: 199).

In the case of representation the external conditions are the represented object (*vergegenwärtigtes Objekt*) and the subject that represents something to himself or herself (*vorstellendes Subjekt*), which we could compare to the parents in representation. The internal conditions are the matter (Stoff) and the form (Form). As far as external conditions are concerned, Reichhold simply states that for there to be a representation it is also necessary that there be someone who has that representation and something to which the representation is referred. It is a very general observation that, though it excludes any simplified idealistic interpretation by Reichhold, it still does not tell us how a mental representation is made, but only on what conditions it can exist.

With matter and form, instead, the analysis becomes more detailed. As a first approximation one can say that matter is that which inside a representation corresponds to the represented object, while form is that which corresponds to the representing subject. In this definition "correspond" means more "depend" than "refer to", since the representation reflects its own intentional capacity only if considered as a whole and not through a single component.

In turn the matter of representation is distinguished from the internal object (*Gegenstand*). Both elements refer to the external object, but correspond to two distinct mental operations. In order to explain this difference Reichhold resorts to a mental experiment: one has to imagine a distant tree which gradually comes closer to the observer. In this moving mental image there is something about the representation of the tree which changes and something which remains the same. What remains identical is the in-

ternal object (*Gegenstand*) of the representation, while what changes is the matter (Stoff) (Reichhold 1790a: 230-231).

In conclusion, in the reference of mental representation three elements can be defined: the external object, the internal object and the matter. The external object is the (external) condition of the representation, which in the noumenal world corresponds to the mental representation. In the Kantian-Reichholdian perspective the possibility of an authentic knowledge of things-in-themselves is excluded. Men can have knowledge of external objects only inasmuch as they make representations of them. While these representations there must therefore be an element which refers to the things-in-themselves, even though it is ontologically different from them. Everything we know about the external object is what is assumed in representation, in the form of external object and matter. The internal object is the content of representation, that which distinguishes the representation of a tree from that of a flower. The matter is the way this content is concretely presented: the tree, for example, can be distant, close by, out of focus, distinct.

The matter is an essential element in every representation, since it is this that allows it to refer to external objects.

Every representation without exception must have matter in the sense that we have described, and the representation in general can hardly be thought of without this matter, as in the case of the form of a real thing without matter. [...] The matter is that essential part of the representation, from which it rightly takes its name (*Gegenstand*). By virtue of which language designates something that occurs to the consciousness and through which language represents another thing external to the consciousness [...]

(Reichhold 1790a: 231, author's italics)

Contrary to what one may think, the matter is a more elementary condition than the internal object of the representation. Empty representations themselves have their matter (that which changes in the stream of consciousness); it is just that this is determined through an internal object (*Gegenstand*) (that which does not change), to which the predicate of reality is unjustly attributed. For example, the matter of the representation of Alice (in Wonderland) is determined by an internal object in the representations which is not even an object of the real world. What is missing in the empty representation of Alice is not the matter: the reader of Carroll easily places Alice in the most disparate of situations and in the most varied ways. What is missing in Wonderland is what Reichhold calls "the internal object of representation", or rather that which in the representa-

tion can find confirmation of the thing in itself, in the form of an external object.

This work of attribution of reality cannot have its origin either in the matter or in the represented object, and therefore it must be the fruit of a specific representational activity. A mental representation is not the causative effect of a more or less weakened impression, but the fruit of the joint action of two specific faculties: the faculty of receiving elements from outside and the faculty of endowing these elements with a form taken from the structure of our mind. The outcome of the first faculty, which Reinhold calls *Acquiescence*, is the matter of representation, while the outcome of the second faculty, called *Spontaneity*, is the form (Reinhold 1789a: 263 ff.). The work undertaken by spontaneity can be referred to the *Transcendental Analysis* of the first Critique, while receptivity can be referred to *Transcendental Aesthetic*, though reflections by the latter Reinhold were to take these acquisitions more and more into the direction of an empiricist-type theory of perception.

The principle of receptivity is recognizable above all in intuitions and perceptive representations. But even in this case we do not have in front of us a weakened image at all, but rather a representation endowed with an autonomous intentional capacity deriving from the imposition of a categorical form, as well as from the residue of the impression of the senses. Reinhold considers intuition (*Anschauung*) and sensation (*Empfindung*) as two aspects of the same reality. Both are sensible representations: they are called "sensations" with reference to the subject and "intuitions" with reference to the object (Reinhold 1789a: 359).

The form of a representation is what the mind puts into the interpretation of a given sensible datum: "the representational faculty consists in the second place of spontaneity, that is, of the active faculty that endows (heretofore) a given matter with a form of internal representation" (Reinhold 1789a: 267). It endows a given sensible multiplicity with a certain unity deriving from categorical forms, through connection and synthesis (Reinhold 1789a: 288). This articulation of unity, which generates the internal representation endowing the sensible matter with a form, is in short what thought and judgement do. As we have noticed, the relationship between the matter and form of a representation has a certain analogy with the relationship between transcendental aesthetic and analytic. More generally, the theme of the matter and form of representation can be considered a reflection on the Kantian problem of the relationship between forms of receptivity and forms of spontaneity, considered on the level of a representational theory of the mind.

Besides, a theory of representation that wished to start from the critical model could not but carry a certain dose of dualism along with it: this was a characteristic that was never to be absent from Reinhold's philosophy, even when his research was broadened to include theories of perception and language. Reinhold considers as dualists those philosophers who operate a clear distinction between the soul (*Seele*), where the representational capacity resides, and the body (*Leib*), which they consider a mere instrument of the soul (Reinhold 1789a: 196-197). He would therefore not have accepted his position being considered dualist. However, if we distinguish between ontological dualism and *gnoseological* dualism, even Reinhold could be considered a dualist philosopher.

According to ontological dualism, states of affairs in the world and mental events belong to two classes of different entities. Considering mental representations as a device for mediation between subject and world, *gnoseological* dualism instead supposes a double intentionality, directed both towards the subject and towards the world. In addition to a double intentionality, it also supposes a double level of description for physical and mental processes. The irreducibility of the level of mental description, or even simply its explicative suitability, is characteristic of this type of dualism, for which the old distinction between interior and exterior remains fundamental for understanding cognitive phenomena. *Gnoseological* dualism does not necessarily accompany ontological dualism, since the doubly intentional role of mental representation and the suitability of a double level of description can be supported, while one will detect the ontological difference between mental events and the other states of affairs. By contrast, ontological dualism inevitably also carries a dose of *gnoseological* dualism with it.

If we adopt this terminology, we can affirm that Reinhold's theory of representation is dualist from a *gnoseological* point of view, but not from an ontological point of view. His proposal presupposes both a double intentionality and a double level of description, but does not accept the distinction between body and soul as if they were two different substances, one being material and the other spiritual.

2.2 Consciousness and Intentionality of Mental States

The theory of representation in Reinhold is only a part of his analysis of the mind. As he himself states in *Wernach*, research on representation has a preliminary role in the theory of consciousness. To deal with any aspect of consciousness, it is necessary to have a theory of representation as one's disposal, even if only implicitly. In upholding this theory, Reinhold is positively influenced by the old psychology of the faculties, thanks to which he avoids a localizing view of things which claims to explain all the cognitive faculties from a partial point of view. It is certainly a risk that Humboldt ran in the same years: in stressing the linguistic mediation which lies under every idea, he ended up considering the difference between thought and language only as a difference in points of view. Even Reinhold, in truth, turns to mental representation in the firm belief that he is studying a primitive mental phenomenon, from which all the others borrow their structure. But Reinhold quickly realizes that he cannot describe all cognition from it, and that there is an even more basic mental phenomena of representation: consciousness.

The so-called elementary philosophy writings are devoted to this problem. They are called this because Reinhold believes that consciousness is a more basic mental phenomenon than representation. The studies on consciousness belong to the second phase of Reinhold's research, which as a whole can be divided into five periods (cf. Schönborn 1991), in Reinhold's *vorherigen* (*Über die des Zusammenhangs der Philosophie mit der Ästhetik* 19, *Abhandlungen* [Reinhold 1801: 1-2]) he himself leads us to this division. The work signals his adhesion to the logical system of Christoph Gottfried Barthle (1761-1908), which Reinhold presents as the fourth stage in the course of his own research. Since in 1812 he announced his change in the course of his own research, the first and final investigative research phase, philosophy of language as a last and final investigative research phase, the five periods as follows: adhesion to Kantian, elementary philosophy, the five periods as follows: adhesion to Kantian, elementary philosophy, adhesion to the doctrine of science of Johann Georg Fichte (1762-1814), the approach to Barthle's logical system and finally reflection on language.

The first period ranges from mainly religious writings, dating from the period when he was still living in Vienna, to the 'spectacular' adhesion to Kantian philosophy. The principal work of this phase is the *Ästhetik über die Kantische Philosophie* (1796-99) with which Reinhold connects

used, according to some in a decisive way, to the spread of Kant's thought which - when it appeared - seemed rather arduous. His adhesion to critical philosophy came about more from the heart than from the reason. During the entire span of his philosophical life, Reinhold retained a great variety of interests, as often happened to intellectuals of the time, which range from the theory of consciousness, to morals, to the debate on adhesion. The young Reinhold saw in Kant the solution to all the problems that agitated him, which led him to reinforce the opinion, frequent at the end of the eighteenth century, that Kant was the promise for all philosophical questions. Friedrich Hölderlin (1770-1834), for example, announced candidly to his brother that "Kant is the Moses of our nation, who pulling it out of the relaxed state into which it had fallen in Egypt, leads it to the open sunny desert of his speculation [...]" (Hölderlin 1799: 304).

In the years in which he unstirringly spread Kantian thought, perhaps his most fortunate years, Reinhold taught at the University of Jena. In 1794 Fichte succeeded him: an event that has seemed symbolic to many. With this changeover Reinhold's philosophical life-span was completed, even before being completely developed. The second and third phases of his research seem to confirm, for many scholars, that Reinhold was nothing more than the bridge between Kant and the three great figures of mature idealism, Fichte, Schelling and Hegel. In this way Reinhold provided idealistic historiography with a solution for a passage that had always caused a difficulty. The second phase coincides in fact with elementary philosophy, with the study of consciousness at the centre of it. This latter is considered a more original mental phenomenon, an elementary one, with respect to the representation to which the author had at first directed his attention. In these considerations there is a progressive approach by Reinhold to the subjectivist perspective that was to find in Fichte its natural conclusion. While the third phase coincides with adhesion to Fichte's system, the fourth is characterized by the adoption of Barthle's logical system. Far from the Kant and Fichte years, the fifth and last phase of Reinhold's research is clothed in noise. The traditional interpretation stresses that in his last years he occupied himself with language, but the circumstance is considered little less than eccentric. We shall devote the last part of this book to this period in Reinhold's thought. The following pages will instead be devoted to the second phase of his thought, which, as we have noted, concerns the problem of consciousness.

The exposition of this aspect of Reinhold's theory is in fact necessary for the line of argumentation that we are following. The main objective of this book is the examination of the linguistic transformation of Kantian

philosophy. At the basis of this perspective there is the belief that a real transcendental semantics is missing in Kant, and that there are only the premises of a theory of language, which was then developed after him by authors such as Roß, Bernhardt and Reischke. Kantian linguistics is a representational linguistics, in the sense that it considers the capacity of language as a specification of the capacity to generate mental representations. Reischke's proposal (1989a) is important exactly because he elaborated the standard formulation of that 'Kantian' theory of mental representation that has since been transformed into representational linguistic theory.

The course of this transformation from a theory of mental representation to a linguistic representational theory can be summed up in three moves. The first is Reischke's attempt to lead thought on mental representation back to the theme of consciousness. The most striking theoretical aspect of this passage is the fact that consciousness is understood in terms of intentionality, to use a contemporary expression. In this perspective the most awkward problem of the Kantian theory of representation and empirical schematism becomes the reference of representations to external objects.

The most innovative and interesting proposal for resolving this problem is Roß's, whose philosophy constitutes the second move in the linguistic transformation of Kantianism. According to his point of view, mental representation realises its own intentional capacity through the production of some specific symbolic forms, such as language, music and mental images. Roß takes up the Kantian theory of aesthetic symbolism, giving it greater importance than it had with Kant. The new empirical schematism of the third Critique, which was based on the analogical mediation of perceptible symbols, in Roß becomes what assures the reference of internal representations.

Unfortunately, this proposal is almost suffocated by the rigidity and complexity of Roß's doctrine, thus losing a large part of its appeal and its innovative theoretical significance. Roß sets himself an impossible challenge: to explain the intentionality of representation by having recourse to the mediation of perceptible symbols, without, however, abandoning the transcendental method that imposes consideration of non-empirical conditions only.

Another step (the third along our road) was therefore essential. It was necessary to betray Kant, which is what Bernhardt and Reischke finally did. In the last phase of his research, Reischke frees himself from this rigid ties with transcendental philosophy, welcoming elements of a varied

nature within his theory, but above all admitting that to in order carry out the functions that we have examined, it is necessary to bear in mind the role of perception, as well as verbal language. In his last theoretical work (1989b) the reconstruction of transcendental analysis is completed once and for all, and the role of verbal language and perception is now accepted as decisive for realising the intentionality of mental representation.

Let us therefore turn to the first step along this lengthy road: the identification between consciousness and intentionality. Naturally Reischke, like all his contemporaries, does not use the term 'intentionality'. However if with this term we allude to the reference of mental representations and their being directed towards something, then there is no doubt that Reischke is thinking of this very operation when he examines the phenomenon of consciousness. In short, by 'consciousness' Reischke means the mind's faculty to refer to states of affairs different from itself. Only by interpreting consciousness in terms of intentionality can we resolve the complicated definitions of consciousness present in Reischke's work. These present in the *Neue Darstellung der Hauptmomente der Elementarphilosophie* – a fragment contained in *Grundzüge zur Darstellung der philosophischen Anthropologie der Philosophie* of 1790/94 – seem to me to confirm this hypothesis.

The consciousness in general consists of the reference (Bezugnahme) of the representation, by means of the subject, to the object and to the same subject, and is inseparable from the representation in general.

(Reischke 1790: 218, my italics)

In the consciousness the representation by means of the subject is directed from the subject and the object and is referred to both.

(Reischke 1790: 167, my italics)

According to this definition, consciousness is what allows the subject to recognise itself, through a representation, as something that is distinct from the external object and to operate reference to the status of external things. This reference is not immediate – or intuitive, as was then said, on the contrary, it is always realised through a mental representation in which the perceptible data are brought together through a given conceptual form. Nevertheless, even if consciousness is not an immediate mental phenomenon, it is at least primary, since the other protagonists of mental life (representation, object and subject) presuppose conscious activity, in the sense of the ability to direct oneself towards something (Reischke 1790: 168).

PART II

The Linguistic Transformation of Kantism

CHAPTER 3

G. M. Roth:
A Champion of Kantian Orthodoxy

3.1 The "Dark Side" of Linguistic Historiography

Georg Michael Roth was born on 12th February 1769 in Frankfurt-on-Main, where he died on 3rd January 1817. In the biographical repertories he is listed as a German scholar and jurist. In 1804 he qualified as a lawyer, but his principal occupation was as a linguist and as a specialist in German studies and general grammar. His academic production ranges from works of theoretical linguistics to grammars on German language for use in colleges. Indeed, he taught German and philosophy at the *Wettstätt* and Frankfurt colleges, where he also became pro-rector of the *Gymnasium*. His teaching activities led him to write several school grammars, including *Systematische Deutsche Sprachlehre für Schulen* (1799). Amongst his other works are *Teutsche Sprachlehre: als Anfang zu einem Anfangsgründe der Teutschen Sprachlehre für Schulen* (1805) and *Anfangsgründe der Teutschen Sprachlehre, vorzüglich zum Gebrauche der Schulen* (1805).

Roth was therefore a German language teacher at college level, a characteristic which he shared with other exponents of the theory of *edukatio symbolica*. Bernhardi was a teacher and also Rector at the *Friedrichs-Gymnasium* in Berlin (cf. Bernhardi 1817); Reinbock taught German

language and literature, and aesthetics, at the *Gymnasium* at Stuttgart. None of the three had been a proponent of the university institutionalisation of linguistics: partly because when the first University chairs in 'Samkrit' (1818) and 'Oriental Literature and General Linguistics' (1821)²⁹ were instituted, Roth and Bernhardi were already close to the end of their working lives (which came in 1817 and 1820 respectively); partly because, as exponents of general grammar, they remained on the edges of the comparativist movement which guided the achievement of a professional status by linguistics. Karl Heinrich Ludwig Pott, another exponent of the same movement, was active at the University of Leipzig, but taught 'Science of State' and not linguistics.³⁰ The analysis of these works, however, gives an overview of the linguistic ideas actually circulating Germany at the end of the eighteenth century.³¹

Roth made himself known with a controversial book. In 1789 the German translation appeared of the work which made Johann Harris (1709-1780) famous: *Hermes; or, a Philosophical Inquiry concerning Language and Universal Grammar* (1751). In 1795 Roth chose it as a controversial target and wrote an essay with the eloquent title *Ansichten oder philosophische Untersuchungen über den reinen Begriff der menschlichen Sprache und der edelsten Sprachlehre*. *Ansichten* is his first work and is connected according to the rhetorical technique which consists in contrasting two alternative models. In writing an essay against a famous linguist like Harris, Roth probably intended to attract attention to himself.³² *Hermes* was in fact constantly referred to in the second half of the eighteenth century. In 1795, when Roth wrote his book, it had reached the fifth edition in English and was also about to be translated into French (Harris 1796).

It could even be said that *Hermes* was an emblem. 'Harris' work is among the most important grammars of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and its role seems almost equal to that of the *Port-Royal Grammar* (Boly 1972: xiii). Harris' work and the *Port-Royal Grammar* *gründete et vollendete* are the main books of the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century movement that Chomsky (1966) called 'Cartesian linguistics', which has the plan for a universal grammar at its centre. But it was not so

²⁹ I. Morpurgo Davies (1998: 7).

³⁰ Pott (1801, 1813, 1820).

³¹ For these essays cf. Neumann (1998).

³² Cf. the review of the same year in *Annalen der Philosophie und der philosophischen Geistes (Jahres 1793)*.

much the plan that Roach means to pull to pieces as the research method. In actual fact, "the grammative *gêthode* is the most important and unitary but also the least scientific research programme in the field of language sciences occurring in an epistemological framework which still considers philosophy and the sciences as co-reflexual terms" (Fornigiani 1997: 1). If *Hermes* is an emblem of this unity, *Antihermes* is a symbol of the break at the end of the eighteenth century.

According to Roach, it is exactly this idea of universality present in the seventeenth-century and eighteenth-century grammatical tradition which is defective. Universal grammar was destined to fail because of the inadequacy of its idea of universality. Roach had the work of perceiving, with more perspicacity than most the linguists in his day, the crisis into which seventeenth- and eighteenth-century linguistics was falling. It was in effect in difficulty even on its own ground, i.e. in the search for "raison de son *qui est commun à toutes les langues*" (Aronaudo/Lancelotti 1636 [1666]: 1).

Universal grammar was based upon four suppositions: 1) there is a universal reason; 2) this reason determines the thought of all human beings; 3) all languages have essentially the same structure in that it is taken from the universal structure of reason; 4) it is therefore possible to elaborate linguistic systems leading to universal understanding, leaving the differences between single languages out of consideration (Naumann 1986: 47). At least the first three suppositions of universal grammar in the Port-Royal tradition are accepted by Roach. As a matter of fact, the belief in the homogeneity of the structure of human language and its derivation from the form of universal reason is reinforced on the basis of transcendental philosophy. The main difference between traditional universal grammar and Roach's position concerns the method used to determine the universal principles of grammar.

At the end of the eighteenth century the *grammaticative gêthode* was inadequate in the eyes of most linguists. It was evident that one of its weak points was the use of a less than rigorous comparative method. In their opinion, the masters of Port-Royal often use comparison between a few European languages to support their theories, but it is only an approximate and diagnostic comparison.

There therefore seemed to be two possible escape routes, according to what analysis of the crisis of general grammar was accepted. One could uphold that the cause of the crisis of general grammar was due to the use of the comparative method, seen as an attempt to base linguistic universals on data from natural languages. This option led Roach to search for a pure

universal grammar that could elude the difficulties inherent in the use of a sharply empirical method like comparison between given languages. But it could also be thought that the obstacle was not the comparative method as such, but rather the lack of rigor in using this method. The comparative choice this second possibility, although they too were dissatisfied with the traditional method, they tried to refine the comparison, convinced that the difficulty lay in the imprecise way this method was used.

Two alternative trends thus arose from the universal grammar crisis. Pure universal grammar, which Roach had an important exponent in Roach, accepted the idea of universality but denied that it could derive from empirical examination of the features of single languages. Historical-comparative grammar, on the other hand, forewent the notion of universality but accepted the comparative method, seeking to improve it.

The history of linguistics in the following decades was to see pure universal grammar succumb, and was to connective historical-comparative grammar as the emerging linguistic discipline. Roach was therefore fighting a losing battle, having used up all his resources in a cultural dispute destined to fail. This is the reason for his immediate and otherwise inexplicable fall into oblivion. His work endured in the twenty-year span from 1795-1815 have not been reprinted, even though he represents one of the principal interpreters of universal grammar in the German classical age.

3.2 Philosophic and Linguistic Idealism

One of the greatest uncertainties that weighs on German classical philosophy regards the really quite paradoxical theory that some philosophers defended concerning the actual non-existence of things. These philosophers substituted for things a world based on the appearance of mental representations. Even Kant, in order more easily to define his position, attributed this iteration to idealism (Kant 1783: 288-289).

However, as far as we can see, no philosopher of this period was prepared to hold such an extreme position. Rather, what was really at stake was whether the possibility of accessing things outside us could be considered as a criterion of truth for our judgment. Reinhold – who, as we have seen, in his day was also the scholar who gave most importance to the intermediary nature of mental representation, never doubted the existence of things outside us. For Reinhold, as for Kant on the noumenal world, the problem of the reality of things was always to be discussed

only in terms of the possibility of human knowledge and never in terms of the actual existence of things.

