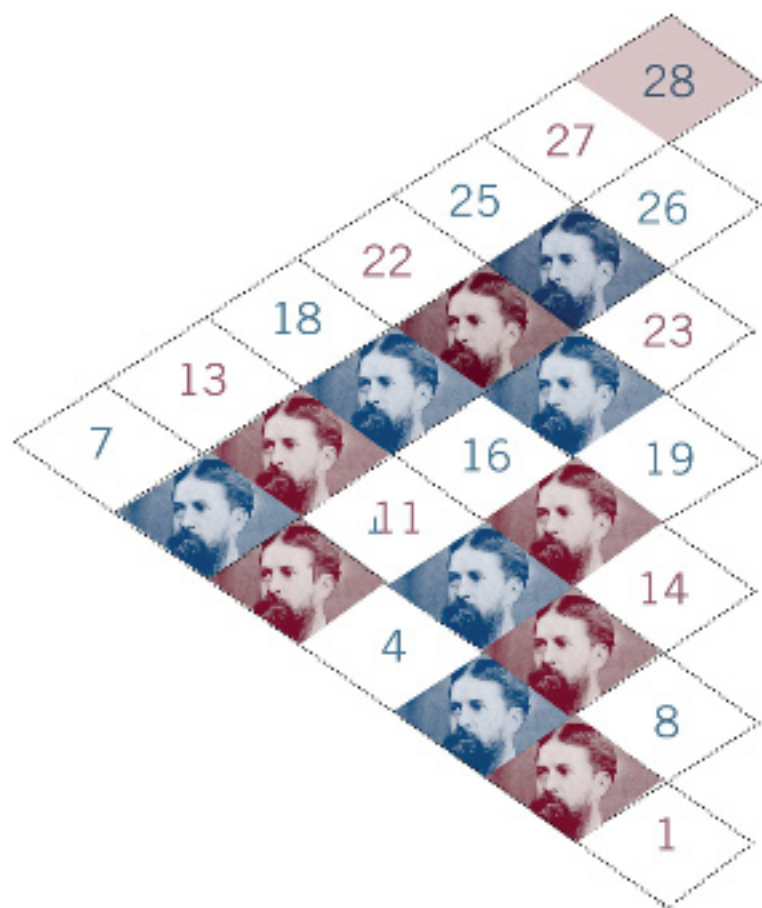


Bloomsbury Advances in Semiotics

# PEIRCE'S TWENTY-EIGHT CLASSES OF SIGNS AND THE PHILOSOPHY OF REPRESENTATION

TONY JAPPY



B L O O M S B U R Y

Peirce's Twenty-Eight Classes  
of Signs and the Philosophy  
of Representation

## Bloomsbury Advances in Semiotics

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Peirce's Twenty-Eight Classes  
of Signs and the Philosophy of  
Representation

Rhetoric, Interpretation and  
Hexadic Semiosis

Tony Jappy

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## Abbreviations

Primary Peirce sources are referenced in the text by letters in brackets as follows:

Peirce, Charles S. (1931–1958), *Collected Papers of Charles Sanders Peirce*, 8 Volumes, Hartshorne, Charles, Paul Weiss and Arthur W. Burks (eds.), Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press (CP)

Peirce, Charles S. ([1940] 2011), *Philosophical Writings of Peirce*, Buchler, J. (ed.), New York: Dover. (B)

Peirce, Charles S. (1976), *The New Elements of Mathematics, Volume Four: Mathematical Philosophy*, Eisele, C. (ed.), The Hauge: Mouton. (NEM4)

Peirce, Charles S. and V. Welby-Gregory (1977), *Semiotic and Significs: The Correspondence between C. S. Peirce and Victoria Lady Welby*, Hardwick, C. S. (ed.), Bloomington: Indiana University Press. (SS)

Peirce, Charles S. (1982), Fisch, M. et al. (eds.), *The Writings of Charles S. Peirce, Volume 1: 1857–1866*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press. (W)

Peirce Charles. S. (1992), *The Essential Peirce: Selected Philosophical Writings, Volume 1: 1867–1893*, Houser, N. and C. Kloesel (eds.), Bloomington: Indiana University Press. (EP1)

Peirce, Charles S. (1998), *The Essential Peirce, Volume 2*, Peirce Edition Project (eds.), Bloomington: Indiana University Press. (EP2)

Peirce's manuscripts are referenced by their number in the Robin Catalogue (e.g. R339, which is the manuscript of Peirce's Logic Notebook). For the interested reader there exists an online version of this particular document:

Peirce Logic Notebook, Charles Sanders Peirce Papers MS Am 1632 (339). Houghton Library, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass., at this address: <http://nrs.harvard.edu/urn-3:FHCL.Hough:3686182> Accessed March 2016. Note that owing to the placement of editorial matter at the beginning of the file the Houghton sequence numbers don't correspond to the page numbers of the manuscript. I have therefore included the Houghton sequence number in brackets after the page reference. For example, the reference to page 285r in the Logic Notebook appears in the text as R339 285r (H534).

The *Oxford English Dictionary* is referred to in the text as *OED*.

Correlates in the definitions of triadic and hexadic relations are abbreviated in the text in bold:

Sign	<b>S</b>	Dynamic Object	<b>Od</b>
Representamen	<b>R</b>	Immediate Interpretant	<b>Ii</b>
Object	<b>O</b>	Dynamic Interpretant	<b>Id</b>
Interpretant	<b>I</b>	Final Interpretant	<b>If</b>
Immediate Object	<b>Oi</b>	Relations:	<b>S-O, S-I</b> etc.



