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PEIRCEAN MODAL (AND MORAL?) REALISM(S)

Remarks on the Normative Methodology of Pragmatist Metaphysics

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1. Introduction

The immediate purpose of this paper is to compare Charles S. Peirce's *metaphysics of the modalities* – or rather, a “Peircean” approach to this metaphysical issue that can be derived from his defense of *synechism* and *scholastic realism* – to the *modal realist* views defended by important twentieth century and contemporary philosophers. This application of Peircean ideas to contemporary metaphysics of modality will eventually yield a pragmatic, critical evaluation of both. In particular, I will question the strict dichotomy between *metaphysics* and *ethics*, thus also questioning the separation between *theory* and *practice* that Peirce himself, at least apparently, subscribed to in his 1898 Cambridge Conferences Lectures, *Reasoning and the Logic of Things*.¹ This questioning will be carried out through a perhaps somewhat surprising argument for the entanglement of *modal* and *moral* realisms, pragmatically articulated. The outcome is an irreducibly normative methodology for metaphysics, ethically enriched and grounded, which hopefully provides a novel perspective on Peirce's (or at least Peircean) normative thought.²

My discussion will proceed as follows. In section 2, I note, still in an introductory fashion, that the contemporary discourse of modality is firmly rooted in metaphysical realism. In section 3, I suggest that the Peircean approach is closer to Kantian transcendental metaphysics. The contrast between metaphysical realism – or what Kant would have called “transcendental realism” – and the properly transcendental metaphysics in my view inherited by pragmatism turns out to be very important, both generally and in the special case of modality, and section 4 examines the possibility of interpreting Peirce's scholastic realism (a key doctrine in his modal theory) as grounded in a naturalized form of transcendental argumentation. Section 5 turns to a related Peircean view,

synechism, and moves on to consider the ethical aspects of these Peircean metaphysical ideas. Section 6 continues this task by means of a few brief remarks on transworld identity (particularly personal identity), while section 7 draws a more general moral regarding the normative methodology of metaphysics in the Peircean pragmatist framework. Finally, the concluding section 8 pulls some of the threads together.

Much of what I will say about pragmatism, scholastic realism, and synechism will be relatively familiar to Peirce scholars. Nevertheless, I hope to be able to put these familiar topics into a slightly more novel perspective by emphasizing their Kantian background and by rearticulating them in terms of (what I will call) the ethics/metaphysics entanglement.

2. The metaphysically realist assumptions of contemporary modal realism

There is a variety of quite different views available in the contemporary debate over the metaphysics of modality, and obviously I cannot do justice to the richness of this debate in a single paper. For example, actualists like D.M. Armstrong (1997, 2004) and possibilists, or possible worlds realists, like David Lewis (1986, 2001) sharply disagree with each other on the correct treatment of the metaphysics of possibility and necessity. While Armstrong maintains that strictly speaking only the actual world exists and that “possible worlds” can (fictionally) be constructed only as recombinations of the elements of the actual world, in a way that the truthmakers for any truths about mere possibility (or about necessity) that we need can be found among the denizens of the actual world, Lewis finds it convenient to postulate a vast plurality of possible worlds, understood as complex concrete individuals. While Armstrong needs universals to account for the truthmakers of simple truths of predication (e.g., a is F), Lewis has no need for such repeatable entities, as he can make use of properties as classes of concrete particulars distributed across possible worlds. Yet another influential theory is the one defended by Alvin Plantinga (2003), according to whom possible worlds ought to be construed as abstract entities, as maximal possible states of affairs, and things possess individual essences, properties they have in all possible worlds. In Plantinga’s view, Lewis’s possible worlds nominalism is not really a realist theory about possibility at all but a form of “modal reductionism” (ibid., ch. 10).

These and other influential modal metaphysicians³ are all, quite obviously, *metaphysical realists*, regardless of how violently they disagree with each other about the correct metaphysical picture of modalities, for instance, regarding such hotly debated matters as possibilism vs. actualism, the nature of possible worlds, the difference between necessary and contingent truth, or

transworld identity. Works by Armstrong, Lewis, Plantinga, and Stalnaker – to name only a few among the most prominent scholars in this field – provide ample evidence of the widespread and virtually unquestioned assumption of metaphysical realism among modal metaphysicians active over the past few decades. One need not embrace essentialism *à la* Saul Kripke (1980) in order to be a metaphysical realist in modal metaphysics. One can even be a modal fictionalist, as Armstrong is, and still construe one’s theory of modality under the auspices of a general system of metaphysical realism, arguing that we only seriously need to commit ourselves to the existence of actual states of affairs and their constituents.⁴

Metaphysical realism is here understood roughly in the Putnamian sense, as a commitment to there being a way the world is “in itself”, and a complete, absolute truth about the way that world is, independently of human conceptual categorization or epistemic situations (see, e.g., Putnam 1990; cf. Pihlström 1996). We might call someone a metaphysical realist, if s/he believes that, to borrow David Lewis’s words, “truth is supervenient on what things there are and which perfectly natural properties and relations they instantiate” (Lewis 2001, p. 207). We are here interested in the specific applications this position has, or may have, to the issue of modality. No general discussion of metaphysical realism as such, or its particularly controversial issues such as truth, is possible in this context.

3. An alternative conception of metaphysics

A *very* different treatment of modalities can be derived from Kantian transcendental metaphysics.⁵ Kantian essentially epistemic modalities, constituting one of the four groups of the categories of understanding, cannot be accounted for within metaphysical realism at all but require an “epistemologized” approach to metaphysics. Kant’s transcendental idealism, of course, is a major background presupposition here, but far from being a metaphysically neutral perspective or standpoint – as argued by Henry E. Allison (2004) – it does, in my view, open the doors for a reinterpreted form of metaphysical inquiry into the categorial structure of the human world, or the fundamental structure(s) of any humanly categorized or categorizeable world (as suggested in Pihlström 2006, and forthcoming). “Methodological” interpretations of transcendental idealism, such as Allison’s, are correct to insist on the incoherence of metaphysical realism (or transcendental realism), and to give up implausible “two worlds” construals of the transcendental distinction between things in themselves and appearances, but in my view they are wrong to construe Kant’s idealism in a thoroughly non-metaphysical fashion.

Now, arguably, the Peircean pragmatist can exploit the Kantian critical, transcendental understanding of the nature and aims of metaphysics, instead of succumbing to the temptations of metaphysically realist metaphysics (of modalities, or in general). Peirce himself was a Kantian of sorts, though his treatment of the issue of modalities may also require modification from the Kantian point of view. Moreover, Peirce was certainly a metaphysician.⁶ Here it is sufficient to note the general analogy between Kantian and pragmatist approaches to metaphysics. Both ought to be seen as ways of examining the constitutive features of the world as it is a possible object of (human, or in general rational) experience, cognition, or inquiry. Although Peirce famously rejected a number of specific Kantian ideas, such as the aprioristic account of cognition (and of philosophy, in particular) and the very notion of an incognizable thing in itself (see, e.g., EP1:25 [1868]), the basic thrust of his metaphysics is not as far from Kant's as has sometimes been thought. Throughout his discussions of reality, truth, and inquiry, at various stages of his long career, Peirce was primarily interested in how we can know and (semiotically) represent reality as it is a possible object of cognition and inquiry. The "real", for him, may be "ideal"; the fundamental issue is not the structure of a mind-, cognition-, or inquiry-independent reality, but precisely the way(s) in which the structure of the world is open to us in inquiry and semiosis.

The Peircean pragmatist metaphysician may, then, argue for the reality of certain kinds of entities, or the ontological status – "objective validity" and "objective reality", in Kantian terms – of certain (groups of) categories, such as the one of modality, by referring to what we *need* in our inquiries into the world we live in. This pragmatic "need" may be construed as a quasi-transcendental *conditio sine qua non*; unless we, say, construe modalities realistically, we cannot really make sense of our efforts to inquire into the way the world *is*, in terms of its habits, regularities, and developmental tendencies. Unfortunately, *neither* the Kantian *nor* the Peircean approach seems to be even acknowledged, let alone seriously considered or elaborated on, in standard analytic accounts of the metaphysical issues of modality today.⁷

We will now turn back to the specific metaphysical issue of modalities, this time more explicitly through an application of Peircean ideas, "transcendentally" reconstructed. We must observe that Peirce's approach to modality is very different not only from actualism, such as Armstrong's (according to which the elements of the actual world suffice as truthmakers for all truths about mere possibility), but also from the kind of possibilism or possible worlds realism defended by Lewis (for whom possible worlds as concrete individuals enjoy their static existence entirely disconnected from one another) and from the kind of view Plantinga favors (connecting possible worlds *qua* states of affairs with propositions, yielding, again, a static rather than a dynamic picture of modalities). Indeed, both Armstrong's and Lewis's accounts might be seen as

paradigmatically un-Peircean, or even anti-Peircean, the former because it rejects “real” modalities (especially real possibilities) altogether and the latter because it treats possible worlds as separate and discontinuous. Obviously, Peirce would also reject those approaches to modality that view possible worlds as mere logical or methodological devices devoid of metaphysical significance. Such a position would, in the company of more metaphysical actualisms, sacrifice *real* possibility and *real* generals.

