A Psycho-semiotic model of thinking. Combining Klein and Peirce theories of symbols for a more comprehensive model of the mind

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Abstract

Thesis: The aim of the paper is to present the Melanie Klein and Charles S. Peirce concept of symbols in order to combine them into a scheme that presents conscious and unconscious aspects of thinking through symbolic signs (signs based on convention).

Presented concepts: The paper presents the concept of a symbol in the psychoanalytical and semiotic perspective. The psychoanalytical view is based on interpretation of symbols according to the object relation paradigm proposed by Klein. There are two reasons for selecting her theory for the model: it is most closely bound with interdependency between communication and thinking plus her concept of the proper symbol fulfills definition of symbolic sign in the Peirce theory, due to deployment of matter of absence in the substitution process. Peirce theory however is selected to present semiotic perspective not only for its good linkage to Klein's "proper symbol" but also for its accurate understating of object representation in quasi- mind through Representamen and as a result recognition of symbol embedment in code through unlimited semiosis. Chosen concepts are consolidated into a psycho-semiotic model of thinking which recognizes the symbol to be co-created by a unique internal world of unconscious phantasy with simultaneous employment of semiotic devices oriented to external, group order perspective.

Results and conclusions: The proposed psycho-semiotic model of thinking enhances the psychoanalytic view, based on a drive for the object, by recognizing communication means required for meaningful relation and with that for thinking itself. As a result conceptualizing thinking processes is enriched with semiotic discoveries such as mechanics and structure of Representamen and Interpretant, along with indispensable code rules, with unlimited semiosis at its core. In turn the psychoanalytical view adds to semiotic perspective sensitivity to individual potential and constraints when the code is in use and with that raises precision of exploration in the field.

Contribution to the field: The proposed model enriches the theory of thinking based on object relations with semiotic sign theory, which being focused on communication serves as a frame for establishing object relations and their conceptualization. In turn employing psychoanalytic perspective into the semiotic field brings back code theory to

actual code usage, and by that expands it to various unconscious forces, which ultimately determine Interpretant.

Key words: psychoanalysis, semiotics, symbol, Melanie Klein, Charles S. Peirce

In the paper the author's main interest is a matter of establishing meaningful connection between person and his/her external and internal reality. This profound issue will be tackled by exploring the concept of symbol in a psychoanalytic and semiotic perspective. Acknowledging the limitations of theoretical examination of unconscious structures and forces, a well-grounded concept of symbols embedded in dynamic model of the mind proposed by Melanie Klein will be used for psychoanalytical part. The semiotic dimension will be elaborated through Peirce's concept of symbol, which covers shared space of code order employed by the unconscious for its expression, and by that also -in turn- serves as a fabric that frames the options for symbol formation. Setting the problem in that light allows the paper to be further exploration of work initiated by Riccardo Steiner is his paper "Does the Peirce's semiotic model based on index, icon, symbol have anything to do with psychoanalysis?" (Steiner, 2007). Yet while Ricardo Steiner focuses on translation of Klein concepts into Peirce terms looking for resemblances in both perspectives I will try to combine the two theories into a more comprehensive psycho-semiotic model using as linkage Klein and Peirce definitions of symbol. Such a combined model will cover shared, language and cultural aspects of symbol for the Peirce part, and individual, unconscious phantasy with all its dynamics that make use of the communicative (and in that sense semiotic) part of the symbol for its expression. In other words, it is an attempt to build a model representing mechanics of an individual mind fostered and limited by a cultural, quasi-mind while pursuing recognition of internal and external reality. For accurate description of the model I will start from capturing essentials of both concepts: psychoanalytic symbol and its external extension in the form of available representations[1].

Symbol in Melanie Klein model of mind

To properly grasp core Klein ideas on symbolism, especially relations between symbol and ego along with dynamics of symbol formation governed by psychic positions it is necessary to present psychoanalytic foundations of symbol laid by Sigmund Freud and Ernest Jones.

The concept of symbol in Sigmund Freud papers emerges in two forms: narrow and broad (Petocz, 2003). In the narrow perspective symbol is an element of archaic heritage, a form of unconscious language, a phenomenon of

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1   The representations I am referring to here might and should be transformed by unconscious phantasy to express unique quality and ensure adequate communication, it is just important to stress that -regardless of culture toposes- human mind in cognition and creation always employs what is external and therefore thought is never out of nothing. This notion is well exercised in the psychoanalytic field, yet remains vague in culture reflection.

primary process with constant meaning, shape and affect, occurring in dreams, fairy-tales and folklore. (Freud, *The Interpretation of Dreams*, 1900/2010), (Freud, *General Introduction to Psychoanalysis,* 1916-1917/1960). Early works of Freud are also focused on muteness: core quality of symbol for pathological states (Freud & Breuer, 1895/1955). Such a mute reference appears whenever the event it refers to was either traumatic (and causing dissociation) or incompatible with the ego. Symbol muteness, however, may be overcome if linguistic linkage is employed between experience and symptom (i.e. pain, paralysis).

