Hegel: Metacritics, Philosophical Language, and Memory

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ABSTRACT: Hegel has a metacritical standpoint that can be related to but not reduced to the Herderian metacritique. Hegel's philosophical language must not be understood in terms of the opposition between an 'absolute' and a 'finite' language; rather, it must be understood in terms of the opposition between abstract and concrete language. At a theoretical level, concrete language cannot be understood without assuming an organic function of memory. At the practical level, the difference between abstract and concrete language will be understood as the difference between everyday language and a philosophical one. Hegel justifies this last difference by following Humboldtian standpoints.

RÉSUMÉ : La posture hégélienne vis-à-vis du langage philosophique ne doit pas être assimilée d'emblée à la métacritique herderienne ni être comprise en termes d'opposition entre langage «absolu» et langage «fini». La métacritique hégélienne doit plutôt être comprise en termes d'une différence entre langage abstrait et langage concret. Le mode opératoire du langage concret de la philosophie se saisit en ayant recours à une fonction organique de la mémoire et en acceptant, au niveau pratique, une différence entre le langage quotidien et le langage philosophique. Je vais montrer que Hegel peut justifier cette posture en adoptant une perspective humboldtienne.

Keywords: sign, name, concept, mechanical memory, organic memory, freedom, thought

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"But it is also ridiculous to regard the attachment of thought to words as a defect of thought and a misfortune."[1]

Introduction

In what follows, I will show that, despite the fact that Hegel did not refer to his philosophy as a 'metacritique' and although Hegel had negative views on Herder,[2] Hegel has, like Hamann and Herder, a (non-identical) metacritical standpoint. This metacritical standpoint determines how Hegel's philosophical language is to be understood.

To prove that Hegel has a metacritique standpoint, I will show 1) that thought is not possible without language and that it is a mistake to conclude that, for Hegel, thought is empty or has no linguistic content. Contrary to some interpretations, I will also argue that the problem of a philosophical linguistic thought does not lie upon (and thus is not solved by means of) an opposition between a finite and an infinite thought, but in what Hegel understands as 'theoretical freedom.'

This first point will lead to 2) the differentiation between abstract and concrete thought, that is to say, what is the real and philosophically interesting opposition between two kinds of thought and language. The distinction between both kinds of thought is one in which Hegel differentiates between a way of thinking in which 'matter' and 'form' are separated and a way of thinking in which there is an 'organic,' i.e., self-productive, relation between these elements. This will lead to 3) where I will put the concept of 'organic memory' into play in order to establish the distinction between abstract and concrete language. 'Organic memory,' is not a concept that Hegel used as such. However, following some Hegelian statements and Hans Friedrich Fulda's thesis, I will use it to refer to a kind of memory activity, as opposed to its own mechanical activity. Here, the difference between Herder's and Hegel's metacritical standpoints will appear more clearly. Finally 4) I will briefly refer to the practical level where the distinction between everyday and philosophical language will be justified appealing to what Wilhelm von Humboldt called 'force of language' [*Sprachkraft*].

Against Pure Thought

In 1784, Hamann wrote a brief text called *Metacritique on the Purism of Reason* in reaction to Kant's first Critique. The title gives to the word 'metacritique' the ironical meaning of being a critique (in a non-Kantian way) of a critique (in a

[1] Hegel, G.W.F., *Philosophy of Mind*, 200. *Enzyklopädie der philosophischen Wissenschaften im Grundrisse 1830. Dritter Teil: Die Philosophie des Geistes* §462Z, 280. From now on W10. All references to Hegel's work translated into English include references to the original German version and are indicated with the letter W and the corresponding volume.

[2] Hegel, G.W.F., *Berliner Schriften 1818-1831*, 326. From now on W11.

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Kantian way). In that text, the so-called 'magician from the north' tried to show that the starting point for Kant's critique was incorrect: there is no such a thing as *pure* reason, for reason operates only by virtue of language. For Hamann, this is tantamount to saying that reason is 'impure.' Following Hamann, it is not reason but its alleged *purismus* that should be the target of critiques, for it forgets "what nature keeps together: sensibility and understanding."[3] This unity is contained in our language.

A few years later, in 1799, Herder took his friend and mentor's idea and wrote a massive text called: *A Metacritique to the Critique of Pure Reason*. Once again, the target was Kant and his refusal to depart from the 'impurity of reason' as the first condition of possibility of any category of understanding. The Herderian metacritique states that, in order to criticize reason, it is necessary to be aware of its misleading uses of language. It is a 'metacritique' in the sense that is not just reason but its language that must be criticized. Thus, as he famously states: ontology should actually be philosophy of language.[4]

According to Hegel himself, neither text has anything in common but the title.[5] However, for both Hamann and Herder, Kant's main problem in the first *Critique* lies in the fact that the master of Königsberg did not take into account language and its relation to reason and to knowledge. Language, furthermore, does not have to be seen as a tool but as a 'product' [*Werk*] of the activity of thought. This last point is not clearly stated in Hamann's text but it is a strong statement running throughout Herder's work.

Although there are differences in the use of the concept, we can define 'metacritique' in a general way as a kind of awareness of the fact that any attempt to think about reason's limits and knowledge's conditions of possibilities, must take into account both the limits and the possibilities of language, as well as their relation to thought. I believe Hegel shares this philosophical awareness.

Several authors who have studied Hegel's idea of language, such as Theodor Bodammer, Günter Wohlfart, John McCumber, Jere O'Neill Surber, Charles Taylor, or more recently, Michael Forster, have found similarities—or at least

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[3] Hamann says: "The sensibility and the understanding arise as two stems of human knowledge from One common root, in such a way that through the former objects are given and through the latter thought: to what end is such a violent, unjustified, wilful divorce of that which nature has joined together! […] the evil snake in the bosom of the common, popular language gives us the finest parable of the hypostatic union of the sensible and intelligible natures […]." Hamann, J.G., "Metacritique on the Purism of Reason," 212-213.

[4] See Herder, J.G., *Einer Metakritik zur Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, 165.

[5] See Hegel, G.W.F., W11. In Hegel's review of Hamann's work, he expresses unflattering opinions about Herder. From what he says, it seems that Hegel thought that, while Hamann did understand Kant's critical project, Herder did not. In fact, Hegel praises Hamann's work. Nonetheless, he criticizes his extreme subjectivity.

