Recherches sémiotiques
Semiotic Inquiry

RS·SI

Iconoscopy Between Phaneroscopy and Semeiotic

André De Tienne

Volume 33, numéro 1-2-3, 2013

Peirce et l'image
Peirce and the Image

URI : https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/1035282ar
DOI : https://doi.org/10.7202/1035282ar

Aller au sommaire du numéro

Éditeur(s)

Association canadienne de sémiotique / Canadian Semiotic Association

ISSN

0229-8651 (imprimé)
1923-9920 (numérique)

Découvrir la revue

Citer cet article

De Tienne, A. (2013). Iconoscopy Between Phaneroscopy and Semeiotic. *Recherches sémiotiques / Semiotic Inquiry*, *33*(1-2-3), 19–37. https://doi.org/10.7202/1035282ar

Résumé de l'article

La phanéroscopie et la sémiotique étudient deux entités aux modes d'être distincts : le phanéron et le signe. Chacun forme un continu, l'un d'intention première, l'autre d'intention seconde, ce dernier reposant au sein du premier. Peirce chercha à résoudre la question du passage de l'un à l'autre depuis la publication en 1867 du texte fondateur entre autres de la sémiotique, "Sur une nouvelle liste des catégories". Les écrits de la maturité révèlent le rôle important joué par la notion d'image dans cette transition. Peirce développe en effet une conception pragmatique de l'image qui fait de celle-ci l'ingrédient fondamental de l'expérience concrète des signes. Une image en ce sens n'est pas un dessin ou une représentation picturale, mais en premier lieu un concept à la fois phanéral et logique dont la base mathématique permet de rendre compte du phénomène psychologique. L'image est à la jonction du percept (élément phanéral) et du jugement perceptuel (l'espèce la plus élémentaire d'événement sémiotique) par l'intermédiaire du percipuum, et c'est en pratiquant une activité spéciale appelée iconoscopie qu'on peut l'observer le plus adéquatement. Notre article présente ces propriétés de l'image qui lui permettent de gouverner la transition entre phanéron et signe, et éclaircit en quel sens Peirce pouvait affirmer que les images "instiguent au jugement".

Iconoscopy Between Phaneroscopy and Semeiotic

André De Tienne
Indiana University–Purdue University Indianapolis

The first part of this article[1] lays out an essential premise to the argument developed in the second part, a premise that sums up a significant portion of the research I have been conducting for a long time on the connection between Peirce's phaneroscopy and his semeiotic. The second part, building on the results of the first, presents a number of considerations about Peirce's conception of image, especially as regards an essential semi-phaneroscopic, semi-semiotic activity that may be dubbed 'iconoscopy'.

1. Premise : Transitioning From the Phaneron to the Sign Through Perception

Understanding the connection between phaneroscopy and semiotics requires an in-depth study of the connection between phaneron and sign (or representation, or semiosis), and specifically, as I have shown elsewhere, an examination of how the continuum of representation emerges from the continuum of the phaneron.[2]

Peirce gave many definitions of the phaneron, and most of them imply that its mode of being is distinctly different from that of sign-representation. The most basic definition of the phaneron is derived from the Greek etymology of the word, which means 'manifest'. The word *phaneron* 'denotes whatever is throughout its entirety open to assured observation' (MS 337 : 4, 5, 7). The manifest is that which is plainly exhibited and fully apparent, a condition that obtains only when subject and object are utterly conflated : within the genuinely lived phaneron, there is no separation between a subject-mind that would be seeing from an object that would be seen; all that there is, is *seeming*,

sheer appearance, and nothing more. This is the same as saying that wherever a phaneron emerges, there one will find, as the other side of an edgeless coin, a kind of observation that contributes directly to its manifestation, and Peirce called it 'direct awareness' (as opposed to indirect consciousness). To be directly aware of the phaneron, he says, is to be 'aware not merely before a Sign of it, or Substitute for it', but to be 'put *facie ad faciem* before the very Phaneron itself' (MS 645 : 3, 5, 1909). Appearance and mind are conflated, nothing mediates between the two : strictly speaking, there is no sign activity. Direct awareness is a face-to-face encounter, not a semiosic[3] or mediatory one; no distance separates the two faces, as it were, or at the very least it is not one that comes under any notice. We may say that the mode of being of the phaneron is self-presentation, or perhaps more rigorously 'self-presencing', for that is what it means for anything to be 'phaneral' (an adjective of Peirce's own coinage) : it has to be sheer experiencing, a kind of continuous happening in which nothing is detached from anything, and in particular no ego is experiencing itself as a phaneral ego in opposition to a phaneral non-ego. For such contrast implies a kind of distance between two poles that has risen to some level of consciousness, and where a distance becomes felt, something is no longer manifest, no longer merely phaneral, and there arises then a need for mediation and therefore for representation. Phaneral awareness is intuition without consciousness, and the permanent background of all consciousness.

Representation fundamentally differs from phaneral self-presencing in that it consists in a re-presencing of something not immediately available through something else that happens to have some relation to it and to be available, either spontaneously, by accident, or by design. Representation therefore implies that something is not manifest but needs to be manifested through some other means than its own resources. Signs are vested with that mission of mediation and, even though signs themselves are phaneral while they are busy appearing, what makes them special is that, both through and beyond their own appearance, they are trying to manifest and communicate something else (a form), and in doing so they exhibit or instantiate their own particular mode of being, which we may call 'other- or alio-representation', as opposed to phaneral 'self-presencing'.

The key question is how does self-presencing develop into alio-representation : how do we pass from phaneron to sign? This is a problem Peirce began tackling as soon as he was mature enough to philosophize. In "On a New List of Categories", the challenge was to propose a hypothesis explaining how we passed from Substance to Being, that is, what exactly takes place when a copulative proposition gets formulated that unites some predicate or relative term to some subject term where before all that was available was the anonymous unity of an unanalyzed 'substance' whose main virtue was that it offered something that was simply 'present in general'. There is no need here to provide a reminder

of Peirce's ground-breaking solution. What needs to be emphasized is that, when Peirce developed his later classification of the sciences, his mature theory of perception, and his semiotic theory, what he was in part doing was rephrasing the issue partly solved in 1867 in the far broader terms of his categorial theory and metaphysical philosophy of the late 1890s and early 1900s, and that this entailed a clear-cut distinction between phaneroscopy and semiotics, thus between phaneral manifestation and semiosic representation, so that a revised account of the passage from the one to the other became necessary.

