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## **The Purposefulness in our Thought: A Kantian Aid to Understanding Some Essential Features of Peirce<sup>1</sup>**

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### **Abstract**

This paper aims to shed light on the role played by purposefulness in Peirce's account of thought by means of a comparison with Kant's regulative principles. Purposefulness, as an orientation toward an end involved in a thought process, is distinguished from purposiveness, as conformity to an end. Peirce's architectonic, cosmology, and theory of natural classes are briefly analyzed in light of these concepts. Then, a comparison between Peirce's esthetic ideal and regulative hopes and Kant's regulative ideas and principle of purposiveness is undertaken. This comparison, while allowing us to find a solution for some difficulties, especially some regarding Peirce's esthetics, shows how purposefulness is far more important for the American thinker. Thus, purposefulness and purposiveness turn out to be primarily regulative principles of our thought. As such, they allow us to identify a transcendental level in Peirce's philosophy, avoiding the inconsistencies that have been attributed to Karl-Otto Apel's account.

*Keywords:* Charles S. Peirce, Immanuel Kant, Friedrich Schiller, Purposefulness, Purposiveness, Synthetic reasoning, Esthetic Ideal, Regulative Hopes, Regulative Ideas, Transcendental Philosophy

### **Introduction<sup>2</sup>**

From his own day to ours, the Kantian character of Charles S. Peirce's philosophy has been recognized and (in recent decades) documented, so it would seem to be superfluous to do so once again. In a general manner, the relevance of concepts like finality, purpose, and end to an understanding of some of his most fundamental doctrines (especially his pragmatism or pragmatism)

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cism) has also been widely recognized. What is, however, lacking in the secondary literature on Peirce is not so much a detailed, systematic account of the role that purposefulness plays in securing the unity of his thought<sup>3</sup> but such an account developed in specific reference to Kant's critical project. If Peirce were interpreted in this light, we would obtain a deeper insight into the (methodo)-logical root that grounds the different shapes that the orientation toward an end assumes in his theoretical undertaking. That is, nothing less than the diverse forms of human purposefulness, as envisioned by Peirce himself, would come into sharper focus.

There are certainly many respects in which Peirce can be considered Kantian or non-Kantian, and his conception of purposefulness is undoubtedly one of those. His purpose-oriented account of natural classes is deeply inspired by Aristotle. Moreover, the development of Darwinian evolutionism was surely a relevant influence on his renewed interest for end-oriented processes in nature. However, I think that a comparison with Kant can help us understand those respects in which purposefulness is logically relevant; that is, it can help us grasp those respects in which purposefulness is an essential principle for the process of reasoning.

The warrant for interpreting Peirce's philosophy in light of purposefulness is provided by Peirce himself, insofar as he chooses the word *pragmatism* for the connection between rational cognitions and rational purposes that it recommends. His vindication of using *pragmatism* as a word to identify his doctrine (rather than *practicalism*), is based on the Kantian distinction between *pragmatisch* and *praktisch*.<sup>4</sup> *Pragmatisch*, for him, identifies a dimension of thought in "relation to some definite human purpose."<sup>5</sup> This makes the *pragmatic* virtually synonymous with the *purposeful*, where the purposeful is not bound to selfish ends, but consists in an intersubjective and general process that makes signs grow in a social undertaking. It is just in the tasks of highlighting the generality involved in Peirce's idea of purposefulness and of distinguishing it from any utilitarian view of purposes that a comparison with some concepts of Kant, developed in the 2nd Appendix and in the Architectonic of the first *Critique* and in the third *Critique*, becomes useful and not banal.<sup>6</sup> While such a comparison has to some extent been undertaken, more needs to be done—in particular, we need to move beyond the restrictive focus on regulative ideas (as important as a proper understanding of such ideas is).<sup>7</sup>

For our purposes, I will define, at the outset, *purposefulness* as orientation toward an end involved in a thought process, distinguishing it from the more specific concept of *purposiveness*, with which I will identify the Kantian idea of *Zweckmäßigkeit*, that is conformity to an end.<sup>8</sup> It is impossible to examine *all* the different but arguably interrelated senses in which the connection to a purpose is both a theme treated in

depth by Peirce and a factor giving direction to his endeavors. Hence, what I hope to accomplish in this paper is simply to identify the methodological root that lies at the basis of all the different shapes that the orientation toward an end gains in Peirce's philosophy as a whole.<sup>9</sup> As we will see, it is here that we find the means to understand Peirce's account of natural teleology. In doing so, it should become clear that Peirce develops more fully than Kant the importance of purposefulness. He does so in a way that highlights both his affinity to, and differences from, his predecessor: the concept of purposefulness provides us with the key to understanding the *hypothetical* and *self-corrective* character of Peirce's philosophy as a whole. While the possibility of limitless self-correction is recognized by Kant, the need for a mode of thinking other than the merely hypothetical is at the basis of Kant's project. Kant goes so far as to assert in the Preface to the first edition of the first *Critique*: "Everything . . . which bears any manner of resemblance to an hypothesis is to be treated as contraband; it is not to be put up for sale even at the lowest price, but forthwith confiscated, immediately upon detection" (KrV, A XV). What could be farther from the self-understanding of an experimentalist, especially one who characterized one of his most famous doctrines as the "logic of abduction" (that is, the logic of the formation of hypotheses)? From Kant, Peirce inherited the ideal of human reason holding itself accountable in a strict, severe sense not only for its claims about reality but also for its ideals, goals, and purposes. The Kantian account of knowledge demands, at least in the empirical employment of human concepts, limitless adjustments, including inevitable self-correction.

In order to support these claims, I will discuss, first, Peirce's architectonic as a fulfillment of our orientation toward an end and, moreover (if we limit our attention to logic and the sciences more abstract than it), as an attempt to identify the fundamental elements of thought which allow us to address a question that, like Kant in the third *Critique*, he takes to be of central importance. That is, how can we, starting from experience, obtain a synthetic knowledge of the empirical world? Though the relationship between these two concerns may not be immediately obvious, it becomes so when we realize that the possibility of such synthesis depends ultimately upon the presence of purposefulness. But, in particular, Peirce's answer to this question makes use of his notions of esthetic ideal and regulative hopes.<sup>10</sup> These notions themselves and their deployment in this context, however, are enhanced by being connected to the Kantian concept of regulative ideas and the equally central Kantian principle of purposiveness. Yet this is not all. In their distinctively Kantian form, these concepts assist Peirce in realizing his own philosophical purposes helping us in finding a consistent formulation of the esthetic ideal and regulative hopes. While Kant assists Peirce in this respect, Peirce in the end goes beyond Kant precisely in reference to the topics

under consideration. The result of this is not a rejection of Kant but a radical transformation of the transcendental project. This transformation is, however, quite different than the one identified by the foremost contemporary proponents of Peirce as a transcendental pragmatist, most notably Karl-Otto Apel. Hence, I will in conclusion not only identify the sense in which even the mature Peirce was engaged in a “transcendental” project but also dissociate this sense from that of Apel.

### *The Fundamental Orientation Toward an End*

Recall that, for our purposes, *purposefulness* is to be understood as an orientation toward an end involved in a thought process. As such, it provides us the means to understand Peirce’s own architectonic project, which I will suggest should be understood as a self-understanding of thought in which we are both using and showing the synthetic and hypothetical structure of our systems of signs.

