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# The role of logical sentiments in moral creativity: toward narrative reality in a Peircean semiotic-pragmatic approach

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**Abstract:** This paper aims to investigate the ethical implications in narrative to bridge the gap between theory and practice, drawing attention to religious ethics as a poetics of possibility. Based on Peirce’s account of conservative sentimentalism, a semiotic-pragmatic method of logical sentiments of charity, faith, and hope is employed for moral creativity. These sentiments are tied to self-control, leading to altruism, which is associated with Christian ethics for discovering the true and real Self. In connection with Paul Ricoeur’s idea of poetics of will, in which ethics and poetics interact, I illustrate Peirce’s developmental account of the Self as an autonomous self-controlling agent: the “I” imagining the Thou idea as a person in semiosis through narrative imagination. Thus, this paper implies the transference from narrative reality, which is associated with a vague and indeterminate sense of narrative meaning, to narrative truth, which is determined by way of narrative argument, generating narrative meaning-truth. In this regard, verification of this argument is confirmed in narrative meaning-truth in life, which actually emerges as the narrative therapeutic effect through practice.

**Keywords:** altruism; conservative sentimentalism; narrative imagination; poetics of will; self-control

## 1 Introduction

Peirce’s theme of “vitaly important topics,”<sup>1</sup> expressed in his Cambridge Lectures of 1898, raises an important issue about the relation between theory and practice, more specifically, the issue of the relation between the normative sciences of logic, ethics, and esthetics and morality, the evolved set of norms and folkways that make up

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<sup>1</sup> This theme appeared in “Philosophy and the conduct of life,” the first of eight Cambridge Conferences Lectures organized by William James in 1898. In the lecture, Peirce claims that people should not rely on ethical theories but on their sentiments and instincts (CP 1.666).

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moral life.<sup>2</sup> For Peirce, “morality consists in the folklore of right conduct. A man is brought up to think he ought to behave in certain ways. If he behaves otherwise, he is uncomfortable” (CP 1.50). In this lecture, this common sense morality of a community is set against the possibility of a science of ethics. When it comes to the conduct of life, Peirce argues here that morality is a far better guide than a science of ethics. Ethics rests on scientific reasoning, while morality rests on habits of feeling, which Peirce calls a “conservative sentimentalism” (CP 1.673).

The claim of conservative sentimentalism as a better guide to conduct than a science of ethics vexed Peirce scholars, expressed in particular by Cornelis de Waal’s objection (de Waal 2012: 83–100; see also Atkins 2016: 75–82). As opposed to de Waal, who emphasized Peirce’s idea of a separation of the science of ethics and morality, some other scholars suggest a continuity between the two, based on themes such as rational self-control, religion, metaphysics, imagination, normativity, and the theory of mind (see Liszka 2021;<sup>3</sup> Sheriff 1994; Atkins 2016; Hookway 2002; Gava 2014; Slater 2015; Colapietro 1989; Kaag 2014).

In defending Peirce’s idea of conservative sentimentalism, I draw attention to human beings as moral animals (Smith 2003). My concern in this paper is to show that his idea of moral nature stems from creative criticism, that is, *criticism of self-control*. My analysis employs a semiotic-pragmatic approach. With this objective, I analyze the logical sentiments of charity, faith, and hope from a religious perspective, leading to moral creativity. Thus, I investigate the logical sentiments in semiotic processes in their relation to the search for meaning and truth. I discuss the role of the logical sentiments and rational self-control in the process of ethical inquiry from a religious perspective. Based on rational self-control and logical sentiments, I analyze moral creativity through the narrative imagination, focusing on the I–Thou concept, which leads to the freedom to choose a norm associated with an internal reality.

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2 For Peirce, morality means that “We are brought up to have a horror of doing certain things and of not doing other things. The habit which we thus contract of associating certain emotions with certain acts [...] becomes a very powerful one, and the necessity which we thus feel ourselves to be under of acting in a certain way we term a moral necessity” (n.d., R 892: 1, cited in Liszka 2021: 37).