At the heart of the matter, especially from the standpoint of this article, lies Peirce's theory of perception. That theory is key because in it we find elements that are both phaneroscopic and semiosic. There is no space here to develop at any serious length Peirce's perception theory, whose sophistication is such that there is no definitive treatment of it yet in the secondary literature, but its key elements are well known. It will be sufficient to recall those few elements that are needed for the sake of the present discussion, and of course one would expect that an examination of Peirce's conception of image requires that we keep in mind not only what he had to say on that subject from a semiotic perspective, but also from the standpoint of perception.

In the first place we must recall that percepts are not discrete sense-impressions but anything that is sensorily apprehended as a single cohesive whole that exhibits itself to the full and without parts. Not being discrete, percepts do not require to be brought to unity in a synthesis, but they present themselves with a natural intrinsic connexity that, as a connexity, escapes notice because it is not subject to control nor to questioning or analysis, but can only be acknowledged irresistibly. Percepts provide no cognitive information whatsoever; they result from a mind's uncontrolled sensory interaction with something seemingly outside of it (although it doesn't know it), and as such they are pure 'seconds' in the categorial sense : they are singular clashes between ego and non-ego. Percepts are neither purely physical nor purely mental events; they are both at the same time, and neither element (physical or psychical) is distinguishable within the percept taken as a whole.

Being pure instances of secondness, percepts of course include elements of firstness, but not of thirdness yet. Sometimes however, Peirce refers to three elements, the third being 'the generalizing or associating element' (CP 8.144). In such contexts Peirce is usually referring to what he calls the *perceptual fact*, and sometimes also the *percipuum* (but one needs to be cautious in such correlations for Peirce's analysis varies; suffice it to say that the percipuum is the percept as interpreted in the perceptual judgment). The perceptual fact is the intellect's 'imperfect report' (CP 2.141), or 'fallible record' (CP 2.143) of the percepts; it is the result of an observation of some duration and of an associative generalization operated on selected aspects of a series of percepts. We

may, for instance, be looking from slightly different angles at a book lying open before us; this act of looking occasions a series of percepts, the superimposition or coalescence of which gives rise to a general perceptual record of the book. The perceptual fact is a 'quasi-inference from percepts' (CP 8.144) that is highly fallible since it can only record a very limited set of features of the percepts, some of which might even be misrecognized for all sorts of circumstantial reasons. Percepts are individual events that happen *hic et nunc* (although not instantaneously), and as soon as one seeks to consider them, they are already gone and can only be recalled incompletely in memory. As a 'memory hardly yet separated from the very percept' (CP 2.146), the perceptual fact is no longer the percept, but already an abstractive representation untrue to the percept.

The perceptual fact introduces a new ingredient, that of thirdness in its most elementary form, and this it shares with the *perceptual judgment* in which it is expressed. The perceptual judgment is that which asserts 'in propositional form what a character of a percept directly present to the mind is' (CP 5.54). In other words, it is the official semiotic recognition of the factuality of the percept. The perceptual judgment's formulation is as compulsory and irresistible as the perceptual occurrence is. But since the judgment reflects the high degree of selectivity of the perceptual fact by covering only a very limited amount of characters of the percepts, it remains at best a hypothesis about such characters. In attributing existence to some feature of the percept, the perceptual judgment operates an abductive inference 'nearly approximating to necessary inference' (CP 4.541). The important point is that for Peirce, perceptual judgments are, on the one hand, the first premisses of all reasoning, and, on the other hand, they constitute the most elementary units of experience as such.

There are indeed two ways of looking at the perceptual judgment : phanerally (as a live experience) and semiotically (as an expressed proposition). A percept alone is not a phaneral ingredient because it lacks thirdness, although it can certainly be said to contribute heavily to the phaneron's coming to presence. Essential to the most rudimentary form of a phaneral ingredient as such is the continuous *coalescence* of percepts, a coalescence which *is* the perceptual seeming and is saturated with thirdness or generality without which the phaneron would be unable to give rise to representations. The generality presenced within the phaneron is generality viewed in its firstness, and it is akin to the generality that characterized the early 'Substance', which Peirce defined as 'what is present *in general*'. That generality is of a kind that accompanies both the continuous coalescing of singular percepts into enduring appearances, and the indeterminacy of the manifest, which, to the extent that it is familiar, remains whole and unexamined. The continuous coalescence of percepts provokes immediately in the mind the emergence, through a 'quasi-inference', of a *generalized image*, the

perceptual fact or percipuum.[4] As such, the perceptual fact is, I suggest (and will develop further down), mostly an iconic *representation* of the perceptual coalescence *presenced* in the mind. Indeed, this is where we find ourselves standing on the border between the phaneral and semiosic worlds. As long as the perceptual coalescence remains unabstracted or unexcised, the phaneral stream keeps flowing undisturbed. But the moment a perceptual coalescence is transformed (coagulated or reenacted) into a perceptual fact, the moment a split occurs and representation takes place. The perceptual fact is a '*self*-representing' iconic sign in the sense that it is not essentially formally different from what is presenced in the coalescence, even though its scope is bound to be more limited. What distinguishes it from the coalescence itself is its separation : the perceptual fact is the perceptual coalescence brought to a stop, excised, and thus alienated, made *other*, and held up above the phaneral stream for further objectification – a process which goes on immediately through the uncontrollable expression of the perceptual judgment. Peirce writes :

> The perceptual judgment professes to represent the percept... But the percept cannot be a premiss, since it is not a proposition; and a statement of the character of the percept would have to rest on the perceptual judgment, instead of this on that. Thus, the perceptual judgment does not represent the percept *logically*. In what intelligible manner, then, does it represent the percept? It cannot be a *copy* of it; for... it does not resemble the percept at all. There remains but one way in which it can represent the percept; namely, as an index, or true symptom... There is no warrant for saying that the perceptual judgment actually is such an index of the percept, other than the *ipse dixit* of the perceptual judgment itself (CP 7.628).