On the other hand, Booth's philosophy presents the characteristics of absolute idealism, at least at first sight. He goes far beyond Kant's transcendental idealism and Fichte's elementary philosophy. In considering the framework of mental representations as a sort of prison from which one cannot escape, continually rebounding from one representation to another. In the following passage this point of view is expressed in an exemplary manner:

If I wanted to compare for example the internal representation (*Innereindruck*) that I have of the rose with itself, then I would have to separate the internal representation of the rose from the rose itself and then compare the one with the other: the rose and the rose's representation. But in comparing them I would not represent the rose other than through the reference of the internal representation to the rose, and with this the rose would not be able to bring into my consciousness modifications determined solely by its own independence from the form of the representation, but only through modification determined by the form of the representation. The rose, as object of my representation, cannot therefore be considered the original of itself and my representation cannot be the image of itself, on the contrary my representation, in accordance to its form, is itself the original. (Booth 1796: 36-37, my italics)

Booth's thesis is rather extreme, but his radically does not consist in the denial of any ontological solidity of the 'rose' or the reduction of reality to a world of appearances, but rather in the fact that - even though roses undoubtedly exist outside us - internal representations cannot refer to them. If representations can only refer to other representations, and if they are nevertheless the indispensable horizon of cognition, human beings then seem the prisoners of their own mental representations. The mind cannot escape from the circle of its own representations; instead of helping us to orient ourselves in our environment, representations end up hindering access to it.

Booth maintains that the relationship between the internal representation and the object is dialectic, in the sense that both terms exist only in their reciprocal reference. On one hand the object is the external cause of internal representation, on the other hand it is its internal effect. In turn, the internal representation is on one hand the internal effect of the object, but on the other is its external cause (Booth 1796: 5). The dialectic structure of these sentences intends to reproduce the dialectic relationship between the representation of things and represented things. Such considerations well explain the satisfaction, typical of philosophers of the time, in using

abstract formulations, but also show the transcendental terrain on which Booth's theory of mental representation is crafted.

The structure of Booth's argument about the reference of representations is one of the chief entry points to absolute idealism, at least from the epistemological point of view. Applied to the linguistic faculty, this structure was to generate linguistic idealism, with its typical theory of the speculative identity of thought and language. Booth's scepticism on the ability of representations actually to refer to reality, in Humboldt was to regard the linguistic reference. This argument was to lead Humboldt to assert that human beings are prisoners of language.

[...] man is always a prisoner in the circle of language and cannot freely reach any point of view outside of it. As soon as there any word he wants to put in the concept designated by that word, he has no other means (barring subtle objects of the intuition) than translation into another language, or a definition which in turn can only be made up of words. (Humboldt 1830-11: § 30)

Apart from the vague allusion to objects of intuition (not by chance between brackets), in language human beings are, so to say, in prison. A golden prison perhaps, similar to the enclosure of the Kantian a priori, but still a prison. There is a certain analogy between the reasoning that leads one to think that human beings are prisoners of their own mental representations, and that which leads us to the same conclusions about language. In both cases one begins by considering the necessity of the representational and linguistic processes in human cognition. In the same way that it is impossible to have experience of a rose without the mediation of the corresponding representation, it is also impossible to imagine a rose without the mediation of the corresponding word, or at least without some linguistic mediation.

Man's world, in short, is inevitably made up of words and mental representations. Man's belonging to the sphere of language and representation is so intrinsic, that representations and language define the very human being. "Man", states Humboldt (1830: 16), "is such only through language; so conceive it, however, he must already be a man".

Booth's and Humboldt's arguments have a similar structure, even if they concern different aspects, such as resorting to mental representations and language. In both cases their arguments would demonstrate that notwithstanding appearances, one cannot do without representations and language. The typical structure of this argument, suggesting that what seems non-representational and non-linguistic in reality depends on representational

tion and language, can be considered as the model of psycho-logical idealism. Humboldt did not consider himself an idealist and indeed had no liking for this point of view. Roth was convinced that he was simply applying Kantian philosophy to language. Notwithstanding this, if by 'linguistic idealism' we mean an idea that defines language as "no longer an analytical device for mediation between the subject and the world, but rather an autonomous force whose efficacy does not derive from the biological structures of the subject, not from the world's structures, but instead is itself constitutive as much as the subject and the world",¹² then the Roth-Humboldt model can be considered the main stage in the transition from philosophic to linguistic idealism.

3.3 The Puzzle of Reference

However, within Roth's reasoning there is something more than the psycho-logical and linguistic model of idealism. Let us now turn once again to the passage concerning the representation of the rose that we have previously examined and dwell upon the limitation with which it concluded: the scepticism about the reference of the representation would be valued "in reference to its form". In other words, mental representations are not symbolic systems able to guarantee reference on the basis of their own formal scheme, or the categorical (or syntactic) aspect present in them.

In this way Roth's theory of representation risks falling into an insurmountable aporia. On one hand, objects would have no ability to make an impression upon the human mind outside the domain of mental representations. On the other hand, as for their form, internal representations cannot refer to anything other than themselves. Only one possibility for the reference of the representation remains open, and that is thanks to the master, which is what Roth's solution appeals to. But for an anti-empiricist such as Roth, who denies the idea that the manner of representation is a weakened stage of a perception, the reference of the manner of representation cannot be taken for granted. The puzzle of reference therefore remains unresolved.

The solution proposed by Roth for this puzzle is the most innovative element of his philosophy. His solution most links him to Kant's and

Reichhold's theories of mental representation and the theory of esthetic judgement. For it is based on the notion of *Darstellung* which, as we have seen, was the word that Kant used as an alternative to *erkennen* and 'typological'. Following Roth in this discussion is quite difficult: it is therefore worth proceeding one step at a time. Let us begin with the identification between *Darstellung* and the reference of internal representation.

This action through which the internal representation is referred (positioned) to objects is called representing them externally (literally), and the product of this action is the Darstellung of the internal representation to the objects.

(Roth 1796: 121)

According to Roth's assertion, the reference of the internal representation to objects would therefore consist of their external representation. To place such an assertion in the right context it is necessary to return to Reichhold's definition of consciousness, which we examined in the previous chapter.

Consciousness in general consists of the reference (Abgrenzung) of the representation, by means of the subject, to the object and to the same subject, and is inseparable from representation in general.

(Reichhold 1790: 218, my italics)

As we have noticed, for Reichhold consciousness coincides with what today more often goes under the name of 'intentionality', or rather the reference of the representation to its content. There is therefore a strong analogy between Roth's external representation and Reichhold's consciousness, since both allude to the intentionality of mental states. In Reichhold, the consciousness consists of the reference of the internal representation (Vorstellung) to the object (Gegenstand, as Husserl would say). In Roth, the external representation (*Darstellung*) is the action through which the mental content is referred to objects. In short, both are an attempt to explain the phenomenon of intentionality. Roth's theory of external representation would therefore be a solution to the problem of consciousness (understood as intentionality) of mental representations that Reichhold had focussed on in his elementary philosophy.

Here then is the next step: according to Roth, what is external representation? What does the activity of externally representing mental contents consist in? What makes reference to external states of affairs possible? In order to reply to these questions it should be noted that according to Roth *Darstellung* is a collective noun, designating three expressive systems: language, music and images. These are the three mediators in

which external representation is concretely realized. To recapitulate, we have on one hand an internal representation (generically understood as a mental content) and on the other hand an external representation (realized in three specific modalities). This idea, then, is that the mental content is referred to external things through one of the above expressive modalities of external representation.

In general, 'internal representations' seems to me to be the best expression for translating the German term *Vorstellung*. In the same way as 'external representation' best renders the term *Darstellung*,³¹ I therefore consider the *Darstellungstheorie* as a theory of external representation, and I distinguish it from the *Vorstellungstheorie*, seen as a theory of internal representation. A representation, according to the traditional meaning of the term (i.e. representation), is a mental content that is referred to a state of affairs in the world, even in the absence of this state of affairs. The difference between internal and external representation depends on the fact that the first is independent of the modality (or form) in which it was realized, while the second is a mental content when it has assumed a certain form and is realized on a given material substrate.

According to this idea, verbal language is a modality of external representation characterized by the propositional format (i.e. by the rules of the inferential grammar) and by being realized on the material substrate of the articulate voice. The basic idea of the *Darstellungstheorie* is that the distinction between internal and external representation corresponds to distinct mental processes. This, however, does not say anything about the ontology of these mental states, that is to say the existence of two distinct mental states. Rather, the theory supports the descriptive advantage of this distinction, that is the advantage it gives concerning the understanding of mental processes. The idea is that in the passage from internal to external representation the specific elements of different systems of external representation enter into play, and therefore also the defining elements of verbal language.

Notwithstanding this clarification, some theoretical reservations remain regarding the legitimacy of the distinction between external and internal representation. It is above all necessary to justify the qualification of 'representation' for designating facts of language. Let us take for example the cry of a mother to her son, 'John, beware of the dog!'. In what sense can we say that this verbal expression is an external representation?

And, above all, in what sense is it a mental representation? In the strict sense the phrase using 'John, beware of the dog!' is a physical event that has its place in the external world and not in the mind. It is endowed with an acoustic solidity measurable in loudness, frequency, etc.

Why should this event be considered in any respect a representation? The short reply to this question is that it is also a representation, because without the mental operation that has brought it into being it would not have any meaning. In other words, this event must be considered a mental representation by virtue of its own semantic value and the intentionality that created it, making it interpretable.

The sentence "John, beware of the dog!" can be considered from two angles. From one angle it is an acoustic string that has an ontological solidity comparable with that of a tree, cloud or armchair. However, seen in this way it has no meaning. It does not indicate any mental state (in this case the mother's worry), neither could it induce any behaviour (e.g. the attention the child could pay to the dog under the influence of the cry). The reason why the cry means something, with its intentionality directed towards external objects and towards internal mental states, is just what makes it possible to evaluate the cry as a mental representation. For the sentence to have meaning, it is necessary to infer a representational mental processing consisting in transforming an internal semantic content (a *Vorstellung*) into something external, something, therefore, that has an existence in the world independently of any mind.

The problem can also be formulated in a different way: the term *Darstellung* designates both the activity of externally representing certain mental states, and the outcome of this activity. Besides, in German many terms which end in '-ung' have the property of indicating both an activity and its outcome. The ambiguity present in this type of word is justified by the fact that to distinguish precisely between an activity and its outcome is often quite difficult.

In the case of internal representation, for example, it is rather hard to separate a certain mental state from the activity that produced it, since that mental state is present only when there is the corresponding activity. In the case of external representations things are even more complex. These phenomena appear as states of affairs that assume a certain meaning thanks only to an intentional process, and therefore cannot be considered independently of the mental process that created them. Moreover, unlike internal representations, which consist exclusively of a mental process, external representations also have an autonomous solidity.

31) - *idem*, for example *Warner S. Foster's translation of Critique of Pure Reason*, *Indianapolis, Cambridge: Hackett Publ.* (1996: 22 footnote).

For our convenience we can begin now to give a list of characteristics of internal and external representations. We can consider it a sort of guide for the use of these two notions, though the overall meaning of the distinction will only appear clearly at the end of our journey. The characteristics are shown as conditions that a state of affairs must satisfy to be an internal or external representation. These, however, cannot be checked off at every single occurrence of the terms *Darstellung* and *Vorstellung*. In most cases there is a more careful use of the terms, highlighting this or that quality, even if more careful and technical uses of the terms take all the conditions into account. To be an internal representation, a state of affairs:

- 1) must also be a mental event (i.e. must have an intentionality directed towards internal states);
- 2) must have form and content;
- 3) must refer to external objects, or rather must have an intentionality directed towards the world;
- 4) these characteristics must also be present when the situation from the object is no longer there.

To be an external representation, a state of affairs must also have the following characteristics:

- 1) the representation must take on a certain format (propositional, in the case of verbal language);
- 2) it must be realized on a specific material substrate (in the case of verbal language, that of the articulatory voice);
- 3) finally, so that a linguistic external representation can be distinguished from other forms of expression of mental contents, a communicative intent and an implicit dialogic structure are also necessary.

But let us turn to the question of representational modality. As we have noticed, the form of a representation includes all the characteristics that depend directly on the cognitive structure of the subject. The internal representation obviously has its own 'form', although it has no specific modality, as happens, for example, to perceptive representations. The external representation, in addition to being endowed with a form, is also characterized by its own 'format', in the sense that it is realized on a given substrate and according to the nature of that substrate. With the term 'format' I therefore allude to the specific modality of the external representa-

tion. The term is unattractive, meaning that it does not correspond to classical terminology (Roca preferred the term 'modality' or 'way' (*Weg*), 1796: 39-40), and follows contemporary terminology instead. 'Format' is the term used by Kosslyn (1980), corresponding - for example, to 'stage' (Marr 1982) or 'level' (Jackendoff 1992).

If one distinguishes between a non-modal internal representation and an internal representation endowed with a specific form, it is to be supposed that, although contributing to the mind's structure, language does not use up its limits. To express this opinion even more directly, the mind's make-up is not entirely linguistic. Is the German classical age the opposite theory was held more or less openly by the Romantics and the supporters of linguistic idealism. The objection made to the arguments put forward against the identity of mind and language, such as the theory of external representations, was - in a vaguely Humboldtian way - that there are portions of non-linguistic cognitive articulation, though it was accepted that even these, in that they available to the consciousness, are in a sense made linguistic.

We have noted that Roca used a similar argument in the relationship between representation and reality, to deny that we can have access to portions of reality without the mediation of mental representations. His position is therefore a kind of neo-Humboldtian idealism without linguistic idealism.

In the dominant linguistic theories of the German classical age, language is conceived of as a sort of big bang that, with its advent, restructures the human world, transforming it into a linguistic world. To consider verbal language as a modality of external representation contradicts this opinion - first of all because linguistic activity depends on an underlying mental strategy and a communicative aim, features that do not, to use one of Hegel's expressions, make language an 'end in itself' (Hegel 1856: 216); but above all, because verbal language is only one of three mental processes.

3.4 The Three Modalities of the Mind

The basic idea of *Darstellungstheorie*, - that verbal language is a modality of external representation - was formulated for the first time by Roca in *Anthropos* (Roca 1793: vii). But it is in the following work, *Über die Anthropologie* (*Über die Natur Philosophie der Menschen, der Mensch und Sprache*)

the (1790), that this principle takes on the characteristics of a comprehensive theory of the mind. As we have noted, in Roth's external representation indicates the internal capacity which mental events are endowed with. This is the faculty that allows representations to 'hook up' to events of reality, guaranteeing that the content of the representation refers to an external object. In short, according to Roth this faculty consists of the production of three symbolic forms: the articulate voice, inarticulate sounds endowed with meaning, and visual images.

A certain oscillation can be noted regarding the ontology of these symbolic forms. Sometimes it seems that Roth is referring to the physical events of sounds and figures, at other times that he is referring only to the corresponding mental representations. In effect, there is a certain difference between auditory, propositional and visual mental images on one side, and inarticulate and articulate sounds and concrete visual pictures on the other. However, from the point of view of a mentalist theory of language, this difference is not critical. If one maintains that linguistic ability greatly depends on the capacity to generate and manipulate mental representations, the fact that a sentence is pronounced out loud, whispered or only imagined is unessential. The idea of external representation is able to hold all these phenomena together. A given sentence presupposes an underlying representational mental process, both for its production and its comprehension. Moreover, a linguistic mental representation can also actually be pronounced. For these reasons Roth attempts to elaborate a model that holds together the external product of the symbolic activity and the underlying mental process.

The theory contemplates three different mental and expressive systems, in which the level of concrete realisation, the level of content, and the level of corresponding mental activity are in turn made distinct. To follow this reasoning more easily it is useful to present the schema (cf. p. 73) suggested by the author (Roth 1796: 39-40):

The identification of the level of concrete realisation, mental content and its corresponding activity is not always faithful to Roth's terminology. However, it is meant to be so from a theoretical point of view. As regards the interpretation of language, music and the image as the mental systems that correspond to articulate and inarticulate sounds and shapes, the terms used by Roth, as we have mentioned, is 'modality' (Art). But the idea is that of a system regulating the relationships between the various levels mentioned above. Let us consider, for example, the following passage:

Figure 2: The modulation of the mind

Modality or system of external representation	language (Sprache)	music (Musik)	image (Bild)
Concrete realisation	articulate sounds (articulable Thing)	harmonious sounds (harmonische Thing)	shape (Gestalt)
Meaning or mental content	thought (Gedanke)	representation of natural sense (Vorstellung des natürl. Sinnes)	representation of external sense (Vorstellung des äußern Sinnes)
Activity	designating (Ausdrücken)	expressing (ausdrücken)	depicting (abbilden)

The shape could not refer to any representation of external sense, the harmonious sound to any representation of internal sense and the articulate sound to any thought. If all these internal representations had not before any actual reference (Ausdrücken) already been referred (abbilden) to the object through the image, music and language. (Roth 1796: 40)

The fact that the articulate sounds refer to a thought content through language indicates that the latter is the system of modulation between the two elements. The mental and expressive activities regulating this process are called actions (Handlungen) for the production of modalities of external representation (Moden). Though, the representations of the internal and external sense, are what the articulate sounds, harmonious sounds and shapes respectively refer to. The former are therefore the level of content, the latter are the level of concrete realisation.

The system of verbal language and music have various elements in common, such as being made up of sounds. The system of shapes has different characteristics since it is realised upon a spatial substrate instead of a temporal one. This system regulates (in the principle of) the relationship between representation of the external sense and single shapes. With the term 'principle' in this context we refer to the regularity of the relationship between the level of expression and the level of content.

For the philosophy of the image in general, the following principle (Grund) is valid as a fundamental first principle: the image is the difference between the inwardly representing subject and the shape that a representee externally

and the correspondence with the representation of the external sense.
(Roth 1795: 415)

This definition, like the one corresponding to "language" which we shall examine later on, is based on Reinhold's definition of "consciousness". We can even consider Roth's entire theory of modalities of *Darstellung* as an interpretation of Reinhold's theory of consciousness.

The expression "representation of external sense" indicates first of all the capacity to receive a given matter outside us (phenomenon). In this sense it coheres with the representation of internal sense, which is the capacity to perceive the internal modifications in our bodies (proprioception). Being aware of an object that is in front of us implies a representation of the external sense, while feeling an acceleration of our heartbeat implies a representation of the internal sense.

The most usual way to perceive objects outside us is to delineate their shape and size and the reciprocal relations between them. For this reason the "representation of external sense" is typically situated in space, so this expression usually means a mental representation organized in a spatial way. On the other hand, the typical way of representing internal states and modifications is in succession, so the representation of internal sense is conceived of as a mental representation organized in a temporal way. The consideration of representations based on time as internal, and those based on space as external, is also influenced by the Kantian opinion that temporal representation is more basic than spatial. The very arbitrariness of the expression "representation of the external sense" also goes for internal sense, through which reference is made first of all to the temporal format in which the representation is organized, and secondly to the fact that the meaning of sounds is always a representation of internal states. In this second mental system concrete realizations are meaningful although particular sounds. A sign of pleasure or a shout of exultation are phenomena of this type.

The fact that Roth speaks of "noise" to indicate the system that regulates the relationships between sounds and their meaning should not be understood in a technical way. He does not so much refer to musical concepts endowed with artistic intent, as to a sort of grammar for the generation of meaningful sounds. In the same way that language is the grammar of articulate sounds for the designation of thought contents, music is the grammar of harmonious sounds for the expression of the representations of internal sense, and the image is the grammar of the composition of figures for depicting representations of external sense.

From these statements it is easy to imagine how Roth will present the linguistic system. Here the level of expression or concrete realizations is made up of articulate sounds. The semantic content is thought, while language is the system of mediation between sounds and thought. The activity of creating meaning typical of verbal language is *delegating*, distinct from depicting and expressing. The main feature of delegating is that it is an activity of *the understanding*, consisting in applying categorical forms to sensible data.

Expression is contrasted with mediated mental activities, since it can exist even without any categorical mediation, as in the case of a scream of fear. According to an opinion in vogue at the end of the eighteenth century, and also shared by Roth, expression is a faculty that human beings have in common with other animals, in that it consists of the immediate and overbearing access of the sensations. Since conceptual mediation is missing in the inscription, it "is not an external representation of the understanding, but the expression of an internal or external sensation" and therefore is excluded from the parts of speech (Roth 1815: 27-28).

The definition of "language" put forward in Aesthetics returns to the schema of the definition already examined in relation to the image.

Language is on one side the difference between the internally representing subject and the externally representing articulate sounds, and on the other the correspondence with the internal representation of the understanding.
(Roth 1795: 74-75)

There are three elements present in this definition: the representational faculty of the subject, the expressive capacity of articulate sounds and the content of the understanding. The definition highlights two aspects present in language: on one hand the structural and opposing aspect, on the other the referential and associative aspect. In the first sense language has a function of mediation between the representational faculty and the articulate voice, while in the second sense it performs a referential function with respect to the products of the understanding.

A characteristic feature of the linguistic function emerges from the comparison with the depiction of shapes. While the latter implies a certain amount of imitation, delegating presents a high degree of arbitrariness. Furthermore, depiction is based on the similarity of elements arranged in space, and is therefore more suited to being represented through an imitation. Being based, instead, on the logical sequence of elements, delegating can easily indicate the latter in the time sequence and treat them as concepts of the understanding.

Roth's approach thus leads to a tripartite mind, made up of verbal language, images and music. The mind is not endowed with a single working system able to regulate the formation and expression of all semantic contents. Instead, it is made up of different modules or independent systems for treating different types of data. The use of different modules depends on the type of data the mind has to carry out. If it has to represent a concept of the understanding, then the linguistic system is the most suitable. But for other cognitive duties language could prove to be less efficient. For example, if one wants to provide fear in someone, a scream, although an inarticulate sound, could perhaps prove more efficacious than words.

According to this approach the linguistic format is not in the least the basic format of the mind. This seems to me to be a significant difference from Humboldt's position, with whom even Roth shared a part of the idealist argument. In effect, in claiming that the linguistic format is the only format of the mind, Humboldt consistently concluded that in consciousness there is no point external to language which could be worked on. According to Roth though, there are meanings and cognitive processes endowed with their own regularity that carry out their function independently of linguistic mediation. If we turn to the terminology introduced in the previous section, we can understand more clearly in what sense the opinion that it is impossible to escape from the world of representations, and that there have three distinct formats, makes Roth a supporter of genealogical idealism, without also making him a supporter of linguistic idealism.

If we insert Roth in his context – Kantian philosophy assisted through Reinhold's elaboration – the originality of his claims emerges clearly. In this context the problem of intentionality of mental representations was a sticky one, as we have seen. In fact, if we make the faculty of elaborating mental representations transcendental, intentionality becomes a *fact* – supposed because it is a *priori* – but paradoxically loses its objectivity. The problem is dealt with in a technical way in transcendental schematism, where Kant seeks to give an explanation of the application of *a priori* forms. But the *a priori* nature of categorical forms, which should have preserved them from the scepticism concerning knowledge inherent in empiricism, ended introducing a new and more dangerous scepticism regarding intentionality.

