

Susan Petrilli / Augusto Ponzio

Order of Discourse and Responsibility

To Answer forself; To Answer for the Other

The problem of the «order of discourse» concerns both exterior and interior discourse. In this paper it is considered from a «semiodialogic» perspective, where logic and semiotics intersect. Semiosis and argumentation are interconnected dialogic behaviors. The common denominator is «interpretation» understood not only in terms of identification, but also of «answering comprehension». This implies that in human semiosis to interpret is also to respond dialogically, take a stand, account to, and account for, which involves values, habits, norms, stereotypes, and ideologies. The «order of discourse» is connected to power and ideology. Logic converges with the ideo-logic of a given social system and of the individual who is part of that system. The study of ideology and the problem of individual moral and legal responsibility should be dealt with from a semiotic perspective given that social planning, programmes, ideologies, individual verbal and non-verbal behaviors are all made of signs. Social reproduction in general is made of signs, verbal and non-verbal. The subject redefined in semiotic terms has pivotal implications for the question of moral and legal responsibility. From a semiotic perspective «to answer for self» clearly will not suffice. To answer for self is always to answer not only to the other but also for the other, «to answer for the other.»

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1 To Answer for self, by Augusto Ponzio

[Rz 1] The «order of discourse» in our title does not merely allude to exterior discourse in the context of a dialogic relationship with another person, but also to interior discourse in which this other person is our own interior double self through which we evaluate the validity of a given argument. Understood in such terms our problem implies a discussion along the boundaries interconnecting *logic* and *semiotics* in what may be described as a «semiodialogic» perspective.

[Rz 2] Three authors we believe fundamental for the adequate development of such a perspective are Charles S. Peirce (1839–1914), Mikhail M. Bakhtin (1895–1975) and Emmanuel Levinas (1906–s1995).

[Rz 3] A common denominator linking logic and semiotics, or, better, these two aspects implied by the *semiodialogic* approach, to the *order of discourse*, to which belong the individual's questioning and answering whether internal or external, is *interpretation*. In fact, as Peirce repeatedly underlines in his papers, interpretation plays a central role in semiosis and argumentation which are reciprocally inseparable and dialogic behaviors. To evidence the connection of argumentation and semiosis to dialogue is to evidence the dialogic character of interpretation to the extent that interpretation is not only identification, recognition but also «answering comprehension», an expression adapted from Bakhtin. In other words, together with the *identification interpretant*, which is the aspect we stop at when considering meaning in terms of the *signifié* understood in the Saussurean sense and, therefore, in its dependency on the «code», we must also consider the interpretant of *answering comprehension* which does not merely limit itself to identifying signs but responds to them dialogically, takes a stand, makes a choice, and therefore implicitly involves reference to values, habits, norms of behavior, stereotypes, ideologies (cf. Ponzio, Calefato & Petrilli 1999).

[Rz 4] But the «order of discourse» is also connected to power and ideology. Consequently, it also implies logic understood as the *ideo-logic* of a given social system, the context of the external or internal questioning and answering of an individual.

[Rz 5] Our topic develops along the boundaries of the fields of logic, semiotics, and theory of ideology in a perspective that may be characterized as «semio-ideo-logic». According to this point of view, another very important author, relevant to our discourse is the Italian philosopher Ferruccio Rossi-Landi (1921-1985). He demystified both external and internal discourse through which the individual is presumed to answer personally, to be responsible as a moral and legal entity, when in fact all human behavior is programmed behavior insofar as it is communicative behavior, that is, sign behavior. What we must realize is that programs, programming and social planning are closely interconnected, and that the more the capitalist production system in the phase of global communication develops the more such interconnection becomes closer and ever more necessary.

[Rz 6] The connection of semiotics to the study of ideology in individual moral and legal responsibility depends on the fact that without studying signs there is no way of understanding anything about social planning, projects, ideologies of individual verbal and non-verbal behaviors. In general, the whole system of social reproduction is made possible by communication

and, therefore, by signs, verbal and non-verbal signs. What semiotics should do is examine signs as a constituent part of the processes they belong to. Such an approach evidences the effective connection between the individual internal and external order of discourse and ideology – and between the disciplines that deal with them at both the foundational level and of general theory: semiotics as the general theory of signs and as theory of ideology. On examining communication in the process of social reproduction to which it belongs, we must not only consider it in relation to systems of sign exchange, but also of sign production and consumption. And as part of the totality of social reproduction, ideology must also be viewed in its necessary relationship with sign systems. Rossi-Landi's pioneer research deserves due consideration given its central importance for a semiotico-critical approach to false consciousness. Rossi-Landi defines the dominant class «as the class that holds control over the emission and circulation of verbal messages in a given community» (Rossi-Landi 1972: 203–204).