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the possibility of establishing them—between Herder's thesis and some Hegelian statements on language and reason. Some of them have addressed the particular question of whether Hegel has a metacritical standpoint. Most of them have answered that he does not, in particular Surber and McCumber.[6]

I will not argue against their conclusion, which seems correct to a certain extent (given that Hegel's metacritical standpoint is not Herderian, through and through). However, these authors have nonetheless reached this conclusion by following the wrong assumptions.[7] They have argued that 'metacritique,' as Herder puts it, signify that reason and language are identical, and that language is the product of a given society.

For Surber, this comes to mean that language is historical and thus contingent. Accordingly, reason is also historical and contingent. Contrary to this position, Surber adds, Hegel's reason must be considered pure.[8] In other words, thinking is post-linguistic[9] and it cannot have a contingent content.

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6 See McCumber, J., *The Company of Words. Hegel, Language, and Systematic*, 240 and Surber, J.O., "Hegel's Linguistic Thought in the *Philosophy of Subjective Spirit*: Between Kant and the 'Metacritics.'"

7 Both commentators agree that a metacritical standpoint is to assume the sensible or symbolical character of language, the identity of language and thought and, therefore, the sensible (or contingent) character of reason. However, this position implies a misunderstanding of Herder's project. Although language, for Herder, develops from sensation, it is not exclusively the product of sensible data of a given world but the product of thought's activity, already at work in sensibility. This development implies an update of a force, which Herder called 'circumspection' [*Besonnenheit*]. This is why Herder's metacritique is not a simple identification between language and thought but rather a position in which both thought and language stand in a productive relation. Wohlfart and Forster have a more comprehensive reading of Herder's work. They also acknowledged the presence of several Herderian theses in Hegel's philosophy. Wohlfart has tried to do justice to the Herderian philosophy and has shown the great influence he had over Hegel. But Wohlfart, unconvincingly, attributes to Herder's and Hegel's metacritical standpoints a sense of surpassing the Kantian critique. See Wohlfart, G., *Der Spekulative Satz. Bemerkungen zum Begriff der Spekulation bei Hegel*, 31. For his part, Forster fails to see the organic character of the relationship between thought and language. I believe that the concept of thought is not used by Herder, as Forster suggests, in an enlightened sense, as if it were a mere faculty, independent of language. See Forster, M., "Herder's Philosophy of Language, Interpretation and Translation: Three Fundamental Principles," 328. Forster misses the importance of the organic relation between language and reason, thus failing to see the non-immediate identification between these elements, both in Herder and in Hegel.

8 Surber, J.O., "Hegel's Linguistic Thought in the *Philosophy of Subjective Spirit*: Between Kant and the 'Metacritics,'" 196.

9 Surber, J.O., "Hegel's Philosophy of Language: The Unwritten Volume," 254.

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For his part, McCumber stresses that if thought is limited by its form of expression (i.e., language), then thought is not self-constitutive (because it needs language) and is, on the contrary, finite. No finite linguistic thought could account for the absolute, since in order to do so an infinite thought is needed. Here, McCumber identifies the term 'absolute' with the term 'infinite' and thus concludes that thought, in Hegel's philosophy, should be seen as infinite, which means that it is not limited by its form of expression.[10]

In my view, Hegel shares with Hamann and Herder a project that strives to find the conditions for the possibility of philosophical knowledge by means of language. There is nevertheless a very important difference: whilst, for Herder, reason is impure, not only because it needs language but also because the concepts that we use to think come from our natural language,[11] Hegel distinguishes between two ways of thinking. He assumes that reason is impure because it needs language but he also proposes going beyond natural language and natural ways of 'representation.' In this sense, philosophical language does not appear in Herder's deflationary mode. On the contrary, philosophical thought and its language acquire, in Hegel's view, features that make this particular language different from natural language and 'natural' thought.

It is in the section called 'Psychology' from the *Philosophy of Spirit* from the *Encyclopaedia* where Hegel admits the *impurity* of reason. Here, Hegel shows the organic movement of intelligence [*organische Entwicklung der Intelligenz*][12] and the very strongly associated emergence of linguistic thought.[13] In this 'organic' movement, the linguistic sign appears as one of the most important stages, the stage of imagination [*Einbildungskraft*].

It is true that, for Hegel, signs refer to some*thing.* It must be said, however, that this *thing* has a *sui generis* otherness. The 'otherness' of the *thing* does not lie in the fact that the *thing* is given or that the *thing* is placed at an ontological realm of reality, different from the realm of the mind; rather, intelligence is

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10 See McCumber, J., *op. cit*., 219. McCumber has some problematic uses of certain Hegelian technical terms. For example, he uses 'representational' as if Hegel was using it as logical empiricism does. The problem is that 'to refer' does not mean, for Hegel, to point to something outside the realm of intelligence. To assume that Hegel uses 'representation' as some sort of external referentiality is tantamount to forgetting Hegel's precautions with the concepts of 'externality' or 'given.'

11 Herder, J.G., *op.cit*., 166.

12 Hegel, G.W.F., W10, §451Z, 57.

13 I will mainly focus on this part of Hegel's text, and I will proceed linearly, following the steps Hegel himself takes to show the organic development of intelligence. This is the best method for my argument as linearity shows how intelligence is constituted linguistically: first by signs, then by names, and finally through concepts. A speculative method—from the concept's point of view—is implicitly mentioned in the next section.

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actually self-posited in the *thing*. The *thing* is now located on the side of an exteriority *within* intelligence itself.[14]

But what does Hegel understand by 'thing'? There are two German terms that Hegel uses to talk about things: '*Ding*' and '*Sache*.' While, on the one hand, '*Ding*' is an object considered from the point of view of the intelligence that is not yet in its interiority, '*Sache*,' on the other, is the term Hegel uses to indicate that intelligence itself has become the object of what it is considering, as its 'other.' In other words, this *thing* is the embodiment of the intelligence and is the real meaning of a linguistic sign.

Surber focuses on the difference between signs and names. Names are the product of another stage of intelligence, namely, memory. He explains their difference by opposing an alleged sensibility of signs and an alleged *purity* of names. According to Surber, Hegel's claim that we think in names [*es ist in Namen, daß wir denken*][15] means that thought is not sensible, contingent, social, and impure but rather free of contingent content. For him, signs refer to an external (i.e., ontologically differentiated realm, independent and *outside* the subject) reality that gives them meaning, while names are pure in the sense that they do not mean or refer to any given object in the cultural (external, contingent) world. He thus concludes that if though thinks in names, thought is post-linguistical.[16]

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[14] Hegel says: "Fantasy brings the inner content [*inneren Gehalt*] to the image and to intuition and this is expressed by saying that it determines the content as being. So we must not find this expression surprising either, that intelligence makes itself be, makes itself the thing [sich *seiend,* sich zur *Sache* mache]; for the content of intelligence is intelligence itself, and so is the determination that it gives to this content." Hegel, G.W.F., *Philosophy of Mind*, 193. W10, §457, 268.