During the years in which Roth wrote his first works, Reinhold witnessed the issue of intentionality by searching in the consciousness, seen as the reference between representation, subject and object, the foundation

of the representational faculty (Reinhold 1790: 167-168). Roth was interested above all in problems of language and experimented with a different pathway. His idea, as we shall repeatedly see, is that the intentional capacity inherent in mental representations derives from the fact that they refer to objects through specific symbolic forms, which he calls *Darstellung*. The position that the later Reinhold was to arrive at is more comprehensive, since he recognised the possibility of an autonomous capacity of referring to mental representations and to perception. Moreover, Reinhold's recognition of the function carried out by verbal language was to bring him closer to Roth's position.

If the intentionality of the mind is realised through all of the human expressive systems (verbal language, inarticulate meaningful sounds, and shapes), the linguistic meaning and semantic content of visual and auditory mental images coincide with the reference of internal representations. Roth thus gives his own version of an idea quite widespread during the eighteenth century, according to which language has a formative role regarding thought. The interest in Roth's position lies in the fact that he does not limit himself to once again supporting this theory, but attempts to explain the way in which the formative work of language actually comes about. His theory owes much to Kantian philosophy, but he seems to go deeper than Kant in interpreting transcendental schematism as a linguistic way.

3.5 Theory of Meaning as Transcendental Deduction

As we have seen, the intentionality of internal representation depends on external representation. This means that in order for an *intra-modal* representation to refer to an external object, it needs to be realised on a given material substrate and to take on a given format. In other words, until a representational mental process becomes a perceptible symbolic form, it is not complete and therefore has no intentional capacity.

However, if from the point of view of intentionality the internal representation depends on the external one, from the point of view of truth conditions, everything is the opposite way round. In this case the relationship that is established between *Darstellung* and *Wahrnehmung* is similar to that between an image and its original, and therefore it is the external representation that depends on the internal one.

On the strength of the deduction of the internal conditions of the *Darstellung* from the conditions of the *Verstellung* is, in general, determined in the representational faculty, an external representation is not admissible except as an image (*Bild*) of the internal representation established in a (*Abgrenzung*). (Roth 1796: 51)

According to Roth's approach there is no contradiction between these two theses. If we recognize the change in perspective, the dependency of *Verstellung* on *Darstellung* regards the faculty of referring to objects, while the dependency of *Darstellung* on *Verstellung* regards truth conditions. Verbal language, signs and hermeneutic sounds are necessary in order for the mind to be able to refer to objects. But the truth conditions of propositions and other symbolic forms are measured using the corresponding internal representation as a yardstick.

The principle that establishes the dependency of *Darstellung* elements on *Verstellung* is called *perception* (*Wahrnehmung*). The internal representation is endowed with a criterion both for material and formal truth. Material truth is the agreement (*Übereinstimmung*) of the internal representation with the object. It always regards a particular object and therefore its rule, depending on concrete circumstances, cannot be anything but particular. On the basis of the principle whereby internal representation is the original of itself, this truth depends on a feature present within the same *Verstellung* (Roth 1796: 72). Unlike material truth, formal truth does not regard correspondence with something outside the representation, but rather the possibility that different representations connect correctly to the mind. The criterion that regulates this type of truth is universal, since it does not depend on particular circumstances but on universal logical laws.

Roth is convinced that, unlike the internal representation, the external one has only one criterion for material truth, inasmuch as formal truth is absolutely impossible for it (Roth 1796: 73). Formal truth is in fact regards the universal logical rules that establish the possibility of correctly connecting concepts. This criterion cannot, however, be valid for elements such as articulate sounds, in which the empirical considerations can determine different possibilities of correct connections each time.

The criterion of the material truth of *Darstellung* is rather simple. *Darstellung* is true if the object externally represented in it represents (*repräsentiert*) the matter and form of the given internal representation, the *Verstellung* (Roth 1796: 73). The said, in a word, the *crisis* internal representation" (Roth 1796: 73). The truth of *Darstellung* is thus conceived of in the terms of an adequacy to the corresponding *Verstellung*. In conclusion, the concordance of *Darstellung*

being in reality is nothing other than *Wahrheit* (*Truth*) or *Wahrheitsheit* to the corresponding *Verstellung*. Roth calls this principle, which concerns the truth conditions of *Darstellung*, the "principle of representational accord (*Übereinstimmung*)", to distinguish it from the "principle of representational agreement (*Übereinstimmung*)" of *Verstellung*.

The dependency of *Darstellung* on *Verstellung* as much as on the truth conditions highlights Roth's devotion to the Kantian philosophical system, but exposes his doctrine to significant difficulties. Concerning this question, the following possibilities would in fact seem more plausible. If verbal language and the other symbolic systems guarantee the reference of representations to the external objects, then they should also guarantee the truth conditions of internal representations. If instead the symbolic systems respond to the internal representations for truth conditions, then one would expect the internal representations to have an autonomous reference capacity. In short, it would seem more reasonable that in a conception of truth such as adequacy, the rule of reference should also be the basis for determining the truth conditions.

Roth's other reflections on this point concern the distinction between form and matter of external representation, but it is doubtful that in this way he succeeds in avoiding the objections that we have raised. Let us first of all examine the definition of form and matter of external representation.

Every external representation, as a product of externally representing the matter and form of the internal representation, consists in the first place of a mark, through which the matter of the *Verstellung* is represented externally, which I call the matter of the external representation [...] and in the second place of a mark through which the form of the *Verstellung* is represented externally, which I call the form of the external representation. (Roth 1796: 57-58)

The dependency of these marks on *Verstellung* constitutes the transcendental deduction (*Ableitung*) of the elements of *Darstellung*. Thanks to this deduction the matter and form of the external representation are pure, universal and necessary. They are pure, in that they do not depend on experience, necessary in that without them it is impossible to conceive any representation, and universal in that they regard every representation without exception (Roth 1796: 57). This argument helps Roth to maintain the possibility of constructing an *a priori* universal grammar. It is probable that at the basis of the reasoning on the transcendental deduction of elements of external representation there is an epistemological need, or rather desire, to found the universal grammar on the basis of transac-

denial philosophy. In effect, if verbal language is a modality of external representation, and the elements of the latter are deducible in a universal, necessary and *a priori* way, then there is the possibility of identifying the linguistic universal. Roth seems especially interested in this, but from his reasoning there also comes the possibility of a universal syntax of shapes and harmonious sounds.

Satisfying this need, however, has quite a high price. If the form and matter of the external representation only reproduce the form and matter of the internal representation, it is not clear what happens when a 'Vorstellung' is 'recreated' in a certain representational form and when it is realised on a given material substrate. In the case of verbal language it is not clear what the propositional format and the substrate of the articulation add to a non-modal internal representation. Furthermore, since the element of the articulation voice substrate is explicitly excluded from the framework of the pure universal grammar, the propositional format should be the specific element on which to base the reformed universal grammar. But on this point, as we shall see in the next section, Roth's proposal is not so innovative with respect to the tradition of the Post-Royal general grammar.

In short, it would be more consistent to maintain that the transformation of a *Vorstellung* into a *Darstellung* consists of providing the internal representation with a form and matter adequate for its expression. This perspective had been investigated in *Critique of Judgement* and was to be further explored by Bernhard and the later Reinhold. From this point of view Roth seems "better than the Pope", that is than Kant. Although Kant advanced both schematic and symbolic explanations, Roth takes every external representation back to a schematic substrate. His objective is to safeguard the possibility of an *a priori* universal grammar and for this reason he uses a sort of transcendental deduction applied to elements of external representation.

3.6 Pure vs. Empirical Universal Grammar

The theoretical foundations of the pure universal grammar depend on the idea of 'universal' that Roth uses.

A universal grammar can be thought of in two ways, according to the sense in which the concept of universal is taken. In a first restricted sense universal is a term applied to that which is considered as universal by experience etc.

grouped up under *nature*, in a more proper sense it is applied not only to what is confirmed as such by all actual experience, but what is determined as universal and consequently necessary inasmuch as independent of every possible experience. (Roth 1795, 3)

Roth is convinced that before Kant the difference between universality given by experience and universality given by reason was not perceived in a clear way (Roth 1796: 22-23). Moreover, Kant's philosophy is explicitly assumed as the framework of the new linguistic method. This is how Roth reconstructs his adherence to the critical system: "While *Critique of Pure Reason* investigated the possibility of experience, it meanwhile succeeded in discovering the only source from which all our knowledge flows. It showed that the subject of every philosophy - and therefore the philosophy of images, music and language as well - is found in man himself, and consequently everything that is necessary, universal and independent of experience must be sought in the faculty already present before any experience, and always unchangeable in the human soul, and in that which is determined by it" (Roth 1796: 25). Critical philosophy is in this way taken as the basis on which rigorously to found a theory of language that would exclude the conditionings of experience.

The role played by experience is decisive for the correct assumption of the concept of universality. A given linguistic feature can be universal in two cases: if the knowledge of all known languages states that this feature is universally widespread; or if it is directly deduced from the language faculty. In the second case empirical knowledge of languages is not only irrelevant for the determination of the universality of linguistic principles, but it is even measured by the *a priori* universal characteristics. Roth applies the Kantian distinction between *a priori* and *a posteriori* to the theme of linguistic universals with an explicit epistemological aim. The main objective is to distinguish between empirical universal grammar (*empirische allgemeine Sprachlehre*) and pure universal grammar (*reine allgemeine Sprachlehre*). The former takes as universal what it infers from the experience of all languages, the latter takes what is not only universal, but also necessary and independent of every possible experience (Roth 1795: 3-4). Empirical universal grammar does not need a pure concept of language, in that its aim is to turn the linguistic knowledge acquired until that moment in a system. For pure universal grammar though, the pure idea of language is indispensable, in that the universal elements of the grammar will be deduced exactly from this idea.

The author's intention is swiftly stated, and is as ambitious as it is difficult to realise. Roth appreciates the attempt made by preceding linguistic

dics to elaborate a universal grammar, but he holds that it should be transformed from a universal grammar of all languages into a universal grammar of the language faculty. At the beginning of *Anthropologie*, he presents his research programme, stating that linguistics should become a philosophical science in the strict sense of the word. Once again the break between philosophy – and with it the linguistics that would be assimilated to it – and the empirical sciences is declared. He professes to have been led to these reflections by disappointment at the lack of systematic organization in preceding linguistics, and thus to have been driven to join critical philosophy and the study of *Reinhold's* elementary philosophy to contribute to the re-founding of linguistics as a strictly philosophical science. Besides the Kantian revolution the philosophy of language was an empirical science. In his work of 1796 Roth even maintains that "if the science of its language until now [...] had been interrogated on the legitimacy of its own name, it would have had to defend itself from the accusation of unphilosophy" (Roth 1796: 30). Hoping that linguistics will become a strictly philosophical science, Roth thinks of a complete and enclosed system of knowledge.

The character of true science lies in its source (Dingli and Form (Form) united to the source. It demands a necessary and universal source. Inasmuch as its form lies in the form of this source. In the entire mass of the matter there is something that constitutes the fundamental source (Cronstedt) from which all else develops. Inasmuch as the form is united to this fundamental matter it is called fundamental form (Cronstedt) and, if it is expressed, it is called fundamental principle (Cronstedt). (Roth 1796: 20)

But in pre-Kantian linguistics the matter was taken from experience and therefore the entire construction of the science was declared to have universal foundations. "Universal grammar [...] was therefore [...] nothing but the universal history of languages (and not the science of language, as one would usually be led to believe)" (Roth 1796: 24).

From his attention to the "universal history of languages" two indications useful for understanding Roth's linguistics can be taken. On one side, there was the refusal to consider the temporal factor, change, and in short, history for understanding language, which was to lead him not to take into consideration the originality of the method of the early historical-comparative grammar. On the other side, there was the explicit refusal to take natural languages into account as an object of linguistic study, leading him exclusively to consider the language faculty. Moreover, the exclusion of certain problems, which traditionally belonged to the linguistic disciplines, goes even further still. The matter (other than the form and

the fundamental principle) is pure universal grammar must be determined as a priori, i.e. in a necessary and universal way. For this reason all the elements that do not derive directly from the transcendental structure of reason remain excluded from the field of language sciences. Section XXV of *Cronstedt der reinen allgemeinen Sprachlehre* is devoted to this exclusion, and is worth repeating here in its entirety.

Excluded therefore from the contents of the pure universal grammar are:

- 1) arbitrary sound, inasmuch as material given by experience, in which the symbol determined as a priori by the understanding is shown;
- 2) the material meaning of the designation, in that pure universal grammar is a merely formal science;
- 3) in general everything that is not deducible from the idea of the symbol, but has to place in the field of single languages that often are differently founded on psychological laws; and is not determined by the laws of the symbol independently of its use. (Roth 1815: 13)

Here, then, is the complete separation between empirical study and philosophical reflection on language. The first addresses the various natural languages, the second the universal language faculty. Even here Roth's position is extreme: many representatives of general grammar in Romanticism directed their attention more to the language faculty than to the explanation of the facts of language. Nevertheless, while *Berthold* and above all *Voss* also use the results of empirical grammar with the aim of better directing their research, Roth maintains he is able to do without the acquisitions of empirical grammar, convinced even that they risk leading linguistics away from its specific duty.

Once the separation between the study of data on natural languages and the analysis of transcendental characteristics of language is so clearly established, Roth is called on to provide an explanation of the relationship between the two disciplines. The solution proposed is rather simple: pure universal grammar "will serve as a criterion" for the grammars of single languages, and also as a "criterion for appreciating the scientific value of every particular grammar" (Roth 1815: 15). Single grammars are not the acid test of the worth of universal grammar. On the contrary, grammars of single languages must be compared with the pure universal grammar to verify the value of their structure and the consistency of results. Roth contrasts the regulatory value of a theory founded on pure reason and the invalidating or confirming force of linguistic data with respect to theories.

Let us take an example from *Allgemeine Sprachlehre*. In the section entitled *Analysis of the attributive*, at the moment of introducing the def-

the article the author seems to take into consideration the possibility of a concrete case of non-conformity between the grammar of a natural language and pure universal grammar. In some languages, in fact, there is no distinction between the definite and indefinite article, not to mention the fact that in yet other languages the article does not exist at all. The objection taken into consideration can be reformulated in the following way: if pure universal grammar acts as a norm for the grammars of single languages, how would the cases of languages that do not conform to pure universal grammar be explained?

In reality, Roeth takes this problem only to show that such questions are badly formulated. "Come on, you should be able to make this sort of objection! Anyway, it even allows us to renounce a pure universal grammar understood as a rigorous science [...]" (Roeth 1815: 71). Other pure sciences, continues Roeth, do often clash with things, as happens in sciences, continues Roeth, and still no-one dreams of criticising their mathematics or formal logic, and still no-one dreams of criticising their identity and method. The question of conformity between the pure universal grammar and the single grammar, as far as we can see, has been taken into consideration only to be declared irrelevant. All things considered, with the comparison between the pure universal grammar, formal logic and mathematics, Roeth intends to claim that the object of pure grammar is not the working of natural languages.

Given these premises, a revolutionary grammar with respect to the seveneenth and eighteenth-century tradition would be expected. In reality, there is nothing of the kind. From a strictly grammatical point of view, Ruch only presents interesting innovations in the wake of the grammatical tradition. The main characteristic of his theory lies in the fact that the explanation of grammatical categories is conducted as the deduction of logical categories. This method seeks to transfer Kantian transcendental deduction into morpho-syntactical analysis.

The distinction between the determinate and indeterminate article, which provides the above argy-bargy, is a classic distinction, present (to refer only to Rod's cultural horizon) in both contemporary grammar and classical works of 'empirical' universal grammar. According to Rod, the indeterminate article designates a 'real number' (note *Großle*, before the indeterminate article designates a 'real number', while the determinate article (not *Zahl*) as an indeterminate individual, while the determinate article (not *Zahl*) as a species. According to Port-Royal, the article designates a 'real number' as a species. According to Port-Royal, the article was 'invented' to determine the vagueness of common nouns, so that it was 'invented' to determine the vagueness of common nouns, so that its use with proper names (present in Italian - especially the north - and Greek) is branded as a "use that does not agree with reason" (Arminius).

Laurence 1976 [1960]: 57). We are faced with a rationalistic attitude that links Piaget-Royal to Piach, tending not so much to explain actual linguistic use as to evaluate it on the basis of its supposed rationality. For his part, Harris observes that there can never be as many names as there are individual natural substances, so that to designate individual things without a name, the corresponding species is adopted or, if even the species is unknown, the genus. For example, if it is a matter of designating a dog that does not have a proper name, we shall refer to its species and we shall call it dog, or, even more generically, animal.

But this is not enough. The Thing, at which we are looking, is neither a Species, nor a Genus? What is it then? An Individual. Of what Kind? Known, or unknown? Seen now for the first time, or seen before, and now recognized? (To here we shall discover the role of the two Aristotle's (A) and (T) and (C) responses and primary Perception, and denote Individuals as unknown, (T) as respects our secondary Perceptions, and denote Individuals as known, (C) as respects our primary Perceptions.)

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The deictic element in Harris' description is familiarly with the individual that one intends to designate. If it is already known, then "she" will be used, if it is unknown then "a" will be used. "The difference [...] between them ['the' and 'a'] is this: the Article (a) leaves the individual itself unascertained, whereas the Article (the) ascertains the individual also, and is for that reason the more accurate Derivative of the two" (Harris 1751: 217).

In both Roosh and cryptical general grammar, the distinction between the determinate and indeterminate articles responds to the need to identify a particle that accompanies the name, leaving the individual in question indeterminate. It is necessary, however, to note that Roosh's definition *per se* of *al-furqanah* is more rigorous than that of classical grammar. Compared to Hariri, the main difference regards the treatment of the determinate article, conceived of by Roosh as a particle that designates a specific, and by Hariri as a particle that designates an individual.

As for Port-Royal, the difference is even more meaningful, since *Arminius* and *Lancelotti* seem interested in the description of certain linguistic uses, more than in a logical definition. Their reduction of the function of articles to the 'determination' of the meaning of common names seems unsatisfactory. Moreover, this flexibility of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century general grammar allows them to take into consideration the differences between the various languages and the particular uses of the article, which insured embarras *rich*. On the whole, what radically distinguishes the two approaches is the way of defining the linguistic category.

rich. Post-Kant and Harris only try to describe certain linguistic uses, while Rorty derives the grammatical forms from a series of distinctions based on abstract ideas, and in short, from the presumed structure of reality.

Rorty does not merely repeat the traditional grammatical theories. As Neumann has clearly shown, his presence in the field of German language grammar is the period from Johann Christoph Adelung (1732-1806) to Hayek is significant, and in many respects, innovative. For example, he expands the distinction – favoured by the followers of Adelung – between the adverb of quality (*adverbium qualitatis*, *Beifügenschaftswort*), the adverb of circumstance (*adverbium circumstantiae*, *Umstandswort*) and the adjective (*Eigenchaftswort*), distinguishing within the latter class between adjectives in the strict sense of the word (*Adjective im eigentlichen Verstande*) and adverbial adjectives (*Adverbialer Adjective*) (Rorty 1799: 51 ff.). Furthermore, the difference between predicative and attributive, that Adelung (1806: 17) had applied to adverbs of quality, is also applied to adjectives in the strict sense (cf. Neumann 1986: 165-166). Rorty also plays a significant role on other important points, such as the table of the *partes orationis* and the definition of gender.

But his grammatical position does not keep faith with the initial proposal to overturn traditional grammar. As important as his grammatical theories are, the most remarkable element of his position lies in the attempt to found a universal grammar which is deduced directly from the transcendental forms of reason and leaves behind the material on which language is realised and any consideration of a semantic type and even natural languages. In other words, as important as he is as a grammarian, Rorty is above all interesting as an example of a philosopher of language wrestling with the transcendental change. The author of *Adelung* is a Kantian extremist whose work represents, exactly for this reason, an increasing acid test for the validation of the linguistic transmutation of Kantian. Precisely because he is a radical intellectual, he holds a particular historiographic interest, since in his works there are some traces of Kantian-type linguistics which are more evident than in more moderate and prudent authors.

CHAPTER 4

Beyond Kant The Eclecticism of A. F. Bernhardt

4.1 Between Enlightenment Semiotics and Transcendental Philosophy

The merit of having first elaborated a theory of language based on the idea of 'external representation' goes to Rorty (1795, 1796). But the person who brought most fame to this notion, and gathered most praise, was Bernhardt. Although it is evident that he owes much to Rorty in many points, it seems to be more a case of problems in common than solutions. The two perspectives are so clearly distinguished that they can be considered alternative versions. Regarding almost every problem, 'Rorty's version' and 'Bernhardt's version' contrast each other. Compared with Rorty, on whom up to now little research has been done, in recent years Bernhardt has enjoyed a certain 'rediscovery'.³⁴

R. Hayek provided a penetrating portrait of Bernhardt, born on 24 June 1769, which is worth repeating here.

³⁴ W. A. Schabert (1987), *Salomon Langhans* (1768), *Österreich* (1990), 1990; Thoma (1991), 1991; Geyer (1992), *Metaphysik* (1996); Farnberger (1997), *Metaphysik* (1997), 1997; Farnberger (1998), 1998; Farnberger (1998), 1998.

The most notable among them [the circle of intellectuals around Ludwig Tieck] was without doubt August Ferdinand Bernhardt, only four years older than Ludwig, and the son of a police superintendent in Berlin. After having attended the *Realistische Gymnasium* under Meierhold he went to study at Halle, becoming a notable scholar of F. A. Wolf. Stimulated by the new philology, and enthusiastically about Goethe, he was undecided between hard philological study and aesthetics. Physically given to logical operations, wit and precision, full of spirit and energy, always quick in sarcasm, irony and parody and baroque improvisation, a witty narrator, a conversationist and dramatist, he would also have liked to have been a poet. Only that the critical judgement of the connoisseur could not substitute the missing creative immediacy, and if sometimes with philological problems he succeeded in putting together some small dramas, he wasted his time and efforts.

(Hegyn 1860: 27-28)

In drafting this portrait, Hegyn gathers together some reactions that Bernhardt had provoked while he was still alive. Altogether, he had cultivated three main interests: pedagogy, literature and linguistics. In Wolf inaugurated in the Berlin circle of Romantics, thanks also to the fact that he was the brother-in-law of Ludwig Tieck (1773-1853), he did not, however, succeed in carrying himself lasting concern in this sphere.