It is hardly necessary to remind readers of Peirce that he was committed to constructing philosophy *architectonically* (CP 1.176–178). Even if the Kantian inheritance in the use of this word is generally acknowledged, more than often the implications of this inheritance are neglected (KrV, A 832–851 B 860–879).<sup>11</sup> Thus, the relationships among the different sciences are understood by means of Auguste Comte’s model, in which a science borrows its principles from the more abstract science and its contents from the more concrete one (EP 2:258, 458).<sup>12</sup> I certainly do not want to say that this interpretation of Peirce is incorrect, for I would be flying in the face of too much textual evidence, but I do want to stress that we lose something very important if we limit ourselves to this pattern viewing Peirce’s architectonic exclusively in reference to Comte’s model. In relying solely on Comte’s schema to represent what Peirce means by *architectonic*, we forget the holistic picture of a system that Peirce shares with Kant. Thus, Peirce, after having linked the cosmological to the architectonic character of philosophy, claimed:

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 the necessity of planning it out from the beginning. [CP 1.177]<sup>13</sup>

If we have to construct our philosophy by the fission of minute parts, we have to possess first of all the idea of the whole, which must guide us in the organization of the elements. Without some idea of a possible whole of knowledge, human inquiry can never be anything more than blind groping and perhaps even less than this—spasmodic exertions now in this direction, now in that. With a search for the whole (i.e., with a directive purpose), however, human inquiry becomes a

deliberate undertaking, a self-conscious and self-critical project with a ceaselessly self-corrective future. The priority of the idea of a possible whole is the heart of the Kantian architectonic and is immediately linked with purposefulness.<sup>14</sup> Even if Peirce offers what is deliberately (or conscientiously) limited to an architectonic of experimental reason, not one of *pure* reason, the inspiration and, to some extent, the form of this system owe more to Kant than Comte. Thus, both for Peirce and Kant we construct our systems making the form of the whole an end to pursue. Accordingly, in the first *Critique* Kant wrote:

In accordance with reason's legislative prescriptions, our diverse modes of knowledge must not be permitted to be a mere rhapsody, but must form a system. Only so can they further the essential ends of reason. By a system I understand the unity of the manifold modes of knowledge under one idea. This idea is the concept provided by reason of the form of a whole. [KrV, A 832 B860]<sup>15</sup>

It is a vague anticipation of the whole that drives us to the construction of a system; an idea that functions like an indeterminate end which does not hold in itself the actual relationship of the parts before their concrete emergence. "For this idea lies hidden in reason, like a germ in which the parts are still undeveloped and barely recognizable even under microscopic observation" (KrV, A 834 B 862). This is to say that the directions in which our knowledge will eventually move, the forms that it will historically assume, are not predetermined by the presence of the idea of a possible whole. We need to consider the contents of our actual knowledge to develop a definite whole suitable to account for them. As a consequence, the definite whole which constitutes our result is not anticipated in any way in the idea of a possible whole that guides us in our search for this reaching. Thus, the operative presence of an essential end of human reason at the very outset of its self-critical employment does not prevent the fully developmental and dynamical character of the architectonic itself. If this is so (and there is very strong reason to believe it is), Peirce's claim that we have only historically bounded totalities is compatible with the claim that we have to pursue the shape of the whole so as to obtain a determinate ordering, and I think this is the way in which we have to understand his architectonic.<sup>16</sup>

The architectonic is thus at once an instance of a progressive organization of our thought in order to conform our ideal of knowledge and, if we limit our attention to logic and the sciences that it presupposes, a picture of the fundamental elements that are present in our thought among which this orientation itself finds a place. As a consequence, the purposefulness involved in the semiotic process constitutes the ground to understand the orientation toward a congruent representation experienced in the architectonic.<sup>17</sup> Granting that, I do believe that we can

find a solid basis to understand not only all the expression of the orientation toward an end involved in a thought process, but even the teleological tendency in real objects postulated by Peirce.

Is it not true that Peirce holds that the orientation toward an end of our inferences and of the process of inquiry is only an aspect of the general growth of reason which joins together thought and nature (CP 8.256)? This question could hide some essential differences in the way in which Peirce accounts for the end-orientation of thought and of the world as a whole (our thought included). But it raises another question. That is, why does Peirce need to give a common account of thought and nature by means of the orientation toward an end? I think that, for Peirce, we do not have to explain our thinking as a phenomenon of the process of evolution that we find in the world;<sup>18</sup> on the contrary, the process of evolution of the world remains an explanatory hypothesis to account for the achievements of our thought (CP 1.487).<sup>19</sup> It means that the orientation toward an end that we postulate in cosmology finds its ground in the purposive character of the semiotic process. Thus, it is in the normative sciences that we discover the roots of the explanatory hypothesis developed in Peirce's metaphysics. If I am right, this allows the employment of a comparison with Kant even to approach Peirce's treatment of teleology in cosmology, as far as we have to understand this process only in analogy to the principle that we encounter in the normative sciences. Obviously, it is not possible to ascribe any objective value to purposefulness by the simple postulation of this analogy. So, when Peirce tries to show that there are real tendencies toward ends in nature, he also has to point out some empirical evidence. It is true that for Peirce we might reach an answer to the question if this teleology is *real* or not, whereas for Kant it is not, but, until the evolutionary process functions as an explanatory hypothesis, we have to find his ground in the conformity with the semiotic process of generalization. If we remind ourselves of our definition of purposefulness and purposiveness—whereby the former means an orientation toward an end involved in a thought process and the latter a conformity to an end—we can see how the architectonic deals essentially with purposefulness, while cosmology, being the postulation of a conformity between reality and the purposefulness involved in thought, is actually an instance of purposiveness.

The same thing can be said for the concept of natural classification.<sup>20</sup> Kant holds that in respect of some objects we are compelled to use the concept of final causation to understand their being, but we cannot ascribe a real value to this final cause (KU 239–249). This is precisely the point in which Peirce's philosophy departs the most from that of Kant. For Peirce *every* law, even the mechanical ones, functions as a final cause, and it *really* governs the facts. Thus, we can have only one natural classification (CP 1.275). This difference is a very important one. It coincides with Peirce's axiom not to block the road of inquiry. In other words, if the concepts that we use for the knowledge

of objects involve a kind of purposiveness and prove to be appropriate to our pragmatic interaction with those objects, why do we need to bound the purposefulness in our conceptual implementations? I do not think that we need to stress this important difference, as it is widely accepted. For our concerns, it is more important to distinguish two issues. First, the fact that for Peirce every law functions as a final cause broadens the boundary of the use of purposiveness with respect to Kant. Second, if we look at the natural classification in the context of Peirce's fallibilism, we can see how we can approach, but never reach, the "true" natural classification. This is to say that the purposive nature of every concept that we use to know the world can be distinguished from the question of the *reality* of this purpose. Only the ultimate answer reached by the inquiry would correspond exactly to the real class that operates in the world. Indeed, we can differentiate two levels in Peirce's teleological account of natural classes: the former *heuristic*, which postulates a conformity between the way in which symbols and the laws that those symbols represent relate to their instances and fall under our definition of purposiveness, the latter *real*, which treats the universe as a purposeful organism and is opposed to Kant.<sup>21</sup>

In the same way as in cosmology, in natural classification the postulation of a real orientation toward an end for the facts which fall under a law rests upon an analogy between the way we relate signs and the principle which guides the organization of the universe. We can thus distinguish the question of the purposefulness necessarily involved in our class-concept from the question of its reality. If this is true, we can see how a reference to Kant can help us clarify the former question, as far as his concern is to show how we must use the idea of teleology in our knowledge without the right of giving it a real value.

I hope I have succeeded in vindicating a unifying approach to the many ways purposefulness takes in Peirce's thought as a fundamental development and reconfiguration of some problems faced by Kant as well. This is possible only focusing on the normative science as the core of Peirce's notions of purpose, final cause and end, and on semiosis as the teleological process of the growth of signs that forces Peirce to think in terms of orientation toward an end even in other fields of inquiry. Having suggested how the root of every instantiation of the idea of purposefulness lies in the architectonical and synthetic picture that Peirce uses to represent our thought, it is now time to analyze in detail how this semiotic process works.

### ***How Are Synthetical Judgments Possible?***

I am now going to introduce a fundamental problem which accompanied Peirce throughout much of his career. We can find it in the early vindications of the method of induction,<sup>22</sup> or in the late appeal to instinct to explicate our power of abduction.<sup>23</sup> This problem concerns the possibility of the synthesis, the possibility of the growth of knowledge. Even



though both induction and abduction are, for Peirce, synthetic, I think it is in abduction that we face the issue in all its fullness as far as it is the only reasoning that can introduce a new idea, or use a past idea in a new context, while induction can only extend the value of an assertion upon some members of a class to the whole class (EP 1:189). Thus, only abduction can introduce a totally new class, or change our representation of it in order to introduce a new member. It is for this reason that our concern regarding synthetic reasoning will focus on abduction. Approaching this issue by means of the words of Peirce is particularly fruitful because he states it in a direct critical relation to Kant which, as we will see, justifies our looking to the third *Critique*.

