

Review

Reviewed Work(s): Claves del pensamiento de C. S. Peirce para el siglo XXI by Jaime Nubiola

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Source: *Transactions of the Charles S. Peirce Society*, Vol. 34, No. 2 (Spring, 1998), pp. 483-488

Published by: Indiana University Press

Stable URL: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/40320707>

Accessed: 15-03-2023 10:20 UTC

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Claves del pensamiento de C.S. Peirce para el siglo XXI

Jaime Nubiola (editor asociado)

Anuario Filosófico Volumen XXIX/3, pp.1131-1440

Pamplona: Servicio de Publicaciones de la Universidad de Navarra, 1996.

Charles S. Peirce's immense production is still little known in Spanish speaking academic circles. One can find in Spanish a few translations (mainly in logic and semiotics, extracted from the *Collected Papers*, some of them of poor quality) and very few critical works on Peirce's thought. An important and more systematic work, intended to transfer Peirce's fundamental contributions to the Spanish speaking community, is being carried on by Jaime Nubiola and his *Grupo de estudios peirceanos* (founded in 1994) at the University of Navarra (Spain). One of the first products of this initiative is the *Anuario Filosófico* number under review. *Anuario Filosófico* is a well established philosophical journal which devotes monographic numbers to some chosen cultural issues. Volume XXIX, number 3, *Claves para el pensamiento de C.S. Peirce para el siglo XXI*, is dedicated to Peirce.

This monographic number includes an introduction by Nubiola, a good translation of Peirce's "The Nature of Science" (as edited by K.L. Ketner in Stuhr's *Classical American Philosophy: Essential Readings and Interpretative Essays*, Oxford University Press, 1987), a translation of Walker Percy's now classical essay "The Fateful Rift: The San Andreas Fault in the Modern Mind" (P. Samway (ed.), *Signposts in a Strange Land*, New York: Farrar, Strauss and Giroux, 1991, 271-291), a translation of Susan Haack's "Ethics of Intellect: a Peircean Approach" (*Social Philosophy and Policy Foundation* (13), 1996, 296-315; a brilliant and forceful diatribe against pseudo-research), and fifteen original studies prepared for *Anuario Filosófico*. Most of these studies deal with Peirce's semeiotic in a wide sense: universals and scholastic realism, concepts and signs in Peirce and Gracián, signs and grounds in Peirce and Frege, the three modes of inference, semiotics and imagination, indexicality, communication, information, cognitive science, Peirce and Spanish linguistics, translation as pragmatics. Three other studies deal

with philosophical comparisons (Peirce vs. Kant, vs. Ortega, vs. Putnam) and a final one presents a Peircean view of matters in modern management. Underneath the authors' affiliations one can find an interesting web of supporting Catholic institutions, showing again the wide and large influence that Peirce's work can produce.

Mauricio Beuchot (UNAM, Mexico) deals in "El realismo escolástico de los universales en Peirce" with one of the most interesting but difficult problems in Peirce's logic and metaphysics. Peirce's realism is contrasted with Scotus, coming to the conclusion that Peirce's synechism can be seen as an extreme form of realism as compared with Scotus, where there would be more room for nominalistic considerations. Beuchot discusses Peirce's realism in the framework of scholasticism and semiotics but points little to Peirce's metaphysical categories. As a result, Peirce's "compagination" between scholastic realism and Kantian phenomenology is seen as impossible by Beuchot. In contrast, a much more detailed appraisal such as Joseph Esposito's *Evolutionary Metaphysics* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1980) shows that a sound compagination is possible, when due attention is given to the recursive branching of Peirce's categories. Eduardo Forastieri-Braschi (Universidad de Puerto Rico) ("Gracián, Peirce: conceptos, signos"), in an important contribution, shows how Peirce and Baltasar Gracián, master of the great baroque treatise, can be located in the same combinatory tradition which, from the scholastics, through the Port Royal grammarians, Leibniz or the baroque Jesuits, looked for a general methodeutic which could explain the diversity of experience. Emphasizing the category of Relation to fully understand Gracián's "conceits" and Peirce's signs, Forastieri-Braschi goes on to explain how some intrinsic indeterminacies in Thirdness can account for Peirce's needed reality of generals; this is a key idea which, related to modalities, could help to explain better Peirce's realism. Forastieri-Braschi studies also diverse lesser known combinatory heritages (Ramus, Pedro Fonseca) which provide interesting bridges between Gracián and Peirce.