The consideration that his contemporaries had for him did in fact vary: August Schlegel held him in high regard, but his brother Friedrich did not share this opinion. Alternatively, the famous journal edited by the Schlegels, published a not very convinced review of his of Herder's *Metaphysik* (Bernhardt 1800). When the second volume of his *Spektakel der Menschheit* (Bernhardt 1800). When the second volume of his *Spektakel der Menschheit* came out, A. W. Schlegel reviewed it favourably.¹² In the foreword to *Deutscher Grammatik* (1815), Jakob Grimm (1785-1863) declares that he does not appreciate Bernhardt's work. Even Friedrich D. E. Schlegel, who was an admirer (1798-1834) had a different attitude towards him. Tieck was an indirect cause of these problems: Bernhardt had in fact earned the fame of plagiarising writings, a difficult circumstance to verify since his literary works were destroyed after his death, according to his will. Furthermore, Bernhardt found himself at the centre of a scandal involving his divorce from Tieck's sister, which was much grasped about (Hitcher 1991: 803). Humboldt, who had adopted very tolerant opinions concerning this, did not let himself be conditioned by Bernhardt's ill fame. Although quoting not let himself be conditioned by Bernhardt's ill fame. Although quoting philosophers and theoretical linguists very rarely and reluctantly, in *Über das vergleichende Sprachstudium in Beziehung auf die verschiedenen Epo-*

chen der Sprachentwicklung he praises Bernhardt, declaring that he follows his grammatical theories (Humboldt 1820: 390).

The field in which Bernhardt proves to be a first-rate doctor, and moreover the only field we turned to direct our attention towards, is theoretical linguistics. Apart from Latin and Greek grammars written for schools, Bernhardt's linguistic reflection is concentrated in the first years of the eighteenth century: in 1801 and 1803 two volumes of *Spektakel der Menschheit* appeared, and in 1805, *Angewandte der Sprachwissenschaft*. With this work, as we have previously mentioned, we consider the second phase of the history of Derstophy concluded (cf. pp. 31-32). From this moment onward to refer to this notion in linguistic theories meant dealing with Roth's and Bernhardt's ideas.

Spektakel der Menschheit is a complex and ambitious work, of about eight hundred pages, which deals with many aspects of language in a systematic framework. It is divided into six books: the first has an introductory aim and is devoted to the notions of language and grammar, not least the question of the origin of language. The second and third books constitute the pure grammar (*Reine Sprachlehre*), followed by the applied grammar (*Angewandte Sprachlehre*), which takes up the final three books. In his pure grammar Bernhardt is interested in the formal aspect of language: the theory of the parts of speech and syntax. In the second book the grammatical categories of the noun, the adjective, pronoun, adverb and preposition are investigated, and there is also a part on the verb 'to be'. The third book is devoted to the rules of grammatical composition, and therefore to the sentence and its connectors. The fourth book, which marks the start of the applied grammar, is devoted to poetic expression, that is to language as Derstophy of the imagination; the fifth to scientific expression, that is to language as Derstophy of the understanding. Finally, the sixth book contains an investigation of language considered as sound, with particular attention to metre.

The main intention of the distinction between pure and applied grammar is to divide the form of language from its matter. "For Bernhardt grammar, in the form of morphology (book II) and syntax (book III), represents the form; semantics (IV and V) and phonetics, the matter" (Schleibner-Lange/Weydt 1988: 89). Within applied linguistics Bernhardt went later on to distinguish the meaning of words from their being made up of articulatory sounds, thus rendering the subdivision triadic (syntax, semantics and phonetics). This idea is also expressed in *Metaphysik und Spektrum der Gegenwart und Entwicklung* of 1815, where the author maintains that, "the object of language is the word. This authorises a triple vision; we can

¹² For the first time see Humboldt (1800; 1810; 1811; 1819).
¹³ Schlegel (1802); cf. Thomsen (1992).

consider it according to its form (and grammar is produced), or according to its meaning (and this constitutes the *lexis*) or finally as articulate sound, as something that makes sound" (Bernhardi 1801: 21, Nr. 13).

The question of the origin of language can be a good starting point for appreciating the originality of Bernhardi's proposal. He discusses the two main theories that had been contended in the previous decades in the famous debate at the Royal Academy of Sciences in Berlin. The first theory is about the divine origin of language, discussed through the texts of Sallustius and the earlier supporters (Bernhardi 1801: 117). The second theory, on the basis of which language originated without divine intervention, encounters the favour of the author, who notes that there are significant differences among the scholars who accept this hypothesis.

Three versions are traced: according to the first, language would be the fruit of arbitrariness and human convention. This explanation has the defect of supposing an already structured society in which an agreement can be produced (Bernhardi 1801: 118). However, this type of society, in turn, is based on institutions that are unthinkable without the use of verbal language, and so we fall into a vicious circle. The second version substitutes arbitrary signs with natural signs and considers language as the result of sensation, or in other words, as an interjection that has developed up to the point of becoming a natural language. This version, although not running into the preceding contradictions, has the disadvantage of not being able to account for the arbitrariness present in language.

The author then presents his own opinion, which would be the third version of the naturalist theory. According to this approach, "human reason represents itself externally in language through the organ of the uttering, under the influence of the imagination and in the material of articulate sound" (Bernhardi 1801: 119). The conditions that Bernhardi put forward to make his theory valid are rather demanding: he proposed to show how reason can translate its ideas into articulate sounds, just as the understanding can its concepts and the imagination its images. Moreover, it is also necessary to demonstrate that articulate sounds are the most suitable signs for this purpose.

Finally it is necessary to show that verbal language is the result of a double need: first of all an *internal need* of the organism, i.e. sensation. From this point of view language seems a complex answer to organic stimuli. As the basis of this behaviour are the reflexes, so that language is a sort of highly elaborated reflex. Considering language as the answer to an organism's internal need is, however, inadequate for understanding how language is produced. This type of organic answers do not, in fact,

produce communicative action, which instead is essential in daily linguistic practice. The latter is also an answer to an external need, or rather the necessity to establish a contact and understanding with other individuals. To prove the validity of his theory, Bernhardi (1801: 119) proposes to show furthermore how arbitrary signs are based on a necessity and can be traced back to underlying natural signs, and in short to an intuitive structure.

Bernhardi's theory presents itself in this way as a comprehensive theory of language, tending to provide a system in which to insert the various characteristics of the linguistic phenomenon. The proximity with the philosophy of his friend Fichte is evident in this systematic intention. However, this proximity should not be exaggerated, since Bernhardi, as we shall see, moves away from Fichte on some decisive points in his linguistic theory and above all in refuting the idealistic claim to deduce the elements of language from its general idea. Bernhardi adopts a direct and original perspective. On one hand he bases himself on the acquisitions of transcendental philosophy and joins others in attempting to consider linguistic ability linked to all higher cognitive activity, with special reference to the capacity to form and manipulate mental representations. On the other hand he denies that this link allows us to deduce grammar from logic according to the method of transcendental deduction. On the contrary, he considers language as an object of experience and a cognitive activity linked to perception and bodily organisation. From this point of view his theory is closer to empirical psychology than transcendental philosophy.

Bernhardi tried to formulate a theory reconciling the acquisitions of eighteenth-century sensation with the demands of the new critical perspective. He adheres to general grammar, but gives it an empirical foundation that had often remained extraneous to that research path. Regarding the old controversy on conventional or natural signs, he assumes a position which we could call 'opportunistic'. He recognises the presence of signs which are both more or less conventional and more or less natural in the linguistic system. The mind produces the different types of signs and chooses to use them according to opportunity and emergent argumentative need. The question of the type of signs that constitute language is therefore not decisive because language, in short, is not a kind of signalling. It is rather a kind of external representation. But to understand the meaning of this statement it is necessary to turn to the distinction that he makes between internal and external representation.

4.2 Internal and External Representation

The theory of meaning is one of the aspects that most deeply divides Roth's views and Bernhardt's. The difference can be summed up as follows: while for Roth meaning coincides with the internal representation, for Bernhardt it is the sum of the internal and external representations. Moreover, for Roth the external representation serves more to explain the reference than the meaning. Verbal language performs an essential function for the reference of representations, but does not contribute any element to their content. The transcendental deduction of the external representation served exactly to uphold the theory of coincidence of the internal representation and linguistic meaning. Instead, for Bernhardt there is no linguistic meaning as long as the internal representation is not externally represented.

In the introduction to *Aufkündigung der Sprachwissenschaft*, Bernhardt (1805: 1) gives the following definition of "language": *Diejenige Gesamtheit aller auslautender Laute, durch welche der Mensch seine Vorstellungsvermögen darstellt, wird Sprache genannt* ("language is the whole of articulating sounds, through which human beings externally represent their intellectual representations"). In the concept of language, adds Bernhardt, three elements are present: *Wortbildung, Darstellung und artikulierende Laute*. The first element can be left aside for now, while the concept of *Darstellung* should be examined more intimately.

A similar examination was conducted at the beginning of *Sprachlehre*, in which three meanings were proposed for the word *Sprache*. The distinction between the first two meanings depends on the fact that the term *Sprache* (like "language" in English) encompasses two senses that often in other languages correspond to two different words (e.g. Italian with "linguaggio" and "lingua", French with "langage" and "langue"). The first sense indicates the human faculty to speak, or the physical and intellectual disposition of man to create linguistic signs and to produce the articulate voice. When a investigator this faculty of language, linguistics is called upon to describe the working of the phonatory organs and to discuss the necessity and arbitrariness of the language system (Bernhardt 1801: 11). The second sense is which the word *Sprache* is used to indicate a particular natural language. In this case the idea of "language" is correlated with the concept of the people (*Volk*). The primary duty of linguistics of a particular natural language is to understand how it is that a certain group of people use the same linguistic signs. In order better to distinguish the

two types of linguistics, Bernhardt notes that while the laws of the linguistic faculty are universal, in the sense that they pertain to human beings as species, the norms that regulate the use of a natural language are individual (1801: 13).

After having distinguished between these two senses, the author proposes what is closest to his heart: the metaphoric sense of the word *Sprache*. In this sense it is the language of nature, sign language, or musical language. In these cases the main characteristic of verbal language is applied in a wider sense to similar situations. This characteristic is why language is a *Darstellung*. To be more precise, verbal language is a mode of external representation, it is an external representation endowed with particular characteristics.

Language in the proper sense is perhaps only a kind (*Gattung*) and modification of *Darstellung*, indeed this sense exactly the right and superior concepts under which language in the proper sense can be subsumed.

(Bernhardt 1801: 14)

Bernhardt argues that he has thus found the closest concept under which verbal language is included, and at the same time also a basis on which linguistic research can be founded (Bernhardt 1801: 15). Moreover, since the external representation is defined by its difference from the internal representation, it should be understood in this relation: "every *Darstellung* has a correlated *Wortbildung*; and therefore also language and all its parts, since it is included under the concept of *Darstellung*" (Bernhardt 1801: 14).

Already the Latin word *representatio* alludes to the close relationship between variation and diversity. It is made up of *praesentis*, which indicates something that can be clearly seen (*Auseinander*), or more in general, perceived, and the prefix *re-*, which indicates a repetition. The Latin term therefore alludes to the elaboration made by the mind of something that has made an impression upon it. It indicates the basic process of every mental representation, or the reproduction of a state of affairs in absence. The German language re-articulates the semantic field of the Latin word, distinguishing between an activity that proceeds from the outside to the inside (*Wortbildung*) and an activity that on the contrary goes from the inside to the outside (*Darstellung*). For this reason it uses the two prefixes *vor-* and *dar-*, which originally indicated a spatial relationship and which in our case are used to designate two different phases of cognition.

"But now the word *Wortbildung*," states Bernhardt "includes everything that has become an object in the human mind, from the smallest var-

sible contact to the larger and more composite activity", or, in other words, "the internal representation is nothing other than a modification of the consciousness" (1801: 15, 47). Bernhardt's meaning of the term therefore fits into the line running from Kant to Reinhold, in opposition to Hegel's meaning.

Any mental content which we are conscious of is a *Vorstellung*, in that the mind receives external stimuli and raises impressions of them. *Darstellung* is the activity of responding to stimuli. These two phases of cognition are complementary: for a mental representation to be produced, it is necessary that an external reply be the counterpart of a phase of recognition, of acquisition of stimuli and their subsequent processing. The external representation is a sort of two-feedback action in human perception and the representational faculty. It therefore indicates that cognitive activity is not limited to the processing of perceptive data from sensory impressions (*Sinnempfindungen*) through intuitions (*Anschauungen*) up to concepts (*Begriffe*), but needs a further moment of external objectivation in order to be complete. It needs to project outside itself its own structure, because it is only from the meeting between this projection and the assumption of the external data that the mental representations take shape. For a mental representation to be formed, *Darstellung* is therefore as necessary as *Vorstellung*. It is the same process, considered from two points of view: "*Vorstellung* is nothing more than an internal *Darstellung* and *Darstellung* is nothing more than an external *Vorstellung*; originally neither of them were distinct and the reciprocity of reflection can already be seen in the linguistic form: *sich vorstellen*, to imagine (Bernhardt 1801: 47).

To use a distinction proposed by J. Searle for classifying different forms of intentionality, one could say that the internal representation has a world-mind direction of causation, while the external representation has a mind-world direction of fit (Searle 1983). As can be seen, the distinction between the two types of representation identifies first of all the mental processes. It has firstly a descriptive value and does not explicitly involve the ontology of these internal states. On a more generic descriptive level, the two representations designate the same process considered from opposite sides.

With the intention of studying the various phases which make up the representational process, Bernhardt underlines the projective or adaptive aspect present in generating mental representations. In this way he develops a reasoning of Fichtian origin, based on the idea that the relationship between man and nature is not a tranquil one. Nature is essentially differ-

ent from man, in that it lacks reason and awareness, but man nonetheless expects it to satisfy his expectations. Human beings therefore seek to bend nature to their needs, so as to make it homogeneous with their action plans, and the most effective weapon for this purpose is reason, so the action exerted by man against nature takes the shape of a forced attribution of rationality.

Since language is the outer projection of human essence, it proves to be a formidable instrument in the hands of a reason centred on the subject. With language we remodel nature in our image and we thus enslave it to our needs. The tendency to personify is an obvious symptom of this process. Bernhardt notes that this tendency, which manifests itself, for example, with the attribution of the masculine or feminine gender to inanimate things, is an element present in all languages. For this reason personification, together with metaphor, is the rhetorical process that lies at the basis of all other figures.¹⁷

The conflict inherent in the relationship between man and nature disappears altogether in the relationship between humans equally endowed with reason. In this case it is not so much a totalitarian reason which acts, imposing its own form outside itself, as a reason directed towards understanding. Between human beings it is possible to have that union that is impossible with nature. But how does this happen? So that there can be understanding between subjects equally endowed with reason, Bernhardt argues that there needs to be a middle point between will (Willen) and action (Handlung). In short, there needs to be a faculty capable of making what is intention exterior, of transforming a resolution into a concrete action. "The action, through which that happens, in a broad sense is called *darstellen* and is therefore what reveals and constructs rational natures" (Bernhardt 1801: 46).

External representation is therefore the faculty of making one's resolutions real, transforming them into an action. Considered in this light, Roth's interpretation of external representation as intentional activity is not entirely true in Bernhardt's theory. Moreover, in that it is objectified and becomes an element of the external world, the will is also made available for our knowledge. In external representation the communicative aspect is essential: it is the tendency that pushes human beings to project outside themselves their own rational structure, which regarding other individuals leads them to create civilisations. Since the external representa-

¹⁷ Bernhardt (1801: 97, 141, 151, 1803, 179 ff.).

the risk of arbitrariness and motivation. As K. Bühler (1934) and T. De Mauro (1980) have noted - with the principle of obstrusive relevance and formal semiotic arbitrariness respectively - the genesis of linguistic meaning has a certain role in the regularity of this operation.

Let us look at a simple example. Let us suppose that we want to represent something formed by the elements 'a, b, c', putting the most imitative strategy - an imitative - into action. If the imitation were based on the element 'a', then the reproduction would be arbitrary with respect to the elements 'b' and 'c' (Bernhardt 1801: 53). As far as we can see, every external representation is partially arbitrary and partially imitative. It is imitative with respect to the elements that it tries to reproduce, while it is arbitrary with respect to the elements that it leaves out and in some cases substitutes with new characteristics which are useful for the memory but independent of the series that it tries to reproduce. In every imitative reproduction a portion of arbitrary choice of marks is present, just as every semantic production contains a portion of "imaginative manner", i.e. marks assumed by the imagination because they are imitative. Every external representation contains a portion of imitation and a portion of reproduction of the represented object, joined with a portion of arbitrariness in the choice of distinctive features.

In general, the greater number of marks that are present in the thing represented and are registered, the closer the means of representation will move to imitation and the further away from the arbitrary sign. Bernhardt proposes this evaluation as a 'rule for the order of arbitrary signs' (Bernhardt 1801: 56). From his point of view, both imitations which are too similar to the objects represented and arbitrary signs with too weak a degree of similarity serve very little for the purpose - the former because of a problem of economy of thought, the latter because of a problem of ease of use. Following the genetic theory of the semiotist, Bernhardt imagines a gradation that goes from simply imitative sounds to completely arbitrary sounds. However, unlike the semiotists, he "reconstructs a complete series of qualitative transformations: partial imitation, analogical and iconic imitation (according to the degree of sensation), metaphor, explicit convention" (Schleutten-Lange/Weyel 1988: 86). Each of these external representations responds to a different expulsive or cognitive intent, which depends on the particular cognitive and communicative strategy brought into play.

In some respect, Bernhardt's position is eclectic, in the sense that he avoids the dispute between the followers of the arbitrarist or naturalist thesis on the origin of linguistic signs, in favour of a more accommo-

ing position that considers verbal language as a comprehensive system in which both iconic signs and arbitrary signs have a place. Indeed, imitation and arbitrary choice of marks are two strategies in the hands of a subject that is already able to form external and linguistic representations. Bernhardt's is also an epistemological theory of the mind: the availability of different strategies which prove to be opportune according to the duties that they must perform, is recognised in the human mind. The different modes of external representation do not give rise, as happened with Boethius, to different mental modules, but rather to different argumentative and representational strategies. We shall have figures or sounds then, according to whether the more or less arbitrary sign is realised on a physical substrate of space or time.

Unfortunately in philosophy eclecticism is rather ill-famed. From the historical and philosophical point of view it is in fact characterised by subtle arguments from different and sometimes contradictory research paths. In actual fact the lack of view shown in eclecticism conceals an unjustified prejudice. Generally eclecticism is associated with a negative evaluation concerning the outcome of such an operation. Yet the outcome does not take its origin from the nature of the operation. The lack of coherence arises only if the models of explanation adopted on one plane require that they be extended to all possible cases, independently of the level of analysis. However, a difficulty of this kind may arise in any theory and is not peculiar to eclecticism.

The question of the ontology of the mind appears to be a domain within which eclecticism proves to be quite advantageous. The fundamental doubt concerning mental states is related to whether they are real or not. Yet, unless we decide to adopt a very trivial meaning of the term 'real', as a consequence of which one might expect one day accidentally to run into mental states, the question is that of trying to establish which are the most adequate levels of explanation. More specifically, it concerns the possibility of reducing explanations formulated in terms of the psychology of beliefs and desires to the terms of the language of physics and chemistry. If one adopts an eclectic standpoint, both explanations may be retained, a distinction being made between the levels of analysis. In many of the sciences we are used to solutions of this kind: doctors and biologists, for example, are not at all taken aback by the fact that according to the different levels of analysis, digestion can be perceived as consisting in the mechanical process of fragmentation of food by means of mastication and in the various chemical processes of denaturation of nutrient substances. Normally no one considers whether digestion as such exists in real-

ity. According to the different levels of analysis we find both the physical and chemical processes and digestion. Selection of this kind could also be adopted for the philosophy of mind. The suggestion put forward by J. Searle is oriented in this direction: he considers mental states to be on a par with any other biological phenomenon, yet he considers it useful to retain the level of mental description (Searle 1983). It is not surprising, therefore, that his finality has earned him the definition of eclectic.

Bernhardi's position could also be considered eclectic, at least if we assume this definition of 'eclecticism'. Moreover, eclecticism characterises him from many points of view. In addition to the versatility of his interests, which we have already mentioned, the many influences which his theory is subject to should be considered. The relationship that most impressed scholars, in such not many, was that with Fichte. E. Fetsch, who was the first to recognize the importance of Bernhardi's thought in German classical linguistics, claimed that *Sprachlehre* represents the attempt to apply the system elaborated by Fichte to linguistics (Fetsch 1923: 65). Recently D. Thomaud once again proposed, in a more organic manner, the attempt to reconstruct Bernhardi's theory as a grammar inspired by Fichte's philosophy.³⁹ J. Griesinger goes to the extent of considering Bernhardi's work as a "sprachphilosophischer und erbsprachpsychologischer Kommentar" on the essay on language that Fichte had written in 1795.⁴⁰ H. Gipper singles out not only the influence of Fichte and Kant, but also those of the *grammatische philosophie* and of the *Italienromantismus* (Gipper 1992: 215). B. Schlieben-Lange and H. Weyth (1988), for their part, have traced the presence of topics taken from the semantics of Lactius and Cassiodorus. It cannot be denied that these motifs are certainly present in Bernhardi's work. On the whole it appears to me that this variety of influences does nothing but legitimize the eclectic interpretation.

One case in which this eclecticism is evident is the 'rule for the order of arbitrary signs'. In Roth's model the choice of marks depends on the adoption of a given mental module. In Bernhardi the same external (more or less arbitrary) representation can become a linguistic sign or a figure, according to which material substance it is realized on. There is no absolute tie, but only a certain opportunity, a certain advantage. Since a figure possesses more 'imaginative matter' and has more features in common with what it represents, it will show a more initiative character. A linguistic sign, on the contrary, can do without the conformity of features

with what it represents, and therefore can operate more liberally in the choice of pertinent features.

Notwithstanding the aforementioned differences, the same desire to get over the seventeenth and eighteenth-century dispute on naturalness vs. arbitrariness of linguistic signs can be found in both Roth and Bernhardi. The solution that Roth tries to give - in a rather obliging way - betrays the fact that the question was losing its importance in the eyes of *Darstellungsbegriff* philologists.