Moreover, the relation between Peirce’s pragmatism and his scholastic realism is tight; indeed, the two doctrines are more or less inseparable in his thought, enabling a unique combination of metaphysical inquiry and a critical perspective on metaphysics (which helps us to make the rather obvious point that pragmatism is *not* simply positivism or instrumentalism):

[Pragmati(ci)sm] will serve to show that almost every proposition of ontological metaphysics is either meaningless gibberish – one word being defined by other words, and they by still others, without any real conception ever being reached – or else is downright absurd; so that all such rubbish being swept away, what will remain of philosophy will be a series of problems capable of investigation by the observational methods of the true sciences – the truth about which can be reached without those interminable misunderstandings and disputes which have made the highest of the positive sciences a mere amusement for idle intellects, a sort of chess – idle pleasure its purpose, and reading out of a book its method. In this regard, pragmatism is a species of prope-positivism. But what distinguishes it from other species is, first, its retention of a purified philosophy; secondly, its full acceptance of the main body of our instinctive beliefs; and thirdly, its strenuous insistence upon the truth of scholastic realism (or a close approximation to that, well-stated by the late Dr. Francis Ellingwood Abbot in the Introduction to his *Scientific Theism*). So, instead of merely jeering at metaphysics, like other prope-positivists, whether by long drawn-out parodies or otherwise, the pragmaticist extracts from it a precious essence, which will serve to give life and light to cosmology and physics. At the same time, the moral applications⁸ of the doctrine are positive and potent; and there are many other uses of it not easily classed. On another occasion, instances may be given to show that it really has these effects. (EP2:338-339; CP 5.423 [1905].)

In this passage, Peirce can be read as implicitly contrasting “ontological metaphysics”, by which he presumably means metaphysics employing the a priori (intuitive) method, such as traditional “pre-critical”, rationalist metaphysics, to his own scientific – and epistemic rather than

ontological – metaphysics, which is much closer to Kant’s transcendental philosophy than, say, contemporary metaphysical realism.⁹ The passage just quoted is by no means the only place where Peirce emphasizes the strong link between pragmatism and scholastic realism (see also, e.g., CP 5.503-504, 8.208, 8.326), but it may serve us here in our search for a new, Peircean or pragmatist yet transcendental, metaphysics and its applications to the issue of modality. My way of “extracting” the (irreducibly normative) “precious essence” of metaphysics may diverge from Peirce’s own in some crucial respects, but the important point here is that pragmatism, far from being anti-metaphysical, allows and indeed encourages such an extraction.

4. Peirce’s scholastic realism, transcendently defended?

Peirce’s statements about scholastic realism may be found in a number of important writings, all the way from his seminal 1868 papers (EP1, chs. 2-4) and the famous 1871 Berkeley review (see CP 8.7-38; EP1, ch. 5; W2:462-487) up to his late writings on pragmatism in and after 1905 (see EP2, chs. 24-28). In a number of places he describes his scholastic realism as “extreme” (CP 5.77n1, 5.470).¹⁰

Modal realism, especially realism about “real possibility”, is a key element of Peirce’s scholastic realism.¹¹ Defining “the scholastic doctrine of realism” as the view that “there are real objects that are general”, Peirce goes on to argue that “the belief in this can hardly escape being accompanied by the acknowledgment that there are, besides, real *vagues*, and especially, real *possibilities*”, because “possibility being the denial of a necessity, which is a kind of generality, is vague like any other contradiction of a general” (EP2:354; CP 5.453 [1905]). Returning to his example of the hardness of a diamond, discussed in the early formulation of pragmatism as a method of “making our ideas clear” in the well-known 1878 paper, Peirce now reflects:

For if the reader will turn to the original maxim of pragmatism at the beginning of this article, he will see that the question is, not what did happen, but whether it would have been well to engage in any line of conduct whose successful issue depended upon whether that diamond would resist an attempt to scratch it, or whether all other logical means of determining how it ought to be classed *would* lead to the conclusion which, to quote the very words of that article, would be “the belief which alone could be the result of investigation carried *sufficiently far*.” Pragmatism makes the ultimate intellectual purport of what you please to consist in conceived conditional resolutions, or their substance; and therefore, the

conditional propositions, with their hypothetical antecedents, in which such resolutions consist, being of the ultimate nature of meaning, must be capable of being true, that is, of expressing whatever there be which is such as the proposition expresses, independently of being thought to be so in any judgment, or being represented to be so in any other symbol of any man or men. But that amounts to saying that possibility is sometimes of a real kind. (EP2:354; CP 5.453 [1905].)

The recognition of real possibility, Peirce elsewhere tells us, “is certainly indispensable to pragmatism” (CP 5.527). The pragmatist “is obliged to subscribe to the doctrine of a real Modality, including real Necessity and real Possibility” (EP2:357 [1905]). The case of the hard diamond is revisited in Peirce’s oft-cited letter to the Italian pragmatist Calderoni (c. 1905):

Even Duns Scotus is too nominalistic when he says that universals are contracted to the mode of individuality in singulars, meaning, as he does, by singulars, ordinary existing things. The pragmatist cannot admit that. I myself went too far in the direction of nominalism when I said that it was a mere question of the convenience of speech whether we say that a diamond is hard when it is not pressed upon, or whether we say that it is soft until it is pressed upon. I now say that experiment will prove that the diamond is hard, as a positive fact. That is, it is a real fact that it would resist pressure, which amounts to extreme scholastic realism. I deny that pragmatism as originally defined by me made the intellectual purport of symbols to consist in our conduct. On the contrary, I was most careful to say that it consists in our concept of what our conduct would be upon conceivable occasions. (CP 8.208.)

It is not easy to determine what exactly the relation between pragmatism and scholastic realism is, though. As a logical maxim, pragmatism can hardly deductively entail a metaphysical theory such as scholastic realism. Perhaps the relation is best construed as an *abductive* one: we arrive at scholastic realism as the only plausible background hypothesis that might enable us, in accordance with the pragmatic maxim, to account for the meaning of rational (intellectual, scientific) concepts in terms of the conceivably practical bearings we may consider their objects to have.¹²

Let us now enrich Peirce’s own formulations by a leading commentator’s opinions. Carl Hausman (1993, 1999) is one of the Peirce scholars who find scholastic realism absolutely central in Peirce’s metaphysics and theory of meaning, indeed in his system as a whole. Thus, it will be

useful for us to take a look at how Hausman – only as one example among the Peirce scholars who have been inspired by Peirce’s views on realism – characterizes scholastic realism.¹³ According to Hausman’s (1993, pp. 3-4) initial definition, scholastic realism is the view that “there are repeatable conditions that are independent of mental acts and that function like rules for the ways particular things behave”. The contrast, he emphasizes, is to nominalism rather than idealism.¹⁴ Meaning – a pragmatic theory of which is one of Peirce’s central contexts for the development of scholastic realism – depends on “*would-be’s*”, “patterns according to which occur the outcomes of actions and consequences relevant to the idea in question”; accordingly, meanings are disclosed in “dispositional conditions, in habits, according to which the meaning or *would-be* could be expected to be exemplified if the concept that articulates the meaning were put to the test” (ibid., p. 7).¹⁵ Here, again, the place of modality and modal realism at the center of scholastic realism is obvious. Clearly, Peirce’s postulation of repeatable conditions, rules, patterns, habits, dispositions, or “*would-be’s*” is not a postulation of specific objects but rather of something that objects can come to exemplify or manifest. Hausman even says that there is a Platonic element in Peirce’s realism, insofar as the Peircean “generals” are “reals, independent, dynamic, ordering conditions that are not exhausted by, but are effective with respect to, sequences in which particular empirical consequences are encountered” (ibid., p. 8).¹⁶ These conditions are “regularities” that “render phenomena intelligible” (ibid., p. 142). But there is also a teleological element in the postulation of Peirce’s dynamic, “developmental” generals: they are constantly “evolving”, “tendencies that grow”, and should not, according to Hausman, be thought of apart from a *telos* (ibid., p. 14; see also pp. 26-27, 50-51). This dynamic position distinguishes Peircean generals from traditional “fixed” universals (ibid., p. 26), including of course Plato’s Forms (but also Aristotle’s universals), as standardly conceived.¹⁷

In terms of the contemporary discourse on modality referred to above in section 2, Peirce is, clearly, a modal realist, as he acknowledges “real possibilities – general modes of determination of existent particulars” (ibid., p. 48). This is a key idea in his theory of meaning, based on the pragmatic maxim, in which it is crucial to distinguish *conceivable* practical bearings – something that *would* or *might* happen, if an object (e.g., a diamond) were subjected to certain experiential conditions (e.g., scratching), in order to find out whether a particular concept (e.g., hardness) applies to it or not – from what *actually* happens to any particular concrete objects (see, again, EP2:354; CP 5.453 [1905]; cf. Hookway 2000). Yet, although “possibility is sometimes of a real kind” (EP2:354; CP 5.453; also quoted in Hausman 1993, p. 49), Peirce should not be understood as a Lewisian realist about “existing” possible worlds. He points out, e.g., that philosophy deals with the “reality of potential being” in addition to the “reality of existence” (EP2:35 [1898]). As in

the case of universals, his picture of possibility is much more dynamic than the views propounded by most contemporary authors.¹⁸ Even more importantly, Peirce effectively avoids, by means of his Thirdness and real generals, the game played by contemporary metaphysicians about whether to achieve ontological economy by postulating possible worlds and avoiding universals or, conversely, by postulating universals and avoiding irreducible unactualized possibilities. The Peircean trick, of course, is that real generals are able to do the job of both.¹⁹

As Hausman reminds us, this defense of real generals, real possibilities, or would-be's is intimately related to Peirce's normative notion of the "final opinion", the ideal end of scientific inquiry. Particular phenomena or objects, though intelligible as generals, never exhaust the latter: "If would-be's are possibilities, or ideals not exhausted by their instances, then inquiry does not terminate in some perfected state of knowledge – knowledge about itself – that ceases to change. Reality is dynamic [...]" (Ibid., p. 165.) Scholastic realism – as well as the doctrine of synechism, the theory of continuity, that is intimately connected with it (cf. section 5 below) – is, for Peirce, a *normative* condition of thought, knowledge, intelligibility, and thereby inquiry (see ibid., p. 168). The Peircean view of truth, as emphasized by Cheryl Misak (2004) and others, is that truth is what *would* be believed if inquiry were, or could be, continued indefinitely long, i.e., something upon which inquiry *would* not improve. The final opinion, however, is itself something that need never be actualized. It is an ideal, regulative, normative notion, providing a reason – an irreducibly normative reason – for continuing inquiry when faced by resistance. (Hausman 1993, p. 217.) If, Peirce says, "Truth consists in satisfaction", then "it cannot be any *actual* satisfaction, but must be the satisfaction which *would* ultimately be found if the inquiry were pushed to its ultimate and infeasible issue" (EP2:450 [1908]).

