Book Reviews

Tony Jappy (ed.), *The Bloomsbury Companion to Contemporary Peircean Semiotics*.
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The Bloomsbury Companion to Contemporary Peircean Semiotics, which includes fifteen chapters by contributors from ten different countries, is a collection of studies of Peircean semiotics in the modern-day context. The collection is structured around three main topics: the contextualization of Peirce today, the applications of his theory to specific research objectives, and the seeking of correspondences between Peirce and other researchers and other research fields. Readers may well find some critical issues and new applications of Peircean semiotics.

In the first chapter, ‘Peirce in Contemporary Semiotics’, Paul Copley, president of the International Association of Semiotic Studies (or IASS), traces the history of the reception and development of the Peircean theory of signs by leading semioticians: Jakobson, Eco, Fisch, Ransdell, Sebeok, Merrell, Nöth, Petrilli, Deely, and Stjernfelt. He especially highlights some key misinterpretations during a period of almost one hundred years, since the first anthology of Peirce’s writings was published in 1923, and provides a broad view of how Peirce’s theory of signs has survived and evolved among all these malformations and fixations.

In the second chapter, ‘Peircean Semiotics in China Today’, Xingzhi Zhao, a leading Peirce specialist in China, presents a panorama of the rise and boom of Peirce’s semiotics in China. The country has a long tradition of semiotic thinking, and ancient Chinese philosophy shares significant similarities with Peirce’s concept of triads. It was in the 1960s and the 1970s that Peircean semiotics was first noticed and compared to Chinese philosophy by Zhongshu Qian, a leading Chinese literary theorist of the day (p. 73). However, it was not until the early 1990s that more Chinese scholars began to study Peircean semiotics, which then flourished in the twenty-first century leading a paradigm shift in Chinese semiotic studies. With the rapid development of cultural studies

in China, scholars not only apply Peircean semiotics as a useful tool to solve sign problems in different interdisciplinary fields – especially cultural and sociological – but also further develop and renovate them. They are thus in turn adding new dynamics to Peircean semiotics.

The following three chapters aim to explain some basic concepts of Peirce's semiotics, namely semiosis, sign classes, and aesthetics. Semiosis, a fundamental operational idea in today's semiotic research in diverse domains, was not fully developed by Peirce. Rather, it emerged outside a strictly Peircean context (notably in biosemiotics and narratology) (p. 9). The volume's editor Tony Jappy sets out in his own chapter, 'Peirce's Conception of Semiosis', a purely Peircean conception of semiosis and summarizes it in five distinctive aspects: semiosis is a logical concept; it is a dynamic process composed of six, not three, correlates, and functions as a linear sequence; the sign's dynamic object triggers it; it is structured within three universes of existence, for which phaneroscopy is irrelevant; and it accounts for causation and intention under an extended conception of the dynamic object (p. 127).

Priscila Borges, in 'A Complex System of Sign Classes for Complex Sign Systems', deals with Peirce's most complicated sixty-six classes of signs, as opposed to the already fully-explained three-class, ten-class, and twenty-eight-class systems. With more classifications comes a more accurate description of a sign since there are more aspects to observe. Therefore, this complex classification of sign classes renders more possibilities in the complex sign systems in various human culture domains, such as digital language and gender definitions. The author presents two fields as examples of how these classifications can work more fruitfully. Although it is doubtful whether these classifications are fully applicable, as they have always been considered the most complicated in Peirce's semiotics, the author's endeavour gives us insights into the possible future directions.

As a little-developed field, Peircean aesthetics is the main topic of the article by Robert E. Innis in 'Peirce's Aesthetic Confession and its Analytical Consequences'. Based on Dewey's conception of aesthetics as 'perception', Innis explores Peirce's view of aesthetics (esthetics) in terms of the presentation of objects, quale-consciousness and sign typologies, and, above all, nature, as an aesthetic product of the self-assembling processes of nature itself rather than only as an aesthetic phenomenon (p. 156).