In parallel to these discoveries S. Freud considered symbol in more broad and dynamic perspective, it was 1895 when he described the substitution process defined as a form of identification of two elements, in which the affective element (responsible for stirring the affect brought by the symbol) loses its direct connection to consciousness and is replaced by other elements (i.e. accompanying the experience) serving from now on as a sign for actual referent. (Freud, [1895/1950]/1966). With that in place, it becomes clear that symbol is not only indirect representation, but also a type of relation between signifié and signifiant which is based on unknown grammar.[2] The problem of that grammar emerged directly in his clinical experience, as it indicated that meaning of symbol remains unobvious unless multiple associations are examined. His call to analyse multiple associations before offering interpretation may be read as recognition that the grammar of the unconscious is in constant change and so unconscious meaning may be ascribed in fast paced manner into various signs[3], since it is the network between symbols rather than particular symbol content, which carries the unconscious meaning. Such "floating" substitution mechanism for symbol uncovers its complexity but also expands the concept of symbolism. Unlike in the narrow perspective, the broad view on symbol translates into defining it as a sign bearing no constant meaning but rather being infused with content according to unconscious configuration. Some grounds for this dynamic grammar, may be found in symbol origins. The symbolisation process is of multiple sources: it is derived from relations to primary objects, fixed by long-lasting infant dependency and fostered by instinctual drives. The core of the symbol is the linkage it provides between unconscious and conscious parts of the mind, which in an ontogenetical perspective can be translated into heading towards a peculiar combination of drives and cognitive structures, which impose a connection between primary and non-primary objects. This very connection marks the line between two dimensions of symbol: a repressed one (impulses towards primary objects) and a conscious one (realization of impulse through secondary objects, which represents symbolically primary objects) and highlights the fact they are processed in the mind simultaneously, indicating another aim of the symbol, which is mediation between conflicted impulses.

2   Reference to de Saussure theory allows to outline the type of relation, obviously signifiant in psychoanalytic interpretation may take shape other than linguistic, i.e. somatic symptoms.

3   High frequency of change occurrence is given in Freud works implicitly, in example in his advices to analyse all associations before the symbol is interpreted. (Freud, 1916-1917/1960) Clear explanation of the velocity of symbolism offers definition of unconscious phantasy as motion, proposed by Susan Isaacs (Isaacs, 2002).

Having the concept of symbol in Sigmund Freud theory outlined it is time to move to Ernest Jones' contribution. To some extent E. Jones, as all psychoanalysts, follows S. Freud discoveries adding though particular emphasis to the relation between symbol and individual by considering symbol in context of regression, blood relations and matters of life and death (Jones, 2000). Interestingly Ernest Jones concept of symbol may be considered more theoretically or more practically becoming that way two loosely connected approaches to a matter of symbol and its formation. An example of such division of his theory will be presented through perspective of Agnes Petocz (Petocz, 2003), (psychoanalysis theorist) and Hanna Segal (Segal, 1990), (practicing psychoanalyst). Agnes Petocz focuses on the spatiality of symbol in E. Jones perspective, and it is very true that his important contribution is widening symbol understanding in its conscious part (which Jones calls metaphor) and by that visualizing the flow of unconscious content from unconscious to conscious mind space, stressing necessity for symbol to link unconscious content with all affect it bears.

Such a clear theoretical model appears to be only partially useful in the clinical setting: while part of it can easily be employed, the other seems to be disputable. Kleinian psychoanalysts, Hanna Segal indicate that from a practical perspective much of E. Jones observations resemble to her analytical experience: considering symbolisation as a form of keeping linkage with repressed content, recognising symbol as representation of blood relations, and matter of life and death, and observing that one notion can be represented by multiple symbols (Segal, 1990; Segal, 1997; Segal, 1991b; Segal, 1998). The difference lies though in two fundamental matters, which are interconnected: relation between symbolism and sublimation, and fixed meaning for symbol. Ernest Jones believed symbolisation to be a process in which effect is transformed in a very different way than in sublimation, while Segal, following the Klein notion, considered symbolisation to be prerequisite for sublimation and at the same time a substance of sublimation being enhanced in the process:

„We might consider it a question of terminology and accept Jones's view that we should call symbols only those substitutes which replace the object without any change of affect. On the other hand, there are very great advantages in extending the definition to cover symbols used in sublimation. In the first place the wider definition corresponds better to common linguistic usage. Jones's concept excludes most of that which is called "symbol" in other sciences and in everyday language. Second, and I shall elaborate on this point later, there seems to be a continuous development from the primitive symbols described by Jones to the symbols used in self-expression, communication, discovery and creation. Third, it is difficult to establish a connection between the early primitive desires and processes in the mind and the later development of the individual, unless the wider concept of symbolism is admitted. In the analytic view, the child's interest in the external world is determined by a series of displacements of affect and interest from the earliest to ever new objects. And, indeed, how could such a displacement be achieved otherwise than by way of symbolisation?" (Segal, 1990, p. 51).

In other words despite the comprehensiveness of Jones theory it is difficult to employ it into psychoanalytic practice without adjustments.

In oppose to the more theoretical perspective of Ernest Jones, Melanie Klein is all about practice. Her view on symbol is well grounded in S. Freud and E. Jones discoveries and bears all the essential qualities of psychoanalytic symbol, yet it exceeds the Freud theory into object relation dimension. This very dimension underpins symbolic code as Peirce understands it and so is an excellent venue for establishing linkage between individual unconscious and semiotic framework for meaningful communication.[4] That paradigm, being focused on ego development in relation to external and internalized objects (in culture, social science this could be translated into identity establishment in group and culture environment) makes her the closest peer to culture and social concerns and at the same time keeps her deep rooted in core psychoanalytic discoveries.

