

# Intellectual Gravity and Elective Attractions: The Provenance of Peirce's Categories in Friedrich von Schiller

*Atração Intelectual e Afinidades Eletivas: A Proveniência das Categorias Peircianas em Friedrich von Schiller*

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**Abstract:** The paper's methodological prolegomena eschews narrow-gauge nominalistic approaches to Peirce in favor of his own synoptic (synechistic-synergistic) style of constructing his categorial architectonic in dialogue with the major ideas in the history of philosophy. As a "first" case in point, this paper focuses upon the provenance of and convergence with Friedrich von Schiller's *Aesthetic Letters* in Peirce's earliest Tuism and in his remembrance of Schiller in his mature phase. In-depth exegesis reveals that Schiller's classic contains the seeds of Peirce's trichotomic categorization of experience in three confluent strands of his developing system: 1) his phenomenological category of Firstness—corresponding to Schiller's sense of "pure appearance" in the *Spiel-trieb*, as its plays out in Peirce's prioritizing of abductive inference in inquiry and in the tyochastic component of his cosmological metaphysics; 2) Esthetics as the "first" of the Normative Sciences; and, 3) the concept of Pure Play as "Musement" in his 'A Neglected Argument for the Reality of God' (1908) and in 'An Essay toward Improving Our Reasoning in Security and in Uberty' (1913).

**Keywords:** Nominalistic vs. synoptic methodologies. Provenances and convergences. Schiller's *Aesthetic Letters*. *Spiel-trieb*. Peirce's tuism. Architectonic system. Firstness. Abduction. Normativity of esthetics. Musement. Uberty.

**Resumo:** Os prolegômenos metodológicos do artigo afastam abordagens nominalistas estreitas para Peirce em benefício de seu próprio estilo sinóptico (sinequístico-sinergístico) de construção da sua arquitetônica categorial em diálogo com as principais ideias na história da filosofia. Como um "primeiro" caso, este artigo foca sua proveniência quanto à convergência com as Cartas Estéticas de Friedrich von Schiller no Tuismo inicial de Peirce e sua lembrança de Schiller em sua fase madura. Uma exegese aprofundada revela que o clássico de Schiller contém as sementes da categorização tricotômica de Peirce da experiência em três vertentes confluentes de seu sistema de desenvolvimento: 1) sua categoria fenomenológica da Primeiridade – correspondendo ao sentido de "aparência pura" de Schiller no *Spiel-trieb*, como se desenrola na priorização de Peirce da inferência abdutiva na investigação e no componente ticástico da sua metafísica

cosmológica; 2) A estética como a “primeira” das Ciências Normativas; e 3) o conceito de Puro Jogo como “Devaneio” (Musement) em seu ‘Um Argumento Negligenciado para a Realidade de Deus’ (1908) e em ‘Um Ensaio visando nosso Raciocínio sobre Segurança e Uberdade’ (1913).

**Palavras-chave:** Metodologias nominalistas vs. sinópticas. Proveniências e convergências. Cartas Estéticas de Schiller. Spiel-trieb. Tuismo de Peirce. Sistema arquetetônico. Primeiridade. Abdução. Normatividade de estética. Devaneio. Uberdade.

## Methodological Prolegomenon

Trends in the contemporary academy that either *nationalize* or *professionalize* philosophy in narrow-gauge scholastic—hide-bound cultural or technocratic—trajectories are nominalistic.<sup>1</sup> They fall short of Peirce’s theory of inquiry with its emphasis on the inter-national and inter-generational character of heuristic discovery, which he conceived indeed as extending beyond the present geological age. This was crucial for Peirce not only with regard to the mathematical and idioscopic, but also to the coenoscopic, sciences. He practiced this methodology in building the carefully constructed architecture of his own system out of broad historical legacies and contemporary developments in philosophy.<sup>2</sup>

- 1 As an instructive example, see the incisive critique of the nominalistic trajectory of Richard Rorty’s works in Ivo A. Ibri (2013, pp. 181-192); consult the bibliography for further notices of Professor Ibri’s work in this regard. Scholasticisms are often culture-bound, and tend to promote psychologistic and nominalistic turfs. E.g., Rorty’s case privileges the short-sighted, ontologically deflationary perspective of “we liberal ironists.” Nominalism appears in physicalist (Democritus) and mentalistic (Berkeley, Hume) forms, or a combination of both (Hobbes, Locke). The short-sighted agendas of contemporary scholasticism privilege the latter, i.e. consist of material hermeneutics in dyadic semiotic form. Peirce presciently complained of the takeover of the universities by the Dunses, the nominalistic humanists, in his 1905 “Answers to Questions concerning My Belief in God,” (STUHR, 1987, p. 90). From Saussure to Rorty to the extremes of Deconstruction, the nominalist holds that intellectual concepts say nothing about the world; they legislate language as a matter of inter-communicative human structures alone, e.g. as a differential “play” of signifiers without an objective signified. To the contrary, Peirce wrote that “Reality is not independent of Thought in general” (CP 7. 336), such that “we are in Thought, not that thoughts are in us” (5.289n.). His ontological or objective idealism postulates that physical matter itself is a hide-bound form of the world’s semiosis or sign exchange system. Thus “To be a nominalist consist in the undeveloped state of one’s mind of the apprehension of Thirdness as Thirdness. The remedy for it consists in allowing ideas of human life to play a greater part in one’s philosophy” (CP 5.121).
- 2 Kant’s architectural metaphor for system building occurs in the opening pages of Peirce’s ‘A Guess at the Riddle’ (1887-88) and ‘Architecture of Theories’ (1891). Close study of Peirce’s words reveal a precedent in Schelling, who wrote: “The general foundation of it [Kant’s *Critique of Pure Reason*] is the thought: before one wishes to know something, it is necessary to submit our capacity for knowing itself to an examination. Just as a careful builder carefully ponders his resources before he erects a house, to see whether they are sufficient for both the firm foundation and the successful execution of the building, the philosopher must, before thinking of erecting a building of metaphysics, first be sure of

The narrow-gauge partisan methodologies are not likely to do justice either to the full range of Peirce's system or to its first-tier place in the history of philosophy. Peirce philosophized outside of the academic box of his day and never characterized himself as an "American" philosopher. He hewed to Kant in considering philosophical work to have a *secular* or *public* status,<sup>3</sup> while eschewing what he called "one idea'd" systems randomly deploying in some local intellectual ecosystem of natural selection.<sup>4</sup> Yes, he fruitfully interacted with Henry James Sr., William James, Josiah Royce, Paul Carus, John Dewey, and many other philosophical interlocutors in his own day. But in addition he sympathetically engaged the gamut of speculative ideas of the major classical authors—Plato, Aristotle, Epicurus, Duns Scotus, Leibniz, Swedenborg, Kant—while gathering other building materials from leading strains of the British as well as of the post-Kantian German traditions—notably those of Berkeley, Hume, Schiller, Schelling, and Hegel. It remains a huge project to establish the convergences of his architectonic system with the philosophical heritages he parsed to a considerable degree—and, what is more, in that expanded perspective justly to evaluate Peirce's place in the history of philosophy.

In this paper I exercise my *will to learn* from Peirce's own methodology, which I call *synoptic* after Kant (and Aristotle), or *synechistic* after his own appellation of "the keystone of the arch" of his "completely developed system."<sup>5</sup> My focus,

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the materials for it, whether he can obtain them, and, since these materials are drawn from a spiritual source in this case, this source must itself first be examined, in order to be certain whether it really contains or offers sufficient material for the intended building. Before we can hope to have knowledge—particularly of supersensuous objects—we must first examine whether we also have the capacity to know them." (SCHELLING, 1994, p. 98) An earlier occurrence of the architectural metaphor—entirely significant for my purposes here—traces back to Peirce's 'Fraser's *The Works of George Berkeley*' (1871), where Peirce, in setting the stage for the anti-nominalist Duns Scotus in the *Zeitgeist* of his age, writes, "[...] there is nothing in which the scholastic philosophy and the Gothic architecture resemble one another more than in the gradually increasing sense of immensity which impresses the mind of the student as he learns to appreciate the real dimensions and cost of each" (EP1 p. 87).

- 3 BUCHLER, 1955, p. 72: "The universally and justly lauded parallel which Kant draws between a philosophical doctrine and a piece of architecture has excellencies which the beginner in philosophy might easily overlook; and not the least of these is its recognition of the cosmic character of philosophy. I use the word 'cosmic' because *cosmicus* is Kant's own choice; but I must say I think *secular* or *public* would have approached nearer to the expression of his meaning [...]. To the cosmological or secular character of philosophy (to which, as closely connected, Kant with his unflinching discernment joins the circumstance that philosophy is a thing that has to grow by the fission of minute parts and not by accretion) is due to the necessity of planning it out from the beginning." (CP 1.176-78).
- 4 See the same opening paragraph of 'The Architecture of Theories': "[...] those one-idea'd philosophies are exceedingly interesting and instructive, and yet are quite unsound." (BUCHLER, 1955, p. 315; CP 6.7)
- 5 Peirce's 1902 letter to Wm. James, CP vol. 8, ch. 5, 186 ff. "I seem to myself to be the sole depositary at present of the completely developed system, which all hangs together and cannot receive any proper presentation in fragments." Letter to Wm. James, CP 8.255. In several concise sentences Peirce goes on to lay out his "completely developed

necessarily limited here, will fall upon the iconic-qualitative synergistic symmetry of Peirce's categories with Friedrich von Schiller's *Aesthetic Letters*.<sup>6</sup> I will take seriously the judgment of Nathan Houser that Schiller left an "indispensable impression" on Peirce.<sup>7</sup> Peirce declared that Schiller was in fact his "first" philosophical influence; and a force of intellectual gravity brought him back to Schiller as his system peaked in its later phase. In tandem with consciously and unconsciously absorbing Schiller, Peirce reconfigured the systems of Schelling and Hegel, in due course producing his categorical Tritism that he enthusiastically estimated as "one of the births of time."<sup>8</sup>

In taking this indispensable approach we should first take serious cognizance of the fact that Peirce came to declare that his philosophical career sprang from the soil of his initial TUISM. This first manifestation of the developmental teleology of his philosophical genius consisted of a precocious abduction in the form of a categorial classification of the I-, IT-, and THOU-worlds drawn from Friedrich von Schiller which, he acknowledged, planted the seeds of his later system of the THREE CATEGORIES "in disguise."<sup>9</sup>

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system" in miniature, in which, he insists, "the true nature of pragmatism cannot be understood" nominalistically (as in James's version) or without the interconnection of his three categories and three normative sciences. Cf. DILWORTH, 2010, pp. 53-74).

- 6 SCHILLER, 2004. This classic in the philosophy of Aesthetics reformulated principles Schiller laid down in a previous work, *Über Anmut und Würde* (SCHILLER, 1992), which critiqued Kant's way of prioritizing "Dignity" qua Respect for the Pure Moral Law over "Grace" of character, i.e. what Schiller termed "the beauty of virtue of the beautiful soul." The latter, Schiller contended, involves the holistic interplay of natural inclination and freedom. Kant replied in the next year, in the second edition of his *Religion within the Limits of Reason Alone*, 1794, reasserting his own position on the idea of pure moral duty absolutely countervailing natural inclination. In reply, Schiller's *Letters on the Aesthetic Education of Man* of 1795 expanded his concept of *Grace* in terms of the *Spieltrieb*. For his part, Peirce championed Schiller's position across the board via his Three Categories, thus in his general theory of experience and inquiry and in the specialized relation of Esthetics to Ethics (theoretical Ant-ethics) and Logic in the Normative Sciences.
- 7 EP2, 527, fn. 6.
- 8 Peirce came to claim that his Tritism, i.e. trichotomic categoriology, improved upon those of Aristotle Kant, and Hegel. If so, this should indeed be appreciated as one of the philosophical "births of time" as well as providing the basis for the just assessment of his place in the history of philosophy. For a first-rate appreciation of Peirce's categories and semiology, see BRADLEY, 2009, pp. 56-72).
- 9 In his "The Sense of Beauty never furthered the Performance of a single Act of Duty" (MS 12, 1857), the teen-age Peirce, taking the title of his essay *verbatim* out of Schiller's *Letters*, developed the opposing concepts of *Person* (autonomous source of form, pure ideas, laws) and existential *Conditions* (sensuous impulses, manifold contexts, empirical cases), as reconciled by a third *Play-impulse* productive of their harmonious integration; this *Play-Impulse of Beauty* is the condition of a complete humanity, and of perfect freedom. Exactly following Schiller, the young Peirce goes on to say that "Beauty gives the mind no particular direction or tendency, no result for controlling intellect or will"; thus "perform[ing] no single duty," it rather "places the mind in a state of 'infinite determinableness' [...] comparable to refreshing sleep, although sleep is a passive source of refreshment, whereas Beauty is an active one." His sense of aesthetic "refreshment" is conspicuously out of Schiller's text.