Let us remember here the allusion with which up until now we have laboured in trying to the question of whether language is a natural or arbitrary designation [...]. Well, one cannot deny that in all languages there are designations in which the connection between designated thing and sign is clear, however it is also certain that there are still more numerous designations, especially in languages already formed, where this connection is not seen at all. The former are emphasized by those who uphold that language is a natural designation, and the latter by those who maintain that it is arbitrary designation. Both parties judge in a unilateral manner [...]. From these two parties a third is born which cannot be accused of unfairness.

(Roth 1790: 83-84)

According to this third way of seeing things, continues Roth, quoting F. W. D. Sessel, language consists "natural designations alongside arbitrary designations, in that nature and the course of passions are expressed through the tone of discourse, the speed or slowness of pronunciation and similar resources, or the audible objects are expressed through a certain similar sound of the words".⁴¹ In *Gewordener rede und abgemessener sprachlehre* the theoretical basis of this position can be found. As external representation, claims Roth, can be similar to what it represents, when there is a strong homogeneity with the elements of the corresponding internal representation. In this case the external representation is natural and is called *imitation* (Roth 1815: 8). When, however, between the external and internal representation there is no significant homogeneity the *Darstellung* is an arbitrary sign.

Natural *Darstellung*, or imitation, can refer to an imitation or a concept. To refer to an imitation it will use an image, while to refer to a concept it will employ a symbol. Moreover, concepts can also be designated through arbitrary signs. In this case the designation is nothing but the 'means to remember a concept', not showing any intrinsic similarity to it (Roth 1815: 4). Since verbal language only designates concepts of the un-

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39. Thomaud (1992a: 420 ff.); cf. Wied-Schwaninger (1987: 366).
40. Griesinger (1992: 562); cf. Griesinger (1990), Pallas (1970).

41. Roth (1790: 84-85), Sessel (1794: § 237).

demanding, it is made up at the same time of natural *Derivierung* and artificial *Entwerbung*. In other words, language is in part a symbol and in part an arbitrary sign.

Roth also reaches the same conclusion as Bernhardt, though along a different pathway. Both are convinced that verbal language consists of a mixture of arbitrariness and intuition (*Intuition*) in the choice of particular features. As is known, Humboldt too maintained that language is "at the same time copy (*Abbild*) and sign, not all product of the impression of objects and not all product of the speakers' will" (Humboldt 1820: 29). There is the impression that even in this case Humboldt's position owes a lot to Bernhardt's and perhaps even Roth's ideas. Furthermore, in Roth's case there is also a formulation almost coinciding with Humboldt's: "Even thus it emerges that language is at the same time an arbitrary sign and a symbol" (Roth 1815: 9). To appreciate the similarity of this sentence to Humboldt's, one should bear in mind that in Roth's theory the symbol is an *exclusive* external representation that designates a concept of the understanding, analogous to the notion of 'copy' in Humboldt.

4.4 The Senses: Touch, Sight, Hearing, and Metaphor

The problem of the greater conformity of articulate sounds as a material substrate for verbal language can also be found in Bernhardt, who, indeed, deals with it in a more brilliant way than Roth. On this subject the two positions are completely divergent. Not being conditioned by tightly belonging to transcendental philosophy, Bernhardt willingly takes many elements from that perspective, but does not feel obliged to support any burden of explanation just to remain faithful. In Bernhardt, moreover, the solution of the question of material substrate makes reference to the entire cognitive set-up of the human species. It is therefore necessary to examine some aspects that have been excluded from the argument until now, and which are, however, essential.

According to his point of view the basis of knowledge is touch (*Ge-fühl*). This approach was already characteristic of Herder and Reinhold too who to take it up in 1816.⁴ Referring to *Ge-fühl*, Bernhardt aims to allude on one hand to the tactile system, on the other to the more general

4. Beyond Kant - The Eclecticism of A. F. Bernhardt

disposition to sensibility of the human species (Bernhardt 1801: 74). He is led in this direction by the ambiguity of the German word *Ge-fühl*, which grammatically indicates a passive disposition and an affection. But it is an ambiguity that proves useful, allowing him to hold many elements together in a single concept. The basic idea is that the whole of the body's surface is sensitive to external stimuli, only with different gradations and different measures of specialisation. The fingertips, for example, have a high degree of sensibility, but reduced specialisation. The nostrils, where the sense of smell is concentrated, have a good degree of sensibility and an even higher specialisation.

From a certain point of view, touch is the only sense which man has, if by this one means the capacity to be affected by external objects. This single sense, however, creates the other senses by specialising its own action and regulating its own excitability in various ways. The image that Bernhardt (1801: 22) suggests for his own cognitive model is that of a pyramid. The base of the pyramid is sensibility (meaning fire of all touch), while the reason, which is the faculty more characteristic of man, would be the vertex.

Touch is enclaved under the condition of a persistent pressure and is compared to the stroke of a musical string (Bernhardt 1801: 22). The basic idea of tactile perception is therefore mechanical, like a string that re-sounds when it is struck. Touch does not, furthermore, perceive objects as a totality, but concentrates on their particular qualities. Through an exploratory movement, touch is able to recognise the form of an object, getting an idea of its area and its limits. The form (*Form*) of objects is therefore already within reach of the exploratory movement of touch. In short, touch presents the essential characteristics of all senses: the aptitude to receive data from outside (the capacity to respond when faced with some slight pressure), the exploratory activity of the subject (the hand touching an object) and the delimitation of parts (the capacity to identify a form in the object). The cognitive model proposed by Bernhardt is therefore based on the capacity to receive stimuli and to elaborate a reply consisting in the production of forms. This model specifically characterises the base of the pyramid, even if it extracts its influence to all cognition.

First of all, the other senses also respond to the same principle. In the case of sight, its characteristic property is colour. When we 'cut out' a certain colour patch on a background we obtain a figure (*Gestalt*). The latter corresponds to the visual sense to whose form was for touch (Bernhardt 1801: 23). The figure, states Bernhardt (1801: 26), is a form joined with colour. Touch and sight have a characteristic in common that distin-

41 | Herder (1770), Reinhold (1801).

guides them from hearing. They accompany visual and spatial intuitions, while hearing accompanies temporal intuitions. Mental images based on visual and spatial intuitions are called plastic, while those based on temporal intuitions are called musical (Bernhardi 1803: 35). Furthermore, the representations of space and time are based on different modalities: space on seeing (*Sehebenen*) and time on feeling, sensing (*empfinden*) (Bernhardi 1803: 283).

Hearing is created on the model of the other senses. The property that it immediately perceives is simple sound (*Geräusch*). If we isolate a simple sound we obtain a tone (*Ton*) (Bernhardi 1803: 24-25). As is evident, we find ourselves faced with the same model operating on various levels. The capacity to receive external data gives rise, in the case of touch, to a generic bodily modification, in the case of sight (under the conditions of light), to the sensation of a colour, in the case of hearing (under the conditions of air), to the sensation of a sound. The response of the human organism to an external stimulus identifies a form in the case of touch, a figure in the case of sight and a tone in the case of hearing. Synesthetic perceptions are the most complex and at the same time the most common. In the perception of movement, for example, sight and hearing often co-operate for the same objective (Bernhardi 1803: 26-27).

Before examining the reason why articulate sounds are the most apt means for linguistic external representation, it is also necessary to take into consideration the way different perceptive data are reversible with one another. The brief answer to this problem is that such reversibility is made possible thanks to the fact that touch – through a mechanism of inner-sensorial movement on a metaphorical basis – acts as a sensorium commune among the five senses. Since the various senses are nothing but modifications of touch, the data perceived in each one can be translated into a more elementary form. It is exactly this more elementary form that allows reciprocal reversibility. Even sight responds to the three characteristics that we have encountered, but in a more specific way, in that the tactile form of sight corresponds to a figure.

If this hypothesis is to be accepted, it is likely that touch can carry out the function of sensorium commune. In other words, it is likely that the information archived in a complex form can be recovered into the simpler form that has generated it. The most problematic point is the possibility of converting specific information from one form into another. Let us return to the example of touch and sight. The problem is whether, in addition to converting spatial characteristics, it is also possible to convert more specifically visual characteristics. A form and a figure

can in effect be convertible, but can we translate a colour into the tactile form? Bernhardi's reply appeals to a metaphorical type of mechanism.

4. Beyond Kant – The Fabrication of A. F. Bernhardi

In a broad sense a metaphor is a relationship between any two spheres. But if we take the term in its strict sense, then we shall only use the term 'metaphor' to refer to the relationship of identity or one-to-one correspondence between the two spheres. Otherwise, if the relationship is subordination we shall have a synecdoche; if it is succession we shall have a metonymy (Bernhardi 1803: 90). While synecdoche and metonymy are tropes based on lower characteristics of sensible intuition, the metaphor is a relationship that regards the entire intuition (Bernhardi 1803: 94). Since the understanding and the imagination are respectively analytic and synthetic faculties, the former governs synecdoche and metonymy, while the latter governs metaphor.

Compared to metonymy and synecdoche, the metaphor acts as a generic criterion for producing analogies between intuitions. Its perception such a criterion allows touch to function as sensorium commune for all the sensory systems. For example, synesthetic perceptions are a concrete area in which metaphorical movement between the contents of the various senses ensures the formation of a single sensible representation.

Most times when Bernhardi uses the notion of metaphor, he does so to describe the relation that is established between sensibility and the rest of the mind's contents. In these cases he proposes the metaphorical relationship as a model of the relationship between mind and body.⁴¹ In reply to the question of how it is possible to designate the world of the understanding, Bernhardi says that the mind is able to do it by comparing the product of the understanding to be designated with a content that it already possesses, and assuming the sign of this latter also for metaphorically recalling the former (Bernhardi 1803: 83). "Now we have seen that man can designate what is sensible, taking the sign of an external action and making it a sign of the internal, in other words considering it as an external representation and using it metaphorically" (Bernhardi 1803: 83). On the basis of these considerations Bernhardi is driven to maintain that all language is nothing but an "allegory of the understanding" (1803: 85, my italics). In this way the model of the external representation becomes the model of the entire relationship between the perceptive and intellectual fields, taking up and amplifying the suggestion of exclusive symbolic that Kant put forward in section fifty-nine of the third Critique.

⁴¹ Bernhardi (1803: 81, 83, 1803: 19 ff., 84 ff.).

4.5 Understanding and Imagination

The imagination and the understanding, the faculties at the centre of a fiery debate after Kant, carry out a strategic role in the choice of pertinent features. In his *Critique of Pure Reason*, Kant assigned an over-ambitious duty to the imaginative faculty. In attributing to it a decisive role in the elaboration of schemata, he caused it to become one of the weak points in his theory of the mental faculties. For these reasons the debate on the (productive) imagination became one of the most fascinating themes for the intellectuality of the early nineteenth century. With the explosion of this debate, the separation between the two concepts 'Phantasie' and 'Einbildungskraft', which cover the semantic field of the term 'imagination', showed the greater and greater specialization of research, with Phantasie employed on the aesthetic side, and Einbildungskraft on the philosophical side (Klausen 1968). In Bernhardt's writings a decisive preponderance of the second term can be seen, bearing witness to the fact that the author, notwithstanding his major literary interests, was busy above all in the field of the psychology of the faculties. He does not appeal to the imagination in order to refer to a generic and inextinguishable flash of liberty, as often happened in the philosophers and scholars of his time, but to designate a specific cognitive faculty. The understanding and the imagination are therefore not activities arranged in a hierarchic way, that indicate successive phases in the formation of knowledge, but rather distinct modes of working in the mind.

The understanding is the faculty able to fix something and make what is unstable stable (Bernhardt 1801: 30). It is a principle of order that, as we have seen in advance, is present at different levels, from immediate sensation to the elements of concepts. It is the mental process of fixing pertinent features, on whatever level it presents itself. It is an analytical faculty that isolates characteristics and breaks down the totality into its subject elements. For example, in hearing, the understanding is the faculty that breaks down the immediate datum of the sensation, isolating the phonetic features that carry meaning and leaving the rest aside.

The imagination is the complementary faculty, able to collect scattered and isolated features into superior unities. In this case it is also a general principle that intercepts different physical and mental activities. While the understanding is an analytical faculty, the imagination is a synthetic faculty. It is easy to guess that the two faculties are both necessary for the formation of a mental representation, contributing in different

ways to the choice of pertinent features from the continuum of reality and to their fusion in a new unit. In truth, there is a certain specialization of the duties of the imagination and the understanding in a hierarchic sense too, even if it is a preferential specialisation, in that the two faculties work preferably at a certain level because in that case they are truly indispensable. The imagination is needed to confer unity on the intuitions, thus forming images. In turn, the understanding, by means of the analytical quality of judgement, selects the characteristics of images that can be assumed within arbitrary signs (Bernhardt 1801: 304). The action of the imagination on intuitions is necessary when these are transformed into images, while the action of the understanding is indispensable for producing signs based on underlying images.

The choice of marks is always to a certain degree an arbitrary operation. "The reason for the arbitrariness of linguistic signs," says Bernhardt, is that "the word, which externally represents the blending of accents, has a smaller extension than what is designated" (Bernhardt 1801: 66). It therefore intercepts only a part of the infinite marks of the designated thing.

The choice of marks does not depend on a convention (Verabredung), but more radically on arbitrariness (Willkür). While the latter is a characteristic internal to the production mechanism of signs and - even though to a small degree - of images, the convention consists of a contract agreed between individuals about their common conduct, that is the use of certain phonetic or graphic signs for certain agreed aims. Arbitrariness is the faculty of choosing pertinent marks, adopted because appropriate for the aim of representation. It has a fundamental role in the formation of the external representation in general. The conventions, on the other hand, have a degree of action limited by language. They are made possible by it, but because of this language cannot depend on conventions.

When Bernhardt asks himself how arbitrary signs have arisen, he notes that the simplest and most immediate explanation - that they are formed through a convention - on closer inspection proves to be absurd, since for such a presumed agreement to be realised a large quantity of linguistic signs would already have to be presupposed (1801: 51). The author also uses this distinction between internal and external characteristics to designate the 'value' of language. In the same way as money, it was originally arbitrary, but, once established, becomes necessary (Bernhardt 1801: 124). Bernhardt's distinction between arbitrariness as a characteristic internal to the semantic relationship and conventionality as an external characteristic, is particularly significant if one remembers that in

the Count (1922) by Sansone, to whom we also owe the definitive success of this distinction, there are still semantic oscillations in this area (De Mauro 1963: 412 ff.).

An interesting outcome of the activity of the understanding is the link that establishes between arbitrary signs and calculation. Arbitrary signs are the most characteristic product of the understanding because they are the signs in which the operation of choosing marks is conducted in the most radical way. The understanding is a faculty of the human mind that operates in a quantitative way and consequently seeks to transform the products of the imagination into elements that yield to the laws of analytical judgment. In Bernhardt's lapidary words: "[...] the understanding, by its nature, is a tendency to number, it transforms the quality in quantity" (1803: 56). By 'number' the author does not necessarily mean natural numbers, but more generally any calculable amount. The understanding, in addition to being a faculty tending to transform the quality into calculable amounts, is also "a designating (Benachener) faculty and this tendency is expressed very well in the word *Meisens* (namely)" (Bernhardt 1803: 60). The understanding is therefore a faculty that has the tendency to number and designate together. It is easy to guess that the sign of the understanding will be treated as a number.

Let us now consider the signs of the understanding as numbers, thus the judgments and the capacity to draw conclusions (Schlußfolgerungen) will appear in this way as calculations for the invention of these numbers and thus the world of the understanding will extend by extension the world of natural signs; and therefore, inasmuch as the signs of the understanding are operations, and therefore, inasmuch as the signs of the understanding are operations, an admissible connection arises of all the forces under one number. Numbers become images, and from their concepts both produce new concepts internally and there is sure to be transformed, through external representation, once again into numbers, thus forming a new world. At this point another question arises: If, in order to operate, the understanding employs words signs, where does it take them from and how does it choose them? [...] The imagination or the memory will lend its signs to the understanding, and these, inasmuch as they are adopted by the understanding, are called concepts. (Bernhardt 1803: 60-61)

On the basis of this substantiation of arbitrary signs to calculations, Bernhardt ends up comparing the various parts of speech to calculable amounts.⁴¹ This is a statement that confirms that in following the myth of

4. Beyond Kant - The Evidences of A. P. Bernhardt

language as calculation, Bernhardt is very careful to distinguish between the different levels of description and analysis. From this point of view, language is a calculation only inasmuch as it is considered as a product of the faculty of the understanding. However, the awareness that this faculty only contributes in a partial way to the formation of the linguistic ability remains firm.

In the fifth book of *Sprachlehre*, where language is considered as *Darstellung* of the understanding, the reasoning becomes tauter, in the attempt to explain how in some cases it is possible to determine exactly the number of marks in a concept (Bernhardt 1803: 138 and *passim*). "Although the number of marks in a concept is indeterminate, it is, however, determinable; in this case every mark appears as a unity, and their fusion as a totality, consequently as a number" (Bernhardt 1803: 139). The following procedure, or as the author says, 'operation', presents itself as a sort of componential semantics treated in the same way as formal logic, in which Bernhardt tries to show how from the enumeration of marks in a certain number of concepts it is possible to obtain the common base with a logical and formal operation. We can show the model using an example given by the author himself.

Let a, b, c, d be sensations that I join together as marks. 'A' is therefore produced which is equal to a, b, c, d ; the same case can be given for $b, c, d, e, f = B$, with $b, c, d, g, h = C$ and finally with $b, c, d, h, i, k = D$. Hence the relationships of unity are given in the following way: 'b' behaves with relation to A as 1 to 4 regarding B, as 1 to 3, so happens regarding C; finally regarding D as 1 to 6. It is therefore possible to make the following observations: $(D - B) = (C - B)$ and this transposition of 'C' we shall call 'O'; furthermore $(A - c) = (B - c)$. The fusion of 'AB' we shall call 'N'. Consequently 'N' is based on b, c, d, e and 'O' on b, c, d, h . Therefore $(D - h) = N$ and this latter we shall call 'M'.

(Bernhardt 1803: 139)

To make Bernhardt's reasoning clearer let us take the following schema into consideration, in which the capital letters indicate the concepts and the small letters the marks, or the sensations, that make them up.

41. For the noun see Bernhardt (1803: 60); for the pronoun Bernhardt (1803: 203); the same model is applied to the same sentence: "The sentence, for the understanding, is a

calculation, it means the increasing to concepts [...] For the imagination it is on the other hand like a picture [...] (Bernhardt 1803: 234).

a	b	c	D						= A
	b	c	D	e	f				= B
	b	e	D			g	h		= C
		c	D				i	k	= D

A simple formalization of the preceding operation can also be proposed.

$$D - A = C - E$$

$$CD = O$$

$$O = (b + d + i)$$

$$A - a = B - b$$

$$AB = N$$

$$N = (b + d)$$

$$(D - b) - N = M$$

The operation highlights the way in which the calculability of signs of the understanding should be interpreted. In the last analysis it is a matter of extracting a rather radical idea of compositional semantics in which to each concept there corresponds a definite number of marks. It is thus impossible that the concepts chosen to the first, also made up of a definite number of marks, are derivable from the first on the basis of a calculable procedure. Bernhardt believes that the possibility of establishing relationships between the various concepts of the same semantic family gives rise to a procedure (Fregean) endowed with the characteristic of predictability (Bernhardt 1803: 159). The similarity of this idea to that of the algorithm is quite evident. Nevertheless, this, one should not forget, that the understanding is only a given level of analysis. In other words, according to Bernhardt natural languages are not at all amenable to calculation. When, however, the semantic analysis is conducted following the method of the understanding, we can think that they effectively behave in this way. An analysis that adopted the point of view of the imagination or reason would proceed in quite a different way.

If languages are considered as products of the understanding, it is not necessary to turn to elements outside the linguistic system for determining the lexical meaning. On this point Bernhardt's theory is rather close to structuralist semantics. But he was also very conscious of the influence of factors external to the system for the formation of lexical meaning, as with become evident from his thesis that meaning follows dialogue involved of

preceding it (cf. section 4.5). In general, if we consider meaning as a form, it depends entirely on the elements internal to the linguistic system, but if we consider it from the reference point of view then the elements external to the system become unavoidable.

Bernhardt uses the term 'form' to indicate both the categorization and the system of 'opposing relations' (as in structuralism). When he wonders how a signal chosen by one individual can become common to everyone, until it 'necessarily' designates its meaning, the reply is that it happens thanks to the fact that "every language is the external representation of internal representations and therefore a *form*" (Bernhardt 1801: 108, my italics). As in the case of the value of money, to which languages are often compared, linguistic meaning too is based on insertion into a system of opposing relations. All things considered, the calculatory aspect of signs of the understanding does nothing but take the formal character of language to the extreme.

4.6 Time as a Condition that Allows Us to Say Everything

At this point we can draw the first conclusions on the problem of the greater conformity of articulation sounds for linguistic representation. In attributing to articulation sounds the exclusive possibility of acting as adequate means for human language, Bernhardt is led to compare them to visual signs. Even these, in fact, are automatically able to represent meanings, as happens in deaf sign-languages. Moreover, it is an indisputable fact that the material substrate on which the expressive system typical of the human species is realized, is not visible signs, but articulation sounds. Furthermore, in the human species this circumstance has also led to a re-examination of some organs, such as the larynx and the mouth, whose primary function is not articulation of the voice. Therefore two possibilities are given: either the selection of this substrate was completely accidental and therefore, from the phylogenetic point of view, a hypothetical language based on a visual substrate would have had the same degree of cognitive development, or there must be a specific reason that in some way connects articulation of the voice and the formation of human mental representations. Bernhardt's research on the specific conformity of articulation sounds is an attempt to uphold this second thesis.

He takes from the tradition the first cause of the preference for auditory signs compared to visual ones. Auditory signs are said to be preferred because the condition necessary for visual ones (light), is a less universal condition than air, which is necessary for sounds (Bernhardi 1801: 51). The advantage of being able to communicate even in conditions of poor lighting and not being restricted solely to face-to-face communication has had some weight in the selection of this means. The tendency of language to include every domain of reality and to transform every part of nature into a rational essence has led man to use the most universal means.