We may even say that an adequate conception of inquiry, if understood as a process aiming at the settlement of belief, will require the notion of a final opinion, interpreted in terms of scholastic realism and the irreducible reality of possibilities, as *its* necessary condition for possibility – even if achieving the final opinion (truth) remains a mere hope. Generality, we may say, is structurally present in the account of inquiry aiming at the fixing of a final opinion (cf. EP1:88-91 [1871]). This is Peirce himself again:

That is *real* which has such and such characters, whether anybody thinks it to have those characters or not. At any rate, that is the sense in which the pragmatist uses the word. Now, just as conduct controlled by ethical reason tends toward fixing certain habits of conduct, the nature of which (as to illustrate the meaning, peaceable habits and not quarrelsome habits) does not depend upon any accidental circumstances, and *in that sense*

may be said to be *destined*; so, thought, controlled by a rational experimental logic, tends to the fixation of certain opinions, equally destined, the nature of which will be the same in the end, however the perversity of thought of whole generations may cause the postponement of the ultimate fixation. If this be so, as every man of us virtually assumes that it is, in regard to each matter the truth of which he seriously discusses, then, according to the adopted definition of “real,” the state of things which will be believed in that ultimate opinion is real. But, for the most part, such opinions will be general. Consequently, *some* general objects are real. (Of course, nobody ever thought that all generals were real; but the scholastics used to assume that generals were real when they had hardly any, or quite no, experiential evidence to support their assumption; and their fault lay just there, and not in holding that generals could be real.) One is struck with the inexactitude of thought even of analysts of power, when they touch upon modes of being. One will meet, for example, the virtual assumption that what is relative to thought cannot be real. But why not, exactly? *Red* is relative to sight, but the fact that this or that is in that relation to vision that we call being red is not *itself* relative to sight; it is a real fact. [...] Not only may generals be real, but they may also be *physically efficient* [...] Generality is, indeed, an indispensable ingredient of reality; for mere individual existence or actuality without any regularity whatever is a nullity. Chaos is pure nothing. (EP2:342-343; CP 5.430-431 [1905].)

Now, since inquiry is obviously actual, and therefore possible, its necessary condition, scholastic realism, must in some way be satisfied (see especially EP1:92 [1871]). Scholastic realism is needed to make sense of the very possibility of inquiry, at least insofar as inquiry is understood as aiming toward a final opinion whose object is “the real”, with the hope that this will be achieved. Nominalism would destroy the possibility of inquiry and ultimately lead to utter chaos. This suggests that Peirce is arguing for scholastic realism not just abductively but in a Kantian transcendental fashion,²⁰ examining the necessary conditions for the possibility of something we take for granted. More precisely, Peirce’s arguments are sometimes a genuine mixture of transcendental and naturalized, abductive arguments.²¹ As suggested elsewhere (Pihlström 2003, ch. 3), his abductive defense of extreme scholastic realism can be seen as a naturalized transcendental argument, if we are prepared to blur the dichotomy between transcendental and abductive arguments, and thus more generally the one between transcendental and naturalistic philosophy, including transcendental and naturalized, “scientific” metaphysics. There is at least a Kantian transcendental strain in the Peircean account of generality, despite its otherwise naturalized character, insofar as generals or would-be’s are, again in Hausman’s (1993, p. 185) words,

“constitutive of the intelligibility of the universe”. This very constitutivity is, we may add, both metaphysical and transcendental.

The Peircean account of modal realism is, then, in this respect once again very different from the kind of standard formulations, based on metaphysical realism, briefly described in section 2 above, although in the end Peirce himself may be too strongly tied to such a realism, as well.²² Perhaps the Peircean philosopher ought to seek a middle way between metaphysical realism and full-blown, transcendently idealist, traditional Kantianism? This general issue aside, a realistically oriented modal theorist can definitely learn a lot from Peirce’s treatment of the reality of generals. I have at least, I hope, established that this particular case can be used to examine whether, or how, a transcendental-cum-pragmatic metaphysics is possible.²³

Let me, before moving on to synechism and other matters, address one final worry regarding the interpretation of scholastic realism. Hookway (2000) and others have emphasized the need to draw a distinction between transcendently established principles or theses, on the one side, and mere “hopes”, on the other, in the interpretation of Peirce. Now, shouldn’t we view modal (or scholastic) realism itself as a mere hope instead of a transcendently defensible thesis? We can, and should, definitely understand the final opinion as a mere hope; as was pointed out above, it need never be actualized, and we need not believe that it ever will. But in order for inquiry to be possible, we do have to maintain that hope – as a normative, transcendental constraint for inquiry. It seems to me that the (mere) hope that there is a final opinion, or that we will, in our inquiry, end up with a view not to be replaced by any other (better) view, regarding some specific question, can *only* be maintained, if we are already committed to the principle(s) of modal and scholastic realism. This very hope, even if it remains a mere hope, requires “real possibility”. It is certainly important to make a distinction between hopes and transcendental principles, but it is equally important to inquire into the transcendental presuppositions of such “mere hopes”. The hope that there is a final opinion transcendently presupposes scholastic (particularly modal) realism, because generality cannot be reduced away from the final opinion. Thus, we ought to realize that the normative or methodological conditions of, or constraints for, inquiry – or the very possibility of inquiry – may themselves have metaphysical presuppositions.

My point is that these presuppositions, metaphysical though they are, can be seen as both pragmatic and transcendental. In a properly pragmatist approach, no crude distinction between pragmatic and transcendental presuppositions needs to be drawn. Rather, both can be seen as aspects of our human ways of rendering the world we live in intelligible to us, metaphysically and – as we will soon see in more detail – ethically.²⁴

5. Continuity and synechism

We will now for a moment turn from the doctrine of scholastic realism to another Peircean doctrine inseparable from it, namely, *synechism*. The expression is derived from the Greek term, *synechismos*, derived in turn from *synecho*, “to hold or keep together, to continue, to preserve” (EP2:503n1). As is well known, this position, the doctrine of *continuity*, is – along with tychism and agapasm – a central thesis of Peirce’s speculative metaphysics and evolutionary cosmology. Associated with scholastic realism and thereby with Peirce’s category of Thirdness, synechism is the view that everything is continuous with everything else; there are no atomistic elements of reality fundamentally discontinuous from each other.²⁵ It is precisely by exemplifying continuities that Peircean generals can be said to constitute “the intelligible structure of the world” (Hausman 1993, p. 177; see also p. 185).

According to synechism, both being as such and specific modes of being, e.g., mentality and spontaneity, are matters of degree, not something sharply separable from their opposites. Nor is there any ontological gap between reality or being, on the one hand, and appearances or phenomena, on the other (EP2:2 [1893]). Peirce describes synechism as “the tendency to regard everything as continuous”, in a way that includes “the whole domain of experience in every element of it” (EP2:1 [1893]). He defines it as “that tendency of philosophical thought which insists upon the idea of continuity as of prime importance in philosophy and, in particular, upon the necessity of hypotheses involving true continuity” (CP 6.169 [1902]; cf. EP1:313 [1892]). Synechism is, thus, both metaphysical and methodological. However, it is not “an ultimate and absolute metaphysical doctrine” but (rather like pragmatism) a “regulative principle of logic” guiding our choice of hypotheses (CP 6.173 [1902]).²⁶ Joseph L. Esposito (2007, p. 1) offers the following, somewhat more detailed characterization in the *Digital Encyclopedia of Charles S. Peirce*:

Synechism, as a metaphysical theory, is the view that the universe exists as a continuous whole of all of its parts, with no part being fully separate, determined or determinate, and continues to increase in complexity and connectedness through semiosis and the operation of an irreducible and ubiquitous power of relational generality to mediate and unify substrates. As a research program, synechism is a scientific maxim to seek continuities where discontinuities are thought to be permanent and to seek semiotic relations where only dyadic relations are thought to exist.

Mentioning no less than ten (!) different ideas Peirce invoked in relation to synechism, Esposito especially emphasizes that synechism and pragmatism were regarded as mutually supportive by Peirce, as “synechism provides a theoretical rationale for pragmatism, while use of the pragmatic maxim to identify conceivable consequences of experimental activity enriches the content of the theory by revealing and creating relationships” (ibid.).