[Rz 7] Study of the ideo-logic of individual internal and external discourse, through which the individual answers for himself, requests a focus on the relationship between dominant forms of discourse and the «world» conceived as a totality to which the individual belongs, as Being, as Reality, which imposes its *hard laws* on individuals. As Levinas (1961) demonstrated, the world is indissolubly tied to politics, already as a projection, a plan, as the space for the satisfaction of needs. The world is tied to politics as a totalizing overview and functional system, as the strategy of productivity, efficiency, as adherence to reality, as guarantee of the *conatus essendi*, as mediation of the interests – in Latin *inter-esse*, which plays on the concept of being – of both the individual and the collective subject, as the awareness and management of *becoming*, starting from a realistic view of the present and through readaptation to the present by the past, as economy of the lasting, of the persistent, of the progressive in *being*, at all costs. Even at the cost of war, the *extrema ratio* of war, war considered as part of the world, which is foreseen by it, is part of its logic, of the ontology of the *conatus essendi*. The world foresees war given that, being structurally based on identity, it exploits that which is other for the maintenance, reinforcement, duration, and expanded reproduction of the same (Ponzio 2013). The world is ready, it is prepared for the sacrifice of alterity – alterity of the I and of the other – to individual and collective identity. The connection between World, History, Reality, Identity, Responsibility, Truth, Force, Reason, Power, Productivity, Politics, War is inscribed in our experience, in our mentality as Westerners. And this connection has always been exploited and exasperated by capitalism, even more so these days. Communication functional to the reproduction of this social system extends and consolidates this connection. The Gulf War of 1991 marks a decisive phase in recent history, a kind of watershed between a period that begins from the Second World War and is characterized by the widespread refusal of war as a solution to conflicts in international relations, and another period, today's, characterized by the ideo-logic of capital and assent to war largely accepted as a just, necessary and legal means of asserting peace, the rights of identity, and of difference.

[Rz 8] Today there is an increase in the danger of submitting passively to social programs that mask widespread forms of «refined oppression» under mystifying banners paradoxically mistaken for liberating practices. The widespread effects of mass communication and, therefore, of ideology or, as we prefer, of the dominant *ideo-logic* supporting the whole multi-medial communication network, represent this kind of danger. The conjunction between telecommunications and informatics is favoring expansion of this network at a planetary level, which is producing a form of socio-cultural reality without precedents from the viewpoint of the messages teaming in it in terms of quantity, immediacy, and circulation.

[Rz 9] A direct consequence of advanced technology and of the intensification of sign traffic is the superimposing of messages. This also implies translating and evaluating such progress in terms of alienation of the human subject, in terms of mystification and fetishization of its linguistic and non-linguistic products made ready for the market. The more message production is redundant, the more the individual as a critical subject is suffocated despite active participation in such production processes. Even those subjects who would seem to be immune from the effects of the so-called electronic revolution variously contribute to the expansion of the world «sign market» (see Sebeok 1987) in which consciousness and praxis are alienated for a productive cycle whose end is production itself. With reference to the problem of the status of the subject considered as a user-consumer, the obvious truth is that such developments in the communication network, which inevitably end up involving us all, do not necessarily imply higher levels of critical awareness, creativity, responsible participation, or «freedom». Quite the contrary: the risk is that of remaining trapped in this communication network, which the more it expands becomes ever more oppressive.

[Rz 10] In today's order of discourse lying is no longer based on keeping things hidden, thanks also to the power of media and to the preponderance of images. Just think of the techniques used by dominant information services. Intangibility based on secrecy is no longer possible in a culture aspiring to «transparency», to glassiness – «glass things do not have an «aura». Glass is the special enemy of secrets» (wrote Benjamin in *Experience and Poverty*, 1933). The impossibility of gaining awareness and of intervening transformatively on things and situations which instead must be preserved, concealed and handed down, is obtained by organizing things so that to see does not mean to understand, which, if anything, is impeded. The «destructive character» (Benjamin) of the present day – meaning current society as it is characterized by production for the sake of production, by communication for the sake of communication – shows, unveils, has its own constitutive obscenity. Destructive work needs a public, witnesses, says Benjamin. The succession and overlapping of information in the name of «transparency» and to the satisfaction of a sort of widespread «voyeurism» makes it possible to level reality onto appearance and destroys the very notion of control by public opinion. The possibility of attention is replaced by confusion, the possibility of scandal by inurement, comprehension by misunderstanding. Indeed, says Benjamin (in *The Destructive Character*, 1931), in the end one lets oneself be misunderstood, which eliminates gossip, and this happens because people don't want to be misunderstood; more exactly, the destructive character requires a continual provocation to misunderstanding.

[Rz 11] The demystification of ideology in today's order of discourse, as much as of such notions as Responsibility, Subject, Reason, Truth, Reality, is only possible through a critique of signs capable of accounting for the production, exchange and circulation of signs as this cycle takes place in the global process of social reproduction. Such a project is committed to the development of a new and more conscious form of humanism, which not only focuses on the sign dimension of human beings – as semiotics has done so far; with an enormous contribution in this sense from Peirce – but also on the human dimension of signs, as established by a project conceived and developed by such figures as Bakhtin, Levinas, Rossi-Landi.

