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P.I.E.R.R.E.¹ and the Agents of R.E.A.S.O.N.²

Keith Aoki*  

PROLOGUE

There once was a man named Pierre  
Who to Legal Pundits said:  
I just don’t care,  
for all your implausible schemes  
and high-minded dreams,  
dreamt up to hide Reason’s disrepair.  
So see this story, my friend  
And perhaps in the end  
You can draw  
Your own conclusions there.

² Rational Epistemic Analytic Systemic Ontologic Normativos (R.E.A.S.O.N.)
* Professor, University of Oregon School of Law. Sincere thanks for encouragement and comments to Pierre Schlag, Anthony Paul Farley, Maria Grahn-Farley, Michael Fischl, Phyllis Goldfarb, Peter Goodrich, Duncan Kennedy, Bert Westbrook, as well as Dean Dennis Lynch and the rest of the participants in the February 2002 “Beyond Right and Reason” Symposium hosted by the University of Miami School of Law. Particular gratitude is due to Professor Martha Ertman for introducing me to Maurice Sendak’s book, “PIERRE: A CAUTIONARY TALE IN FIVE CHAPTERS AND A PROLOGUE,” (Harper & Row, 1962) thereby providing both a conceptual frame and a jumping off point. Thanks are also due to the work of Jim Steranko, Jack Kirby and Stan Lee who created “NICK FURY, AGENT OF S.H.I.E.L.D.” for Marvel Comics in the 1960s and served as a stylistic touchstone and inspiration. And thanks to Francisco Goya & Beto Juarez.
A: Li, WE COULD JUST START OVER... HEH!

B: THANKS FOR COMING... TONY'S GOT SOMETHING TO BRING UP...

A: YEAH, WE HAVE A PROBLEM! SINCE WE ACCEPTED THIS "PIERRE" SYMPOSIUM, WE HAVEN'T SEEN ANY PIECES WITH MORE THAN 20 FOOTNOTES!!

B: MY CITE-CHECKERS ARE COMPLAINING...

A: I'VE WARNED THE BOARD ABOUT THIS...

B: YES, BUT...

A: WE MUST DO SOMETHING! THE LACUNAE ARE SAPPING OUR JURISPRUDENTIAL MOXIE!

B: GUESS WHAT? I HAVE A PLAN...

A: BUT YOU ALWAYS HAVE A PLAN! WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO WITH THESE PIECES?

B: WELL, WE COULD JUST START OVER... HEH!

A: COME ON, GET REAL! NOW, SOME OF THESE PIECES CAN BE "DOCTORED" UP INTO RESPECTABLE LEGAL SCHOLARSHIP... BUT...

B: GET A LOAD OF THIS...

A: HMMMM... YOU MEAN SOMEONE SENT DRAWINGS IN? A... COMIC STRIP???

B: YOU SEE WE DO HAVE A PROBLEM...
NORM ATIVO, AGENT OF R.E.A.S.O.N.!
RATIONAL EPISTEMIC ANALYTIC SYSTEMIC ONTOLOGIC NORMATIVOS

BLOW-BACK!

IN A TOP SECRET UNDERGROUND FORTRESS, AN ALL-SEEING PANOPTIC VIDEOSCREEN OPERATED BY A TEAM OF MERCILESS, PANIC-TICKED ANTI-RATIONALISTS PURVETS A FATAL SIGHT!!!

IT'S NORM ATIVO - EXACTLY AS THEORY PREDICTS!!

HE MUST FEEL BOLD IN KNOWING THAT R.E.A.S.O.N. ALWAYS PREVAILS!

HE IS ALL ALONE!!!

...LITTLE DOES HE KNOW THAT HE WILL NEVER SEE HIS PRECIOUS LITTLE LEGAL GRID AGAIN!!!

...LIKE A SMALLER VERSION OF REASON'S VAST ACADEMIC HOVERING HEADQUARTERS!

...IT RUNS ON HIGHLY-PRESSURED HOT AIR!

HE'S WEARING ONE OF REASON'S LATEST AUTO-DIDACT TRANSPORT PODS FOR SURREPTITIOUS DESCENT!

RAW TEXT END
REQUEST PERMISSION TO DEPLOY THE CRITIQUE OF THE SUBJECT!
WE WILL BLAST HIM OUT THE FRAME!

PERMISSION DENIED!! MR. ATIVO IS UNDOUBTEDLY WIRED INTO THE "GRID" OF R.E.A.S.O.N AT THIS EXACT MOMENT!!
IF WE TRASH HIM IN THEIR, THEY WILL ANNIHILATE US!!

ALL HAIL P.I.E.R.R.E.!!

WE SHALL ALLOW NORM ATIVO TO TOUCH DOWN WITH OUT INCIDENT!! HE MUST REPORT BACK THAT ALL IS NORMALLY REASONABLE!!

...THEN, WHILE R.E.A.S.O.N WALLOWS IN FATAL COMPLACENCY AND FALSE SECURITY -- WE SHALL STRIKE!!