The perceptual coalescence (which we may safely substitute for the percept in the above quotation) is represented iconically in the perceptual fact (or percipuum) and indexically in the perceptual judgment – that judgment being the product of a reaction to the percept. The connection between the phaneral coalescence of percepts and the expression of the perceptual judgment on the iconic ground of the perceptual fact appears to be extremely tight; it is both a physical and a psychical contiguity, as indexicality suggests. Since there is no control at either side of the border, we may say that the semiosic scission that intervenes and commands the selective objectification of portions of the phaneron is not only inescapable, but also demanded by the very categorial structure of the phaneron. Indeed, the manifest cannot stand its own obscurity (obscure, for unpredicated and unexpressed), what is offered in direct awareness requires greater scrutiny, and there thus arises perceptual consciousness.

As a collection of *objectifiable ingredients*, the phaneron is both the seat and the source of many possible reductions to unity, only a few of which ever come to actual emergence. The path followed by this emergence process is the passage that leads from phaneral self-

presentation to semiosic alio-representation. How this passage works must now be examined : I will first present an explanation that relies both on Peirce's category theory and on his perceptual theory before passing to what can properly be called iconoscopy.

The ancient distinction between virtual and actual turns out to be quite useful for our discussion of the passage from phaneron to sign. It has very much to do with Peirce's distinction between phaneroscopy as the science of the 'phaneron in its firstness' and normative science (thus including semiotic) as the science of the 'phaneron in its secondness'.

The phaneron in its firstness is the live phaneron, and the phaneron in its secondness, the 'objectified phaneron', that is, all the parts that have been subjected to abstraction and representation. The passage from the phaneron in its firstness to the phaneron in its secondness is, therefore, akin to the passage from self-presentation to alio-representation. To say that alio-representation is the mode of manifestation of the phaneron in its secondness is to say that the chief characteristic of this mode of manifestation is the introduction of 'otherness' within the phaneron in its firstness. The effect of this introduction is to explode the phaneral conflation by polarizing it : two poles emerge at a distance of each other. That distance, which is a way to express the alienation between the two poles, creates, at a logical level, a separation between what at first is ego and non-ego (in an utterly depsychologized sense), but what much further down the road becomes sign and object. The remarkable feature of that cleavage is that it never severs the two sides completely; on the contrary, it always leaves a *ground* of reference enabling the sign to refer to its object, a ground on which a messenger solicited by the sign can set foot and strengthen or enrich the relation between the two parts. That messenger is another sign, the interpretant. 'Alteration' (or introduction of otherness – perhaps 'alienation' is a better word despite its ambiguity) of the phaneron is thus what occurs when we pass from the phaneron in its firstness to the phaneron in its secondness, and indeed it is that which makes alio-representation possible.

Now, Peirce often characterizes firstness as the category of possibility or potentiality, and secondness as the category of brute fact or actuality. The passage from self-presentation to alio-representation can therefore be described in the terms of actualization of a possibility. The metaphor of a swimmer holding an ingredient up above the surface of the stream that keeps carrying him is useful to convey the idea that representation takes place not apart from the phaneron, but 'con-current-ly' to it. No mind can ever escape the phaneron, which means that all representation processes are part of it 'in their firstness', that is, in their manifestness or presence in general. The actualization of an ingredient, or the alteration of the phaneron, is therefore itself phaneral : even the introduction of otherness (or secondness) is a process that can be viewed in its firstness.

This being clarified, how does the passage from virtual to actual

come to take place? We may take a hint from Peirce's cosmological account of the passage from virtual to actual through the mediation of generality or thirdness to explain the passage from self-presentation to alio-representation.

As a conglomerate of possible ingredients, the phaneron is, in a sense, chaotic. The potential phaneral parts are 'firsts' awaiting actualization. Let us examine this process in the possible ingredient constituted by a perceptual coalescence. Within the phaneron many potential perceptual coalescences emerge simultaneously, confusedly, and continuously. Only a very few of them will be separated from the confused (chaotic) conglomerate and self-represented or reenacted iconically in the perceptual fact. How does a perceptual coalescence turn into a perceptual fact? Very simply by being selected through attention to some of its formal elements (and thus neglect of others). Iconic reenactment is the process which partitions some selected portion of the phaneron into nameable, or at least somehow semiotically identifiable ingredients. But why does selection occur at all? Why does the self-present become an occasion of alio-representation?

The fact is that the phaneron itself demands that representation take place. Peirce's conception of the logic of the universe provides us with an explanation that supports this idea : the logic of potentiality is that it shall annul itself (CP 6.219). A potentiality that would not call for actualization would not be a real potentiality because its very 'idleness', as Peirce says, would reduce it to naught : potentiality and actualizability may not be exactly synonymous terms, but one implies the other.[5]

To return to the perceptual coalescence, the selection process is an act of excision and expression. What makes it possible is that a potential ingredient, before it is selected and actualized as an ingredient, 'annuls itself' through getting contrasted over against the rest of the conglomerate. Contrast stems from the inter-reaction of qualitative possibilities, an inter-reaction that would remain accidental were the ingredient not excised and expressed, and thereby 'steadied'. The passage from the virtual perceptual coalescence to its objectification in a perceptual fact and judgment, or the process of determination and alteration, appears thus to be the deed of an active semiosic process of perceptual generalization. The perceptual fact, or percipuum, is the result of the excision as expressed in the perceptual judgment. This process isolates some aspect of the phaneron out of the original stream and brings it into the adjacent, 'con-current', stream of signs, endowing it with the steadiness that was lacking in the phaneral flow.

Generalization confers on the objectified ingredient of the phaneron its character of ingredient, a character that would not obtain were the phaneral transience of the coalescence not brought to a stop, and were the latter not held up and steadied above the stream. Steadiness allows for attentive observation and analysis to take place, and from there we

can argue that the continuity of representation (the process of reducing a manifold to unity) finds its origin in the continuity of the phaneron.[6] The alteration of, or introduction of otherness within, the phaneron explodes the object-subject conflation because it establishes a discontinuity between continua : the phaneral continuum sprouts on its own a new continuum, that of representation; we should even say that it sprouts an infinite diversity of such semiosic continua. This is how we pass from the phaneron in its firstness to the phaneron in its secondness, therefore : through the continuous alteration or 'discontinuation' of self-presentation.

