



THE CONDITIONS OF FREEDOM AND THEIR METAPHYSICAL IMPLICATIONS FOR THE PHILOSOPHIES OF ARISTOTLE AND PEIRCE

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Abstract: *This article aims to present Peirce's project as an organic system that is able to provide a reasonable account of our complex experience of freedom. For this reason, I will maintain that there are three conditions of possibility for human freedom that can be established according to an attentive reading of Aristotle's works, namely, the contingency of the world, the existence of a being who can take advantage of the world's contingency, and the capacity of a person to decide his or her own idea of happiness or final good in a human community. Even though Peirce did not think explicitly of these conditions, I will try to defend that they can be tracked, consolidated, and improved through Peirce's philosophy. These conditions can be tracked, first of all, in their common perspective regarding the world's element of contingency and openness to growth. Second, both philosophers think that human beings have the power to decide and actively participate in the world through experience and habit. Finally, both grant an important role to the community in their philosophies in order to give sense to persons' actions.*

Keywords: *Charles Sanders Peirce. Aristotle. Freedom. Evolution. Ethics. Metaphysics.*

AS CONDIÇÕES DE LIBERDADE E SUAS IMPLICAÇÕES METAFÍSICAS PARA AS FILOSOFIAS DE ARISTÓTELES E PEIRCE

Resumo: Esse artigo tem como objetivo apresentar o projeto peirciano como um sistema orgânico apto a fornecer uma abordagem razoável acerca da nossa complexa experiência da liberdade. Por essa razão, mantereí que há três condições de possibilidade para a liberdade humana que podem ser estabelecidas de acordo com uma leitura atenta das obras de Aristóteles, a saber, a contingência do mundo, a existência de um ser que pode tirar vantagem da contingência do mundo e a capacidade de decisão de uma pessoa acerca de sua própria ideia de felicidade ou bem final em uma comunidade. Embora Peirce não tenha pensado explicitamente nessas condições, defenderei que elas podem ser rastreadas, primeiramente, através de suas perspectivas comuns no que diz respeito ao elemento de contingência do mundo e em sua abertura para o crescimento; segundo, ambos os filósofos pensam que os seres humanos possuem o poder de decidir e participar ativamente no mundo, por meio de suas experiências e hábitos e, finalmente, ambos asseguram um importante papel para a comunidade em suas filosofias, de modo a dar sentido às ações das pessoas.

Palavras-chave: Charles Sanders Peirce. Aristóteles. Liberdade. Evolução. Ética. Metafísica.

Introduction

This article has as its main aim to present Peirce's project as an organic system that is able to provide a reasonable account of our complex experience of freedom. For this reason, I will maintain that there are three conditions of possibility for human freedom that can be established according to an attentive reading of Aristotle's works, namely, the contingency of the world, the existence of a being who can take advantage of the world's contingency, and the capacity of a person to decide his or her own idea of happiness or final good in a human community. Even though Peirce did not think explicitly of these conditions, I will try to defend that they can be tracked, consolidated, and improved through Peirce's philosophy. These conditions can be tracked, first of all, in their common perspective regarding the world's element of contingency and openness to growth. Second, both philosophers think that human beings have the power to decide and actively participate in the world through experience and habit. Finally, both grant an important role to community in their philosophies in order to give sense to persons' actions.

Moreover, these conditions of freedom can be consolidated and improved through Peirce's philosophy, for he offered a unifying version of how these conditions work in the universe. This is due to the fact that he conceived the cosmos as a continuum in which growth and evolution take place as a general feature of the cosmos; this does not happen in the case of Aristotle, for whom the universe must be divided between the things that happen by necessity and things that can be otherwise.