[Rz 12] The logic of internal discourse of the I is a *dia-logic*. The I is not a closed totality standardized and conformed to the order of discourse functional to power and dominant ideology. The constitution of sense for the I always implies dialogically structured argumentation. Sense is always the answer to a question, a sort of rejoinder in a dialogue where question and answer do not simply involve information exchange, but far more than this, values and valutative orien-

tations. The kind of question we intend calls for a pragmatico-valutative standpoint, just as the answer involved in comprehending sense also requires a standpoint, whether implicitly or explicitly. Question and answer logic in which sense is decided escapes the limits of monologicality.

[Rz 13] As Levinas (1961, 1974) demonstrated, otherness is not outside the sphere of self, which does not lead to its assimilation, but quite on the contrary, gives rise to a constitutive impediment to the integrity and closure of self. Instead, the relation with the other is intended as a relation of excess, a surplus, the overcoming of the objectifying thought, release from the relation between subject and object and from the relation of equal exchange. The self/other relation irreducibly goes beyond the realm of knowledge, the concept, abstract thought, even if it is just this relation that makes them possible.

For Sartre as for Hegel, the oneself is posited on the basis of the for-itself. The identity of the I would thus be reducible to the turning back of essence upon itself. The I, or the oneself that would seem to be its subject or condition, the oneself taking on the figure of an entity among entities, would in truth be reducible to an abstraction taken from the concrete process of self-consciousness [...]. (Levinas 1974, Eng. trans. 103)

[Rz 14] Contrary to Sartre and Hegel, Levinas believes that the self of «being conscious of oneself» neither coincides with consciousness nor presupposes it; instead, self pre-exists with respect to consciousness to which it is connected by a relation of otherness and autonomy.

[Rz 15] With respect to identity of the person as delineated in the order of discourse, the individual as social living being is double and escapes from identity.

Here is a person who is what he is; but he does not make us forget, does not absorb, cover over entirely the objects he holds and the way he holds them, his gestures, limbs, gaze, thought, skin, which escape from under the identity of his substance, which like a torn sack is unable to contain them. (Levinas 1948, Eng. trans. 135)

[Rz 16] The question and answer in the internal and external discourse of the I are not absolute and impersonal abstract categories of *Logos*, but rather concrete aspects of dialogue. Differently to monological sign relationships, which would not seem to have spatio-temporal and axiological limits, or, which are situated in the space-time of monological discourse, dialogical question and answer relationships have a precise and diversified spatial, temporal and axiological collocation, which determines the degree of *irreducible otherness* with which such relationships are endowed. We believe Bakhtin's main contribution to the problem of the conditions of possibility, to the foundations of dialogical argumentation lies in his approach, in the terms just described, to the problem of sense.

[Rz 17] The capacity for critique with respect to a «closed universe of discourse», and for moral and legal responsibility functional to the dominant order of discourse is only possible where dialogical potential is at its highest and, therefore, where the answer required for the comprehension of sense is grounded in the logic of otherness, and calls for a standpoint. This means to assume responsibility as the responsibility of interrogating the value of behavior beyond its systemic contribution to the process of reproduction of today's communication-production process. This implies the critical effort of examining *à la Kant* the «conditions of possibility» of meaning as well as attempting *à la Marx* to recover the sense for man of semiosis, considered, following Rossi-Landi as «social reproduction». To study meaning as the production of significance, that is, to put together signs and values, also implies doing what Marx did with his critique of merchandise: that is, it implies to deconstruct sense in order to evidence the action of signs and communication

relationships between things in production processes instead of just considering «facts», «things» or «relationships between things» independently of such processes. It also means to restore human sense to things and facts by critically revealing the linguistic and social alienation processes to which the human person is subject in daily signifying and communicative practices.

[Rz 18] A relation may be established between inferential argumentation in answering for self and Peirce's sign typology, especially if we consider his tripartition into symbol, index and icon in terms of the degree of dialogicality and otherness implied in the relationship between interpretant and interpreted. In symbols the relationship between the interpreted and interpretant is regulated by a habit and therefore it is conventional; in the index it is regulated by causal necessity and therefore it is constrictive; in the icon it is regulated by similarity and therefore by the principle of reciprocal autonomy. This also applies to argumentation if we consider the relationship between premises and conclusion as a relationship between interpreted and interpretant signs. In induction the relationship between the premise and the conclusion is of the symbolic type, it is based on habit. In deduction it is of the indexical type given that the conclusion is a necessary derivation from the premises. In abduction the relationship between premises and conclusion is of the iconic type, that is to say, of reciprocal autonomy, and this implies a high degree of inventiveness together with a high-risk margin for error. Abductive processes are highly dialogical and generate answers that may be considered as the most risky, inventive and creative.

[Rz 19] As already demonstrated in detail (Ponzio 1984a, b), the degree of dialogicality in the relationship between interpreted and interpretant is minimal in deduction, where once the premises are accepted the conclusion is compulsory. Inferential processes also remain unilinear in induction where identity and repetition dominate even though the relationship between premises and conclusion is no longer compulsory. On the contrary, in abduction the relationship between argumentative parts is dialogical in a substantial sense. In fact, in abduction very high degrees of dialogicality may be reached and the higher, the more inventive becomes reasoning. Abductive argumentative procedure is risky, that is, it is mainly tentative and hypothetical with a minimal margin left to convention (symbolicity) and mechanical necessity (indexicality). Abductive inferential processes – in which iconicity prevails – involve transcending the logic of identity and equal exchange and generating sign processes at high levels of otherness and dialogicality.

