

Theory and History of Ontology

by Raul Corazzon | e-mail: rc@ontology.co

Annotated Bibliography of John Deely. First part: 1965-1998

INTRODUCTION

John Deely (1942-2017) was the Rudman Chair in Thomistic Studies at the University of St. Thomas in Houston.

"If there is one notion that is central to the emerging postmodern consciousness, that notion is the notion of sign. And for understanding this notion, nothing is more essential than a new history of philosophy. For the notion of sign that has become the basis for a postmodern development of thought was unknown in the modern period, and before that traces back only as far as the turn of the 5th century AD. Yet the context within which the general notion of sign was first introduced presupposes both the ancient Greek notion of "natural sign" (semeion) and the framework of Greek discussions of nature and mind which provoked the development of philosophy in the first place as an attempt to understand the being proper to the objects of experience. Not only does it emerge that the sign is what every object presupposes, but, in modern philosophy, the conundrum about the reality of the "external world", the insolubility of the problem of how in theory to get beyond the privacy of the individual mind, springs directly from the reduction of signification to representation. So here is one of the ways in which the four ages of this book can be outlined: preliminaries to the notion of sign; the development of the notion itself; forgetfulness of the notion; recovery and advance of the notion. Tracing the development of the notion of sign from its beginning and against the backdrop of Greek philosophy yields an unexpected benefit by comparison with more familiar historical approaches. Every modern history of philosophy has been essentially preoccupied with the separating off from philosophy of science in the modern sense, especially in and after the seventeenth century. From this point of view, many of the continuing philosophical developments of the later Latin centuries tend to drop out of sight. It has become the custom to present modern philosophy, conventionally beginning with Descartes (17th century), simply as part and parcel of the scientific break with the authors of Latin tradition, and to treat the bringing of nominalism into the foreground of Latin thought by William of Ockham (14th century) as if that were the finale of Latin development.

This hiatus of two and a half centuries in the history of philosophy, however, effectively disappears when we make our way from ancient to modern times by tracing mainly the development of the philosophical notion of signum. From the High Middle Ages down to the time of Descartes we find a lively and continuous discussion of sign which, through a series of important if unfamiliar controversies on both sides of the thirteenth century, leads to a basic split in the closing Latin centuries. On one side stand those who think that the general notion of sign is an empty name, a flatus vocis, a nominalism, no more than a "relation of reason", an ens rationis. On the other side are those who are able to ground the general notion in an understanding of relation as a unique, suprasubjective mode of being, a veritable dual citizen of the order of ens reale and ens rationis alike, according to shifting circumstances.

Modern philosophy, from this point of view, appears essentially as an exploration of the nominalist alternative; and postmodern thought begins with the acknowledgment of the bankruptcy of the modern effort, combined with the determination pioneered by C. S. Peirce to explore the alternative, "the road not taken", the "second destiny" that had been identified in the closing Latin centuries but forgotten thereafter. Peirce's postmodern resumption of premodern epistemological themes produces a number of immediately dramatic and surprising results (beginning with the cure for the pathology dividing our intellectual culture between the personae of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde).

So derives the title for this work, *Four Ages of Understanding*: ancient Greek thought, the Latin Age, modern thought, postmodern thought. The book is a survey of philosophy in what is relevant to the "understanding of understanding" from ancient times to the present. It is intended both as a reference work

in the history of philosophy and a guide to future research - a "handbook for inquirers" in history, philosophy, and the humanities generally, including historians and philosophers of science. The book also aims to aid in the classroom those professors willing to wean a new generation from the "standard modern outlines" of philosophy's history which serve mainly to support the post-Cartesian supposition that history is of next to no import for the doing itself of philosophy."

From: John Deely - *Four ages of understanding. The first postmodern survey of philosophy from ancient times to the turn of the Twenty-first century*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press 2001. pp. XXX-XXXI.

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Reprinted in: John Deely and Raymond J. Nogar (eds.) - *The problem of evolution. A study of the philosophical repercussions of evolutionary science* - New York, Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1973 pp. 120-145

4. ———. 1967. "Finitude, Negativity, and Transcendence: The Problematic of Metaphysical Knowledge." *Philosophy Today* no. 11:184-206.
5. ———. 1967. "The Situation of Heidegger in the Tradition of Christian Philosophy." *Thomist* no. 31:159-244.