Consequently, Peirce can give a more meaningful place to chance in the world. For him, chance is not the product of our ignorance, as modernity would claim, but a condition of the possibility of the world's growth; and mutations are not mere mistakes of the cosmos, instead they represent the cosmos's attempts to grow and to harmonize its creatures. Thus, although mutations cannot be predicted, or at least fully determined beforehand for particular cases, they can be explained. On the other hand, for the theories that do not give an important place to chance in the cosmos, as in Aristotle's case,¹ mutations, or as he called them *theratoi*, are mere accidents of the undetermined matter that acts without a purpose and about which no explanation can be given. However, in this article I will not deal with each one of the conditions of possibility of freedom in more detail. Here, I will present the main features of the project and will leave a more detailed account for further development. Now, let me give you a short account of the Aristotelian background.

I

In the work of Aristotle there is not any particular section or paragraph that discusses freedom in an explicit or direct way, in contrast to his treatment of other ethical issues, such as virtue, happiness, or friendship. This leads us to a problem since, as there is not any particular treatise on freedom, some scholars have assumed that there is not a theory of freedom in Aristotle's thought and, consequently, not a theory of moral responsibility either, as it is shown by Austin in his *A Plea for Excuses*. There he states that "Aristotle has been often censured for talking about excuses or pleas, and leaving out 'the real problem' [i.e., freedom]; under my consideration, the first time I became interested in the excuses was when I

¹ It has to be said that Aristotle did give an important role to chance, but only in the field of ethics and limited to the sublunar world not for the general behavior of the cosmos.

started to see the injustice of this slander.”² This accusation can be referred to the Third Book of *Nicomachean Ethics*, where Aristotle examined what can be excused in a moral action. However, in my view, this negative method, which asks for the conditions under which we can state that we are not responsible for an action, represents for Aristotle the best way to deal with the problem of human responsibility, after his first attempts to analyze it in a positive way in his earlier ethical work, *Eudemian Ethics*³.

Thus, the central hypothesis upon which I will base Aristotle’s theory of freedom is the following: Aristotle has a theory of human responsibility and, therefore, a theory of freedom. Only when we consider the existence of freedom, the fact that human beings can choose and, as a consequence, that they are responsible for their actions, can we talk about ethics in a strict sense. For me, it is unacceptable to talk about human ethics if we do not assume the fact that human beings can be responsible for their actions in the sense that they are the efficient cause of them, in the same way as they are “of their children.”⁴ Consequently, I claim that there is no plausible reason to accuse Aristotle of maintaining a deterministic ethics, for he not only conceived human beings to be responsible but he also recognized the conditions in the world and in the political constitutions that ground the possibility of freedom.

To begin, I assume that the conditions of human freedom are three: The first condition is what I call the cosmological condition—that the world is contingent. According to this condition neither everything that happens is absolutely determined nor is it completely subjected to chance. Even though these two situations can be found in the world, Aristotle would say, there is as well a range of circumstances in which human beings can choose. In the second place, the human condition of freedom establishes that there is a being who can take advantage of the world’s contingency, since he or she is able to deliberate and to choose. This is the human being. Finally, there is the political condition which stated in its most general perspective says that in order for freedom to be possible, it is necessary that the human being has the possibility to decide his or her own idea of happiness or ultimate good in a human community. In other words, the contingency of the world is necessary in order to make deliberation possible, but if someone is born as a slave in a polis without the possibility to decide and to act according to his or her own idea of happiness, we cannot consider this being free.

It is important to underscore that the political condition requires necessarily the other two conditions, that is, the political freedom is supported by the deliberation of a subject and the possibility of action given by the contingency of the world. Thus, this third condition of freedom unifies the former conditions and gives them sense. The political condition, in its relation to the objective condition, favors the space for deliberation, since, from Aristotle’s point of view, the freeman is the one who can deliberate in order to establish not only his particular actions but also the laws that rule him. This constitutes the typical action of the citizen.⁵ Hence, only when

² J.L: Austin, “A Plea for Excuses,” in *Philosophical Papers*, ed. J. O. Urmson & G. J. Warnock (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1961), 173.

³ In my point of view the *Eudemian Ethics* is an earlier work of Aristotle, although this point of view is quite controversial. See Werner Jaeger, *Aristotle: Fundamentals Of The History Of His Development* (London : Oxford University Press, 1967).