But the principal argument used to uphold the thesis of the greatest conformity of articulate sounds for language is that, being auditory signs, they have less imaginative material than visual ones. It is easy to guess what Bernhardi means by the expression "imaginative material", if we reflect on the difference between the understanding and the imagination that we have previously mentioned. As will be remembered, the imagination is the faculty to blend the characteristic features, isolated by the understanding, into a superior unity. It acts above all on the elements of instantaneous, into a superior unity. In these the imaginative material is greatest, soon forming mental images. In these the duration of simultaneity and they are synthetic representations in which the datum of simultaneity and locality stands out. Having more imaginative material, the signs of sight are more suited to being used as intuitive signs. They can in fact easily give a comprehensive and faithful image of what is meant to be designated, exploiting the isomorphism on which they are based.

The fundamental difference between visual and auditory signs is that the former represent one totality along with another totality, while the latter represent a given totality with a multiplicity of marks (Bernhardi 1801: 56). Thanks to the latter characteristic, auditory signs lend themselves better to the activity of choosing marks in the production of arbitrary signs. Since there is no relationship of one-to-one dependence between the elements of two consonant classes, the relationship will be based on the "rule for the choice of arbitrary signs". Visual signs are therefore more suited to designating an intuitive, while auditory signs are more suited to being put together and articulated. Bernhardi does not intend to deny the fact that in visual signs too there is a certain articulation, in this case too there are preferential characteristics. Expressed in a slightly exaggerated manner, the general schema of reasoning is the following: the intuition of space is typical of sight, while that of time is typical of hearing. Signs are difficult in raising itself higher than a mere

collection of wholes, while hearing is naturally given to the identification of characteristic features.

However, Bernhardi seems quite aware that phenomena such as the identification of a distinctive feature, the emergence of a shape from the background and focusing on an object demonstrate that sight too is based on temporal elements and the identification of salient characteristics. In this case too, Bernhardi's position is surfeited by a certain opportunism. He states that, given the spectacular and preferential way that visual and auditory perception work, the latter proves more suited to conforming to the activity of the understanding and the production of arbitrary signs. This activity could be developed on the basis of visual signs too, on condition that we are ready to face a major difficulty. It is an explanation that is not able to demonstrate an absolute need of verbal language to be based on the substance of the articulate voice, but one that succeeds in bringing arguments in favour of an undeniable congeniality of auditory signs with the structure of all cognition.

As the basis of the human mind there is an elementary activity which we could call discretisation of time. By this I mean the segmentation of an indistinct flux of a temporal type into discrete entities so that they can be manipulated by the understanding and memory. It is a very comprehensive activity that, as in the case of touch, is subsequently specified according to the level on which it is realised. The levels on which we find this activity are perception, the generation of mental representations, the production of the voice and the formation of verbal signs. Since we have already dwelt on the first two elements, we shall concentrate on the production of the voice and the formation of verbal signs. But first it is useful to look more closely at what this particular treatment of temporal fluxes consists in.

In considering the temporal format as basic in activating the data of knowledge, the proposal of discretisation of time owes something to the structure of Kant's first Critique. As is known, in *Transcendental Aesthetics* Kant considered temporal succession (such *otherwise*) as a primary format with respect to simultaneity (together) of space. In this way he considered the activating of data in a temporal form as the brick of all the passive phase of knowledge. By affirming that the schema too has a temporal form, this principle was extended to the active phase of the elaboration of categorical forms. This way of thinking was generally accepted in Kant's time, however, the way in which Bernhardi receives this idea proves to be quite original. He does not merely accept the opinion on the basis of which the temporal format of succession is the elementary mode

of the passive and active phase of knowledge. Rather, he goes in search of the mental activity that is able to produce this succession, tracing it by conferring a discrete type of order on continuous phenomena which we come up against. When the mind finds itself faced with a confusion and indecisive sequence it is led to set limits to this sequence, to break it up and to isolate discrete sections in it. In this way a phenomenon is made available to our mind, which operates more easily on such sections. The memory, for its part, can successfully archive sections with well defined and confined.

This activity is consistent with Pictet's idea that the relationship between man and nature is one of conflict. Opposed to nature as something radically different from himself, man attempts to bring it into a domain that is his own, and manipulates it by means of his own resources, thus making it similar to himself. In this conflict human beings use a formidable weapon, i.e. reason. We have noticed that the tendency to personally nature is a basic strategy of the domestication of nature. The discretisation of time is an even more elementary strategy. It is the first filter through which nature is made to pass, if in some way it becomes part of the human world. Bernhardt's approach demonstrates, though indirectly, the extent to which transcendental philosophy had penetrated into the common culture of the nineteenth century. In fact, affecting of theories at the beginning of the nineteenth century, though the discretisation of time is not explicitly linked to the Kantian ideal, the two models show a clear analogy in presenting a condition making the experience of the human species possible.

According to Bernhardt it is necessary to consider time not as a quality independent of the sensible substrate, but as a way of measuring a certain appearance. Considered in itself, time does not exist at all. To be perceived, it must always be connected to a sensible intuition, that is to say it must be the form of something that changes or remains. Examined as a sensible quality, time is like an indeterminate current whose bounds then escape us. According to this way of thinking, "the concept of empty time is nothing, infinite time is only a concept of the understanding", or an abstraction (Bernhardt 1801: 197).

Since time runs with and through the intuition, it can only possibly exist without intuition it would be thought of as intuition, were as a single and undivided stream, but always perceived in a limited and divided manner.

(Bernhardt 1801: 197)

What Bernhardt rejects is the idea of time as an empty "place" or a container in which in principle all changes are possible, in favour of time as

the capacity to measure the changes of which we have an effective perception.

As we have seen, the fact that the air is a more general vital condition with respect to light proves to be an advantage for auditory signs. Bernhardt works out his own analysis on the production of the articulate voice starting exactly from this point. He states that "air is the universal condition of language", it is that elastic body which is between the representing subject and the receiving subject and is able to bring linguistic external representation with it (Bernhardt 1803: 249). However, the specific condition of verbal language is not simply air, but air emitted from within the chest. This is "a very beautiful symbol for language in general". According to Bernhardt, speaking means modelling and restructuring the flux of air emitted during respiration. Expressed in a slightly poetic way, "speaking means exhaling one's own internal world and one's own individual ideas [...]" (Bernhardt 1803: 249). The importance given to expiration in the formation of language is such that Bernhardt (1803: 257) goes as far as to deny the possibility of injunctive articulations. In all probability in this argument there is an attempt to assimilate expiration to external representation. The latter, indeed, was conceived of as a response by the organism to external stimuli in an attempt to make the environment uniform with human reason. The air emitted in expiration seems to the author a good symbol of language exactly because it suggests the idea of a movement towards outside. On this level language is considered as an organic reflex, as a horse whinies in attempting to express its internal state, man, prompted by the same reflex, speaks. The specific configuration of his organism and the attempt to make sounds adequate to his representations leads man to transform air emitted from the chest into articulate voice.

Air simply emitted is speech, at the first degree of formation, is called *Spürwort* (Bernhardt 1803: 249). This is distinguished into *harmonic* and *articulate* spirit. The harmonic spirit is produced simply by leaving the mouth open and making the exhaled air resonant without any impediment. The articulate spirit, instead, is produced by modifying the expiratory flux through the phonatory organs. The former shows a close affinity with vowels, the latter with consonants. According to the type of impediment that is offered to the expiratory flux, it will resonant in various ways. Bernhardt's idea is that the single portions of the phonatory apparatus should not be considered separately, but that the mouth and other elements constitute a holistic system of phonic production (1803: 258). Using this framework, Bernhardt proposes his own guide to phonology, probably treating the different sounds. It is interesting to note that the

"single sonorous element of a language" is called *Buchstabe*, a term which is usually rendered in English as 'letter' (Bernhardi 1803: 254). The *Buchstabe* is, instead, the minimum identifiable element in the chain of the articulatory voice. It should also be mentioned that this minimum element is identified on an exclusively phonetic and articulatory basis and the acoustic and perceptive aspect is not taken into consideration. On the basis of observations of an articulatory type, Bernhardi is convinced that one could also compile a sort of original alphabet (*Ursprache*) valid for all languages, a kind of catalogue of all the linguistic sounds produced by man (1803: 253).

The model proposed for explaining the production of the articulatory voice is consistent with the idea of the discretisation of time. In this case too it is a matter of acting on an indeterminate current to produce discrete sections. The indistinct current is the air emitted during expiration. The first grade of formation is the articulatory split, with it the breath is actually made to rest. On this substrate the phonatory organs then act, modelling the articulatory split into parts, which are made to carry meaning. This activity has an obvious analogy with the discretisation of meaning. This activity has an obvious analogy with the discretisation of meaning. Moreover, all these sensory activities are rooted in auditory perception. Moreover, all these sensory activities are regulated by the same model that we have seen in the segmentation of the stream of consciousness into discrete sections. Between the air modelled stream of consciousness and the articulatory voice there is the same relationship as that in expiration and the articulatory voice there is the same relationship as that which is established between the indistinct stream of consciousness and the fixation of sections that become distinct representations. From another angle, mental representations too, as we have seen exemplifying the role of the understanding and imagination, are generated in the same way.

The same model is also found to act on the morphological and syntactic levels. The expression 'discretisation of time' is particularly appropriate to the formation of verbal syntax. According to Bernhardi, in the human to the formation of time is always linked to an intention. The very man who perceives the perception of time is always linked to an intention. The various ideas of time in a linguistic acquisition. Although the action that the various senses perform together is able in itself to grasp the movement of an object, however, time and movement take on a definite form only when they become part of a linguistic strategy.

To obtain this result it is necessary to incorporate a certain change that occurs in reality in a linguistic action (*Handlung*). That is to say, the change is a certain phenomenon is observed and the stream within which the action is included are observed arbitrarily. It is the linguistic faculty that arbitrates limits to an action. Since this choice responds to linguistic criteria, the very determination of the action will depend on verbal language.

Involving an action in the passage of time produces a stretch of time (*Zeitraum*). The latter term, moreover, figuratively expresses the fact that the discretisation of time consists in attributing visual and spatial characteristics to temporal-type phenomena. "The stretch of time therefore cuts a quantity of points out of the infinite series of time and thus defines that infinite series" (Bernhardi 1801: 194).

Linguistic time and action are two closely connected phenomena, indistinguishable from an ontological point of view. Bernhardi compares them to a line with a certain colour. If we consider the line from the point of view of its direction, the focus is on linguistic time. If we consider it from the point of view of colour, the focus is on the action. Although linguistic time and the corresponding action can be considered separately through abstraction, in reality, like the colour and the line, they do not exist independently (Bernhardi 1801: 194).

In order to show Bernhardi's point of view, we can recall a simple schema proposed by him.

Figure 3. Time, action and language



In this figure the line AB indicates time thought of as an indeterminate current. In order to fix words in this stream and therefore make a stretch of time it is necessary to suppose a subject able to observe the phenomenon externally, represented in the figure by the letter 'X'. To fix these confines the subject is required to break into the temporal flux of the external reality, creating a point which it can work on (indicated in the figure as 'a'). This point allows us to fix the relative notions of 'before' and 'after'. In this way the linguistic actions represented by the segments 'a', 'b' and 'c' can finally be established, and therefore ordered the corresponding segments 'd', 'e' and 'f', thought of as non-linguistic events. From this point of view, we can say that the action 'an' follows

the action 'K' is that we represent to ourselves a visual mental image in which the first segment has the visual-spatial characteristic of following the other going from left to right.

4.7 The Theory of External Representation and Semiotics

From what has been said there clearly emerges a tendency in Bernhardt to use the notion of sign in a rather restricted meaning. He adopts the term 'sign' not for any type of (semantic) relationship, but preferably for those associations testified by the understanding. From this point of view, arbitrary linguistic signs are that particular type of *Darstellung* that is related through articulate sounds and in principle can be subject to a calculable through predictability. It is a rather restricted use of the notion, but fairly widespread in the theories that we are examining.

For Roeh too a sign is not a generic relationship within given terms, but a specific relationship that takes place only under certain conditions. Let us take the definition of 'sign' present in *Ausdruckslehre*: "signs is said of everything through which the internal representation of a thought object is presented to the consciousness, or in truth, what a concept is referred to" (Roeh 1795: 89). Although this definition may seem to be quite comprehensive, actually it is fairly restricted. It follows in its structure that of the *'signage'*, given previously, with the difference that in the case of the sign, the thought object substitutes the invited (*ausdrucksförmig*) object of the image, and the concept substitutes the invitation (*Ausdrucksanruf*). Unlike the image, the sign shows the feature of only designating concepts of the understanding. From Roeh's point of view, any element that carries images, sensations, impressions or other types of mental contents that are not copies of the understanding is not a sign.

In Roeh's and Bernhardt's perspective, with the term 'sign' one alludes to the means of an association, established by a third party, used for the memory and to designate products of the understanding. From this point of view, Kantian characterisms, seen as mere signs of association, Bernhardt's calculable signs and Roeh's signs of the understanding, can in many ways be considered synonymous.

All this allows us to shed more light on an aspect that otherwise risks remaining obscure. If we consider the idea that "language is the proper sense is perhaps only a kind of and modification of external representa-

tion" (Bernhardt 1901: 14), we need to ask ourselves how the philosophers of *Darstellung*, though having the solid tradition of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century semiotics at their disposal, preferred to base their definition of language on a recently defined idea (such as that of external representation).

We are not dealing in the best with an anti-semantic controversy, as happens, instead, in some passages in Humboldt, but the preference given to the notion of (external) 'representation' over that of 'sign' requires an explanation. We are in fact witnessing the simultaneous redefinition of both terms. The meaning of the term *Darstellung* is widened until it includes many expressive activities and thus becomes the genus of which verbal language is supposed to be a species. Besides, the term 'sign' finds its own semantic field narrowed, so as to indicate not just any type of relationship between signifier and signified, but the relationship established by the understanding with the aim of helping the memory. In the eyes of the *Darstellung* philosophers, what can have been the reason for favouring the notion of 'external representation'?

The essential difference between a sign and a *Darstellung* is that the latter always depends on a mental representation. We can imagine non-linguistic signs that do not refer to any mental representation, such as a stone, which, even aside from a representation, is able to show that we are cold. But we cannot imagine non-linguistic *Darstellungen* that are independent of a mental representation. In the technical sense of that era, these phenomena would merely be expressions (*Ausdrücke*), since they do not undergo the mediation of any mental representation. Unlike characterisms, which can recall a sense thanks to an association established by a subject external to the relationship itself, the representations are a sort of 'internal' relationship acting. When the representation of an oak is formed in the mind, this representation only works for the oak. A phrase of stone, however, can indicate either a turkey being cooked or enemies approaching, according to what an external subject (or the community of users) establishes that it indicates. In this sense Peirce considered the latter and the internal object (*Representant*) of the representation as essential elements of it. And it is for this reason that it is more correct to speak of intentionality of a mental representation than intentionality of a sign.

The external representation, furthermore, presents another characteristic that makes it more suited to the aims of *Darstellung* philosophy than signs. Right from the Kantian formulation of *ästhetische Symbolik*, it is based on a semantic shift between the level of categorization and the level

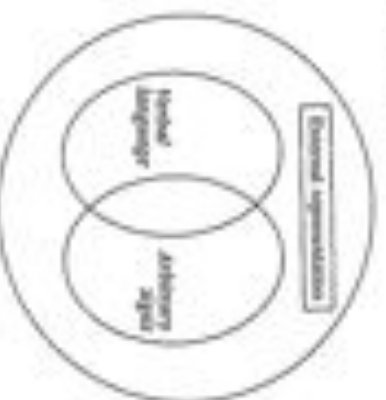
of intelligibility. *Darstellung* is always founded on an asymmetry between these two levels, without the representation becoming opaque. The asymmetric link between the two levels is not of the one-to-one type, as with characteristics, but "shuffled", or to use Bernhardt's words, "tropic".

In a sense these differences are also linked to the way the perception influences the external representation. The latter does not refer to an arbitrary way to the content of the perception. In Bernhardt's view, external representation is just the right response to perceptive stimuli. This perspective cannot be confused with behaviourist-type ones, since in this case the reply to external stimuli consists in the production of a mental representation, and as is known, behaviourism insisted on such a serious doubt on the realism of mental states. However, in Bernhardt's case it is always an organism's reply to perceptive stimuli. In this perspective verbal language is not concerned of as an instrument of communication for connecting through bodies immaterial signs that would otherwise remain isolated. It is rather an indispensable element for the working of the mind before and independently of the need for communication.

Hence there are the reasons that prompted the *Darstellung* philosophers to base their analysis on the notion of external representation, even having a strong tradition like seventeenth- and eighteenth-century semiotics at their disposal. For the above reasons, they probably deemed that the notion of external representation was more efficient for their purposes. The idea of signs must have seemed to them on the one hand too generic and on the other too narrow – too generic if we think exclusively of the associative function of signs, but too narrow if we pay attention to their particular congruency with the faculty of the understanding. The following model (cf. Fig. 5) exemplifies the relationship thus set up between verbal language, signs and external representation.

The non-linguistic natural signs are excluded from this model, since they do not regard the question of linguistic articulation. Moreover, not even all arbitrary signs are linguistic: coins, for example, are non-linguistic arbitrary signs, since they do not exhibit the characteristic of being articulative sounds, which is typical of verbal language, neither do they designate any mental state. On the other hand, not all facts of language are signs in the strict sense of the word, and even more so not all the facts of language are linguistic signs of the understanding. For example, articulative sounds used as metaphors and analogical imitations are not signs of the understanding.

Figure 4: External representation and signs



If we pay attention to linguistic phenomena, the line of specification traced out by Bernhardt therefore goes from *Darstellung* to *Sprachdarstellung* (linguistic external representation) down to *Sprachschreibling* (written arbitrary signs). *Zwischen* (linguistic external representation through arbitrary signs).

4.8 The Communicative Pattern. Bernhardt between Fichte and Humboldt

The recognition of the communicative or public purpose inherent in external representation, contrasted with the private nature of the internal representation (Merleau-Ponty 1996: 25 ff.), is based – as has been stated – on some themes in Fichte's philosophy. Although these influences are in effect important, they should not be exaggerated.

Bernhardt believes (à la Fichte) that "in general every external representation is a request made to one reason to connect up with another reason" (1806: 12-13) and that, "the aim of linguistic external representation is to link one reason with another reason outside of us and therefore to satisfy certain needs according to the degree of the chargeable formation" (1803: 3). However, when he considers language more an activity than a

code, he breaks away from Fichte, who in fact carefully distinguished between 'signs' and 'actions', maintaining that language is made of signs and not actions.

Language, in the most authentic sense of the word, is the expression of our thoughts through arbitrary signs. Through signs (Darwin), I say, therefore not through actions (Humboldt). Moreover, our thoughts also manifest themselves through the consequences that they have in the sensible world. In that and not according to the results of this thinking. A rational being, in wanting my actions, can deduce what I have thought. But this is not language. In general, one must define as language only the designation of things, and one should take nothing but this into consideration. Language has absolutely no other end apart from this designation. In an action, on the contrary, the expressive of thought is only accidental. It does not occur with the aim of having a purpose. I do not act to make my thought manifest to others; for example, I do not act to indicate to others that I am hungry. Every action is an end in itself. I act because I want to act.

(Fichte 1795: 302, author's italics)

The main difference between signs and actions is that the former have an instrumental character, while the latter are ends in themselves. Actions are simply realised as they occur and do not create any sensible attractant, which is instead an essential element of the linguistic phenomenon. In this argument there lurks a difficulty present in Fichte's philosophy of language: from many of his statements we should expect language to be nothing but a particular case of interaction (*Wechselwirkung*), and therefore a certain type of action.

Yet in his main linguistic work, Fichte traces a clear line of demarcation between linguistic signs and actions. Bernhardt, on the other hand, is often between two stools: the idea that language is an action. He realises a connected supporter of the idea that language relates with nature from the role that it plays within an interpersonal relationship. It is necessary to attribute to the latter case the status of 'action'. Darrwing allows him to hold the cognitive and communicative activities together, or to use words dear to J. Habermas (1988), rationally with an aim (*Zweckrationalität*) and acting towards understanding (*Verständigungsbefähigung*).

Bernhardt's theory is independent of Fichte from a linguistic point of view, but less so from a metaphysical point of view. R. Wils-Schneidauer (1987: 374). To notion of Darrwing is based on Fichte's metaphysics" (1987: 374). To work out the concept of Darrwing, Bernhardt in effect draws on Fichte's idea of *Wechselwirkung*. Furthermore, in Fichte the idea of Darrwing already also had a linguistic significance (cf. Zahn 1981), as well as

than theoretical. In *Über den Begriff der Wissenschaftstheorie* Fichte states that, once the principle of science is found, all the 'system of human knowledge' is nothing but its Darrwing (Fichte 1794a: 54). Consistently with this definition, all the works that he subsequently wrote are nothing but a 'search for a new Darrwing of the doctrine of science'. The problem Fichte faced lay in the link between the transcendental subject and concrete linguistic ability. He faced this problem in his lectures of 1794, entitled *Über den Geist und den Buchstaben in der Philosophie* (Müller-Vollmer 1981). The road there that man is a free being and therefore cannot undergo 'essential' modifications by another being. To enter into effective interaction with a fellow-being and therefore escape from solipsism, he must: "produce outside himself a manifestation that expresses his spiritual idea [...], that is to say derivatives the mind (Geist) in the body" (Fichte 1794b: 319). According to Müller-Vollmer, in order to solve this problem Fichte uses the concept of Darrwing, through which - a little paradoxically - "the impossible becomes possible" (Müller-Vollmer 1981: 445). By Darrwing Fichte does not mean the communication of an already-available semantic content that passes from the location of one receiving subject. Instead, "Darrwing has only the function of setting things going and providing an impulse to 'develop autonomously' (rather as inevitably), through its own activity, a spiritual idea' conceived by the speaker" (Müller-Vollmer 1981: 445).

Fichte considers the production of sense as the fruit of the exchange of signals between the speaker and listener, and therefore expresses an idea that was to become central in Bernhardt's and later in Humboldt's thought. In both authors the idea was to take on the status of a formative principle of language, from both a morphological and syntactic point of view. In Fichte's theory the model is suggested by the analogy between system Darrwing and linguistic Darrwing, that is by the way the sensible structure manifests the ideal one (the mental content or the system of science).

Like many of his contemporaries, Fichte is excited by two contrasting needs: on the one hand, he seeks to limit the action of language to that a sensible instrumental function, since he realises that otherwise the subject's transcendental structure would end up being irremediably weakened. On the other hand, he is engaged in seeking the essential characteristic of human nature in the linguistic function. The latter need leads him to uphold that not only interaction but also 'interaction through signs is a condition of humanity'. In sum, Fichte, Bernhardt and Humboldt are link-

ed by an analogous conception of linguistic sense, according to which sense is not something that is ready before communication in the mind of the speaking subject, but rather something that is formed through dialogue.