"This is an essay on the meaning of Being ('das Sein') in the philosophy of Martin Heidegger. its principal conclusion is that with the notion of 'Sein,' Heidegger has picked up again a theme first introduced into Western thought by Averroes and Aquinas, forgotten after the death of Poincaré in 1644, namely, the reality of 'ens intentionale' as an order of existence irreducibly other than the order of material nature. The point is demonstrated by showing the correspondence of Heidegger's 'Sein/Seiende' distinction with the 'intentionale/entitativum' distinction of Arabic and Latin Aristotelianism."

6. ———. 1967. "The Problematic of Metaphysical Knowledge." *Philosophy Today* no. 11:184-206.

"If metaphysical knowledge is truly a distinct and formally unified cognitive discipline which touches the way things are in some commonly fundamental way, then the nature and extent of such knowing should admit of an at least minimal characterization. With the question of whether there is after all a genuinely metaphysical mode of understanding experience into which our minds can thematically enter explicitly in mind, this essay probes into the problem of establishing a critical point of departure for metaphysical ontology properly and recognizably so called."

7. ———. 1968. "The Immateriality of the Intentional as Such." *New Scholasticism* no. 42:293-306.

"This article takes occasion from the discussion of intentionality set forth in chapter 12 of Mortimer J. Adler's recent book, 'The difference of man and the difference it makes,' to clarify a number of points in the classical theory of intentionality which are largely unknown or misrepresented in such current discussions as the one Adler both reports on and extends. It achieves this clarification by a close scrutiny of Adler's text, directing attention at critical points to the signal analyses of Jacques Maritain and Yves Simon which go farther into this problem of intentionality than any other contemporary writings."

8. ———. 1969. "The Philosophical Dimensions of the Origin of Species. Part I." *Thomist* no. 33:75-149.

"This article is a comprehensive assessment of the major writings on natural species from Aristotle to the

present, aiming to understand in what sense the ancient views were transformed after Darwin. It draws a clear distinction between the approach of classical philosophy and that of modern science to the problem of species, coupled with a comparative assessment of the methods of classical vs. modern philosophy in dealing with the question of specific differences in nature. The problems of causality, chance, and progress (evolutionary direction) are discussed in the framework of the species concepts. A detailed analytical outline is given after the conclusion."

9. ———. 1969. "The Philosophical Dimensions of the Origin of Species. Part Ii." *Thomist* no. 33:251-342.
10. ———. 1969. "Evolution and Ethics." *Proceedings and Addresses of the American Philosophical Association* no. 43:171-184.

Reprinted in: John Deely and Raymond J. Nogar (eds.) - *The problem of evolution. A study of the philosophical repercussions of evolutionary science* - New York, Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1973 pp. 187-209.

"This article seeks to determine the nature of the connection between evolutionary and ethical theory. To achieve this it proceeds from a statement of the possible connections to consider the idea of nature seemingly entailed by the data of evolutionary science, delineating here the general notion of good co-entailed, the distinction between physical and moral goodness, the 'naturalistic fallacy', being and ought, the mutual implication of 'natural' and 'positive' law. It concludes with a resolution of the possible connections initially limned."

11. ———. 1971. "Animal Intelligence and Concept-Formation." *Thomist* no. 35:43-93.

"Beginning from certain remarks on abstraction by Peter Geach, this article outlines a classical view of the highest levels of cognitive organization attainable in principle by animal consciousness, and indicates the indispensable role played by such attainments in the formation of properly intellectual cognition. By a careful culling, the relevant texts from Aquinas' corpus are gathered in a consistent framework and related to the contemporary conclusions of H. H. Price and M. J. Adler adversative to Geach."

12. ———. 1971. *The Tradition Via Heidegger. An Essay on the Meaning of Being in the Philosophy of Martin Heidegger*. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff.