The Klein reflection around the symbol can be divided into two phases, the early one when she was focused on neuroses treatment and educational support (Klein, 1929; 1948), which falls into the period of her time in Berlin Psychoanalytic Society and Karl Abraham supervision (1924-1925), and the later one when, after moving to London and under the influence of Ernest Jones and other British psychoanalysts (Klein, 1959, pp. 25-26), she became interested in more disturbed states, namely psychosis.

In 1923 she laid the foundation for understanding symbol in the context of object relation by situating symbol formation between identification (source of symbol) and sublimation (utilization of symbol as a means of libido expression). In other words identification was considered by her as a displacement of sexual energy to an object which results in establishing profound, primary relation between ego and object, which due to its sexual quality must be repressed and transformed into symbol formation. Once symbol is formed, libido expression can be enhanced to an even more advanced and precise vehicle (less conventional, more individual) which is sublimation. Having foundations established, in 1929 she writes about indirect representation in play and sublimation (Klein, 1929; 1948), moving her interest into the role of aggressive impulses along with anxieties they induce. She manages to establish that these impulses can be sublimated into a work of art, when anxieties evolve into reparative impulses. In practice it means that move from anxiety to reparation (accompanied by drop in aggressive impulses) is a tangible sign of working through the unconscious conflict. Shortly after formulating these observations Klein proposed a fully integrated theory of symbol with her paper *The importance of symbol formation in the development of ego*. (Klein, 1929; 1948). In the paper she indicates explicitly symbol formation to be a process of establishing connection with external and internal reality and therefore is necessary for ego to meet reality demands. (Klein, 1930; 1948, p. 238). There is however an important prerequisite for symbol formation to appear as a skill, which is necessity to overcome early response to reality.

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4   It is at the core of Peirce concept of symbol, what is shared and agreed between people, this connection between objects takes here a static form (much expected for culture device) of convention.

At the beginning of life infant experience elements of internal and external reality as raw, indigestible attacks which arouses its sadistic impulses. With development of ego and synthesis of identifications into superego this hatred and rejection towards objects (be it external or internal) decreases as it can be effectively dealt with based on acquired experiences. That discovery is a breakthrough in that sense that neither Freud nor Jones reached the description of absent symbolism. While Freud wrote a lot about various pathologies in symbol formation such as hysteric symptoms, or inhibition, these were only disturbed mechanics of conveying unconscious content. Klein takes a step back in the observation and captures states when symbolism is blocked to be launched. In her analysis of Dick symbolism mechanics cannot be interrupted as they were not yet established and so the treatment she provides must respond to psychosis not neurosis. Her proposal to arouse anxieties that bring to the surface sadism and by that allow ego to work it through helped a boy to switch from being his own aggression to using his aggressive impulses for developmental purposes. At the same time this particular analysis outlined the process one must get through in order to launch symbolisation.

To fully grasp Melanie Klein symbol theory it is necessary to reach out to one of her followers: Hanna Segal, who consolidated Klein findings on symbol, and managed to embed them into the Klein model of psychic functioning. To better understand this important context of symbol formation it is necessary to highlight that the Klein model of thinking is of dynamic structure, it is based on fluctuations between two positions: paranoid-schizoid and depressive.

The first position has its origins in first quarter of life, when the infant is most vulnerable to any sensations as the psychic apparatus is not yet advanced enough to deal with them in a controlled manner. As a result, a position can be described by experience of chaos accompanied by a drive towards separation of good from bad in order to overcome this chaos. During this process the infant identifies himself with good objects and strives for protection from bad objects, the aftermath of this split is heavy usage of projection mechanisms. Complex, internal life strongly bound with aggressive impulses must be now cleaned from what was recognized as bad in order to fit into a new organization. And here projection comes into play ensuring effective removal of all unwanted aspects of ego leading to so called "impoverishment of ego". Since relation to partial object[5] constitutes the position there is no sufficient differentiation between self and object, symbol and symbolised, and so also between conscious and unconscious. Symbolisation in a paranoid-schizoid position Segal calls "symbolic equation", as the substitution mechanism is impeded by splitting and projection which prevent clear separation of symbol from what it stands for (for example in verbal communication it is hard for patient to establish if referent refers to shared meaning, understood as actual definition of
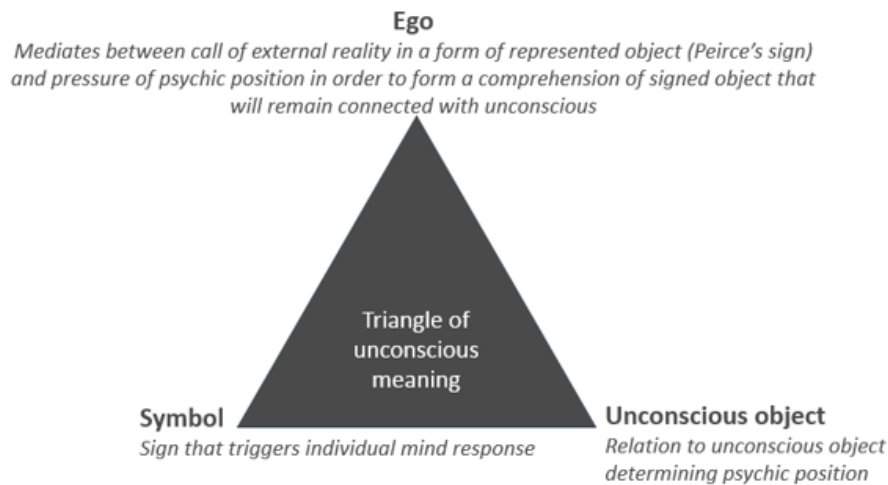
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5   Partial object here can be considered as oversimplified object: either good or bad, and never combining these two qualities. For more information on partial object in paranoid-schizoid position see chapter *The Paranoid-Schizoid Position* in *Introduction to the Work of Melanie Klein* (Segal, 2002a).