This suggests the hypothesis that the passage from phaneron to sign involves a transformation of thirdness : the thirdness of the phaneron develops into the thirdness of representation. The thirdness of the perceptual coalescence develops into the thirdness of the perceptual fact (as an iconic sign) and judgment (as indexical sign, but also as symbolical sign).[7] The 'development' of phaneral thirdness into semiosic thirdness results from the adjunction of *mediation* to its 'attributes', which already included generality and continuity. Mediation indeed arises only when some type of alteration has taken place. No such alteration mars the happy (but ignorant) flow of phaneral awareness; it is only when the latter turns onto itself that something like consciousness develops, and with it, a separation between ego and non-ego that institutes the need for triadic mediatory relations.

2. Iconoscopy

The time has come to discuss the special kind of activity a most appropriate name for which is arguably 'iconoscopy'.[8] May Peirce scholars be reassured, especially those that may think themselves the orthodox guardians of the doctrine. This somewhat new word is not intended to point out a flaw in Peirce's classification of the sciences by demonstrating that we need to add one more science between phaneroscopy and the normative sciences, especially semeiotic. Indeed there is no need to do so. The real intention is to show that, precisely because of the nature of the connection between phaneroscopy and semeiotic, and especially of the transition between phaneron and sign, one needs to surmise that there exists a type of activity that is common to both, that that activity must have to do, as already suggested, with icons and iconic signs, and that a good name for that transitional activity is iconoscopy, that is, the activity of selecting portions of the phaneron for the sake of reducing them to representational unity. Iconoscopy is not a new type of activity; it is one in which most things endowed with a sensory apparatus are engaged all the time, perhaps without being fully aware of it for the classical reason that what is obvious usually escapes inquiry. Iconoscopy is not a science, and should therefore not been confused for instance with iconology. Being transitional, iconoscopy goes on both in phaneroscopy[9] and in semeiotic, and perhaps it would be good, as far

as the latter is concerned, to coin another name, 'semioscopy', to refer to the *general* activity of detecting and describing signs.

Remembering that the suffix -scopy comes from the Greek *skopein*, meaning 'to observe from a distance, from an elevated point', iconoscopy introduces the idea that there is something that needs to be observed from a distance, and that that something is an icon, or, to use a Latin instead of Greek word, an image. Mindful of the fact that the original occasion for this article was a colloquium about 'Peirce and image' and not about 'Peirce and icon', I will be using the word 'image' more regularly in what follows, without trying to ignore too blatantly the fact that 'image' and 'icon' are not, at least in Peirce's subtle thought, synonymous terms. Exactly how not synonymous is the object of an interesting study that this paper shall not undertake. The fact is that Peirce often uses the word 'image' in many different contexts, from the mathematical to the psychological through the logical, and that not all of his uses refer to the same thing. But the stronger reason that favors using the word 'image' at this juncture rather than the word 'icon' is precisely that Peirce gave the word 'icon' a technical definition that removes it from the field of phaneral experience to the benefit of semeiotic, while he frequently uses the word 'image' in order to insist on the experiential dimension that accompanies icons, whether it be phenomenological or psychological. Since the passing from phaneral self-presencing to semiosic representation is in the first place a matter of perceptual experience before it becomes a matter of philosophical analysis, the word 'image' in this context appears indeed to be unobjectionable.

Our incursion into Peirce's theory of perception has brought us to the point where we understand that, at the juncture between the phaneral and the representational, lies a moving territory that may well be where the activity of 'imaging' dwells. This is indeed something that is suggested by the hypothesis made earlier that the percipuum represents the perceptual coalescence iconically. For it ensues that a percipuum is essentially an image. An image of what nature is what we need to find out, and we shall do so through a roundabout way.

In the first place, it is important to keep in mind the pragmatic stance that Peirce began developing about perception already in 1868 (*cf.* CP 5.305). No matter the sensory guise in which perception takes place, we need to realize that to perceive is to put oneself in a particular condition or mode of being that enables us to acquire an indefinitely large amount of knowledge of the perceivable qualities that may be ascribed to elements of experience. When one sees or hears something, what matters is not that we are perceiving this or that particular individual sight or sound, but rather that we are entering a manifold of possibilities each of which may yield indefinite experiential consequences. No object of seeing is indeed ever fully determinate, if only because we are unable to become conscious at once of an infinite amount of discrete details, and it would

be a phaneroscopic mistake to reduce seeing to the apprehension of some particular image or picture as though it happened to be a slice taken away from the stream of appearance. Seeing, or more generally sensing, is in the first place being phanerally aware, not of something, not of anything, but just being aware, without any 'of', that manifestation is taking place. Phanerally speaking, sensing is an intransitive verb : it has no object apart.

Peirce's first lesson, learned and taught in 1868, is that there are no images. This is put a little bluntly, and may sound inconsiderate given the consensus that 'Peirce and images' is a worthy topic of discussion. But the thing is, there are no images, none to be imagined, none even to be seen. And Peirce no doubt is right, at least as long as we adopt the modern conception that an image is a perfectly singular representation. Peirce tells us that it is actually impossible to conceive of any representation as being absolutely singular. One could easily object to this by pulling out of one's wallet the photograph of a loved one or by pointing to a painting on a wall, and arguing that here is a material artifact, utterly determinate and singular, right in front of our eyes, that that is what is commonly called an image, and that, unless we are blind or inveterate liars, we ought sincerely to acknowledge that we are seeing it. Some other good but not helpful soul might remark that there is no need to limit the usage of the word 'image' to such artificial products, since to look at a photograph does not entail a physiological activity in any way distinct from looking at flowers on the balcony, at a natural landscape, at a stranger's smiling face, or at the night's starry sky. The moment we open our eyes in any situation we are looking at something singular and taking it in its manifold minute details, no matter what it is that we are looking at, and that what gets formed instantaneously in our mind is the corresponding image. Even more, the moment we merely imagine anything, like a horse jumping over a log, we are forming a vivid image all of whose singular details we are fully in control of. But Peirce refutes this : neither in actual sensing nor, quite obviously, in imagination do we ever perceive anything absolutely singular; we are not even physiologically equipped to see the smallest details, and what is worse, the moment we avert our eyes we completely lose sight of the image that was supposedly present a moment before; fully determinate images don't even persist in our memory. Thus for the concept of image to retain any usefulness, we must first recognize that no naïve or precipitate theory will do unless we really want to spend the rest of our lives framing unsatisfactory ad-hoc rescuing explanations. No photograph, however high its resolution, no painting, however controlled its execution, is usefully defined as a singular representation, even if it is unique and unduplicable. But especially important is the fact that the conception of image cannot be merely understood if it is confined to only one side of a coin. An image is not merely an external artifact, but is rather the experience it is capable of providing, whether by design or