## Introduction

Among many others two reasons for undertaking this study stand out, one anecdotal in origin, the other rather predictably academic. In a seminar one day, in a discussion of the difference between a legisign and a replica by means of one of Peirce's favourite examples, the English definite article, a very sharp student raised her hand and asked what sort of object the definite article represented, given that a sign is defined in part as something that represents an object. A rule? A law? But what sorts of objects were these? This, it seemed to me, was a very pertinent question in the circumstances. But it was one which began to bother me – how did we know what sorts of objects were represented by the classes of signs I was describing? The system that I had been presenting to these students defined the sign and two sorts of relations into which it entered very precisely, but it was not designed to detect any sort of object, and most researchers are content to recycle examples given by Peirce himself. Identifying the object, then, a task which we accomplish over and over again every minute of our lives, became a problem that required further research, but this meant looking beyond the three-division system I was describing.

The second reason came from a more conventional source. Writing in the Introduction to *The Essential Peirce, Volume One*, Nathan Houser, the doyen of Peirce scholars, recognizing that Peirce had been unable to complete the classification of the sixty-six signs he had posited within his general theory, set out a programme for semiotic theorists in the form of the following statement: 'Perhaps in our present state of understanding of language and semiosis we have no need for such complexity [sixty-six classes of signs] – just as we once had no need for relativity physics – but where principal distinctions can be made, they should be made, and, in any case, they will probably someday be needed' (1992: xxxviii).

## The programme

The present study, then, is a contribution to that programme, but instead of adopting as its scope the principal distinctions required for the ten divisions yielding the sixty-six classes, it is restricted to six of those ten divisions, which, when correctly combined, theoretically yield twenty-eight such classes. Both the six-division and ten-division systems were Peirce's final statements on the classification of signs, and the viability of any attempt to establish the correct ordering of either series of divisions is conditioned by stages in their evolution. In this we follow what Peirce considered to be key to our understanding of the development of Plato's thought: 'everything depends upon the chronology'.<sup>1</sup> Consequently, the principle informing the restricted and therefore more feasible part of the larger programme adopted in the study is that what is true of our appreciation of Plato's dialogues will also be true of Peirce's theory of signs, and for this reason in the chapters to come a chronological approach has been adopted.

However, there is a drawback both to the larger programme outlined by Houser and to the less ambitious one undertaken here. Peirce spent nearly half a century developing his various contributions to logic and philosophy, and yet the later statements characterizing these contributions are still only available in a piecemeal fashion. Now the greater part of the research reported in the pages to follow deals necessarily with Peirce's later semiotic theory, namely the period following the course of lectures he gave on logic at the Lowell Institute in Boston in 1903. It is rather sobering, then, to have to admit that much of the most interesting material from 1904 and after not only comes from largely unpublished manuscripts and from letters, but even from drafts of letters. These in particular contain some of the most illuminating semiotic material that Peirce produced, but the fact that they were never sent confers on the enterprise an unavoidably 'but what-if', hypothetical character. If the *Writings*<sup>2</sup> had reached the period from 1903 to 1910 there would be no problem. They haven't, and so the present study is also an attempt to present some of the semiotic riches of this period in spite of the difficulties induced by this editorial handicap.

We know from the available documents that Peirce struggled to finalize the late sign-systems in 1908, and even now, over a century later, there is still no consensus as to how the ten divisions they projected should be arranged, or even as to the viability of such an enterprise in spite of its being a necessity, as Houser has noted. Some authorities, Weiss and Burks (1945), for example, have proposed a reordering of Peirce's original scheme. Others, like Spinks

(1991), have claimed that the task of identifying the sixty-six classes is, if not impossible, counterproductive.<sup>3</sup> Yet others, more circumspect, like Liszka (1996), have suggested that in view of the incomplete and disparate nature of the available data, it is more prudent to concentrate on the three-division system Peirce announced in 1903.<sup>4</sup> But perhaps the most significant comment on the problematic nature of the more complex of the late systems and on the need of a research programme of the sort mentioned by Houser is that of another noted Peirce scholar, Thomas Short:

For all the enthusiasm that Peirce's later taxonomy has elicited, with its promise of a vast system, an endlessly ramifying formal structure that applies everywhere and to everything, close examination of it disappoints. It is sketchy, tentative, and, as best I can make out, incoherent. Its importance lies not in what it contains but in the kind of project it defines. That project has not yet been adopted by any of Peirce's devotees. (2007: 259–60)

Other authorities, Savan (1988) and Shapiro (1983), for instance, have indeed attempted to characterize the later typologies and identify some of their defining features. Nevertheless, Short's rather extreme statement clearly describes the sorry condition in which Peirce's final statements on signs find themselves within the Peirce community, even now, some ninety-odd years after Ogden and Richards first brought them to the attention of the public in the ten pages devoted to Peirce in their Appendix D (1923: 279–90). It is precisely the purpose of the present study to take up the 'project' mentioned by Short, but the emphasis will be less on how best to order those later divisions as on how coherent at least one of the two systems announced in 1908 can be shown to be. As the title suggests, the study develops two interrelated themes: the late 28-class sign-systems and a 'philosophy of representation'; but in doing so it also investigates the evolving logical status of Peirce's object.

To begin with, it should be noted that in what follows the term 'sign-systems' refers both to the definition of semiosis – the complex process in which the sign participates together with the object it represents and the effects that it produces – and to the typologies which were derived from it. All of Peirce's definitions of the sign in 1903 and earlier were triadic in nature, whereas in the period after 1904 they came to be defined as effectively involving six elements. In this respect the year 1903 constitutes a sort of theoretical watershed, and the late sign-systems are therefore those established after 1903 and based upon the more complex definition of sign-action. As it happens, the ten divisions of the 'later taxonomy' mentioned by Short which should, theoretically, yield sixty-six classes of signs also include the very six from which twenty-eight can be obtained. This



being the case, one approach to a better understanding of the ordering problem is to investigate the specificity of the six-division system before attempting to master its more complex companion. By isolating characteristics of this simpler typology and then comparing and contrasting them with the remaining divisions of the 66-class system we might gain a greater understanding of how they differ and, consequently, of how better to integrate the two, should this prove to be theoretically possible.