Contents: Acknowledgements VII; Preface IX; A note of reference stile XI; List of symbols used XIII; Analytic Table of Contents XVII-XXVIII; Introduction 1; I. The situation of Heidegger in the tradition of Christian philosophy 9; II. The problem of language and the need for a re-trieve 17 III. The forgottenness of Being 29; IV. Form Man and the *Cogito Sum* to Dasein 43; V. Dasein and the regress to conscious awareness 62; VI. *Intentionalität and Intentionale*: two distinct notions 78; VII. Dasein and the intentional life of Man 88; VIII. The presuppositioned priority of the Being-Question 111; IX. Phenomenology: the medium of the Being-Question 134; X. From the early to the later Heidegger 156; XI. Conclusion: the denouement of our re-trieve 171; Postscript: a note on the genesis and implications of this book 178; Appendix I: The thought of Being and theology 184; Appendix II: metaphysics and the thought of M. Heidegger 189; Selected bibliography 194; Index of proper names 199-200.

"In making it clear that the essential thought of Heidegger is concerned principally with what scholasticism has referred to in passing (so to speak) as the order of *esse intentionale* strictly understood, however, I intend to make it equally clear that with Martin Heidegger *philosophy itself* has achieved a measure of progress. For if the area of *esse intentionale* has been clearly delimited by the great scholastics, it has been almost entirely neglected or misunderstood by the majority of philosophers; and even in those rare writings, such as the works of John of St. Thomas, where its fundamental structure is rightly characterized, its proper actuality is never rendered fully thematic. Even as the ancients knew full well that the earth was a globe, yet knew nothing of the actual topography of the other side, so is the notion of *esse intentionale* the "*antipodes*" or unexplored region in their metaphysical topography concerned, as it was, principally with tracing the nature of change and the substance/accident dimension of act-potency compositions, i.e., with *esse entitativum*, rather than with the dimension of intersubjectivity and the then little realized problem of intersubjectivity *par excellence*, the nature of the domination of man's existence by a total view of reality (culture, *Weltanschauung*, etc.) not known to reduce to fact, or of *Historicity*." (...)

Yet however complex and subtle accuracy compels its detailed analyses to be, this book has a simple ground plan. It develops through eight stages, covered by ten chapters:

1. Stage one does no more than place our considerations in the context of contemporary currents of thought, pointing out the difficulty and utility of arriving at a consistent understanding of the direction of Heidegger's thought (Chapters I and II).

2. Stage two consists in a direct consideration of Heidegger's original philosophical experience as providing an approach to the meaning of "Being" in terms of the presence of beings in awareness and social life rather than simply in themselves (Chapter III).

3. Stage three delineates the difficulty of formalizing this experience of intersubjectivity in a definite question serving to guide further inquiry, of translating the mystery of Being into a structured problematic accessible to properly philosophical research (Chapter IV).

4. In stage four are brought out the double set of considerations necessary to analytically adequate the structured unity of Dasein as disclosed by virtue of the fact that Dasein's uttermost (*äusserst*) possibility is at the same time its ownmost (*eigenst*) and *non-relational (unbezügliche)* (Chapters V and VI).

5. The fifth stage makes clear that the contribution of Heideggerian thought to the progress of philosophy stems principally from rendering the intersubjective dimension of human reality thematic, from thematizing that dimension of Dasein according to which it enjoys its "objectively scientific priority," as Heidegger puts it, for phenomenological research (Chapter VII).

6. Stage six makes clear the functional interdependence which obtains between the ontic-ontological structure of Dasein's temporal unity and the priority in philosophy of the phenomenological over the metaphysical sense of the Being question (Chapter VIII).

7. Stage seven examines the identity of Heidegger's conception of the phenomenological attitude and research-mode with his thought of Being (*Denken des Seins*) (Chapter IX).

8. The final stage traces the passage from the early to the later Heidegger as necessitated from within by the suppression of the act-potency structures which gave determinateness and direction to the analyses of *Sein and Zeit*, showing that in these terms the celebrated turning in Heidegger's way of thought provides the justification and completes the demonstration of each sequential stage in our Retrieve." (pp. 3-4).

13. ———. 1971. "The Myth as Integral Objectivity." *Proceedings and Addresses of the American Philosophical Association* no. 45:67-76.

"This article attempts a definition and division of myth in order to clarify the relations between mythical thought and critical reflection. By means of this clarification, a further attempt is made to vindicate the uniqueness in principle of objective existence over against that of physical and mental events alike, in terms of the indifference of thought to being and non-being in its relation to objects, an indifference unmistakably exhibited by the functioning of myth in human culture."