FOR FAR TOO LONG HAVE I VEILED MY INTENT BENEATH BANAL AND FACILE ACADMIC CHIT CHAT AND ERODE MY NUFFING REPARTEE!!

LET HIM LAND AND OUR ROBOTS WILL BRING HIM TO ME!!

THE TIME HAS COME TO CALL THEM ON THE CHAOS AT THE HEART OF THEIR HALLUCINATION!

MEANWHILE, IN THE BARE DESERT ABOVE... P.I.E.R.R.E.'S SECRET UNDERGROUND HQ...

THIS IS THE PLACE... ALL RIGHT! NOW ALL I GOT TO DO IS TRACK DOWN THOSE CAREERS FROM P.I.E.R.R.E.!!

I WONDER WHO THEY REALLY ARE BEHIND THOSE "PIERRE" MASKS? ONE THING'S FOR SURE: R.E.A.S.O.N HAS PINPOINTED THEM AS A "THREAT TO THE "GRID"ivating!

AND THE "GRID" MUST BE PROTECTED -- AT ANY COST!!

THIS IS THE MIDDLE OF THE DESERT THAT MEANS EVERYBODY'S IN HIDING HERE...

HEY, WHAT'S THAT SOUND?

IT WAS ENOUGH MUSCLE TO DEMOLISH A TANK!!

OH NO!! EVIL ROBOTS!

WHAT? IT Didn'T EVEN SLOW THE ROBOT DOWN!!

I BETTER USE MY PRAGMO PELLET!!
MEANWHILE, HIGH ABOVE MEGATON CITY, THE FLYING COMMAND CENTERS OF R.E.A.S.O.N. HOVERS...

INSIDE THE MASSIVE CRAFT LIES THE HEADQUARTERS OF R.E.A.S.O.N., VORACIOUSLY DEVOURING INFORMATION,

BAD NEWS...

CEASELESSLY DEPLOYING THE GRID OF SURVEILLANCE UNTIL ATIVO’S DROPPED OFF THE GRID.

THE COUNCIL MUST BE INFORMED!

AS THE HIGH COUNCIL OF R.E.A.S.O.N. JUDICIOUSLY DELIBERATES...

YES WE WAS RECONSIDERING THOSE ABORTIONIST EVILDOERS FROM P.I.E.R.R.E.

YES YES YES, WE MUST DEPLOY OUR TRUMPET MISSILES, "ASIF" BOMBERS AND OUR SELF-REFLEXIVE "SMART BOMBES!!"

NOW THAT WE’VE MAPPED P.I.E.R.R.E.’S LOCATION, WE MUST DEPLOY OUR TRUMPET MISSILES, "ASIF" BOMBERS AND OUR SELF-REFLEXIVE "SMART BOMBS!!" OUR MISSION IS CRYSTAL CLEAR!!

WE MUST PROCEED WITHOUT MERCY OR RESTRAINT... THE MINIONS OF P.I.E.R.R.E. MUST NOT BE ALLOWED TO BURROW IN AND CARVE OUT ANY EXCEPTIONS!!

WE SHALL SHOW P.I.E.R.R.E. THAT OUR SOUND AND REASONED JUDGEMENT ALWAYS PREVAILS!!!

WE STRIKE FOR TRUTH, GOODNESS AND...... FATE!!!

YES YES YES
THE FOLDS!!!
THEY SEEK TO
ATTACK ME
WITH THEIR
PITIFUL TOYS!

DON'T YOU REALIZE
YOUR INSANE SCHEME
WILL NEVER WORK!
THE GRIP IS EVERYWHERE—IN THE FOOD,
YOU EAT, THE AIR YOU BREATHE!!

IF YOU COME
TO YOUR SENSES
AND RELEASE ME,
YOU'LL GET AN
ENDOWED CHAIR
AT YALE FOR
STARTERS! COME
ON, BE
REASONABLE!!

WISHFUL
THINKING,
MR. ATIVO!!
THE GRID
IS A FIGMENT
OF YOUR POOR
BECKONED
IMAGINATION!

AS FOR YALE, I
(AND P.E.R.R.E.)
DON'T CARE!!!

AND, MR. ATIVO, R.E.A.S.O.N. SHOULD
NOT BE SURPRISED AT P.E.R.R.E.'S
OWN PROPENSITY FOR "SELF-DEFENSE"—
REPAINTED CRITICAL REFLEXIVITY INDEED!!

KA-THWOOOM!
KA-THROOM!
THOK!

HURRY, YOU DOGS!
I MUST HAVE MY
DISGUISE IN PLACE
IMMEDIATELY!!

YES MASTER!!
LOWER THE
FACIAL
MORPH
PROGRAM
TO MAXIMUM!!

SIR, YOU ARE
PREPARED
FOR MORPHING!!

WITHIN MOMENTS, YOU WILL
HAVE A NEW FACE!! YOU WILL
BE AN INDISTINGUISHABLE
REPLICA OF NORM ATIVO!
AGENT OF R.E.A.S.O.N.!!