3 Liszka’s interpretation of Peirce’s conservative sentimentalism in terms of fallibilism, critical common-sensism, synechism, and evolutionism (Liszka 2021: 42) leads to the idea that “Peirce’s conservative sentimentalism is a both descriptive and proscriptive theory of morality” (Liszka 2021: 53). Based on his interpretation, I particularly rest on Liszka’s scientific observation on the subject matter in relation to the theme of ethical community from a developmental approach, focusing on the transition from disinterested inquirers to disinterested love, pursuing intergenerational altruism (Liszka 2021: Ch. 7). This transition is relevant to my moral inquiry based on morality, which is developmental in nature by way of critical self-criticism through autonomous agent in the esthetic process of imagining the Thou idea.

## 2 Moral inquiry and rational self-control

Moral problems spring from individualism.<sup>4</sup> Based on his theory of continuity, Peirce asserts that “individualism and falsity are one and the same” (CP 5.402 n. 2). He goes on to say:

[W]e know that man is not whole as long as he is single, that he is essentially a possible member of society. Especially, one man’s experience is nothing, if it stands alone. If he sees what others cannot, we call it hallucination. It is not ‘my’ experience, but ‘our’ experience that has to be thought of; and this ‘us’ has indefinite possibilities. (CP 5.402 n. 2)

In the same vein, Peirce’s defense of conservative sentimentalism is associated with common sense: “It [sentimentalism] is an *ism*, a doctrine, namely, the doctrine that great respect should be paid to the natural judgments of the sensible heart” (EP1: 356). Morality based on sentimentalism involves instinctual, indubitable beliefs rather than reason and science (CP 1.49). In this way, in Peirce’s early thought, practice, and theory were separate; the former involved vital matters in the individual’s business and interest, and the latter involved general knowledge. However, in Peirce’s later thought, theory and practice harmonize with rational self-control in ethical inquiry, which aims at reasonableness in the conduct of life. It can be said that common-sensism conjoined with inquiry leads to the fixation of new beliefs. To do so, self-controlled conduct must involve reasoning (CP 1.606).

In this regard, sentimentalism, or “sensitivity to context and situations,” is “a primary feature of moral inquiry” (Misak 2000: 98). But this moral inquiry presupposes normativity in order to reach a convergence of opinions (Misak 2000: 99). In this case, norms can be understood as ideals, laws, or customs. How is it possible to modify our practical belief in vital matters? This requires sensitivity or sentimentalism as pragmatic advice (Sheriff 1994: 87). Peirce’s common-sense conceptions of conservative sentimentalism do not constitute a political or ethical theory (Atkins 2016: 78); they are instead more like a piece of advice (Atkins 2016: 78) for moral inquiry. It shows how impossible it is for logic alone to make the world better, because we are unreal in an individual state of fancy, whereas we are real in the community of “disinterested inquirers” (Liszka 2021: 138–144) as being in the world of fact.

Why do we require an operation of self-control, and what are the modes of self-control in reasoning? Peirce writes, “For reasoning is essentially thought that is

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<sup>4</sup> Peirce argues that the most vital factors in the method of modern science are the moral factors: the first is the genuine love of truth and conviction, and the second is that the method is made social; on the one hand, it is open to anybody to observe, provided he fulfills the necessary conditions, both external and internal, and on the other hand it applies in respect to the solidarity of its efforts (Kevelson 1987: 21–22).

under self-control, just as moral conduct is conduct under self-control” (CP 1.606), so that we can participate in the realm of sentiment or emotion without any force, but by a deliberate act. There are three modes of self-control. These are critical or creative self-control in feeling, moral self-control in action, and rational self-control in thought.

As indicated above, when we face vital matters, such as a life-and-death situation, we tend to follow our own heart, not a logical theory, because, from the individual’s point of view, this is *my* concern as my individual business. This rests on an individualistic view of belief, which is associated with vitally important matters. In this regard, Peirce remarks that vitally important topics are not important, because all reasoning about them is unsound and all study of them is narrow and sordid, being deprived of generalization or not being welded into the universal continuum which constitutes true reasoning (CP 1.673, 677).