One of the seminal writings in which synechism is introduced and defended is Peirce’s 1892 article, “The Law of Mind” (EP1:312-333), which argues for the “law” that ideas tend to spread continuously, affecting each other, and that they lose intensity but gain generality in this process. Peirce, who saw not only pragmatism but also, e.g., his objective idealism and tychism as closely accompanying synechism, discussed in several writings continuity not only metaphysically but also mathematically. Moreover, he believed that a successful proof of pragmatism would establish the truth of synechism (CP 5.415; EP2:335 [1905]), since continuity is essentially involved in pragmatism (cf. again Esposito 2007). He thus also wanted to maintain a crucial link between synechism and scholastic realism (CP 6.172-173 [1902]). Like pragmatism and scholastic realism, synechism was, for Peirce, “a purely scientific philosophy”, although he noted that it may support the reconciliation of science and religion (EP2:3 [1893]).

In his 1893 paper, “Immortality in the Light of Synechism” (EP2:1-3), Peirce explains that the synechist must deny the Parmenidean distinction between being, which is, and not-being, which is nothing, arguing that being is “a matter of more or less, so as to merge insensibly into nothing” (EP2:2). Thus, synechism rejects dualisms of all kinds, including the classical dualism of the physical and the mental (psychical) as “unrelated chunks of being”. Instead of being distinct categories, the physical and the psychical are “of one character”, although there are obviously differences in degree between things that are more mental and spontaneity-involving and things that are more material. Similarly, synechism rejects sharp discontinuities between the living and the non-living, offering a ground for a qualified defense of immortality, as well as discontinuities between oneself and the others: “your neighbors are, in a measure, yourself” (EP2:2-3). Accordingly, synechism may be seen as a metaphysical basis of panpsychism, as well as of the ethically vital capacity for empathy.

This, finally, brings us to a major issue I want to emphasize in this paper: the relation between metaphysics in general and the metaphysics of morality (or *Metaphysik der Sitten*, to employ a Kantian phrase), particularly between the metaphysics of modality and the metaphysics of morality, and still more specifically between modal and moral realisms, pragmatically construed. Insofar as there is a fundamental continuity between oneself and others (possibly including even God), there is great human relevance in the seemingly abstruse metaphysical issues of synechism

and scholastic realism. Peirce's rejection of nominalism, moreover, is quite explicitly intended as morally significant, as it is not only formulated as a criticism of an abstract metaphysical position but also as an attack on individualist egoism and the "Gospel of Greed" (cf. EP1:357 [1893]).²⁷ If I subscribe to the view that, "I am altogether myself, and not at all you", I am in the grip of a "metaphysics of wickedness", which the synechist must "abjure" (EP2:2 [1893]). The person, Peirce says, "is not absolutely an individual"; rather, a "man's circle of society" is itself a "loosely compacted person" (EP2:338 [1905]). This is a crucial application of synechism. If we fail to acknowledge our continuity with others – with a potentially unlimited community of fellow humans (especially fellow inquirers) – it will be impossible for us to distinguish between absolute truth and what we merely in fact do not doubt (cf. EP2:338 [1905]).²⁸

Accordingly, I am not only saying that Peircean scholastic realism and synechism offer a richer perspective on issues in modal metaphysics than the contemporary debates between Armstrong, Lewis, Kripke, Plantinga, *et al.* are able to provide us with. They do, especially when construed transcendently, and in particular they succeed in providing us with a more dynamic picture of both universals (generals) and possibilities than those debates are able to; but they do more than this. They also enable us to build a bridge across the gap between metaphysics and ethics, demonstrating that such a gap, though taken for granted in mainstream analytic metaphysics, need not be assumed in the first place. Peirce seems to argue that nominalism, by blocking the road of inquiry (CP 1.170), is in danger of leading to skepticism not only in science but also in theology and ethics, threatening his task of "reuniting" science with religion and morality (see Forster 1992).

I have in my earlier discussions of scholastic realism (see Pihlström 2003, pp. 167ff.) expressed sympathies with Joseph Margolis's *constructivist* and *historicist* reading of Peirce's doctrine of real generals – though primarily as a substantive philosophical view rather than as an interpretation of Peirce – and I find this reading especially relevant when we wish to emphasize the ethical relevance of Peircean realism.²⁹ After all, Margolis (1993, p. 323) proposes that the intelligible structure of the world is constituted "through the very process of our experiencing the world", and that things share real generals in this "symbiotized world", although "there *are* no antecedent generals" separable from human experience that we could simply discover things to share. Objectivity presupposes real generals in this sense, as "implicated in the *lebensformlich* viability of natural-language discourse", particularly predication (Margolis 1995, p. 128). The view that the world, on the one side, and our thoughts and representations of it, on the other, are "symbiotically connected", or even inseparable, is actually built into synechism itself, insofar as the latter entails, among other things, that there is "no permanent disconnection between thoughts or representations and things or objects", as thoughts "influence and shade into" things, and things into

objects (Esposito 2007, p. 10). What is crucial here is that, quite obviously, the process of our experiencing the world or the “*lebensformlich* viability” of the natural-language discourse we engage in in relation to such experiential processes are ethically pregnant, shot through with ethical (and other) values we continuously (re-)construct through our experience and discourse. As I put it in my earlier work (Pihlström 2003, p. 168), “[o]ur social, open-ended, thoroughly historicized practice of language-use – i.e., our practice of applying general predicates in describing our world – must be the (non-foundational) ground of our realism of generality”, which, then, “can only be grounded in human predicative practices, which are in flux, historically changing”. There is no reason to suppose that such a flux would, for us, be ethically neutral (see also Pihlström 2005). Just as thoughts shade into things, and *vice versa*, facts shade into values, and *vice versa*³⁰ – and metaphysics into ethics, and *vice versa*.

6. The problem of transworld identity, pragmatically reconsidered

A metaphysical example – not unrelated to the issue of modalities – may be used to highlight this ethical pregnancy of scholastic realism and synechism. Famously, Peirce tried to maintain the irreducibility of all the three categories he distinguished, Firstness, Secondness, and Thirdness, only the latter among which is the mode of generals. Hence, our Peircean emphasis on generality and continuity must not entail a total abandoning of individuality.

The identity of individuals, or particulars, is an urgent problem whenever we investigate metaphysical topics such as generality and modality. Identifying individuals, especially *persons*, across time and across possible worlds is a major issue in contemporary modal metaphysics. The basic alternatives are the following: either there is no transworld identity at all but only “counterparts in different worlds”, i.e., no thing exists in more than one world (Lewis); *or* things can exist in more than one possible world, i.e., a thing preserves its identity across possible worlds by preserving its essential properties (Plantinga); *or* only actual things and properties exist, so strictly speaking there is no transworld identity to be preserved, although non-actual possible worlds and non-actual instantiations of properties can be constructed by recombining the particulars and universals of the actual world (Armstrong).³¹ Again, this issue can, however, be crucially reconsidered in terms of Peircean scholastic realism about modalities. Such a rearticulation may have some relevance to more practical issues regarding the identity of selves or persons (again, across time and across possible worlds). Thus, the metaphysical issue of modalities may turn out to possess profound normative relevance. In the standard metaphysically realist discourse on

modalities, such relevance is scarce indeed. Not so in Peirce (or the Peircean defense of real generals), because realism and synechism are deeply related, and synechism is a (not the) metaphysical ground of the empathy central to ethics.³² Pragmatic realism about generals – not only about one’s own potentialities for moral action but also about the continuity between oneself, one’s other potential “selves”, and others – may, then, help us in formulating a truly pragmatic moral realism.³³

In particular, Peirce emphasized the “reference to the future” as an “essential element of personality”; the continuity of persons over time must, however, be supplemented by the need for a “development, for growth, for life” (EP1:331 [1893]).³⁴ Being a project stretching to an open future, the self or person (especially the moral self) is never a closed and final individual. Nor, we may add, is it thus restricted to a single possible world (the actual one) – if this phrase is allowed here. Rather, the self’s moral potentialities are continuous with its actual features; the relatively continuous identity of the person is partly maintained because of the person’s continuity with its other potential selves.

Once more, we may attempt a transcendental argument. Moral motivation and moral actions are possible, because they are actual (however rare); this much we may take for granted. We can now go on to ask *how*, that is, on the basis of what kind of necessary (and perhaps sufficient) conditions, they are possible. Here, the continuity Peirce emphasizes between oneself and others, the potential objects of one’s moral or immoral actions, emerges as a crucial condition for the possibility of ethics as we know it. If the others were completely discontinuous from ourselves, it would be hard to see how we could be motivated to care about them at all. If there is some measure of continuity, however scarce, moral motivation can at least to some extent be understood. The fact that this argument is explanatory, in addition to clarifying (making explicit) the conceptual structure we (necessarily, though perhaps only implicitly) employ in this context, may be a reason to soften the boundary between transcendental and abductive argumentation (as already suggested above and in Pihlström 2003, ch. 3). Furthermore, realism about possibilities – “real possibility” – is needed here, since “the other” as the object of my moral conduct is always to some extent indeterminate and open – a Peircean “vague”. There are always more potential objects of ethical concern than are actually present in my moral experience and deliberation.

The question remains, however, whether otherness is recognized fully enough when the continuity between oneself and others is emphasized in a Peircean manner. Does ethics ultimately rest on such continuity, or on the resulting potentiality for empathy? It might be argued that this is not sufficient for ethics (see Putnam 2004, Pihlström 2005). It might, more precisely, be suggested that we ought to respect the other precisely as an Other, as totally *discontinuous* and therefore

irreducible to ourselves. Be that as it may – I am not going to settle the issue here – a Peircean examination of generality and continuity is clearly not only metaphysically but also ethically relevant, though surely not an easy way to account for morally demanding otherness. This mutual relevance of metaphysics and ethics, or even their deep entanglement, is all I hope to be able to defend here.