the word, or to unconscious phantasy, which -due to struggle of splitting and projection- enters to the consciousness).

The depressive position starts with the onset of the second quarter of life. At this point modes of infant thinking change, due to more developed neurological systems. The child is now able to remember many of his experiences which contributes to his sense of security, and this in turn results in withdrawal of split and move from projection to introjection. (With newly gained sense of security the whole object can be acknowledged, because infant -having object introjected and available for recall- is able to recognise in loving parent his frustrating aspects without collapsing into disorganization.) With object introjected infant can finally recognise the difference between self and object, symbol and substitute, conscious and unconscious content. That differentiation is of great importance since it opens the mind for an abstract thinking: as a result symbol formed in depressive position (so called symbol proper) enables combining internal with external aspects, and ensures continuity on timeline so that past remains inseparable from present and future. The two positions are giving shape to cognitive functions of mind throughout life and with that are a vital part of the psycho-semiotic model of thinking.

Overall, symbol in Klein theory can be described on the triangle matching relations between unconscious object relation, symbolic sign[6] and conscious and unconscious meaning of symbol formed by ego.

Ego
Mediates between call of external reality in a form of represented object (Peirce's sign) and pressure of psychic position in order to form a comprehension of signed object that will remain connected with unconscious

Triangle of unconscious meaning

Symbol
Sign that triggers individual mind response

Unconscious object
Relation to unconscious object determining psychic position

Figure 1. Scheme of Melanie Klein concept of symbol, based on her paper (Klein, 1930, 1948), and issued for the purpose of this paper

As it is with Peirce concept, symbol in Klein theory is understood in two ways: as denoting regular understanding of substitute (item that stands for an object and so refers to it) and as a set of relations that constitutes mechanics of the sign. Individual comprehension of symbol depends here on the relation with

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6   Translating to Peirce theory this element is close to Representamen in symbolic type of sign.

the unconscious object, which in Klein theory is translated to psychic position. If relation to the unconscious object is closer to paranoid-schizoid position conscious meaning will be more determined by unconscious constrains, and so more concrete (blind to many of semiotically available readings of sign), or even confused with unconscious phantasy content. If on the other hand object relation is closer to depressive position conscious meaning of sign will be seamlessly linked to unconscious content, and gently guided by unconscious phantasy will remain open to various readings of that sign and to employing it to abstract thinking.

Symbol in Charles S. Peirce semiotic theory

As stated earlier psychoanalytic perspective is a basis for the psycho-semiotic model of thinking, due to the recognition that the individual is primary to a group, even in acts and behaviors considered as genuinely social, such as language and communication. What justifies the approach is that while group existence is constituted by individuals[7], individuals' existence is not constituted by group[8]. Putting individual before group when examining mechanics of symbol, and so to a great extent matter of language, is a far from regular approach in semiotic and linguistic, it is however very present at researches on literature: works of art composed of language (history and theory of literature, poetics). What remains latent in doctrine (semiotic, linguistic) becomes apparent in pragma (and evolves to a core topic when thoughtful usage of language is at stake)[9].

The psychoanalytic perspective, serving well individual before group approach, is nevertheless insufficient to describe comprehensively the mind based communication model (psycho-semiotic model). Being closely tied to the individual makes psychoanalysis unable to reach culture and semiotic devices in their depths and breadths. In that very point group contribution weaves its importance, as at the core of thought is also its representability. Notion that cannot be shared is by default prevented from benefiting from human kind heritage and in that sense is meaningless. Moreover these are the culture and semiotic devices, which in turn shape the mind of infants striving for relation through communication, as they literally outline what is considered to be distinctive and therefore also communicable. (The differentiation between ascribing distinctiveness and acquiring communicability in fact mirrors the Klein paradigm of object relation as for thought to be recognised by self, convention is also indispensable.)

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7   Unarguably group phenomena should not be reduced to set of individuals.

8   **Individual existence is shaped by group, but group is not a factor deciding on individual existence.** It was psychoanalysis, that first disclosed that these are internal factors that decide on human development, with environmental factors being of secondary importance (Segal, 2007). Understanding what is primary and what secondary in dependency between individual and group has far reaching implications for understanding aggressive impulses role and guilt arising from these in the course of ego development.

9   Theme of language usage in linguistics is skipped here purposely as it does not differentiate between intentional usage of language and mechanic repetition of clichés, and such differentiation is of great importance for model combining language and thinking.