⁴ Aristotle, *The Nicomachean Ethics*, trans. H. Rackham (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1999), 1113b17.

⁵ See Aristotle, *Politics*, trans. H. Rackham (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1972).

someone belongs to a community, is he the object of praise or blame for the rest of the people⁶. As a consequence, it can be asserted that someone has acted in a good or a bad way. On the other hand, the political condition in its relation with the human condition provides for moral education. This allows the child to acquire, to develop, and to consolidate the rational and deliberative capacity with the aim of becoming a citizen.

Given these conditions, my thesis is that this same structure of freedom found in Aristotle's work can be tracked, consolidated, and improved through Peirce's philosophy. It can be tracked, first of all, in their common perspective on the contingency that is constitutive of the world⁷. Secondly, both philosophers think that a person has the power to decide and actively participate in the world through the influence of experience and habit. And finally, both, Aristotle and Peirce, granted an important role to community in their philosophies in order to make sense of the actions of individuals.

Moreover, this structure can be consolidated following Peirce's philosophy, because the three conditions of freedom parallel Peirce's three categories. If this is so, then the possible theories of ethics can be reduced to seven in the same way that Peirce's model of classification catalogues all possible system of metaphysics⁸. Furthermore, it means that all other systems of ethics that neglect one of these conditions would be deterministic or degenerate in some respect.

Finally, Aristotle's basic theory of freedom can be improved through Peirce's philosophy because Aristotle, unlike Peirce, did not think of the world in evolutionary terms. On the contrary, the Greek philosopher considered the scientific method as following universal and necessary rules which forced him to separate ethics from science⁹. Consequently, he asserts that the form of species is predetermined and development only takes place in particular organisms that are born with the potentiality to achieve a certain form as its final aim. For instance, a seed is a tree in potency, whose final end (*entelechia*) is to become a tree. Peirce, instead, conceived evolution as the world's general development, and this entails that ethics and science follow the same method insofar as they participate in the same contingency. For him, the scientific method does not follow the necessary deductive demonstration; rather it follows the inductive and abductive methods of probabilities. As a result, neither Aristotle's division between practical and theoretic sciences nor Kant's former division between a mechanical causality in nature and the transcendental idea of freedom are any longer necessary.

One of the virtues of Peirce's philosophy is that it is able to give a coherent and unifying view of human knowledge and the world's constitution in all its complexity, whereas the other philosophical systems that try to fit freedom look at this unity only as a promise or, at the most, as a regulative ideal of reason. Next, I will try to show the explanatory power of my thesis through sketching analyses of some important ethical philosophies under these categories. In order to do this, I will

⁶ Aristotle thought of this issue having in mind only men as citizens as the constitutions of his day established. However, I am thinking here of citizens including both men and woman.

⁷ In Peirce it is called the proposition of *tychism*.

⁸ Which is not a mere coincidence insofar as Peirce considered that there is a knowledge implicational system, according to which the manner how we explain the categories of the world through phenomenology has a direct implication in the way we conceive ethics, logics and science.

⁹ See Aristotle, *The Nicomachean Ethics*, trans. H. Rackham (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1999), book VI.

present first the possible ethical systems through a negative method - by noting what condition of freedom they neglect and how they lose explanatory power. Then, I will present them through a positive method by disclosing, according to Peirce's artificial model of classification¹⁰, how each includes one of the conditions of freedom.

II

Determinism, as opposed to each one of the conditions of freedom can be established also in three ways as follows. First, as opposed to the world's contingency, it argues that the final aim, good, or happiness is predetermined or univocal in its content and, therefore, that this finality is one and the same for all human beings. Secondly, as opposed to the possibility of deliberation, it affirms that the character cannot be modified, either because it is innate or because, as soon as it is acquired in an early age, it cannot undergo any future change. Thirdly, opposed to a political freedom, is any kind of slavery, understood as the denial of the right to establish one's own idea of happiness in the context of a *polis* or human community.