[15] Hegel, G.W.F., W10, §462, 278.

[16] See Surber, J.O., *op. cit*., 254. Inversely, Michael Forster believes that, for Hegel, meaning comes from an internal realm (a mind, a subject) and is added to the 'external' sign. Despite the difference of perspective, both commentators emphasizes that Hegel endorses a dualistic theory of signs. Forster says: "[…] Hegel already in the unpublished Nuremberg *Encyclopaedia* (1808 and onwards) […] still retains a sharply dualistic theory of the (linguistic) sign [*Zeichen*] according to which it is the external expression of an inner meaning—a theory very much in the spirit of just the sort of Enlightenment dualism concerning language and meaning […]." Forster, *German Philosophy of Language: From Schlegel to Hegel and Beyond*, 156. Rather, he had something more like an expressivist theory of meaning, as Taylor puts it (although 'expression' is not the perfect term since there is no independent entity 'expressing' itself). Taylor says: "On this theory (expresivisme) words have meaning […] because […] they express or embody a certain kind of consciousness of ourselves and things, peculiar to man as a language-user, for which Herder used the word *Besonnenheit*. Language is seen not just as a set of

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But Surber misses out on some very important remarks that Hegel makes on sensibility, for example, the one stating that it is a mistake [*Irrtum*] to assume that sensibility gets its input from *outside*.[17]

To signify, to mean [*bedeuten*], is not equivalent to referring to something *outside* the subject's mind. Meaning is what the sign refers to as already being in the pure frame of the intelligence. Meaning has nothing to do with any alleged ontological difference between the realm of things and the realm of words, such as what naïve realism or logical atomism could state. Signs do not refer to some external reality. Rather, meaning goes from the subjective to the objective in the one realm of intelligence.[18]

In other words, the meaning and the sign are both simultaneously *outside*, that is, they are the *external* thing [*Sache*]. But the representation the sign builds is *external* insofar as it is posited intuition or an intuition inside the intelligence.[19]

What Surber fails to see is that, for Hegel, signs are not contingent externalities, but rather the matter of the internal realm of intelligence, which is still placed beside the thing [*Sache*]. He fails to see that the process of intelligence towards itself is always a successive or progressive movement of interiorizations and that signs and their meanings are already an element of such interiority.

As José Manuel Sánchez de León rightly sees, a sign, for Hegel, is the connection of thought to the sensible or intuitive side of cognition.[20] Yet, at the same time, the sign is something produced spontaneously by the intelligence[21]

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signs, but as the medium of expression of a certain way of seeing and experiencing […]. Hence there can be no thought without language […] Hence this theory of expression is also anti-dualist. […] Thus expressivist theory as a marriage of hylomorphism and the new view of expression is radically anti-dualistic. And so was Hegel's theory of the subject." Taylor, C. *Hegel*, 55, 82.

17 Hegel, G.W.F., W10 §447, 248. This outside is already what Hegel calls 'the rational' [*das Vernünftige*].

18 "[…] the inner and outer, are completely welded into one." Hegel, G.W.F., *Philosophy of Mind*, 192. W10 §457, 267. See also §465Z, 284.

19 See Hegel, G.W.F., W10 §462Z. Derrida puts this in a few, very illuminating sentences: "Et pourtant, inversement, cette production fantastique ne fait rien de moins que de produire des intuitions. Cette affirmation pourrait paraître scandaleuse ou inintelligible. Elle implique en effet la création spontanée de ce qui se donne à voir, par cela même qui peut ainsi voir et recevoir." Derrida, J., *Le puits et la Pyramide*, 90.

20 Sánchez de León, J.M., *Zeichen und Subjekt im logischem Diskurs Hegels*, 72. Sánchez de León also says: "Indem das Denken durch das Zeichen sich selbst veranschaulicht, lasst es den blos subjektiven Status eines nachtlichen Schachtes der Intelligenz hinter sich und objektiviert sich. Kurz: Es macht sich selbst zur Sache, zum Gegenstand seiner eigenen Perzeption." 80.

21 Ibid., 79.

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at the level of imagination. Thus, it is not that linguistic signs are 'sensible' and, therefore, external (in a naïve, realistic manner) and contingent. This means rather that sensible signs, as signs of intelligence, are already produced as such by the intelligence itself.[22] Hegel states:

> The *genuine*, *concrete* negativity of the linguistic sign is the *intelligence*, since through intelligence the sign is changed from something *external* to something *internal* and is *preserved* in this recast form[…]. We are only aware of our thoughts, only have determinate, actual thoughts, when we give them the form of *objectivity*, of *being distinct* from our *inwardness*, and thus the shape of *externality,* and of an externality, too, that at the same time bears the stamp of the highest *inwardness* […].[23]

This creation of an 'internal exteriority,' that is, an exteriority within the intelligence,[24] can lead us to the comprehension of an extremely important concept within the economy of intelligence's development: theoretical freedom,[25] which I'll refer to later. First, let us also see how Hegel concludes from this inwardness on the importance of language for thought. He writes:

> To want to think without words, as *Mesmer* once attempted, is, therefore, a manifest absurdity. […] [A]lthough the common opinion is that it is just the *ineffable* that is the most excellent, yet this opinion […], is entirely groundless, since the ineffable is, in truth, only something murky, fermenting; it only gains clarity when it can get into words. Accordingly, the word gives to thoughts their most worthy and genuine reality. Of course, one can also grapple with words, without comprehending the thing. But then what is at fault is not the word, but a defective, indeterminate, superficial thinking. Just as the genuine *thought* is the *thing*, so too is the *word*, when it is employed by genuine thinking. Intelligence therefore, in filling itself with the word, receives into itself the nature of the thing.[26]

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22 Hegel, G.W.F., W10 §456Z, 267.

23 Hegel, G.W.F., *Philosophy of Mind,* p. 200, W10 §462Z.

24 Hegel says: "[…] a reality known inside out [*Auswendigen*] that remains enclosed in the inside [*Inwendige*] of intelligence and is its outside, its existing side, only within intelligence itself." Hegel, G.W.F., *Philosophy of Mind*, 200. W10 §462, 279.