Now, where does sentimentalism lead us in regard to the conduct of life? What pragmatic advice will flow from this idea of sentimentalism or sensitivity? In the following two sections, I discuss the logical sentiments of charity, faith, and hope from a religious perspective, which appear in Peirce’s “The doctrine of chances” (1878)<sup>5</sup> (EP1: item 9), focusing on the relation of altruism and morality. Based on the universal continuum through sentimental and volitional welding with others and God (Atkins 2016: 158–164), the esthetic dimension of morality will be explored by paying attention to the poetics of moral life, which is embodied in narrative imagination.

### 3 Logical sentiments in semiotic process from a religious perspective

In his book, *Truth, rationality, and pragmatism* (2002), Hookway’s defense of logical sentiments on the basis of a religious outlook is presented from the viewpoint of scientific rationality, employing Peirce’s key theme of “self-control” (Hookway 2002:

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5 For my project on moral inquiry by means of method of methods, that is, the esthetic process of semiosis of selfhood, I refer to three main texts by Peirce: “The doctrine of chances” (1878), in which logical sentiments were discussed in terms of community of inquiry; “Evolutionary love” (EP1: item 25, 1893), in which Peirce’s idea shows a love of truth in loving an individual person as a general idea based on synechism; “Philosophy and the conduct of life” (EP2: item 4, 1898), through which Peirce’s idea of reconciliation between reason and sentiment (instinct) is illustrated with the harmony of practice and theory. In this paper, the third text by Peirce plays a role in connecting the first and the second text in terms of a developmental approach to the semiotic Self based on an insight of altruism from the unlimited community to an individual person.

Ch. 9). He examines Peirce's claim that rationality is dependent upon altruism in "The doctrine of chances" (EP1: item 9). Hookway posits that "if 'reasoning' is to have a role in settling vital questions, there must be a substantial degree of harmony between these strategies: 'common sense' (our primitive conception of practical rationality) guides us when our 'logical sentiments' can be trusted in connection with practical matters" (Hookway 2002: 245). Then he explores this premise to conclude that even if logical sentiments are associated with a religious outlook of altruism, "it is important that appeal to the logical sentiments is separable from these religious views and has a fundamental role in Peirce's account of rationality" (Hookway 2002: 245).

Hookway's arguments on the role of logical sentiments in scientific rationality appear to be based on analytical methods<sup>6</sup> rather than a categorical method of phenomenology. In this regard, a phenomenological approach embraces a purposeful and religious view on a triadic semiotic process in which the Self plays the role of agent in the semiotic action. Therefore, the logical sentiments of charity, faith, and hope, as centered on altruism, will serve to detect the truth as tied to the axiology of thinking, expressed in the esthetic dimension of Peirce's normative sciences.

The aim of this section is to explore the logical sentiments from a religious perspective. This will connect with the notion of altruism and Peirce's idea of the welding with others into a continuum, and its connection with God (Atkins 2016: 156–164). The benefit of underpinning logical sentiments with a religious outlook, and especially one of Christian ethics, lies in the semiotic process of self-realization in terms of the realization of the Other's existence through mutual recognition of a person as a sign in continuum of others. Peirce stated a similar view on the I–You relation in his idea of synechism:

Nor must any synechist say, "I am altogether myself, and not at all you." If you embrace synechism, you must abjure this metaphysics of wickedness. In the first place, your neighbors are, in a measure, yourself, and in far greater measure than, without deep studies in psychology, you would believe. Really, the selfhood you like to attribute to yourself is, for the most part, the vulgarest delusion of vanity. In the second place, all men who resemble you and are in analogous circumstances are, in a measure, yourself, though not quite in the same way in which your neighbors are you. (CP 7.571)

Hookway explores the idea of logical sentiments in relation to Peirce's other themes: the fixation of belief and self-control, connecting with the concept of rationality. This connection of logical sentiments, fixation of belief, and self-control seems to be very relevant in observing how the trio of sentiments of charity, faith, and hope in

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<sup>6</sup> Hausman distinguishes between joining subject and predicate and the logic of relation based on a phenomenological method (Hausman 1979: 204).