[Rz 20] The problem of moral and legal responsibility brings us back to the question of the centrality of dialogue in argumentative reasoning, that is, reasoning that has not stiffened into the defence and reproduction of identity but rather is open and oriented by otherness.

[Rz 21] Bakhtin (1975, It. trans. 1979: 365) evidenced how unilaterality, ossification, rectilinear and unilateral dialectics derives from sclerotized dialogue. Monological, unilinear and totalizing dialectics is necessarily orientated towards a synthesis and a conclusion and as such calls for a *critique of dialogic reason* (cf. Ponzio 2004). From this point of view Bakhtin is a main point of reference also because the whole of his research, including his paper of 1974 on the methodology of the human sciences, concentrates on the same problem faced by Sartre in his *Critique de la raison dialectique*: that is, whether the knowledge and understanding of man by man not only implies specific methods but a *New Reason*. This, however, cannot be understood in terms of a new relation between *thought* and its *object*, as instead believed Sartre (cf. 1960). In fact, Sartre's dialectics remains wholly inside the limits of monological dialectics given that he reduces the relation of otherness to a relation of identity and of reciprocal objectification: dialectics between *for self* and *for others* is dialectics in totalizing consciousnesses, where the tendency is to affirm one's own objectifying view.

[Rz 22] The critique of dialogical reason is the critique of the category of Identity, which is the category currently dominating in Western thought and praxis. In the perspective of identity where sense is made to coincide with partial and limited interests only mystification is possible: and this is true whether we are speaking of the identity of an individual, group, nation, language, cultural system or of a very large community such as the European or the entire Western world or the United Nations.

[Rz 23] The category of Identity dominates today not only because of the *concrete abstractions* constructed upon it, which form the *Reality* we experience: such concrete abstractions as Individual, Society, State, Nation, Truth, Knowledge, Equality, Justice, Freedom, circumscribable and definable Responsibility, Need, Equal exchange, etc., which are «internal» to today's overall system of social reproduction; but also because the system itself is actually grounded in the category of Identity which tends to assert itself structurally and constitutively as Universal in a worldwide Production, Market and Consumption process. The logic of concrete abstraction in the current process of social reproduction is the logic of Identity. And the category of Individual with its rights, obligations, responsibilities; of Society with its interests; of State with its Politics adhering as much as possible to Reality; of Equal exchange with its needs, all obey the logic of Identity.

[Rz 24] The places of argumentation internal to the order of discourse are the places of the logic of identity. Our forms of Reason, which include the reasons of war even if in the form of *extrema ratio* which makes war itself seem legitimate, just, legal; our Reason inclusive of reason that justifies elimination of the other – from emargination and segregation to extermination –, is the Reason of Identity. Its logic is asserted by barricading, isolating, expelling or exterminating the other, thereby allowing for construction of the concrete abstractions in which such logic is founded. This includes the Individual who in the first place must sacrifice its own otherness to itself in order to assert itself as identity.

[Rz 25] The critique of Reason and argumentation thus intended requires a *point of view that is other*. This requires preliminary *recognition of the other*, or, rather, recognition of the fact that recognition of the other is an *inevitable imposition* (cf. Ponzio 2003). Recognition of the other not as a concession, a free choice made by the Individual, the Subject, the Same, but as a necessity imposed by alienation, the loss of sense, by the situation of *homo homini lupus*. The situation of *homo homini lupus* consequent and not mythically antecedent to – Hobbes' fallacy! – the concrete abstractions of State, Politics, Law.

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[Rz 26] An aspect of Charles S. Peirce's sign theory that should not be undervalued is the contribution that may eventually come from it for a redefinition of the subject. This has pivotal implications for the question of moral and legal responsibility conceived in terms of «answering for self». In fact, to answer for the self is always to answer not only *to* the other but also *for* the other.

[Rz 27] On Peirce's account, the human being, the self, viewed as a sign converges with the verbal and non-verbal sign material of which it is made, with thought. In other words, the subject is a semiotic process. Insofar as it is a sign, that is, a sign in becoming (CP 5.313), the subject emerges as a dialogic and relational unit, as an open subject, an ongoing process in the intrapersonal and interpersonal dialogic interrelationship with other signs and with other subjects. The human

person is born into a community in which his/her experiences are determined as s/he develops in relation to the experiences of the other members of that community, and never in isolation.

[Rz 28] The self's discourse is never exclusively its own but rings with the discourse of others. In a Peircean perspective and in accordance with Mikhail Bakhtin, we may say that the word is never neutral but rather is impregnated with the words, thoughts, experiences, actions, values and feelings of others.