25 "[…] intelligence is the dialectic of this immediate asunderness, a dialectic that is for itself. Accordingly, mind posits the intuition as its own, pervades it, makes it into something internal, recollects itself in it, becomes present to itself in it, and hence, free. By this withdrawal into itself, intelligence raises itself to the stage of representation. Representational mind has intuition; intuition is sublated in mind, not vanished, not merely passed away." Hegel, G.W.F., *Philosophy of Mind*, 184. W10, §450Z, 256.

26 Hegel, G.W.F., *Philosophy of Mind*, 200, W10 §462Z, 280.

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Here Hegel states that it is absurd to imagine that thought can exist without words. But the absurdity of this affirmation is not that we cannot separate thought and words. It is indeed possible to think without language. An important conclusion comes from this, namely: thought and language are not identical. However, even if thought and language are not identical, they cannot actually [*wirklich*] be without each other. Thus, it is absurd to believe that, without words, thought can have, as Hegel puts it, a *genuine reality.* Hence, the aphasic thought, far from being the candidate to represent the alleged pure thought of philosophy Surber wants to characterize (that is, the alleged post-linguistical thought needed to think philosophically), is, on the contrary, a confusing, imprecise, and defective one.

The impurity of thought that can be derived from here does not mean, however, that thought is inhabited by strange elements when it actually exists i.e., by something that once was outside—as naïve realism would have it. Exteriority, as seen earlier, is only as such within the framework of intelligence, that is, in its interiority. Thus, freedom of thought does not mean that thought is rid of words or of things coming from an external reality. Quite the opposite: our thoughts need words in order to be free since words are the product of the act of self-determination of intelligence and are what makes thought actual. It is why Hegel himself says: "But it is also ridiculous to regard the attachment of thought to words as a defect of thought and a misfortune."[27]

Furthermore, by the already mentioned 'organic development of intelligence,' Hegel meant that thought is present in every step of the formation of words (sensibility, imagination, memory) as the activity that makes them be.[28]

At the beginning of this section, I stated that, although the different usages of this word, 'metacritique' is a philosophical position that presupposes the fact that any attempt to think about reason's limits and knowledge's conditions of possibilities must take into account both the limits and the possibilities of language, as well as their relation to thought. Thought and language are thus mutually dependant. This constitutes a solid base to affirm that Hegel endorses a metacritical position, as defined above.

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27 Ibid.

28 Accordingly, one can relate Hegel's idea of thought to the Herderian concept of circumspection [*Besonnenheit*]. Hegel admits thought's impurity by taking into account the model of self-productiveness of thought's contents that Herder provides through the idea of circumspection [*Besonnenheit*] at work in every 'faculty' involved in the creation of language. See Hegel, G.W.F., W10. §§446-468 and note 7 of this paper. See also Knappik, F., "Hegel, über Vorstellung und repräsentationalen Gehalt," 73. Knappik points out that 'intelligence' is an activity implicitly present in every stage of its own development. See specifically his proof of intelligence's activity in sensibility. This has to do with the proper speculative movement of the concept of intelligence.

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Additional specifications are nonetheless needed in order to approach a complete characterization of Hegel's metacritical view on language and thought. In particular, we must take into account that, rather than just being a kind of container of words, thought has another function: it establishes, as Alfredo Ferrarin puts it, the semiotic relationship[29] between names.

One must also be aware of the fact that, despite Hegel's assumption about thought's impurity, he does not identify philosophical thought or *concrete* language of the absolute, with everyday language. This is an important point that separates him from Herder.

I believe that we must abandon everyday language or the formal, representative way of thought, which Hegel calls 'abstract,'[30] in order to attain a philosophical one. The usual and formal way of thought is precisely the way understanding imposes 'mechanical' relations between names. Let us look at these points more closely.

From Abstract to Concrete Language

As we have just seen, signs do not refer to an objective, external, word—as naïve realism would have it. And consequently names do not constitute the level at which this alleged opposition would be surmounted, as Surber believes. How then are names to be characterized?

For Hegel, names are the product of memory. Unlike signs, they do not have meaning [*Bedeutung*]. This is not to say that names are absurd. This only points to the fact that the separation between the objective and subjective pole of intelligence is sublated.[31] Hegel says:

> But intelligence is the universal; the simple truth of its particular self—externalizations, and the appropriation that it carries out, is the sublation of that distinction between meaning and name. This supreme recollection of representing is the supreme self-externalization of intelligence, in which it posits itself as the being, as the universal space of names as such, i.e., of senseless words.[32]

Names do not 'mean.' They are not signs and therefore they are no longer *related* to things [*Sache*]. But that does not mean that things have disappeared. Rather, it is the relatedness existing at the level of imagination (the level of

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29 That is why Ferrarin highlights the following: "From our perspective, it bears stressing that it is only intelligence's activity that institutes the semiotic relation; that thinking is operative from the outset, from the earliest or still dormant stages of spirit, and not once signs have been introduced […]." Ferrarin, A., "Logic, Thinking and Language," 144.

30 See Hegel, G.W.F., *Wer denkt abstrakt*? From now on W2.

31 See Hegel, G.W.F., W10 §462, 278.

32 Hegel, G.W.F., *Philosophy of mind*, 201. Hegel W10 §463, 281.

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intelligence where signs are created) that is sublated. There is no more need to *relate* the subjective and the objective poles (signs and things) of intelligence since names now become the things themselves. We are moving away from representation and approaching thinking, the final stage of the organic development of intelligence. Memory [*Gedächtnis*] constitutes this final stage.

The realm of memory points out to what Hegel understands to be the 'freedom of thought.' Thought, for Hegel, is free. Its freedom does not mean that it lacks content [*Stoff*], but rather means that it can create its own contents and organize them.[33] Memory is the first stage where this autonomy of thought can be clearly perceived. As being contained in memory, names relate only to other names.[34] Hegel thus states:

> Memory is in this way the transition into the activity of the thought, which has no meaning any more, i.e., *the subjective is no longer something different from its objectivity, just as this inwardness is in being in its very self*.[35]

But even if memory constitutes the step leading from representation to thought, memory will play a fundamental role in the characterization of representational thought, better called 'understanding' [*Verstand*] because memory will give understanding its mechanical semantics. What is meant by 'mechanical'? This is something we are going to find out.