The issue I have been briefly examining is fundamentally an issue about the identifiability and reidentifiability of human selves or persons as moral subjects, both across time and across possible worlds. Arguably, in order to be able to engage in moral (or immoral) actions and/or thinking, we must be able to identify ourselves as more or less the same selves from a particular moment of time to another, and from one possible world (especially the actual one) to another (making no ultimate metaphysical commitment to possible worlds in Lewisian or any other sense, of course). This is to say that we must be able to see ourselves as the subjects of the actions or choices we are considering, in such a manner that we “see ourselves” from the perspective of a future time or a possible scenario which may never be actualized. Peircean generals, especially “would-be’s”, or real potentialities, are needed here. Now, such presuppositional necessities built into the very project of being ethical in this human world, a world in which orientating toward future and open choices, unactualized possibilities, is a given fact about our moral deliberation, seems to require a Peircean understanding of real possibilities and dynamic, developmental conditions or patterns rendering intelligible the structure of not only the physical cosmos but also our moral universe. This requirement for the very intelligibility of the world we live in is, then, not only a requirement for the universe investigated by science but for the one we ethically deliberate in, as well.

Identity – the paradigmatically relevant case of which is, of course, personal identity – must be preserved in some way, even in a fragile way, in the course of the various kinds of both physical and social transformations individuals go through. Only by preserving our identities, however fragmented and multifaceted, can we so much as morally deliberate. To this extent, at least, we need a metaphysics of continuity; a fully discontinuous world would be not just chaotic but, more importantly, ethically unbearable. We may even see some kind of “necessity” involved in the developmental tendencies that nevertheless preserve our basic moral identities. For example, tragedy is a great method of representing such necessities at work in the formation of tragic characters and their guilt.³⁵ More generally, there is, arguably, continuity and generality in language, without which no meaning, representation, or communication would be possible. This applies to ethical meaning and communication, in particular.³⁶

A crucial aspect of morality as the kind of human phenomenon we know it is, indeed, the relative stability of certain kind of human *character*, based on people's various potentialities and habits of action, viz., Peircean generals. For human beings, such potentialities are, all the way from the start, ethical – thus, not merely applicable to ethically relevant situations, but ethical through and through. In a Peircean modal-cum-moral realism, such “generals” are constitutive of the (moral) reality we live in. This constitutivity is, again, transcendental, not merely factual (say, empirical or causal), though of course manifested in various empirically detectable ways.

I am not at all saying that these reflections and rearticulations would lead us to an unproblematic view of moral identities. On the contrary, it remains an open question how continuous or discontinuous with respect to “the Other” I can or must be in order to be able to find her/him a possible object of moral concern. Similarly, it remains an open question how continuous or discontinuous with respect to my own (future) moral possibilities or potentialities I can or must be in order to be able to recognize certain potential ethical choices as *mine*, instead of someone else's. The important thing here is that the relevant notion of continuity can here be understood roughly along the lines of Peircean synechism, as connected with scholastic realism – at least if these are interpreted through the kind of combination of pragmatism and transcendental philosophy I have proposed. In any pragmatist attempt to further investigate these problems the perspectives of metaphysics and ethics must, in any case, be combined.

7. Normative science, normative philosophy

These issues may be connected with Peirce's trichotomy of the normative sciences – aesthetics, ethics,³⁷ and logic (see, e.g., EP2, ch. 18 [1903]). By building a bridge from metaphysical topics such as modality and continuity to the issue of moral realism, we of course dispense with Peirce's own view that metaphysics and the three normative sciences ought to be kept distinct in the classifications of the sciences. In none of his elaborate classifications of the sciences does Peirce put ethics in the company of metaphysics (cf., e.g., EP2:36 [1898]). Yet, he does find logic central to metaphysics; and as ethics, famously, is later (at least from 1903 onwards) understood as a normative science prior to logic (to which aesthetics, in turn, is prior), we may perhaps leave room in Peirce's scheme for a metaphysics informed by, though not governed by, ethical presuppositions.

There is a deep, hitherto unnoticed connection between the issues of *modal* and *moral* realisms, as understood within a broadly Peircean (and more generally pragmatist) scheme – or, at least, this suggestion seems to arise as a result of our considerations above. As already indicated,

moral realism presupposes modal realism, because the self must be committed to morally relevant potentialities and thus, in a sense, must maintain its relatively stable identity across possible worlds, and also because the self must understand itself as continuous with the world, including other selves and its own possible selves, a world in which it may act morally (or immorally, for that matter). This may even be seen as a transcendental presupposition of any genuinely moral perspective on the world. In turn, modal realism, again pragmatically articulated (instead of being simply based on metaphysical realism, as in standard contemporary discussions), may have a crucial moral motivation; as has been suggested above, it may turn out that a truly moral motivation requires a modally realist account of continuity and possibility (potentiality), and one may even defend this latter realism on the grounds of its ethical implications. Thus, a modal metaphysics, by articulating a categorial scheme needed in ethics, may ultimately be in the service of the good life, and *this* fact may, reflexively, count as an ethical consideration in its favor. Even highly abstract theoretical philosophy, for the Peircean pragmatist, may then possess significant normative force – or should, at least, do so. It is precisely by being a field of pragmatic possibilities, potentialities for action – either moral or immoral – that possibilities become significant for us, and thereby “real” in a genuinely pragmatic sense.

The metaphysics of modality can, and of course usually is, conducted in abstraction from any ethical concerns, and probably most modal metaphysicians would find the introduction of such concerns in this context absurd. The pragmatist, however, views the matter quite differently. *Any* metaphysical commitments we make are ethically grounded, especially in Jamesian (if not so clearly in Peircean) pragmatism (see Pihlström 2007). In particular, the very discourse on modality is, arguably, derived from our *human* possibilities, from the morally demanding fact that we need to freely choose the course of our lives in situations opening up a number of different possibilities, not all of which can be actualized in the same world. (We may here speak about our morally choosing to live in some particular possible world instead of some others, but we can, if we are afraid of too weighty modal metaphysics, simply treat this as a manner of speaking.) The more abstract metaphysical notions, including the one of possible worlds, are – precisely – abstractions from this prior, pragmatic-cum-ethical idea of potentiality or possibility as a field of open choices.

In Peircean terms, this order of priorities can be highlighted by referring to (i) the order of the normative sciences, in which ethics is prior to logic, and (ii) the succession from pragmatism, via scholastic realism, to synechism (continuity) and thereby to the ultimate ethico-metaphysical continuity between oneself and others. The rejection of ultimate individuality is, for the Peircean pragmatist, a basis for a morally significant notion of possibility. Hence, as we have seen, metaphysical possibilities are not ethically neutral; the very framework in which a modally realist

treatment of potentiality becomes possible (in terms of scholastic realism, if we follow Peirce) is ethically structured all the way from the start. This result might even be compared to the scholastics' own way of treating the discourse on modalities as secondary to, or at least motivated by, theological issues about God's freedom.

In addition to these perhaps slightly far-fetched elaborations on and applications of Peircean themes, if not strictly speaking Peirce's own views, it is worth noting that ethics is more explicitly built into Peirce's evolutionary metaphysics, because cosmic evolution is a process guided by *agape*, evolutionary love (see especially EP1, ch. 25 [1893]). As related to this evolutionary view, nominalism deserves to be rejected partly for ethical reasons, as a position leading to selfishness. However, the Peircean metaphysician of modality and morality – the Peircean pragmatic modal and moral realist – may want to keep her/his realism pure from such evolutionary speculations, important though they remain in Peirce scholarship.

8. Concluding remarks

Some general conclusions about the relations between “theoretical” (e.g., metaphysical) and “practical” (e.g., moral, or more generally normative) issues in philosophy can now be drawn. These areas of philosophical reflection are much more intimately intertwined than is usually noticed, and any pragmatist sensitive to the thoroughgoing ethical relevance of our metaphysical commitments, or (conversely) the metaphysical implications of our ethical ideals, ought to recognize this. Pragmatists, Peircean or not, should not reject metaphysics as such but ought to reinterpret it in a pragmatically adequate manner (see also Pihlström 2006, 2007, forthcoming). The notion of possibility, in particular, is of crucial importance to ethics – and to Peircean normative sciences in general – because Peirce understood his categories as applicable to any possible world and, similarly, regarded his views on ethical norms and the norms of inquiry or logical thought as applicable to any possible case of action or reasoning (Hookway 2000, p. 297). A lot depends, obviously, on how the notion of possibility is construed here; I would simply urge that a contemporary Peircean realist about possibility (or, better, potentiality) ought to base her/his realism on Kantian transcendental considerations, or even Kant's own epistemic modalities conceived as categories of human understanding, instead of any metaphysically realist assumptions about, say, individual essences or concretely existing possible worlds.

Thus, if I am right, Peirce's scholastic realism might suggest one way of reaffirming the metaphysical seriousness of pragmatism, without full commitment to metaphysical realism.