Christianity influence logic. Peirce sees these sentiments as spiritual gifts, quoting St. Paul in the New Testament. He writes:

It may seem strange that I should put forward three sentiments, namely, interest in an indefinite community, recognition of the possibility of this interest being made supreme, and hope in the unlimited continuance of intellectual activity, as indispensable requirements of logic. [...] [T]hese three sentiments seem to be pretty much the same as that famous trio of Charity, Faith, and Hope, which, in the estimation of St. Paul, are the finest and greatest of spiritual gifts. Neither Old nor New Testament is a text-book of the logic of science, but the latter is certainly the highest existing authority in regard to the dispositions of heart which a man ought to have. (EP1: 150–151)

My interpretation of Peirce's statement is that charity, as a form of altruism, is an essential element for *self-realization*. It is supported by a faith and a hope that self-controlled activity will be continued indefinitely. Thus, with self-controlled conduct in life and charity as an altruistic sentiment that aims at welding with nature, the Other, and God in a universal continuum, reaching a true, objective, real Self is possible.

Peirce remarks that "to be logical men should not be selfish" (CP 2.654). This remark implies that sentiment is tied to communal sentiment, in which my interest conforms to that of community as "mere cells in a social organism" (CP 1.647). This view of the Self as part of a social organism that is instrumental to thought shows that the concept of reality is connected to the notion of community. In other words, the community of inquiry is capable of an indefinite increase of knowledge (EP1: 52). In this sense, the logical sentiment is directed to this unlimited community. Otherwise, the Self as an individual person, being separated from his fellows, is only a negation (EP1: 55). This aspect of the nature of community allows us to see conservative sentimentalism or common-sensism as pragmatic or prudential advice in Peirce's early thought on pragmatism. In this respect, the Self as an individual person lies in the structural relation between ego and non-ego, or selfishness and unselfishness, or individual and community. In his early writing, Peirce admits that his notion of man-symbol<sup>7</sup> was too nominalistic, neglecting its quality and relation (EP1: 52). But in his later thought, given his phenomenological analysis of the Self and self-control,<sup>8</sup> he became more

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<sup>7</sup> Peirce acknowledged in *Man's glassy essence* (1892) that "long ago, in *the Journal of Speculative Philosophy* [...] I pointed out that a person is nothing but a symbol involving a general idea; but my views were, then, too nominalistic to enable me to see that every general idea has the unified living feeling of a person" (EP1: 350).

<sup>8</sup> This developmental approach to the concept of the Self in Peirce was studied thoughtfully by Vincent Colapietro (1989).

realist.<sup>9</sup> The development of the concept of the Self enables us to observe the changes from the relation of charity and the unlimited community<sup>10</sup> to that of love and an individual person as a general idea. Charity, as an altruistic sentiment in a community of inquiry, is geared not only toward a final opinion but also toward a moral norm for fixing belief by self-controlled action. Thus, resting on Liszka's analysis of ethical community (Liszka 2021: Ch. 7), charity in the unlimited community of the disinterested inquirer develops positively into the disinterested love of an individual person by creative self-criticism through the sentimental welding with others and God (Atkins 2016: 156–164), an expression of “evolutionary love.”

The altruistic sentiment can generate insight (Royce 2009: 156–162), a source of creative love in the scientific spirit. It is relevant to the concept of Peirce's evolutionary love. Peirce writes:

I have an idea that interests me. It is my creation. It is my creature [...] it is a little person. I love it; and I will sink myself in perfecting it. It is not by dealing out cold justice to the circle of my ideas that I can make them grow, but by cherishing and tending them as I would the flowers in my garden. The philosophy we draw from John's Gospel is that this is the way mind develops. (EP1: 354)

Creative self-control, combined with the altruistic sentiment, enables the merging of I and Other into the universal continuum, a welding of two minds in a semiotic process of selfhood and community.