not. We cannot pragmatically separate images from their experiencing, potential or actual. Hence it is more fruitful to consider any image as a potential experience, even when it is being actually experienced since no actual experience can exhaust the available potential.

One important feature of an image understood as a dynamic source of potential experience is that the experience it may offer is one that it is itself soliciting, even while it is not being perceived. Images are what they are to the extent that they are fulfilling a function, and that function is principally to offer forms and invite to their contemplation and expansion. From the Peircean dictum that everything is representable follows the dictum that every form, whether visual or not, is imageable. This does not necessarily mean that every form is echoed through some visual schema in our imagination, but that every form somehow gets to be experienced or echoed, in however vague or skeletonized an appearance, in perception. Whatever is not imageable is unperceivable. To say this does not imply that we are limited to forms that can be grasped directly through our senses. On the contrary, there are many forms that are perfectly imageable even though they cannot be sensed directly but only through technical devices whose function it is to translate the unperceived into the perceived by providing an echo of it within the wavelength range we are sensitive to. Even non-sensory forms are imageable. Let's consider Peirce's example of the memory of a conversation he had with some person he needed to influence (CP 1.594). Before meeting with that person, Peirce urged himself to make sure that his entire conduct throughout the anticipated conversation ought to adopt a certain tone and manner so calibrated as to convey the kind of impression most likely to bring the interlocutor into acquiescence. This was a preparation of conduct, a determination to behave in a certain way that had to permeate the entire encounter regardless of how it might unpredictably evolve, and regardless of whether Peirce would remain consciously aware of his resolution in the heat of conversation. Now, the time of the meeting arrived, Peirce had his conversation, but the interlocutor reserved his final answer. After taking his leave, Peirce wondered whether the meeting went well, and in particular whether he had been able to conduct himself throughout according to his predetermined resolution, the 'mental formula' he had urged himself to apply. To answer that question, Peirce must perform an iconoscopy. He must on the one hand remember the conversation, how it took place, what was said, how it was said, in what order, and with what kind of composure especially on his part. That memory, Peirce says, can be 'roughly described as an image' (CP 1.596). Contemplating that image, Peirce must then examine whether it satisfies the stipulation of his earlier resolution. To do that he needs to pay attention to different segments of that general image and see whether each conveys a form that adheres to the form spelled out by the 'mental formula' assigned to his future conduct. A formula is an iconic rheme constituted of

any number of predicates (of different adicities), some of which may themselves be embedded in higher-order predicates (determining for instance the sequence of their fulfillment), and all of which are attached to more or less definite variables. Peirce's memory of the conduct of the conversation provides a whole set of predicates and contents (terms) for their attached variables. The iconoscopy he needs to perform consists in correlating the image of that memory with the general image of the mental formula and in perceiving whether any satisfactory mapping can be performed that shows successful bijection or surjection between one image and the other in all those segments of the first image that were especially crucial in regard to achieving the desired objective (the latter being yet another image 'in the back of the mind'). This exercise in correlation and mapping is an activity of comparison that is central to the contemplation of an image. For an image cannot be conceived alone; it always solicits other images for comparison, given that an important property of images is their capacity to correspond to something else, and even to be substituted for something else to the extent of their formal correspondence.

Peirce was well aware of the mapping function of images. After all he contributed a historically important entry to Baldwin's *Dictionary of Philosophy and Psychology* on this subject (1901 : 518-19), that entry being precisely named 'Imaging', a translation Peirce proposed for the German *Abbildung*, a word used by Gauss for map-projection.[10] In that entry Peirce explains that one can regard 'any mathematical function of one variable as an image of its variable according to some mode of imaging', – thus if y is the result of applying a function f to variable x, then y is made an image of x through the imaging function of f. Dedekind extended this conception to discrete systems : any system will be an image of another if every one of its elements can be replaced by (or imaged by) a corresponding element of the other system, while noting that no thought is possible without the mental power to compare a thing with another or to establish a correspondence between one thing and another. Schröder broadened the definition to the logic of relatives by noting that 'any relative whatever may be considered as an imaging'. At the end of the article Peirce suggests that one could narrow down the use of 'imaging' to what is called today a bijective mapping, or a one-to-one correspondence between two sets in either direction. What here matters is that the most elementary conception of imaging, as is found in mathematics, implies that it promotes the possibility of correspondence and substitution between a given state of things and another related to it through some operation of transformation. When Peirce performs the iconoscopy of his conversation, he must see whether he had successfully applied the imaging function represented by the mental formula of his predetermined resolution to the actual performance of the meeting so that that performance turned out to be effectively transformed by the partly conscious, partly unconscious application of that formula in

such a way that the outcome was actually different from what it would have been had Peirce not sought to modify his behavior accordingly. He is therefore comparing several icons all at once : that of his resolution, that of the conversation as it took place, and that of the conversation as it might have taken place had the preliminary resolution not been formulated. These images are superimposed over one another so that similarities and differences may stand out and appear especially where one would expect them to appear if the conversation happened to have followed the desired pattern or not.