According to Kant, the central question of philosophy is “How are synthetical judgments *a priori* possible?” But antecedently to this comes the question how synthetical judgments in general, and still more generally, how synthetical reasoning is possible at all. [EP 1:78]

First of all, it is important to notice that Peirce wrote these words in 1869. Indeed, he formulated very early the problem that we are exploring. Accusing Kant of not having first answered the question about the general possibility of the synthesis, Peirce is touching a very essential point of his position in respect to the German thinker. For Peirce, one of the biggest mistakes Kant made was to maintain the strong distinction between feeling, as passivity, and understanding, as activity<sup>24</sup>. It is the strong notion of understanding as activity that allows Kant to draw from logic the table of *a priori* categories and to characterize them as something completely knowable independently of our particular experience. Subsequently, he vindicates the application of these categories to experience in general by means of their reference to the *a priori* forms of space and time. After having divided the two worlds of feeling and understanding, he holds a necessary application of the latter to the former without giving an explanation of how this mediation is possible, said Peirce. The first question would have been: how can we use our general concept to judge a particular feeling? The Peircean answer to this question lies in the mediating function of the sign. The sign has the ability to connect a singular occurrence with a general term. Peirce saw in the Kantian notion of schema an attempt to account for this mediating function, an attempt that, for him, came too late.

His doctrine of schemata can only have been an afterthought, an addition to his system after it was substantially complete. For if the *schemata* had been considered early enough, they would have overgrown his whole work. [CP 1.35]

Thus, for Peirce, the main error of Kant was not having considered *synthesis* in general as the ground from which to build his whole system.

But if we look at the third *Critique*, I think that we can recognize the process of synthesis as its essential concern, as far as “the power of judgment in general is the faculty for thinking of the particular as contained under the universal” (KU, 66). The power of judgment is precisely the faculty that brings together feelings and concepts. It is a principle that enables us to use a general rule to apprehend a particular fact.<sup>25</sup>

We can see how far this analogy goes if we consider for a moment Schiller’s *Aesthetic Letters*. Peirce’s appreciation of the *play-drive* lies precisely in its mediating function between the passivity of our feelings and the activity of our reason. The first two drives that compose a human soul are the *sensuous* and the *formal* one. “If the first drive only furnishes cases, this second one gives laws” (Schiller, 1967, p. 81). Considered separately these two features of the human soul cannot work. The first would reduce it to matter, without a principle of the unity of matter, and the second would fall in a pure empty formalism (Schiller, 1967, 77). The function of the play-drive is thus to open up a path for the rising of our activity in the middle of our passive apprehensions. The play-drive coincides here with the aesthetic state: A state in which a person is not yet in the pure formal state of the law, while nonetheless free from the pure passivity of perception. It is a pure state of freedom, aside from the material and the formal determinations. It is a state in which we experience form before a determinate form of reason is at hand. There is something like an indeterminate grasp of form at the level of feelings. What is important to notice is that this grasping of form at the level of feeling allows reason to enter the sphere of sensibility. “Through the aesthetic modulation of the psyche, then, the autonomy of reason is already broken up within the domain of sense itself” (Schiller, 1967, p. 163). We find here a similarity between feeling and reason as far as the form of reason is felt in an indeterminate manner in perception.

We have reached a point very close to Kant’s discussion of the judgments of taste. In this kind of judgment, for Kant, we feel a pleasure thanks to the affinity between the form of the object that we experience and the general form of our understanding.

If pleasure is connected with the mere apprehension of the form of an object of intuition without a relation of this to a concept for a determinate cognition, then the representation is thereby related not to the object, but solely to the subject, and pleasure can express nothing but its suitability to the cognitive faculties that are in play in the reflecting power of judgment, insofar as they are in play, and thus merely a subjective formal purposiveness of the object. [KU, pp 75–76]

It is easy to see how Schiller inherits his concept of an aesthetic state and of play from a reading of Kant’s *Critique of the Power of Judgment*.<sup>26</sup> What interests Peirce in Schiller’s letters, and what Kant attempts to solve in his third *Critique*, is precisely a basic problem

regarding the ways of connecting our concepts and rules to our experience.<sup>27</sup> In general, the power of judgment is a faculty that allows us to connect our concepts and our feelings by means of a resemblance between the two. But it is in its *reflecting* form that the power of judgment discloses all its synthetic force as an *a priori* principle for our *a posteriori* experience.<sup>28</sup> In fact, the reflecting power of judgment gives us a principle to search for a rule which enables us judging a surprising percept.<sup>29</sup> Here the question *how are synthetical judgments possible?* gains its full importance, for what the synthesis has to bring about is a completely new rule.<sup>30</sup> What is at issue here is still the need of an *activity* intervening before the possession of a determinate rule and capable of finding it by means of the *similarity* between the facts at end and the rule we need.

It is useful here to remember that for Peirce abduction is the only synthetic reasoning that enables us to discover a new idea (EP 2:216) and that it works finding *similarities* between an imaginative representation and a general one.<sup>31</sup> As Peirce put it, “This synthesis suggesting a new conception or hypothesis, is the Abduction. It is recognized that the phenomena are *like*, i.e. constitute an Icon of, a replica of a general conception, or Symbol” (EP 2:287).

Now we know that to bring about a synthetic concept we need a process capable of acknowledging similarities between the form of our apprehension and the form of our symbols.<sup>32</sup> The call for an intermediate state between determinate passivity and determinate activity is thus a common problem that Kant, Schiller and Peirce face in different but interrelated contexts. Having individuated the common problem in the need for a synthetic process of mediation that allows one to obtain a new concept departing from not yet organized representations, we have now to analyze which elements play an active role in this generative semiotic process.

### *Hoping for the Admirable*

To answer the question how a progressive organization of our thought is possible from a Peircean perspective, we need to analyze two essential concepts: the *esthetic ideal* and the *regulative hopes*. As we will see Peirce needs an esthetic ideal that enables us to anticipate vaguely the form of thirdness which has to guide our inquiry. On the other hand, this guide is not enough to start the process of inquiry. We have to hope that we can fulfill the vague ideal that we are searching for.

### *The Esthetic Ideal and the Regulative Ideas*

It was only after 1902 that Peirce became thoroughly conscious of the self-corrective character of semeiotic, inserting it in his classification of the normative sciences together with ethics and esthetics (CP 1.575–584; 2.196–200).<sup>33</sup> The normative sciences are theoretical sciences

because they do not give us any prescription about how to think and to act. They only describe the fundamental purposive character of our thought, will, and feeling. In the triad, esthetics plays a fundamental role, as far as it gives us a grasp of the *admirable per se* which grounds the orientation toward an end of all of the normative sciences. Thus, we will focus our attention on the science of the *esthetic ideal* given its fundamental role in the synthetic process of inquiry.<sup>34</sup>

After 1902 Peirce gave many contrasting descriptions of esthetics and of the ideals with which it deals. For example, in the *Minute Logic* of 1902 he described the object of esthetics as something that we can feel in its immediate presence, without finding any duality in it (CP 2.199). In contrast, in a 1906 draft for a paper entitled “The Basis of Pragmatism,” he held that esthetic good and bad are closely connected to the secondary feelings of pleasure and pain as kinds of attraction and repulsion, indeed as kinds of action (EP 2:379). I think that we have to look at these as many attempts to resolve some difficult issues that Peirce faced when he searched to give a systematic account of esthetics in the normative sciences. We can list the problems as follows:

- He needed a science of the ideal that grounds the process of self-control and of the growth of reason;
- He was convinced that esthetics, in some ways, deals with feeling;
- He did not want to give a psychological account of logic grounding it in immediate feelings;
- He wanted to find a dualistic character in esthetics, so as to insert it rightfully into the normative sciences.