Thus based on Peirce's own transparent declaration of his relation to Schiller, I think we can and should observe strong undercurrents of Schiller's provenance at the very heart of Peirce's mature categories: 1) in his phenomenological category of Firstness of qualitative Feeling—corresponding to Schiller's sense of "pure appearance" in the lived experience of the *Spieltrieb*—which resurfaces in Peirce's prioritization of mathematical-theorematic or hypothetical/abductive inference as well as in the tychastic component of his cosmological metaphysics; 2) in his arguably "peak" *legisignificant* determination of Esthetics as the "first" of the three Normative Sciences which plays the role of Quality of Qualities in his semeiotics of the metaboly of symbolization; and, 3) as special application of the above, in his 'Neglected Argument for the Reality of God' (1908) where Peirce features the concept of Pure Play as an instinctive religious ablation in "Musement, which has no rules, except the very law of liberty" (CP 6.458; EP2 436).<sup>10</sup> Capping this "remembrance of

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Contemporaneously in MS 21 of 1857 Peirce penned 'Raphael and Michel Angelo compared as Men,' in which he distinguished

1. The Intellect etc. or that which says I.
2. The Heart " Thou.
3. The Sense " It.

Peirce added: "These three compose the inner nature and include everything."

In tandem with these Schillerian formulations, in MS 20 of the same year of 1857, 'A Scientific Book of Synonyms,' Peirce distinguished the *actual* (which marks what is done in reference to previous acts) and *real* (what simply exists as object of thought, or as an object of contemplation). And again, he distinguished between "An actual fact and a real sentiment," or, in reverse order, "to be" and "to exist." Peirce's distinction here between the *actual* and the *real* internally resonated with his contemporary 'The Sense of Beauty never furthered the Performance for a single Act of Duty.' (W, 1, pp. 10-19) The distinction remained crucial in the development of his mature categories—*real* in differing senses of qualitative possibility (Firstness) and of generality of thought (Thirdness), respectively, and *actual* for existential acts, events, brute facticity. This distinction resurfaces for example in the "three universes" of his 'A Neglected Argument for the Reality of God' of 1908.

More specifically for the purposes of this paper, I would venture to suggest the heuristic of finding the THOU as a germinal seed for Peirce's development of what he called his "agapastic ontology" of "cherishing love" and "sympathy" (CP 6.610, EP1, 353, 364). The THOU concept appears almost literally in his attendant doctrine of interpersonal recognition, as inscribed for example in 'The Law of Mind': "The recognition by one person of another's personality takes place by means to some extent identical with the means by which he is conscious of his own personality. The idea of the second personality, which is as much as to say that second personality itself, enters within the field of direct consciousness of the first person, and is as immediately perceived as his ego, though less strongly. At the same time, the opposition between the two persons is perceived, so that the externality of the second is recognized" (EP1, 332). Another close structural variation occurs in his later semeiotic language of the *commens* (EP2, 478).

- 10 For the relation between Peirce's Esthetic Ideal and his 'A Neglected Argument for the Reality of God,' see the following words inscribed in one of his Letters to William James: "As for humanism, I prefer the word 'anthropomorphism' as expressive of *the scientific opinion* [...] But the God of my theism is not finite. That won't do at all. For to begin with, existence is reaction, and therefore no existent can be *clear supreme* [...]"

the poet,” Peirce—explicitly again—drew on Schiller’s concept of the *Spieltrieb* in one of his last writings, ‘An Essay toward Improving Our Reasoning in Security and in Uberty’ (1913).<sup>11</sup>

Furthermore, based on Peirce’s architectural declaration—within the postulational parameters of his Fallibilism—of having constructed a “completed developed system,” I think we can arrive at the following synoptic reconstruction of its essential (foundational) blueprint. In his later concept of the metaboly of symbolization in which each of the three sign functions—of immediate object, dynamic object, and interpretant—intercirculatingly functions as a first, second, or third—his “first” THOU category was an “uberous” ground-plan concept in the sense of harboring the pregnant potential of the synergistic dovetailing of the twin concepts of the “Thirdness of Firstness” (Reality and Truth in the asymptotic “long run” of “Concrete Reasonableness”) and the “Firstness of Thirdness” (the Final Interpretant of the Ideal of the Admirable, Adorable, Glorious *per se* of “Concrete Reasonableness” in the Normative sciences). In Peirce’s transparent iconology, so to speak, his THOU blossomed into the variescent-concrescent Universe’s Quality of Qualities, or ultimately regulative Predicate of Predicates, in agapistic evolution. Thus

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anthropomorphism for me implies above all that the true Ideal is a living power [...] That is, the esthetic ideal, that which we *all* love and adore, the altogether admirable, has, as *ideal*, necessarily a mode of being to be called living [...] Now the Ideal is not a finite existent. Moreover, the human mind and the human heart have a filiation to God [...] Pluralism, on the other hand, does not satisfy either my head or my heart.” (CP 8.262)

- 11 EP2, 434 ff. and 463 ff. A few months before he died, Peirce wrote he has postponed writing this essay for nearly fifty years; and he is writing about the Instinctive basis of reasoning “for a real person, with all the instincts of which we human beings are so sublimely and so responsibly endowed.” He goes on to say that the pragmatic maxim—pertaining to outward manifestations in conduct to understand another’s or even our own thoughts—“is, roughly speaking, equivalent to the one that I used in 1871.” This “certainly aids our approximations to [the] *security* of reasoning. But it does not contribute to the *uberty* of reasoning, which far more calls for solicitous care.” [The editors’ footnote (p. 533) cites a contemporary letter in which Peirce refers to *uberty* as a “possible and esperable value in productiveness” as distinct from *security* (“approach to certainty”).] Peirce then points out that History informs us that secure reasonings in any number of fields have remained sterile for millennia, so the issue is how to get beyond preconceived conclusions. There follows the famous sentence: “*Yet the maxim of Pragmatism does not bestow a single smile upon beauty, upon moral virtue, or upon abstract truth;—the three things that alone raise Humanity above Animality.*” [464] In this same vein Peirce speaks of the reason why he chose the unusual word “uberty” instead of “fruitfulness” “merely because it is spelled with half as many letters”: “Observations may be fruitful as you will, but they cannot be said to be gravid with young truth in the sense in which reasonings may be, not because of the nature of the subject it considers, but because of the manner in which it is supported by the ratiocinative process.” [472] In the mature phases of his career Peirce drew the distinction between *mathematical* (theorematic, abductive/hypothetical reasons of a heurctic character, i.e. “gravid with young birth”) and *logistic* (deductive, mechanical) types of reasoning, and carried the indeterministic character of the former into his rejection of anancastic metaphysics (e.g. “Hegelianism of all types”). For an illuminating discussion of this, with further implications for Peirce’s relation to Spinoza, see DEA, 2006 and 2008.

his “youthful” THOU concept was “gravid with new truth” on the way to his final thinking on the “smiling” concept of Uberty in the “Universe perfused with signs.”

In terms of these provenances and convergences, it should be added that Ralph Waldo Emerson looms as historical intermediary between Schiller's *Aesthetic Letters* and Peirce.<sup>12</sup> Emerson's writings, themselves remarkably trans-Atlantic in inspiration, blended available forms of 19<sup>th</sup> c. English and German Romanticism and Idealism into a theory of, so to speak, nonanthropocentric connatural creative semiosis.<sup>13</sup> In the following generation, Peirce, who while still a young man co-lectured with Emerson, Hedge and several others at Harvard in 1870-71, followed suit, while explicitly drawing attention to his elective affinity with Emerson in several contexts.<sup>14</sup> Emerson's prose and poetry in fact absorbed and mediated much of Schiller and Schelling, while transforming ideas of Heraclitus, Plato, Plotinus, and Swedenborg.<sup>15</sup> Schelling's own “protean” series of works harkened back to Plato, Plotinus, the Christian mystics, and Spinoza. Schelling's works were early on impacted by Schiller

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- 12 Cf. Bibliography for two recent articles by David A. Dilworth on Peirce's elective affinities with Emerson appearing in *Cognitio* (2008 and 2009). These articles, focusing upon writings at the end of Emerson's career, ‘Poetry and Imagination’ and ‘The Natural History of Intellect’ (1870), illustrate that all the “big ticket items” of Peirce's objective idealism are prefigured in Emerson. In a future study the author will present the same thesis drawn from the beginning of Emerson's career, namely from his initial work *Nature* (1836) and his early and mid-career essays, which already contain the essential lineaments of Peirce's theory of nonanthropocentric connatural evolutionary semiosis and, as I argue here, the metaboly of symbolization in the regulative register of normative Esthetics.
- 13 Emerson read Thomas Carlyle's *Life of Schiller* (published in 1825), and throughout his career he hewed close to Goethe's and Schiller's aesthetic ideals and priorities, blending them with those of Schelling. His friend Coleridge was another conduit of information concerning the currents of German Idealism. Schiller's ideas also reached Emerson through his Transcendentalist colleagues—Theodore Parker, Oliver Wendell Holmes, James Freeman Clarke, John Sullivan Dwight, Margaret Fuller, Frederick Henry Hedge, James Eliot Cabot, John Heath, Charles Stearns Wheeler, and Charles Timothy Brooks, among others. Dwight contributed translations of Schiller and Goethe's poems in George Ripley's 14-volume *Specimens of Foreign Standard Literature*; Fuller translated and wrote critical studies of Goethe and Schiller; Hedge wrote on many of the German authors for the *Christian Examiner*; Brooks produced translations of two of Schiller's poem for the April 1844 issue of the *Dial* (edited by Emerson and Fuller); Wheeler and Heath attended the Berlin lectures of Schelling and reported them to Emerson by post; Wheeler's translation of a Schelling lecture appeared in the *Dial* (1843).
- 14 Blocking the road of inquiry, an earlier generation of Peirce scholars have been anti-metaphysical and generally nervous about Peirce's Transcendentalist background, e.g. his Emersonian “Buddhisto-Christian” religiosity; see for example MURPHEY, 1961 part. 1); and APEL, 1981, p. 102 and fn. 49, 50. For the requisite positive appreciation of Peirce's Transcendentalist background, see ANDERSON, 1997 and 2007; RICHARDSON, 2007. For Peirce's ‘The Law of Mind’ and its precedence in Emerson et al., see KRUSE, 2010.
- 15 John Weiss (1818-1879) was active in the early phase of Transcendentalism in promoting the ideas of Kant, Fichte, Schiller, and Schelling. In 1845 he published a translation of *The Aesthetic Letters, Essays, and the Philosophical Letters of Schiller*. Cf. WAYNE, 2010.

and his colleague Goethe; Schiller's, in turn, involved components of the critical transcendentalisms of Kant and Fichte; and of course all these strains of thought had deeper roots in a wider array of literary Romantics and Idealists of the "Jena/Weimar Circle" of their time.<sup>16</sup> Notwithstanding his scientific-mindedness, Peirce had his ear to the ground. He was in a position to graft, replant, and harvest this expansive legacy of ideas—and he did.

Peirce's own doctrinal articulations support this broader historical approach to the materials he gathered in constructing his architectonic system. For only two of many cases, there are his important doctrinal concepts concerning the contemporary *Zeitgeist* (illustrative of Thirdness) in 'Man's Glassy Essence' and 'Evolutionary Love' of the 1890s, and his articulation of the dialogic character of the *cominterpretant* or *commens* in 1906—both of which, among other things, legitimizes the possibility of inter-textual dialogue among authors in the history of philosophy.<sup>17</sup> "Nominalism," he wrote elsewhere, "is a deadly poison to any living thought."<sup>18</sup> Nominalisms, physicalist or mentalist, misplace the concrescences of living, dialogic Thought in the universe and cannot account for the indefinite community of mental semiosis in the short or the long run. For Peirce our human quasi-minds are synechistically "representative" of other intelligent organisms, and of the cosmogenesis as a whole. That is why we are not just wasting our time, but are inquiring about, clarifying, and *living on* real metaphysical laws of nature in their human relevance.