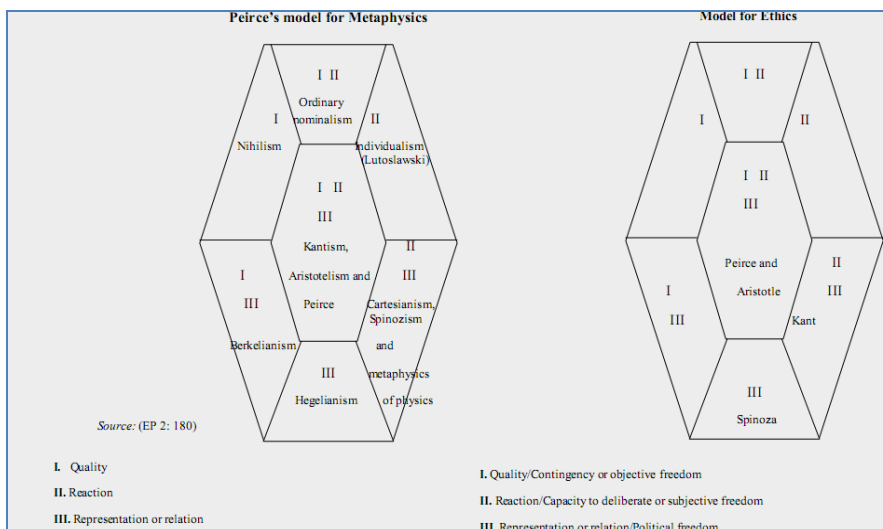
As an example of the first category we can think of all the philosophies that defend rational life as the only possible way to achieve happiness, as does Plato in book VI of the *Republic*¹¹. For the second type we can think of the behaviorists, who reduce character to one's reaction to pleasure and pain. Finally, for the third one, we can think of totalitarian or authoritarian regimes, where citizens have no power to decide their own idea of happiness insofar as they have no influence upon the laws that rule them and, therefore, their ideal of happiness is predetermined only by the regime's will.

Here we can see that there is a relationship among Peirce's ontological categories firstness, secondness, and thirdness. According to him firstness is quality of feeling, secondness is reaction, and thirdness is relation, representation or symbol. In the present proposal (I) constitutes the cosmological condition or the world's quality, (II) constitutes the human condition, and (III) constitutes the political one, i.e. the relation that builds a human being between the world's quality and his or her own capacities to choose. Furthermore, it has to be noticed that once one of the conditions is neglected, the others are affected. Thus, if we neglect contingency, there cannot be either deliberation or political freedom in a strict sense. On the other hand, if we affirm contingency but neglect deliberation, there cannot be political freedom, and if we affirm contingency and deliberation but not political freedom, deliberation will be impeded. This is clear in the sense that when a slave has no right to use his or her deliberation in order to establish his or her own idea of happiness, according to which he or she would direct his or her particular actions, the particular actions cannot be said to be freely chosen.

Figure 1. Peirce's Model for Metaphysics and my proposal of the Model for Ethics

¹⁰ See Charles Sanders Peirce, *The Essential Peirce: Selected Philosophical Writings*, vol. 1, ed. Nathan Houser and Christian Kloesel (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991), 164. There Peirce states, "the three categories furnish an *artificial classification* of all possible systems of metaphysics which is certainly not without its utility." Italics are mine.

¹¹ See Plato, *The Republic*, trans. Paul Shorey, (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1969-1970).



Source: Charles Sanders Peirce, *The Essential Peirce: Selected Philosophical Writings*, vol. 2, Edited by Nathan Houser and Christian Kloesel. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998, 2.180. The proposal of the model for Ethics is mine.