[Rz 29] On Peirce's account the subject is an incarnated subject made of intercorporeity, sociality, history, psychic activity. The latter implies thought, language, consciousness as well as the complex and variegated sphere of the unconscious, or «semi-conscious», an «obscure part» of the psyche which Peirce describes as the principal part of mind. The semiotic processes forming the unconscious are not illuminated by reason, that is, they are not controlled by reason or by fully-conscious inferences. And not only does the unconscious represent the main part of the mind's activity in terms of quantity, but in fact it also represents a rich resource in signifying potential with respect to thought processes controlled by reason or fully-conscious inferences, «almost infinitely more delicate in its sensibilities», says Peirce (*CP* 6.569, cf. also *CP* 7.555).

[Rz 30] «Human signs» both in the sense of the signs that human beings produce and the value that such signs are able to express are characterized by a structural tendency toward instability, uncertainty and restlessness. The signs forming the subject develop as an open and critical system ready to question itself always, similarly to an existential and phenomenological adventure in which stable points of reference, convictions, beliefs and truths are continuously called into question and put into crisis. As an open semiotic process in becoming, as sign material evolving out of otherness and dialogism, subjectivity does not remain imprisoned within the boundaries of being and its various definitions, but, on the contrary, is characterized by its potential for transformative development and dialogic displacement outside roles and definitions, outside the very categories of being (Petrilli 2010; Ponzio 2011).

[Rz 31] Indeed, the concept of displacement, movement, crossing, «extralocalization» (to say it once again with Bakhtin) in the relation between parts constituting the sign according to the logic of otherness is already inscribed in the Greek etymology of the word «dia-logue». Evoking Emmanuel Levinas we may advance the claim that well before the advent of his philosophy of otherness, Peirce had already outlined an «otherwise than being» in semiotic terms. In Peirce's description signs and subjectivity are not limited to the logic of symmetrical exchange between the speaker and listener, the utterer and interpreter, between an encoding sign and a decoding sign, between an interpreted sign (which includes the object) and an interpretant sign. Instead, signs and subjectivity are open to displacement as they lead outside and beyond themselves and beyond the body that incarnates them to develop in terms of intercorporeality.

[Rz 32] Peirce opposes the concepts of «personality», «personal self», «individual self», which presuppose a finite self, to the concept of self in communion with other selves. The finite self or «personal self» is an «illusory phenomenon», but to the extent that human beings are egocentric and egotistic they believe they can live and flourish separately from others, from the human community they in fact belong to. And to the extent that they believe this, they are creating the conditions for such illusory forms of isolation. In reality, self can never be wholly divided or separated from the other.

[Rz 33] As Peirce teaches us, human existence completely isolated from the other is not a possibility. Nor is isolatedness a guarantee of the uniqueness or singularity of the single individual, of the self's specificity, of its otherness with respect to the otherness of others. To be a self involves

being a member of a community, so that what counts and should be theorized is not «my» experience but «ours» (CP 5.402 n.2). Indeed, of great interest is how Peirce associates the social and communitarian character of the self with such values as uniqueness, singularity, signifying otherness with respect to any given interpretive process whatsoever. In this perspective the capacity for signifying on one's own account beyond and apart from reference to anything else is theorized with recourse to the category of firstness. This implies that self's uniqueness, its irreducibility to a referent, is unveiled and developed in the relationship with the other. Insofar as it is unique, the self is ineffable (CP 1.357); with Levinas we could state that the self is saying beyond the said, a propensity for significance before and after words.

[Rz 34] Not only the self and the other do not exclude each other. More than this, the self's identity is constituted uniquely in the relationship with the other – the other from self and the other of self, the human other and the divine other –, be it an effective other or only imaginary (CP 7.572). The self is a process in becoming, therefore, to be a self means to be in the process of becoming a self, an open-ended semiotic process that is never complete (CP 6.157). In the Peircean perspective, self is being in becoming, not a separate unit, but a continuous being characterized by incompleteness and unfinalizability. From the point of view of temporality, beyond including the past and finding some degree of realization in the present, the single individual is always projected toward the future (CP 6.155). In semiotic terms, self is projected into future interpretants without ever being defined once and for all, and to deny such a possibility means to deny self its essence as a sign, to deny the dialogic dynamics of semiosis, ultimately to deny the self its identity as self. And as an open semiotic process in becoming in the interrelationship with other selves and other signs, self is not only oriented toward the future but it also reinterprets and reinvents itself with respect to the past and to the present itself.

[Rz 35] A fundamental role is attributed to the body in the development of consciousness to the point that in a Peircean semiotic framework consciousness is *incarnated consciousness*. The body is a condition for the full development of consciousness and, therefore, of the self as a sign or symbol. The self develops interrelatedly with other bodies, with other selves and other signs through which it extends its boundaries, which are the boundaries of the world it experiences. Such an approach to subjectivity not only concerns the intellectual sphere but also the ethic and the affective (Petrilli 2013).