In a word, these intertwined doctrinal concepts implicate his category of Thirdness as the general continuity of Mind and thus subtend his doctrines of intellectual *tradition* and *growth* as well as of the various regulative governances of the Normative Sciences in his Pragmatism and Semeiotics.

And thus Peirce's "one law of mind" in his theory of *lived experience* is that ideas tend to spread continuously, losing immediate intensity but gaining in iconically-proliferating generality (CP 6.104). Specifically for our purposes here, Peirce's Thirdness-category of evolutionary habit-transformations translates, in one of many applications, into the semeiotic interpretant of *recombinant convergences* in nature and human intelligence. The historically progressive execution of the scientific-heuristic (truth-discovering) methodologies describes the phenomenon that different individuals, peoples, and cultures *tend* to come to the same objectively real conclusions—just as different forms of life (such as wings, fins, eyes, lungs, digestive systems) on opposite ends of the Biosphere have evolutionarily arrived at

16 See alphabetical entries in WAYNE, 2010. Goethe was a key intellectual force; he was initially troubled by the "merely regulative" aspects of Kant's *Critique of Judgment* (1790); influenced by Friedrich von Schiller, Friedrich Schlegel, and the young Schelling, he came to expound the affinity of the human mind and nature in his science and art. See RICHARDS, 2005 and 2002.

17 Letter to Lady Welby, EP2, 478. Emerson's essay 'History' (1841) can also be cited as a wonderful articulation of the grounds of *commens*-ible inter-textuality in the history of Thought.

18 NEM, 3.201. I am grateful to Professor Ivo Ibri for this reference and for his masterful critique of nominalistic trends in the contemporary academy in his "Neopragmatism Viewed by Pragmatism: A Redescription," (IBRI, 2013).

the same general solutions.<sup>19</sup> This is the basis of ecology and economy—and of our conferences and conversations.

Peirce's lines of phenomenological, metaphysical, and semeiotic inquiry in fact illustrate recombinant convergences with many affine variants in the history of philosophy. (His Three Categories, he insisted, were not new, but trace back before Neanderthal man.) Locally, in the *Zeitgeist* of his own times he appears to have digested leading ideas of Schiller, Schelling, and Emerson, developing them in like-minded but different registers of articulation than his predecessors, while arriving at symmetrical end points in significant respects. As a lesson in method, I propose now to illustrate this multi-leveled synergism with respect to "first" and "later" convergences with the thought of Friedrich von Schiller. It is the story of a *palimpsest*—or to change the metaphor, of a fruitful *propagation*—a so-to-speak viticultural *grafting* of an excellent European variety onto a native American rootstock.

### Schiller's original text, Letters 1-11 and 24-27 as Provenance of Peirce's First Categories of *I, IT, and THOU*.

Letters 1-11 and 24-27 comprised Schiller's original *Aesthetic Letters* which now stands as a unique, first-tier classic in the annals of the philosophy of Aesthetics.<sup>20</sup> Letters 3-4 on the State have new matter. Schiller then penned Letters 12-23, elaborating at greater length the "two drives" (the sensuous-causal and the rational-moral) faculties, as drawn from Kant's first and second *Critiques* and their reconfiguration

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19 Needless to say, this is not *destined* in an anacastic sense. Among other places, see CP 6.610 where Peirce refers to his "Socialistic, or as I prefer to term it, agapastic ontology" that blends his social theory of inquiry with his tychism; in the same context he asserts that the combination of tychism and agapism "is a natural path by which the nominalist may be led into the realistic ways of thought."

20 Friedrich (Johann Christoph) von Schiller (1759-1805) was a dramatist, poet, historian, and aesthetician regarded along with his close colleague Johann Wolfgang von Goethe as one of the greatest literary figures of his time. His early dramas—such as *Die Räuber* (*The Robbers*, 1781) and *Don Carlos* (1787)—dealt with social and political oppression, and later ones, such as *Maria Stuart* (1801), *The Bride of Messina* (1803) and *Wilhelm Tell* (1804), addressed spiritual freedom liberated from the claims of the world and depicted man as participating in an eternal moral order. His histories of the revolt of the Netherlands (1788) and of the Thirty Years War (1791-93) led to a professorship at the University of Jena in 1790. His historiographical writings provided background material for his *Wallenstein* trilogy (1808), which was highly praised by Samuel Coleridge as "not unlike Shakespeare's historical plays—a species by itself." These works and his acclaimed poetry carried over into his treatises on aesthetics. Besides *On Grace and Dignity* (1793) and *The Aesthetic Letters* (1795) Schiller produced another critical treatise on aesthetics in *On Naïve and Sentimental Poetry* (1795-96) and an essay *On the Sublime* (1801). His poetry and philosophical treatises reflect his encounter with the contemporary ideas of Goethe, Kant, and Fichte. Emerson read Thomas Carlyle's *Life of Schiller* (published in 1825) and I presume Peirce did so too. Schiller's poems and plays inspired the musical compositions and operas of Beethoven, Verdi, Donizetti, Rossini, and Tchaikovsky, among others. His "Ode to Joy" featured in the fourth movement of Beethoven's Ninth can be appreciated as a miniature expression of his synergistic reflections on aesthetics and politics which had a significant impact on 19<sup>th</sup> c. American thinkers.

in his third *Critique*. Reginald Snell's Introduction argues that the text has two different but interlaced positions with respect to a third drive, the *Spieltrieb*—the faculty of Beauty as both liberating and consummatory.<sup>21</sup> In the first instance—as underlined by the young Peirce—the experience of Beauty has a “refreshing” effect.<sup>22</sup> The experience of Beauty takes the person out of his immersion in physical reality, i.e., from the slavery of the animal appetites, opening up the possibility of intellectual and moral cultivation in a higher freedom of the spirit. In the second case, the education of Beauty imports the *ideal* of a “completion of Humanity,” in the sense of an ongoing, unending realization of the perfectibility of human nature that includes the sensuous, intellectual, and moral dimensions of life in various harmonious integrations. As we parse the nuances of these interlacing themes, we will gain purchase on how Peirce, in due course, harvested a measure of his three phenomenological, normative, and metaphysical categories from his career-long reflections on Schiller's *Letters*.<sup>23</sup>

In Letter 1 Schiller says he will follow Kant in the ethical sphere concerning the autonomy of moral freedom; but in Letter 2 he qualifies that allegiance in the crucial form of arguing “against the times” that it is through Beauty, and not Duty, that we arrive at “true freedom.” He articulates this trajectory in Letter 3, postulating that the transition from the physical State of Nature (based on brute force, including the compromises of selfish drives underwriting Hobbes's social contract) to a rational-moral society (the Kantian cosmopolitan dream *in futuro*), has to be mediated by this third component (Beauty).

The French Revolution, Schiller goes on to say, did not usher in the new order. Its aftermath has been one of materialistic degeneracy in both the lower and upper strata of society. It has rather accelerated the modern fragmentation of powers, e.g. in the speculative/scientific and practical/business spheres, in contrast with which Schiller introduces an idealized paradigm of “natural wholeness” (Letter 6). Contemporary philosophy—Schiller charges—is complicit with these evils brought about by the modern state in fostering the culturally fractious empirical and analytical styles of the Enlightenment (Letters 7, 8). In passing here, we can note that, in broad outline as well as in specific respects, Peirce—also following Schelling's and Emerson's precedent—repeated this indictment of the degenerate “modern times,” as for example in his rejection of the “Greed Gospel” of his 19<sup>th</sup>-century milieu and the more encompassing individualistic and nominalistic currents of modern materialistic humanism and scientism.<sup>24</sup>

21 SCHILLER, 2004, pp. 14-15.

22 *Ibid.* p. 12.

23 Here I use “career-long” generically. In fact, Peirce says that he revived an earlier interest in Schiller in his later career when he was addressing his formulation of the three normative categories. See DeTIENNE, 1996; BARNOUW, 1988, p. 607; PARRET, 1994; LEFEBVRE, 2007, pp. 341-42.

24 EP1, 354. Peirce reprises the essential gist of Schiller's indictment of degenerate modernity in MS 435: “To pursue ‘topics of vital importance’ as the first and best leads only to one or other of two determinations,—either on the one hand what is called I hope not justly, Americanism, the worship of business, the life in which the fertilizing stream of genial sentiment dries up or shrinks to a rill or comic tid-bits, or else on the other hand to

Letter 8 returns to Schiller's master theme that cultivation of the aesthetic sensibility is "the pressing need of the age."<sup>25</sup> He follows this up with a portrait of the artistic genius—modeled after Goethe—whose expression of Beauty transcends time. But a genuine philosophy, he says, has the task of articulating "the education of pure humanity" by "the transcendental road" to achieve "a pure rational concept of Beauty" (Letter 10).<sup>26</sup> As we shall explore further in due course, this passage can be read as adumbrating Emerson's essay on "Beauty" (1860) as well as Peirce's doctrine of Esthetics as the First of the Normative Sciences, though Peirce, for his part, came ultimately to question the traditional psychological vocabulary of "Beauty" (*kalos*) in favor of a more general normative concept of the *summum bonum* as the "Admirable *per se*."<sup>27</sup>

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monasticism, sleepwalking in this world with no eye nor heart except for the other. Take for the lantern of your footsteps the cold light of reason and regard your business, your duty, as the highest thing, and you can only rest in one of those goals or the other." (STUHR, 1987, p. 42).

- 25 Herbert Marcuse's *Eros and Civilization* (1955) consciously but belatedly reprises Schiller's advocacy of overcoming modern alienation by remaking civilization through the liberating force of the aesthetic function (a new reality principle); other neo-Marxist theorists have similarly bought into Schiller's critique of abstract "reification" in the material sphere. The present paper restricts itself to the observation that Emerson and Peirce drew their criticism of alienated modernity from Schiller far in advance—up to a century in advance—of the Frankfurt School, while setting it in the political matrix of American democracy. A further exploration of this trajectory would involve reflection on Hegel's deflection of post-Kantian aesthetics in the direction of what became a moral-prioritizing "logical socialism" (in the language of Karl-Otto Apel, Habermas, and followers). See HEGEL, 1993, where Hegel demotes the beauty of nature to the beauty of art while conceiving of the "end of art" in history according to the steely dictates of his deterministic logic of Spirit. Cf. Michael Inwood's introduction, xi-xxxii. Hegel insightfully, but with his critical reservations on the Idea of Art in Modern Philosophy, refers to Schiller's *On Grace and Dignity* as the basis of his *Aesthetic Letters* (pp. 67-69).
- 26 *Ibid.*, p. 60. The "pure rational concept of Beauty" performs the function of "correct[ing] and guid[ing] our judgment concerning every actual case; it must therefore be sought along the path of abstraction, be inferred simply from the possibility of a nature that is both sensuous and rational." In *Introductory Lectures on Aesthetics*, Hegel comments as follows: "This notion of Schiller's may be readily recognized in the general views of *Anmuth und Würde*, and in his poems more particularly from the fact that he makes the praise of women his subject matter; because it was in their character that he recognized and held up to notice the spontaneously present combination of the spiritual and natural" (*ibid.* p. 68).
- 27 In the final analysis Peirce overhauled the terminology of Schiller and Emerson, as well as of Kant and Hegel, among others by reconfiguring traditional approaches to *Aesthetics* via his sense of *Esthetics*. See Martin Lefebvre, *art. cit.*, for an astute discussion of how Peirce rejected the traditional concept of Beauty (*kalos*, etc.) as too narrow, thereby transforming the traditional types of "Aesthetics of the Beautiful" into his theoretical science of "Esthetics" in which "the Admirable *per se*" functions as the normative basis of Ethics and Logic, and thus arguably as the normative lure of his agapastic cosmology and critical semeiosis in his "universe perfused with signs." Apart from the metaphysical, there is the semantic question. Consulting the *Colins Pocket*

Letter 11 reworks this “transcendental road” by appealing to “two final concepts,” namely, Fichte’s pure and empirical egos—the *pure self* and its *existential determinations*, respectively—for the task of “divinization of the human.” The concept of the *pure self or ego*, Schiller writes, postulates that “The person must be its own ground”; and accordingly, “we have *in the first place* [my emphasis] the idea of absolute being grounded in itself, that is to say of *freedom*.” Man *receives* this gift of “pure intelligence” qua “pure activity” from “the supreme Intelligence creating out of itself,” while the spatial and temporal conditions of his personal identity constitute his *manifested existence*. “Only as he alters does he *exist*; only as he remains unalterable does *he exist*.”<sup>28</sup>