There is, however, an even more compelling reason for examining the 28-class system (which, apparently, Peirce referred to only once, namely in a letter to his English correspondent, Lady Victoria Welby), an enterprise that so far has been overshadowed by discussions of the more complex typology. Investigating the simpler system as an independent, 'stand-alone' instrument for the identification and classification of signs will also make it possible to exploit its analytical power, which, if only in terms of the greater number of different types of signs it identifies, must surely have a theoretical potential not possessed by the earlier 10-class system of 1903. One innovative aspect of this particular taxonomy is to be found, for example, in the fact that Peirce's best known division, which distinguishes between icon, index and symbol, is entirely absent from the later, hexadic 28-class system,<sup>5</sup> which means that we have at our disposal two radically different analytical approaches – an earlier and a later, both within a genuinely Peircean framework – to the examination and classification of the same semiotic phenomena, so to speak. They present, in effect, two distinct conceptions of the classification of the same sign. And so an assessment of the nature and analytical potential of the 28-class system is the first of the two major themes the study develops.

Now Peirce defined semiotics<sup>6</sup> as nothing other than logic, which he conceived in two distinct ways, one narrow and one broad. As we see in Chapter 1, the narrow dealt with the relation between signs and what they represent, whereas he was led in 1903 to identify the broad, 'grand', logic as a veritable 'Philosophy of Representation'. The sheer ambition of such a project is astonishing, and testifies to Peirce's confidence in the theoretical framework he had established at the time and in his attendant association of the sign with the process of representation. However, this confidence can be seen to diminish with the development of the later sign-systems, characterized as they are by a complex series of interpretants, a development which may have neutralized or even appropriated the purpose he had earlier attributed to a branch of logic which he referred to as 'methodeutic' or 'speculative rhetoric'. For this reason, the waning influence of the philosophy of representation and its relation to Peirce's mature understanding of signs

constitute the second of the themes to be developed in the book, for in this age of biosemiotics and zoosemiotics, which in their Peircean versions are based essentially upon the 1903 semiotic 'model', it is important that the logical status of representation itself and its altered status within the later systems as well as Peirce's more complex final conception of the sign they were based upon be clarified.

## Organization of the book

Chapter 1 begins the chronological development of the relevant concepts, and traces Peirce's general theory of representation as far back as the 1860s. It comprises two major parts. In order to present the general background to Peirce's theory of signs the first part reviews selected influences from the modern Western philosophical tradition which contributed to Peirce's intellectual development and which he ultimately came to break with. The second presents Peirce's semiotics as he introduced it during that course of lectures at the Lowell Institute. Since most introductions to Peirce's theory of the sign are hybrid in the sense that they combine material from 1903 and the later definitions, the description given in Chapter 1 will surprise many readers as all the statements and quotations have been restricted to the 1903 period for purposes of comparison with the later systems.

Chapter 2, the longest in the book, traces the ways in which Peirce's conceptions of the sign came under considerable pressure over the period of the four years following the Lowell Lectures, that is, from 1904 to 1907, and how the theoretical developments which occurred in this period contributed to the pioneering features of the later sign-systems, and, ultimately, to the by-now problematic status of the speculative rhetoric/methodeuteic branch of the general philosophy. The successive stages described in the chapter show Peirce breaking with the philosophical tradition outlined in Chapter 1.

Chapter 3 introduces the hexadic sign-systems which evolved from the principles discussed in the previous chapter. It shows how Peirce moves innovatively from his earlier category-based conception of signification and classification to one based upon three universes. A further purpose of the chapter is to review the debate concerning the ordering of the divisions involved in the late typologies, which to this day continues to be a subject of disagreement among Peirce scholars to the almost complete neglect of the characterization and exemplification of the sign-classes themselves.

Chapter 4 compares and contrasts the two very different typologies by examining the way in which each accommodates a corpus of literal and figurative signs. It shows how the triadic system of 1903 classifies signs according to the way they represent their objects – the well-known division of the icon, index and symbol is an excellent example of this principle, together with Peirce's highly original concept of the hypoicon – while the 1908 hexad classifies signs according to the sorts of objects that they represent, a typology from which, as mentioned earlier, the icon-index-symbol division is absent.

Having compared the earlier typology with the later in Chapter 4, Chapter 5 exploits the analytical potential of the later system in its own right. It begins with a discussion of the way in which interpreters can react differentially to the same sign. One course of enquiry into this problem is provided by the 1908 system, and involves tracing the evolution of Peirce's conception of the object over the early years of the century. The final stage of this theoretical development is used to show how a number of pictorial signs are determined by an object quite different from the perceived entities they depict.

Most of these chapters have, in addition to their specific theoretical material and the illustrations, a summary of the chapter's main findings, a section which expands upon some of the more complex ideas introduced in the chapter and, in some cases, suggestions for further reading. The chapters cover as wide a variety of pictorial representations as our copyright laws allow, without neglecting, of course, the sorts of verbal examples that Peirce himself tended to use. Finally, as an aid to understanding the rapidity with which Peirce's theorizing on signs developed in the period after the Lowell Lectures, I have included an appendix containing eight increasingly complex typologies developed in the two years between August 1904 and August 1906, all from his Logic Notebook, R339.