In iconoscopy, images become active experiences of formal comparisons between blank templates (the formulas) and their embodied realizations or applications. Peirce remarks that as this comparative iconoscopy takes its course, it will automatically bring about a judgment about its outcome, a judgment that will be accompanied with a feeling of satisfaction or dissatisfaction according as the mapping of predicates shows greater or lesser correspondence with the mental formula. Whether that formula represents a particular momentary resolution, or a more general intention, or even an ideal of conduct, doesn't change the nature of the operation : in each case a particular conduct is being mapped or gauged against a general formula, patterns will be matched against antecedent patterns, until a final diagnosis emerges that states whether a particular conduct or activity managed to inscribe itself within the larger set of pattern-compliant conducts. We learn from this that images result from imaging processes according to which certain transformations occur that are traversed by more or less general plans and purposes, such that their comparative experience brings about a judgment assessing the extent to which a resulting image remains or not 'allied to its originating principle', as Peirce says in one place (CP 2.24). The more complex or 'composite' the image, the more likely it is to bring about an informed judgment more complex than a perceptual judgment. The expression of that judgment does not need to take on a linguistic form : it can adopt a diagrammatic or schematic form. Since what it ends up exhibiting is the extent to which the correlation between template and application obtains, and since that exhibition is principally perceptual, the experience of it cannot but be accompanied by its own feeling, of satisfaction or dissatisfaction. There is no preset criterion for it, for that feeling emerges uncontrollably : it arises whether one likes it or not. If the correlation between application and template is strong, and if that strength was itself part of the plan that presided over the selection or even the design of the template or formula, then the judgment that reports about the extent of the correlation will yield a feeling of satisfaction. But since the judgment that so arises is a matter of direct second-intentional experience of the correlation, it itself is not under control either, and its formulation, as experienced, cannot but be accompanied by an embodied firstness, and thus a sense that what was realized *produced* a *sufficient* correlation – hence a *satisfecit*,

a satisfying feeling. The intensity of that feeling will be proportional to the strength of the correlation.

Regarding the power of images to bring about a judgment, Peirce makes the following important remark :

> You saw an image. There was no subject or predicate in it ["it is red" is not something "seen"]. It was just one unseparated image, not resembling a proposition in the smallest particular. It instigated you to your judgment, owing to a possibility of thought; but it never told you so. Now in all imagination and perception there is an operation by which thought springs up; and its only justification is that it subsequently turns out to be useful (CP 1.538).

That images instigate to judgment is a pragmatic cornerstone of Peirce's semiotic and perceptual theory. The manifold brings about its own reduction to unity, as it were. The process is teleological. Some end needs to be achieved, some purpose fulfilled, but the purpose is not itself expressed in any clear terms, for it is essentially indefinite. If thought springs up, Peirce intimates, it is because it does something that has non-idle consequences. It responds to the image, he says, but how can that happen? When we look at something that happens to be red, we do not see it under the propositional form 'it is red'. What we see is an 'unseparated image', that is, we are witnessing a phaneral manifestation, a percipuum that is just emerging from the infinitely broader phaneral stream 'owing to a possibility of thought', thus owing to an embodied firstness that just happens to be prescinded from the flow perhaps thanks to some predisposition or selective habit or predetermined resolution. This percipuum is a generalized percept but not a perceptual judgment; it is rather a nascent semiosic instigator of that judgment, and that judgment, being the immediate interpretation of that nascent sign, can in turn stand for it as a sign of it (*i.e.*, of that sign's mediatory relation to a perceptual coalescence) in order to instigate further interpretants, all of it in the name of the form that needs to be communicated. The percipuum, as an imperfect report of the phaneral perceptual coalescence, is a complex rhematic iconic sign (a blend not only of qualisigns, but also of rhematic iconic sinsigns and legisigns), and it provides everything that is needed for the judgment to get expressed, including the urge for it because that urge is already within the form that it conveys. In other words, the percipuum is the pivotal experiential element that allows something to emerge from the phaneron and get communicated to the semiosic continuum. It acts as the gate between the realm of manifestation and that of representation. One remembers the first part of Peirce's famous maxim, 'The elements of every concept enter into logical thought at the gate of perception and make their exit at the gate of purposive action' (EP 2 : 241). It is the first of these two gates that our discussion has been chiefly concerned with.

When Peirce, in the late writings, defines signs as mediums for the communication of a form, we must notice that the form at stake is of a

special nature. It is never a singular thing, but, as he puts it, the 'truth of a conditional proposition', a proposition whose own form can be expressed as 'under certain circumstances, something would be true' (MS 793; published in EP2 : 544n.22).[11] A form is thus the promise of a would-be, and a promise wouldn't be a promise if it could not be fulfilled. Perception ushers forms from the phaneron into logical thought; signs convey these forms through their own continuum of interpretance, until some transformation is achieved, some action accomplished, and especially some new habit settled. At the gate of purposive action, forms have been squeezed of their available potential, their promise has been embodied and thus fulfilled, and they return to the phaneral manifold they had actually never literally left, until their urge is felt again.

I will not explore Peirce's elaborate semiotic explanation of how icons and indices get bound together to form symbols. It is one of Peirce's principal contributions to have shown how judgments, whether dicent legisigns, or sinsign replicas of the latter, manage to combine iconic rhemes with indexical rhemes in order to express propositions and actually reduce the phaneral unity to the unity of a representation. Experientially speaking, however, Peirce thought that logic could not provide an account of how a symbol gets to interpret an image, for this is a step of thought that is subconscious, uncontrollable, and uncriticizable. But it was always clear to Peirce that if any proposition could be claimed to be true, it had to be the case that an image in it got somehow connected with a symbol (CP 4.479). Images in that sense offer an essential, if partial, connection to truth itself. They mediate between the untold and the told, and their mediation brings in the very possibility of inferences, from the most unsure to the most secure. Their power of evocation is part and parcel of the kind of reality they are. Images exert a deep influence because they are themselves the product of an even deeper and constantly flowing phaneral influence. Images anchor possibilities and suggest how they can get embodied. Images offer immense flexibility; they welcome additions and subtractions, they let themselves be manipulated and experimented upon, they will let themselves be stripped of every garment so as to display forms as pure and skeletal as one wishes, all to the benefit of revealing the unperceived secrets of the deeper structure forming the warp and woof of experienceable reality. Especially, images are purposes at work, purposes seeking expression and fulfillment, and it behooves us, image-forming and image-interpreting minds, to remain aware that whenever we contemplate an image, we are being formed and transformed, constantly, continuously, and if we realize that we are ourselves forms in development, we must constantly make sure that we don't commit formal mistakes, wrong substitutions, mistaken correspondences, rushes to judgments. For that we need to perform regularly an iconoscopy of our actions, detect the forms under whose influence we fell, and assess whether the judgment that is bound to arise from that iconic examination is accompanied with a feeling of

satisfaction or dissatisfaction.

