

Prof. Dr. Alfred Toth

Some instances of qualitative preservation

1. The German psychiatrist and writer Oskar Panizza (1853-1921) is a late representative of the radical subjectivist idealism, which has probably found its peak in Stirner's work (cf. Wiener 1978, Toth 1997). Panizza accepts the difference between outside and inside world solely as a working hypothesis. For him, thinking is hallucination, and experience is illusion (Panizza 1895, p. 21). According to him, there are no dichotomies such as Outside and Inside, Thinking and Experience, Subject and Object, etc. (1895, p. 30). However, when he is forced to explain the origin of hallucination, transcendence comes through the backdoor again in his philosophical building: "Therefore, I put the demon at the border, where I do not find anymore a *causa*, but ask for a *causa*, thus for a transcendental *causa* (...). Hence, the demon is a factor, won by necessity out of transcendence, in order to explain my thinking on This Side, which is equipped with the need of causality, and the world of appearance, connected to it. Even clearer, Panizza states later: "The demon (is) something from the Beyond" (1895, p. 27).

However, for Panizza, the demon is not only the "creative principle of the illusionist act" (1895, p. 48), but, at the same time, also "whatever comes across me in nature, after subtracting the effect of my senses" (1895, p. 49), i.e. the Thing per se. "And herewith, we have explained and constructed the 'Thing per se', however, only what concerns illusionism, experience. But here alone I encounter the question for explaining the 'Thing per se' – the question what remains after subtracting my senses from the Outer World. From the standpoint of my thinking, there is no 'Thing per se', since from here, the *entire* Outer World is illusion. But in the area of illusion, at least, I may apply my recognition, won on the standpoint of thinking, and I may call the 'per se' of my vis-à-vis, what last on him after *my* senses have been subtracted, - Demon" (1895, pp. 48 s.). In another place, Panizza calls the demon "ghost" (1894, p. 49). Thus, life appears as "haunting" (1895, p. 50), and one is remembered to the famous passage in Stirner: "Everything, which appears to you, is but the appearance of an intrinsic ghost, a ghostly appearance. For you, the world is just a world of appearance behind which the ghost itself is haunting. You see ghosts" (Stirner ap. Bauer 1984, p. 46).

On this background, Panizza formulates a semiotic paradox, which has hardly been recognized by now: “Only Death puts an end to this haunting. And end for me, since everything points out that I, my thinking, knows nothing, that my corpse – an illusionist product – lies there stinking, *a performance for the Others*. The demon retires, he stops his creative acts. And the hull, the mask, rots visibly in the illusory pleasure – of the Others, the survivors. That no rest, no rest of thinking – as far as human experience reaches – remains from me, must us, so eagerly searching for ‘preservation of power’, make aware that something goes down the drain, as one says, - where? Something, my thinking, goes where? And the mask rots before our eyes. It mixes into the mass of the other illusory products. It works out without rest – for our illusory view. We calculate it in nitrogen and oxygen, and the calculation works out. Inside of the world of appearance, nothing is lacking. However, the thinking, fighters for the Principle of Preservation of Power, where does the thinking go to? (1895, pp. 50 s.).

2. Semiotic preservation of quality as analogue to physical preservation of power can only work in a polycontextural semiotics which can bridge the abyss between the sign and its object (cf. Toth 1998). However, Bense tried to establish a semiotic “preservation theorem” on the basis of 1-contextural triadic semiotics. As we will see, this idea turns out to be not as bad as it seems beforehand.

For Peircean Semiotics “an absolut complete diversity of ‘worlds’ and ‘parts of worlds’, of ‘being’ and ‘Being’ (Sein und Seindes) (...) is principally not reachable for a consciousness which works over triadic sign relations” (Bense 1979, p. 59). Nevertheless, consciousness is understood as “a binary functor of being which produces the subject-object relation” (Bense 1976, p. 27), since Peirce keeps up “the difference between the object and the subject of recognition in connecting both poles through their being represented” (Walther 1989, p. 76). More exactly, “the representative connection of the sign class also indicates the epistemological subject, the realizational connection of the object thematic also indicates the epistemological object” (Gfesser 1990, p. 133). “In this way, we stipulate an intrinsic (i.e., non-transcendental) notion of recognition, whose essential process lies in de facto differentiating between (recognizable) ‘world’ and (recognizing) ‘consciousness’, but, though, in producing a real triadic relation, the ‘relation of recognition’” (Bense 1976, p. 91).