Social means are not the only prerequisite for thought to appear and be used. It is much more than that. For individual, embedding thought in network of group thinking (be it language or other culture modes) is of crucial importance as it expands cognitive forces employed to the problem through: social feedback (exceeding individual perspective), other culture responses (exceeding span of thinking available for culture of origins) and past solutions (learning from past experience of home culture and other cultures). All these representations with effect they bring fall under definition of sign in Peirce theory. Similarly to Klein concept of symbol (where ego mediated between unconscious anxieties aroused by unconscious object and sign itself before forming the thought), Peirce's sign mediates between an object that determines the sign and the sign itself acknowledging the outcome to be a form of influence on the person, which he calls Interpretant. Including effect upon person in the definition of sign makes apparent it is not only relational approach that brings together the two models: Peirce, unlike many semioticians[10], is a pragmatist and so his theory is anchored in sign usage or, to be more accurate, in thinking through signs.[11] And sign definition, that will be used for purpose of the paper, highlights precisely the two aspects: relationality and influence[12]: "I define a Sign as anything which is so determined by something else, called its Object, and so determines an effect upon a person, which effect I call its Interpretant, that the latter is thereby mediately determined by the former." (Peirce, *Essential Papers*, 1998, p. 478).
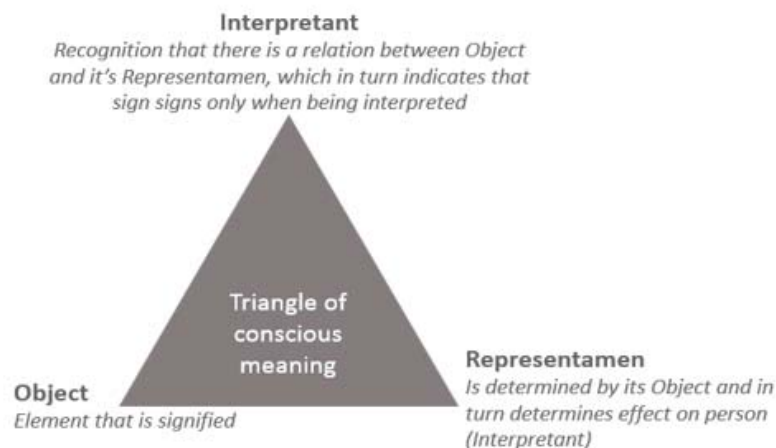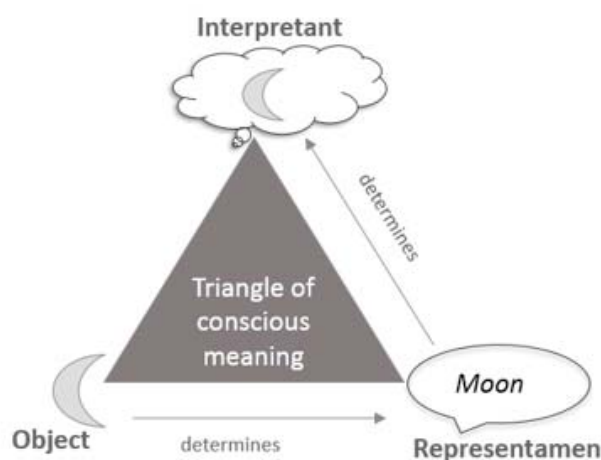

Figure 2. Scheme of Charles Peirce concept of symbolic sign, based on his ideas outlined in letter to Lady Welby (Peirce, 1906, 1998). Scheme issued for the purpose of this paper.

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10 It is a postulated approach in semiotics to separate code examination from its actual usage. (Eco, A Theory of Semiotics, 1976)

11 Bounding sign with cognition is very strong, as he puts it: *We have no power of thinking without signs*. (Peirce, 1984, p. 213) That connection is what enables match between his views on symbol with individually oriented theory of unconscious forces.

12 Relationality and influence underpins Klein theory of object relation, it is however captured from perspective of unconscious phantasy.

In the definition, the signifying element of the sign called Representamen is a form of sign-vehicle which, being determined by some elements of object, determines further interpretation that appears in the mind. It should be stressed that these are not only distinctive elements of objects that translate to the Representamen and further to Interpretant, but also that for Representamen to be a sign vehicle is also possible only through distinctive features. The most intuitive will be here the example of language: when a word is pronounced only certain qualities of phoneme are deciding on its distinctiveness from other phonemes. To illustrate it on the example of a word "moon":

Figure 3. Scheme of Charles Peirce concept of symbolic sign, based on his ideas outlined in his letter to Lady Welby (Peirce, 1906, 1998). Drawing inspired by **Kow**alewski, Retrieved from: http://semiomiks.blogspot.com/2010/10/znak.html. Scheme issued for the purpose of this paper.

As presented in the given example Representamen is determined by a set of qualities of the object, and with that determination further determines Interpretant. Moreover, since we used language as an example it is necessary to highlight that Representamen ability to represent is grounded in distinctive features of phonemes it consists of. Phonetic transcription of the pronounced word [mu:n] indicates that recognition of the Representamen comes from qualities like place of articulation, manner and voicing for consonants (here the difference between [m] and [n] is only in place of articulation bilabial versus alveolar as they are both nasal and voiced) and for vowels: their height, backness and roundness (in addition to more sensitive differentiations), which for [u] is high, back and round. To sum it up, essentially Representamen is what enables recognising it as a representation (substitute) of object, and this happens in two modes, through Interpretant which matches the Object with Representamen, but also through qualities enabling it to represent, in the given example it is a convention imposed on distinctive features of the set of phonemes.

