

A Peircean theory of technology

Alin Olteanu, Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University

University of Bucharest

Semiotics can underpin the fast-developing philosophical discourse on technology, but it has been seldomly considered as such. Based on Charles Peirce's pragmatic semiotic and its uptake in biosemiotics, I propose a view on human-machine interaction where *human* and *machine* do not precede their interaction but are *prescinded* from their (intelligent) behavior as a unit. Aligning with external mind theory, this approach avoids asking where does mind (user) begin and end, so to localize where does the computing machine (tool) begin and end.

My proposal follows recent efforts both in semiotics to tackle technology and in philosophy of technology to incorporate semiotic insights. The framework hashed out is developed in light of the cognitive semiotic approach to study the mind in the interrogation of the imagination (or simulation). Specifically, I adopt Hoffmeyer's biosemiotic view on technology as scaffolding that co-evolves with the organisms that model by scaffolding. This aligns with externalist approaches to mind that regard environments as having active roles in mindwork. Moreover, I explain that Peirce's semiotics offers an avantgarde mind externalism. Particularly, by abducting, minds behave conditionally, in the assessment of what *would be* the case. In this view, the self is located in the future (Interpretant), as extended through presently unfolding semiosis. This ushers a weak transhumanism where technology is construed as the mind's outworking itself to its next stage.