Mechanical Memory

Understanding appears as the representational way of thinking. This, for Hegel, means that the understanding places [*stellt*] its objects in front of [*vor*] it. To represent [*vorstellen*] means, for Hegel, to think abstractly.[36] Why? As Hegel suggests in his brief text, *Who thinks abstractly?*, to think in an abstract way is to assume that things are only as they appear to us under certain conditions, that they don't change, and that they are not dependent on historical and social conditions.[37]

In addition, to think abstractly means to perceive qualities as discrete elements of an object. In other words, it means to believe that several qualities of an object define the object, but without being able to see these qualities in their mutual determination. This mutual determination is what Hegel will call 'inner relation.' The 'inner relation' between names is opposed to their 'outer relation.'

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33 See Sánchez de León, J.M., *op. cit.,* 83.

34 Hegel, G.W.F., W10 §464, 282.

35 Hegel, G.F.W., *Philosophy of Mind*, 201-202, my emphasis, W10 §464, 282-283.

36 For example, see the case of the women complaining to an old lady in Hegel, G.W.F., W2, 575-581.

37 Ibid. Take the example of the criminal who is judged by the one-sidedness of common sense.

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This 'outer relation' can be indicated with a German word Hegel uses playfully: *auswendig*.[38] This word refers to a memory that learns things *by heart*. To *learn things by heart* means, for Hegel, a 'mechanical' or 'automatized' way of learning relations between names (that is, nets of inferences between names already constructed).

But I contend that he uses the term '*auswendig*' not only to stress that we learn things by heart but also to stress that the relation between names at this level is external. This externality is the unilateral way of being of understanding. Hegel states:

> Just as pressure and impact are mechanical relationships, so we have mechanical knowledge, too: we know things by rote, inasmuch as the words remain without sense [*Sinn*] for us and are external to the senses [*Sinne*], representation, and thought; the words are in like manner external to themselves: they form a senseless [*sinnlose*] sequence. Action, piety, etc., are mechanical in the same way, inasmuch as what a man does is determined for him by ritual prescriptions, or by a director of conscience, etc., and his own spirit and will are not in his actions, so that even within himself they remain external.[39]

With memory and its names, we are still in the representational way of thinking because we are still in an external form of relating names. In this case, the word 'external' does not mean, as in the previous case, a differentiated realm of reality—as naïve realism would have it—nor the 'externality' within interiority, as in the case with signs. 'Exteriority,' in this new context, is equivalent to the act of juxtaposing names, a sort of blindness of the immanent relatedness between them.

Just as when I put a book next to another book on a shelf, I put a word next to another word in a sentence. This 'next to' is what Hegel calls 'exteriority.' Exteriority' in this sense also implies that names find themselves contingently within a realm that gathers them together (the shelf, the sentence). This new way of conceiving exteriority, different from the word 'exteriority' used before, depicts what takes place at the level of 'mechanical' memory and abstract understanding.

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[38] For this concept, see Hegel, W10 §462, 280 and note 24 of this paper. '*Auswendig*' is opposed to '*Inwendig*.' This two words Hegel uses to show an opposition that he never really develops in detail. Since the Jena Period (1801-1807), Hegel says: "[…] das nächste Produkt ist, daß wir etwas auswendig WISSEN; aber noch nicht *inwendig* wissen […]." Hegel, G.W.F., *Jenaer Systementwürfe* III, note 1, 180, my emphasis.

[39] Hegel, G.W.F., *The Encyclopaedia Logic*, 274. Hegel, G.W.F., *Die Wissenschaft der Logik mit den mündlichen Zusätzen*, §195, 352-353. Translation modified. From now on W8.

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As Hegel suggests, at this stage, the realization of intelligence has not yet been achieved as true thought. Intelligence falls again in a new opposition between names and grammar or, better expressed, between content and form. Grammar is not directly related to the historical character of language but to a kind of 'a-historical' structure which is understanding[40] itself as a dividing and fixing force. Hegel is using a distinction that Humboldt himself makes between the material aspect of languages (words) and the formal aspects of it (grammatical rules).

Hegel knew Humboldt's work. In the *Encyclopaedia*, he cites Humboldt's study *Über den Dualis*.[41] Humboldt refers to grammar as 'formal' but he insists throughout his work, that forms must be taken as regulative ideas, not as existing things.[42] Hegel is aware of Humboldt's thesis on the historicity of languages and the variety of linguistical families. But he attributed non-historical features to grammar.

Understanding generates representations [*Vorstellungen*] because it puts the form (grammar) upon the content of memory, that is, names. Names are ordered by understanding. It creates an external relation to each other.

Accordingly, memory is mechanical when it represents, because this is the moment were intelligence juxtaposes its content. Understanding fixes and thus mechanizes the relations of its contents for which the dividing force of the understanding is required. Representations are objects without internal unity.[43]

Mechanical memory contains the 'stones' for the building of thought, but it is not the building itself because stones do not have life. Hegel states: "The relationship between the stones and the house is not determined by their nature [because it] is mechanical. If the goal, the soul, does not lie in what is living, then every member stops being what it is only in its relationship to life."[44]

Hegel is thereby suggesting that, in order to comprehend the real relation between content and form, thought must be conceived of as something gifted with life. To continue with the metaphor, the stones (or names for that matter) must be alive in order to be the building. In other words, names must have 'spirit'[45]; they must grasp their own content. Hegel states once more: "[…] in intellectual

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40 Hegel says: "But the formal element of language is the work of the Understanding [*Verstand*] which impresses its categories on language; this logical instinct gives rise to the grammar of language." Hegel, G.W.F., *Philosophy of Mind*, 195. I slightly modify the English translation.

41 See Hegel, G.W.F., W10 §459, 272 and W11, 131-294, where Hegel comments on Humboldt's translation of *On the Episode of the Mahabharata Known by the Name Bhagavad-Gita*.

42 Humboldt, W.v., *Le duel*, 107.

43 See Hegel, G.W.F., *Wissenschaft der Logik*, 291. From now on W6.

44 Hegel, G.W.F., *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie des Geistes 1827-1828*, 220. My translation.

45 See Hegel, G.W.F., W6, 295.

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thinking [*verständigen Denken*], the content is indifferent to its form, while in rational or conceptual cognition [*vernünftigen oder begreifenden Erkennen*] the content produces its form from its own self."[46]

This is a very important statement. Hegel makes clear that there are two kinds of thought: representational thought and rational knowledge. The first one is free insofar as the contents it possesses are the result of the intelligence activity. But in this kind of thought content (names of mechanical memory) and form (grammar) are just *related*. Relations imply a persistent separation between the elements at play. Both extremes are thus indifferent to each other (names regarding grammar or content regarding form). On the contrary, a rational thought does not establish any relation between its contents. Rather, contents are able to produce themselves in virtue of the presence of the form within themselves.