I consider contingency or the cosmological condition to be firstness, because none of the other conditions can exist without this. We cannot think about deliberation, for instance, without a contingent world to act upon. Deliberation or the human condition, I take to be secondness, in the sense of reaction, because the act of deliberating is the result of the reaction of the human being to the possibilities presented by a contingent situation. We need a context to act. Hence, Aristotle says that only when certain circumstances are present is it possible for us to act virtuously or immorally. For example, only when there is a war we can act courageously or cowardly, and only when a friend is in need we can act kindly or ungenerously. Finally, I consider politics to be thirdness because it is the mediator between contingency and deliberation. The fact of belonging to a community, where such things as language and custom are continually at play, is a basis of human deliberation. For, it is only within a community that our actions can be subject to praise and blame by others.

In this article, I will analyze to some extent only Kant's and Spinoza's ethical proposals in order to make my point about how the three conditions of freedom operate to make human freedom possible. Furthermore, I will analyze these systems insofar as I consider that they can be very useful in order to make explicit the primary existing discussions about freedom in western philosophy.

Both Spinoza and Kant had as a basic idea that efficient causality rules the world's events. Regarding this mechanical causality, there appear to be only two options. The first is to deny any teleology and contingency in the world and consequently to deny human deliberation; the second is to separate natural mechanical causality from a human teleological one, and to give persons the power to deliberate. That is, freedom, is only real under the form of a *transcendental* idea. The first option is openly defended by Spinoza and the second one by Kant. Thus, Spinoza accepted the mechanical view with all its fatal consequences for the ethical world, whereas Kant tried to reconcile teleological causality, typical of ethics, with nature's mechanistic causality through an artificial division in his third antinomy of pure reason, according to which freedom would be merely a *transcendental* ideal of reason.

Spinoza unambiguously denied that the human being is free, because, as it is established in the first part of his *Ethics*,¹² such freedom would be against the necessary occurrence that makes possible scientific knowledge. Therefore, both human beings and nature are ruled by the same law; hence, there would be no contingency and no deliberation. Instead of freedom, Spinoza spoke about liberation that consists merely in acknowledging and acceding to the causes that affect me.

On the other hand, Kant stated that the human being acts freely in relation to the necessary causal law of nature. Thus, in order to affirm human freedom, he needs to introduce a division between the law of nature and the law of reason in his third antinomy of pure reason, where the law of nature acts mechanically whereas human beings act according to freedom. Nonetheless, as I have said, this division seems to have been artificially established insofar as he affirmed that happiness is unattainable due to its indeterminacy, but that the means to achieve it are strictly determined by an *a priori* law upon grounds of reason, i.e. the categorical imperative¹³.

In this manner, both Kant and Spinoza denied contingency and deliberation¹⁴. The latter proposed a deductive world that operates according to efficient and mechanical causes, and the former, in establishing the mechanistic development of the world, made an artificial division between human freedom and the causality of nature, where human beings' own rational and moral causality turn out to be as deductive as that of nature.

Examining the work of Spinoza and Kant, we see the implicational relationship of these three conditions of freedom. Every time that someone wants to accept any particular kind of freedom and neglects one of the conditions, he or she will face one of the three following consequences. First, they will be forced to introduce an artificial division between the conditions of freedom to make the system coherent. Second, in order to explain a phenomenon of freedom they will be compelled to bring back the category they once neglected thus undermining their own system¹⁵. Third, in order to be consistent, they will be constrained to expose an unmistakably deterministic and narrow explanation of the phenomenon. It is important to note that what is at stake here is not merely a matter of internal inconsistency of a system - in the case of Spinoza the system can be more than coherent; what is at stake is the loss of explanatory power in dealing with human experience.

Accordingly, when Kant established the freedom of human beings in denying the world's contingency, he had to make an artificial rift between human being's causality and that of nature.¹⁶ In the same way, when Spinoza wanted to affirm

¹² See Benedictus de Spinoza, *Ethics*, (Ware: Wordsworth Editions, 2001), note 2 Prop. xxxiii.

¹³ See Immanuel Kant, *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, trans. H. J. Paton (New York: Harper & Row, 1964), 26.