Having Representamen described it is worth to define the Object before moving to more complex idea of Interpretant. As indicated in the definition of sign cited earlier Object is being pulled into thinking through Representamen. According to the definition, intuition that object is spotted by a person due to its being part of reality is incorrect, distinction of Object (becoming apparent to the mind) is due to its Representamen that mediates between object itself and what can be thought about it (how it can be interpreted, conceptualised). In other words, what is not signed by Representamen will not be distinguished by mind. For Object representation mechanics, it should be reminded that Object determines the sign only through selected, meaningful features and in that capacity is recognised by the mind.

With that in place it is possible to move to a matter of Interpretant being the most important contribution of Peirce. Resembling with de Saussure's signifié is however far more complex: in addition to its linkage to Representamen (signifiant), it is also embedded through a relation to the actual object of cognition and at the same time built into a code in a functional manner (unlimited semiosis). Peirce himself defined Interpretant in various ways, and good consolidation of his ideas on the topic is offered by another of prominent semiotician Umberto Eco:

"The interpretant is not the interpreter (even if a confusion of this type occasionally arises in Peirce). The interpretant is that which guarantees the validity of the sign, even in the absence of the interpreter. According to Peirce it is that which the sign produces in the quasi-mind which is the interpreter; but it can also be conceived as the definition of the Representamen (and therefore its intention). However, the most fruitful hypothesis would seem to be that of conceiving the interpretant as another representation which is referred to the same »object«. In other words, in order to establish what the interpretant of a sign is, it is necessary to name it by means of another sign which in turn has another interpretant to be named by another sign and so on. At this point there begins a process of unlimited semiosis, which, paradoxical as it may be, is the only guarantee for the foundation of a semiotic system capable of checking itself entirely by its own means. Language would then be an auto-clarificatory system, or rather one which is clarified by successive systems of conventions that explain each other. Therefore sign is »anything« which determines something else (its interpretant) to refer to an object to which itself refers (its object) in the same way, the interpretant becoming in turn a sign, and so on ad infinitum" (Eco, *A Theory of Semiotics*, 1976, pp. 68-69)

As indicated in the citation Interpretant is no longer only a concept of object that appeared in mind recalled by the representation in a single act of recognition, but is now a part of code constituted by infinite reference to further Interpretants (which in the reference mode become signs themselves). Interpretant, enhanced by the idea of unlimited semiosis to a set of concepts appearing in quasi-mind in response to sign, is what is exactly required for the psycho-semiotic model, as it provides a precise outline of conscious definition of object fully built into code, without which it would obviously collapse into meaninglessness. Employment of unlimited semiosis to Interpretant comprehension in code theory opens it to the following definition:

"(i) The meaning of a sign-vehicle, understood as a cultural unit displayed through other sign-vehicles and thus showing its semantic independence from the first sign-vehicle (this definition equating the one of »synonymy« by which many semanticists [for instance Carnap, 1955; Quine, 1953] seek to define »meaning«);

(ii) The intentional or componential analysis by which a cultural unit is segmented into its elementary semic components, or semantic markers, and therefore presented as a »sememe« which can enter, by the amalgamation of its »readings«, into different contextual combinations (this definition equating the interpretant with the componential representation of a sememe, that is, with a »tree« like the one proposed by Katz & Fodor, 1963);

(iii) Each of the units composing the componential tree of a sememe, every unit (or seme or semantic marker) becoming in its turn another cultural unit (represented by another sign-vehicle) which is open to its own componential analysis (in other words, can be represented by a new system of sign-vehicles; this definition is equal to that of the »seme«, or elementary and absolutely abstract semantic component, as discussed in *Semantique structurale* by Greimas, 1966a)" (Eco, 1976, p. 72)

For the purpose of this paper, the three aspects can be brought back to understanding Interpretant as (1) any coded element of sign content (meaning), which comes down to a series of denotations and connotations, (2) comprehensive discourse that explains sign meaning but also inferentially develops logic capabilities postulated by sign, (3) aggregation of potential Interpretants necessary for definition of certain unit of meaning, which by its nature exceeds simply a collection of distinctive elements for its ability to develop logic capabilities.[13]

While all elements of sign have been defined it is necessary to present basic taxonomy Peirce proposes, in order to further explain why it is symbol that will be matched with psychoanalytic perspective. Peirce defined three types of sign: index, icon and symbol. Indexical sign is a type of sign where Object and its Representamen are linked with a certain natural relationship, and it is that relationship what defines the sign-vehicle. Iconic sign is a type of sign constituted by similarity between Representamen and its Object. The connection between Object and Representamen is considered by Peirce to be weaker than in index as more interpretation must be employed, in other words there are a many distinctive elements that must be read properly to denote sign. Representamen of symbolic sign, unlike index and icon type of signs, bear no natural relationship or resemblance to its object, it is a pure convention or habit that make it understandable. A good example that illustrates all three types is the exit sign that consists of an arrow (index sign), drawing of exiting man (icon sign) and word "EXIT" (symbolic sign).