Tensions do remain, however. Can metaphysical realism in the end be avoided? (Cf. again Pihlström 2003, ch. 3.) Is transcendental idealism or transcendental argumentation a proper method for the metaphysics of modalities, and does it really work? Might William James, for instance, provide us with a better example of the normative mixture of metaphysics and moral philosophy, and of the related use of the transcendental method, that we have here investigated in relation to Peirce (cf. Pihlström 1996, 2004, 2007)? Here, obviously, we cannot settle these issues. I hope, however, that a pragmatically convincing case has been made for a deep entanglement of metaphysics and ethics, especially of the issues of modal and moral realisms. We must, however, be prepared to turn to James's views, especially his *Pragmatism* (1907), in our search for a truly ethical construal of pragmatist metaphysics – although James is not as helpful as Peirce in providing the moral metaphysician with a sufficiently robust modal framework.³⁸

As noted in the beginning of this paper, Peirce's own thesis that theory and practice ought to be kept distinct must be sacrificed – and, perhaps, a Jamesian view of their inevitable entanglement must be maintained instead – if one is willing to embrace the kind of synthesis of modal and moral realisms I have sketched. Peirce, after all, did hold, in the (in)famous 1898 Cambridge Conferences opening lecture (RLT, ch. 1), that “the investigator who does not stand aloof from all intent to make practical applications, will not only obstruct the advance of the pure science, but what is infinitely worse, he will endanger his own moral integrity and that of his readers” (EP2:29 [1898]). And he did say that practical applications of philosophy to “Religion and Conduct” are “exceedingly dangerous” (EP2:29 [1898]). Pure science, in Peirce's view, “has nothing at all to do with *action*”; and matters of vital importance, far from being scientifically resolvable, should be left to sentiment and instincts (EP2:33 [1898]). Peirce concluded that “the two masters, *theory* and *practice*, you cannot serve”, because “[t]hat perfect balance of attention which is requisite for observing the system of things is utterly lost if human desires intervene, and all the more so the higher and holier those desires may be” (EP2:34 [1898]).

Whatever the merits of this dichotomy between theory and practice, or reason and sentiment, as a picture of the relations between science and daily life, this unpragmatic dualism fails miserably as an account of the relation between metaphysics and ethics.³⁹ This, in brief, is the main message of the present paper. Given the pervasiveness of the issue of modality in metaphysics, and the irreducibly ethical aspects of this entire problem framework, I can only conclude that theory and practice are inseparably entangled in the fusion of metaphysics and ethics the pragmatist must work within. This entanglement is closely parallel to the one of fact and value also emphasized in (neo)pragmatism (cf. Putnam 2002, 2004; Pihlström 2005) – an entanglement that we might, as was briefly suggested in section 5 above, explicate in terms of synechism. Still, it is perhaps James's –

or, rather, John Dewey's – pragmatism that enables us to appreciate this entanglement better than Peirce's. At least, neopragmatist critics of the fact/value dichotomy, especially Putnam (2002), have encouraged a turn to James and Dewey, and there certainly is something correct in this proposal, even though Peirce should not be forgotten in this discussion, either.

There can, indeed, hardly be a better way to close this discussion than by a quote from Peirce himself, this time from the early Berkeley review, drawing out (*pace* Peirce's 1898 pronouncements) rather nicely the deep connection between metaphysics and ethics – and, thus, theory and practice – in his defense of scholastic realism:

But though the question of realism and nominalism has its roots in the technicalities of logic, its branches reach about our life. The question whether the *genus homo* has any existence except as individuals, is the question of whether there is anything of any more dignity, worth, and importance than individual happiness, individual aspirations, and individual life. Whether men really have anything in common, so that the *community* is to be considered as an end in itself, and if so, what the relative value of the two factors is, is the most fundamental practical question in regard to every public institution the constitution of which we have it in our power to influence. (EP1:105 [1871].)⁴⁰

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Notes

¹ See EP2, ch. 4, and RLT, ch. 1. See, however, also Misak (2004a, 2004b) for a reading of Peirce as a moral cognitivist. We have to remember the context of Peirce's 1898 lectures: he was unhappy with William James's suggestion that he ought to have lectured on "topics of vital importance" instead of abstract logico-mathematical issues. Note also that the theory vs. practice and metaphysics vs. ethics dichotomies are closely related to, though not reducible to, the dichotomy between facts and values, heavily criticized in Putnam's (2002, 2004) neopragmatism. Cf. here Nathan Houser's paper, "Peirce and the Growth of Values" (this conference).

² My willingness to move, rather swiftly, from general metaphysical topics, such as the modalities, to moral philosophy is explained by the fact that this paper is part of a more comprehensive research project on (what I call) "the ethical grounds of metaphysics". For related work on this topic, see Pihlström (2006), (2007), and forthcoming. (Eventually, I plan to incorporate part of this material in a book manuscript, *The Return of Metaphysics? A Pragmatic and Transcendental Rearticulation of the Methodology of Ontology*, which is still very much work in progress.) For another attempt to take the step from Peirce's scholastic realism to a form of moral or ethical realism, cf. Rosa Mayorga's contribution to this conference, "Peirce's Ethics: From an Extreme Scholastic Realism to Modest Ethical Realism".

³ Compare also, e.g., the form of actualism defended in Stalnaker (2003).

⁴ Alternatively, a nominalist can also be a metaphysical realist; thus, metaphysical realism is not committed to realism about universals in an Armstrongian manner. See, e.g., Devitt (1991).

⁵ On this specific theme in Kant scholarship, I have learned from the recent writings by Markku Leppäkoski, e.g., his (2001), as well as the very interesting research plan for a PhD thesis by my former student Toni Kannisto (University of Tampere). This paper will make no contribution to the interpretation of Kant, nor will I try to settle the hard question of whether there can be *any* metaphysics within a Kantian framework sharply critical of traditional ("pre-critical") metaphysics, but the Kantian context of my proposal for a rival conception of metaphysics in general (and the

metaphysics of modality in particular) ought to be acknowledged. For a more detailed case for “Kantian” readings of pragmatism, see Pihlström (2003); also cf. Pihlström (2006).

⁶ Cf., e.g., the following list of what Peirce regarded as metaphysical problems: “Here let us set down almost at random a small specimen of the questions of metaphysics which press, not for hasty answers, but for industrious and solid investigation: Whether or no there be any real indefiniteness, or real possibility and impossibility? Whether or not there is any definite indeterminacy? Whether there be any strictly individual existence? Whether there is any distinction, other than one of more and less, between fact and fancy? Or between the external and the internal worlds? What general explanation or account can be given of the different qualities of feeling and their apparent connection with determinations of mass, space, and time? Do all possible qualities of sensation, including, of course, a much vaster variety of which we have no experience than of those which we know, form one continuous system, as colors seem to do? What external reality do the qualities of sense represent, in general? Is Time a real thing, and if not, what is the nature of the reality that it represents? How about Space, in these regards? How far, and in what respects, is Time external or has immediate contents that are external? Are Time and Space continuous? What numerically are the Chorsy, Cyclosy, Periphaxy, and Apeiry of Space? Has Time, or has Space, any limit or node? Is hylozoism an opinion, actual or conceivable, rather than a senseless vocable; and if so, what is, or would be, that opinion? What is consciousness or mind like; meaning, is it a single continuum like Time and Space, which is for different purposes variously broken up by that which it contains; or is it composed of solid atoms, or is it more like a fluid? Has truth, in Kantian phrase, any ‘material’ characteristics in general, by which it can, with any degree of probability, be recognized? Is there, for example, any general tendency in the course of events, any progress in one direction on the whole?” (CP 6.6.) The contemporary Peircean who takes seriously Kant’s criticism of traditional (pre-Kantian, pre-critical) metaphysics need not treat *all* these issues as really significant, but s/he may, presumably, attempt a pragmatic-cum-transcendental rearticulation of *any* of them. Peirce himself seems to regard the view that metaphysics consists of “thoughts about thoughts” as both Aristotelian and Kantian: see EP1:45-46 (1868); for Peirce’s acknowledgment of the Kantian background of modal concepts, see also EP2:283 (1903). Scholastic realism seems to be incorporated in Peirce’s very concept of metaphysics, because in 1898 he defined metaphysics as “the science of being, not merely as given in physical experience, but of being in general, its laws and types” (EP2:36). In the same lecture, we are told that the conclusion of metaphysics have a “necessity of matter”, informing us “not merely how the things are but how from the very nature of being they *must* be” (EP2:35). On metaphysical necessity and possibility, see also Lowe (1998), ch. 1.

⁷ For instance, the only reference to Peirce in Lewis’s (2001) thick volume of papers is to the “Peircean” idea of ideal scientific truth, discussed by Lewis in connection with a critique of Putnam’s internal realism (see p. 69). Plantinga (2003) and Stalnaker (2003) are examples of recent studies of modality that fail to even mention Peirce. Nor is the Peircean alternative acknowledged in textbooks, such as Loux’s (2002), or in, e.g., Lowe (1998) and Kim and Sosa (1998).

⁸ Interestingly, there are also other passages in which morality is invoked in relation to pragmatism and scholastic realism: “To say that I hold that the import, or adequate ultimate interpretation, of a concept is contained, not in any deed or deeds that will ever be done, but in a habit of conduct, or general moral determination of whatever procedure there may come to be, is no more than to say that I am a pragmatist.” (CP 5.504.) Though I am not sure what Peirce actually means when talking about “moral applications” and “moral determinations” in passages such as these, it seems that the otherwise plausible view according to which Peirce was primarily interested in natural-scientific habits of conduct – the conceivable practical effects brought about by scientific ideas in a laboratory – whereas William James (and perhaps the other classical pragmatists) more broadly included moral (and other non-scientific) habits of action in their versions of pragmatism (see, e.g., Pihlström 2004), must be qualified to some extent.

⁹ I am grateful to Tommi Vehkavaara for a conversation on this point, and related ones.

¹⁰ See also, e.g., the following passages: CP 1.15-26, 3.93, 4.1ff., 5.59-65, 5.93-101, 5.312, 5.423, 5.430-433, 5.453ff., 5.502-504, 5.528, 8.208, 8.258, 8.266, and 8.326, as well as the relevant discussion in RLT.