[Rz 36] In his discussion of the functioning and development of cognition and will in semiotic terms, as much as of emotion, desire, and feeling, Peirce states that «there is no reason for supposing a power of introspection; and consequently, the only way of investigating a psychological question is by inference from external facts» (CP 5.249). As she states in her unpublished manuscripts (deposited in the Welby Collection, York University Archives and Special Collections, University of Toronto, Canada: for further information, see Petrilli 1998b, 2009) dedicated to the problem of Subjectivity, Victoria Welby (1837–1912) was also strongly critical of the concept of introspection, as theorized and practiced in her time, and of its implications for the construction of human identity (cf., for example, *I and Self*, Nov. 23rd. 1907, Box *Subjectivity*).

[Rz 37] In Peirce's view a fundamental aspect of the interpersonal relationship is sympathy for the other, sentiment for the other, the condition of feeling for one another, of being in communion with the other, while at the same time maintaining one's own specificity or singularity as a unique individual. According to Peirce, sentimentalism is the «doctrine that great respect should be paid to the natural judgements of the sensible heart» (CP 6.292). It is strictly related to Peirce's interrelational and intersubjective approach to self and to knowledge. Of particular interest

is the importance he placed on such considerations for the successful development of scientific research, whose consequences are drawn out with his «agapistic theory of evolution» (CP 6.295).

[Rz 38] Consciousness develops through sign processes oriented from the outside to the inside, from the external to the internal, from the public to the private, and not vice versa (with Bakhtin we may distinguish between official and unofficial consciousness) (cf. Bakhtin-Voloshinov 1929). Consequently, consciousness is the outcome of a process of introjection from the outside to the inside. This implies that in order to know consciousness we must turn our gaze outward, toward the social world and the interpersonal relationship, and not introspectively. As we have already mentioned, the world as lived by the subject is at least double comprising an internal world and an external world, the continuously interacting orientations of interiority and of exteriority. Inside and outside, internal and external, inner and outer are in fact abstractions with respect to a semiotic continuum that knows no interruptions or separations.

[Rz 39] As anticipated, beyond describing the subject in terms of semiosis, action, habit, another fundamental characteristic is identified by Peirce in the capacity for rational consciousness, which he analyzes in terms of control over one's inferences, that is, the process of self-control, meaning the capacity for criticism, verification, confutation, a disposition to respond, to regulate one's behavior in the light of norms and ideals and aspirations, «a sense of taking a habit, or disposition to respond to a given kind of stimulus in a given kind of way» (CP 5.440). Thus understood, self-control is associated with the subject's freedom and autonomy, values that may be placed on the side of semiotic materiality at high degrees of signifying otherness. And, furthermore, insofar as freedom and autonomy tell of the relationship of otherness among signs, of self-control, from the viewpoint of ethics they also tell of the relationship of responsibility toward the other implied by the logic of otherness.

[Rz 40] Particularly interesting is the fact that Peirce includes the imagination in the category of self-control. The imagination gives rise to autonomy and signifying freedom; this is the imagination, the disposition to daydreaming which in the last analysis subtends all intellectual power (cf. CP 6.286) and contributes to the formation of habits – as when behavior tends to translate into practice what in a manner had already been conceived in the play of musement.

[Rz 41] In Peirce's conception the human disposition to daydreaming and to reflecting upon ideals, aspirations and passions belongs to the side of the moral or ethic dimension of signifying processes. And to the moral sphere also, as it emerges in the tension toward the realization of ideals and aspirations, belong the tasks of control and criticism (MS 675, 15–16; MS followed by the number of the manuscript refers to Peirce's unpublished manuscripts identified according to the number system used by Houghton Library at Harvard University, USA).

[Rz 42] Therefore, not only the brute force of experience, but also the power of imagination, and, in the last analysis, the force of attraction exerted by otherness, all count among the major factors that influence and gradually model the subject's consciousness. Indeed, ideals do not act upon existents directly but model them while respecting their nature, so that the modality through which ideals exert their influence is not at all that of brute force but what Peirce calls «creative love». And the effect of creative love, intentionality aside, is that of calling to their realization existents subjected to such influence.

[Rz 43] It may be inferred from Peirce's semiotic perspective that the dialogic conception of sign – and therefore of human consciousness – and the logic of otherness that subtends it, form a necessary condition for his doctrine of continuity, or synechism. This doctrine maintains that «all that exists is continuous» in the development of the universe and of the human subject that be-

longs to it. Dialogism and otherness account for the logic of synechism and, therefore, for the driving force exerted in evolutionary processes by continuity, inexactitude, uncertainty, inascertainability and, in the ultimate analysis, by fallibilism (CP 1.172).