14. ———. 1972. "The Ontological Status of Intentionality." *New Scholasticism* no. 46:220-233.

"In a recent article, Richard Aquila argues that Brentano's intentionality thesis as developed by Chisholm is either devoid of ontological significance, or carries a commitment to non-existent objects. The argument is that a relation, if it is genuine, implies the reality of its term. I show this argument to be mistaken, by pointing out the classical distinction between the formality of a relation, which derives from its being referential, and the reality or existence of a relation, which derives from its foundation in some subject. In terms of this distinction, it is perfectly possible, under certain privileged conditions (discussed in this article), for a true relation to exist without there having to be any real term for that relation. Hence it is false to assert that the thesis concerning the intentionality of the mental depends for its ontological significance on a commitment to a realm of mind-independent non-existent objects."

15. ———. 1972. "How Language Refers." *Studi Internazionali di Filosofia* no. 4:41-50.

"Assuming language sometimes succeeds in referring to objects, this article considers the question: how is such success possible? What enables language to refer? After showing that behavioral psychology and the theory of meaning as use provide no answer, an answer is drawn (by way of an infinite regress argument) from the dependence of language on an essentially relative entity T, which as such is indifferent to the physical reality of its term. Some implications are developed as critique of views of Frege, Meinong, Russell, Quine, and Wittgenstein; and it is suggested in conclusion that the capacity of language to refer to what does not physically exist is the key to the nature of thought."

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 24. ———. 1977. "Metaphysics, Modern Thought, and 'Thomism'." *Notes et Documents* no. 8:12-18.
 25. ———. 1977. "The Use of Words to Mention." *New Scholasticism* no. 51:546-553.
- "This article takes up the problem of linguistic reference as it has been stated in current Anglo-American philosophy, but introduces into the discussion basic considerations derived from a 1632 'Tractatus de signis' by John Poinso. The argument shows why the concept of use' is incapable of providing foundations for a philosophy of language, and how the necessary alternative concept leads to radical revision of basic positions widely held in recent analytic and linguistic philosophy concerning mental events and states."
26. ———. 1977. "All'origine Della Semiotica." *Renovatio* no. 12:330-357.
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 29. ———. 1978. "Semiotic and the Controversy over Mental Events." *Proceedings and Addresses of the American Philosophical Association* no. 52:16-27.
- "This essay surveys epistemological theory as it has developed from the beginnings of modern philosophy to the present time, in order to show how the development of a doctrine of signs (semiotic) provides, both historically and theoretically, as alternative understanding of knowledge that is far more consonant with common experience than any of the traditional mainstream modern or contemporary views, and thus portends a revolution for philosophy."
30. ———. 1980. "Antecedents to Peirce's Notion of Iconic Signs." In *Semiotic 1980. Proceedings of 5th Annual Meeting. Semiotics Society of America*, edited by Herzfeld, Michael and Lenhart, Margot, 109-120. New York: Plenum.
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"The first part of this book is an initial attempt to establish an outline of the history of logic expressly from the standpoint of a doctrine of signs as defined by John Locke under the heading of semiotic. No effort has been made in this part to explore the standpoint so defined (that is left for the second part).

What has been attempted rather is to indicate in a summary fashion and from the point of view of a philosopher a general sketch of the place and circumstances in Western culture where semiotic consciousness was first thematically achieved, to the extent at least that we are able to determine this in the light of the history of logic and philosophy as the "experts" present it to us, supplemented of course by an actual reading, first-hand, of the texts on which the outline relies - not all of which, by any means, have been weighed evenly if at all in the researches so far of the expert historians.

This fact already indicates the extent to which semiotic historiography will be achieved only by upsetting and revising, often in radical ways, the conventional outlines and histories of thought which have become standard fare in the universities of today. The writing of this history eventually must inevitably take the form also of a *structuring anew* of the entire history of ideas and of philosophy, in order to bring to the fore and make explicit the semiotic components latent by the nature of the case (all thought being through signs) in each of the previous thinkers who have wrestled since ancient times with foundational questions of knowledge, experience, and interpretation generally.

(...)