In these formulations, *freedom* is associated with Fichte’s *Tatbandlung*, the primary, foundational, irreducible Deed or Act (reminiscent of a famous line of Goethe’s *Faust*, Part I),<sup>29</sup> which Schiller here refers to as the personal embodiment of humanity that persists through change, turning every “perception” into “experience.” Fichte’s *person* and *conditions* dyad, itself a transformation of Kant’s paradox of noumenal and empirical selves, reemerged in the I-world and IT-world *dyadic*

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*Dictionary and Thesaurus* (Harpers, 1997), we find the word *admirable* translates into such cognate terms as *astonishing, choice, excellent, exquisite, fine, praiseworthy, rare, surprising, valuable, wonderful*, and the word *beauty* into *loveliness, grace, comeliness, elegance, exquisiteness, seemliness, symmetry*. My impression is that Schiller would have had no problem with Peirce’s way of reconfiguring and fine-tuning the vocabulary, while still noting the overlap of significant Platonic respects both authors explicitly and implicitly shared in common. And it could be noted that Emerson’s writings are replete with usages of Beauty and its cognates that split the difference between Platonic Beauty and the Admirable *per se* in Peirce’s sense. Peirce’s MS 310 features a cosmological sense, in thematizing all three component categories of his Tritism in its “dream” scenario of “a Reasonableness that Creates”: “[...] it must be a dream of extreme variety and must seem to embrace an eventful history extending through millions of years. It shall be a drama in which numberless living caprices shall jostle and work themselves out in larger and stronger harmonies and antagonisms, and ultimately execute intelligent reasonablenesses of existence more and more intellectually stupendous and bring forth new designs still more admirable and prolific.’ And if the fairy should ask one what the *denouement* should be, I should reply, ‘Let my intelligence in the dream develop powers infinitely beyond what I can now conceive and let me at last find that boundless reason utterly helpless to comprehend the glories of the thoughts that are to become materialized in the future, and that will be *denouement* enough for me. I may then return to the total unanalyzed impression of it. I have described it. Now let me experience it.’” Peirce goes on to say: “My taste must doubtless be excessively crude, because I have no esthetic education; but as I am at present advised the esthetic Quality appears to me to be the total unanalyzable impression of a reasonableness that has expressed itself in a creation. It is a pure Feeling but a feeling that is the impress of a Reasonableness that Creates. It is the Firstness that truly belongs to a Thirdness in its achievement of Secondness. As a matter of opinion, I believe that that Glory shines out in everything like the Sun and that any esthetic odiousness is merely our Unfeelingness resulting from obscurations due to our own moral and intellectual aberrations.”

28 *Ibid.*, p. 62.

29 GOETHE, 1987, part one, line 1238, “*In Anfang war die Tat.*”

categories of the young Peirce's initial categorial formulations, while his third youthful category of the THOU-world translated the *triadic Spieltrieb* concept of the *Aesthetic Letters*.<sup>30</sup>

But it should be noted that Schiller in fact prefigured this doctrine in his *On Grace and Dignity* of 1793, which centers on the inter-translating concepts of "the beauty of play," "sympathetic play," "grace as the beauty of play," and "the character of the beautiful soul," in contrast to Kant's concept of autonomous and hegemonic moral "dignity and worth."<sup>31</sup> Following the graceful Schiller, the young Peirce showed signs of his future philosophical genius in formulating the *polarity* of the rational and sensuous drives in the terms of the I- and the IT-worlds, while completing the *Spieltrieb* paradigm with the *synthesizing* function of the THOU-world,—dialogic harbinger of Peirce's theory of the indefinite community of inquirers, of Man as a sign, of dialogic Mind as an indecomposable Thirdness, of nonanthropocentric connatural creative semeiosis, of Evolutionary Love through the efficiently finious force of normative ideals, and in his later concepts of the *commens* and of Reasoning not in Security but in Uberty.<sup>32</sup>

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30 "[...] [W]e are absolutely correct, to restrict beauty, *objectively*, to mere natural conditions, and to explain it as a mere effect of the world of sense [...] [W]e are also correct to place beauty *subjectively* into the intelligible world. Beauty is, therefore, to be viewed as citizen of both worlds, belonging to the one by birth, to the other by adoption; she receives her existence in sensuous nature, and attains to the right of citizenship in the world of reason [...] [T]aste, as the faculty of judgment of beauty, steps into the middle between mind and sense, and connects these two natures, each scornful of the other, in happy concord: as it teaches matter respect for reason, it also teaches that which is rational its sympathy for sensuousness; as it ennobles perceptions into ideas, it transforms the world of sense in a certain way into a realm of freedom." (G&D 346). "Either the person represses the demands of his sensuous nature to conduct himself in accord with the higher demands of his reasonable nature; or he reverses this relationship, and subordinates the reasonable part of his being to the sensuous part, and thus merely follows the thrust with which the necessity of nature drives him on, just like other phenomena; or the impulses of natural necessity place themselves in harmony with the laws of reason, and the person is at one with himself." (G&D 361).

31 "Nature provided beauty of form, the soul bequeaths beauty of play. And now we also know what we are to understand by charm and grace. Grace is beauty of frame under the influence of freedom, the beauty of those phenomena upon which the *person* decides. Architectonic beauty does honor to the Author of nature, charm and grace honor him who possesses them. The one is *talent*, the latter a *personal* merit." (G&D 350). "A lively mind obtains influence over *all* bodily movements, and ultimately succeeds, indirectly, in changing even the fixed forms of nature, which are unreachable by the will, through the power of sympathetic play. With such a person, everything becomes a feature of his character [...]" (G&D 357). "We call it a beautiful soul, when moral sentiment has assured itself of all emotions of a person ultimately to that degree, that it may abandon the guidance of the will to emotions, and never run the danger of being in contradiction with its own decisions [...] It is thus in a beautiful soul, that sensuousness and reason, duty and inclination harmonize, and grace is its epiphany." (G&D 368).

32 Thus the THOU reappears in the first part of 'Evolutionary Love' in the form of "cherishing-love" that has no [Empedoclean] opposite. Cherishing-love is "circular, at one and the same impulse projecting creations into independency and drawing them

In sum at this juncture, the evidence is that Peirce began his monumental career-long task of re-conceptualizing Kant's Table of Categories under the heuristic guidance of Schiller's *Letters*. The developmental teleology of his thinking blossomed over time. The initial TUISM of his first re-conceptualization of Kant via Schiller took the form of the mediating function of REPRESENTATION in the "New List of Categories" of 1867, and then,—as he completed the structural integration of his trichotomic system as a whole in a new vocabulary beginning with "A Guess at the Riddle" of 1887-88,—of the synthetic power of THIRDNESS and, in due course, of ESTHETICS as the first Normative Science.<sup>33</sup>

Now back to an exegesis of Schiller, who inscribed the "education" qua "aesthetic divinization of Man" as normative obligation of his Fichtean-based analysis. "Although an infinite being, a divinity, cannot *become*," he continues, "we must surely call divine a tendency which has for its infinite task the proper characteristic of divinity,"—in other words, ideally speaking, "absolute realization of capacity (actuality of all that is possible) and absolute unity of manifestation (necessity of all that is actual)." "Beyond question," he says, "Man carries the potentiality for divinity within himself; [and] the path to divinity, *if we may call a path what never reaches its goal*, is open to him in his senses."<sup>34</sup> In due course Peirce took over, *via*

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into harmony" (EP1, 352-53). Elsewhere Peirce writes: "The value of *Facts* to it [heuristic Science], lies only in this, that they belong to Nature; and Nature is something great, and beautiful, and sacred, and eternal, and real—the object of its worship and its aspiration" (CP 5.589). See also notes 23 and 46.

- 33 On the reemergence of Peirce's *Tuism* in his 1867 concept of *Representation*, cf. FISCH, 1986; DeTIENNE, 1996, and APEL, 1995; also articulates how Peirce's 1867 "New List" contained the seeds of his categorial and semiotic elaborations. But Apel goes on to problematize the dovetailing of Peirce's phenomenology of Firstness and normativity of Esthetics (the "Firstness of Thirdness," such as in the "dream" scene of MS 310) as an aporia in the late Peirce (APEL, 1995, p. 117). Begging to differ, I suggest that there is a single developmental thread running from Peirce's initial Tuism, early theory of truth and reality in the long run, man as a sign, one law of mind and agapastic ontology, and his classification of Esthetics in the normative sciences. To deprive Peirce's text of its own inner principle of synechism in the developmental teleology of his own career signals some kind of heteroarchic reading and agenda.
- 34 *Ibid.*, pp. 64-65 my emphasis on the inexhaustibility of Schiller's Final Interpretant. Schiller's sense of *sensuousness*, which is here intended to reject the Kantian moralistic dichotomy of noumenal and phenomenal, is further elaborated by Peirce's trichotomic semeiotic as the sense of *embodied qualisigns* in the asymptotic hyperbolic universe. The affinity or congeniality of nature's unconscious iconography (its optics, acoustics, sign transfers in biological secretion systems, in the precise rhythms and timings of chemical interchanges, in plant and animal life, and so on) with iconic predication of perceptual judgments in the learning processes of human languages grounds the possibility of "how synthetic discoveries are possible," instead of being the reductive Darwinian accretions of chance contingency. This connatural affinity is variously articulated by Peirce in terms of common sense, instinct, creative imagination, or the *lumen naturale* (and has a huge background in Emerson). Such a connatural iconic affinity constitutes the first component of Peirce's objective idealism that runs on the normative ideal of agapastic evolution which "adopts certain mental tendencies, not altogether heedlessly, as in tychasm, nor quite blindly by the mere force of circumstance or of logic, as in anacasm,

Schelling and *contra* Hegel, this heuristic of asymptotic open-ended potentiality of melioristic semiosis *in futuro*, subsuming this “uberous” trajectory in many phases of his writings with respect to the “developmental teleology” of the universe in what he called the *finiosity* of nature and experience.<sup>35</sup>

Now, as indicated above, *Letters 24-27* comprised the original sequence after *Letters 1-11*. Letter 24 postulates that there have been three separate “moments or stages of man”—individually considered and for the human race—in a sequence of the physical, the aesthetic, and the moral. This is a reappearance of the instrumental (“refreshing”) function of the Beautiful, which, grounded in the spontaneity of the aesthetic consciousness, shakes off the power of physical nature, enabling a person and a society to control it in the moral condition. Here Schiller re-plays his Fichtean conditions of human experience—of the transcendental *I-world* and the sensual, physical *IT-world*—in reverse order. He first describes the condition of “crude nature,”—barbarian and slave nature,—from which man never entirely escapes. From there, secondly, he passes on to the condition of a “degenerate form of reason” that introduces ideas over matter in care and fear, producing the imperfect imperatives of worldly or eternal happiness—fantastical desires for an infinite perpetuation of being and well-being in the dimension of animal strivings for the absolute. In this corrupted form of rationality, even Kant’s moral law is only a negative check on self-love; its concepts of right and wrong are statutes ordained by a fearsome divine will, not things valid in themselves and to all eternity. Here the *sensuous impulse to live* still dominates over the formal impulse. Thus in the first condition he is a non-rational, in the second a “rational,” animal; but, Schiller concludes, “he should be neither of these, he should be a human being.”<sup>36</sup>

Letter 25<sup>37</sup> builds further on this theme. In the first stage of sensuous slavery, man is simply immersed in the *IT-world*, such that there is no world yet *for* him. (In such an *IT-world* we seem to have a precedent for the concept of “reification” in the sense elaborated by Marx, Lukacs, and a contemporary generation of neo-Marxist critical theorists.) This one-sided materialistic reduction is balanced, however, with Schiller’s Kantian and Fichtean recourse to the binary conjugation of matter

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but by an immediate attraction for the idea itself, whose nature is divined before the mind possesses it, by power of sympathy, that is, by virtue of the continuity of mind” (CP 6.307). The Firstness of icono-morphoses in natural and human semiotic exchanges intersects with the Firstness of the ideal normativity of “concrete reasonableness,” which Peirce describes as “that Glory [which] shines out in everything like the Sun.”

35 In this regard it will be important to trace the theme of the priority of judgments of *the beauty of Nature* before the *beauty of Art* in Goethe, Kant, and Emerson. Hegel produced the more limiting direction in associating Beauty with the Fine Arts, a direction which arguably opened the door to the modern (post-modern) psychologistic aesthetics of cultural relativism. (See note 23 above.) On the developmental teleology of the ethical individual, see the still classic work of Vincent Colapietro.