It was in the early 1900s that Peirce became convinced that logic rested on ethics, and ethics on esthetics. The discussion above implies indeed the suggestion that ethics has an esthetic foundation. The feeling of satisfaction, or of shame in case of a negative or weak correlation between an image of experience and the formula-image that served at its intended model, arises without calculation or deliberation. It directly accompanies the perception (which is not exactly sensorial, but diagrammatic) of the correlation or lack thereof between the realization of a given course of action and the plan or project that originated it. That project is of a far more general nature and comes itself with a particular esthetic quality that is capable of exerting intense attraction, especially if it brings in the belief that the project is 'admirable'. For Peirce, what is admirable is that which, due to its intrinsic excellence, arouses an integrally positive emotion that wins over the deliberate adhesion as much to the strength of that emotion as to the project's intention, and that adhesion translates into the real effort to do everything in one's power to realize it as far as one can. The realization itself is a semiosic process of replication and interpretation of the general plan into the possibilities of actual circumstances. Successful realization allows the admirable form of the plan to propagate itself into its embodied form, and the experience of that propagated form yields the feeling of satisfaction, whose intensity is proportional to the extent of the correlation. How that is determined is the business of iconoscopy. Only by performing it shall we get a glimpse of whether we are fulfilling our purpose, or not.

Notes

1. This paper has much benefited from comments received from Vincent Colapietro, Nicole Everaert-Desmedt, and Sharon Morris.
2. Much of that research was condensed into my paper 'Quand l'apparence (se) fait signe : la genèse de la représentation chez Peirce' (2000).
3. I use the adjective 'semiosic' to refer to the sign process Peirce called semiosis, and the adjective 'semiotic' to refer to the science of semeiotic or semiotics either as such, or as the standpoint from which a characterization is made.
4. An appropriate quotation in this regard is the following : "I recognize that there is a percept or flow of percepts very different from anything I can describe or think. What precisely that is I cannot even tell myself. It would be gone, long before I could tell myself many items; and those items would be quite unlike the percepts themselves [...]. I am forced to content myself not with the fleeting percepts, but with the crude and possibly erroneous thoughts, or self-informations, of what the percepts were [...]. In place of the percept [...] the only thing I carry away with me is the perceptual facts or the intellect's description of the evidence of the senses, made by my endeavor" (CP 2.141). The use of the word *self-information* is significant in that it seems to support our viewing the perceptual fact as a 'self-representing' sign of the coalescence (or 'flow') of the percepts.
5. This entails that the potential is essentially teleological, and is that in which all evolutionary processes are rooted. Continuity and generality are rooted in potentiality, *i.e.* in firstness.

6. The generalizing tendency that actualizes (or alters, or objectifies) the possible phaneral ingredients holds its continuity from the phaneral background. To get across this idea, Peirce uses the image of the blackboard and the chalk line (*cf.* CP 6.203). The blackboard is a continuum of possible points, like the phaneron is a continuum of possible ingredients. If we draw a white chalk line on the board, what appears is a sudden discontinuity within the potential. 'This discontinuity is one of those brute acts by which alone the original vagueness could have made a step towards definiteness' (*ibid.*). Alteration has occurred, a possible ingredient has been actualized. What does the discontinuity consist in? It is not the line which is discontinuous; quite on the contrary, the line is continuous, and gets its continuity from the original blackboard continuum. And the blackboard continuum has not been interrupted by the line, for it supports the line. The discontinuity stems from the fact that the two continua are inter(re) acting : 'the boundary between the black and white is neither black, nor white, nor neither, nor both. It is the pairedness of the two. It is for the white the active Secondness of the black; for the black the active Secondness of the white' (*ibid.*). The actualized ingredient of the phaneron is in active secondness with the rest of the virtual phaneron, and vice versa. Self-presentation is continuous, and alio-representation is continuous, too; the representational continuum gets its continuity from the phaneral stream, like the chalk line gets its own from the blackboard. Neither self-presentation nor alio-representation are discontinuous in themselves, nor even the passage from the first to the second continuum is. What is discontinuous is the effect created by alio-representation (or alteration) within the phaneron. As a matter of fact, the delimitation and selection of an ingredient within the phaneron (or actualization of a possible part), while it is itself a continuous process, establishes a discontinuity within the phaneron insofar as it puts two continua in inter(re)action with each other. On the one hand, we have what has not been selected but left outside the representational determination, and this is the rest of the phaneron, what has been abandoned in the cognitional obscurity of the manifest; on the other hand, we have the selected ingredient, abstracted, and thus made 'other'. Either side is 'the active secondness' of the other.
7. In the same way as the determination of the universe grows through generalization, so does the determination (or 'coagulation') of the perceptual coalescence into a perceptual fact come from generalization, that is, from the transmutation of the thirdness of a coalescence (a coalescence is a growing together of percepts through its continued experience) into the thirdness of an iconic sign.
8. Iconoscopy is not a word found in the *Oxford English Dictionary*, so that we may infer it was probably never used in reference to the art of using an 'iconoscope', a binocular-parallax–suppressing instrument (invented by E. Javal in 1866) giving a three-dimensional appearance to two-dimensional images, and a flat appearance to three-dimensional objects. In the 1930s, an iconoscope was a television camera tube containing an electron-emitting gun and equipped for rapid scanning of a photoactive mosaic. It was eventually replaced by the vidicon, a device whose name was formed from 'video' and 'iconoscope'. In 1955, *The Modern Language Journal* published an article entitled '"Iconoscopy" in Language Teaching' by Simon Chasen in which iconoscopy was the name high school teacher Chasen chose to call his method of teaching a foreign language by showing pictures and photographs to the pupils and asking them to use the appropriate vocabulary they had just learned to speak about what they saw. In April 1979, a letter signed by K.W. Lavers and A. Levers appeared in the *British Journal of Radiology* that was entitled 'Iconoscopy'.
9. Although phaneroscopy is not a science in the usual sense of the word, or even in Peirce's own sense of it since it does not yield a body of warrantable and