¹¹ See, e.g., EP2:35 (1898); EP2:354-357 (1905); EP2:450 (1908); CP 5.453-454, 5.457, 5.527, 6.485; on Peirce’s progress, in 1896-97, toward the acknowledgment of real possibilities, see also CP 3.527, 8.308, as well as Fisch (1986), p. 194, and Houser (1998), p. xx.

¹² We might also say that the pragmatic maxim presupposes scholastic realism not as a purely logical principle but whenever the maxim is applied to any real concept. Again, I am grateful to Tommi Vehkavaara for this formulation.

¹³ Hausman does not confine himself to discussing Peirce’s scholastic realism but is interested in his “evolutionary realism” in a wider sense. Boler (2004, 2005) also sees scholastic realism as a part of a more general (and evolving) commitment to realism in Peirce. This paper will not deal with the controversy over the development of Peirce’s views on realism vs. nominalism. For a now classic statement of Peirce’s “progress”, see Fisch (1986); for further discussion, cf. Hookway (1985), pp. 112-117, Michael (1988), and Boler (2005). Nor can I discuss Peirce’s relations to his predecessors, such as the scholastics – or Berkeley (see Boler 1980, 2004; de Waal 1996; Mayorga 2007).

¹⁴ See also Rosenthal (2001a). However, in Rosenthal's view, Peirce's position is far from theories postulating "repeatable universals": "[...] the reality Peirce envisions is not characterized by discrete things or repeatable universals, but by a concrete dynamic continuum inexhaustibly rich in possibilities and potentialities" (ibid., p. 9).

¹⁵ Hausman is here paraphrasing, in scholastically realist terms, the central ideas of Peirce's famous 1878 article, "How to Make Our Ideas Clear" (EP1, W3). On Peirce's "would-be's" and potentialities as "powers" of things irreducible to their actualizations, see, e.g., CP 1.414, 1.420, 4.172, 5.77n1, 5.428, 5.436, 5.527-528; on the Aristotelian and medieval sources of these views, cf. Boler (2005), pp. 20-21. As already noted in the text, Peirce later found his 1878 view of hardness (CP 5.403; EP1:132 ff.) too nominalistic (see, e.g., Boler 2004, p. 72; Hookway 2000, pp. 52-56).

¹⁶ Definitely Peirce rejects standard Platonism in arguing that his real generals are not independently existing things, "separately existing Ideas", but rather "modes of being in things" (Boler 2005, p. 18). As Peirce says, "no great realist held that a *universal* was a *thing*" (CP 1.27n, also quoted by Boler). Existence is the mode of being of Secondness, while reality is the mode of being of Thirdness, and nominalism conflates these two (CP 5.503 [1905]; see Boler 2004, pp. 68-69). Even familiar physical objects, on Boler's reading, are for Peirce "lawlike processes, systems, *constituted* by Firstness, Secondness, and Thirdness" (ibid., p. 71). The structure of things must, with the Scholastics, be understood as analogous to the structure of thought (ibid., p. 70). The notion of constitution here is, however, metaphysical in a rather traditional sense, not (at least not clearly) transcendental.

¹⁷ See further Hausman (1993), ch. 4 *passim*. That Peirce was not always entirely consistent in his distinction between existence and reality can, however, be seen from the following characterization of scholastic realism: "The absolute individual can not only not be realized in sense or thought, but cannot exist, properly speaking. For whatever lasts for any time, however short, is capable of logical division, because in that time it will undergo some change in its relations. But what does not exist for any time, however short, does not exist at all. All, therefore, that we perceive or think, or that exists, is general. So far there is truth in the doctrine of scholastic realism. But all that exists is infinitely determinate, and the infinitely determinate is the absolutely individual. This seems paradoxical, but the contradiction is easily resolved. That which exists is the object of a true conception. This conception may be made more determinate than any assignable conception; and therefore it is never so determinate that it is capable of no further determination." (CP 3.93n.) See also the statement at CP 5.312 (EP1:53 [1868]) that "generals must have a real existence".

¹⁸ Hausman (1993, p. 49) continues: "Thus, if something is not false or not known to be false, it is possible." This might strike a contemporary modal theorist as seriously misleading: aren't contingent falsehoods possibly true and contingent truths possibly false? Couldn't Peirce acknowledge this? Is this a problem for Peirce? Cf. CP 3.527 ("The Logic of Relatives") for Peirce's discussion of an epistemic definition of possibility. Indeed, a sharp distinction between possibility in a metaphysical sense and in an epistemic sense is foreign to Peirce, as it overlooks his way of seeing reality itself as epistemic – as the object of inquiry and, ultimately, of the final opinion. Furthermore, we should note that Peirce also has a "pure" notion of possibility, associated with Firstness, to be distinguished from laws, tendencies, or would-be's, which are cases of Thirdness. The latter, genuine "potentiality", is more fundamental than mere abstract pure possibility. Cf. Boler (2004), p. 72; see also CP 1.422. In Peircean evolutionary cosmology, there is a step from "undetermined and dimensionless potentiality to *determined* potentiality" (Houser 1992, p. xxxiii). On real possibilities, see also CP 4.547, 4.579-580. For Peirce's distinctions between various different notions of possibility, see, e.g., the following characterizations in "Notes on Metaphysics":

"Logical possibility: that of a hypothesis not involving any self-contradiction.

Mere possibility: that of a state of things which might come to pass, but, in point of fact, never will. In common language, exaggerated to the 'merest possibility.'

Metaphysical possibility ought to mean a possibility of existence, nearly a potentiality; but the phrase does not seem to be used in that sense, but rather in the sense of possibility by supernatural power.

Moral possibility one might expect should be the opposite of moral impossibility, meaning, therefore, something reasonably free from extreme improbability. But, in fact, it seems to be used to mean what is morally permissible.

Physical possibility: (1) that which a knowledge of the laws of nature would not enable a person to be sure was not true; (2) that which might be brought about if psychological and spiritual conditions did not prevent, such as the Pope's pronouncing *ex cathedra* as an article of faith the fallibility of all his own utterances.

Practical possibility: that which lies within the power of a person or combination of persons under external conditions likely to be fulfilled, and questionable chiefly because internal conditions may not be fulfilled.

Proximate possibility. It is very difficult to make out what is meant by this; but the phrase is evidently modelled on *potentia proxima*, which is a state of high preparedness for existence; so that proximate possibility would be a high grade of possibility in a proposition amounting almost to positive assertion.

Real possibility is possibility in the thing, as contradistinguished from mere logical possibility (Scotus, *Opus Oxon.*, I. ii. 7, *Ad secundam probationem maioris*).

Remote possibility: the possibility of a proposition which is far from being positively asserted. Also used in common speech.

Substantive possibility: the admissibility of a pure hypothesis (as illustrated above).” (CP 6.371.) For a discussion of these and related matters, see also Rosenthal (2001b).

¹⁹ This “game” covers much of the dialectic between, say, Armstrong and Lewis, in which the common purpose by all parties to the debate is to maintain maximal ontological economy. By accepting universals into his ontology, Armstrong thinks he has a sufficiently rich furniture in the actual world to yield truthmakers for truths about mere possibility, without postulating real possibilities, while Lewis claims that possible worlds and properties as classes (of *possibilia*) can, nominalistically, perform the job traditionally performed by universals. Famously, W.V. Quine was even more austere a metaphysician, eliminating both universals and modalities from his ontology, because both lack his – strictly nominalist – spatio-temporal criteria of identity. For these dialectics, see the essays collected in Kim & Sosa (1998).

²⁰ The Kantian “transcendental” approach to the realism issue must be distinguished from the controversy over transcendental and immanent realism about universals. For the latter in connection with Peirce, see Friedman (1995). Peirce, interestingly, points out an explicit connection between Kant and scholastic realism in the well-known passages of the 1871 Berkeley review discussing real generals and inquiry: “Indeed, what Kant called his Copernican step was precisely the passage from the nominalistic to the realistic view of reality. It was the essence of his philosophy to regard the real object as determined by the mind. That was nothing else than to consider every conception and intuition which enters necessarily into the experience of an object, and which is not transitory and accidental, as having objective validity.” (EP1:90-91.)

²¹ In the passage just quoted (CP 5.430), Peirce talks about “experiential evidence”, which of course may legitimately lead us to think that his argument is not transcendental at all – at least not purely a priori or apodictic. See Haack (1992) for a discussion of Peirce’s defense of scholastic realism as an argument based on the possibility of science as genuine inquiry. For Haack, Peirce’s scholastic realism is a piece of “scientific metaphysics” abductively defended, whereas I have sought to mix up Peirce’s abductive and transcendental concerns in this regard (see Pihlström 2003, ch. 3). Cf. also Rosenthal (2007a). A scholar more sensitive to transcendental construals of Peirce than Haack, Rosenthal, or Misak (among others) is Hookway; see his (2000), pp. 91 ff., 106-107, for a discussion of the relevance of the rejection of nominalism to Peirce’s pragmatic view of truth. Hookway’s interpretation is not purely transcendental, though (see *ibid.*, pp. 295-298). Esposito (2007, p. 13), in turn, explicitly reads Peirce’s views on synechism as harboring transcendental arguments: “Simply put, if continuity in nature embodying not mere contiguity but relational generality was not all-encompassing, then representability would not be achievable, and if entities called signs could not represent then experimentation would be impossible and abductive inference would always be a mere wild guess. However, it is indisputable that science advances, our knowledge deepens, and that our intuitive abductions often reveal truths once we more clearly understand the significance of the models shaping them.” Hence, synechism must be accepted as a necessary condition for the possibility of representability, abduction, and scientific progress. Let me note, further, that when referring to “transcendental” conditions, arguments, or considerations in a Peircean context I am not committing myself to Apel’s (1981) to my taste too foundationalist and not genuinely fallibilist version of transcendental pragmatism (for my reasons for keeping the Apelian approach at a distance, see Pihlström 2003, ch. 7). For an insightful exploration of transcendental argumentation in Peirce, in the context originally shaped by Apel and Habermas, see Cooke (2005).