[Rz 44] And while the dia-logic relation between self and other – both the other from self and the other of self – emerges as one of the most important conditions for continuity in the creative process, a major force considered as most firing creativity is identified in love. In the present context some of the most relevant descriptions of love include: with Levinas, the orientation toward the absolute other; with Welby or Bakhtin, the potential for engendering significance, this too according to the logic of otherness; with Peirce «the impulse projecting creations into independency and drawing them into harmony» (CP 6.288). The most advanced developments in reason and knowledge are achieved through the creative power of reasonableness and are moved by the forces of agapasm. In Peirce's conception of evolution, which he develops with reference to St. John's Gospel and to the theosophy of Emanuel Swedenborg, reason warmed by love becomes reasonableness, while the hateful becomes lovely:

Everybody can see that the statement of St. John is the formula of an evolutionary philosophy, which teaches that growth comes only from love, from I will not say self-sacrifice, but from the ardent impulse to fulfil another's highest impulse. Suppose, for example, that I have an idea that interests me. It is my creation. It is my creature; for as shown in last July's Monist, it is a little person. I love it; and I will sink myself in perfecting it. It is not dealing out cold justice to the circle of my ideas that I can make them grow, but by cherishing and tending them as I would the flowers in my garden. The philosophy we draw from John's gospel is that this is the way mind develops; and as for the cosmos, only so far as it yet is mind, and so has life, is it capable of further evolution. Love, recognizing germs of loveliness in the hateful, gradually warms it into life, and makes it lovely. That is the sort of evolution which every careful student of my essay «The Law of Mind» must see that synechism calls for. (CP 6.289)

[Rz 45] Thus conceived reasonableness is endowed with the power of transforming one's horror of the stranger, the alien, one's fear of the other (understood as the fear one experiences of the other foreign to myself) into sympathy for the other become lovely. Developing Peirce's discourse in the direction of Levinas's philosophy of otherness and subjectivity, we may add that love transforms fear of the other, in the sense of the fear that the other provokes in me, into fear for the other. Love has the power to transform fear of the other (whether the subject's fear or the object's fear) into fear for the other, for the other's well-being. Fear for the other implies conscious awareness of one's responsibility for the other (thereby developing a bad conscience in the place of a good conscience, a pacified conscience), to the point of taking responsibility for the other, of taking the blame for all the wrongs the other is subjected to, for what the other suffers, for the other's sorrows. Love, reasonableness, creativity and responsibility are grounded in the logic of otherness and dialogism, and together move the evolutionary dynamics of the self and human consciousness.

[Rz 46] Such implications in Peirce's theory enable us to associate the general orientation of his research to Welby's own significant perspective where too logic, reason and knowledge are oriented by the logic of otherness. Thus endowed knowledge opens to the ethic-pragmatic dimension of existence transcending limits of the gnoseological as expressed, for example, in the tendency to stick obstinately to fixed theoretical positions, practices or habits accepted uncritically. The concept of reason fired by love calls to mind the association Welby herself established between love and logic when, for example, in a letter to Peirce of December 22nd, 1903, she wrote:

May I say in conclusion that I see strongly how much we have lost and are losing by the barrier which we set up between emotion and intellect, between feeling and reasoning. Distinction must of course remain. I am the last person to wish this blurred. But I should like to put it thus: The difference e.g. between our highest standards of love and the animal's is that they imply knowledge in logical order. We know that, what, how and above all, why we love. Thus the logic is bound up in that very feeling which we contrast with it. But while in our eyes logic is merely «formal», merely structural, merely question of argument, «cold and hard», we need a word which shall express the combination of «logic and love». And this I have tried to supply in «significs». (Welby/Peirce, December 22nd, 1903, in Hardwick 1977: 15)

[Rz 47] In a series of unpublished manuscripts written at the beginning of the twentieth century, Welby proposed the original concept of *mother-sense*, subsequently replaced by the term *primal sense* and its variant *primary sense* (Box 28, Subject File 24). This concept plays a central role in the development of the self as much as in her analysis of the production/interpretation of signifying processes and of the construction/interpretation of worlds and worldviews. Welby distinguished between «sense» and therefore «mother-sense», on the one hand, and «intellect» and therefore «father-reason», on the other. And with this distinction it was her intention to indicate the general difference between two main modes – that in fact cut across sexual difference – in the generation/interpretation of sense. Mother-sense and father-reason are always hypothetically isolatable at the level of theory, but they are strictly interrelated in praxis, that is, in sense producing processes (where «sense» is understood in a broad sense to include «meaning» and «significance»).

[Rz 48] Mother-sense is the generating source of sense and of the capacity for criticism, says Welby; it is subtended by the logic of otherness and as such corresponds to the capacity for the acquisition of knowledge in a broad and creative sense, that is, through sentiment, perception, intuition, and cognitive leaps; with reference to Peirce, we could say that knowledge thus described is the idea intuited before it is possessed or before it possesses us. As the capacity for knowledge, which we may also understand in the Peircean sense of *agapic or sympathetic comprehension and recognition*, or in the Bakhtinian sense of *answering comprehension*, mother-sense belongs to the human race in its totality, «an inheritance common to humanity», as Welby says (in Petrilli 2009), without limitations in terms of sexual gender. Mother-sense is not exclusive to the female as much as on a socio-historical level mostly women emerge as its main guardian and disseminator. By contrast, intellect as understood by Welby is knowledge largely oriented by the logic of identity or, more specifically, by identity where in the balance with alterity the former dominates. The intellect intended as rational knowledge alludes to the processes of asserting, generalizing and reasoning about data as they are observed and experimented in science and logic. Its limit lies in the tendency to succumb to the tyranny of the data we wish to possess but which, on the contrary, end up possessing us. Welby claims that the reign of knowledge covered by the intellect is fundamentally entrusted to the jurisdiction of the male. This is so mainly because of socio-cultural reasons and certainly not because of a special natural propensity for rational reasoning exclusive to the male. However, the intellect derives from mother-sense and must remain connected to it if we are to avoid homogenization and levelling onto identity and safeguard the intellect's broad capacity for sense or significance.