The second part of this book can no longer claim to be historical (though it tries not to be ignorant of history). Insofar as it differs from Part I, it does so under the inspiration of a remark made by Paul Bouissac at the sixth annual meeting of the Semiotic Society of America on the 2nd of October, 1981, in his presentation, "Figurative vs. Objective Semiosis." All previous semiotic "theories," he observed, be they Greimasian, Saussurean, Peircean, Poinsonian, have come to the study of signs late in the day, on the basis of a thoroughly worked out system of concepts, a "pre-existing philosophical paradigm." To this preajcent paradigm, then, their subsequent notions of signification were referred and required to conform. The coming of age of semiotic as a perspective in its own right requires exactly the reverse. It can have no paradigm of philosophy given in advance. Beginning with the sign, that is, from the function of signs in our experience taken in their own right (semiosis), it is the task of semiotic to create a new paradigm - its own - and to review, criticize, and correct so far as possible all previous accounts of experience in the terms of *that* paradigm.

These remarks, filled at the time with the passion and life of the speaker, were spontaneous there and poorly paraphrased here. Yet they struck me then and seem to me now with undiminished force exactly *justes*, exactly to capture in a flash of insight the task against whose demands the movement that has grown up around us must finally be measured. To answer Herbert's question (1981), what contributes toward meeting these demands in the work going on today is the revolutionary part of semiotics, what does not so contribute belongs to merely passing fad and fashion.

Like Part I, therefore, Part II of this book is heuristic rather than didactic. It seeks not to outline but to adumbrate the reorientation of thought made possible by the semiotic point of view not (indeed) in all areas, but at least in the area of the foundations of knowledge and experience, and at the interface of modern with (in lieu of the better term yet to be coined) post-modern times. Semiotics is capable of mediating a change of age as profound and total as was the separating off of modern times from the Latin era. Then, the cutting edge of transition was modern science, experimental and mathematical, coming of age. Today it is the interpretive activity of the mind becoming conscious of its full range, ground, and instruments, that is, semiotics." pp. 1-4.

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Reprinted: South Bend, St. Augustine's Press. 2004. Greatly expanded fourth edition, Tartu University Press, 2005, with an introduction by K. Kull, S Salupere, P. Torop: *Semiotics has no beginning* pp. IX-XXV and an Author's Preface to the Fourth Edition XXVI-XXVIII.

(In the fourth edition the chapters from eight to eleven are new, and the first, but especially the third and fourth chapters contain important additions).

Contents of the Fourth edition: K. Kull, S Salupere, P. Torop: *Semiotics has no beginning* pp. IX; Author's Preface to the Fourth Edition XXVI; Author's Preface to the first edition XXIX; Thematic epigraphs 1; 1. Literary semiotics and the doctrine of signs 1; 2. Semiotics: method or point of view? 12; 3. Semiosis: The subject matter of semiotic inquiry 26; 4. Signs: The medium of semiosis 51; 5. Zoosemiotics and anthroposemiotics 74; 6. Physiosesemiosis and phytosemiosis 111; 7. Retrospect: history and theory in semiotics 1368. Prospect: a new beginning for the sciences 171; 9. The quasi-error of the external world 183; 10. How semiotics unifies human knowledge 202; 11. The definition of Human Being 215; References 233; Translators' afterword 260; Dictionary of terms 262; Name Index 266-268.

"The aim of the book, then, is to fill the need for an answer to the question of just what is the essential nature and what are the fundamental varieties of possible semiosis. The substance of the answer to this twofold question is contained in chapters 3 through 6. Corresponding to this answer is the answer in chapter 2 to the prior question of what semiotics itself-the knowledge corresponding to the subject matter-basically is. And bracketing this whole discussion by way of opening and closing is a kind of sociological look at semiotics today in chapter 1, balanced by a historical look at semiotics in retrospect and prospect in chapter 7.

This is a book I have long wanted to write and one that has, for even longer, needed to be written; but, at least for this author, only recently have the essential insight and opportunity come together for expressing in a coherent overall framework the basic concepts of semiotics." pp. XXIX-XXX.

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Symbolicity is bound together with *Semiotics 1990* edited by Karen Haworth, John Deely, and Terry Prewitt as a single volume.

60. ———. 1993. *The Human Use of Signs Or: Elements of Anthroposemiosis*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield.