The movement from one to another illustration of the character of the *admirable per se* coincides with the different emphasis that Peirce placed on one or the other of these problems. Indeed, I do not think that we can find a solution in Peirce. We can only look at the paths that his argumentation takes, so as to find some suggestions for a solution, perhaps with the aid of Kant. We can find a confirmation that this is the case if we have a look to Peirce’s unpublished papers. In a manuscript written in 1910 he identified pain as a pure feeling, contrasting his formulation in “The Basis of Pragmatism” and preventing a picture of linear evolution for his account of esthetics (MS 649.37). In the same paper he noticed that “Pleasure and Pain do not, *in themselves*, carry any sound *Reason* for acting one way, influential as they are in the purely brutal mode” (MS 649.29). That is to say that pleasure and pain cannot constitute any ground for the reasonableness of our ideals, an aspect so fundamental in what Peirce was looking for. Moreover, Peirce doubted the position of esthetics between the Normative Sciences even after 1903. In 1905 he made esthetics a branch of ethics (MS 1334.36) and in 1911 he hesitated to call the first branch of the Normative Sciences esthetics (MS 673.13).

We might take the description of esthetics that he gives us in “The Basis of Pragmatism” (EP 2:361–397) as his final position.<sup>35</sup> True, it gives us a solution to the latter two problems listed above. Peirce did want to distinguish his position from that of Sigwart and the ‘German logicians’ (EP 2:166–169, 252–255). Logic cannot rest upon a *feeling of logicity* which does not allow any distinction between good and bad reasoning. This argument asserts that we hold a reasoning as true so far as we feel it is logical. If afterward we criticize it, we can do so only because we feel the logicity of another reasoning. Thus, we have no criterion by which to assert the truth or the falsity of an argument given that its acceptance or critique rests upon the feeling of the person that holds it, so that when two people hold two different positions, we have no means to choose between the two (EP 2:244).

Peirce tried to move away from this position asserting that pleasure and pain are not immediate feelings but secondary ones which have to do with the attractiveness or the repulsiveness of a primary feeling (EP 2:189–190, 379). This position allowed him to give a dualistic account of esthetics which vindicates its location in the normative sciences, avoiding a foundation dealing with immediate feelings. But there are two problems in this position which, I think, indicate that it is not the best formulation for Peirce’s needs. First, an account of esthetic pleasure and pain based upon the distinction between what is attractive and what is repulsive can hardly give us an idea of what is *admirable per se* as an end to pursue. Second, explaining esthetic experience as a sort of action, we lose an important feature of what Peirce was looking for: the possibility of discovering a similarity between a non-symbolical apprehension and the form of thirdness and lawfulness.

What Peirce needs in his discussion of esthetics is the possibility to anticipate the lawfulness of thirdness in feeling. He needs a vague representation of the reasonableness that we search in inquiry grasped at the level of a qualitative indeterminate sign: “The one thing whose admirableness is not due to an ulterior Reason is Reason itself comprehended in all its fullness, so far as we can comprehend it” (EP 2:255).

It is precisely for this last image of the admirable that the dualistic account based upon the distinction between what is attractive and what is repulsive cannot account. In esthetics Peirce needs a way to ground our inquiry and behavior upon an ideal represented at the level of feeling, an organized feeling that is totally different from the immediate one which grounds logic for Sigwart. The admirable has to give us a vague idea of a system of knowledge that rests with our inquiry to fulfill. It is only after this admirable ideal has been grasped that the dichotomy of the attractive and the repulsive can make sense representing something that fits or does not fit it. Anything can be considered good or bad, beautiful or ugly, desirable or undesirable, only in reference to an ideal that it conforms or not (MS 310.11–12; 649.37–38).<sup>36</sup>

But in so far as selfish ideals are excluded from the scope of esthetics, this ideal must be the unique one that is admirable by any sound rational being, that is Reason itself. Taking the opposition between pleasure and pain as the founding division of esthetics would mean missing the main role of esthetics in the schema of the normative sciences: the individuation of an end independently from any contingent consideration tied to a particular interest. It is for that reason that Peirce speaks about an ideal admirable independent of any ulterior reason (EP 2:142, 201, 253, 255, 260; MS 1334.38–39; 602.10–11; 633.5). As a result, I think we can distinguish the imaginative grasping of the ideal, in which no consideration has to interfere, and the pleasure that we feel in the contemplation of an object which depends on the relationship between that object and the reasonable ideal. Using our distinction between purposefulness and purposiveness, we can say that when Peirce is talking about the *admirable per se* he is referring to the former concept as the end that grounds our generalizing tendency. On the contrary, when he refers to *esthetic enjoyment* he has in mind a conformity to that ideal, approaching the Kantian idea of purposiveness.

I think that now we can seek Kant's aid in order to clarify the problem at hand. The aesthetic judgment upon the beautiful in nature gives us pleasure as far as we feel a *similarity*, a *harmony* between the form of the object apprehended in the imagination and the form of the understanding as a general faculty.

Since the freedom of the imagination consists precisely in the fact that it schematizes without a concept, the judgment of taste must rest on a mere sensation of the reciprocally animating imagination in its freedom and the understanding with its lawfulness, thus on a feeling that allows the object to be judged in accordance with the purposiveness of the representation . . . for the promotion of the faculty of cognition in its free play; and taste, as a subjective power of judgment, contains a principle of subsumption, not of intuitions under concepts, but of the faculty of intuitions or representations (i.e. imagination) under the faculty of concepts (i.e. understanding), insofar as the former in its freedom is in harmony with the latter in its lawfulness. [KU, 167–168]

What Kant is describing is a harmony between the form of the objects in our apprehension and the faculty of concepts in general, before any particular concept is used. Kant's analysis of the judgments of taste is useful to understand what Peirce is looking for as far as he needs an account of pleasure which is brought about by an experience of the form of thirdness at the level of feelings:

it seems to me that while in esthetic enjoyment we attend to the totality of Feeling . . . yet it is a sort of intellectual sympathy, a sense that

here is a feeling that one can comprehend, a reasonable feeling. I do not succeed in saying exactly what it is, but it is a consciousness belonging to the category of Representation though representing something in the Category of Quality of Feeling. [EP 2:190; see also MS 310.9, 11–12]

In Kant's aesthetic judgment we feel a pleasure in so far as we find a similarity with the form of our lawfulness in the form of our apprehension. Likewise, in Peirce's esthetic enjoyment we feel pleasure for the presence of the form of thirdness in the quality of a representation given at the level of feeling; we feel pleasure for the occurrence of the form of reasonableness in the way in which our feelings present themselves. In other words, we feel pleasure because we experience a similarity between the order of feelings and the vague idea of the admirable *per se*.<sup>37</sup>

As a result, when Peirce refers to *esthetic enjoyment* he is dealing with *purposiveness*, insofar as he is treating a conformity between a representation and the ideal of our reason. To the contrary, when he is searching for a way to identify the ideal in itself, the *admirable per se*, he is looking for a grasp of the form of thirdness at the level of qualitative representations capable of offering us a ground for the *purposefulness* involved in our thought.<sup>38</sup> He never held this as his definitive solution because, worried as he was by the danger of identification of the esthetic ideal with Sigwart's immediate feelings, he never succeeded in clarifying the difference between *purposefulness* and *purposiveness*.

Having seen how much we lose in the dualistic account of esthetics, I think now we have enough arguments to distinguish the qualitative vague grasping of thirdness from the foundation of logic upon immediate feelings.<sup>39</sup> Sigwart's position is totally different from Peirce's so far as it uses the feeling of logicity to vindicate the value of an argument. In Sigwart's hands feelings become the only possible ground of justification for any logical process. To the contrary, what Peirce is searching for is not a ground to validate logical reasonings, but a vague ideal to stimulate a course of inference—an ideal grasped in feeling that induces us to develop a reasonableness which has to be justified by itself. As a problem of logical critic, the question of the vindication of arguments "is not a question of whether the mind approves it or not, but is a question of *fact*" (EP 2:252). Peirce's account of the relationship between logic and esthetics is thus more a question of methodetic, insofar as it looks at the course of reasoning in its relationship to the purposed ideal. As a consequence, in distinction from Sigwart, Peirce uses feelings to grasp an ideal that stimulates the development of ulterior reasonings, not to establish an ultimate inexplicable ground of logicity. In other words, if reasonable feelings can help us in understanding the teleological movement of our thought, they cannot be used as an argument to prove its truthfulness.<sup>40</sup>