Combining symbol in Peirce theory with symbol in Klein theory is due to their direct linkage with language, which covers most of communication that happens intentionally between people and in that sense allows to capture

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13   Another understanding as proposed in *Theory of Semiotics* (Eco, *A Theory of Semiotics*, 1976, p. 70).

comprehensive thinking model at its core. Nevertheless such a model should be further enhanced by employment of developmental perspective and with that an interest in tracking how an infant, during the phase of acquiring language, uses index and icon for communication purposes and how it shapes further language and thinking trajectory (both ontologically and phylogenetically). By the same token another field for exploration on index and icon is examining

Figure 4. Exit sign. Source: Emergency Exit Sign Set free vector, Retrieved from: https://www.cannypic.com/free-vector/emergency-exit-sign-set-302667

their presence in dreams, free associations and other forms of primary process (bearing in mind the means for the discussion remains language). At this point however such supplementations must be kept for other papers for their complexity and broadness.

Psycho-semiotic model of thinking

Matching psychoanalytic and semiotic concept of symbol for building of a psycho-semiotic model of thinking is to transgress the usual split between subjective and objective perspectives in concepts of thinking. The proposed model offers a view on individual, unconscious mechanics that decides how the concept of object of thought will be formed (Klein), and at the same time presents what is offered objectively in language in a form of definition of object with all potential for development it bears.
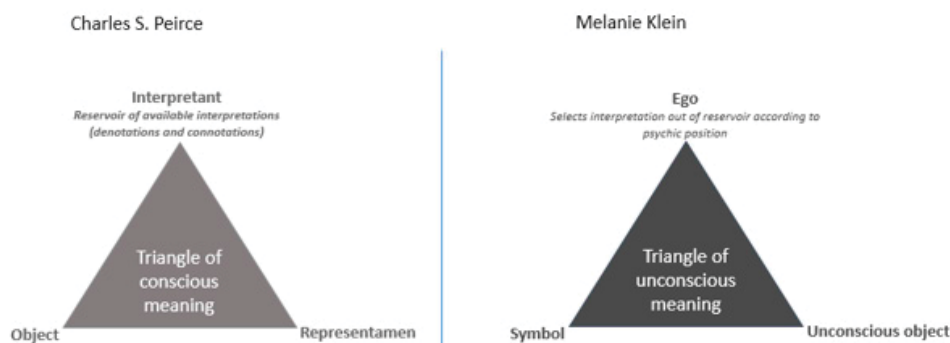
Figure 5. Scheme of Charles Peirce concept of symbolic sign (Peirce, 1906, 1998), and Melanie Klein concept of symbol (Klein, 1930, 1948). Scheme issued for the purpose of this paper.

As indicated in the proposed name, psycho-semiotic model of thinking has for its base the individual psychic world with all its capabilities and constrains, it therefore presents how the individual at a certain moment (particular psychic position) uses language and other symbols for thinking. (It should be stressed that the opposite exploration would also be interesting: to see how psychic positions translate to Interpretant.) As indicated in the model below, consisting of symbol triangles based on Peirce and Klein theories, it is a role of ego to mediate between psychic position it is submitted to and reality demands represented to mind in a form of signs. The result of the mediation is individual comprehension of symbol, that is based on culture or language reservoir and shaped according to unconscious phantasy (through psychic position). In the process of mediation ego must ensure the comprehension of symbol combines unconscious and conscious understanding, as it is a prerequisite for making external object meaningful to a person.[14]
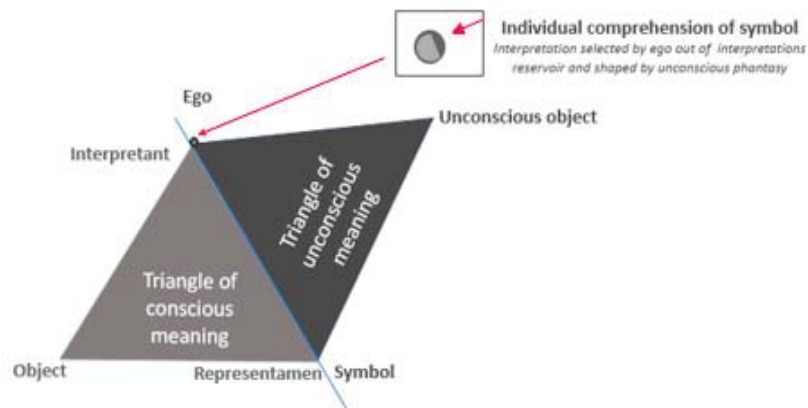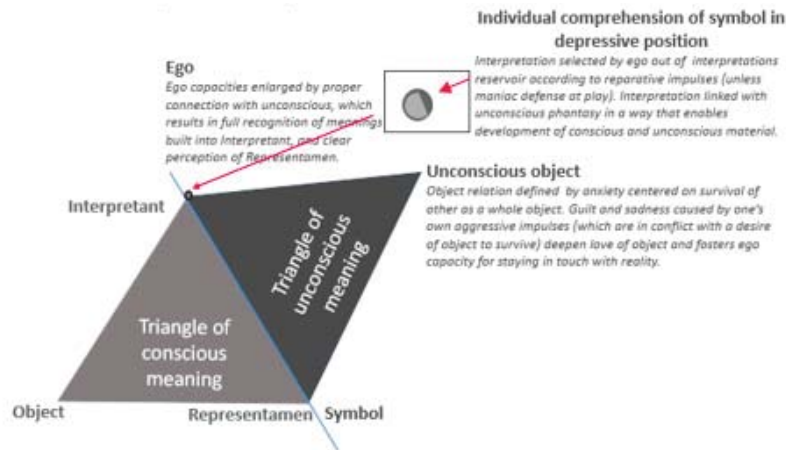

Figure 6. Scheme presents combined views of Charles Peirce (Peirce, 1906, 1998), and Melanie Klein (Klein, 1930, 1948) on symbol. Scheme issued for the purpose of this paper.