36 *Ibid.*, p. 119. As already noted, these formulations, pointedly in his polemic against Kant’s dyadic hermeneutic of the tension between the “graceful play” of *sensuous inclination* and *moral duty*, Schiller already formulated in his first work of critical aesthetics, *On Nature and Grace* (1793).

37 *Ibid.*, pp. 119-23.

*and form*. “Contemplation (reflection) is Man’s first free relation to the universe which surrounds him.” Man’s *formal* nature frees his objects from desire and thus secures them from passion. However, he adds that what is true in man’s legislative (intellectual and moral) nature is even more evident in moments of *aesthetic calm* where *timeless forms*, images of the infinite, are immediately reflected upon the transient foundation of empirical consciousness. “Zeus who triumphs over the laws of time brings the reign of Saturn to an end.” Man becomes superior to every terror of Nature so long as he knows how to give form to it, and to turn it into his object. With noble dignity he rises up against his deities. “The divine monster of the Oriental [...] dwindles in the Grecian fantasy into the friendly outlines of humanity; the empire of the Titans falls, and infinite force is mastered by infinite form.”<sup>38</sup>

And here Schiller’s *Spieltrieb* bids to move beyond the purview of Fichte’s subjective idealism. It is not true to human nature, he insists, to pass directly from “mere life” to “pure shape” or “pure object.” Beauty performs the mediating work of free contemplation but without leaving the world of sense—as happens in the case of cognition of abstract truth or right. In our *pleasure* in the Beautiful, no succession between activity and passivity can be distinguished; it is only because *reflection is so intermingled with feeling* that we believe ourselves to perceive form immediately. Moreover, Beauty is both an *object* for us, and at the same time *a state of our personality—form* and at the same time our human *life*. This *aesthetic form* of consciousness is the only experience in which form and matter are truly interpenetrative. The “analytical philosopher”—as in Kant’s and Fichte’s prescriptions for the moral consciousness—works with the false assumption of the incompatibility of thought and sensation. “But with the enjoyment of Beauty, or aesthetic unity, there occurs a real union and interchange of matter with form, and of passivity with activity, [such that] by this very occurrence the *compatibility* of both natures is proved, the practicability of the infinite in finiteness, and consequently the possibility of a sublime humanity.”<sup>39</sup>

The existential and theoretical issues, then, involve the task of making our way from ordinary life to *aesthetic life*. The sense of Beauty involves not only the normative possibility of a sublime humanity; it is simultaneously the order of *revelation of affinity* between physical nature and the symbolic systems of the human mind—and here Schiller also adumbrates the theme of the *connatural affinity of unconscious and conscious mindedness* that was to undergo a conspicuous development in Schelling, Emerson, and Peirce.

In passing, we can note that Letter 26<sup>40</sup> is a particular good background for Emerson’s Transcendentalism. Since the aesthetic disposition “first” gives rise to freedom and cannot itself arise from freedom—Schiller insists—it must be a “gift of Nature” and “consequently can have no moral origin.” The germ of Beauty develops “not where Man hides himself troglodyte-fashion in caves or moves nomadically in great plural hordes,” but only “communicating with himself and the whole human race in that joyful state and in that blessed zone where activity alone leads to

38 Schiller’s rhetorical flourishes here also trace back to Fichte’s influence and extend forward to Emerson’s ‘Fate’ and ‘Power’ essays in *The Conduct of Life* (1860).

39 *Ibid.*, p. 123.

40 *Ibid.*, pp. 124-31.

enjoyment and enjoyment alone to activity [...] where imagination eternally escapes from reality and yet never goes astray from the simplicity of Nature—here alone will sense and spirit, receptive and creative power, develop in the happy equilibrium which is the soul of Beauty and the condition of humanity.”

And indeed in this same context Schiller formulates distinctions of qualitative immediacy, existential otherness, and open-ended cultural *Bildung* that are a provenance of the young Peirce's I-IT-THOU triad and of the mature Peirce's categorial Tritism of Firstness, Secondness, and Thirdness. Historically, Schiller observes, in the transition from the savage to humanity, in all races that have escaped from the slavery of the animal state, civilized progress has engendered “a delight in *appearance*, a disposition toward *ornament* and *play*.” Extreme stupidity and extreme intelligence both seek the “real” [read: the *actual*, or Secondness in Peircean parlance] and are wholly insensible to “mere appearance.”<sup>41</sup> “Indifference towards reality [*id est*, “actuality”] and interest in appearance are a real enlargement of humanity and a decisive step towards culture.”<sup>41</sup> They “reveal to us a force which sets itself in motion of its own accord, independently of any outward material, and possesses sufficient energy to repel the pressures of matter.”

Here Schiller also refers to the “noble senses” of eye and ear, as contributing to aesthetic freedom and the play-impulse, which issues forth in the “imitative creative impulse” that transforms Nature into “mere appearances.”<sup>42</sup> Aesthetic experience, Schiller insists, is man's territory on which he forges “new” relationships in Nature. He exercises this right of sovereignty in “*the art of appearance within the world of appearance*,” which is the “unsubstantial kingdom of the imagination.” The poet, Schiller observes, steps outside his proper boundaries when he attributes *existence* to his *ideal*. “It requires a further, and much higher, degree of liberal culture to perceive in the living only pure appearance, than to dispense with life in the appearance.” (The influence of his compatriot and colleague, Goethe, is also present in these formulations.)

Letter 27<sup>43</sup> completes this line of thought concerning “pure appearance.” “To strive after absolute appearance demands greater capacity for abstraction, more freedom of the heart, more vigor of will than Man needs if he confines himself to *reality* [read: Peirce's sense of *actuality*], and he must have already put the latter behind him if he wishes to arrive at [aesthetic] appearance.”<sup>44</sup> A total revolution

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41 Cf. fn. 20 above.

42 This doctrine of the “noble senses” of eye and ear, which recurs in Schelling and Schopenhauer, may still carry a “German” psychologistic nuance that Peirce rejected in his semeiotically expanded sense of the ubiquitous variety of qualisigns incapable of hierarchization in the immediacy of “esthetic enjoyment.”

43 *Ibid.*, pp. 131-40.

44 *Ibid.* pp. 131. The Firstness of Thirdness exhibited in Esthetic normativity is complemented via Peirce's categorial doctrine of the Thirdness of Firstness. Thus Peirce argues that clarity in the Firstness of phenomenological perception is an *acquired* capacity; see “Training in Reasoning” (RLT, pp. 181-7, and EP2, 189-90. Specifically here, the role of habit functions as an *acquired skill of receptive sensitivity* to the purely aesthetic quality. “I venture to think that the esthetic state of mind is purest when perfectly naïve without any critical pronouncement, and the esthetic critic founds his judgments upon the result

is needed in the whole mode of perception. “When therefore we discover traces of a disinterested free appreciation, of pure appearance, we can infer some such revolution of his nature and the real beginning in him of humanity.”<sup>45</sup> Man needs such a “superfluity in the material, an aesthetic supplement, in order to extend his enjoyment beyond every need.”<sup>46</sup> “The animal *works* when deprivation is the mainspring of its activity, and it *plays* when the fullness of its strength is this mainspring, when superabundant life is its own stimulus to activity.”<sup>47</sup> Nature itself makes her way through the sanction of superfluity of physical play, to *aesthetic play*, in its *free movement* which is itself both end and means. Man’s imagination is like that; it simply delights in its absolute and unfettered power in its physical image-making; but it finally achieves the capacity for “*free form*, the leap to aesthetic play” in its physical image-making. Such a *freer* play-impulse “finally breaks completely away from the fetters of exigency, and Beauty for her own sake becomes the object of its endeavor.”<sup>48</sup>

Here again Schiller prioritizes the beauty of Nature over Art. Calling upon his poetic powers and the themes of his later literary accomplishments, in this concluding Letter 27 Schiller writes persuasively—and a precedent to analogous

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of throwing himself back into such a pure naïve state of mind—and *the best critic is the man who has trained himself to do this most perfectly*” (CP 5.111, my emphasis). We recall that Peirce was a trained sommelier. Thus the aspect of *training* (or Schillerian *refinement*) in perfectly naïve receptivity involves Peirce’s broader semeiotics of personally and culturally *nurtured mediations*—that is, habits of *self-controlled conduct* to enable one to appreciate the phenomenological quality in itself. This *morality*—so to speak—of *habituated openness to quality* is entailed in Peirce’s further remark that the contemplation of beauty “is a sort of intellectual sympathy, a sense that there is a feeling one can comprehend, a reasonable feeling [...]” (CP 5.114). That is, a reasonable feeling realized in and attested to by developing habits of self-control in the internally conversing, self-critical quasi-mind of the artist as well as of his critics and audience in the public world. In ‘The Basis of Pragmaticism in the Normative Sciences,’ Peirce writes that “All inhibition of action, or action upon action, involves reaction and duality. All self-control involves, and chiefly consists in, inhibition. All direction toward an end or good supposes self-control; and thus the normative sciences are thoroughly infused with duality” (EP2, 385). By way of considering Peirce’s ideal of the *summum bonum*,—the Ultimate Interpretant of the “admirable in itself” as “concrete reasonableness,”—we should also configure the implication of the *increasing growth of esthetic intuition* in an artist’s *career-sensibility* (e.g., the distance traveled by Beethoven between his First and Ninth symphonies, or by Jackson Pollock between his early abstract and later drip paintings). This is a topic for another day.

45 *Ibid.*, p. 132.

46 *Loc. cit.*

47 *Ibid.*, p. 133.

48 It can be argued that Schiller’s point here resurfaces in one of Peirce’s career-ending essays, ‘An Essay toward Improving Our Reasoning in Security and Uberty’ (EP2, 462 ff.) where he advances the concept of *uberty* (“gravid with young truth”) that “puts a smile upon Beauty, upon moral virtue, and upon abstract truth”—“the three things that alone raise Humanity above Animality” (EP2, 465). And, for what it may be worth, we can note that Peirce here uses the word *Beauty* in this triad of normative human values.

flourishes of Emerson—in describing an “aesthetic supplement” to material nature in the grades of organic life. A “gleam of freedom,” he says, shines over the darkness of animal existence, a sign of its liberation from the bare necessities of life. The lion roars in purposeless display, exuberantly enjoying its sway when not gnawed by hunger. The insects swarm with joyous life in the sunbeam; the song-birds warble their melodious tribute to the spring dawn, and convene in raucous councils as the autumn leaves fall. The trees put forth innumerable buds in lavish, celebratory profusions well beyond the possibility of their individual survival rate. “So Nature gives us even in her material realm a prelude to the infinite, and even here partly removes the chains which she casts away entirely in the realm of form.” We feel our “consanguinity” (in Emerson’s term) with organic nature in our human life, sharing a metaphysical DNA, as it were, with our vegetable and animal environments. Through this connatural superfluity of *physical play*, Schiller goes on to say, we mount to *aesthetic play*, where the imagination soars to the lofty freedom of the Beautiful above the designs of every purposed end.<sup>49</sup>

Returning then to the original theme of Letters 3-6, Schiller concludes that Beauty can alone confer on Man a true *social character*.<sup>50</sup> Taste alone brings harmony into society, because it establishes it in the individual. All other forms of perception, sensuous or intellectual, divide a man; only the perception of the Beautiful makes something whole in him, because both his natures must accord with it. And thus it is only in the Beautiful that we enjoy life at the same time as individuals and as the human race, that is, as *representatives* of the race.<sup>51</sup> “Beauty alone makes all the world happy, and every being forgets its limitations as long as it experiences her enchantment.” “No pre-eminence, no rival dominion is tolerated as far as taste rules and the realm of the Beautiful extends.” Therefore “In the aesthetic realm is achieved the idea of equality which the visionary would fain see realized in actuality also.”

But can the “State of Beauty in Appearance” really exist, and where is it to be found? Schiller concludes Letter 27 on a note reminiscent of Socrates in the *Republic*: As a need, in every finely tuned soul, as an achievement, only in a few select circles.

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49 In a variety of other contexts Schiller the poet and playwright expatiates cogently on this theme in depicting the aesthetic sublimations, the generous interplay of refined affections, involved in the romantic relations between the human sexes. “Desire extends and exalts itself into love as mankind arises in its object, and the base advantage over sense is disdained for the sake of a nobler victory over the will.” Beauty therefore “resolves the conflict of natures in its simplest and purest example, in the eternal interplay of the opposite sexes”; and “she aims to accomplish the same in the intricate totality of society, in the moral world after the pattern of the free union which she there contrives between masculine strength and feminine gentleness.” As in the chivalric code, beyond the dynamically sensual state of rights (curbing nature with nature) and even the universal ethical imperative of duty (subjecting the individual to the general will) is the aesthetic state of cultivated society. “*To grant freedom by means of freedom* is the fundamental law of this kingdom.”