# The Philosophy of Representation

Since the study seeks to establish the theoretical differences between two of Peirce's sign-systems, the purpose of this first chapter is to provide the reader with as complete a description as space allows of the one which was conceived late in 1903.<sup>1</sup> It is in this context that the term 'Philosophy of Representation' has been adopted to cover all aspects of Peirce's sign theory at that time:

Now it may be that *logic* ought to be the science of Thirdness in general. But as I have studied it, it is simply the science of what must be and ought to be true representation, so far as representation can be known without any gathering of special facts beyond our ordinary daily life. It is in short The Philosophy of Representation.<sup>2</sup> (R465, 1903)

The expression itself is from a draft of the third of the Lowell Lectures on logic but as it was used by Peirce after a discussion of degeneracy the editors obviously thought it more thematically appropriate to group it with texts on phenomenology in Volume One of the *Collected Papers* instead of in Volume Two with the other texts on signs from the Lectures. This is of no consequence. The expression usefully exploits the fact that Peirce grew over the years preceding the lectures to conceive of logic in two ways – a specialized branch of logic and a broader conception composed of three distinct but interrelated branches, this being the 'grand' logic. Moreover, since up to and including 1903 Peirce considered signs as the units of representation, and since, by 'representation' he meant a signifying process of the widest possible scope,<sup>3</sup> the notion that logic should be considered as the general philosophy of representation – a love of knowledge and a search for knowledge in the field of representation, therefore – is entirely appropriate.

The chapter traces what one can consider to be the major developments of the theory up to and including the Lowell Lectures on logic. From a semiotic point of view it was a remarkable achievement, an autonomous and complete descriptive system accounting for ten logically valid classes of signs. However,

like all theories, it was subject to revision, as a consequence of the intellectual restlessness of its founder and his quest to discover all possible types of signs. For convenience, the subject matter of the chapter has been divided into three distinct sections. The broad lines of the trivium forming the philosophy of representation are introduced first as an explanation of one theme from the general title of the study; the second reviews the most relevant aspects of the theoretical background to Peirce's theory of signs and the advancement of knowledge leading to the period of the Lowell Lectures; the third describes the theory of the sign developed in the Lectures and their accompanying *Syllabus* of November and December 1903.<sup>4</sup> This is not an arbitrary decision. Many Peirce scholars see three or four stages in the development of Peirce's thinking on signs, the 1903 stage being referred to as the 'interim' stage by Atkin (2010) and Liszka (1996), for example. As I shall be contrasting the 1903 system with the 28-class system of 1908 the third section effectively corresponds to that interim stage. The chapter concludes with a summary of the characteristics of Peirce's theory of semiotics in 1903 and a discussion of their interest for the general study. As the theory presented here is necessarily a personal point of view, I have appended bibliographical references to other accounts of the way Peirce's logic developed in this particular period in order to offer the reader a balanced presentation of the problem.

## The philosophy of representation

Peirce's logical trivium was based upon the structure of the medieval teaching system composed of grammar, logic and rhetoric, itself an outgrowth of Ancient Greek theory. In the Lowell Lectures he defined it and its relation to his conception of logic in the following manner:

All thought being performed by means of signs, Logic may be regarded as the science of the general laws of signs. It has three branches: (1) Speculative Grammar, or the general theory of the nature and meanings of signs, whether they be icons indices, or symbols; (2) Critic, which classifies arguments and determines the validity and degree of force of each kind; (3) Methodeutic, which studies the methods that ought to be pursued in the investigation, in the exposition, and in the application of truth. Each division depends on that which precedes it. (CP 1.191, 1903)

The three branches received different denominations over the years, but the important point to note is that logic in the broad sense – a 'grand' logic – is a field of study comprising three hierarchically organized branches, while

logic in the narrow sense is but one of the three. He termed the latter ‘critic’, the branch of the philosophy of representation concerned with the validity of inferences, these being classified within the relation holding between a sign and the object it represents. Speculative grammar is the first of the three branches. As the final sentence in the quotation notes, its relative position within the group, or order of ‘application’, is significant since it deals broadly with the conditions of signhood: determining what constitutes a sign is obviously a priority, given that the other two branches necessarily depend upon an entity’s having been previously identified as a sign within speculative grammar. The last of the three, the least developed and the branch that Peirce ultimately found most difficult to circumscribe to his satisfaction, is the one he refers to at this point as ‘Methodetic’. As Peirce understood it in 1903 this branch sought to validate the conditions governing signs and the interpretants they were intended to determine. The term ‘methodetic’ alternated until 1906 with ‘speculative rhetoric’, a case of a terminological instability which pertains specifically to the nature and function of this third branch of the grand logic, and scholars reviewing it have found considerable variation in the terms and definitions concerning it: Kent (1987: 206), for one, identifies nine different denominations for the methodetic branch, while more recently Liszka (2000: 440) cites seven different names for the rhetoric and something like 30 different definitions, some of which will be met with in the following sections. This, then, was the tripartite structure of Peirce’s grand logic, his philosophy of representation of 1903.

## The semio-philosophical background

It is a fact that no theory, philosophical or otherwise, suddenly breaks upon an unsuspecting world *ex nihilo*, and Peirce’s semiotics is no exception: like that of others, his thinking on signs was determined partly from what he had read and absorbed from the Western philosophical tradition, from the Greeks and the Scholastics in particular, and partly from his reactions to it. However, it is the philosophy of the modern period that is most pertinent to the development of his theory of the sign. In this context, the study of the nature and origin of knowledge was decisive as far as the peculiar emphasis of the theory was concerned, given that for Peirce knowledge could only be acquired by signs: ‘and a sign is something by knowing which we know something more,’ he was to write to Lady Welby in 1904 (CP 8.332). Since one of the problems of knowledge is to determine how the judgements which more sceptical positions enjoin us

to suspend are actually derived from sense data, it was essential for Peirce to be able to offer a logical, as opposed to a psychological, account of their formation and progress from their source at the 'gate of perception', as he puts it. And as he was initially concerned to hypothesize how knowledge could be obtained from perception his semiotics evolved into a powerful and original set of statements concerning the sign. Furthermore, the inquiry into, and modelling of, the cognitive processes by which knowledge is acquired inevitably determined the number and nature of the elements involved in the model. In Peirce's early work there were three: sense data, percept and perceptual judgement. Since, from the start, he always conceived the latter of these as being inferential in nature, there was no theoretical reason why these stages or 'moments' in the knowledge acquisition process should not be assimilated to those involved in the interpretation of signs generally. The following sections, then, exploit this aspect of Peirce's semiotics by comparing and contrasting it with concepts from the work of John Locke and Emmanuel Kant, two of the major figures of the constructive, anti-sceptic strain of Western philosophy.