According to the model if depressive position dominates, ego is more capable to source from Interpretant, which means that signs that Interpretant consists of are largely available and so logical capabilities postulated by sign are accessible for development. Such comprehension of symbol will be complex and available for abstract thinking, immune to the challenges of object absence, well embedded in a time flow, and easy to enter into meaningful linkages (associations) that foster interpretation development.

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14 As mentioned earlier symbol comprehension must combine conscious and unconscious understanding. However as with any good translation the separation in the flow of two languages (conscious and unconscious) must be kept in order to maintain linkage working.

Figure 7. Scheme presenting combined views of Charles Peirce (Peirce, 1906, 1998), and Melanie Klein (Klein, 1930, 1948) on symbol, when depressive position frames mind. Scheme issued for the purpose of this paper.

If, on the other hand, paranoid schizoid position dominates, ego is impaired by unconscious phantasy and all unconscious object relation anxieties it arouses. This results in limited usage of Interpretant (understood as reservoir of available interpretations) and therefore inability of symbol development. Comprehension of symbol is oversimplified, enslaved by concrete thinking, which bounds interpretation with "here and now" attitude and therefore eliminates any expression of abstract thinking such as concept of absence. If ego regression is intensified, concrete thinking is withdrawn into even more psychotic state when separation of conscious from unconscious, object from ego and symbol from substitute collapses, and as a result thinking is no more available.
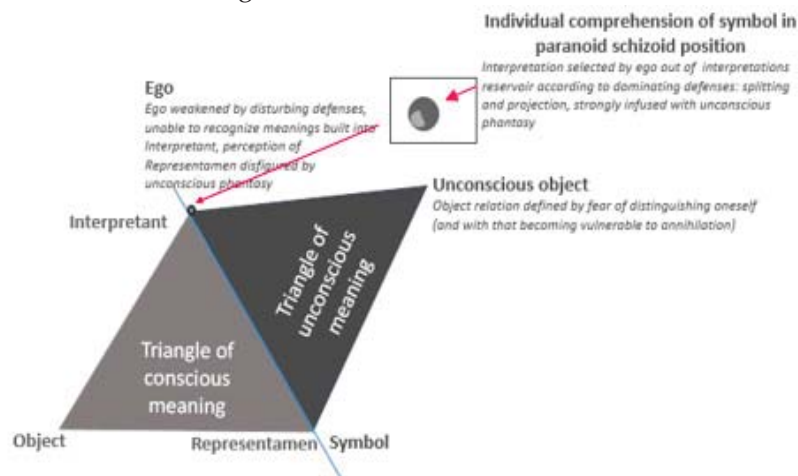
Figure 8. Scheme presenting combined views of Charles Peirce (Peirce, 1906, 1998), and Melanie Klein (Klein, 1930, 1948) on symbol, when paranoid-schizoid position frames mind. Scheme issued for the purpose of this paper.

The Psycho-semiotic model, however, contributes more than by employment of psychic positions to Peirce concept of symbol. It actually describes how sign object gains its relevance for the individual in a way different than projective identification and displacement of affect[15], as it shows how culture and language code holds mind in external reality. In other words it reflects complexity of how the human mind becomes "glued" to reality, incorporating both internal and external forces, and by that outlining broader spectrum of factors that pull mind out of psychotic state.

Combining unconscious phantasy and its mechanics with the idea of Interpretant enriches Peirce's view with psychic potential and constrains which define Interpretant on meta-level. In addition introduction of a matter of unconscious raises Peirce model to various pragma aspects, for example it allows us to perform differentiation between operational usage of symbol and sublimation, in other words it separates mechanical repetition of symbol usage from using it with thoughtful reflection on its meaning. On a top of this it facilitates employment of psychological achievements into semiotic and linguistic investigation with respect to individual differences.[16] The model adds also to psychoanalytic understanding. Klein almost hundred years ago pointed to the importance of sign usage for ego when working through anxieties, integrating superego and overcoming aggressive impulses, yet she only intuitively indicated semiotic relevance of the process staying focused on unconscious meaning. The proposed model clarifies her understanding in that skipped direction. It is no longer a vague concept of symbol (in meaning of sign) but it is a Representamen and Interpretant with all their structure and means for communication that ego needs to employ in order to launch and maintain the process of thinking.[17]. In other words psycho-semiotic model of thinking presents, that thinking is formed not only by relation to unconscious object but -to a great extent – also by semiotic rules.

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15 From primary to secondary object.

16 Dominating object relation translates into level of psychic organization (psychotic, borderline, neurotic).

17 Employment of semiotic devices is only part of establishing thinking process.

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