[Rz 49] On the basis of these considerations, we may distinguish, with Bakhtin (1920-23), two senses of responsibility: «limited responsibility», as delineated in relation to individual and collective identity and to reproduction of the dominant order of discourse; and «unlimited respon-

sibility», as delineated in relation to the structural alterity of the individual. In the latter case, to answer for self is at once to answer to the other and for the other.

[Rz 50] Responsibility understood as «answering to» and «answering for» the other is responsibility that transcends the boundaries of identity, responsibility without alibis, and in this sense is unlimited responsibility.

[Rz 51] Bakhtin insists particularly on the inevitability of being involved with the other. His reference is to the concrete other and not just to an abstract other self, theoretically conceived as abstract gnoseological consciousness. The other is implied in the condition of participative involvement and answerability in the world from the perspective of one's place in its uniqueness: to be answerable and participative is also apprehension for the other, for that other who compels me to answerability; answerability of the deed is above all answerability for the other. And my uniqueness consists in the impossibility for me to abdicate such answerability. As a uniquely responsible self I cannot be replaced or substituted, to the point of abnegation, of self-sacrifice which my «answerable centrality» alone makes possible, thereby becoming «sacrificed centrality». The limited responsibility of identity, i.e., responsibility with alibis, Bakhtin calls «special answerability». Instead, answerability without alibis, i.e. responsibility/responsivity pertaining to the unique single individual and its alterity, he calls «moral answerability». To unite these two types of answerability – i.e. for unity between answering for self and answering to and for the other – special answerability must be brought into communion with unique moral answerability, as one of its constitutive components. This is the only pathway, as Bakhtin indicates, to surmounting the pernicious non-fusion and non-interpenetration of culture and life.

[Rz 52] Therefore, on the one hand, we have «special answerability» relative to a given domain of culture (confession, law, profession, political ideology, etc.), a given content, a given role and function. This is delimited, defined, circumscribed answerability referred to identity in its repeatability, to repeatable identity of the objective and interchangeable individual. On the other hand, we have «moral answerability», «absolute answerability», answerability without limits, without alibis, which alone accounts for individual action unique; this is answerability pertaining to the single individual, that cannot be abdicated.

[Rz 53] The connection between these two kinds of answerability corresponds to that between objective, repetitive, identical meaning – conferred by the domain of culture where action is objectified, and the unrepeatable self-determination of being understood as a unique and unitary event, as activity in its detotalized globality and complexity, neither decomposable nor classifiable.

[Rz 54] In the present day and age the fundamental limit in the dominant order of discourse characteristic of the global communication world in its current phase of development – i.e. the capitalist system where communication is entirely functional to the reproduction and world-wide expansion of that system – is the widespread promotion of responsibility understood reductively in terms of *technical responsibility*. Consequently, the world of global communication is the world of communication for production, profit, and re-production – with all the necessary means available, including war – of this same socio-economic system of production. This world has a destructive character («the destructive character», as described by Augusto Ponzio in his intervention above, is an expression introduced by Walter Benjamin in 1931 to describe the capitalist socio-economic system at the dawn of Nazism). This destructive character is manifest today, more than ever before, in such world-wide and pervasive phenomena as the destruction of the environment, the increase in poverty, structural unemployment, exploitation of the South of the World by

the North, and in the expanded reproduction cycle for the sake of the communication-production of war, as expressed in the new social plan for «*infinite war*» or «*preventive war*» (Ponzio 2009).

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Susan Petrilli is Associate Professor of Philosophy and Theory of Languages, University of Bari Aldo Moro where she teaches Semiotics and Semiotics of Translation; fields of research: general sign theory, philosophy of language, translation studies, subjectivity studies, and psychoanalysis; recent books include: *Signifying and Understanding*, Mouton, 2009; *Sign Crossroads*, Transaction, 2010; *Altrove e altrimenti. Con Bachtin*, Mimesis, 2012; *The Self as a Sign, the World and the Other*, Transaction, 2013. In 2008 she was nominated 7th Sebeok Fellow. Augusto Ponzio is Full Professor of Philosophy and Theory of Languages, University of Bari Aldo Moro where he teaches

Philosophy of Language and General Linguistics; fields of research: philosophy of language, semiotics, general linguistics, anthropology, and ideology; recent publications include: *L'écoute de l'autre*, L'Harmattan, 2009; *Emmanuel Levinas, Globalisation, and Preventive Peace*, Legas, 2009; *Encontros de palavras. O outro no discurso*, Pedro e João Editores, 2010; *Dialogo sui dialoghi*, con Massimo Bonfantini, Edizioni Scientifiche Italiane, 2010; *La filosofia del linguaggio*, Giuseppe, Laterza, 2011; *Linguística Chomskyana e ideologia social*, Curitiba Editora, 2012.