Testimony from Peirce himself argues, perhaps, for a more comprehensive discussion of the latter than of the former: we learn that his earliest readings in philosophy were in the 'classical German schools' (CP 1.4, c.1897); that in 1855, under the influence of his father, he began to study the first *Critique* two hours a day over a period of three years until he virtually knew it by heart (CP 1.4, c.1897); and that, as a consequence, he was 'in the early sixties a passionate devotee of Kant, at least as regarded the Transcendental Analytic in the *Critic of the Pure Reason*' (CP 4.2, 1898). However, Kant's influence upon Peirce's early thought has been extensively discussed by many major studies, Deledalle (1987) and Murphey (1993), for instance, which renders such an enterprise redundant in the present context. Locke, on the other hand, might initially seem an improbable choice, for evidence from Peirce gives the impression that there were other, more important influences: Aristotle, the Scholastics and, above all, Kant.

The decision to include comparison with Locke is to a large extent justified by the fact that the chapter seeks to show how Peirce's theories of knowledge and the sign, which in this study has been identified as the philosophy of representation, belong to an established empiricist philosophical tradition. In this context Locke is a thinker with whom the general reader will probably be far more familiar, whereas Peirce's 'obligation' to Kant is probably best seen as a debt by disagreement: having devoted much of his early philosophical energy to the assimilation of the critical philosophy, Peirce came to define his own philosophy in reaction to that of his teacher. The debt to Locke is potentially of the same

type, although less clear-cut and, in one area at least, possibly one that Peirce was not entirely aware of. For while Locke's use of the term 'semeiotic' to refer to his doctrine of signs, for example, was subsequently taken up by Peirce, thereby justifying at least a cursory study of the *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, Locke may nevertheless have exerted more subtle influences.

It should be noted that Peirce's theory of semiotics and its place in the overall scheme of the sciences underwent considerable modifications, but the general tendency seems to be that whereas Peirce was initially a self-confessed Kantian who spent his first years in philosophy throwing off the transcendental yoke, so to speak, to the extent that he ultimately repudiated much of what he had learned from his teacher, the influence he received from Locke followed the opposite course: although never ever more than a background figure among the influences Peirce explicitly and repeatedly acknowledged, Locke's concepts of semeiotic and experience were to become progressively more important as his own thinking matured and his conception of the categories, for example, matured in the years at the beginning of the twentieth century. The purpose of this second section of the chapter, then, is not to engage in yet another analysis of, for example, Locke's epistemology and its alleged inconsistencies and contradictions or in yet another piece of eighteenth-century exegesis – such a task is not only beyond the scope of the present study, it is also irrelevant – but rather to pinpoint and illustrate selected aspects of the specificity of Peirce's thought by contrasting them with earlier theoretical statements from the same tradition.

## **Semeiotic**

By virtue of a 'discontinued way of writing', interrupted by political activities, Locke took nearly twenty years to complete *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (henceforth the *Essay*), and, by the time of his death, had prepared a fifth edition of the text. In spite of the modifications brought to the three subsequent editions published in his lifetime, the text nevertheless constitutes a single, relatively homogeneous statement on the problem of knowledge. Peirce, in contrast, spent some fifty years constructing and considerably revising a theory of semiotics, cognition and scientific inquiry which was never completely consigned to a single text, and consequently poses problems of interpretation of an entirely different order. In spite of this, we begin with a discussion of what must naturally seem to be Peirce's principal debt to Locke, namely Locke's 'semeiotic', or doctrine of signs.

Although the third book of the *Essay*, titled 'Words', is devoted to language and various forms of linguistic use and abuse, it is not until the final chapter of Book



IV that Locke defines the object of his theory of signs and their specific function in relation to the epistemological predicament exploited by scepticism, namely the discontinuity between the apprehending mind and objects in the world:

*Thirdly*, the third branch may be called *Σεμειωτική*, or *the doctrine of signs*; the most usual whereof being words, it is aptly enough termed also *Λογική*, logic; the business whereof is to consider the nature of the signs the mind makes use of for the understanding of things, or conveying its knowledge to others. For, since the things the mind contemplates are none of them, besides itself, present to the understanding, it is necessary that something else, as a sign or representation of the thing it considers, should be present to it; and these are *ideas*. ([1690] 1964: IV, xxi, 4)

The passage calls for a number of comments. First, in anticipation of Peirce, Locke locates his doctrine of signs within a scheme which classifies the sciences of the understanding according to their specific function in the ‘commonwealth of learning’ to which he alludes in the Epistle to the reader. Second, the ‘ideas’ that Locke has been working into a theory of knowledge are here defined explicitly as proxies, or surrogates, standing to the mind for objects, particularly substances, which, by the nature of things, cannot be present there of themselves. What Peirce actually thought of this definition is apparently not recorded, but there can be little doubt as to his initial approval: it posits that signs or ideas enter, together with ‘the things the mind contemplates’ and the mind or understanding itself, into an embryonic form of the triadic relation governing his own sign, object and interpretant. It implies, moreover, that with the obvious exception of the immediate degree of knowledge which Locke had inherited from Descartes, and, allowing for the fact that cognitions (i.e. ideas) are determined immediately by qualities, such a process of knowledge acquisition functions by inference, and considers not only ‘public’ representations but thoughts, too, to be the referents of signs. Third, just as Peirce was to do two centuries later, Locke conceives his doctrine of signs as a form of logic, the principal business of which being to determine the nature of the signs used to register and communicate ideas. Peirce, however, as mentioned above, considered logic in two distinct manners, although, here as elsewhere, he was not entirely satisfied with his definitions. Consider, for example, the following statement, an alternative to the quotation from the Lowell Lectures with which the philosophy of representation was introduced above:

The term “logic” is unscientifically by me employed in two distinct senses. In its narrower sense, it is the science of the necessary conditions of the attainment of truth. In its broader sense, it is the science of the necessary laws of thought,

or, still better (thought always taking place by means of signs), it is general semeiotic, treating not merely of truth, but also of the general conditions of signs being signs ... also of the laws of the evolution of thought. (CP 1.444, c. 1896)

Peirce had already defined logic at this time to be what he called, variously, 'semeiotic', 'semiotic'<sup>5</sup> or, on at least one occasion, 'semiotics': as we saw earlier, it was both the entire grand logic and also the narrower branch of the trivium (the term 'critic' itself was borrowed from Locke). Surprisingly, in a fragment from 1906 he redefined the scope of his whole research enterprise by positing independent logics for icons and indices, and restricting the scope of the trivium, now no longer general, to the symbol alone, a position uncannily reminiscent of his work in the 1860s:

Therefore, I extend logic to embrace all the necessary principles of semeiotic, and I recognize a logic of icons, and a logic of indices, as well as a logic of symbols; and in this last I recognize three divisions: *Stecheotic* (or stoicheiology), which I formerly called Speculative Grammar; *Critic*, which I formerly called Logic; and *Methodetic*, which I formerly called Speculative Rhetoric. (CP 4.9, 1906)

The trivium, then, by this account, is restricted to the study of the symbol. Later still, however, in a draft to Lady Welby, with whom he had begun to exchange views on matters of signification and logic in 1903, he returned to the earlier conception of the grand logic, considering it once more to be a general semeiotic: 'It seems to me that one of the first useful steps toward a science of semeiotic (*sémeiōtiké*), or the cenoscopic science of signs, must be the accurate definition, or logical analysis, of the concepts of the science' (CP 8.343, 1908). Finally, he claimed in another draft to her that he was working on a 'logic-book' to be titled 'Logic considered as Semeiotic' (CP 8.377, 1908). The classificatory wheel has come full circle.

The Peirce scholar Max Fisch has suggested with respect to such statements that Peirce began his career as a logician by rebutting Locke's conception of logic as the general doctrine of signs (1986: 321–55):<sup>6</sup> Fisch calls this 'logic-within-semeiotic'. No doubt still under the influence of Kant, and with a conception of the categories restricted to thought, Peirce considered the business of logic to be the study of symbols, more precisely, of arguments or inference generally. By the mid-1880s, however, he had come to realize that a theory of signs cannot dispense with icons and indices, and apparently conceded in deference to Locke that logic might well have a second, broader application. Finally, by 1902, Fisch claims, the original, restricted conception of logic was dropped altogether. 'It has taken Peirce most of his productive lifetime', he concludes, 'to come all the way

back to Locke' and to see semiotics as 'logic-as-semeiotic'.<sup>7</sup> Whatever the merits of Fisch's analysis, it suggests that a comparison of Peirce's later, more elaborate version with Locke's theory of semeiotic contributes to our understanding of how a doctrine of signs can become a system of logic. Concerning the way each locates his doctrine of signs within a classification of the sciences, however, they differ considerably.

### Architectonic

In the penultimate chapter of the *Critique of Pure Reason*, Kant writes, 'By the term *Architectonic* I mean the art of constructing a system. Without systematic unity, our knowledge cannot become a science; it will be an aggregate, not a system .... Reason cannot permit our knowledge to remain in an unconnected and rhapsodistic state, but requires that the sum of our cognitions should constitute a system' ([1787] 1974: 471).<sup>8</sup> Now, with the exposition of his cognitive theory completed, Locke undertook, in the final chapter of the *Essay*, a schematic classification of the sciences involved in the study of 'all that can fall within the compass of human understanding', namely, as he claimed, natural philosophy, or knowledge of things; practical philosophy, or ethics; and, finally, semiotics, which studies the signs used by the understanding for private and public purposes, that is, the recording and communicating of ideas. Since the majority of signs used by the understanding are words, he suggested that logic might be an alternative name for this science. This classification is restricted to three sciences, suggests a natural division of all objects of knowledge, but distributes these objects across distinct, unrelated fields of inquiry: 'All which three, viz. *things*, as they are in themselves knowable, *actions* as they depend on us, in order to happiness, and the right use of *signs* in order to knowledge, being *toto coelo* different, they seemed to me to be the three great provinces of the intellectual world, wholly separate and distinct one from another' (*Essay*, IV, xxi, 5). By Kant's definition, then, Locke's classification is an aggregate, not a system, or 'organism': in short, it is not governed by the architectonic principle.

In contrast, as we saw earlier, Peirce's conception of science *is* systematic and architectonic, and the various classifications of the sciences that he established particularly in the early years of the twentieth century posit them explicitly as a unified system in which the sciences were related organically. This architectonic feature of his philosophy was not the only one he inherited from Kant, for his research is characterized by the gradual emergence of a consistent set of categories within a very personal conception of phenomenology, his extensive

use of the triad and the doctrine that every cognition involves an inference of some form: all Kantian in origin, although the philosophical antecedents for sets of categories can be traced at least back to Aristotle.

## **Phenomenology**

Briefly, the final classification of the sciences that Peirce published in 1903 distinguishes between theoretical and practical sciences. The theoretical sciences then subdivide into the sciences of review and the sciences of discovery. Philosophy follows mathematics in the sciences of discovery, precedes a field of inquiry Peirce calls 'Ideoscopy' and itself subdivides into phenomenology, normative science and metaphysics: 'Phenomenology ascertains and studies the kinds of elements universally present in the phenomenon; meaning by the *phenomenon*, whatever is present at any time to the mind in any way. Normative science distinguishes what ought to be from what ought not to be ... Normative science rests largely on phenomenology and mathematics ...' (CP 1.186, 1903). This abridged sample of the much larger classification is architectonic in that the subdivisions tend to be trichotomic and the various fields of study are ordered in such a way that the later presuppose theoretical principles established in the earlier, obeying what might be called the 'dependency principle' of the architectonic. Logic, as mentioned above in the introduction to the philosophy of representation, depends upon ethics, which itself depends upon aesthetics.