The function of esthetics in the context of our synthetic reasoning is thus to guide it, providing it an end to approach. In this imaginative grasp of reasonableness I think we can find another similarity with Kant on the grounds of the idea of purposefulness. In the 2<sup>nd</sup> Appendix of the first *Critique* (KrV, A 643–668 B 671–696) Kant presents a regulative character of the ideas of reason that enable us to organize our *a posteriori* experience in a systematic way. The ideas of reason give us a positive scheme of a systematic whole which however can be fulfilled in a multitude of different manners. This means that the regulative ideas provide us an *indeterminate* principle for the rational organization of our knowledge (KrV, A 680 B 708). We tend to give the most systematic account of our thought as possible, and in so doing we follow an indeterminate idea of what is a holistic whole for us.<sup>41</sup> It is precisely this tendency toward an end as a harmonic whole vaguely grasped that Peirce described with the orientation toward an admirable state anticipated indeterminately in esthetics.<sup>42</sup>

But Peirce, identifying the admirable at the level of the qualitative state of representation, provided us a stronger basis for the indeterminate and vague way in which this ideal works. Having seen above how fertile is the imaginative territory that lies between our passive apprehension and our active lawfulness for Peirce, we can understand the power that the ideal gains working at this level, taking advantage of the qualitative correlation between firstness and thirdness. As a result, we can summarize Peirce's account of the growth of knowledge as follows: we have an indeterminate, undeveloped, grasping of the form of thirdness that we must try to reach in our determinate knowledge. It happens that an occurrence captures our attention and asks for an explanation. At this point, we give rise to a process of thought which makes our previous habits of judgment and the present facts at hand play in respect to their *qualitative form*. We let these *forms* play until they reach an organization which is able, by similarity, to satisfy the requirements of the vague, indeterminate form of our ideal.

#### *The Regulative Hopes and the Principle of Purposiveness*

Thus, when we carry through the synthetic process of reasoning we attempt to actualize the form of an ideal, grasped vaguely at the level of non-propositional thought, in the structure of our historically bounded knowledge. The positive use of this ideal for the orientation of our inquiry is made possible by a fecund “play” between thirdness and firstness which can bring about an always new arrangement of the form of our thoughts in order to satisfy the required form of our ideal.

But we have no certainty that the order found thanks to our reasoning will account for experience. We cannot know if the ideal that governs our thought will order it in accordance with the order of the world. Thus, to pursue our ideal in the attempt to give an account of our experience,



we have to hope that, following it, we can always find a habit of thought, a law, a concept, suitable for that experience: “Every attempt to understand anything,—every research,—supposes, or at least *hopes*, that the very object of study themselves are subject to a logic more or less identical with that which we employ” (RLT 257).

This, for Kant, is precisely what we need to judge upon an experience for which we do not know if we have a rule to judge it. We have to *reflect* upon this experience *as if* it had the same form of our understanding, *as if* it were the *purposive* product of a divine mind which created it in behalf of our knowledge.<sup>43</sup> Here, it is useful to recall the words of Kant: “The principle of reflection on given objects of nature is that for all things in nature empirically determinate *concepts* can be found, which is to say the same as that in all of its products one can always presuppose a form that is possible for general laws cognizable by us” (EE, 15–16).

Thus, both for Peirce and Kant we have to approach the inquiry into nature *as if* it had the same form of the laws of our thought. In other words, we cannot know if our inferences will lead us to a result suitable to account for our experience, but to infer we have to hope that this is possible.<sup>44</sup> This is the most thorough way in which Peirce inherits the Kantian principle of purposiveness, as a principle that enables us to develop concepts in order to understand the world we live. It is only on the hypothesis of a conformity between the world and the purposeful form of our thought that we can hope for a successful result of our inferences.

There is an important issue to stress here. Peirce holds the principle of hope in contrast to the transcendental way of argumentation, while the principle of purposiveness is, for Kant, a transcendental principle.

I am not one of those transcendental apothecaries . . . who call for a quantity of big admission, as indispensable *Voraussetzungen* of logic. . . . I do not admit that indispensability is any ground of belief. . . . But all that logic warrants is a *hope*, and not a belief. It must be admitted, however, that such hopes play a considerable part in logic. For example, when we discuss a vexed question, we *hope* that there is some ascertainable truth about it, and that the discussion is not to go on forever and to no purpose. A transcendentalist would claim that it is an indispensable “presupposition” that there is an ascertainable true answer to every intelligible question. I used to talk like that, myself; for when I was a babe in philosophy my bottle was filled from the udders of Kant. But by this time I have come to want something more substantial. [CP 2.113]

Here Peirce, in criticizing the transcendental account of indispensability, is touching on a similar point he made in his 1892 paper “The Doctrine of Necessity Examined,” where he attacked the thesis that the

absolute order of the world is a presupposition of science, a necessary postulate. Peirce criticized this position because what is postulated gains a positive function in the *content* of the inference based upon it. In a postulate we assume as a premise something that is not certain, and we draw from that premise some conclusion, so that the content of the conclusion is directly affected by the postulated premise (EP 1:300–302). Similarly, for Peirce, the transcendentalists take the necessity to hope in the intelligibility of the world as a sufficient ground to believe in this intelligibility.

But, for Kant, the transcendental principle of purposiveness is only a principle to *reflect* upon nature *as if* it were produced in behalf of our knowledge. It does not give us any ground to believe in the reality of this principle, but it gives us only a guide for the research into nature. Indeed, for Kant, using this principle we do not put any determinate *content* into the results that we reach thanks to it.<sup>45</sup> Thus, in spite of the different terminology, we can see how far the similarity between the two goes.

#### *Peirce's Conjunction of Esthetic Ideal and Regulative Hopes*

We can now have an overall idea of the purposeful character of synthetic thought for Peirce. Experience surprises us continuously forcing us to manipulate the complex of our habits to find the simpler explanation as possible. In this process of manipulation we tend toward an ideal form of explanation grasped vaguely in imagination. Moreover, we cannot but hope that this course of reasoning will lead us toward a harmonic whole including thought and world. In the context of a description of what would be the ultimate aim of action Peirce gives us a synopsis which represents very well his idea of the course and the requirements of thought.

It is plain that these two conditions can be fulfilled at once only if it happens that the esthetic quality toward which the agent's free development tends and that of the ultimate action of experience upon him are parts of one esthetic total. Whether or not this is really so, is a metaphysical question which it does not fall within the scope of normative science to answer. If it is *not* so, the aim is essentially *unattainable*. But just as in playing a hand of whist, when only three tricks remain to be played, the rule is to assume that the cards are so distributed that the odd trick can be made, so the rule of ethics will be to adhere to the only possible absolute aim, and to hope that it will prove attainable. [EP 2:203]<sup>46</sup>

This quotation comes from a discussion of ethics. This circumstance notwithstanding, I think it can give us a good illustration of how the semiotic process of thought grows, considering the common normative character of logic and ethics. This hoped tendency toward a final state

of knowledge, resting always on the test of experience, best describes Peirce's idea of the growth of signs. If we have to rearrange the system of our sign in order to account for our experience, we cannot but follow the vague idea of an organized whole that we find vaguely in esthetics. At the same time we have no certainty that a reasoning so developed will lead us to a satisfying explanation of the world. Thus, we have to hope that the process of thought-growing will develop an always more harmonic relationship between knowledge and experience, in which the surprising occurrences are reduced to the minimum.

Accordingly, it is evident how purposefulness, as a regulative key concept to understand the process of generalization that characterizes all of our signs, and purposiveness, as a hope in the conformity between thought and world, are important for Peirce. I think that the categories are "empty" outside this semiotic process,<sup>47</sup> as far as they can be recognized as essential character of every phenomenon only prescinding them from it. They appear, phenomenologically, before our eyes when we look at the semiotic structure of our experience without identifying any particular course of thought, searching to identify the essential characteristics of it.<sup>48</sup> So, we cannot have any idea of the categories, as characters of all phenomena, without the use of examples (W 5:297–298, 303). They are discovered as "tones of thought."<sup>49</sup> Then, it is clear how the categories need an instantiation to achieve any positive content. They are necessary in character but in so vague a manner that they gain determination only when actualized in a particular course of thought.