This second type of thought, Hegel claims, implies the self-production of contents. This self-production cannot be achieved unilaterally. Contents must, with respect to the form they generate, find themselves in a mutual movement of production. This is the turning point from a mechanical to an organic memory.

Organic Memory

Hegel states: "[…] thinking must not remain abstract, formal thinking, for this dismembers the content of truth; it must develop into concrete thinking, into conceptual cognition."[47] For Hegel, as I will show in this section, "[p]hilosophical language is concrete."[48]

While understanding appears as a dividing force, Hegel characterizes concrete thought as the one that can conceptualize [*begreifen*]. Thought will be depicted as unifying and syllogism-making [*schließende*].[49]

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46 Hegel, G.W.F., *Philosophy of Mind*, 204. W10 §467Z, 285-286.

47 Ibid., 203. W10 §465Z, 284.

48 Hegel, G.W.F., 10 §465Z, 284. To think the problem of everyday and philosophical language in terms of finite and infinite or absolute language, whatever this might be, instead of approaching it from the problem of the incompatibility between abstract and concrete language, means to depart from an incorrect idea of the Hegelian logos. In this respect Guillaume Lejeune states: "[…] l'idée de discours absolu, au sens où le contenu du discours serait la vérité achevée de ce qui est, apparaît, pour les commentateurs, problématique. Mais ne faut-il pas voir là le fruit d'un malentendu concernant l'idée hégélienne de discours absolu? Qu'elle est la logique qui sous-tend le système hégélien et son concept d'absolu?" I think Lejeune is asking the right question. Lejeune, "Système et langage chez Hegel à la lumière du concept logique de 'paraconsistance'," 71.

49 Hegel, G.W.F., W10 §466, 285. Hegel says: "[…] in the syllogism [*Schluß*] the understanding determines content from itself, by sublating that form-distinction. In the insight into necessity, the last immediacy still adhering to formal thinking has vanished." Hegel, G.W.F., *Philosophy of Mind*, 204. Translation modified.

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I believe that this opposition between two kinds of thought is the real problem and the real difference between two kinds of language: everyday language and philosophical language. I contend that this is the key to understanding Hegel's own metacritical position.

Concrete thought is, as I will argue, only possible if names become concepts. Understanding must become reason, concrete thought, by overcoming [*aufheben*] its dividing force.

Names are, for Hegel, souvenirs of souvenirs,[50] interiorization of former interiorizations, namely, of signs. This double souvenir allows for the completeness of intelligence (the completeness towards which intelligence aims in its organic development) for it shows the progressive sublation of any sort of exteriority and the attainment of a more enclosed domain which is reason. Only when intelligence has reached its final stage does it become reason. As such, reason is able to grasp, to comprehend [*begreifen*], to really think. Real thinking must sublate the representations of the understanding. Hegel says:

> It must of course be conceded that, as long as we do not comprehend [*begreift*] but confine ourselves to a simple, fixed representation [*Vorstellung*] or to names [*Namen*], we do not have the slightest concept [*Begriff*] of the 'I', or of anything whatever, not even of the concept itself.[51]

The step leading from names to concepts can be grasped by taking into account what I call the 'organic memory.' As said at the beginning of this paper, Hegel does not use this expression. I allow myself to do so assuming, among other things, that the way Hegel understands organic movement is closely related to what he understands as the teleological, self-constituting processes (this is, in the end, true subjectivity). Final causes sublate the 'mechanism' of efficient causes, hence, thought sublates (mechanical) memory by becoming organic.[52] I argue that it is possible to see a further movement of sublation of mechanical memory, which he also refers to as 'organic memory.'[53]

Fulda also sees that there are some non-developed issues concerning memory in Hegel's *Encyclopaedia*. He admits that Aristotelian traces in the constitution of Hegel's section *Psychology* are unarguable. It could thus be expected that Hegel's concept of memory is similar to the Aristotelian memory [*mneme*].

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50 I translate '*Erinnerung'* as 'souvenir' instead of using 'memory' because 'memory' is the word I have used to translate '*Gedächtnis*.'

51 Hegel, G.W.F., *Science of Logic*, 691. Translation modified. W6, 490.

52 It is worth mentioning that, in several dialectical developments, a mechanical moment is subsumed by a chemical and then a teleological moment. See, for example, the whole structure of Hegel's philosophy of nature or the *Science of Logic*. The doctrine of the concept: objectivity. G.W.F., W6, 402-445.

53 Fulda, H.F., "Vom Gedächtnis zum Denken."

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However, he also reveals, quite convincingly, that Hegel does not share the Aristotelian thesis in which memory finds itself in an accidental relation [*kata simbebekos*] to thought.[54] The Aristotelian *mneme* is related to fantasy, not to thought (or, if it is, only accidentally so). In contrast, memory, for Hegel, has sublated imagination. Indeed, both imagination and memory have something in common, namely, their capacity of interiorization [*Erinnerung*]. Memory, however, contains names, not signs, as we have already seen. For this reason, memory is, for Hegel, constitutive of thought and not accidentally related to it. However, there are, as we have seen, two kinds of thought: understanding and reason. Where should organic memory be placed?

Fulda rightly sees that memory, in Hegel's account, is between two processes. On the one hand, memory can be found working for the unification of intelligence and its signs by transforming signs into names. This is the process we just left behind in mechanical memory. On the other hand, it can be found on the side of achieved intelligence, that is, on the side of reason or of thought, which is the activity of actually having thoughts.[55] In this last sense, Fulda, following Hegel, points out that memory is not just mechanically but also organically related to thought. So, this is where organic memory should be found. But, what is the particularity of this new 'relatedness' between memory and thought, most of all taking into account that the development of intelligence is itself an organic development?[56] In other words, to say 'organism' is to say a self-generating movement, thus not only memory but also imagination and intuition are organically related to thought. This observation highlights the difficulty stressed by Hegel:

> To grasp the position and meaning of memory in the systematization of intelligence and to comprehend its organic connection with thinking is one of the hitherto entirely neglected and in fact one of the most difficult points in the theory of mind. Memory as such is itself the merely external mode, the one-sided moment of thinking's existence; the transition is for us or in itself the identity of reason with the mode of existence, an identity which brings it about that reason now exists in the subject, as the activity of the subject. Thus reason is thinking.[57]

On the one hand, we can ask: if everything in intelligence follows an organic movement, why then is memory called 'mechanical'? And, on the other, how can we understand an 'organic memory'? Elisa Magrì has answered that

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54 Ibid., 329.