The Self participates in semiosis, representing objects through beliefs as the ground of a sign (Sheriff 1994: 48–50). As we know well, in Peirce's doctrine of signs, to be a sign, there are three elements: ground, object, and interpretant (Hausman 1993: 67–84). Therefore, a deliberate subject with belief as a ground of a sign is determined by an object (immediate and dynamical), producing the dyadic relation between deliberate subject and dynamical object, leading to a third process of interpretation. In this relation, the Self is passively determined by the dynamical object, but the Self also freely determines an interpretant, moving the sign-agent actively toward the love of truth and law, inspired by altruistic sentiment. This altruism is a key element for the Self to experience the outward clash in Secondness

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<sup>9</sup> On Peirce's pragmatic realism I refer to Oleksy (2015), who deals with a plural concept of realisms. In this regard, not only the reality of Thirdness in representation but also the reality of Secondness in relation and the reality of Firstness in quality are experienced in a form of feeling, action, and thought (see also Max Fisch's remarks on Peirce's two-category realism in Peirce's review of Royce's religious aspect of philosophy (EP1: 229)).

<sup>10</sup> The relation of charity and unlimited community is understood through the concept of the disinterested inquirer in ethical community by virtue of intergenerational altruism, which develops into evolutionary love (Liszka 2021: Ch. 7.)

as a religious viewpoint. Then the Self and other become mutually intelligible, being welded into the common mind in love by “creative self-criticism” (Sayers 2015 [1941]: 3).

In this sense, the semiosis of selfhood requires the three logical sentiments which are operative in self-controlled conduct of life: belief in love as a ground (of a sign), love as a gentle force for development of a person as a general idea (object), and hope for significate effects in producing a new, purposive belief (interpretant). In the next section, I explore how this semiosis of selfhood is actualized in the conduct of life, drawing attention to the power of narrative imagination in its esthetic dimension.

## 4 Imagining the Thou idea: moral creativity and narrative imagination

The aim of this section is to connect Peirce’s logical sentiments with Ricoeur’s religious ethics, which is characterized by mediation of poetics and ethics. In this regard, Ricoeur’s mediating role is salient in the work of a poetics of will. Therefore, I look at the poetics of moral life, focusing on the concept of the Self as an autonomous and inwardly directed self-controlling agent through a first-person method, that is, the “I,” which refers to the autonomous agent’s power of acting in Peirce’s conception (Colapietro 1989: 112).

The concept of the Self, both in Peirce and in Ricoeur, is very important in semiosis and narrative, respectively, with respect to self-controlling action. Peirce’s understanding of man as a symbol, or a word (a person), indicates that man is spiritual, thus not being confined in one place at one time within one physical body. In other words, Peirce claims that a person is a sign in a sign system, through which he/she is capable of self-control, self-criticism, and self-interpretation as an autonomous interpreter (Colapietro 1989: Ch. 5). In contrast, Ricoeur’s concept of Self resides in poetic language as a possibility for development in terms of Other in the forms of metaphor, narrative, and otherness. In Ricoeur’s philosophy, the poetic implies the capability of self-interpretation (Wall 2011: 50). With the two thinkers in mind, what we need to focus on is how the concept of the Self in self-controlling action involves moral life. My argument is that without the concept of the Self as autonomous and inwardly directed agent in semiotic activity of the poetics of moral life, it would be impossible to see any progress in life for self-realization and thus to become the real true Self. Therefore, I investigate “moral creativity” by means of Peirce’s concept of an autonomous agent, the “I,” in Firstness, through the act of imagining the Thou idea as a person in semiosis.