50 *Ibid.*, p. 138.

51 See the title of Emerson’s *Representative Men* (1860).

He also mentions “the pure Church.”<sup>52</sup> In practice, however, we find it “only in a few select circles where it is not the spiritless imitation of foreign manners but people’s own lovely nature that governs conduct, where mankind passes through the most complex situations with eager simplicity and tranquil innocence, and has no need whether to encroach upon another’s freedom in order to assert his own, or to display gracefulness at the cost of dignity.”<sup>53</sup>

## 2. The Second Sequence: Letters 12-23: Schiller’s Anticipation of Peirce’s Prioritizing of Esthetic Normativity.

Schiller developed his Letters 12-23 after completing the original set 1-11 and 24-27. In this new set he continued Kantian and Fichtean themes transposed to a philosophy of “aesthetic” consciousness inclusive of the moral, while at the same time amplifying his basic assertion as to the *educative ideal* of the Beautiful as the *telos* of human perfection. This is the *educative* sense of the “Beautiful” that Peirce critically transformed into the “Admirable *per se*” of “Concrete Reasonableness” as the *summum bonum* (the normatively regulative Predicate of Predicates) in his semeiotic ontology of a “Universe perfused with signs.” A clear precedent to Schelling, Emerson, and Peirce, Schiller’s “educational” account in effect prioritized the revelation of the Beautiful in experience as the “first” normative ideal subtending the moral and logical trajectories of experience. Here Schiller, in concert with his colleague Goethe, had already broken through Kant’s dichotomy of phenomenon and noumenon with regard to the lived experience of *poiesis* in Nature and Art and had carried this trajectory forward in his theory of morals as well. Peirce followed suit, by way of translating “Aesthetics” into his preferred interpretant of “Esthetics” as the *first* Normative Science to meet the exigencies of his vastly wider theoretical register.<sup>54</sup>

52 Cf. the ending of Peirce’s ‘Man’s Glassy Essence’ where he mentions religious groups as embodying an agapastic *esprit du corp*.

53 *Ibid.*, p. 140. Among other references, this passage can be read as provenance of Emerson’s ethics, politics, and the general content of his *The Conduct of Life* (1860).

54 I refer back to a preliminary point concerning Peirce’s self-conscious claim to have developed “a completely developed system” (Letter to Wm. James, 1904). His “Schelling-fashioned” objective idealism consisted of a non-positivistic *empiricist-orientated metaphysics*—aligned with Schelling’s “progressive empiricism” or “metaphysical empiricism” as expounded in the latter’s “Positive Philosophy,” itself a polemic against Kant’s and Hegel’s Negative (critically regressive a priori) philosophies. Peirce’s metaphysics postulates a worldview that is creative in inexhaustible “variescences” (therefore “ecstatic” in Emerson’s term), as well as immanently evolutionary—an “asymptotic hyperbolic” worldview framed in terms of irreducible, trivalent, compresent principles of actualization (Firstness, Secondness, Thirdness) across the fields of logic, mathematics, phenomenology, semiotic, speculative cosmology, and the special sciences. His semiological Tritism deliberately employed the term “interpretant” to get away from cognitive associations with existent minds, psychological acts, events, entities, rather postulating indefinitely proliferating sign-transferences (“semiotic wave-packets”) with cosmological and theological implications. In such an inherently “vague” register of maximally comprehensive generality, Peirce marked Kant’s *critical* idealism as nominalistic for its dichotomous focus upon individual minds and unknowable things

As our heuristic guide here, let us again imagine how Peirce, in the mature phase of his career, “remembered” and drew again from this pool of thought—namely, his “first” philosophical reading of Schiller’s *Letters*. As one of many possible citations, the following one from his 1903 essays, ‘The Maxim of Pragmatism,’ will serve our purpose:

There is a preference which depends upon the *significance* of impulses, whatever that may mean. It supposes that there is some ideal-state of things, which regardless of how it should be brought about and independently of any ulterior reason whatsoever, is held to be good or fine. In short, ethics must rest upon a doctrine which without at all considering what our conduct is to be, divides ideally possible states of things into two classes, those that would be admirable and those that would be unadmirable, and undertakes to define precisely what it is that constitutes the admirableness of an ideal. Its problem is to determine by analysis what it is that one ought deliberately to admire *per se* in itself regardless of what it may lead to and regardless of its bearings upon human conduct. I call that inquiry Esthetics, because it is generally said that the three normative sciences are logic, ethics, and esthetics, being the three doctrines that distinguish [the] good and bad, *Logic* in regard to representations of truth, *Ethics* in regard to efforts of will, and *Esthetics*, in objects considered simply in their presentation. Now that third normative science can I think be no other than that which I have described. It [*Esthetics*] is evidently the basic normative science upon which as a foundation the doctrine of ethics must be reared to be surmounted in its turn by the doctrine of logic.<sup>55</sup>

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in themselves. (It can be argued, however, that Peirce did not do full justice to the array of critical transformations centering on the reflective power of judgment in his Third Critique.) Fichte’s *subjective* idealism was in the same case. Hegel’s system was then the big daddy of Nominalism in subsuming reality retrospectively without *esse in futuro*, thus reducing the generality of world process to mere facticity, the singularity of the Absolutization of Reason. For his part, Schiller shared the available theoretical frameworks of Kant and Fichte, while also drawing on the resources of Goethe and the young Schelling, accomplishing in his *Spieltrieb* concept an early variation of a triadic realism-idealism. Schiller’s superlative accomplishments as a dramatist, poet, and historian preceded and naturally fed his treatises on philosophical *Aesthetics*—featuring his central concepts of “grace” and “the beauty of play” in registers of traditional philosophical description. Peirce’s scientifically and metaphysically grounded theoretical register was far vaster but—I am suggesting—he came, with transparent grace, to acknowledge symmetries of their thought in important respects.

- 55 EP2, 143. See MS, 1334 Adirondack Summer School Lectures, 1905, where Peirce refers to *Esthetics* by the alternate name of *Axiagastics*: “[...] to this day Normative Sciences are frequently confounded with Practical Sciences. They are, however, properly speaking pure sciences, although practical sciences are joined to them, so that in part they are truly Practical sciences. But the normative science proper is not a practical science but is a study in the pure interest of theory [...] If we are to admit only two normative sciences, the first of these, which for convenience we call *ethics* relating to *control of the existent*, or say to actualization, and the second to *thought*, then the first ethics must have two sections, the one on the ultimate aim, or *summum bonum*, which will be same as esthetics, if esthetics is not to be confined to sensuous beauty, but is to relate to the

Such a passage arguably reveals the resurfacing undercurrent of Schiller's aesthetics in Peirce's mature philosophical text. How much this is by explicit recall and how much by unconscious gestation is impossible to tell. But as we delve further into their textual interface we shall appreciate how Schiller's Letter 12-23 provides an unmistakable provenance for Peirce's doctrine of the priority of esthetic normativity, despite his apparent modesty and confessed wavering on the subject of Esthetics in certain other contexts.<sup>56</sup>

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admirable and adorable generally, while the other, which may be called critical ethics, treats of the condition of conformity to the ideal [...] I will suggest that *axiagastics* be the name for the science of the worthy of adoration [...] or in other words the analysis of what it is that excites that feeling akin to worship that fills one's whole life in the contemplation of an idea that excites this feeling. We must suppose that primitive or barbarous people hardly have this idea, since hardly any word in any language (as far as I know) expresses it. The French *beau* approximates it but is poor and cold. The primitive man found too much reason to think of the divine *not* as something to be passionately loved, but as something to be feared. Only the Greek *agamai* is an exception, a glorious verb expressing how the common people in primitive times looked up to their leaders with passionate admiration and devotion. It comes nearest to expressing the idea [...] I make the word *axiagastics*, for the science of that which is worthy to be admired and adored." (STUHR, 1987, pp. 65-66) Peirce adumbrated this thought in his remarks on "the *divinization of genius*" in 'Evolutionary Love' of 1893. This 1905 passage also looks ahead to his concept of Musement in the NA of 1908.

- 56 See EP2, 190 (1903) where Peirce says that "[...] ignorant as I am of Art, I have a fair share of capacity for esthetic enjoyment," and goes on to inscribe his perhaps most crucial articulation of esthetic enjoyment as comprised of the Firstness of Thirdness—that is, a "Quality of Feeling," as a "sort of intellectual sympathy," "a reasonable Feeling." In MS 310 of 1903 and elsewhere, Peirce also modestly disclaims personal esthetic sensitivity, and he even confesses to have "wavered" on the possibility of establishing Esthetics as a science normatively prior to Ethics and Logic. He says he began considering Ethics as a normative science only around 1887; but then referring to Schiller's *Letters*, the subject to which he devoted his first philosophic studies "exclusively," he says he had since then "so completely neglected it that I do not feel entitled to have any confident opinions about it." In his determination that Esthetics is the first of the normative sciences, he concludes by saying that the supposition is governed by his three phenomenological-cum metaphysical categories. (EP2, 189, 200, 201) And yet, Peirce's hermeneutical act is circular here, in that—as we have seen—his three categories trace back, however unconsciously, and "in disguise," to his "first" categorial classifications of the pronouns I, IT, and THOU based on Schiller's *Letters*. To this we should add that the modestly disclaiming Peirce, if only by virtue of sharing the standards of taste of his own social milieu, must have possessed a considerable degree of aesthetic sensitivity. His friendship with the Hudson River School artist Albert Bierstadt can be cited in this regard, as well as his spending time with his wife in NYC artistic circles. His capacity for aesthetic revelation comes out especially in the beautiful passage leading up to his 'Neglected Argument for the Reality of God':—"Enter your skiff of Musement, push off into the lake of thought, and leave the breath of heaven to swell your sail. With your eyes open, awake to what is about or within you, and open conversation with yourself; for such is all meditation. It is, however, not a conversation in words alone, but is illustrated, like a lecture, with diagrams and with experiments." The overall context here is that "Play, the law of liberty," functions as the heuristic for scientific observation and analysis,

Schiller's Letter 12, in elaborating upon the two *contrary impulses*, the sensuous and the rational, once again reduces the "single form of sensuous existence" to a state of *material reification* characterized by a condition of "absence-of-self." The "sense impulse" of the I-world would indeed be that in which "the whole phenomenon of mankind is rooted" *in abstraction and apart from* the contrary "formal impulse" of the constituting I-world characterized by its rationally legislative functions, intellectual and moral, with their autonomous trajectories aiming at truth and right.<sup>57</sup> Letter 13 further develops this opposition of the sensuous and formal drives in terms of Fichte's concept of *Wechselwirkung*, or "reciprocal action,"—itself a variation on Kant's dictum of the conjunctive form-matter relation, but which Kant himself problematically articulated in the dyadic form of tension between moral autonomy and sensuous heteronomy.<sup>58</sup> Schiller's key point is that *aesthetic culture*

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involving "higher weapons of the arsenal of thought" that are "not [just] playthings but edge-tools." (CP 6.461; EP2, 437) His description of the "smiling and civilized-looking" vista of the fag-end of the Blue Ridge Mountains by "the picturesque Delaware River" in Milford, Pennsylvania can be thought to have a Bierstadt flavor (EP2, 469). His splendidly articulated "dream" of the concretely Admirable in MS 310 is another instance. (This footnote courtesy of Nicholas Guardiano, Philosophy Department, SIU.)

57 The latter trajectories of the *formal* impulse raise mankind to a "unit of idea[s] embracing the whole realm of phenomena." By this operation of transcendental intelligence "we are no longer [immersed] in time, but time, with its complete and infinite succession, is in us. We are no longer individuals but species; the judgment of all spirits is expressed by our own, the choice of all hearts is represented by our action." (*Ibid.* p. 67) As we have seen, "Grace" in G&D became the *Spieltrieb* of the *Aesthetic Letters*—a huge theoretical generalization on Schiller's part, and one taken to another level of generalization by Peirce.

