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Sommario/riassunto	The postmodern response to the century-old crisis of classical discourse (which called into question the possibility of a fixed, objective, and absolute knowledge) has been to declare the death of the subject, and the end or absence of meaning. The Potential of Modern Discourse seeks to recover for contemporary discourse an alternative possibility by returning to the modernist project of linking ethics, politics, and the discourse of knowledge. In the multiple, ironic discourses of Robert Musil, the semiotics of Charles Sanders Peirce, and the physics of Werner Heisenberg, Marike Finlay finds the basis for a

new discourse of knowledge. In her pragmatic, consensual model, meaning and truth are not objectively or unilaterally established, but rather "triadically" co-constructed as relationship among "object," "representamen" (or "sign"), and "interpretant" (the terms are Peirce's), and this triadic relationship is constantly shifting through time and space. By approaching Musil's *The Man without Qualities* as discourse, Finlay finds in it a re-presentation of the theory of knowledge implicit in the Peircean triadicity and Heisenberg's philosophy of physics. Her reading constitutes one of the first attempts to apply Peircean semiotics to a literary work. In Musil's modernist response to the crisis of representation, Finlay discovers an alternative to the postmodernist complete deconstruction of sense.