Moral creativity is described as “impossible possibility” (Wall 2005: 10). Wall stated: “This [impossible possibility], to me, means that moral creativity must be regrasped (*religere*) in its fullest sense paradoxically and primordial mystery. And this can be done, finally, only in the language of mythology” (Wall 2005: 10–11). From the discussion in the previous section, my understanding of morality rests not on scientific rationality but on common sense; naturally, this leads to moral inquiry with esthetic dimensions toward valuation in a reasoning process by self-control. In this sense, a central focus is the autonomous agent’s power of acting in the process of reasoning so as to examine the role of logical sentiments in moral creativity in semiosis of selfhood.

According to Wall, the character of moral creativity results in moral competence with a view of “radically inclusive moral worlds with one another” (Wall 2005: 11). Wall is cautious in using the word “inclusive” here not to describe a complete moral norm but “moral life’s inner poetic perfection or possibility” (Wall 2005: 11). Therefore, “radical inclusivity” means inclusion of “the Other” in the sense of the singular, the irreducible, the non-substitutable, the Other as itself, also a primordial and mysterious creator. “Moral creativity faces the ultimate fact that *selves are other both to themselves and to one another*” (Wall 2005: 11, emphasis added). The description of moral creativity as “impossible possibility” by Wall appears to be meta-ethics in moral life; however, with the semiotic process of selfhood operated by self-controlled actions through logical sentiments with altruistic insight, the poetics of possibility can be realized through imagining the Thou as embodied cognition. I will illustrate this point shortly.

In this regard, I will look into the poetics of moral life by first-person experience by means of a method of methods, that is, an esthetic process,<sup>11</sup> which was introduced by Kevelson (1987). In terms of first-person experience in this method, “imagination does not lie in images or texts as such but in the possibilities they open up for selves to create new meaning of their worlds. Poetics is not primarily a matter of receiving images from without, but of reconstituting meaning for oneself” (Wall 2005: 35).

I will examine the role of self-control in imagination. As we have seen, imagination is not characterized by passivity; rather, it is operative in agency through the controlling of the Self or self-government, to the extent that imagination is understood as a mode of thinking. With respect to autonomy and inwardness of

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<sup>11</sup> Esthetic process is derived from Peirce’s method of methods, that is, a *method for the discovery of methods in mathematics* (CP 3.364). What Kevelson empathizes with is progress in art, which is characterized by a “radical shift” *from focus on things to focus on process* (Kevelson 1994: 219). Thus, she rests on Peirce’s phenomenological analysis, which is a preparatory process to all semiotic analysis, with focus on changes between Quality, Fact, and Representation (Kevelson 1994: 219). I find that this method is very effective for moral inquiry in relation to the idea of moral creativity, discovering a new value.

agency, we look into the inner dimension of the Self, that is, consciousness, which consists in an internal reality rather than an external reality in community. As Vincent Colapietro rightly describes, there are different ways of knowing oneself and others in that we know our minds in an internal and immediate way and the minds of others only in an external and mediated way (Colapietro 1989: 100–101). Then, in a semiotic approach to the Self, the Self as a sign is interpreted through semiotic activity, which means that for Peirce, the nature of a person is a sign, that is, a word:

It is that the word or sign which man uses is the man himself. [...] Thus my language is not simply something to which I conform myself: it is *by* which I transform myself. In other words, some systems of signs reach a level of complexity such that their development is determined partially, as it were, *from within*. Human persons are such semiotic systems. (MS 290, 58–63, cited from Colapietro 1989: 110)

Here is another quote as to how Peirce compares the nature of person and that of a word:

He cannot know his own essential significance; of his eye it is eyebeam. But that he truly has this *outreaching identity* – such as a word has – is the true and exact expression of the fact of sympathy, *fellow feeling* – *together with all unselfish interests* – and all that makes us feel that he has an absolute worth. (CP 7.591, emphasis added)

I see that the idea of human persons as semiotic systems in Peirce is analogous to that of self-interpretation in the poetics of moral life in Ricoeur: “a poetics that finds its center of gravity in the involuntary-voluntary practice of forming an already constituted language into new innovations of meaning for oneself” (Wall 2005: 34). Richard Kearney put it this way: “Ricoeur affirms the more *poetical* role of imagining – that is, its ability to say one thing in terms of another, or to say several things at the same time, thereby creating something *new*” (Kearney 1989: 2).