If the categories can gain determination only in their instantiations, the value of purposefulness for Peirce's thought is far greater than for Kant's. It is only as instruments, as characters, in a process oriented toward an end that they can achieve a positive shape. Thus, the categories can be grasped only in their historical embodiment, in a way that suggests a Hegelian idea of them. And this is not at all a wrong suggestion. But what is important to notice here is that the growth of reasonableness, for Peirce, is not a necessary process brought about by the dialectical movement of thought and nature, but is a regulative process, not at all necessary, to approach an ideal state of knowledge. As a result, Peirce, in developing further than Kant the regulative character of thought, preserves his spirit.

### *The Transcendental Character of the Regulative Ideal*

I believe that the purposeful picture of thought delineated here enables us to identify a new way to individuate a transcendental level in Peirce's semeiotic. In this section I will discuss a criticism brought against Apel's transcendental interpretation of Peirce in order to show how my account can avoid the problems of his understanding, offering a new way to develop a transcendental interpretation of Peirce.

I want to state in advance that my use of the word *transcendental* is more sympathetic with Kant's own use than with contemporary analysis of *transcendental arguments* in general. Since Strawson's interpretation of the first *Critique* appeared,<sup>50</sup> there has been a large debate concerning this subject. In this debate it has been assumed that Kant's transcendental arguments served the need to secure the objectivity of our knowledge against the skeptical doubt.<sup>51</sup> Among others, Henry Allison has noticed how this interpretation is strongly defective.<sup>52</sup> According to him, Kant did not try to vindicate how the ideas within our mind could be applicable to an external object, but wanted to show which principles were necessary to account for our knowledge of that object.<sup>53</sup> If this were true, Kant's project would not be oriented toward the justification of an experience in question, but would be interested chiefly in the structure of our knowledge. In this light, we can understand why Kant uses the term "transcendental" even for regulative principles. As a matter of fact, regulative principles cannot guarantee any objectivity. They are nonetheless transcendental insofar as they are necessary for our experience and knowledge. As far as, in my view, Peirce's esthetic ideal and regulative hopes are necessary regulative principles for the development of our knowledge, they can be seen as transcendental, even if they cannot claim any objective value. There are obviously many divergences between Peirce and Kant in this respect. One of these lies surely in the fact that Peirce does not allow any *determinate* a priori proposition on the object. However, as far as these differences are widely accepted and recognized, I will direct my attention to their similarities.

In a 1994 paper, Cheryl Misak showed correctly many weaknesses in Apel's and Habermas' transcendental account of the semiotic process. In particular she claimed that the assumed self-evident propositions of Apel are not so self-evident. The propositions in question assert that (1) whenever we argue, in principle, we have to expect a possible consensus regarding what we assert, and that (2) we are obliged, in principle, to recognize all possible members of the community of argumentation as having equal rights. Misak criticizes Apel's assumptions saying that we must transcendentially presuppose the first proposition only if we identify truth with what is intersubjectively valid. If we do not do this, we can assert something, believing in its truth, without expecting any possible consensus upon it. At the same time, experience gives us examples which contradict the second proposition, as far as there are people who think that only a restricted group of humans has the same right to participate to the discourse.<sup>54</sup> I think that the criticisms put forth by Misak are fundamentally right, but I think also that they undermine only the transcendental argument of Apel, not every possible way to find a transcendental element in Peirce's thought.

We can avoid the difficulties of Apel's transcendentalism if we do not look at the reference to the unlimited community as the ground for

every course of argumentation. Even if Apel speaks about the ideal agreement as a regulative idea, in point of fact, he substantializes this idea,<sup>55</sup> insofar as he treats the *real* possibility of reaching this final state as the ground upon which to develop a transcendental deduction. It is true that the process of generalization of our thought tends to develop an intersubjective and unlimited idea of truth, but such an idea is not actually present in every process of generalization. As Misak has noted, we can have truth claims the value of which is restricted to a limited community, as, for example, in an anti-Semitic community. But what is present in the semiotic law which governs the anti-Semitic community as well is the tendency of giving a systematic account of the world. They experience some problems in their society and try to give an explanation with an annexed solution. The semiotic process is here oriented toward a harmonic whole capable of accounting for experience. Then, while we can see a process of generalization already present in this community, we cannot identify the ultimate opinion as a “necessary postulate of semeiotic logic.”<sup>56</sup> The fact that we can criticize this method of fixing belief as inadequate lies in its deficiency in the long run, in its impossibility to resolve the problems it might face, in its inadequacy to develop an always more congruent relationship to the world. In other words, we can criticize it only because it fails to lead us toward a systematic whole more and more in harmony with our experience.

Accordingly, the generalizing tendency is, for Peirce, present in every process of signs involving knowledge. It is guided by the actualization of the esthetic ideal that we grasp vaguely. To satisfy concretely this ideal, we must find a system of signs that gives us the more coherent and simple account of experience as possible, making, at the same time, experience less surprising. It is at the level of this generalizing tendency, in which no reference to an unlimited community is present, that we can find a transcendental moment in Peirce: a transcendental moment which grounds the possibility of a reference to an unlimited community as well, as far as the unlimited community is the best way to embody the orientation toward a harmonic whole.<sup>57</sup> In other words, the tendency to consider every argument as having the same right, grows up naturally when different systems of signs confront each other. But this is not a reference *immediately* present in every system of signs, though we can find always the tendency toward a harmonic whole.

Thus, we have to look for a systematic organization of our thought, and we have to hope that it is capable of being in harmony with our experience. I think it is clear how this hoped for harmony is not something that we *find* in experience, but something that we *search* for in it, something that we need in order to have a coherent experience as a result. This is to say that it is a necessary component of our attempt to give an account of the world that grounds the possibility to attain an organized experience.<sup>58</sup> We can find this tendency even in the limited

systems of signs, as, for example, the anti-Semitic discourse. And it is precisely their limitation of this principle of generalization that gives us the possibility to criticize them. There are two points to notice here. First, the overall presence of this principle in the organization of our signs of knowledge gives us the right to call it a transcendental principle, as far as it will be present even in the sign system that wants to criticize it. We can call it a transcendental principle because it necessarily grounds the possibility of every organization of our signs in order to obtain knowledge of the world.<sup>59</sup> As we have seen, Apel's account of the unlimited community does not answer this requirement, as far as we have organized systems of signs which do not make any reference to the ultimate agreement. Second, we can see in how many ways this principle can be fulfilled, due to its vague and regulative character. We can arrange different and antagonist systems of signs following it, while the antagonism might be a stimulus to revise all of them. Furthermore, we have no certainty in attempting to satisfy our need of a whole; we can always fail in this undertaking.

All this brings us back to Kant and to the transcendental character of the regulative principles. When he describes either the regulative ideas of reason or the principle of the power of judgment, Kant characterizes them as principles for research into nature, and not as principles for the knowledge of nature (KU, pp. 71–73). This means that even if it is necessary for us to use these principles, we cannot individuate them as *a priori* components of the world that we experience.<sup>60</sup> With this account of the transcendental we avoid Peirce's polemic description of the transcendental philosophy as equating indispensability and truth, and at the same time we satisfy his demand of a generalizing tendency present in all the systems of signs involving knowledge. We can thus find a possible new way to identify a transcendental level in our thought in the path that has led us from Kant's regulative ideas and principle of the power of judgment to Peirce's esthetic ideal and regulative hopes. This transcendental level is nothing more than a guide for the continuous rearrangement of our signs in order to account for our experience. As such, although being necessary, it has no actuality outside of a determinate, historical, course of thought.

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valuable suggestions. I cannot but acknowledge also my debt to Tom Viaene, Masato Ishida and Daniel Brunson for their insightful comments. Last but not least, I want to thank Professor Randal Dipert, Professor Douglas Anderson, and the two anonymous referees of the *Transactions* for their observations.

2. In accordance with the customs of Peirce scholarship, I will refer to Peirce's texts using the following abbreviations. CP *v.p* refers to *The Collected Papers of Charles Sanders Peirce*; *v* indicates volume number, *p* paragraph number. EP *v:p* refers to *The Essential Peirce*; *v* indicates volume number, *p* page number. W *v:p* refers to *Writings of Charles S. Peirce: A Chronological Edition*; *v* indicates volume number, *p* page number. RLT refers to *Reasoning and the Logic of Things*. MS *n.p* refers to an original manuscript; *n* indicates manuscript number, *p* page number.