Thus, “in the end, thematics of Being cannot be motivated and legitimated other than via sign thematics” (Bense 1971, p. 16). It follows, “that notions of object are only relevant with regard to a sign class and possess a semiotic reality thematic which can be discussed and judged as its connection of reality only

relatively to this sign class (Bense 1976, p. 109). Therefore, sign class and reality thematic do not behave like ‘platonic’ and ‘realistic’ concepts of Being, but just like the extreme entities of the one and only identical thematic of Being” (Bense 1976, p. 85). Hence, to a sign relation and its reality thematics, there belongs also “the difference between ‘onticity’ and ‘semioticity’” (Bense 1979, p. 19), about which a theorem of Bense orients: “With increasing semioticity, onticity of representation increases, too” (Bense 1976, p. 60). On this background, Bense formulates his “semiotic preservation theorem”:

“Especially, in this connection, the dual relation of symmetry between the single sign classes and their corresponding reality thematics has to be pointed out. This relation of symmetry says that one can, in principle, represent meta-semiotically only that ‘reality’ or those relationships of reality, which one can represent semiotically. Therefore, the representaton values (i.e. the sums of the fundamental prime-sign numbers) of a sign class are invariant towards the dual transformation of a sign class into its reality thematic. This semiotic ‘preservation theorem’ can be regarded as a consequence of a theorem that had been already formulated [in Bense 1976, pp. 60, 62, v.s.] and which says that with increasing semioticity of representativity also its onticity increases in the same degree” (Bense 1981, p. 259).

3. Thus, on the first sight, Panizza’s paradox cannot arise in a semiotic metaphysics built on triadic Peircean semiotics, since Bense semiotic “preservation theorem” implies that “media, object and interpretant of a sign lie in one and the same world” (Gfesser 1990, p. 139). Max Bense himself had seen already very early: “Being (das Seiende) appears as a sign, and signs survive in the purely semiotic dimension of their meanings the loss of reality” (1952, p. 80). In consequence, the concepts of Panizza and of Bense are principally different. Panizza’s metaphysics is transcendental because of the notion of the demon. It is aprioric, because the demon is identified with the thing per se. Further, as an illusionist concept, it is platonic. On the other side, Peircean semiotics is a “non-transcendental, a non-aprioric and a non-platonic organon” (Gfesser 1990, p. 133).

Due to the identification of the modal categories with the prime-numbers (cf. Bense 1980) and because of the paralleling of the semiosic relation of generation with the successor relation of Peano numbers (Bense 1975, pp. 168 ss.; 1983, pp. 192 ss.), the 10 Peircean sign classes are primarily quantitative relations. Therefore, sign classes cannot preserve the qualities, which they are representing, at least not outside of the narrow representative frame of the 10 sign classes. In other words: All qualities of the ontological space, which do not

fit into the Bed of Procrustes of the 10 sign classes, must be lost. On the other side, Bense's "preservation theorem" holds, but simply because reality appears thematized and thus represented in reality thematic which itself is a pure function of the corresponding sign thematic, and vice versa. Therefore, semiotic dual systems span up representation schemes in which the monocontextual subject-object dichotomy holds, but also epistemological objects can only be represented in the reality thematics as dual sign classes and therefore subject to the subjects of the interpretant relations of the sign classes. Sign classes do not reach their objects, and neither do reality thematics. The distinction between sign classes and reality thematics is just a formal doubling of the semiotic representation scheme which allows some further technical insights in the thematization structures of signs – and not more.

4. Polycontextual semiotics exists only since Kaehr (2009, and further studies). If we assume the sign being a triadic relation as a fragment of 4 contextures, we can write the 10 Peircean sign classes as follows:

$$(3.1_{3,4} 2.1_{1,4} 1.2_{1,4}) \quad CV = 17$$

$$(3.1_{3,4} 2.1_{1,4} 1.3_{3,4}) \quad CV = 19$$

$$(3.1_{3,4} 2.2_{1,2,4} 1.2_{1,4}) \quad CV = 19$$

$$(3.1_{3,4} 2.2_{1,2,4} 1.3_{3,4}) \quad CV = 19$$

$$(3.2_{2,4} 2.3_{2,4} 1.3_{3,4}) \quad CV = 19$$

$$(3.2_{2,4} 2.2_{1,2,4} 1.2_{1,4}) \quad CV = 18$$

$$(3.1_{3,4} 2.1_{1,4} 1.1_{1,3,4}) \quad CV = 20$$

$$(3.1_{3,4} 2.3_{2,4} 1.3_{3,4}) \quad CV = 20$$

$$(3.2_{2,4} 2.2_{1,2,4} 1.3_{3,4}) \quad CV = 20$$

$$(3.3_{2,3,4} 2.3_{2,4} 1.3_{3,4}) \quad CV = 22$$

Since every sub-sign lies in at least 2 contextures, qualitative conservation is possible, and since these sign classes thus represent both quantities and qualities, they are no longer purely quantitative, but quanti-qualitative or quali-quantitative sign classes.

4.1. First, we want to look if Bense's monocontextual preservation theorem also holds for polycontextual sign classes. If we take as an example

$$(3.2_{2,4} 2.2_{1,2,4} 1.3_{3,4}) \times (3.1_{4,3} 2.2_{4,2,1} 2.3_{4,2})$$

Although the sub-signs of the “reality thematics” contain now heteromorphisms, the respective contextural “indices” are preserved as the sub-signs are, and also the contextural values of both “sign class” and “reality thematic” are identical. We may therefore say, that Bense’s preservation theorem, although conceived for monocontextural semiotics, holds for polycontextural semiotics, too.

