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Author: Barbieri, Marcello
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Abstract: The discovery of the genetic code has shown that the origin of life has also been the origin of semiosis, and the discovery of many other organic codes has indicated that organic semiosis has been the sole form of semiosis present on Earth in the first three thousand million years of evolution. With the origin of animals and the evolution of the brain, however, a new type of semiosis came into existence, a semiosis that is based on interpretation and is commonly referred to as interpretive, or Peircean semiosis. This suggests that there are two distinct types of semiosis in Nature, one based on coding and one based on interpretation, and all the experimental evidence that we have does support this conclusion. Both in principle and in practice, therefore, there is no conflict between organic semiosis and Peircean semiosis, and yet they have been the object of a fierce controversy because it has been claimed that semiosis is always based on interpretation, even at the cellular level. Such a claim has recently been repropounded in a number of papers and it has become necessary therefore to reexamine it in the light of the proposed arguments.
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