3. An example is represented by the last book of T. L. Short (2007), whose interpretation of Peirce's late semeiotic is substantially purposeful and connected to the idea of final causation analyzed in the theory of natural classes (p. 92, chap. 4–6). Short, however, does not consider the teleology in Peirce's cosmology. Moreover, in reference to the architectonic, even if he notices its fundamental teleological character (pp. 61–66), he does not see it as an expression of the purposive and normative nature of semeiotic. For a general analysis of the concept of purpose in the context of pragmatism see: Smith, 1978.

4. "For one who had learned philosophy out of Kant, as the writer. . . had done . . . *praktisch* and *pragmatisch* were as far apart the two poles, the former belonging in a region of thought where no mind of the experimentalist type can ever make sure of solid ground under his feet, the latter expressing relation to some definite human purpose. Now quite the most striking feature of the new theory was its recognition of an inseparable connection between rational cognition and rational purpose; and that consideration it was which determined the preference for the name *pragmatism*" (EP 2:332–333).

5. The Kantian distinction which Peirce is referring to is at A 805–806, 823–24 B 833–34, 851–52. It is worth noticing that Kant is here discussing contingent purposes and not the transcendental principle of purposiveness. However, to understand the purposefulness involved in Peirce's approach to thought we deal constantly with the necessary orientation toward an end. As a consequence, in what follows in this paper, when I connect Peirce to Kant I do not mean the relationship to particular purposes, but the essential, and, as we will see, transcendental, purposefulness involved in the semiotic process.

6. Even a look to the description of purposefulness offered us by Aristotle and Hegel is fruitful to clarify some aspects of Peirce's thought, but I think that Kant's account is more enlightening for its regulative character.

7. See for example: Apel, 1981, pp. 50, 146; Cooke, 2005, p. 657; Eco, 1999, chap. 2; Hookway, 1985, pp. 61–63; 2000, pp. 234–235; Kaag, 2005.

8. So, in order to be consistent, I will use the adjective *purposeful* when discussing teleological tendencies in thought, even if Peirce often prefers to use the adjective *purposive*. Accordingly, so as to prevent misunderstanding, I have avoided quoting those passages in which Peirce adopts the latter usage, even if I think that their *content* agrees with my interpretation.

9. I refer to a methodological root insofar as I think that the principles which I will analyze in this paper are mostly relevant for Peirce's *methodeutic*, i.e. that department of semeiotic which studies signs from the standpoint of their development in processes of interpretation.

10. I will use the spelling *esthetics* and *esthetic* when I am referring to Peirce's particular treatment of the matter and the spelling *aesthetics* and *aesthetic* when I am not.

11. You can find an exception in Apel, 1981, pp. 132–133.

12. See for example: Parker, 1998.

13. Kant's corresponding words are the followings: "The whole is thus an organized unity (*articulation*), and not an aggregate (*coacervatio*). It may grow from within (*per intususceptionem*), but not by external addition (*per appositionem*)" (KrV, A 833 B 861).

14. In the chapter on the architectonic of the first *Critique*, Kant suggests how the architectonic system of philosophy has to be built following its *conceptus cosmicus*. He says "on this view, philosophy is the science of the relation of all knowledge to the essential ends of human reason" (KrV, A 838–9 B 866–7).

15. Following our definitions, Kant's architectonic is thus a matter of purposefulness.

16. Certainly, Peirce's architectonic could also be seen as totally opposed to that of Kant, due to his aiming at a complete classification of the sciences, including even the empirical ones. Conversely, Kant's focus is only on the a priori structure of reason. So, it is true that the objects that Peirce's and Kant's architectonics want to organize are different. However, what I would like to shed light on are the principles that must guide the different processes of organization, which seems to me similar in Peirce and Kant.

17. I will refer to Peirce's doctrine of signs as *semeiotic* and to the effective use of signs as *semiosis* or using the adjective *semiotic*.

18. This is precisely what Vincent G. Potter does in his book on the normative sciences (1967, pp. 71, 187).

19. For a discussion of this problem see: Apel, 1995; Hookway, 1995.

20. For an account of Peirce's concept of natural classification and its relationship with final causation see: Hulswit, 1994; Pape, 1993; Short, 1981.

21. If my interpretation departs from semiotic purposefulness to understand our use of teleological concepts in natural classes, that of T. L. Short departs from natural classes to understand semiosis as a development of the teleology in nature. For that reason he would not follow me in distinguishing a heuristic and a real level in the consideration of natural classes (T. L. Short, 2007, chap. 4–5).

22. See: "Grounds of Validity of the Laws of Logic" (1869), EP 1:56–82; "The Doctrine of Chance" (1878), EP 1:142–154.

23. See the sixth of the Harvard Lectures (1903), EP 2:216–218, and "An Essay Toward Improving our Reasoning in Security and in Uberty" (1913), EP 2:463–474.

24. Following Peirce's usage, I will use the term feeling to indicate non-symbolical apprehension. So, in order to make straightforward the comparison with the American thinker, I will use the term in this way even when discussing Kant. However, this could produce confusion concerning Kant's philosophy insofar as, in the third *Critique*, the word feeling refers mainly to the feeling of pleasure and displeasure as one of the faculties of the mind. So, it must be kept in mind that even when I am referring to that text I am intending the former meaning.

25. It is useful to notice here that Kant's power of judgment accounts for the process of the production of a judgment. So, what is at issue is not the resulting judgment, but the process that makes it possible. The different use of terminology

notwithstanding, what interests Kant is thus very close to the Peircean idea that our first concern must be the inference, as the process of thought, and not the judgment, as a step in this process.

26. Jeffrey Barnouw (1988) shows correctly how Schiller criticizes Kant's pure formalism in ethics. However, he is totally wrong when he does not see how Kant's account of aesthetic judgments lays the foundation of the argument of Schiller and how similar is the problem that both of them are facing. Probably for that reason he gives us a reductionistic account of the aesthetic state speaking of "dispositions to respond" (1994, p. 161).

27. This interpretation seems particularly suitable if we read a note written by Peirce in his only paper on Schiller: "the two impulses can, and must be, *balanced*, because, since the function of the formal impulse (and, as it seems to me, the peculiar business of mortals) is to reduce to form matter which is furnished by the sensuous impulse for no other purpose, the preponderance of either would give a surplus of faculty which would be either unemployable or of no ultimate advantage" (W 1:534).

28. For an analysis of the centrality of Kant's reflecting power of judgment in the overall context of his work see: La Rocca, 1999; Nuzzo, 2005.

29. Kant says that the maxims of the power of judgment "are laid down *a priori* as the basis for research into nature" (KU, p. 69).

30. "The power of judgment in general is the faculty for thinking of the particular as contained under the universal. If the universal (the rule, the principle the law) is given, than the power of judgment, which subsumes the particular under it . . . is *determining*. If, however, only the particular is given, for which the universal is to be found, then the power of judgment is merely *reflecting*" (KU, 66–67).

31. The qualitative element present in representations concerning facts can be compared with a rule through similarity as far as Peirce's notion of rule involves the conception of the possible practical effects, the habits, that the truth of the rule would imply. This means that we need a general schema of the practical application of the rule. Imaginative representations can be confronted with these schemata, as far as they share the same non-propositional form.

32. As a consequence of his *synechism*, the doctrine of the continuum, it is easier for Peirce to find a path for the access of our concepts in our feelings. For him, we cannot identify a content in our consciousness that is not a result of a synthesis, that is not itself potentially divisible in more essential parts, and, at the same time, we cannot remove an element of compulsion even in our most abstract reflections. This means that we cannot separate absolutely our passivity from our activity, as far as both are always present at every level of thought.

33. For an analysis of Peirce's concept of self-control see: Colapietro, 1989, Chap. 5; Petry, 1994.

34. For an analysis of Peirce's esthetics in the context of the normative sciences see: Kent, 1976; Potter, 1967, chap. 2; Robin, 1964.

35. This is, for example, the position of Barnouw (1988, 1994) and Potter (1967, pp.50–51). It does not seem plausible, as far as in a probably contemporary manuscript Peirce still identifies the aim of esthetics with the individuation of what is intrinsically fine and noble (MS 602.9–11).