verifiable truths but merely a body of descriptive propositions whose objects are non-truth-committing seemings, there is no doubt that Peirce conceived of it as an activity that was to be conducted through and through in a scientific spirit, both regarding its methods of observation and description (mathematically grounded and diagrammatic), and regarding its strenuous ethics of honest and unbiased reporting to a community of inquirers and fellow observers. Thus, the place occupied by phaneroscopy in the classification of the sciences is fully justified : it is the first of the positive science, in that its object is actually an inquiry into the very nature of positive experience, one that is preliminary to any more particular inquiry into its myriad embodiments in the esthetic, ethical, logical, metaphysical, psychical, and physical realms. See De Tienne (2004).

10. Partly published in CP 3.609–10.
11. MS followed by a number refers to a manuscript listed in Richard S. Robin's *Annotated Catalogue of the Papers of Charles S. Peirce*.

Bibliography

BALDWIN, J. M. (Ed.) (1901) *Dictionary of Philosophy and Psychology*, vol. 1. New York and London : Macmillan.

CHASEN, S. (1955) "'Is Iconoscopy' in Language Teaching". *The Modern Language Journal* (39) : 79–81.

De TIENNE, A. (2000) "Quand l'apparence (se) fait signe : la genèse de la représentation chez Peirce". *RS/SI* (20) : 95–144.

_____ (2004) "Phaneroscopy as a Pre-Semiotic Science Possible". *Semiotiche* (2) 4 : 15-29.

LAVERS, K. W., and LAVERS, A. (1979) "Iconoscopy". *British Journal of Radiology* (52) 616 : 334.

PEIRCE, C. S. (1931-1958) *Collected Papers of Charles Sanders Peirce*. Volumes 1–6. C. Hartshorne and P. Weiss (Eds.), Cambridge, MA. : Harvard University Press, 1931-35; Volumes 7–8. A. Burks (Ed.), Cambridge, MA. : Harvard University Press, 1958.

_____. (1998) *The Essential Peirce : Selected Philosophical Writings. Volume 2 (1893-1913)*. Peirce Edition Project (Ed.), Bloomington and Indianapolis : Indiana University Press.

_____. (1982-2000) *Writings of Charles S. Peirce : A Chronological Edition*. Volumes 1-6 (1857-1890). Peirce Edition Project (Ed.), Bloomington & Indianapolis : Indiana University Press.

ROBIN, R. (1967) *Annotated Catalogue of the Papers of Charles S. Peirce*. The University of Massachusetts Press.

Abstract

Phaneroscopy and semeiotic study two entities with distinct modes of being : the phaneron and the sign. Each consists in a continuum, one of first intention, the other of second intention, the latter lying within the former. Peirce sought to solve the question of the passage from one to the other since the time of his first publication 'Upon a New List of Categories'. The mature writings reveal the important role the notion of image plays in this transition. Peirce indeed develops a pragmatic conception of image that turns the latter into the fundamental ingredient of the concrete experience of signs. An image in this sense is not a drawing or a picture, but at first a logical concept with a mathematical basis that helps explain the psychological phenomenon. The image is at the junction between the percept (phaneral element) and the perceptual judgment (the most elementary kind of semiotic event) through

the percipuum, and it can be observed through a special kind of activity called iconoscopy. I shall present those properties of the image that allow it to govern the transition between phaneron and sign, and clarify in what sense Peirce could assert that images 'instigate to judgment'.

Keywords : Iconoscopy; Image; Peirce; Percipuum; Phaneroscopy; Semeiotic.

Résumé

La phanéroscopie et la sémiotique étudient deux entités aux modes d'être distincts : le phanéron et le signe. Chacun forme un continu, l'un d'intention première, l'autre d'intention seconde, ce dernier reposant au sein du premier. Peirce chercha à résoudre la question du passage de l'un à l'autre depuis la publication en 1867 du texte fondateur entre autres de la sémiotique, "Sur une nouvelle liste des catégories". Les écrits de la maturité révèlent le rôle important joué par la notion d'image dans cette transition. Peirce développe en effet une conception pragmatique de l'image qui fait de celle-ci l'ingrédient fondamental de l'expérience concrète des signes. Une image en ce sens n'est pas un dessin ou une représentation picturale, mais en premier lieu un concept à la fois phanéral et logique dont la base mathématique permet de rendre compte du phénomène psychologique. L'image est à la jonction du percept (élément phanéral) et du jugement perceptuel (l'espèce la plus élémentaire d'événement sémiotique) par l'intermédiaire du percipuum, et c'est en pratiquant une activité spéciale appelée iconoscopie qu'on peut l'observer le plus adéquatement. Notre article présente ces propriétés de l'image qui lui permettent de gouverner la transition entre phanéron et signe, et éclaircit en quel sens Peirce pouvait affirmer que les images "instiguent au jugement".

Mots-clés : *Iconoscopy*; *Image*; Peirce; Percipuum; *Phaneroscopy*; *Semeiotic*.

ANDRÉ DE TIENNE is director and general editor of the Peirce Edition Project at Indiana University, Indianapolis. He has been a collaborating editor to the *Writings of Charles S. Peirce* since 1985 and to volume 2 of *The Essential Peirce*. His philological work on the Peirce manuscripts consists chiefly in identifying and reorganizing Peirce's papers in their integrity. He is the author of a book on the exegesis of Peirce's foundational philosophical essay ("On a New List of Categories") and of several papers that investigate various aspects of Peirce's pragmatism and semiotic theory as well as textual theories. As a philosophy professor, most of his advanced courses pertain to the work of either Peirce or Josiah Royce.