Contents: List of figures IX; Preface XI-XIII; Preliminaries 1; Part. I. Signification 11; Part II. Textuality 53; Part III. Critick 83; Part IV. Otherness 121; Paragraphal glosses 135; Appendix: The ethics of terminology 173; References 175; Index of persons mentioned 199; Index of conceptions 202; About the author 241.

"This book is the best argument I can make to date that the perspective required to develop a doctrine of signs in the fullness of its proper possibilities implies also an understanding of human experience that will be for the first time integral and adequate to the task of providing the measure of human knowledge in the whole of its extent, as distinguished from imposing upon experience and systems of belief some ideological measure designed to dismiss large parts thereof a-priori. To minimize the difficulty of the argument, the book has been set up in such a way as to emphasize the autonomy of the paragraphs. The present work is published in the hope especially of drawing other workers into the labor of understanding the human use of signs, recognizing all the while that the work perforce advances along an asymptotic curve ill-suited to dogmatic beliefs of any stripe. A community of inquirers cannot escape from the need to provide its own authority, and at the same time to ground that authority critically on the nodes and intersections of objective being with physical being." pp. XII-XIII.

"I will proceed in four parts.

In Part I, I will examine the generic element in the semiotic definition of *anthropos* as *animal linguisticum*, that is to say, what is common to zoösemiosis and anthroposemiosis through the action of signs in the building up of "experience" as something in its own right superordinate to the brute secondness of environmental interactions. This I do under the heading of Signification. And here, following up on Sebeok's suggestions, we will see how the basic notion of modeling system extends much wider than the linguistic base assigned to it by the Tartu school.

In Part II, under the heading of Textuality, I will examine, so to say, the linguisticization of the world of experience that is, the species-specific element of experience that makes the human modeling system, or experience anthroposemiotically considered, different from the modeling system of animals employing communication systems lacking the code constitutive of the *signum expertum ad placitum* (the sign experienced linguistically, let us say). This sign will appear as ultimately rooted as such in the relation of signification grasped and deployed in its distinction from the perceptible sign-vehicle and the content signified. We will thereby see how textuality, virtual in the Umwelt, becomes actual through the indefinite decompositions and recompositions of experience linguistically construed by means of the establishment of a praeterbiological code which no longer, as in Sebeok's notion (cf. Baer *Thomas A. Sebeok doctrine of signs* in: *Classics of semiotics*, 1981: 183), adequates the Uexküllian notion (1940) of "meaning-plan", because textuality breaks the proportion between biological heritage and object as such experienced. In a word, we confront in the codes whereby experience is textualized the differentiating factor in the semiotic definition of *anthropos* as *animal linguisticum*.

This examination of code will bring us to the third element in this modeling of anthroposemiosis -- Part III of the essay, examination of the curiously detached domain called "Critick" in the wide and generic sense explained above (§ 17) as taken from Locke's *Essay*, wherein that equally curiously detached exercise called "criticism" takes place according to various forms. Therein, at one and the same time, what is most distinctive and what is most feeble in anthroposemiosis coincide to create that illusion whereby the literary aspect of semiosis is raised to the Pinnacle of intellectual achievement and treated perversely as a self-contained and autonomous exercise of semiotic competence. Here we will make explicit a point that will have been established virtually in the two previous stages of the discussion: the critical function and faculty is a subspecies of semiotic competence rather than identical with semiotic competence. Subordinate to and subtended by much broader processes of semiosis, criticism in any specific sense owes its validity to its connection with, rather than to its misleading appearance of

autonomy within, those processes. It is a question of appreciating the expanse of the framework and depth of the foundation that belongs to semiotics today by birthright as an offspring of the doctrine of signs gestated by the Iberians after 1529 (Soto's *Summulae*), crystallized thematically in Poinsett's *Treatise* of 1632, named by Locke in 1690, and implemented by Peirce in its wholesale possibilities with the essay on categories of 1867 and in the many essays thereafter until his death in 1914.

Once the expanse of the framework has been grasped, it will be possible, in a few concluding remarks (Part IV on "Otherness"), to show how "constituting the other" is not unique to anthropology but is rather the basic activity of human intelligence essentially dependent on linguistic means. What is unique and uniquely interesting about anthropology is simply that "the other" is, normally, a conspecific whom we encounter only after socialization to maturity has occurred on the basis of cultural rules and expectations alien to our own socialization."