55 Ibid., 334.

56 That is to say: all the intellectual steps are organically related to thought as moments [*Momente*]. See Hegel, G.W.F., W10 §451Z, 257.

57 Hegel, G.W.F., *Philosophy of mind*, 202. W10 §464, 283.

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memory is mechanical because memory is the efficient cause of thought.[58] I disagree with this reading: memory is not the efficient cause of thought because it is not external to thought, as efficient causes are.

Mechanical memory is a movement within thought that characterizes it as *auswendig*. I contend that organic memory must be understood as its sublation.[59] To sublate the representational character of intelligence means that thought must integrate that which understanding exteriorizes—its *Auswendigkeit* or externality, so to speak. Only by bringing to its interiority [*Inwendigkeit*][60] what is separated by understanding, thought is able to be with itself [*bei sich*]. This means that organic memory brings in *fluidity* into names. Thus, the specificity of organic memory lies in the fact that it does not relate two differentiated names, as mechanical memory did, but is 'self-relatedness.' Memory, as organic, is implicated in the self-generating process of thought.[61]

Only by sublating this external relation will memory be able to organize its content with an immanent form. Without this immanent form, contents of mechanical memory will have no sense [*Sinn*]. That is to say that they will lack an internal force capable of relating them. Without thought, names find themselves in a simple succession and external (juxtaposed only) to each other. Only by virtue of organic memory "sense, Hegel says, interrupts the simple mechanism of memory."[62]

Organic memory is the memory whose contents are no longer names without sense but contents creating their own form.[63] Contents that create their own form are concepts [*Begriffe*]. When memory changes from mechanical to organic, it identifies completely with thought whose activity is to apprehend [*begreifen*]. When organic memory becomes thought, thought then becomes conceptual and is, therefore, capable of judging and creating syllogisms.[64] This last logical product can be defined as teleological movements.[65] The 'sense' that the content of organic memory has must be understood as a direction. When a name acquires its sense, the name has become a concept because within this name there is a direction, a direction towards its completion.

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58 Elisa Magrì writes that: "[…] memory is causally active upon intelligence […]" Magrì, E., "Self-Reference and Logical Memory. Hegel's Theory of the Concept." 75.

59 Ibid.

60 See note 38. In my opinion, Fulda does not establish any difference in this last process. He does not distinguish between the quality of the force of understanding and the quality of the force that thought can provide.

61 Ibid., 328.

62 Hegel, G.W.F., *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie des Geistes 1827-1828*, 200. My translation.

63 See Hegel, G.W.F., W10 §467Z, 285-286.

64 Ibid., 286.

65 Hegel, G.W.F., W8, §204, 361.

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Now, it is possible to say that to think in names, as Hegel puts it, means two things: if thought results from understanding, it means to remain in representations, which are fixed. But to think in names through organic memory is to think names as teleological movements. This transforms names into concepts. Bearing this in mind, we understand why intelligence must, as Hegel says, determine the simplicity of names with their inner difference. As he states in the *Science of Logic*, the capacity of the educated [*gebildet*] thought is to see, even in the smaller natures, an internal unity and a necessity in the union of what constitutes them.[66]

For Hegel, a concept is necessary to the extent that it possesses a movement that has led it to itself, that is, to the extent that its determinations have been appearing one by one. These 'apparitions' or moments [*Momente*] are possible by virtue of the concept's own *poietical* power and not due to external causes. To comprehend or grasp [*begreifen*] is to notice that objects of knowledge are bound together, not only by an inferential network but also by a necessary sequence of progressive determinations.

Organic memory is organically bound to thought; it makes the historicity (or developmental character) of the objects of thought possible. Everything that is philosophically grasped is an immanent teleological activity. We can think about Hegelian concepts such as 'history,'' freedom,' 'consciousness,' or even 'Concept.' [*Begriff*]. They are concepts in the Hegelian way only if they show how they form their own sense as self-development. In the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, for instance, Hegel has shown how 'consciousness' achieved its truer being. This achievement would not be possible if consciousness did not experience itself.

The *Science of Logic* is also a good example of what organic development means.[67] The 'Concept' moves generating itself, towards itself.[68] This relatedness is possible only by what Gwendolyn Jarczyk has shown to be, *de tout temps*, moving this development forward.[69] The driving force at work in every step of the journey is the Concept itself as its form, or as universal.

Mechanical memory has helped us to understand what abstract thought is by revealing the externality [*Auswendigkeit*] or persistent 'indifferent' [*gleichgültig*]

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66 See Hegel, G.W.F., W6, 291. *Science of Logic*, 543. I cannot develop here the interesting relations between the philosophy of spirit and the science of logic but I agree with John Burbidge when he argues that there is an "isomorphism between the logical idea of cognition and the psychology," Burbidge, J., *Hegel's Systematic Contingency*, 137.

67 See also the end of the *Doctrine of Essence*. Hegel shows how being recovers itself from the journey it made in the objective logic. (Being as a movement that has reached itself as such is Concept). Hegel, G.W.F., W6, 239, 240.

68 Ibid., 246.

69 Jarczyk, G., *Système et liberté dans la logique de Hegel*, 249.

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relation between names and grammar. Organic memory has allowed us a better comprehension of what is concrete, philosophical language, by revealing that the sense of a name is not given externally, by a definition in a sentence, but by a construction taking place in its immanent self-developing movement. It thus becomes a concept.

Philosophical Language at a Practical Level

Surber's mistaken interpretation about the purity of thought has to do with his artificial separation between the theoretical and the practical realms. By doing so, he fails to see that thought is part of a broader sphere, that is to say, the social world it belongs to and that it contributes to create.[70] Freedom (theoretical, as well as practical) does not mean, for Hegel, the absence of determinations. On the contrary, as we have seen in relation to theoretical freedom, thought is free insofar as it creates its own contents. In a similar way, practical freedom is also the assumption of social determinations as my own determinations.

Hegel agrees with Herder that language is a spiritual being. For Hegel, language is indeed spirit's existence,[71] and he stresses that actual freedom means to produce Substance through the ethical person's activity [*Tätigkeit*].[72] This substance is the spirit of the people [*Geist eines Volkes*][73] within which we are no longer individual persons, within which we abandon ourselves to a duty.