²² Hausman (1993, ch. 5) also argues in detail that Peirce’s evolutionary realism differs crucially from such more antirealistically oriented contemporary views as Putnam’s and Rorty’s. I will not take a stance on this debate, but it should be obvious that my proposal for a combination of Kantian transcendental idealism and (Peircean) pragmatism is closer to Putnam’s internal or pragmatic realism than Hausman’s favorite form of Peircean realism (see also Pihlström 1996, 2003, 2006, 2007, forthcoming).

²³ Let us note in passing that I have a broader motivation for defending Peirce’s scholastic realism. “Real generals”, especially modalities, suitably interpreted, may be evoked to account for the notoriously problematic modal structure of transcendental reflection on the necessary conditions for the possibility of various given actualities (cf. Pihlström 2003, 2006). Insofar as the Peircean modalities can themselves be reconstructed along the lines of a transcendental metaphysics, a reflexive argumentative structure – but *not*, in my view, any vicious circularity – inevitably results.

²⁴ In Pihlström (2004), and elsewhere, I have further tried to argue that the very distinction between hopes and transcendental principles must be softened, if one prefers William James’s pragmatism to Peirce’s. Here we will set this issue aside, however.

²⁵ See, e.g., Hausman (1993), pp. 15, 141, 177-178, Parker (1998), Reynolds (2002), and especially Esposito (2007). For insightful applications of Peirce’s synechism in metaphysics more broadly, see Rosenthal (1986).

²⁶ Compare, however: “Metaphysics consists in the results of the absolute acceptance of logical principles not merely as regulatively valid, but as truths of being. Accordingly, it is to be assumed that the universe has an explanation, the function of which, like that of every logical explanation, is to unify its observed variety. It follows that the root of all being is One; and so far as different subjects have a common character they partake of an identical being. This, or something like this, is the monadic clause of the law. Second, drawing a general induction from all observed facts, we find all realization of existence lies in opposition, such as attractions, repulsions, visibilities, and centres of potentiality generally. ‘The very hyssop on the wall grows in that chink because the whole universe could not prevent its growing.’

This is, or is a part of, a dyadic clause of the law. Under the third clause, we have, as a deduction from the principle that thought is the mirror of being, the law that the end of being and highest reality is the living impersonation of the idea that evolution generates. Whatever is real is the law of something less real. Stuart Mill defined matter as a permanent possibility of sensation. What is a permanent possibility but a law? Atom acts on atom, causing stress in the intervening matter. Thus force is the general fact of the states of atoms on the line. This is true of force in its widest sense, dyadism. That which corresponds to a general class of dyads is a representation of it, and the dyad is nothing but a conflux of representations. A general class of representations collected into one object is an organized thing, and the representation is that which many such things have in common. And so forth.” (CP 1.487.)

²⁷ See also Neville (2001) on the significance of Peirce’s rejection of nominalism in theology and the philosophy of religion, especially comparative theology requiring vague categories. Synechism, which Peirce says has applications to the philosophy of religion (EP1:331 [1892]), even “calls for” a philosophy of evolutionary love: “Everybody can see that the statement of St. John is the formula of an evolutionary philosophy, which teaches that growth comes only from love, from – I will not say self-*sacrifice*, but from the ardent impulse to fulfil another’s highest impulse. Suppose, for example, that I have an idea that interests me. It is my creation. It is my creature; for as shown in last July’s *Monist*, 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; and as for the cosmos, only so far as it yet is mind, and so has life, is it capable of further evolution. Love, recognizing germs of loveliness in the hateful, gradually warms it into life, and makes it lovely. That is the sort of evolution which every careful student of my essay ‘The Law of Mind’ must see that *synechism* calls for.” (EP1:354; CP 6.289 [1893].)

²⁸ This might even be regarded as a transcendental argument locating a necessary condition (synechism) for the possibility of distinguishing between absolute truth and what is in fact not doubted, had Peirce not added the clause that this distinction is possibly “only in the abstract, and in a Pickwickian sense”. I remain puzzled about how, or indeed whether, he draws this distinction. Cf. also Pihlström (2004).

²⁹ Of course, not all Peirce scholars are happy with Margolis’s suggestions: see Hausman and Anderson (1994), as well as Wells (1994). Margolis’s views may be philosophically relevant to what I am trying to do *with* (or *to*?) Peirce, even though they may be scholarly inaccurate as interpretations of Peirce (and may not even have been intended to be scholarly accurate in that sense).

³⁰ Cf. again Nathan Houser’s (this conference) way of employing Peirce – rather than, as in Putnam’s case for the fact/value entanglement, James and Dewey – in his critical examination of the fact/value dichotomy.

³¹ For more precise formulations, see again the works already cited above, especially Lewis (1986) and (2001), Plantinga (2003), and Armstrong (2004).

³² I am *not* saying that empathy would be a sufficient ground for ethics, however. Cf. Pihlström (2005) for a quite different, albeit pragmatist, view.

³³ The crucial difference between oneself and others, with a relatively stable self *continuously* facing the challenge of ethically acknowledging others, and developing its capacities for acknowledgment – needed, in my view, for ethical responsibility – is lost, if one, when considering different possible worlds as different outcomes of what one might do in a given moral situation, is (as in Lewis 1986) actually considering different things (different persons) in different worlds, viz., mere counterparts and no identity-preserving moral agents.

³⁴ This is not the right place to engage in the growing literature on Peirce’s semiotic and social theory of the self. Very important work in this field has been done by Vincent Colapietro and many others.

³⁵ I wonder, for instance, whether Scheler’s (1919) treatment of the tragic might be reinterpreted in terms of Peircean generality. Both identity and transformation are involved in the development of a tragic figure, and both may require the kind of generality Peirce defends. This issue cannot be examined in any detail here, though.

³⁶ On the relevance of such continuity and generality, see, e.g., Rush Rhees’s (2006) reflections on how any use of language, or any single language-game, must (as its condition of possibility) be connected with language more generally, with the life we lead with language. Going beyond his teacher’s Wittgenstein’s (1958, I, § 2) famous example of the two builders (with their simple, though allegedly complete, language), Rhees argues – transcendently, I am tempted to say, though this is not his own way of making the point – against the very possibility of such a restricted language-game, and against the (related) possibility of there being one single conversation not connected with a host of other situations of language-use. This kind of argumentation can be found throughout his posthumously published volume, and it would be an interesting further task to compare Rhees’s and Peirce’s conceptions of generality. Arguably, a similar impossibility of speaking about or understanding other human beings without speaking to the other(s), without being called upon to respond to them in one’s life more generally, is at work in Emmanuel Levinas’s famous view of ethics as a “first philosophy”. This is not to say that any of these philosophers would have subscribed to transcendental methodology in their work, but we might be able to reinterpret their possibly somewhat limited self-understanding in this regard.

³⁷ Some other contributions to this conference, especially James Liszka's, reflect on Peirce's ethics in much more detail, offering extremely interesting reconstructions of a Peircean pragmatic ethics. In comparison, my investigation remains at a meta-level.

³⁸ A separate investigation ought to be devoted to James's alleged commitment to nominalism. (I plan to do something to that effect in the future; meanwhile, see the brief discussion and the relevant references in Pihlström 2004.)

³⁹ Again, see, however, Misak's (2004a, 2004b) defense of Peirce's moral cognitivism. I do not wish to take any firm stand on how exactly Peirce's remarks in the well-known 1898 lecture ought to be interpreted. Cf. also Rosa Mayorga's very important suggestion (in her paper at this conference) that Peirce's discussion of "vital matters" must be connected with his criticism of nominalism. It is a nominalist error to try to reason about vital matters; the nominalist fails to realize how fallible individual reasoning is (see CP 1.627, also cited by Mayorga).

⁴⁰ I should like to thank Chris Skowronski for his kind invitation to present this paper at the conference on Charles S. Peirce's normative thought (Opole University, Poland, June 26-30, 2007). Part of the material was also presented at the conference on "applying Peirce" (University of Helsinki, Finland, June 11-13, 2007). The following people, among others, have shaped my picture of Peirce (either by directly commenting on, or challenging, the views defended in the present paper or more generally and indirectly), which I gratefully acknowledge: Mats Bergman, Vincent Colapietro, Elizabeth Cooke, Leila Haaparanta, Peter H. Hare, Christopher Hookway, Nathan Houser, Ivo A. Ibri, Erkki Kilpinen, Heikki A. Kovalainen, James Liszka, Rosa Mayorga, Cheryl Misak, Dan Neshier, Ilkka Niiniluoto, Jukka Nikulainen, Jaime Nubiola, Mateusz Oleksy, Helmut Pape, Ahti-Veikko Pietarinen, Henrik Rydenfelt, T.L. Short, Tommi Vehkavaara, and Kenneth R. Westphal. Thanks are also due to the participants of my seminar on Peirce's pragmatism and scholastic realism at the University of Tampere (spring 2007).