

The meaningful communicative exchange from the Middle Ages to the Enlightenment

The history of medieval classification of signs opens to the relational complex made up by rhetorical, grammatical, logical and theological articulations within a natural and epistemological process. The gnoseological procedure is considered a semiotic sequence linking reality to mind in inferential or equivalent relations. The sources for this categorizing theory or representation are found in the Greek antiquity and in the late Latin culture.

Augustinian science of signs, that was considered the highest genus, yields to a selection of species wherein *verba*, *voces*, *signals* and *gestures* are among its elements. Developing this line, the terms of the relation begin to shift and the relation can become symptomatic of an extension (*extra animam*).

The „visual“ and performative aspect develop into a symbolic interplay with the aural language reacting the same process the „Ars grammatica“ of the early Middle Ages had gone through, when the metalanguage and the manuscript layout of the different *Artes* compiled in Ireland and England start showing a conceptualisation of the language as a visual medium.

Lord Bacon and after him the Royal society claim the role of gestures in the language reform they propose, where hieroglyphs serve as a graphic, and thus more permanent, version of gestures. The gesture becomes a means through which the deaf could be educated when the physician John Bulwer endeavours to make it the general and universal language of human nature. As he put it: „Gesture shall no longer be dumb“ (*Chirologia*, 1644).

We welcome proposals relating to the Middle Ages and/or the Modern Period (up to the Enlightenment) in the following possible topics:

- Semiotic world and linguistic articulation
- The new metalinguistic terminologies
- The interplay between aural and visual aspects
- The gesture as a semiotic tool
- First attempts for a linguistic deaf education.

References

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