PREUSCHE, Andrea: **Geometrische Form als semiotisches Phänomen** (Geometric shape as a semiotic phenomenon; Prolegomena on creative diagram formation using geometric shapes (connotography)). Tübingen: G.Narr Verlag 1987. 273p. = Kodikas Code: Supplement; 17. ISBN 3-87808-479-X

The title strikes up an age-old theme which is at the same time a highly topical fundamental subject: in what way are configurations that are describable in terms of formal logic connected with significative patterns, e.g. in what way are algorithms carriers of contents conveying meaning? Pythagoras was able to have recourse to far older traditions of thinking from Mesopotamia. At the present time the subject, although severely circumscribed by the subtitle, conjures up connections to linguistics (prelingual images and number concepts), to overlapping pattern recognition through the entire width of scientific and anthropological research (evolution, phase transitions, AI) all the way to the advancement of topological approaches. The mathematization of the world is followed by its geometrization.

Although the preface (O.S.) defines the book's objective as "describing the mode of operation of geometric form as a universal semiotic phenomenon independent of time", the investigative basis and range of validity are disproportionately narrow. True, in a most readable overview the introductory Chapter I "On the anthropological constancy of geometric form" manifests preferences for geometric form as an archetype and a semiotic phenomenon. But: "The following argumentation will above all be guided by Husserl's phenomenology, Cassierer's symbol theory, Perice's phenomenological semiotics and Eco's code and significance theory. Use will also be made of mnemonic psychology and design (Gestalt) theory as reference sciences" (p.52).

The ensuing discussion: II. "Of advance knowledge of things (recollection, recognition, retention; eidos and typus)", III. "Iconicity and symbol formation (iconicity; symbolic transformation; understanding of meaning) thus concentrate on a technical philosophical aspect which is only occasionally and sporadically expanded on. It is only in Chapter IV: "Geometric discourse", that the limits observed so far are exceeded, mainly by venturing into the creative-artistic realm of pictorial and plastic form-giving (diagrams, geometric code, configuration, ambiguity). Pictorial examples (by Kandinsky et al.) illustrate the train of thought and make it more readily understandable.

The investigation (p.51) professes two objectives: " (1) sign-phenomenological description and sign-theoretical analysis of geometric shape as a universal phenomenon and cognitive form, and - resulting thereform - (2) the design of a specific semiotic model on the basis of geometric shapes (connotography)". Regrettably, the chapter devoted to this second objective, i.e. Chapter V, "Creative diagram formation using geometric shapes: connotography" comprising only 23 pages, or one tenth of the overall text, is a very brief one. Although pictorial examples are included, the chapter - particularly since possible applications and the results thereof are merely hinted at - remains too vague and too unillustrative for this reviewer to care to comment on it. This is all the more deplorable since in interdisciplinary discourse - see above -historically grown as well as artificially concocted pictorial languages are gaining in importance as a field of research.

To sum up: with the exception of this final chapter, is the book a clean-cut piece of work within its self-imposed, predominantly technical-philosophical framework, one which especially those will find most readable who are interested in these specific partial aspects. However, it gives rise to an increasingly urgent wish for a more comprehensive, interdisciplinary investigation, be it only in the form of cross-connections and cross-references. Even if the self-imposed limitation is on the whole accepted, it is difficult to understand why even the footnotes and bibliography contain only cursory references, if any, to, say, the circumvention of language (e.g. E.Holenstein), to the interrelationships of space, number and time (as e.g. M.L.von Franz), to the physics and geometry of phase transitions (fluctuations, catastrophe theory) or to the reflections - not only of interest in the immediate front area - of system biology (Maturana, Varela), of (radical) constructivism as arising from it, or of evolutionary epistemology as proceeding from behavior research in the broadest sense (e.g.Riedl, Vollmer).

The Kodikas/Code series - an explanatory reference to which is lacking -probably addresses itself to a readership with specific pertinent interest. Nevertheless, the special terminology employed - which even this reviewer, although classically educated, had some trouble in understanding - should be complemented by a glossary, lacking here, or at least by an index, likewise lacking. Provision by the publisher of a more appealing set-up of the book, better tailored to the reader's needs and in keeping with the usual standards, would be desirable. And last not least: the work should provide an impulse for critically calling into question, in the light of current research, the philosophical bases expounded, e.g. in connection with what is known as Artificial Intelligence (e.g. Winograd/Flores). Helmut Löckenhoff

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SARTORI, Giovanni (Ed.): Social Science Concepts: A Systematic Analysis. Beverly Hills - London - New Delhi: Sage Publ.1984. 455p. ISBN 0-8039-2177-2

The present book came out of many years activities of the Committee on Conceptual and Terminological Analysis (COCTA). It is devoted to the problem of a critical stock-taking of concepts used in the social sciences. It is subdivided into a methodical and a practical part. In the methodical part, the editor gives guidelines for concept analysis; he concludes with a cross-disciplinary glossary of the most important concepts in this field. In the practical part, these guidelines are applied to an analysis of some selected concepts, namely *Consensus* (George J.GRAHAM, Jr.), *Development* (Fred W.RIGGS), *Ethnicity* (Robert H.JACKSON), *Integration* (Henry TEUNE), *Political Culture* (Glenda M. PATRICK), *Power* (Jan-Erik LANE, Hans STENLUND), and *Revolution* (Christoph M. KOTOWSKY). This review is restricted to the methodical aspects of the book.

Ambiguities and inconsistencies impede intelligible communications and constructive discussions in social