¹⁴ Although Kant said to accept deliberation, it seems to me only an affirmation with form but without content, insofar as I understand deliberation as to weight the possibilities in order to find the best way of action. Therefore, if there are no possibilities, i.e., if there is no contingency, there is no reason to bother oneself in thinking about the best way to act according to the circumstances.

¹⁵ Descartes is a great example in the case of metaphysics. Once he has doubted about everything in the current world of phenomena he had to undermine his own method of inquiry to bring the world back through the belief in God. Thus, he was able to rearrange the world as he found it in the first place.

¹⁶ It is not surprising that, in his *Third Critique*, although he notice teleological causes in living bodies, he was forced to leave them as a loose counter in his architectural system in saying that they have only an heuristic power, this causes, said Kant, "cannot be found in nature ... and reason must continue meanwhile to regard such technique as possible by mere mechanism." Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Judgment*, trans. Werner S. Pluhar (Indianapolis, Ind.: Hackett Pub. Co., 1987), 411.

political freedom and democracy, he had to make a break between world's necessary causality and the nature of human community to bring back the power of deliberation, thus undermining his former denial of teleological causes in the cosmos. Lastly, Aristotle, who accepted contingency in the world but made nature act according to necessary laws, was unable to provide a unifying perspective of the world that includes human freedom.

Let us turn then to applying Peirce's artificial model of classification of metaphysical systems in order to establish how the former ethical proposals can be understood through this model making explicit their weaknesses when trying to give an accurate account of human freedom. According to Peirce, a good philosophy must be grounded upon mathematical principles, insofar as mathematics can determine "what would be true in case a certain hypotheses were true"¹⁷. It is important to notice that Peirce called his mathematical model an artificial one. In my point of view, this is so because he thought that mathematics was not a normative science and therefore could establish only the possibilities of a hypothesis. It cannot affirm or deny if this hypothesis is true or false in relation to phenomena. Hence, insofar as this diagram corresponds to all possible theories of ethics it does not matter if all of them have been present in the history of philosophy; what does matter is that all existent theories can be explained and categorized according to it. To the extent this is possible, the classification will have saved us a lot of time and effort in developing an exhaustive critique of each one of the theories, though such critiques have their own merit. Moreover, insofar as most of the time the philosophers have to undermine their own system in order to "*sozein ta phaenomena*" we should not expect that our classification be exempt from difficulties and that sometimes we will feel a need to modify our classification according to the nuances of the system.

In the present case, I am defending the hypothesis according to which there are three conditions for human freedom: contingency (I), deliberation (II) and political freedom (III). As a result, I maintain that in lacking one of these conditions an ethical theory will fall into determinism and/or will lack a unifying perspective on the world. According to the artificial model of classification, Spinoza's ethics is identified as accepting only (III), Kant as admitting (II) and (III), whereas Aristotle's and Peirce's ethics classify as systems that acknowledge (I), (II) and (III). In sum, Spinoza accepted only the necessitarian law of causality in denying the world's contingency (I) and any effect of deliberation in the world (II), but affirmed political freedom in noticing the importance of democratic governance, freedom of thought and expression in his political treatises (III). Likewise, Kant denied the world's contingency (I) but admitted the possibility of deliberation (II) and political freedom (III) in behalf of a mechanical law of reason, which led him to a deterministic ethical theory.

To conclude my sketch, let me turn to why I think that Peirce's philosophical project has an important advantage over Aristotle's philosophy, despite the fact that both philosophers accept the three conditions of freedom in their systems.

III

In the second book of his *Physics*, Aristotle examined the problem of chance under the terms *automaton* and *tyche*. There he stated chance to be a cause as

¹⁷ Charles Sanders Peirce, *The Essential Peirce: Selected Philosophical Writings*, vol. 2, ed. Nathan Houser and Christian Kloesel (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998), 146.

follows: “[w]hen *any* causal agency incidentally produces a significant result outside its aim, we attribute it to *automaton*; and in the special cases where such a result springs from deliberate action (thought not aimed at it) on the part of a being capable of choice, we may say that it comes by *tyche*”¹⁸. As a result, we might say that chance is a fifth cause of world’s phenomena, with the difference that nothing caused by chance has any regularity and, therefore, cannot be explained by any kind of knowledge, whereas the other four causes: efficient, formal, material and teleological, can, insofar as they are necessary or customary.