This idea radically breaks away from the traditional view of communication, on the basis of which the need to communicate is the sign of the finite nature of human beings. Since man is made up of an immaterial mind-soul and a material body, and meaning is the product of the mind-soul, it too is immaterial. To make itself available to other human beings and, it too is transformed into something perceptible. Communication is seen precisely as an immaterial-material translation of meanings that, however, are ready before the communicative exchange. If meaning coincides with a mental representation that is formed before dialogue, the latter adds nothing to it, except the accidental circumstance of also becoming transparent for the interlocutor.

On the other hand, according to Fichte, Bernhardi and Humboldt's view, linguistic meaning originates from communicative exchange. As it well known, this idea is simply developed in Humboldt, for whom "all speaking is founded on dialogue" (Humboldt 1837: 25). Humboldt is speaking in contrast to the traditional view of communication: "communication, openly contrary to the traditional view of communication: 'communication' is never comparable to the delivery of a material content" (Humboldt 1835-36: 57). Language is always a social event that takes place in dialogue. Moreover, though too, inasmuch as it is dependent on language, stages a sort of interior dialogue even in the most complete isolation.⁴⁵

Nevertheless, these suggestive formulations, the innovative weight of Humboldt's conception of dialogue appears in a different light if it is compared to the Fichte-Bernhardi line of evolution. Actually, Humboldt developed an idea that had already been elaborated by Fichte and Bernhardi, only making it more extreme and therefore rendering it more vivid ("whatever object I treat, it is as if it became infinite in my hands", Humboldt 1836: 454).

Already in Bernhardi the listener participates in the creation of linguistic meaning as much as the speaking subject. In this way communication does not only regard the possibility of establishing an understanding between two subjects - through a certain code - using certain senses communicated with certain signals, but also the very possibility of precise

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ling mental representations. That is to say, the fact that the representation is communicable does not concern only the concrete circumstance that it is actually employed in a dialogue, but first of all its deep structure.

Bernhardi distinguishes between two aspects of communication: on one side it is considered as the relationship between *Darstellung* and the subject for whom it is represented, on the other side, as a property inherent in the representing (*darstellend*) subject (Bernhardi 1801: 17). While in the first case a relationship between several individuals is studied to, in the second it is a property present inside the individual before concrete communication is established. Bernhardi, in short, distinguishes between communicability (*Mittelbarkeit*) and communication (*Mittelweg*). In the first case the capacity to make a certain content of the mind communicable is involved, and in the second the possibility that two individuals actually understand each other.

In the pragmatics of external representation three elements must be distinguished: a subject that represents (*der Subjekt welcher darstellt*), the representation itself (*die Darstellung selbst*) and a subject for whom it is represented (*der Subjekt für welches dargestellt wird*) (Bernhardi 1801: 17). In the case of personal pronouns the following model is presented:

- 1) *Der darstellende Subjekt* - Ich (the representing subject - I)
- 2) *Das empfangende Subjekt* - Du (the receiving subject - thou, you)
- 3) *Die Darstellung* - Er, Sie, Es (the external representation - he, she, it)

The distinction between free (*frei*) and bound (*gebunden*) *Darstellung* is an important aspect of this communicative model. By "free external representation" Bernhardi means a representation that does not respond to any communicative need. In the passage from *Aufgangswort* which we saw earlier, where we read that every external representation is an invitation directed to a mind outside us, there is an interesting statement. Even if external representation is always directed towards the outside and to dialogue, yet "the aim in external representation taken in itself is different" (Bernhardi 1805: 15). Human reason can, in fact, present itself externally in two ways: either as an individual - that is as reason joined to a body - and in this case its action is subjected to external empirical conditions (and therefore external representation too will be something necessary); or directly as such and in this case its product is an image (*Abbild*) of reason (something comparable to an organism).

45. Humboldt (1835-36: 56), cf. Di Cesare (1991: 666) ff.; Tardieu (1990: 172 ff.).

In the first case external representation is bound, in the sense that it is produced "with the aim of communication". In the second case it is free from this aim. For example, a work of art or scientific paper, though they have had their origin in the author's desire to communicate something, acquire an autonomous and universal existence that leaves behind the author's needs and desires and the occasion on which they were conceived. However, the aim of a hungry man's gestures is linked to communication and stops when the hunger is satisfied (Bernhardt 1805: 14). In conclusion, free external representation has "its end in itself", while bound representation has its end and its cause in communication (Bernhardt 1805: 27).

The distinction between free and bound Deverling is one of the few elements of Berthoud's theory that has had a certain amount of success, even if it is difficult to place it in his communicative pattern. The principal intention seems to be to distinguish between speech acts that find their evidence *d'être* in the context to which they were destined, and speech acts that are free from any communicative intent. It is a question of distinguishing between an empirically conditioned reason (and a language) and guiding between a rationally conditioned reason (and a language). Yet if the latter reason (and a language) that go beyond this conditioning. Yet if the latter interpretation we have up to far upheld is correct, this concern this badly into the framework of Berthoud's linguistics, whose aim seems to be not so much to reduce the empirical conditioning of linguistic practice (it values, for example, the conditioning of perception and the articulate voices, on meaning). But to insert them in the logical structure of language. As far as the question of contextualization is concerned, the originality of his position lies in having transferred Fichte's intersubjective model to error and representation and verbal language.

The freedom of human expression highlights forms of conscious and rational intelligence that other animals, as far as Bernhardt knew, do not possess. The meaning of the distinction between free and bound Darwinian beings lies precisely in this description of expressive practices, effectively divergent in some respects, though referable to a logical structure of the dialogic-communicative type. But perhaps what led Bernhardt to stress the role of representation free from empirical conditioning was above all the Romantic climate in which the author worked, with its myth of absolute freedom of the creative act of genius.

At first sight the same need is also evident in the distinction between form and necessity of external representation. While the former appears to depend on the representational faculty, the latter appears to be an irreducible act of freedom. "We distinguish the necessity for external repre-

sensation from its form and we characterize the latter so that it is deduced from the representational faculty and the former as an immediate act of liberty" (Bernhardt 1801: 20-21). As far as form is concerned, the deducibility of verbal language on the representational faculty is absolute: one cannot externally represent anything that has not been in some way previously elaborated by the representational faculty. Elsewhere Bernhardt also states that "all our external representing refers to our internal representing" (Bernhardt 1801: 63).

However, in these statements there is something more than the Romantic enjoyment of freedom. There is also an opposition to Roth's theories on the possibility of a transcendental deduction of external from internal representations. According to his way of seeing things, it is possible to deduce only the form of *Darstellung* from the representational faculty, and not its necessity.

The necessity of *external representation*, which we talk about here, should not and cannot be taken from its context, that is in my view the concept of *internal representation*. Because, even if it were possible, it would develop into a vicious circle; it should rather be taken from a sense of reason and intelligent audit.

(Deborah 31 May 1993)

Amid other

[...] from the concept of internal representation one should deduce the accuracy of the external representation's form, but not the necessity of the external representation itself.

(Ostrowski 1901: 16-17)

If one considers form as that which determines the content of consciousness and language simply as a product of the human representational faculty, one risks not fully grasping its nature. Language depends on the representational faculty, in the sense that it assumes its form from it, but it is not just a product of it. Its necessity, in Bernhardt's terminology, does not derive from the representational faculty. That is to say, man does not speak because he has internal mental representations, even if what he says is always mediated by the representational faculty.

Thus we can finally try to offer a comprehensive picture of the problem of the form and matter of representation. The background is made up of the new model of schematism proposed in section fifty-nine of *Critique of Judgement*. It is the possibility that between forms and intuitions, in addition to schematic connections, there are also symbolic connections in which the relationship is, as we have seen, 'shifted', metaphorical or symbolic. The technical terminology concerning this problem was later pos-

lected by Reinhold in his writings on the representational faculty and in his elementary philosophy. This problem is at the centre of the debate on *exhibitive symbolics*, in which two alternative options clash.

On one side there is Reinhold's thesis, which admits the possibility of a transcendental deduction of both the form of Döring's being and matter from the representational faculty. On the other side there is Reinhold's thesis, which admits only the possibility of a deduction of the form of Döring's being, not its matter. With the admission of the deductibility of the form of Döring's being, Reinhold defends a representational view of language. In this way he asserts the dependency of linguistic ability on the capacity to create and manipulate mental representations, and consequently, the need to study verbal language as a chapter in the theory of knowledge.

He denies, however, the deduction of the matter of external representation from the representational faculty, entrusting the duty of "going in search" of the adequate sensible intuition to verbal language. In this way the function of verbal language, regarding internal representations, would not consist of procuring the reference to objects for them – as Reinhold asserted – but rather in contributing to their "filling" and therefore to their formation. Reinhold states that to connect with other rational beings it is necessary to find the way to take internal representation into the outside world, an operation which needs, in turn, to find a matter for external representation (Reinhold 1801: 47–48).

In Kantian words, Reinhold asserts that language is completely dependent on the function of the schematic intuition, while for Reinhold the formation of mental representations always needs an *exhibitive symbolics* regulated by language. The metaphor is the capacity to "designate the ideal world of the understanding" by finding a similar sign for a new product of the understanding from an already formed product (Reinhold 1801: 83). Verbal language is said to be charged with undertaking this function of mediation between empty categorical forms and intuitions to be objects.

This theory is also embraced by Pöhl in his 1820 grammar of German language. He too distinguishes between a matter and a form in external representation.

As one can distinguish a form and a matter in every internal representation, they are also distinct in external representation. The matter is in fact what is represented internally and externally; the form is in general is the way and manner in which an internally represented multiplicity is linked in a unity for the external and internal intuition, and in the case of language, the way in which the matter, through words, is carried in the unity in external representation. (Pöhl 1820: 161)

Pöhl is convinced of the deductibility of the form of the Döring's being of the representational faculty: "Every linguistic Döring's being is based on a preceding state of consciousness and especially on being conscious of single internal representations, feelings and desires; moreover, no state of the mind and desire can be represented externally through language without some mediation, but only by means of the representational faculty" (Pöhl 1820: 13). In each of these passages the character of the preceding one is conserved, and just as the character of desire is conserved in the mental representation of desire, the character of the formality possessed by Döring's being also remains in the Döring's being. So, since the character of form persists in this passage, the proper function of Döring's being is once again to procure the intuition and the matter.

In general, externally representing something means giving it an intuition and carrying it through sensibilisation in the field of intuitive perception. The external representation is therefore the intelligible sensibilisation of internal representations. (Pöhl 1820: 13)

4.9 External Representation and Expression

In the theory of external representation apparently contradictory elements are mixed together. If we consider language as a type of external representation we could also expect it to be conceived of as a type of expression and sensibilisation. But this assimilation is explicitly denied (and perhaps this is surprising) by the theory's supporters.

In *Die Wohlverstandenen*, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe presents a suggestive and simplified version of the expressive function of language. Charlotte and her friend the captain spend pleasant evenings listening to Edward reading books to them. For his part, Edward loves to read out loud but becomes annoyed if someone, peering into the book, reads ahead of him, which Charlotte, unfortunately, cannot avoid doing. Edward has long consulted his version of Charlotte's behaviour, but at a certain point his intolerance takes the upper hand.

For once and for all stop these rude manners and other such behaviour, which is annoying to society! When I need to someone to let me explain something so that you can hear? The written word, the printed word takes the place of my own intuition, my own heart, and would I struggle to speak, if there were a small window on my forehead or brain which allowed whoever I wanted to express (publish) my thoughts and sentiments

(questioned my feelings in, so know beforehand how I shall finish) "When someone reads my book I feel as if they were spinning me in one."
(Goethe 1809: 311)

Edward thinks of language as a necessary evil, which he would gladly do without if only there were that "window on the mind" that consisted of directly accessing the world of mental representations. In this perspective, the function that is attributed to language (verbal and written) is externally to express something that otherwise one would not succeed in putting across to others. Although this idea is quite widespread and rather common, the common sense idea of the linguistic function, linguists have substituted it to more important limitations. If we refer to the German classical age, the limitations mainly concern the difference between human expressive systems and those of other animals. According to this perspective one should speak of "expression" only in the case of animals, while in man a more complex function is believed to intervene.

It is an idea clearly expressed in the *Essay on the origin of language* by Herder. In it the author claims that man, unlike animals, does not have a instinctive language and notes that, while in nature a bee buzzes and a bird sings, man does not speak at all. "For every animal [...] language is the expression of sensible representations so intense as to be translated into instincts: in other words language - like the senses, representations, into instincts - in animals is innate and immediate" (Herder 1770: 49). The notion of expression therefore has its principal connotation attributed to it: immediacy. In the case of animals, internal states would spontaneously burst forth without the mediation of any intention or conscious choice. These internal states, moreover, are called "sensible representations" exactly because they are mental states that have not been subjected to any mental mediation.

Here then are two different ways of considering the expressive function of language. On one side there is a vague meaning, that for the sake of convenience we shall take as Goethe's version, according to which the verbal language carries out the function of a perceptible means in the place of otherwise inaccessible mental contents. On the other side there is a more technical meaning, given by Herder, on the basis of which expression is linked to the positivity of mental contents that burst forth without any conscious mediation. Paradoxically, in the theory of external representation it is willingly conceded that language is an expression of mental contents in the first - and vaguer - sense, and it is denied that this is also the case in the second sense.

The distinction between external representation and expression is introduced in section fifty-five of *Critique of Judgement*, where Kant, separating Düring from characterisms, speaks of the latter as concerning sensible signs and "as mere expressions of concepts".⁴⁰ The difference between Düring and Amdurk in Kant is clear: the former designates a process that forms mental representations, the latter a simple one-to-one relationship between classes of corresponding objects. In Kant's case the opposition between external representation and expression is defined by means of the object that he wants to designate. When it is a concept of the understanding the corresponding operation is the Düring, while if it is a sensation then the operation is expression. The line of demarcation consists of the presence of a conceptual mediation instead of an immediate sensation. This position is clearly expressed in the case of the inscription. As we have seen, Roth does not consider this even a part of speech proper because of the lack of any conceptual mediation. For this reason, it "is not an external representation of the understanding but the expression of an internal or external sensation" (Roth 1815: 27-28).

Bernhardt is still more explicit on the distinction between specifically human expression (external representation) and that of other animals. The specifically coincides with freedom. According to Bernhardt, rather than the single cognitive elements, it is comprehensive configurations that distinguish human cognitive activity from that of other animals. Even animals express their own sensations through sounds produced by suitable phonatory organs, so that one could be led to attribute a language to them, but animals express only what they feel, while man externally represents their feelings. As a matter of fact,

express and duration are two completely different things. To express originally means to make something internal external and therefore does not include the concepts of freedom, only externally representing, without considering that it is necessarily connected with the corridor of internal representation and that it is determined through the latter, is also an immediate act of freedom [...]

(Bernhardt 1801: 161)

Heyne was even to claim that "an immediate expression of thought is impossible for man" (Heyne 1856: 39). The distinction between expression and external representation, made by Bernhardt in order to distinguish human from animal expressiveness, in Heyne becomes a distinct separation. It happens that even man, claims Heyne, like other animals, instinctively express their own feelings. Such is the case for groans of pain and

40 Kant (1790: 312). - Transl. Bennett (Kant [1790] 1952: 222; author's insert).

pleasure, or for imitative shrieks and interjections. These expressions, furthermore, are not yet language, since the reflection on the immediate sensuous of perception is missing.

Discontinuity between human language and the expressive systems that man shares with other animals is a characteristic element of post-Kantian language theory. This position carries with it a certain amount of bewilderment of meaning, or rather the belief that language arises entirely and at once and that every meaning is comprehensible only by virtue of all the others. A shout of pain and the 'corresponding' linguistic expression are thus incommensurable entities, in that linguistic expression, appealing to a series of abstract entities such as concepts and values, needs a ready-formed language to realize itself.

CHAPTER 5

Beyond Kant

K. L. Reinhold's Linguistic Schematism

5.1 A Redundant Language Philosophy?

Usually Reinhold is considered a minor exponent of German Idealism, yet he is a figure who is difficult to pigeon-hole. He was a restless scholar, who paradoxically had the misfortune to become too famous too young and then to follow a research path which was difficult to reconcile with the dominant trends. Unraveling such a figure is consequently rather complicated. The variety of his interests is almost discouraging: morality, the debate on aesthetic theory of representation, logic, the question of the mind-language relationship, and poetics. His works are difficult to interpret and above all it is hard to follow his frequent changes in course. Reinhold was a scholar that let a theory engross him entirely until a new problem or paradigm got a hold on him. In a period when every philosopher felt called on to elaborate his own theoretical system (a *Lehrgebäude*, as it was then called), this attitude was considered a symptom of speculative 'leisurely'.

Since Reinhold has traditionally been seen as a bridge between Kant and later Idealism, his interest in language (the fifth and last phase of his research) has been considered little less than an extravagance. But this

under-evaluation of the linguistic phase goes against Reinhold's own statements, who clearly maintained that he completed his research path in his last works. In the dedication to Friedrich Heinrich Jacobi (1749-1817), contained in *Gesamtheit aller Synonymik für den allgemeinen Sprachgebrauch in den philosophischen Wissenschaften* of 1812, the author writes:

I dedicate this research to you [...] as the last and best result of the research and working that I have done until now, with which my earthly course finished reaches the end of the question that has been at the core of my being as the principal occupation of my interior and exterior work since childhood. (Reinhold 1812: xviii, xxi)

The last phase of Reinhold's research began as early as 1806 with *Verständnis der Logik und des Größtverhältnisses der Sprache*. Involving the logical categories from a linguistic point of view, the work marks the passage between the two fields. Other significant works of this period are *Reise über merkwürdigen Sprachverstand* under den Pseudonym (1809), the already quoted *Synonymik* (1812) and *Das menschliche Erkenntnisvermögen* (1816).

A. Kierkegaard tried to get to the bottom of this problem, realising that otherwise his impressive research on Reinhold's elementary philosophy, certainly the most exhaustive study in this area, would remain incomplete: 'He dealt above all with the logical phase, but also, as far as linguistic studies are regarded, with Synonymik and a much later essay (the later Feyer: *Wort ist die Wahrheit?* - bei dem ersten Streichlicht über die geistliche Offenbarung und die menschliche Vernunft) in which Ernst der geistliche Offenbarung und die menschliche Erkenntnisvermögen, which goes beyond 1820'. Kierkegaard hardly mentions *Erkenntnisvermögen*, which I consider his masterpiece (Kierkegaard 1961: 263). With the passing of the years the first attempts to understand Reinhold's philosophy of language finally began.⁴¹

The most general characteristic of Reinhold's position is the fact that he considers the study of language as a branch of the theory of consciousness. The latter in turn is based on three fundamental elements: mental representation, consciousness and perception. We have already looked at the first two in the second chapter, so we shall now turn our attention to the latter.

Reinhold's philosophy of language has two purposes: one explains logical and another gnosological. The first purpose is to define exactly the meaning of the main terms of philosophy so as to be able to set up this discipline as a rigorous science (cf. Reinhold 1796). As Choerren saw, it is an analytical ideal, not far from the original intentions of the analytical branch of twentieth-century language philosophy. Reinhold, moreover, had shown these interests from the very first works, though it is with *Synonymik* that the project is brought to fulfillment. In this work the main terms of the philosophical disputes of the time are subjected to a thorough examination, and grouped in families according to their meaning and analysed with the aim of avoiding future misunderstandings. Nevertheless Choerren's 'rediscovery', in the analytic area Reinhold remains almost unknown: for example the recent *Oxford Companion to Philosophy* does not even give him an entry (Günther 1995).

The second need in the linguistic study of the last Reinhold corresponds to the progressive widening of the horizon of his theory of knowledge. The examination of the linguistic faculty is only the last chapter in the encyclopedia of cognitive sciences that Reinhold completed during his long career. After the early studies on mental representation and consciousness, he devoted himself to the logical categories and finally arrived at the relationship between language and thought. This leads him to review his theory of sensibility in the light of a more empirical and psychological approach towards perception. All things considered, if one looks at his career from the point of view of a general theory of consciousness, one cannot fail to appreciate its consistency. It clearly emerges that the theory of representation and the attempt to understand language within the human mind respond to the same need.

This is why I consider *Erkenntnisvermögen* as Reinhold's masterpiece: in this work, all the different lines of his research seem to come together and to fit into a mature framework. The title of the book is in itself a research pathway: the author proposes to investigate what the mediation enacted by verbal language between sensibility and thought consists in. His thesis is that the specificity of the human mind consists precisely in this mediation. Every residual essentialist conception of the cognitive faculty is therefore abandoned; this faculty is no longer considered as a substance, but as the fruit of a specific configuration of diverse or psychic and mental functions. The constitutive elements of the human mind are sensibility, the thought faculty and verbal language. In Reinhold's own words:

41. Kierkegaard (1961).

48. Choerren (1972, 1975, 1986; Farnsworth 1996; Perini 1996a & b).

All sensible knowledge, states the author, begins from the external sense of *Gefühl*, a word that, as we have seen, maintained a certain ambiguity and was often rendered with 'feeling' thanks to the frequency with which it appeared in this meaning in Romantic texts. Reinhold states that "among the different meanings that the word *Gefühl* has gradually taken on, the one that indicates the particular sensation that is felt with the contact of a living body through force and pressure was chronologically the last" (Reinhold 1816: 17). From this original meaning, which indicates the sense of touch, derive the figurative meanings that are based on the condition of passivity typical of this sense. As a matter of fact, the word, in addition to indicating a condition of external passivity, can also be used to designate a condition of internal, or logical, moral or religious passivity. The Romantic meaning of 'feeling' is based on this figurative sense.

The decisive according to which touch is the elementary sense – the objects merely being modifications of it – was quite in vogue at that time, as we have seen in Bernhardt. Touch is the only sense to be distributed over the body's entire surface, except for the nails and hair. The fact that it is the elementary sense allows Reinhold to maintain the thesis that all sensibility is based on passivity. Yet, although passivity is an essential condition of touch, it does not account for its meaning. So that we can really perceive something the intervention of will (*Willkür*) is required, i.e. the intervention of a typically active element. Let us think of a hand that touches an object: it is not sufficient for the hand to come into contact with the object. For the whole shape and general conformation of the object to be appreciated, an exploration of the hand around the object with the intention of tracing its contours, thickness and type of surface is necessary. This action, Reinhold claims, is in a way arbitrary, in that it is the fruit of a choice and an attempt made unconsciously by the individual in which he or she is not passively restrained by the object.