In Peirce, autonomous interpreters (agent) in the higher level of mind’s hierarchy are wedded to ideals and regulated by norms, and they are “personal intellects possessed of *moral natures*” (Colapietro 1989: 111). According to Peirce, any finite mind capable of evolving into an autonomous agent has three distinct powers: powers of feeling or consciousness, or becoming aware of something; powers of action, that is, modifying something; and powers of taking habits (Colapietro 1989: 112). The powers of modifying something, with the “I” in Firstness, play a role in creative imagination in semiotic action.

Let us look at the role of the first-person experience of the “I” with these powers in an autonomous agent through imagining the Thou idea. Regarding imagination, Peirce and Ricoeur share a similarity, regarding it as a mode of thinking or cognitive power in experience. According to Dierckxsens, Ricoeur’s imagination, which is

described in his book *Freedom and nature* (1966), is understood as embodied cognition (Dierckxsens 2018: Ch. 11). His view is derived from Ricoeur's idea that "imagined pleasure is called desire – imagined pain is called fear" (Ricoeur 1966: 107). Then Dierckxsens illustrates embodied cognition by connecting imagination with anticipation of future action, that is, connecting mind and body, thus resulting in engaging with the world. I shall modify this connection in the following manner with respect to the relation between a possibility and actuality: a feeling of fear is a result of imagining the idea of pain; a feeling of desire is a result of imagining the idea of pleasure. Peirce also mentions elsewhere in a similar fashion that a feeling of doubt is a result of imagining the idea of uncertainty as a responsive action through anticipation of future action based on the principle of association of similarity (attraction) and contiguity (repulsiveness) (CP 5.372–376). Then, what kind of feeling can we anticipate as a result of imagining the idea of Thou? We can assume that we feel some kind of distance in reacting to the Thou idea by way of repulsiveness and in turn being estranged from both other and myself in such a way that we experience double consciousness for comparison between Thou and I.

For Peirce, the "I" is an index, referring to the Self as an agent in self-controlling action, and as we have observed, there is a possibility of the self-developing into an autonomous agent under the conditions of three distinctive powers. The powers of the "I" lie in creative self-criticism, with which the "I" is imagining the Thou idea so as to estrange myself from the subjective I, thus modifying the Self, understood as a renewed transformation of the Self. This power of action in modifying the Self through distanciation is operative in a realm of the narrative world, that is, *the world of Thou*,<sup>12</sup> rather than with the Thou idea as a concept. The concept of distanciation or estrangement in Ricoeur is tied to that of writing as narrative for exteriorization of discourse in which hermeneutics is a key term, aiming at meaning-truth (Ricoeur 1976: Ch. 2).

The concept of distanciation or estrangement in the process of interpretation itself can be confounded with that of a kind of alienation as material marks of writing itself in the matter of intentional exteriorization of discourse. Ricoeur seems to distinguish the two in the view of alienation in terms of the characteristics of writing itself, distanciation on the other hand involving reading activity. But the exteriority of writing as autonomy is a necessary condition for the process of interpreting activity as dialectic of distanciation and appropriation (Ricoeur 1976: 38–44). In this regard, imagining the Thou idea is understood as embodied cognition by means of intentional exteriorization of the idea of Thou in a form of a play of musement through self-alienation in opening up for creative criticism. This act of imagination

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<sup>12</sup> What I mean by "the world of Thou" is that only through the narrative world can we understand a new way of being in the world (Ricoeur 1976: 37).

concerns the esthetic processes of quality, fact, and representation, which are embodied in feeling, perceptual judgement, and revaluation, respectively, through narration.