4.2. As the above grouping of the ten sign classes suggests, we have two groups of sign classes that have identical contextural values:

(3.1 _{3,4} 2.1 _{1,4} 1.3 _{3,4})	CV = 19
(3.1 _{3,4} 2.2 _{1,2,4} 1.2 _{1,4})	CV = 19
(3.1 _{3,4} 2.2 _{1,2,4} 1.3 _{3,4})	CV = 19
(3.2 _{2,4} 2.3 _{2,4} 1.3 _{3,4})	CV = 19
(3.1 _{3,4} 2.1 _{1,4} 1.1 _{1,3,4})	CV = 20
(3.1 _{3,4} 2.3 _{2,4} 1.3 _{3,4})	CV = 20
(3.2 _{2,4} 2.2 _{1,2,4} 1.3 _{3,4})	CV = 20

We are thus allowed to say that sign classes and reality thematics which have the same contextural values, are quanti-qualitative/quali-quantitative representation preserving schemes.

4.3. However, we also have 2 sign classes which have the same representation value, but lies in 2 different contextures:

(3.1 _{3,4} 2.2 _{1,2,4} 1.3 _{3,4})	CV = 19	RV = 12
(3.2 _{2,4} 2.2 _{1,2,4} 1.2 _{1,4})	CV = 18	RV = 12

These two sign classes play a crucial role in monocontextural semiotics (cf. Bense 1992), since the second is the sign class of the “complete object” and the first is the sign class of the “esthetic object” which is characterized by “augmentation of Being” (Seinsvermehrung), cf. Bense (1992, p. 16). What differentiates an object from an esthetic object, is called “Mit-Realität” by Bense (1979, p. 132). Mitreality is what causes the augmentation of Being, and it seems that the differential of eigenreality qua mitreality and (objective) reality is represented by polycontextural semiotics through the difference of the CVs: $\Delta(19, 18) = 1$.

4.4. Finally, there is another fact that requires our interest: While 9 of the 10 sign classes can be ordered by increasing CV’s in steps of +1, there is not sign

class whose CV = 21. In other words: The last sign class (with maximal semioticity, v.s.),

(3.3_{2,3,4} 2.3_{2,4} 1.3_{3,4}) CV = 22

cannot be reached from the other sign classes by one-step addition of CV's. Hence, this sign class which represents the totality of all signs in the semiotic universe, cannot be "deduced logically" from the sentences represented semiotically by the other 9 sign classes – as meta-logical sentences cannot be deduced without creating paradoxes in classical logic according to the Gödel theorems. One also should note that simply from the (monocontextural) representation values, this problem does not appear, since the 10 sign classes can be mapped to the RV's 10 to 15 without any gaps of RV's.

Bibliography

- Bauer, Michael, Oskar Panizza. Ein literarisches Porträt. Munich 1984
- Bense, Max, Die Theorie Kafkas. Köln 1952
- Bense, Max, Zeichen und Design. Baden-Baden 1971
- Bense, Max, Semiotische Prozesse und Systeme. Baden-Baden 1975
- Bense, Max, Vermittlung der Realitäten. Baden-Baden 1976
- Bense, Max, Die Unwahrscheinlichkeit des Ästhetischen. Baden-Baden 1979
- Bense, Max, Axiomatik und Semiotik. Baden-Baden 1981
- Bense, Max, Das Universum der Zeichen. Baden-Baden 1983
- Bense, Max, Die Eigenrealität der Zeichen. Baden-Baden 1992
- Gfesser, Karl: Bemerkungen zum "Zeichenband". In: Walther, Elisabeth und Bayer, Udo (ed.), *Zeichen von Zeichen für Zeichen*. Baden-Baden 1990, Baden, pp. 129-141
- Kaehr, Rudolf, Sketch on semiotics in diamonds. In: <http://www.thinkartlab.com/pkl/lola/Semiotics-in-Diamonds/Semiotics-in-Diamonds.html> (2009)
- Panizza, Oskar, Der Illusionismus und Die Rettung der Persönlichkeit. Leipzig 1895
- Toth, Alfred, Zu Oskar Panizzas präsemiotischem Solipsismus. In: *European Journal for Semiotic Studies* 9, 1997, pp. 769-779
- Toth, Alfred, Ist ein qualitativer semiotischer Erhaltungssatz möglich? In: *Semiosis* 91/92, 1998, pp. 105-112
- Walther, Elisabeth, Charles Sanders Peirce – Leben und Werk. Baden-Baden 1989
- Wiener, Oswald, Über den Illusionismus. In: Panizza, Oskar, *Die kriminelle Psychose, genannt Psychopatia criminalis*. Munich 1978, pp. 213-237