58 I am prompted to inquire here whether Peirce, at the later date of "remembering" Schiller, ever actually *reread* the *Aesthetic Letters* and/or the German's earlier treatise, *On Grace and Dignity*. I have no information on this either way, but such reading(s) would have provided ballast against his self-confessed wavering on the priority of Esthetics over Ethics, via the clearcut argument Schiller advances against Kant's "draconian" imposition of moral rules over sensuous inclination. Schiller exposes Kant's moral theory as a function of the I-world *in resistance to* the It-world—in effect falling under Peirce's category of Secondness. As he wrote in G&D, "[in Kant's philosophy], inclination is a very ribald companion of moral sentiment, and pleasure, a regrettable supplement to moral principles." (364) "So long as the moral mind still applies force, natural impulse must still have power to set against it [...] In Kantian moral philosophy, the idea of duty is present with a severity which frightens all the Graces away. [Kant articulated] [...] the strict and harsh opposition of the two principles working on the will of a person [...]" (365) "He became a Draco of his time" [in condemning the decline of morals in his day]. (366) For his part, Peirce conceived of theoretical, not practical, Ethics (Ant-ethics) as the science of self-control through self-criticisms and heterocritisms under the guidance of the principle of contemplative admiration *per se*. This converges, though of course in Peirce's own theoretical register, with Schiller's *personified* concept of "the beautiful soul": "We call it a beautiful soul, when moral sentiment has assured itself of all emotions of a person ultimately to that degree, that it may abandon the guidance of the [moral] will to emotions, and never run the danger of being in contradiction with its own decisions. Hence, in a beautiful soul individual deeds are not properly moral, rather, the entire character is." (368) And again: "It is thus in a beautiful soul, that sensuousness

can do *equal justice* to both. *Culture's* educative role on the one hand must provide the (sensuous) receptive faculty with the most multitudinous contacts with the real world, maximizing *feeling* to its fullest extent, while on the other hand securing for the rational faculty the fullest independence from the sensuously receptive, thereby maximizing *its* legislative activity to the fullest extent. Man becomes a non-entity in the failure of either case; in the former case he sinks down into material reification, in the second into mere abstract formalism. *Aesthetic culture* restricts one-sided hegemony of either impulse in isolation, and thus functions as the principle of *moderation*. (This *moderating* function of culture is also very Goethean.)<sup>59</sup>

Schiller's Letter 14 then links *culture's moderating function* with the "idea of humanity," itself "something infinite" to which man can approximate ever nearer in the course of time, but without ever reaching it. The rare cases of revelation of the seeming "perfect balancing" of the sensuous and rational impulses involve a "complete intuition of his humanity, and the object which afforded him this vision would serve him as a symbol of his accomplished destiny, and consequently [...] as a representation of the Infinite." Once again, this *destinate* realization of aesthetic intuition draws its force from a new impulse—"the play impulse"—which combines the sensuous and rational impulses in a higher dimension, one which "achieves the extinction of time in time and the reconciliation of becoming with absolute being,"—in other words, a reconciliation "of variation with identity." (This is another parallel if not precedent for both Schelling's and Emerson's "twin laws" of *identity* and *metamorphosis*.<sup>60</sup> And I am suggesting that the transformative metaphors, so to speak, of the stream of connatural interpretants inscribed in Peirce's critical semeiotics can be described as a monistic theory of *triadic symbolic metamorphosis* in the same vein.)

This doctrine led Schiller to develop, in the ensuing Letter 15, his concept of the "*object*" of the *Spieltrieb* as a "living shape"—or "*living form*"—that is, concrete experience of the *objectively* Beautiful. This alone, Schiller writes, fulfills our *ideal* concept of Humanity as the *ongoing unity* of sensuous passivity and of

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and reason, duty and inclination harmonize, and grace is its epiphany." (368) Schiller's text, in this personified though not cosmologically evolutionary sense, also introduces an agapastic tone: in distinguishing love from Kantian respect for the moral law, as he writes, "[...] love: an emotion which is inseparable from grace and beauty [...] Love alone [...] is a free emotion, for her pure source flows from the seat of freedom, from our divine nature [...] [I]t is *absolutely grand* in itself, which finds itself imitated in grace and dignity, and satisfied in sensuousness; it is the Legislator himself, the *God* in us, who plays with his own image in the world of sense [...] The pure mind can only love, not respect; sense can only respect, but not love" (G&D 381-82).

59 Cf. Emerson's portrait of "Goethe: Or, The Writer" in *Representative Men*, in EMERSON, 1983, pp. 746-61.

60 Emerson's "twin laws" of *identity* and *metamorphosis* are inscribed in 'The Sphinx,' 'The World-Soul,' and other poems, and are central themes of 'The Method of Nature' (1839), 'Circles' (1841), 'Nature' and 'Nominalist and Realist' (1844), to mention only a few of his essays here. I am suggesting that these "twin laws" are a provenance for Peirce's synergistic correlation of the "Thirdness of Firstness" and the "Firstness of Thirdness" in his mature synechistic metaboly of symbolization of his "Universe perfused with signs."

active freedom.<sup>61</sup>

Speaking personally, I have found it useful here to think of the variations on the symbolism of “Helen” that Goethe inscribed in *Faust*, Parts I and II.<sup>62</sup> Symbolic visions of the most beautiful woman of Greek mythology, culminating in the saving graces of the Eternal-Feminine at the end of *Faust* Part II, function as Romantic-Classical lures of the striving (*Streben*) and development (*Entstehen*) of Faust's soul. Schiller, whose own career was for a time closely intertwined with Goethe's, co-authors, as it were, this central heuristic of *Faust* in arguing that Beauty functions as the ideal of the imaginative impulse ideally informing the high-end spiritual (*poiesis*, including morally poetical) components in all experience.<sup>63</sup> Pointedly, Schiller says, it is witnessed in the Greek Olympics, but not in the Roman amphitheatre; such an aesthetic normativity is also seen in the Olympians gods and the Juno Ludovici.<sup>64</sup>

Once again, we can extrapolate from such contexts as these as precedents to Peirce's normative, axiagastic ideal of the “admirable *per se*” as “Concrete Reasonableness”—which is “a pure Feeling but a feeling that is the impress of a Reasonableness that Creates. It is the Firstness that truly belongs to a Thirdness in

61 In a famous statement here Schiller says that Man “only plays with Beauty” (is *not ethically serious* in this modality); and he “is wholly himself only when he plays.” Reason sets up this ideal of Humanity, which is exclusively neither mere life nor mere form: “Man is only serious with the agreeable, the good, the perfect; but with Beauty he plays.” (*Ibid.*, pp. 79-80). See DAHLSTROM, 2000, pp. 76-94: “In Kant's understanding of the aesthetic transition from nature to morality, each of these domains retains its self-sufficiency and validity independent of the other. In Schiller's eyes there is, by contrast, a higher, aesthetic unity to nature and morality, a unity that completes the human being, by integrating a person's identity with her changing conditions, her dignity with her happiness. This completeness of a human being is an aesthetic state, the play of reason and sensibility, directed at beauty. Thus, while he takes Kant to construe beauty in subjective terms, namely, as the form of an object that, when represented, sets our cognitive capabilities into a state of ‘free play,’ Schiller defines beauty objectively as a ‘living form,’ the object corresponding to the play-drive that completes human nature by freeing it from the constraints of both the sensual and the rational drives. Schiller accordingly observes that ‘with beauty man shall only play and it is with beauty only that he shall play. For, to mince matters no longer, man plays only when he is in the full sense of the word a human being, and he is wholly a human being only when he plays” (Essays, p. 131). As attested by Hegel among others (cf. n. 24, 25 above), Schiller had already launched his critique against Kant—specifically, against Kant's concept of the autonomous “dignity and worth” of pure moral “duty”—in his *On Grace and Dignity* of 1793. His *Spieltrieb*'s function of the true education of man—as in the words of his ‘Ode to Joy’ immortalized by Beethoven's fourth movement of the Ninth Symphony—was a reformulation of that concept of Grace.

62 GOETHE, 1987, part one, and part two. See David Luke's Introduction to part two *passim*, especially in reference to Act II, “Helena”, and Index, p. 292.

63 GOETHE, 1987, part II, 12104 ff.: “All that must disappear / Is but a parable; / What lay beyond us, here / All is made visible; / Here deeds have understood / Words they were darkened by; / Eternal Womanhood / Draws us on high.”

64 *Ibid.*, pp. 80-81. “It was according to this ideal of human beauty that the art of antiquity was framed, and one recognizes it in the divine form of Niobe, in Belvederean Apollo, in the Winged Genius of Borghese, and in the Muse of the Berberini Palace.” (G&D 381).

its achievement of Secondness.” Schiller’s classic treatises on aesthetic sensibility informing the basis of *poiesis* in fact add rich color to Peirce’s theoretical architectonics. Beauty, says Schiller, dictates to mankind the “twofold law” of absolute formality and concrete realization—which is again the “twin laws” of synechistically interpermeating “identity and metamorphosis” that implicate Peirce’s “esthetic” considerations of a “first” normatively regulative principle of human rationality and indeed of cosmic semeiosis and the *finious* nature of “evolutionary love.”<sup>65</sup>

Now Schiller himself achieved a huge generalization of this doctrine in Letter 16, in effect constituting the idea of *Beauty* as *qualitatively first* in its *omnimodal potency* subtending its instrumental and constituting its providential roles. As we have seen, as a principle of *ideal equilibrium* the play-drive functions as the *balancing* measure of the reciprocal action (*Wechselwirkung*) of the sensuous and formal drives. Thus in practice there is always an oscillation in the reciprocal action of what Schiller describes as “energizing” and “melting” Beauty—(energizing the languid, and restoring harmony to the tense, forms of aesthetic consciousness). Beauty in ideal form of practice resolves both these opposing modes, absorbing them in the unity of the ideal Man. In either case such a “pure conception of humanity” is the harmonizing lure of holistic human conduct. Beauty in its omnimodal generality transports us into an “intermediate region” between sensuous passivity and intellectual or moral freedom; it mediates by sublation (*Aufhebung*) in a higher unity of the two sides.<sup>66</sup> And Schiller says this concept of Beauty as the normative ideal of humanity “will lead us through the whole labyrinth of aesthetics” (88). (In net effect, Schiller has here already pushed beyond Fichte and toward the naturalistic-idealistic reflections of the young Schelling.)

Letter 19 further elaborates upon this complex confluence of post-Kantian concepts that seems to have left an unforgettable, though for years an unconscious, impression on Peirce. Beauty is a means of leading Man from matter to form, from perception to principles, from a limited to an absolute existence. But again, the *mind* itself is neither matter nor form, neither sensuousness nor reason. The *will* operates as the authority over these two conflicting necessities, giving rise to freedom. The *will* functions here in the sense of Kant’s “supersensible substrate” of noumenal

65 In an even fuller analysis, we can speculate that Schelling’s *Freiheitschrift* (of 1809), which postulated concepts of Becoming, Purposiveness, and Love in the Divine Personality, formed another background for Peirce’s sense of cosmic semeiosis and evolutionary love. Schelling transmuted these concepts into his later “progressive empiricism,” i.e. “metaphysical empiricism,” expounded in his Berlin Lectures of 1842. Cf. SCHELLING, 1987, pp. 171 ff.