IT IS DONE, SIR!!

DOES THIS MORPH MEET
YOUR DESIRE, SIR?

AH, YES... EXCELLENT!
ATIVO'S MOTHER
COULDN'T TELL US
APART!!
I MUST DON ATIVOS
PROFESSORIAL GARE.

AND WHILE R.E.A.S.O.N.
ASIF STRATO'BOMBERS
CLOSE IN... I SHALL ESCAPE
THEIR BOMBS IN MY
NEUTRONIC JET CRUISER...

FOR TOO LONG HAVE NORM
ATIVA AND R.E.A.S.O.N.
BLOCKED R.I.E.R.R.E.!
HA! THAT TIME IS NOW PAST!!

R.I.E.R.R.E. MOMENT IS
NOW... AND
R.E.A.S.O.N.
IS POWERLESS
BECAUSE I
HAVE FOUND
THE ULTIMATE
HIDING PLACE!!

GROUND ZERO
DEPLOY THE
"ASIF" BOMB!!

...ASIF "BOMB
LAUNCHED!!

LET THEM STICK THAT
IN THEIR RIPS AND
SHOVE THEM WHERE

CRoom!!
BACK AT R.E.A.S.O.N.'S HEADQUARTERS...

PIERRE'S STRONGHOLD HAS BEEN UTTERLY AND COMPLETELY DESTROYED!

HOORAY! R.E.A.S.O.N. TRIUMPHS YET AGAIN!!

P.I.E.R.R.E.'S WAY TO GO!!

THANKS SŒUR! BUT IT'S JUST ANOTHER DAY I HAVE TO TELL THE BOSS I Gotta Gotta GO!!

THE "REAL" NORMATIVO IS DEAD BLOWN TO BITS BY "AS" BID!! P.I.E.R.R.E. SURVIVES AND I AM HERE TO DESTROY R.E.A.S.O.N. FROM WITHIN!!

IN THE SANCTUARY SANCTUARY OF R.E.A.S.O.N. THE CHIEF REFLECTS...

SIR, YOU HAVE THE REPORT THAT SHOWS HOW P.I.E.R.R.E. WAS ERADICATED -- YOU NOW OUR MOMO! "TAKE RIGHTS SERIOUSLY!"

SIR, I CAME TO SEE YOU IN PERSON TO TELL YOU THAT THE BIG IS UP FOR THE GIFT OF R.E.A.S.O.N.!! YOU SEE....

...OPERATION BLOWBACK IS A SMASHING SUCCESS!

MIL.... AGENT KTNO! CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR MISSION!

MUM!! WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU SAYING WHAT?!!

WHAT? R.E.A.S.O.N. WITHOUT END??

EYN MIAH!!
I'M TROUBLED BY THIS PIECE TOO, BUT FOR A SLIGHTLY DIFFERENT REASON.

I MEAN... LOOK AT IT, LOOK AT THE CHARACTERS, THE STORYLINE...

IT HAS ABSOLUTELY NO WOMEN IN IT! WHAT KIND OF STATEMENT IS THAT, NOT TO MENTION THE GRATUITOUS VIOLENCE!

I GUESS IF YOU THINK LEGAL SCHOLARSHIP IS LIKE A BAD A-MASS SPY MOVIE, THIS PIECE IS OK... I VOTE TO REJECT THIS PIECE!

OK, LET'S TAKE A VOTE ON WHETHER WE ACCEPT THIS PIECE!

I, FOR ONE, THINK THE SYMPOSIUM IN GENERAL, AND THIS PIECE IN PARTICULAR, ARE INTERESTING. I VOTE TO ACCEPT!

WELL, WHILE I HAVE COMPLAINTS ABOUT THE RELUCTANCE OF FOOTNOTES, I VOTE TO ACCEPT...

WE SHOULDN'T REJECT THIS PIECE. IF PROFESSIONALS CAN'T POLICE THEMSELVES FOR QUALITY, WE'VE GOT TO! I VOTE TO REJECT.

I'M WITH TONY. WHY NOT TAKE A CHANCE WITH SOMETHING DIFFERENT? I VOTE TO ACCEPT?

I VOTE TO REJECT. NO SELF-AGGRAVATING LAW REVIEW WOULD TOUCH THIS TYPE OF STUFF... WE NEED MORE EMPIRICAL WORK, NOT TRIVIAL MUSINGS!

I VOTE TO REJECT... THIS PIECE INFURIATES ME ON THE LEVEL OF REPRESENTATION.

I GOT TAUGHT NOW TO MY CRANWATH INTERVIEW'S LONG!

OK-- THAT'S 3-3... REJECT?

ACCEPT!!
So, the Pundits did scold
But failed to behold
The fact that Pierre didn’t care
About how reason’s delusion
Leads to entropic confusion
And the further dissolution
Of Legal Thought into thin air.

The “Moral” of P.I.E.R.R.E.
may be: BEWARE!

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3 "El Encanto de la Razón Produce MonSTRUOS También" ("The Enchantment of Reason Produces Monsters Too").