Aristotle’s universe comprehends three kinds of causality: necessity (*anagke*), contingency (*to endechomenos allos echein*), and chance (*autómaton*). By necessity occur all natural phenomena that can be explained by science (*episteme*), such as the movement of the heavenly spheres and the generation of one human being by another human being, in other words, natural causes in general. Contingency is related to ethics and the possibility of making choices leading to particular ends. Finally, chance, as has been said, refers to all exceptional, irregular, or incidental phenomena about which there is no particular way of inquiring.

In this way, the philosopher of Stagira gave us three different perspectives on the same universe. However, he was unable to unify these perspectives because he believed that all the regularities that take place in nature act according to necessity and, consequently, there is no place for evolution. A monkey will always originate another monkey, and any monstrosity caused by nature must be seen as an accident unrelated to nature’s purposes¹⁹. In contrast, Peirce assumed that there is no necessity in the world’s occurrence but habit. The cosmos takes habits that are always themselves open to transformations. Therefore, he was able to explain accidents in nature as a way in which the universe makes its own attempts following its evolution, similar to the way in which we humans act and learn from experience modifying our own habits in our pursuit of happiness as our final aim.

In this way, Peirce’s system offers the possibility to join human and natural causality in arguing for a teleological and evolutionary account of the world. Accordingly, he proposed a new method of inquiring, abduction, which corresponds to the same method that we use in an ethical deliberation. In “The Seven Systems of Metaphysics”²⁰ he clearly assumed that human habits and nature’s habits are all laws of nature. There he maintained that human habits, such as to wind a watch every month, operate under the same logic as any law of nature; they are *active general principles* for their agents, be it persons or nature, that guide a specific mode of conduct.

Thus, if in a mechanical world view the idea was to make a perfect induction in order to stipulate a law of nature that could be applicable through deduction, now, in a Peircean evolutionary world, induction cannot reach such perfection. This follows not only because a human being is finite and cannot know the world in its totality,²¹ but because the world’s constitution is contingent and evolving. Therefore, Peirce

¹⁸ Aristotle, *The Physics*, trans. Philip Henry Wicksteed and Francis Macdonald Cornford. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1934), 197b20-22.

¹⁹ Indeed, in the same Book of his *Physics* Aristotle notices that the etymology of *automaton* indicates the fact of been purposeless, “for the expression *maten* —‘for nothing’, ‘to no purpose’— is used in cases where the end or purpose is not realized, but only the means to it.” Aristotle, *The Physics*, trans. Philip Henry Wicksteed and Francis Macdonald Cornford. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1934), 197b3.

²⁰ Charles Sanders Peirce, *The Essential Peirce: Selected Philosophical Writings*, vol. 2, ed. Nathan Houser and Christian Kloesel (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998), 182-183.

²¹ This would be Kant’s point of view.

proposed the method of abduction, as opposed to induction and deduction, as applicable according to probabilities and working as a hypothesis which is valid in most of the cases. That is, it works in general, but leaves open the possibility of contingency and chance as well, and therefore, allows for the possibility of the world's evolution.

As a result, the world is ruled by teleological laws, which means that persons and nature share a method of development, abduction. This does not imply that mechanical laws are excluded in human beings or the laws of nature; on the contrary, they constitute part of the way in which both act insofar as they have habits. The difference lies in the fact that habits can endure changes and bring about novelty, whereas mechanical laws by themselves cannot. Moreover, if man's habits are taken as laws of nature as well, reason becomes a product of nature and we do not have to be concerned whether reason is able to know the world as it really is. In sum, Peirce's developmental teleology is a step beyond Aristotle's philosophical project insofar as it is able to unify human freedom with the general becoming of the cosmos.

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