

## Introduction

*Giampaolo Proni*

Università di Bologna

[giampaolo.proni@unibo.it](mailto:giampaolo.proni@unibo.it)

When we decided to plan a special issue on Charles Peirce as a tribute to the centennial commemoration of his death, Salvatore and I were aware of the difficulty to collect quality contributions, given the large number of meetings and publications that were planned all over the world. However, we thought that concentrating on communication and culture would add some originality to our call, and, moreover, it would be consistent with Ocula's mission. Last but not least, after more than fifteen years of study on Peirce's writings, I personally felt a sort of obligation, out of the deep admiration not only for the high level of his achievements, but, above all, for his stubborn intellectual integrity.

Peirce's professional failure has become a commonplace in the world of humanities. Nonetheless, he never abandoned "the way of inquiry", as he called it, and on this track, he was able to go further than most of his contemporaries. Who, even among the austere New England intellectuals, would have persevered in studying and writing, day after day, until death, in sheer poverty, alone and without almost any acknowledgment or material success, just for the passion to search for truth and for the words to tell it? In times where only fund raising seems to matter in academy, I think we must ask ourselves: "If we accept, as we should, that a person like Peirce is the most prominent American philosopher of all times, and one of the most important of XIX century, how can we, at the same time, judge a professor or a scholar only on the ground of his or her professional success?" I don't think moral stances can be severed from the method of inquiry. Without a strong commitment to pure scientific attitude, the whole building of knowledge is going to collapse. Think of what it would become of science if rhetoric, lying and forgery would be allowed to alter the results of experiments and measurements.

So, we decided to go on with the call.

The results we present, in our opinion, are all excellent examples of how Peirce is still a source of inspiration in many different fields. Moreover, his theories are actually applied in several fields of media and organisation studies, as the reader will see.

We received texts from different schools and scholars, and turned them to the referees. After the first screening, the process was managed with the aim at improving the author's work, in a personal dialogue that was highly rewarding under the professional and scientific profile. We tried to do our best, and we hope the authors, who can now read each other, will find the same pleasure we

experienced in reading and editing their works. Yes, the articles are in three different languages, and maybe not all our readers are fluent in Italian, English and French, but we believe, as semioticians, that languages are tools for sharing sense and interpretants, and that, if such a sharing is always kept as a goal, the risks of linguistic imperialism do not look so threatening. A multilingual community, however, seems to us as a better model than that of a single vehicular language.

I am aware that the above considerations are less an academic introduction than the report of a personal experience, with some comments added, but, as a Peircean pragmaticist, I have tried to present the consequences of the purpose we have expressed in our call for papers, that has produced to the rich and various contributions we hope you will find both useful and grateful.