66 *Ibid.* pp. 88-89. Schiller refers here to Goethe; and according to Reginald Snell, this passage could be the original precedent for Hegel’s “dialectical” concept of *Aufhebung*. But I am rather inclined to interpret Schiller’s “middling” or “intermediate region” of aesthetic play as a variation on Aristotelian *method* of conjugating matter and form; the same methodic form is characteristic of Goethe. Kant employed the same “synoptic” (not “dialectical”) method that resolves material subject matters and their formal principles into their essential features in his three *Critiques*. Peirce’s text’s methodic operator is consistently synoptic in the form of fallibilistically resolute, rejecting Hegel’s “pragmatoidal,” i.e. anancastic, form of “dialectical” logic. (Cf. EP2, 143 among many other references).

freedom (articulated in the third *Critique*). Necessities *outside* ourselves determine our (Fichtean sense of) *condition*, that is, our *existence* in time, while necessities *inside us* inform of our intellectual and moral determinations to counterbalance the sense of external resistance. An “aesthetic free will to play,” so to speak—a variation on his theme of “grace” over the Kantian moral “dignity and worth” in his former treatise, *Grace and Dignity*—integrates these two conflicting energies in its concrete revelations of the Beautiful as the ideal of our humanity. The “middling disposition” of the play-drive functions as such a *principle of harmonization* as well as *imaginative lure* in this asymptotic human universe. Peirce reformulated this sense of sublation of outer and inner components of consciousness—and attendant problematic of the coincident determinisms and indeterminisms of life—first in his I-IT-THOU Tuism and later in the terms of his master-concept of synechism and its attendant articulation of the trichotomic process of semeiosis.<sup>67</sup>

Now, according to Schiller, *Freedom* is an operation of sensuous *Nature* (in the widest sense of the term, as in Goethe's reprisal of Spinoza) and not a work of a merely individual Man; but it arises only when Man is *complete*, that is, when both his sensuous and rational impulses have achieved mediation in a more concrete synthesis of the Play-drive. It is lacking as long as he is incomplete; it must be restored by the Play-impulse which gives him back his completeness. Historically and in the individual, says Schiller, the sense-impulses operate earlier than the rational; and in this *priority* of the sense-impulses, together with their transformability into an aesthetically free disposition, we find the key to the whole history of human freedom.<sup>68</sup>

Letter 21 further elaborates Schiller's point that esthetic determinacy occupies priority in the normative disposition of fulfilled humanity (individually and historically). Beauty, he says, is a “second Creator.” (Cf. Peirce's aforesaid “Reasonableness that Creates.”). Its omni-modal potentiality for the co-permeation of the sensuous and formal drives functions as “an infinite inner abundance”;

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67 “But dualism in its broadest legitimate meaning as the philosophy which performs its analyses with an axe, leaving, as the ultimate elements, unrelated chunks of being, this is most hostile to synechism. In particular, the synechist will not admit that physical and psychical phenomena are entirely distinct,—whether as belonging to different categories of substance, or as entirely separate sides of one shield,—but will insist that all phenomena are of one character, though some are more mental and spontaneous, others more material and regular. Still, all alike present that mixture of freedom and constraint, which allows them to be, nay, makes them to be teleological, or purposive” (‘Immortality in the Light of Synechism,’ 1893, EP2 2). Here Peirce taps not only into Schiller's sense of the play-drive, but also into Schelling's sense of the artistic genius whose creative urge unites conscious and non-conscious forces in his personality and in society—Schelling's formulations themselves tracing back to variations of the theme of genius in Kant, Goethe, and Schiller.

68 *Ergo*, Schiller (2004) writes, “there is an education for health, for the understanding, for morality, and for taste (for Beauty). This last has as its aim the cultivation of the whole of our sensuous and intellectual powers in the fullest possible harmony. This does not mean that the aesthetic condition operates independently of the physical, intellectual, and moral laws, but is again omnimodally free of any specific determinations by them in its domain of contemplative pleasure.” (p. 99).

its ideal freedom of determination is a “filled infinity,” promoting transports of spirit indifferent in relation to knowledge and merely individual mental tasks. Once again, as quoted *verbatim* by the 16-year old Peirce, Beauty gives “no merely individual result, realizes no individual purpose, and helps us perform no individual duty.” Rather, Beauty restores to a person his or her capacity to participate in Nature’s own ecstatic freedom of expression—which is ‘the highest gift of all, the gift of Humanity itself.’ In actual practice, man loses this capacity with every definite (Fichtean) *condition* into which he sinks, and therefore needs to achieve the epitome of restoring his *naturally free disposition* by means of the *aesthetic life of the spirit*.<sup>69</sup>

Letter 22 further articulates Schiller’s argument that the *aesthetic disposition*, while it can be regarded in one sense as a *cipher* (confining our attention to individual and definite operations), yet in another respect is “a condition of the *highest reality*” (103), as “the absence of all limits and the sum total of the powers which are jointly engaged within it.” This *disposition toward Beauty* removes all limitation; is not caught up in the fixed sequences of causes and effects; is oriented toward wholeness in itself, combining in itself the conditions of origin and of continued existence. Thus while the normal run of sensual perceptions make us further impressionable in the order of sensuous perception, and that of concepts strengthens our resistances and hardens them proportionately, though depriving us of greater spontaneity, in the experience of Beauty we are at such a moment “masters in equal degree of our passive and active powers, and shall turn with equal facility to seriousness or to play, to rest or to movement, to compliance or to resistance, to abstract thinking or to beholding.” (This *disposition to Beauty*, also articulated by Goethe, became a front and center theme in Emerson’s writings.)<sup>70</sup>

69 In another study, I would venture to relate these fundamental thoughts to the original Chinese Taoist classics of Lao Tzu and Chuang Tzu. The *Tao* of Taoism functions in Peirce’s synergistic symmetry of “the Thirdness of Firstness” and “the Firstness of Thirdness.” And in passing we might consider how this captures the non-dual world-affirming spirit of “Zen” and its many historical exemplifications in the Zen arts transposed to the aesthetic-religious life. Conversely, it is very different from the “life of the spirit” as a disillusioned world-transcending “aesthetic liberation” articulated by Schopenhauer and Santayana. Given the role Peirce assigns to the Qualities (icons) of the Book of Nature and of human language that are synechistically coimplicative with the Esthetic normative ideal (the “Firstness of Thirdness”) as set within his Tritism of categorial and semeiotic trivalence, Peirce writes: “Now as to their function in the economy of the Universe, the Universe as an argument is necessarily a great work of art, a great poem—for every fine argument is a poem and a symphony—just as every true poem is a fine argument.” Peirce goes on to analogize this with the iconic qualities of an impressionistic seaside painting: “then every Quality in a Premiss [as a predicate of a perceptual judgment] is one of the elementary colored particles of the Painting [of the Universe]; they are all meant to go together to make up the intended Quality that belongs to the whole as whole. That total effect is beyond our ken; but we can appreciate in some measure the resultant Quality of parts of the whole—which Qualities result from the combination of elementary Qualities that belong to the premises” (CP 5. 119). [Once again, this is pure Emerson, too!]

70 Emerson’s essay “Beauty” in *The Conduct of Life* (1860) expresses how Beauty functions as the lure of Thought or, in other words, plays the ablative/abductive role of symbolic translation in creative sign-transferences: “Thought is the pent air-ball which can rise

Letter 23 completes this disquisition on connatural esthetic normativity. The transition from the passive condition of perceiving to the active one of intellection and willing involves *passage through* an “intermediate condition” of aesthetic freedom. Even though this intermediate condition decides nothing in respect of our judgment or our opinions, Schiller goes on to say, “There is no other way to make the sensuous man rational than by first making him aesthetic.” Beauty in both instances is merely the *capacity*, but determines nothing absolutely concerning the *actual use* of this capacity. The sensuous man is determined (physically) from the outside; the intellectual man from the inside; but the source of the latter's real spontaneity and freedom lies in the “symmetry” of his aesthetic nature. Or again, his “aesthetic temper”—read: Peirce's “feeling”—provides the basis for the spontaneity of reason in its *active ennoblement* of the sensuous—read: Peirce's doctrine of abductive inference—and hence Schiller's political concept of the primacy of aesthetic culture as the basis of the condition of universal moral validity. “In the realm of truth and morality sensation must have nothing to determine; but in the sphere of happiness form may exist and the play impulse may govern.”<sup>71</sup>

*Mutatis mutandis*, these formulations are all precedents to Peirce's sense of Esthetics as the first of the theoretical normative sciences, the science of the Admirable, of a “Reasonableness that Creates.”<sup>72</sup>

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the planet, and the beauty which certain objects have for him, is the friendly fire which expands the thought, and acquaints the prisoner that liberty and power await him. The question of Beauty takes us out of surfaces, to thinking of the foundations of things. Goethe said, “The beautiful is a manifestation of secret laws of Nature, which, but for this appearance, had been forever concealed from us.” (EMERSON, 1983, pp. 1102-03)

- 71 *Ibid.*, p. 112: “He [...] must play at being at war with matter within the boundaries of matter, so that he may be relieved from fighting against this dreadful foe upon the sacred soil of freedom; he must learn to desire more *nobly*, that he may not be compelled to will *sublimely*,” with respect to “everything around it, even what is lifeless”—[as the tradition of objective idealism in Schelling, Emerson, and Peirce proceeded to articulate in metaphysical and poetical formulations.]
- 72 “Pragmaticism consists in the living inferential metaboly of symbols, whose purport lies in conditional general resolutions to act. *As for the ultimate purpose of thought*, which must be the purpose of everything, it is beyond human comprehension; but according to the stage of approach which my thought has made to it—with aid from many persons, among whom I may mention Royce (in his *World and Individual*), [F. C. S.] Schiller in his *Riddles of the Sphinx*, as well, by the way, as the famous poet [Friedrich von Schiller] (in his *Aesthetische Briefe*), Henry James the elder (in his *Substance and Shadow* and in his conversations), together with Swedenborg himself—it is by indefinite replication of self-control upon self-control that the *vir* is begotten, and by action, through thought, *he grows an esthetic ideal*, not for the behoof of his own poor noodle merely, but as the share which God permits him to have in the world of creation.” [*The next paragraph is pure Emerson*]: “*This ideal* by modifying the rules of self-control modifies action, and so experience too—both the man's own actions and that of others, and *this centrifugal movement thus redounds in a new centripetal movement*, and so on; and the whole is a bit of what has been going on, we may presume, for a time in comparison with which the sum of the geological ages is as the surface of an electron in comparison with that of a planet” (5.402 n. 3, my emphasis; cf. 5.3).

### 3. Brief recapitulation

Peirce wrote that Schiller's *Letters on the Aesthetic Education of Man* contained his earliest articulation of his three categories "in disguise." His categorical Tritism peaked in the accretions of his three Normative Sciences, Esthetics, Ethics, and Logic, with Esthetics, the first of the Normative Sciences, corresponding to the phenomenological category of Firstness. If we parse this in rough schematic form, we can see that the "IT" of his initial categories corresponded to Schiller's realm of the sensuous drive—that is, the realm of reification in objective material being which in its brute otherness anticipated his category of Secondness. The "I" of his initial categories corresponded to the (Kantian and Fichtean) freedom and spontaneity of the intellectual and moral life—which Peirce transformed into the incipient freshness of qualitative consciousness in Feeling (Firstness), while relegating the existential condition of the I-object polarities of "transcendental" epistemological and moral consciousness to the subject-object binary of Secondness. The mediating, moderating, dialogic THOU of Peirce's youthful categorial speculation was then his earliest—and already "gravid with young truth"—formulation of his mature iconography of synthetic, sympathetic, communicating Mind in variescently concrecent intra-, inter-, and extra-personal modalities of experience. It symmetrized with Schiller's sense of the aesthetically liberating disposition in its harmonizing function of the play-drive, combining the conflicting tendencies of the sensuous and formal drives in the realized and realizable embodiments of graceful personal character and, in the long educative run, of cosmical concrete reasonableness.

As reformulated by Peirce after 1889, the educative THOU blossomed into the dialogically iconic metaphoricity of THE UNIVERSE PERFUSED WITH SIGNS—in the categorial sense of Thirdness as Representation; in the metaphysical sense of "the One Law of Mind" and of "Evolutionary Love"; in the critical semeiotic sense of symbolic metaboly in the ongoing interpermeating synergies of natural and human interpretants in respect of the regulative ideal of the Final Interpretant of the predicative ideal of the Admirable *per se* as Concrete Reasonableness. In tandem with that, Peirce came to articulate the future conditional nature of meaning in his Pragmaticism, and conceived of *poiesis* in Nature and Art as a "Firstness of Thirdness" within his overall "objective idealism" of empirical-metaphysical discovery. In the final years of his brilliant career, Peirce—again explicitly citing Schiller—prioritized the instinctive play of Musement and Uberty (reasonings "gravid with young truth") in his philosophy.

All these things considered—though necessarily in only roughest outline here—Schiller's *Letters* exerted, in the words of Nathan Houser, an "indelible impression" upon Peirce.<sup>73</sup> Peirce absorbed and, in due course, hugely translated Schiller's aesthetic philosophy into a broader, more multivariate architectonic system, one which in the final analysis bids fair to have achieved one of the most comprehensive and richly suggestive metaphysics of our human way of partaking in the supreme fiction of "Mere Being" in the history of philosophy.<sup>74</sup>

73 EP2, 527, fn. 6.

74 *The palm at the end of the mind,  
Beyond the last thought, rises*

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*In the bronze décor,*

*A gold-feathered bird*

*Sings in the palm, without a human meaning,*

*Without human feeling, a foreign song.*

*You know then that it is not the reason*

*That makes us happy or unhappy.*

*The birds sings. Its feathers shine.*

*The palm stands on the edge of space.*

*The wind moves slowly in the branches,*

*The bird's fire-fangled feathers dangle down.*

("Of Mere Being", Wallace Stevens. The last line of this final Stevens' poem features *poiesis* as the mythological phoenix.)

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Data de envio: 25-02-2014

Data de aprovação: 28-03-2014