Only with the appearance of this will is there a real perception (Reinhold 1816: 20). Objective reality (*gegenständliche Wirklichkeit* or *objektiv*) or *Realität* arises only in this way, through touching, and will (Reinhold 1816: 21). This voluntary movement that guides touch is an action (*Handlung*) in the proper sense. Indeed,

this action, without which no clear sensible self-awareness (*Gefühlsgefühl*) can arise, could also be more the prototype (*Urbild*) than the copy (*Abbild*) of that autonomy (*Selbstbestimmtheit*) which in German philosophy, especially in Kant's *Critique*, has engaged so many people [...]

(Reinhold 1816: 22, author's italics)

This action, or self-activity, for which tactile movement represents the model, has been given various names: activity that goes back on itself (in such *zurückkehrenden Thätigkeit*), acting on oneself (*Handeln auf sich selbst*), subjectively-objectivity (*Subjekt-objektivität*), activity of placing one-self (with *selbst setzende Thätigkeit*), pure ego-mora (*reine Ichheit*), pure identity (*reine Selbstheit*), pure reason or even pure life (*reine Vernunft*, *reine Leben*) (ibid.).

It almost seems a parody of contemporary idealist philosophy. Certainly Reinhold impresses a sharp change of direction on critical and idealist philosophy, in recognising a perceptive foundation in the formation of the subject, which in many contemporary texts had lost some verifiability. Even though he drew close to Fichte's subjective perspective, he ended up giving it an empirical foundation that was completely extraneous to it. With this premise, it is clear why touch is considered the elementary sense, all the others being nothing but modifications of it. It has in embryo the characteristic features of every sensible experience. The other external senses are therefore nothing but specialisations of this basic function.

Because of the genealogical dualism implicit in this position, Reinhold defends the value of the internal-external difference. For our perspective, this difference, and the model consequently used to explain the mind-body relationship, constitute the salient point of Reinhold's argument. This is so for two concurrent reasons: in the first place, because the function of mediation between internal and external experience is carried out by the linguistic faculty; in the second place, because the model explaining this relationship can be found in Reinhold's doctrine of *Darstellung*.

The meaning of this perspective is already appreciable in the distinction between 'internal' and 'external' sense, which are quite ambiguous expressions. The expression 'internal sense', for example, has three distinct meanings: it indicates above all the faculty of non-sensible *Gefühl*, that is the possibility of having logical, moral or religious *Gefühle*. This faculty is inseparable from the faculty of thought for manipulating concepts, and is based on the mind's capacity to be affected by itself, to have modifications of its state that do not depend on external perceptive conditions, but on other states internal to the mind. This faculty of having changes of state not immediately linked to the sensory system is at the basis of the second meaning of the expression 'internal sense': it refers to bodily sensations such as hunger, thirst, digestion or circulation of the blood that, although they are bodily, are produced with a certain auto-

very compared to the perception of special sensory systems (heech, sight, etc.). This second meaning seems to allude in general to the proprioceptive system. Finally, "internal sense" also alludes to the sensations that accompany *Gefühle* of desire (*Leid*) and aversion (*Abhau*), which are elementary conditions of man's life (Reichhold 1816: 100-101).

External experience concerns the perception and changes of state obtained through the body, and internal experience the more strictly mental phenomena. The former is the mind's faculty for receiving affections by through the body, the latter the mind's faculty for receiving affections by itself (Reichhold 1816: 98-100). In this case "internal" and "external" are to be taken in a literal sense, referring to all changes in state that derive directly from perception and all changes in the body's state that are produced without this direct mediation. Internal experience therefore includes a range of phenomena going from digestion to desire or religious beliefs. A wide conception of "mental" is thus set up, including very varied internal states. External and internal sense are not separate and independent faculties. External and internal sense are not separate and independent faculties, but are phenomena indissolubly linked to one another. Although Reichhold's philosophy seems to be busy subdividing the mind into an infinite series of single operations, actually he never loses sight of the unitary and dynamic character of mental processes. Only in some cases does a real distinction also correspond to a conceptual distinction, but on the whole the distinctions have an explanatory value to which no ontological distinction corresponds.

The reformulation of the Kantian distinction between internal and external experience in the terms we have just examined leads Reichhold to make harsh criticism of the principal psychological trends of his time. Before Kant the main opposition was between empirical and rational psychology. This opposition caused the birth of the psychology of the eclectic, as Reichhold calls the supporters of J. H. Lambert's (1728-1777), E. Meier's and J. G. H. Feder's popular philosophy. Kant was convinced he had overcome the defects of empirical psychology with his own transcendental or pure psychology. But, according to Reichhold, Kant's proposal by no means solved the problems of empirical psychology, and in point of fact, anticipating some significant suppositions of rational psychology, it also absorbed its weak points. (Reichhold 1816: 97). Unlike Kant, he values the conditions of superior internal states by perception and keeps in mind the fact that sensibility in turn undergoes an effect of back-action in verbal language.

5.2 Improper Common Images

The model proposed by Reichhold for solving the mind-body problem is based on the idea of reciprocal penetration (*Durchdringung*) (Reichhold 1816: 100). It is an idea taken from chemistry and had already been used by Spinoza to explain the relationship between thought and language.

Thinking, as such is consciousness, and its external representation (*Darstellung*) in itself, that is speaking, not only presupposes each other, but transforms themselves into each other; they are only what they are by being one in the other and through the other (he and *Durchdringung*). In this reciprocal penetration (*Durchdringung*) of theirs and complex mixing the difference between them is lost, so lost that the difference between the gases that combine to make up the atmosphere.

Chemistry represents the difference between gases through their distinction, but philosophical analysis until now has not succeeded in all its methods in showing the difference between thinking and speaking in a similar way.

(Reichhold 1817: 3)

In this passage we find the confirmation of the explicative rather than ontological value of Reichhold's various distinctions. Even the distinction between thinking and speaking has a simply descriptive value. Most of the distinctions regarding the representational faculty are therefore to be seen only as an attempt to make the study of the mind rigorous, also in the awareness of the utility value of its activity. Moreover, the idea of reciprocal penetration is not decisive for understanding the relationship between mental and bodily phenomena.

In *Erfahrungswissenschaften*, Reichhold's proposal is more detailed, with the thesis that the relationship between bodily and mental states is regulated by the borrowing and lending of some characteristics in their respective fields. This relationship is based above all on analogies and similarities that are established between the two kinds of phenomena, like what happens in the case of isomorphism of images. But the similarities of the mind-body relationship can be compared to those of a special type of image: improper or derived images. This is the passage where he proposed this idea.

This borrowing and lending between the active and passive changes of the self is certainly caused and conditioned by the similarities (analogies and relationships) between the states and changes of the body and the states and changes of the mind. Furthermore, these similarities are not at all like those that exist between different external and therefore composed phenomena that

must be included among senses and images, produced by the external perception, that are images proper. They refer, rather, to what is not included among the senses, what is incorporated and mental and takes on the character of hidden, improper and derived images. (Reichhold 1816: 105)

The model of the mind-body relationship can therefore be compared to that of improper images. Dwelling on this aspect of Reichhold's philosophy is therefore important for our perspective. There are two types of images: the single image (*Einzelnbild*) and common image (*Gemeinsbild*). The former is comparable to a portrait and calls to mind a single characteristic. The latter, which Reichhold compares to a schema, calls to mind something on the basis of a multiplicity of marks (Reichhold 1816: 77).

While in the first type of image every characteristic of the original also has its corresponding characteristic in the copy, the second type brings about a relationship in which every characteristic stands for a multiplicity of other marks. From this point of view, the common image performs a task similar to that of empirical concepts based on the choice of marks. The difference consists in the fact that empirical concepts – even those of individual objects – only represent the universal present in the individual, while images refer to concrete and particular characteristics.

Common images, in turn, are divided into proper and derived images. Proper images are those common images that represent the properties that fall under the five senses, while derived images are those common images that refer to internal states, which treat both sensible internal states (such as headache) and supersensible internal states (such as a certain belief). In all three cases – something visible, noticeable or a belief – the images are said to be common in that they use just one mark to indicate a multiplicity of other characteristics. This operation is regulated by the imagination, while for concepts it is the understanding that is concerned with operating the synthesis of multiplicity. Common images, both proper and improper, perform a mental operation comparable to that of the transcendental schema, and therefore are governed by the imagination (Reichhold 1816: 77 ff.). The difference between single images and proper and improper common images does not, however, say everything there is to be said about Reichhold's proposal. The following passage highlights the context, with a further treatment of the theory of images.

Among the various meanings of the polysemic word 'image' (Bild) the original one is the one referring to the intuitive *Darstellung* of something visible in its visibility. Natural *Darstellungen* of the visible, through mirroring on the water's surface and through artificial mirrors, and artificial *Darstellungen*

give through shadows and colours on a simple surface and through the plastic imitation of an body's shape belong to this meaning.

In a derived sense invisible and internal *Darstellungen* of what falls under the senses through residual impressions of sensations, which are possible in the sensible imagination, are also called images; these *Darstellungen* are originally produced by the senses and do not concern just the visible and noticeable, but also the audible, olfactory and gustatory, in short the sensible internal corporeal states.

Finally there are also symbolic, metaphoric and tropic *Darstellungen* of the supersensible that do not belong to the sensible domain, but to the imagination contained by the thought faculty. The word *Idol* (derived from *idola*, visible) and the word *Vorstellung*, used with the same meaning as *Idol*, when an external representation is produced through the power of the imagination. In a derived sense the sensations that call to mind something sensible and the concepts that call to mind something that is not called something sensible form the words used to call to mind something that is not called something sensible, images of thought (*Denkbilder*). (Reichhold 1816: 26-27)

To summarize Reichhold's argument we can distinguish four types of *Darstellung*: natural intuitive *Darstellungen* (1), artificial intuitive *Darstellungen* (2), sensible internal *Darstellungen* (3), and supersensible internal *Darstellungen* (4), also called symbolic, metaphoric or tropic *Darstellungen*.

In natural intuitive *Darstellungen* (1) human activity is not necessary. The mirror of water, which naturally returns the shape that is reflected in it, is a phenomenon of this type. Man is able to produce these phenomena artificially, for example by reproducing a certain shape in a sketch (2). From a functional point of view these phenomena are analogous in that they make the reproduced object like a copy. The difference lies in the fact that while in the first case the image is not the fruit of human activity, in the second case man's action is necessary.

The other two types of *Darstellungen* are called invisible (*unsichtbar*) and internal (*innerlich*). This seems to contradict the interpretation which makes *Darstellung* an external representation, and *Vorstellung* an internal representation. But in reality Reichhold's argument goes in just the same direction and the difficulty consists only in a different lexical use in German and English. In stating that the last two images are internal and invisible *Darstellungen*, Reichhold means to say that they are mental representations, or *Vorstellungen*, though of a specific type. As a matter of fact the first two, rightly speaking, are not mental representations. As image

reflected in a mirror exists independently of the human mind, while even if a sketch perhaps supposes a mental representation, it is not one.

Sensible internal Derivativungen (?) are instead mental representations. Their specificity consists in the fact that they are produced by the residue of a sensation on which the imagination has intervened. Let us think, for example, of those representations that originate directly from the senses' impressions and memory of these impressions. It can be both a specific impression – such as the representation of an apple eaten yesterday – and a more general representation, such as the capacity to recognize the flavor of the apple.

The last kind of image is the one that most interests us. Even in this case it is a mental representation, except that it has no explicit perceptive basis (6). In Reinhold's words they are representations of the imagination, or that part of internal experience "that belongs to the imagination considered by the faculty of thought". The relationship that these external representations have with non-sensible mental contents to which we refer is symbolic, or – as Reinhold also says – derived, tropic or metaphorical. With this the author means that these external representations do not designate their own objects in an abstract and proper way, but use something sensible, bringing a symbolic-type relationship into action.

The third and fourth type of Derivativung, unlike the first two, are mental representations. In the case of symbolic Derivativungen we are faced with internal representations that use the same procedure as that used by certain words. To explain his point of view Reinhold uses the example of the words *Aber* and *Versteherung*. These terms originally indicate the capacity to call something to mind through a mental image, something that one can see with the mind's eye, while now they have the more abstract meaning of "mental representation". To conceive of the "mental content" without using any sensible image is very difficult; indeed, the very idea of "mental content" is based on the metaphor of something that is found inside the mind. Reinhold claims that such abstract representations – the representation of the mental representation – are conceivable only thanks to a coupling with some perceptive characteristic.

In this case the word "*sinn*" acts as a bridge between conceiving of the activity, consisting in forming a mental content, and picturing this activity as seeing that given content internally. The sense in which these terms are used is not literal, but derived. Reinhold speaks of symbolic Derivativungen that represent something that is not sensible (such as an internal representation) using a semantic shift that goes from a proper to a derived sense. He asserts that words of this type, that "serve to call some-

thing thinkable to mind, are therefore also called images of thought (*Denkbilder*)" (Reinhold 1816: 27).

The shift towards a defined sensible content, although improper, is possible thanks to verbal language. In this sense Reinhold supplies a linguistic version of transcendental schematism, with an important addition: the connection between the forms of the understanding and intuitions is no longer guaranteed *a priori* but comes about with the participation of the perception and verbal language. Reinhold does not repudiate Kant's definition of the theory of consciousness. He renews it, though, at some strategic points. To interpret the schema as a mixture of perception and linguistic ability is certainly the most innovative point in his proposal. Thanks to its particular nature, language is especially appropriate for carrying out the function of the schema. Indeed, belonging both to the sensible sphere and the sphere of thought, it can appropriately arrange a meditation. Here is a passage in which this idea emerges clearly:

Nevertheless it is undeniable that language, and language only, is the through which the human cognitive faculty is ordered above all with the proper and essential connection between sensibility and the faculty of thought. Language belongs to both faculties: to the first because it is something that falls under the senses (what is audible in the case of articulate sounds and what is visible in the case of written signs), to the second because it is what is designated by something sensible, that is, concepts as presented by means of single words, judgments by single sentences and decisions by linked sentences. But language is indebted to sensibility not only for material words that accompany every one of our thoughts, judgments or conclusions, but also and especially for those words through which the concepts belonging specifically to external experiences are designated, all the mental and indistinguishable images that necessarily accompany these words and that are produced, through the imagination, by the perceptions of the five senses [...]. (Reinhold 1816: 3-4)

This does not say everything about language's debt to sensibility; it is not exhausted, if we reflect on the role of improper images and the metaphors used for designating concepts belonging to internal experience. Moreover, the word "language" has different meanings that explain the many functions that it underlies: (a) designating internal representations of sensibility and thought, (b) concepts themselves, or (c) designating concepts through signs, or finally (d) designating concepts through articulate sounds (Reinhold 1816: 74). In this final meaning the word "language" more precisely indicates verbal language (Horrocks), while the others have a more general sense. Consistently with this definition, he states that inarticulate sounds, images and gestures, are quite properly only signs of

feelings, sensations and intuitions. For verbal language to be produced, there must be conceptual mediation, or "internal representation of a universal" (Reichhold 1816: 75).

5.3 Language as *exhibitio symbolica*

If we set Reichhold's proposal of linguistic schematism in the Kantian debate on exhibitio symbolica, we clearly see that it takes indications from it and attempts to give it a comprehensive formulation. The problem is the relationship between a mental content mediated by the thought faculty and a given intuition, when this relationship is not regulated by direct schematization but by a symbolic device. In this case we need a feature taken from sensible experience to 'fill' a mental content devoid of a clear perceptual base. In the explanation that Kant and Reichhold provided on this mental and linguistic strategy, there are both points of contact and significant differences. Among the concordances we must number above all the characteristic of *Impropriety*. Both are convinced that there are concepts endowed with a specific and determined intuition. The concept of 'table', for example, has as a fitting intuition that derived from practical knowledge of various concrete tables which one may come across.

However, the concept of cause (Grund), which Kant refers to in section 511 of the *Critique of Judgement*, or the concept of idea (Idee), which Reichhold refers to in *Erkenntnistheorien*, do not have a intuition that corresponds directly to them. Nothing similar to the intuition of a 'table' exists for a 'cause' or an 'idea'. On different occasions a table, but also a chair and many other objects, can be causes or ideas. How is it then that these notions are fixed in the mind? We use intuitions that call to mind a process similar to that of the concept that must be designated. In the case of the Kantian 'cause' we use a support (Stütz) or basis (Basis) as an intuition. In the case of Reichhold's 'idea' we base ourselves on a mental image (an internal and invisible image) and we designate the 'idea' as something that is seen internally.

The main differences between Kant and Reichhold regarding the question of exhibitio symbolica concern the relationship between the representations and the schema and the role played by language. Kant - manifestly faithful to his genealogical system - claims that the procedure of exhibitio symbolica has a place for ideas of reason and so considers it a resource of transcendental dialectic. Exhibitio symbolica uses the rule of the proce-

cedure of the schema, even though it is not a schema. It believes as if it were a schema. Kant hangs between recognizing the importance of symbolic and linguistic devices for forming and expressing mental representations, and a sort of nostalgia for mental processes that can exist without the impurity of symbolic and linguistic systems.

With Reichhold the situation is quite the opposite: with the theory of improper common images, exhibitio symbolica is explicitly assimilated to the schema. In Reichhold, in short, the gap between the transcendental schema and the symbolic *Darstellung* is closed and the latter loses every pathological characteristic feature still present in Kant. The metaphorical way of connecting concepts and intuitions through common images is instead indicated as physiological. Sometimes Reichhold aims at expressions of the supernatural that are appropriate and suitable (*angemessen*, *ausdrück des Reinübernatürlichen*). They are expressions conceived of without the mediation of images, which are therefore universal and necessary. For a moment a Kantian echo of schematism *Darstellung* can be heard, but it is a schematism that Reichhold swiftly overcomes. He says that these expressions are not available, so even in the designation of pure concepts philosophy must use tropes and metaphors, that is to say devices such as improper common images and symbolic external representations (Reichhold 1816: 81).

A second difference concerns the treatment of verbal language. In *Critique of Judgement* the reference to language was still proposed by way of example and without systematic exposition. In *Erkenntnistheorien* the role of language in the process of symbolic *Darstellung* is constitutive. We have therefore reached the heart of the later Reichhold's theoretical proposal: with common images and symbolic *Darstellungen* we can finally understand how verbal language effects mediation between sensibility and the thought faculty. The operation that Kant had assigned to the transcendental schema is stripped by Reichhold of its purity and attributed to language. The linguistic transformation of Kant's procedure is thus finally fulfilled in the work of one of his first and most faithful interpreters. This transformation happens along a pathway that, as we have seen, had already led Kant to re-examine schematism and admit an almost schematic operation conditioned by the linguistic faculty.

As we saw at the beginning of the book, Reichhold was quite late in joining that array of scholars who, like Flaxman and Herder, reproached Kant for not having sufficiently investigated the linguistic phenomenon. He too was a faithful disciple of Kant from the time when he was young, contributing to his undisputed authority. Yet exactly this authority in his

last writings seemed to him the worst legacy of Kant in his successive linguistic studies, because of the bad example of lack of attention to this phenomenon. He mentions just one exception in this desolate panorama: Herder's *Messerschmied* (Rasthof 1816: 2-3, 203 ff.). Certainly he is too severe with Kant here: in those years linguistics was blossoming, often with explicit references to Kantian philosophy of mind, as Reichhold knew well (cf. for example Reichhold 1816: 212 ff.). However, in praising *Messerschmied*, a professed book in Kantianism, but one often read in secret by Kantians themselves, he shows that the parable has been corrected once and for all.

5.4 Concluding Remarks

One of the most interesting aspects of linguistics at the beginning of the nineteenth century is the fact that it is a representational theory of language. In fact, this type of linguistics is prevalent today, especially in the field of cognitive sciences. The aversion to representation, typical of the first half of the century, has been decisively overcome. Frege's and Saussure's anti-psychological tendencies, Ryle's, Quine's and Wittgenstein's objections, the harsh criticisms of behaviourism in psychology, finally had to give way to a new paradigm. The advent of cognitivism has once again called attention to representation and representational-type theories of language.

Although representational linguistics is today very widespread, it is ambiguous. On just one point there is rather ample agreement: however the mental representation is conceived, it is normally considered a solid basis for the theory of meaning. But the controversies are much harder on the nature of representation. The investigations made by scholars coming from diverse fields such as linguistics, psychology, neurological sciences, comparative ethology and philosophy of mind have not been able to produce a unified theory. Furthermore, conceiving the representation from time to time as a configuration of symbols manipulable by Turing's machine, as an analogical reproduction, as a mental model or as a prototype, produces as many corresponding theories of meaning.

The state of research today is characterised both by the proliferation of representational theory of language and by the lack of a standard theory of representation. A genealogy of the representational theories of language can from this point of view prove to be a precious resource. His

story can give us useful suggestions for elaborating a more convincing theory of representation, or at least, for formulating clearer questions. Moreover, tracing this genealogy is a duty for anyone who wants to practice (as I have endeavoured to do in this book) a theory-oriented history of linguistic ideas.

The theories that we have examined in this book are only a fragment of this history. On the whole, it is a history that is yet to be written. For example, only recently has the right amount of attention been given to the psychological semantics of the nineteenth century. The theory of external representation can be a good guide in this exploration. Its influence extends well beyond the German classical age. Rühl, Bernhardt and Reichhold's ideas can be found in works by Heyse and Seifshaf, through which it reaches other scholars in the second half of the nineteenth century. This is the case of G. Gerboer (1871-74; 1884), who knew the works of Kant, Fichte, Reinhardt and Hegel (cf. Nerlich 1998), and P. Wegener (1885). In turn, this late nineteenth-century research constitutes the background to the work of K. Bühler, an atypical psychologist, like Seifshaf. With Bühler's distinction between the linguistic functions of representation (*Darstellung*), expression (*Ausdrucks*) and appeal (*Absicht*), external representation moves into the twentieth century.

Bühler had no clear perception of the long history on which his proposal was based, so much so that he states he has "not found in any linguistic theory the word *Darstellung* as a technical term" (Bühler 1909: 4). If we can begin today to seize the guiding lines of this buried history, we can then hope to repair the rift that separates seventeenth- and eighteenth-century semantics from twentieth-century semantics, and to dispel the impression that the nineteenth century was only the century of comparative linguistics. When the reconstruction work of modern-day semantic theories is complete, present-day research will be able to use an indispensable instrument for improving linguistic knowledge.

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