61. ———. 1993. "How Does Semiotic Effect Renvoi?" *American Journal of Semiotics* no. 11:11-61.

Reprinted as chapter 8 of: *New beginnings: early modern philosophy and postmodern thought* pp. 201-244

62. ———, ed. 1993. *Semiotics, 1992*. Lanham: University Press of America.

63. ———. 1994. "What Happened to Philosophy between Aquinas and Descartes?" *Thomist* no. 58:543-568.

64. ———. 1994. *New Beginnings. Early Modern Philosophy and Postmodern Thought*. Toronto: Toronto University Press.

Contents: List of illustrations X; Preface: The way to Postmodernity by Lucia Santaella-Braga XI; Technical prenote and acknowledgements XV-XVI; Introduction: On reading this book 3; Part I: The historical contacts. 1. Stating the question 13; 2. The historical prejudices 27; 3. Outlining Latinity with rinsed eyes 39; 4. The problem of novelty in the writings of Late Latin Scholasticism 53; 5. Locke's proposal for semiotic: what was new and what was not 109; Epilogue to Part I: Further signs 145; Part II: Expanding the speculative links; 6. How do signs work? 151; 7. The Grand Vision 183; 8. Renvoi 201; Transition to the future: the way of signs 245; Appendix 1: Contrasting ontological and Transcendental relatives 249; Appendix 2: Longer Latin citations 255; References 261; Index 295-310.

"This book concerns the theme of new beginnings within philosophy, the changes of age which define philosophical epochs. The theme is taken up not in its full scope as a speculative issue, but concretely in terms of the two most recent such turning points: the origins of modern philosophy out of Latin times and the origins of postmodern philosophy out of modern times. Each of these eras arises out of and defines itself against the backdrop of the paradigm of philosophy accepted in the background period. But what is unusual in the case I am considering is that the modern paradigm was so formed as to conceal from the outset fundamental themes of premodern Latin thought which are, in effect, resumed and foregrounded (with new accents and emphases, to be sure) by the postmodern development. Between the late Latin matrix of early modern philosophy and postmodernism there is a measure of speculative continuity which the classical modern development conceals. That underarching continuity or subtension is what I want to bring to the surface.

Even so restricted and concretized, the transitions at issue are large. To make their handling manageable, in Part I of the book I have focused on them as they are embodied in key figures: especially René Descartes, 1596-1650, and John Locke, 1632-1704 (and, to a lesser extent, George Berkeley, 1685-1753, and David Hume, 1711-1776), for the understanding of the origins of distinctively modern philosophy; Charles Peirce, 1839-1914, and Martin Heidegger, 1889-1976, for the understanding of the central thrust of postmodernism in philosophy; and John Poinsett, 1589-1644, for demonstrating speculative links which bind the matrix of the two at either end-the dawn and the dusk-of essentially modern philosophy.

Thus there are five key figures in the book, but Poinsett is the central one. He is central, however, not as an isolated thinker but as a representative—a unique and uniquely qualified representative, as the reader will learn-of the Latin Age both in its last phase as providing the matrix of early modern philosophy and in its full extent so far as it was a development of the logical, physical, and metaphysical writings of Aristotle assimilated to the milieu of medieval and renaissance Latin culture. In the same way, Descartes and Locke, Peirce and Heidegger, appear in these pages not as individual thinkers but as paired thinkers representative, respectively, of modernism and postmodernism in philosophy. All five figures, then, are personifications of the theme, and are presented as instantiating it.

(...)

This book sets out to redress the imbalances and correct some distortions, in order to motivate

philosophers and historians of philosophy to see and review their materials in a new light—and above all to start reading some new texts which will not only make it possible to tell, but will shortly compel us to tell, a quite different "story of modern philosophy" than the stale one-sided tale we have been repeating to generations upon generations of students since the 1800s." pp. 3-4

65. ———. 1994. "Why Investigate the Common Sources of Charles Peirce and John Poinsett?" In *Semiotics 1994*, edited by Spinks, Cary William and Deely, John, 34-50. New York: Peter Lang.

66. ———. 1994. "A Morning and Evening Star: Editor's Introduction." *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly* no. 68:259-278.