The noteworthy feature of this classification resides in the fact that it departs from previous versions with respect to relations between the categories and logic, and also to the changing status of logic itself. In his earlier writings, Peirce had made the categories, of which there were five in the mid-1860s, dependent upon logic. By 1903, he had created a new science to deal with this part of the system, which he called 'phenomenology'<sup>9</sup> and which was now independent of logic, presupposing only concepts provided by mathematics. By this time, too, his whole conception of logic had undergone considerable revision and no longer fulfilled a constitutive function in his epistemology, but a regulative one, hence its place among the normative sciences, that is, among the sciences which say how things should be, and not what they are. As a result of a series of theoretical problems pertaining to the coherence and mutual compatibility of the various parts of the organism (cf. Murphey 1993), Peirce was obliged to modify the relations between them if the architectonic principle advocated by Kant was to be preserved. The subject-predicate conception of logic characteristic of Peirce's early period, for example, was entirely conventional. However, by 1870, when

he had come to appreciate the importance of De Morgan's 1860 paper 'On the Syllogism IV and the Logic of Relations', he had abandoned the subject-predicate form of logic and he was beginning to publish on the logic of relations himself. He subsequently divided logic into two distinct parts and classified formal logic, including the logic of relations, as a branch of mathematics.

Thus by 1903, since phenomenology presupposes mathematics, it had become possible for Peirce to distinguish between the material 'content' of the categories, which he identified as Firstness, Secondness and Thirdness, and their formal structure, namely the monad, dyad and triad, respectively. In other words, whereas Locke had conceived a system of ideas which accounted simply for the content of experience, and whereas Kant had made the form of experience a function of one of twelve mind-given, but spurious categories,<sup>10</sup> Peirce had, in 1903, in contrast to both, set up a system of three categories uniting both the form *and* content of experience on the basis of the logic of relations. Furthermore, on the strength of the theorem that any n-adic relation could be accounted for by a triad,<sup>11</sup> he was able to claim that the system was complete. It is in this way that, instead of being derived from logic, the theory of the categories had become 'pre-logical' in Peirce's scheme of 1903. This is the uncompromising description he gave of the categories of Firstness, Secondness and Thirdness in the course of his Harvard Lectures on Pragmatism of 1903, where by the phenomenon, as we saw above, he means 'whatever is present at any time to the mind in any way' (CP 1.186):

Category the First is the Idea of that which is such as it is regardless of anything else. That is to say, it is a *Quality* of Feeling.

Category the Second is the Idea of that which is such as it is as being Second to some First, regardless of anything else, and in particular regardless of any Law, although it may conform to a law. That is to say, it is *Reaction* as an element of the Phenomenon.

Category the Third is the Idea of that which is such as it is as being a Third, or Medium, between a Second and its First. That is to say, it is *Representation* as an element of the Phenomenon. (CP 5.66, 1903)

The notions of quality, feeling and reaction were to reappear frequently in the years to come. Furthermore, he introduced at this point a concept derived from the theory of prescission or mental 'abstraction', expounded in his early work of the 1860s, namely a principle of degeneracy (CP 5.66, 1903). Anything which is considered 'regardless of anything else' can have nothing prescinded or mentally abstracted from it: nothing can be prescinded from a Firstness; it just is as it is. On the other hand, Firstness can be prescinded from Secondness: the

table I am typing on exists, resists the weight of my computer, my elbows and my cup of coffee, capacities which instantiate its Secondness. However, it necessarily has properties, its Firstnesses: made of wood, dark brown, rectangular in shape, hard to the touch etc., properties which can be prescinded mentally from the table, but in themselves intangible. These are 'degenerate' forms of the table's Secondness. Similarly, Thirdness has two degrees of degeneracy; in other words both Firstness and Secondness can be prescinded from it. Consider the simple case of the following utterance: *My table is made of mahogany*. This is a sign which conveys meaning to an interpreter, and illustrates Thirdness. However, in order to be perceived aurally by anyone at all it has to produce airwaves of a particular type, and thus has a material existence that can be plotted, for example, as a sound spectrogram, this being the utterance's Secondness. Finally there is a feeling or quality about the way it is pronounced – whispered, cajoling, screamed, hoarsely etc. This feeling or quality is perceivable but intangible, and constitutes a form of Firstness – whatever the sound qualities heard, they are such as they are, independently of anything else, and they produce a similar qualitative effect as part of the interpretation. The principle whereby the simpler categories can be prescinded from the more complex was to have important implications for his theory of signs of 1903.

The reasons for the pre-eminence of phenomenology within the system at that time and the reasons why a theory of cognition and discovery should need such an elaborate structure will be illustrated below. For the moment, we note simply that the normative, as opposed to the formal, mathematical aspect of logic – in other words, the philosophy of representation – subdivides by the architectonic principle into three branches, the first of which as we saw above, being speculative grammar. This Peirce defines as the general theory of the nature and meaning of signs and, since logic is a classificatory science,<sup>12</sup> speculative grammar determines, among other things, whether a sign is an icon, an index or a symbol (CP 1.191, 1903).

### **Conceptions and signs**

This leads to an important difference between the two empiricist conceptions of the sign, and its implications for a general semiotic theory. In Locke's case ideas are either mental or verbal: no finer distinctions are deemed necessary, and the function and interaction of signs are both very much static affairs. Moreover, as mentioned before, Locke's reference to the vague notion of 'idea' makes no distinction between the content of experience and its formal structure. Peirce,

by contrast, was constantly preoccupied by such considerations, and this took the particular form of an investigation into the way the sign functioned as a cognition within the relation of representation which had preoccupied him for almost forty years. Thus, in his earliest writings, where we find him struggling with the problem of the categories and the way to deduce them in what he considered a less fallible manner than that of his German master, he derived the concept of representation from what he considered at the time to be the five 'universal' conceptions, but subsequently reduced to three when he made logic dependent upon phenomenology and removed the categories from logic.