Carlos Ortiz de Landázuri's "De Kant a Peirce, cien años después (a través de Karl Otto Apel)" (Universidad de Navarra) provides a summary of Apel's positions in his readings of Peirce, from 1962 till

1995. At some points in this article, it is not clear if the author is expressing his own opinion or if he is reformulating Apel's beliefs; I shall assume that most of the critical judgements are Apel's, and concentrate on one of several obscurities. In Apel's understanding of the late Peirce, logical and mathematical relations provide the basic architectonic support for Peirce's entire system; in Ortiz de Landázuri's interpretation of Apel's interpretation of Peirce, a finitist continuum, related to Brouwer's intuitionistic continuum, would then appear, providing the basis of synechism. The term "finitist" seems wrong-headed here since Peirce's continuum, in his original construction, more akin to a saturated model of the reals in nonstandard analysis or to a developing model of the reals in a modal set theory, is very far from finite considerations. On the other hand, the interpretation of Peirce's continuum as an "intuitionistic" continuum, closely related to synthetic models of modern mathematical theory of categories, is an important possibility to explore, yet far again from being adequately proved to be consistent. In a vague generality remains Ortiz de Landázuri's contribution. It seems to this reviewer that now that several general interpretations of Peirce's system are available, it is time for Peirce's scholarship to penetrate in the awesome, difficult "details" which are the key to the architectonic (existential graphs, modalities, Peirce's continuum). Without long detailed studies to come, Apel or others' interpretations will just be fuzzy guides, far from the clarity Peirce would have wanted of a community of inquirers.

In "Frege y Peirce: en torno al signo y su fundamento", M^a Uxía Rivas (Universidade de Santiago de Compostela, Spain) explores the triadic sign in Frege and Peirce. Rivas shows that Frege's triad sign/sense/meaning is mostly composed by diads while Peirce's triadic semeiosis is genuine. In Peirce's semeiosis, Rivas argues that the ground should not be fixed and that it can be considered, depending on perspective, as a first or as a third, unifying thus some divergent interpretations. Gregory Pappas (Texas A&M University) presents in "Peirce y Ortega" a new connection between two apparently disparate thinkers. Pappas finds a parallel between Peirce's "original beliefs" and Ortega's "beliefs", both intrinsically vague, which then

become the source of doubts and knowledge in Peirce and become “ideas” in Ortega, ideas which rule our stability in life. Changes in ideas could indicate changes in original beliefs but it doesn’t need to be the case. A focus on study of ideas could then hinder a crucial dimension in philosophy. Pappas proposes an interesting return to the study of original beliefs, to provide a needed balance. Moris Polanco (Universidad de La Sabana, Colombia) compares variations of pragmatism in Peirce and Putnam (“Peirce y Putnam sobre la experiencia y la naturaleza”). Polanco connects Putnam with William James, around an evolutionary realism and the practical concerns of ordinary life; he sees Putnam as an action philosopher while Peirce would be a purist one, Putnam as a man allied with life while Peirce would be allied with dry science. The dichotomies are dubious at least and they certainly do not correspond to Peirce’s complexity; human experience and natural knowledge are blended in the richness of Peirce’s thought. In metaphysics Polanco discerns a crucial distinction between Putnam and Peirce; nevertheless Putnam’s rejection of traditional metaphysics does not necessarily mean rejection of Peirce’s “mathematical metaphysics”, a still unknown area of research to which Putnam seems much more attracted.