"This special issue of the *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly* devoted to John Poinsett is complemented by a *mélange* of four additional essays in Poinsett's honor, three of which appear in *The Thomist*, and one in *The Modern Schoolman*. (1) Given the neglect Poinsett's work has suffered throughout the modern period, it is at least surprising to find the 350th anniversary of his death commemorated by such a range of learned essays celebrating his current relevance, and appearing in three of the oldest learned journals in the American Catholic university world (dating back, respectively, to 1927, 1939, and 1920).

Such homage is certainly befitting for the work of a man whose epistemological writings were considered by Jacques Maritain to be the only synthesis capable of bringing the thought of St. Thomas Aquinas effectively to bear on the critical situation as it developed in modernity. (2) My abduction is that the homage may be regarded more as auspicious of what the future holds for Poinsett's work in emerging from the shadows of modernity than as redressing a past neglect. These essays in honor of Poinsett in the several journals commemorate the past, by they celebrate the future, marking, in fact, a prospect of postmodernity." pp. 259-260.

(1) John Deely, "What Happened to Philosophy between Aquinas and Descartes?"; James Bernard Murphy, "Language, Communication, and Representation in the Semiotic of John Poinsett"; John D. Kronen, "The Substantial Unity of Material Substances according to John Poinsett" *The Thomist*, 58, no. 4 (October 1994); Gerard J. Dalcourt, "Poinsett and the Mental Imagery Debate," *The Modern Schoolman*, 72, n. 1 (November 1994).

2 Jacques Maritain, *The Degrees of Knowledge*, trans. supervised by Gerald B. Phelan (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1959), 387. See further John Deely, "Semiotic in the Thought of Jacques Maritain," *Recherche Sémiotique / Semiotic Inquiry* 6, no. 2 (1986): 1-30.

67. ———. 1994. "Locke's Philosophy Vs. Locke's Proposal for Semiotic." *American Journal of Semiotics* no. 11:33-37.

68. ———. 1995. "Common Sources for the Semiotic of Charles Peirce and John Poinsett." *Review of Metaphysics* no. 48:539-566.

Co-author: Mauricio Beuchot.

"The prevalence today of 'semiotics' as the preferred linguistic form for designating the study of signs in its various aspects already conceals a history, a story of the ways in which, layer by layer, the temporal achievement we call human understanding builds, through public discourse, ever new levels of common acceptance each of which presents itself as, if not self-evident, at least the common wisdom. Overcoming such present-mindedness is not the least of the tasks faced by the awakening of semiotic consciousness. (...)

There are a host of reasons, from superficial to profound, that play a role in the current dominance of 'semiotics' as the preferred linguistic form for designating the study of signs. The reversal of dominance in the discursive rivalry between 'semiology' and 'semiotics' as cultural forms of understanding, we want to suggest, is owing to the gradual, not to say grudging, recognition of the comparative depth, scope, and importance of the studies authored, on the one hand, by Ferdinand de Saussure (1857-1913) and those who took their principal inspiration in the study of signs from his work; and, on the other hand, by Charles Sanders Peirce (1839-1914) and those who took principal inspiration in the study of signs from his work. Saussure, of course, coined the term 'semiologie,' while Peirce, though he did not coin the word 'semiotic,' nonetheless took it over from the desuetude into which it had fallen as a neologism at the end of Locke's *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* of 1690 and put it into current circulation. (*) (p. 539.

(*) See John Deely, "John Locke's Place in the History of Semiotic Inquiry," in *Semiotics 1986*, ed. John Deely and Jonathan Evans (Lanham: University Press of America, 1988), 406-18. For Locke's actual text itself of 1690, see "Coining the Name," in *Frontiers in Semiotics*, 2-4, with detailed analysis of the

- coinage in Luigi Romeo, "The Derivation of 'Semiotics' through the History of the Discipline," *Semiosis* 6, no. 2 (1977): 31-8; John Deely, "Semiotic and the Liberal Arts," *The New Scholasticism*, 59, no. 3 (summer 1985): 296-322; and John Deely, "Locke's Proposal for Semiotics and the Scholastic Doctrine of Species," *The Modern Schoolman* 70, no. 3 (March 1993): 165-88.
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