36. It is true that especially in the early writing on esthetics Peirce assert that in the pure state of esthetic enjoyment we have no consideration of the conformity to an ideal of beauty (MS 310.11–12). But I think that there we have two

questions at hand. The first is the individuation of the ideal of beauty, the admirable in itself, the beau, the Kalos, in which we have to avoid any reference to any consideration. The second is the experience of beauty in objects. We cannot experience the ideal in itself in objects, but only conformity to the ideal of reason.

37. At this point, in order to reach a proper understanding of what is at issue, we have to clarify what Peirce means by feeling, as far as he uses a different notion than Kant. First of all it is important to notice that, for Peirce, we do not have a manifoldness of feelings as our first impressions. To the contrary, the immediateness of feeling presents itself in a continuous flow in which there are no parts (W 5:299, 304). Anyway, we cannot reach any representation of feeling at this level, insofar as representing involves a process of mediation. We can only infer the presence of this flow of feelings from the qualitative component present in the semi-otic process. In other words, we can speak about feelings only because we represent them by means of a sign. Thus, when Peirce is referring to feelings in this context, I think it is better to read him as referring to our representations of feelings, that is, to iconic signs. Looking at our qualitative and symbolic representations as two different instantiations of signs, Peirce gives us a stronger basis for the possibility of a comparison between the two than Kant, with his absolute division. Notwithstanding the common ground between these two kinds of representation, he is able to maintain a distinction between a qualitative, imaginative, non-conventional, representation and an habitual, ruled one, recognizing the different roles that they play in the process of thought.

38. In a beautiful paper on Peirce's esthetic ideal, Hausman touches on a similar point when he holds that the esthetic value allows a qualitative anticipation of the Summum Bonum as the end of Inquiry (1979, p. 212).

39. Potter notices correctly how, for Peirce, something is not reasonable as far as it is pleasurable, but something is pleasurable as far as it is reasonable (1967, p. 44).

40. This means that we have another alternative to describe the ultimate end in addition to the two indicated by Beverly Kent. We are not compelled to choose between a grounding of logic upon feelings in Sigwarts' way and a deliberately achieved ideal not obtained by means of feelings (Kent 1976, pp. 270–1, 279). We can have an indeterminate representation of the ideal grasped at the level of feelings that is neither an irrational founding of our thought, nor a deliberative, determined result. If it is true that the ideal can develop itself in the process of deliberation this does not mean that it is a result of deliberation (EP 2:377–78 notwithstanding). We have to remember that the ideal has to explain why the course of deliberation takes one way instead of another. In other words we cannot use a result of deliberation to explain how we obtain deliberative results. What I just said does not prevent the historical evolution of the ideal, as long as we maintain separate the two levels to which undetermined ideal and determined course of deliberation depend. That is to say that we can always have different historical way to satisfy the end, to interpret it.

41. Following our definitions, I think that the regulative ideas are more a matter of purposefulness, even if Kant connects them with purposiveness in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Appendix of the first *Critique* (KrV, A 686, B 714). This discussion is thus helping us to clarify a distinction useful to understand the German thinker as well.

42. Peter Salabert (1994, p. 192) suggests an analogy between Peirce's admirable and Kant's aesthetic ideas. I think the suggestion is likely, given the

imaginative character of the aesthetic ideas. But I think that a comparison with the regulative ideas is more fruitful for their power to orient inquiry.

43. Here lies an important difference between Peirce's and Kant's idea of purposiveness. For Peirce we have to hope that our purposes are the same of nature, for Kant we have to judge as if nature is the purposive product of god. This difference notwithstanding, both need a principle that can guide us in the conceptualization of our experience.

44. Contrasting those commentators who hold that Peirce's *hopes* depart from the weakness of Kant's *as if* (Apel, 1981, p. 50; Hookway, 2000, p. 235; Cooke, 2005, pp. 656–657), it is Peirce himself who, in this passage written in 1885, uses the *as if* terminology to introduce something very similar to his *regulative hopes*: “In that way, if we think that some questions are never going to get settled, we ought to admit that our conception of nature as absolutely real is only partially correct. Still, we shall have to be governed by it practically; because there is nothing to distinguish the unanswerable questions from the answerable ones, so that investigation will have to proceed *as if* [italics mine] all were answerable” (EP 1:236). Moreover, Peirce's *hope* seems to be necessary as much as Kant's *as if*. Peirce stresses: “Underlying all such principles there is a fundamental and primary abduction, a hypothesis which we *must* [italics mine] embrace at the outset, however destitute of evidentiary support it may be. That hypothesis is that the facts in hand admit of rationalization, and of rationalization by us. That we *must* [italics mine] hope they do, for the same reason that a general who has to capture a position, or see his country ruined, must go on the hypothesis that there is some way in which he can and shall capture it” (EP 2:106–107).

45. “Now this transcendental concept of a purposiveness of nature is neither a concept of nature nor a concept of freedom, since it attributes nothing at all to the object (of nature), but rather only represent the unique way in which we must proceed in reflection on the object of nature with the aim of a thoroughly interconnected experience” (KU, p. 71). Hookway does not seem to acknowledge this characterization of the transcendental when he uses the argument of Peirce to avoid any transcendentalism in the Peircean view of hopes (1995, p. 401–403).

46. We can find a clue that what Peirce has in mind is very close to the Kantian idea of regulative principles in a draft for the third Lowell Lectures of 1903 in which, describing the Kantian notion of regulative principle, Peirce used the same example of the hand of whist (MS 462.42–43).

47. See Hausman (1979, pp. 213–214) for a similar account.

48. Obviously, here I am considering only the phenomenological description of the categories as characters of every phenomenon, not the mathematical grounding of them.

49. For an analysis of how the categories cannot but be derived from the semi-otic process see: Colapietro, 2001.

50. Strawson, 1966.

51. See for example: Stroud, 1968, 1994.

52. Allison, 1983. See also: Bird, 2006.

53. It is true that Kant provided an argument against the skeptic in his *Refutation of Idealism*. However, it is also true that this is absolutely not the first concern of his project, but merely an argument to undermine Descartes' position (Allison, 1983, pp. 294–309). See also: Carl, 2006, pp. 186–7.

54. Misak, 1994, pp. 752–753.

55. See Oehler, 1987, p. 50.

56. Apel, 1995, p. 385.

57. In a similar way Cooke (2005, p. 659–662) suggests the possibility to find a transcendental level in Peirce's thought different from that of Apel.

58. We cannot say that it grounds our experience because it is not a constitutive principle. As a regulative one it remains a fallible and hypothetic principle that grounds only our looking for knowledge without any certainty to obtain it. This fallibility notwithstanding, I think that we have to look at Peirce's admirable as something that enables us to come to grips with our experience, but that is not known in experience.

59. I agree with T. L. Short when he holds that the purposive character of the sign relationship resides in the process of interpretation. We always interpret for a purpose (Short, 2007, pp. 158, 171–72). I would add to the position of Short that when in the process of interpretation is involved a production of knowledge (and this is the case for the most part of our signs) we do not deal only with particular purposes, but also with general ones: knowledge always involving the search for a coherent and congruent understanding. Perhaps the difference between my transcendental and his naturalistic account of purposefulness lies in this addition. This is confirmed by the "antifoundationalist" reading of "The Fixation of Belief" offered by Short (2000). He develops a suggestive hypothesis claiming that in this paper we have not only an exposition of different methods, but even of different aims, concluding that there is not a fundamental aim for Peirce. I think, though, that this reading cannot explain the whole of semeiosis as a normative process, as far as it can identify a normative character in each method, linked to its particular aim, but not a normative character in the movement from one aim to the other, this movement depending on the introduction of a new condition under consideration. If this movement has to be understood as a normative process we must ask: under what principle do we consider preferable a change of aim? This question cannot but be answered identifying a more fundamental aim.

60. As a consequence we cannot speak, like Apel (1981, pp. 84–85, 119), of a transcendental deduction in Peirce. For Kant a transcendental deduction vindicates the use of some concepts as far as constitutive of nature. Kant never speaks of a transcendental deduction when he treats the regulative principles for the research into nature. He undertakes a transcendental deduction of the judgments of taste, but only as far as no knowledge is involved in them.