Gonzalo Génova (Escuela de Ingenieros Industriales, Spain) in his “Los tres modos de inferencia” summarizes the three Peircean modes of the logic of discovery: abduction, induction, deduction. A careful account is given of how Peirce recognized abduction in Aristotle’s modal syllogisms, popularized it through his famous bag of beans analysis and pointed to its peculiar, ampliative power of explanation, distinguishing it from induction. “El lugar de la imaginación en la semiótica de C.S. Peirce” by Fernando Andacht (Universidad Católica del Uruguay) describes a fundamental relationship between imagination and action, the imagination preparing a range of possible actions and opening an extended range of reality in which a future determinate action can in effect take place. Andacht proposes a rich parallel between imagination and the semiotic ground, considered as a mercurial element which opens the range of possible semeiosis. As pre-rational elements, imagination and ground (which

live in recursive levels of firstness) would open the way to aesthetic intuitions. Armando Fumagalli (Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, Italy) studies variations in Peirce's indexicality theory in his "El índice en la filosofía de Peirce". Fumagalli situates in 1885, year of the "Algebra of Logic" and the "Fundamental Categories of Thought and Nature", a point in which Peirce's indexicality notions become precise tools for the future development of semeiosis. Fumagalli further shows how the index becomes in Peirce's later writings a carrier of sense and meaning, interwoven with the metaphysical categories and scholastic distinctions around *significatio* and *suppositio*.

A crucial advantage of Peircean semiotics over other approaches consists in its dynamics, formed by *controllable* processes of the circulation of signs; the control is provided by logical tools and by the recursive use of the metaphysical categories. Wenceslao Castañares (Universidad Complutense, Spain) studies the dynamics of Peircean communication in his "El efecto Peirce. Sugestiones para una teoría de la comunicación". In an age overwhelmed by communication, as ours, it is certain that Peircean semiotics will do its share to shape our communicational experience. In a brilliant contribution, "La información y el regalo de Peirce al mundo", Guy Debrock (Katholieke Universiteit Nijmegen, The Netherlands) exploits the dynamic aspects of information to reconstruct from it, in a natural way, the three Peircean categories. *Informatio* as an activity which transforms the unformed in formed reconstructs the world inverting traditional causality: events do not possess prior causes, events produce causes. Information goes from the uncertain to local certainty, from Peirce's fundamental vague generality to local knowledge, fitting perfectly with the pragmatic maxim. In "Peirce y la ciencia cognitiva", Antoni Gomila (Universidad de La Laguna, Spain) sums up Peircean semiotics as a general theory of representations, and shows its closeness to modern cognitive science considered as a general semeiosis of computational states. Several of these contributions show the very concrete interests that information and computation theory have in the elucidation of the Peircean heritage.

Joan Fontrodona (Universidad de Navarra) follows an unexpected road in his "El 'evangelio de la avaricia': Peirce y la dirección de empresas". Fontrodona claims that modern management is approach-

ing Peircean creativity, communitarian ethics and non-individualistic solidarity while leaving behind its classical utilitarian origins. If that development is true (yet an unclear fact), management in the XXIst century would be reading in Peirce a kind of apostle of Christ's gospel, as Fontrodona puts it. Carmen Llamas in her "La recepción de Peirce en la lingüística española" offers short considerations concerning the contributions of semiotics and pragmatism to general linguistics before trying to account for Peirce's reception in Spanish linguistics. Unfortunately, this second part of the article, which would have been very useful, is never carried to completion; mention is given of Spanish translations of foreign authors (e.g. Jakobson, Schlieben-Lange) which deal with Peirce, but there is no mention of Spanish (or Latin-American) authors who have worked on Peirce. "Eureka! La traducción como un descubrimiento pragmático" by Dinda Gorlée (The Netherlands) is a beautiful text in which the abductive processes are explained to be fundamental in translation. Translation, as seen by Gorlée, is a continuous semeiosis in which abductive hypotheses are constantly put forward and modified by developments in the text. Gorlée detects three conditions which allow a good formation of abductive translational hypotheses: a professional ground, the experience of Musement and an adequate reflection of the Musement in the external circumstances which involve the translator.

Claves del pensamiento de C.S. Peirce para el siglo XXI is thus an important effort of the Spanish speaking community, together with selected invited foreign scholars, to come to grips with Peirce's extraordinary heritage. Peircean keys to XXIst century, as indicated in the title of the compilation, remain nevertheless very fuzzy; only Debrock's article can be seen as a real programmatic contribution directed to a more distant future.

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