Abduction is Peirce's initiative to generate hypotheses not only in scientific research but in all human activities, as opposed to the two acknowledged methods of deduction and induction. The following three chapters deal with this topic. Sara Barrena and Jaime Nubiola elaborate on abduction in both

scientific and artistic creativity in 'Abduction: The Logic of Creativity'. In 'Abduction as an Explanatory Strategy in Narrative', James Jakób Liszka and Genie Babb suggest an interconnection between scientific reasoning and narrative thinking since all narratives, not only the detective genre, involve a similar abductive sense. Meanwhile, Augusto Ponzio, in 'Logic and Dialogic in Peirce's Conception of Argumentation', views dialogism as fundamental in Peirce's semiotics. Interconnected with the triad of symbol, index, and icon, Peirce's tripartition of inference into deduction, induction, and abduction has a dialogic orientation. The interpreted and the interpretant are in dialogue, and abductive conception can generate sign processes at high degrees of dialogism and otherness (p. 235). Abduction is Peirce's inference mode, a prospect for further study, as these chapters show.

Technological artefacts in our daily life are also semiotic entities, involving or involved in signification and communication. As suggested by Bent Sørensen, Torkild Thellefsen and Martin Thellefsen in 'A Peircean Semiotics of Technological Artefacts', from the perspective of Peirce's semiotics, technological artefacts can be studied in three aspects: technological grammar, technological logic, and technological rhetoric. Using the example of Tesla, a brand of self-driving cars, the authors illustrate how these aspects are applied. However, being an emerging researching direction – though Peirce himself already mentioned 'logical machines' – this analysis is inevitably a simple 'sketch' outlining the possible framework. Readers will anticipate more details of this study.

Claudio F. Guerri in 'The Semiotic Nonagon: Peirce's Categories as Design Thinking' and Seymour Simmons in 'Pragmatism and Semiotics in Teaching Drawing Today' explore the applications of Peirce's semiotics in their respective fields. The semiotic nonagon, which is based on Peirce's trichotomy of signs, is studied by Guerri to serve as a cognitive instrument to 'any situation of human knowledge, be it theoretical or practical', (p. 299) while Simmons finds some ideas in Peirce's theory that are applicable and constructive not only to drawing teaching but also to visual arts.

The final four chapters ponder the very essence of Peirce's work. Rossella Fabbrichesi discusses habits in 'From Gestures to Habits: A Link Between Semiotics and Pragmatism', arguing that habits are the operative gear of semiosis if interpretants are the engine (p. 355). According to the author, Peirce regards the notion of habit as the 'threshold between the mental and material domains' (p. 342), a notion adopted from a very old tradition, but free from psychologistic influences. Fabbrichesi also asserts that the study of signs is the study of habits, which constitutes the foundation of our behaviours. In 'Peirce

and Welby: For an Ethics of the Man-Sign Relation' Susan Petrilli focuses on the ethical principles that these two great semioticians mentioned in their semiotic observations in the fields of human and non-human, verbal and non-verbal. The 'semiotic turn', as Petrilli puts it, is aimed at the axiological order, thus emphasizing values, ethics, aesthetics, and ideology in sign studies.

In the book's penultimate chapter, 'Peircean Semiotic for Language and Linguistics', Jamin Pelkey reiterates the importance of 'thirdness' in the study of linguistics, which tends to be neglected in contemporary linguistic theory, and illustrates how the unification of linguistics is possible within Peirce's general semiotics and pragmatism. The three functions of analogy, automation, and diagrammatization of linguistic interpretants identified by the author 'work together to mediate between language variation and linguistic inheritance, as complex linguistic systems grow towards some more systematic type' (p. 414).

The final chapter, 'Co-localization as the Syntax of Multimodal Propositions: An Amazing Peircean Idea and Some Implications for the Semiotics of Truth', by Frederik Stjernfelt goes beyond the linguistic mode, probing the common ground of multimodal co-localization propositions in different areas of human semiotic activities, such as ancient Egyptian cartouches, comics, diagrams, photography, biosemiotics, and linguistics. Based on a generalization of Peirce's concept of the *dicisign*, the co-localization as the syntax of multimodal propositions could prove that more empirical signs carry truth claims.

The Bloomsbury Companion to Contemporary Peircean Semiotics shows how the study of Peirce's theory has been promoted around the world in recent years. The book not only retrieves the history of the reception of Peircean semiotics but also teases out some little-developed conceptions such as abduction, the sixty-six sign classes, and aesthetic concerns. More importantly, these conceptions have been tentatively applied in various domains, some of which are brand new areas in societal and cultural studies, such as technical artefacts and design. Benefiting from Peircean semiotics, these attempts in turn promote the vitality and range of the great philosopher's thought.

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