The “Thou idea” appears in the spring of 1861; Peirce begins a book entitled *I, IT, and THOU* with the words: I here, for the first time, begin a development of these conceptions. [...] THOU is an IT in which there is another I. I looks in, It looks out, Thou looks *through*, out and in again” (Fisch 1982: xxix). But Kaag suggests that Peirce borrowed that idea from Friedrich Schiller: the three impulses outlined in his *Aesthetic letters: Formtrieb, Stofftrieb, and Spieltrieb*. “Here the young Peirce explains that Schiller intended the play drive (*Spieltrieb*) to mediate and balance between the formal drive (*Formtrieb*) that stems from the rationality of a subject and the sensuous drive (*Stofftrieb*) that proceeds from the physical existence of a human being” (Kaag 2014: 209). Peirce writes: “I should say that these were the I impulse and faculty, and the IT impulse and faculty; and also, the THOU impulse and faculty which (it seems to me) is what Schiller regards as that of beauty” (Kaag 2014: 209). Thus, the Thou idea is related to imagination to mediate the idea of IT and I. “Only through the imagination are we able to grasp – nay, consider – the IT as another I” (Kaag 2014: 209).

The autonomous agent as the deliberate subject, the “I,” is connected to the dynamic object of “IT” by means of narrative imagination of the Thou idea, which is embodied in a human person as a sign in the semiosis of selfhood. At this point, we recall that the “autonomous interpreters (or rational minds) are wedded to ideals and regulated by norms; they are, as Peirce says, ‘personal intellects possessed of *moral natures*’” (Colapietro 1989: 111). Therefore, moral belief in altruism, as an esthetic value of imagining the Thou idea, allows us to liberate ourselves from ourselves or from selfishness, avoiding illusion, so that we will come to be a true, real Self. In this way, we can understand the relationship between I, IT, and THOU as phenomenological categories based on Peirce’s method of discovery in esthetics, that is, a science of value. In this regard, Kaag’s remarks draw attention to the abductive reasoning process in narrative imagination: “Peirce suggests that the ‘THOU impulse’ is related in an intimate way to the processes of the imagination that he would later develop as abduction and musement” (Kaag 2014: 209). The esthetic value of the beauty in the Thou idea through “the play of musement” comes to be realized as in a human person, that is, the reality of Thou.

## 5 Concluding remarks: meaning-truth and narrative reality

In conclusion, I draw attention to narrative reality, which is the ultimate goal for this project of moral inquiry in terms of the logical sentiments of charity, faith, and hope.

These sentiments operate not in the realm of community of inquiry but in the realm of the internal theater of the human mind through self-realization by means of the freedom of choice of an aim. The way I endeavored to show this direction is through the interplay of Peirce's logical sentiments from the religious perspective and the poetics of moral life, based on Ricoeur's hermeneutic imagination, concerning moral creativity. In this line of investigation toward narrative reality, the reality of community transfers to that of an individual person by means of the autonomous agent with moral competence in semiotic activity. This semiotic process produces self-realization of an internal reality, resulting in becoming the real Self. The focal point of this process lies in *imagining the Thou idea*, which involves a play of musement, that is, abductive reasoning with the logical sentiments, love of a person by cherishing and tending to the person so as to make the person real in the world. This is accomplished with the support of the belief in the transforming power of love, hoping to discover a new value in the Thou idea, inspired by esthetic ideals of beauty. In this sense, the reality of community transfers to the reality of the Self and Other, that is, by transferring from the external to internal reality. My argument is that this semiotic and pragmatic approach to reality based on the moral nature of altruism serves as an insight that can be adapted as a scientific method for fixing belief and reaching a true final opinion (cf. CP 5.387).

Based on the esthetic dimensions of I, IT, and THOU, a Firstness of Thirdness in the play of musement, my suggestion is that ethics, understood as a narrative process for creating moral norms, can be further explored in view of the poetics of moral life. Thinking of reality as existing in plural forms and imagining the Thou idea as embodied cognition play a critical role in mediating the external with internal reality. This will allow the fictional in narrative to be transformed to the real in life through the meaning-truth process of an autonomous interpreter. I hope that this semiotic process will be understood as a narrative one, where a human person participates in this semiotic activity in a way to make the process a series of "living narratives" for the conduct of life.

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