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[70] See the beginning of the section called 'Practical spirit' in W10 §469. Language is an essential aspect in Hegel's objective philosophy of spirit. In this respect, I agree with the views according to which it is necessary to understand Hegel's non-developed philosophy of language as a richer field of study instead of taking for granted that the social aspect of language weakens Hegel speculative philosophy. In this respect, I sympathize with Jim Vernon's project. See Vernon, *Hegel's Philosophy of Language*. However, I do not share Vernon's view on grammar as a common and a-historical structure. Whilst it is true that, for Hegel, there is a sort of a-historical dynamic ground for all languages, grammar is, for Hegel, dependent on the community who speak them. Grammars, as Hegel learns from Humboldt, testify of historical changes. His partial, comparative observations between German and Chinese or his esteem of languages admitting flexion prove this point. The movement grounding languages is not grammar but *das Logische*. See Hegel, G.W.F., *Wissenschaft der Logik* I, 20, W5. *Das Logische* grounds *das Grammatische*. See Hegel, G.W.F., W10, §459, 272. In sum, grammar is, for Hegel, an historical structure and moreover, grammars are *moments* of the development of *das Logische*. For this last point, see Olvera, Z., "L'instinct logique de l'entendement et le développement logique du concept."

[71] Hegel, G.W.F., *Die Phänomenologie des Geistes*, 478.

[72] Hegel, G.W.F., W10, §514, 318.

[73] Hegel, G.W.F., W10 §514, 318.

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But, if freedom is already exercised in the communitarian use of language, why, then, does Hegel state that thinking must become true thought? Why not just understanding? Why should we give up the *freedom* (theoretical, as well as practical) we already have in the formal, everyday language? Why should we reject common language in order to know, to grasp [*begreifen*] philosophically, as Hegel demands? These questions point at the difference between Herderian metacritique and Hegel's own metacritical standpoint.

Hegel agrees with Herder on the normative power of spirit. Although he states that freedom means obedience to this universality, he would also agree with Humboldt's thesis on the [*Sprachkraft*], the force of language, shared between speakers and language itself.[74]

Humboldt criticized the draconian perspective, assignable to Herder, according to which all individual thought is determined by the normative power of the linguistic community. Humboldt assumed that language could be modified[75] through the force of language every speaker has. In this sense, it is one thing to say that in language we are in a determined spiritual realm and another to say that this spiritual realm, being determined, is closed down. Precisely, the spiritual realm is not closed down. I believe this is an idea that Hegel shares with Humboldt.

In my view, Hegel would admit a reciprocal relation between what Humboldt calls the 'freedom' of the force of language and the 'normative force' exercised by a language, since he also considers it possible to overtake the limits of communitarian or spiritual language.

The assumption of a reciprocal relation between the universality of language and the use a speaker makes does not mean that Hegel assumes the possibility of private languages. Rather, it indicates the possibility of the extension or plasticity of the social realm to which we belong, and of language.

This can explain why Hegel states that philosophy has the right to exert violence upon language. Hegel affirms:

> It is the privilege of philosophy to choose such expressions from the language of ordinary life, which is made for the world of representations, as *seem to approximate* the determinations of the concept. There is no question of *demonstrating* for a *word* chosen from ordinary life that in ordinary life too the same concept is associated with that for which philosophy uses it, for ordinary life has no concepts, only representations, and to recognize the concept in what is otherwise mere representation is philosophy itself. It must therefore suffice if representation, for those of its expressions that philosophy uses for its definitions, has only some rough approximation of their distinctive difference; it may also be the case that in these expressions one recognizes adumbrations which, as approximations, are close

74 See Humboldt, W.v., *Über die Verschiedenheiten des menschlichen Sprachbaues*, 46.

75 Ibid. 19, 86.

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> indeed to the corresponding concepts. […] philosophy would in any case have the freedom to take advantage of such empty superfluity of language for the purpose of its distinctions.[76]

Hegel seems to be far more radical than Humboldt in his conception of linguistic freedom insofar as he not only admits the possibility for modification of the inferential network of a language; he also urges for a critique against the underlying logic in grammar. This is neither an exhortation for linguistic anarchy nor the sublimation of the romantic genius. The self-knowledge of thinking (self-knowledge means the identity of thought with its objects[77]) is related to the effort of the concept itself. Philosophical language must criticize representational, abstract language.

That is also why, as Rosenkranz testifies, Hegel notices that: "We are not used to exert violence upon language and to form new words from old ones."[78] These statements make clear that philosophy cannot be without language, but this language must be modified. Philosophy has the right.

Philosophical thought will have to exert violence upon everyday language in order to stir up the passion for the concept.[79] The exercise of this right cannot be interpreted as ambiguity, vagueness, or a blunt lack of style. It is not what Kierkegaard called the Hegelian 'perverse' use of language.[80] Rather, it is freedom.

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76 Hegel, G.W.F., *Science of Logic*, 628-629. W6, 406-407. George Di Giovanni translates *Vorstellungen* wrongly for 'imaginary representations' instead of leaving it just as 'representations.'

77 See Hegel, G.W.F., W10 §468, 287.

78 Forster, M., *German Philosophy of Language: From Schlegel to Hegel and Beyond*, note 34, 171.

79 I believe Ferrarin saw this when he stated: "Hegel is keenly aware of the binding power of words, precisely insofar as they are found as ready-made externalities pre-existing me and dominating me. But he believes that not only we can, we indeed must go against the fixed meanings representation attaches to words. Where do I find that thesis? In general, I find it in the movement of the logic, which is more of a living process than a formal derivation or deduction of categories. If dialectic is the destruction of the pretense to absolute validity on the part of finite determinations, and the speculative is the essence of what is, if the Idea is process (ENZ.C §215), the process of validating its necessity and pervasiveness, then we can only express truth as a movement of returning to itself. In the dialectical movement dissolving the rigid elements of predicative syntax, the copula does not relate a fixed subject and a predicate external to it, but should be understood as a becoming identity, the subject's progressive self-actualization." Ferrarin, A. "Logic, Thinking and Language," 149-150.

80 See Nuzzo, A. "The Language of Hegel's Speculative Philosophy," 75.

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I have argued that Hegel does have a metacritique. However, my point was not to say that Hegel's metacritical position is identical to Hamann's or Herder's metacritiques. The difference lies in Hegel's understanding of theoretical and practical freedom. On the one hand, the sublation of mechanical memory shows us that another language, different from the representational, is possible. Organic memory takes us to the realm of philosophical language.

It has also become clear that, in a way, Hegel would assume the Humboldtian point of view on the force of language as the possibility of transforming everyday language. To grasp [*begreifen*] or to think philosophically is only possible if we stop thinking with juxtaposed names. Language can and must be transformed in order to make us think beyond abstract, senseless words. Philosophy means to grasp organic, teleological movements or concepts fleshed out with sense.

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