Like Kant, Peirce held that the function of conceptions was 'to reduce the manifold of sensuous impressions to unity' (CP 1.545, 1867), the unity in question taking at that time, as noted above, the form of a proposition of conventional subject-predicate logic. In this view, for example, such conceptions would be considered to be at work at this very moment in my understanding to reduce the multitude of stimuli emanating from the external world to the unity of the proposition: 'My table is made of mahogany'. Unlike the said table, the proposition is not 'public', is not 'in the world', as it were, until uttered, but, rather, in someone's mind. In this early scheme, three other conceptions were involved in the passage from the manifold of substance to the unity of being, namely quality, relation, and representation, these being respectively a function of three types of 'reference' within the constitution of the proposition: reference to a ground or character, reference to a correlate and reference to an interpretant. This system is, clearly, nothing less than a prototypical definition of the sign relation upon which Peirce was to build his entire logic. He notes, 'Now the three links composing this chain [of conceptions], namely reference to a ground, reference to a correlate, and to a correspondent afford the elements of a complete system of logic' (W1 353, 1866). Further, from an analysis of the three items involved in the function of the third conception, representation, namely the relate, the correlate and the correspondent, Peirce was able to classify the various classes of representations:

[W]here the repraesentamen has a real agreement with its object, the representation consists in a *likeness*; a simple quality is shown but the object itself is not said to exist. In the second case, there is a real difference of the repraesentamen from its object ... in this case the representative character of the one will consist in constant accompaniment of the other, so that it *indicates* the existence of the latter without noting any characters of it. Such a representation may be termed an *index*. In the third case, where the relation of the repraesentamen is ideal, the ground of this relation is an attribute of the

correlate *attributed* to the relate ... This gives a *general sign*, a word or conception, for the repraesentamen will necessarily apply to everything which contains its attributed quality. (W1 355)

By 1866, then, Peirce had not only deduced and illustrated his three categories, he had also defined the basic conceptions involved in cognition, subordinated them to the sign relation and had begun to work them into the logic that would ultimately yield the subclasses of icon, index (or sign, as Peirce also called it at the time) and symbol. Furthermore, in the 1860s Peirce was already trichotomizing this division by distinguishing the three types of general signs according to the elements involved in the sign relation. Thus, he defines symbols as ‘the objects of the understanding, considered as representations ... that is, signs which are at least potentially general’ (CP 1.559), and he discriminates between symbols ‘which directly determine only their *grounds* ... and are thus but sums of marks or *terms*’ (CP 1.559),<sup>13</sup> symbols which also ‘independently determine their objects by means of other term or terms, and thus ... become capable of truth or falsehood, that is, are *propositions*’ (CP 1.559), and, finally, symbols ‘which also independently determine their interpretants, and thus the minds to which they appeal, by premissing a proposition or propositions which such a mind is to admit. These are *arguments*’ (CP 1.559). This can be summarized in Table 1.1.

The subdivision of the symbol constituting the lowest level of the triadic edifice described in Table 1.1, namely the term, is in all essential details the general term posited by Locke in the *Essay*. This means that in 1867, at least this part of Peirce’s logic was still virtually isomorphic with Locke’s. However, his preoccupation with logic led him not to return to Locke’s original statement but to develop a far more complex system of his own, with a decisive effect on his semiotic theory. This involved the subordination of logic to phenomenology in the classification of the sciences; the development of the categories of Firstness and Secondness in addition to the Thirdness already present in the system of the 1860s; increased awareness of the nature of reality, of the function of the object and of what Peirce termed the ‘Outward Clash’; and, finally, the development

**Table 1.1** Peirce’s Trichotomy of Representamens, 1867

<b>Sign-Object</b>
Symbol
<i>Argument</i>
<i>Proposition</i>
<i>Term</i>
Index/sign
Likeness



of the interpretant. All of this represents a considerable departure from the semeiotic of Locke.

### Categories of the forms of experience

It remains to be seen how Peirce's theory of cognition integrates the three elements of the sign relation as conceived in 1903. We have already seen that Peirce's early work on the categories derived five universal conceptions: substance, being and, between them three references, respectively, to ground, correlate and interpretant. He subsequently dropped being and substance, leaving the three 'material' categories corresponding to these three references, quality, relation and, finally, representation; seen in the light of the later categories of the forms of experience, they realize, respectively, the monad, the dyad and the triad:

The metaphysical categories of quality, fact, and law, being categories of the matter of phenomena, do not precisely correspond with the logical categories of the monad, the dyad, and the polyad or higher set, since these are categories of the forms of experience. The dyads of monads, being dyads, belong to the category of the dyad. But since they are composed of monads as their sole matter, they belong materially to the category of quality, or the monad in its material mode of being. It cannot be regarded as a *fact* that scarlet is red. It is a *truth*; but it is only an essential truth. It is that in being which corresponds in thought to Kant's analytical judgment. (CP 1.452, 1896)

These are forms that are to be found in many, if not most, of Peirce's theoretical concepts: trichotomies, the categories, the later universes of experience and their three modes of being, his triadic relations and their three correlates etc. In 1866, in an early attempt to define his categories he wrote, 'These three conceptions are all we require to erect the edifice of logic. Why they should be three is unknown; although a reason can be given for every other logical division. But this number may indicate an anthropological fact' (W1 524). This aspect of his intellectual background is obviously important for full understanding of his theory of how signs function and of the various types of signs it is possible to identify. He was, in a special sense of the term, an idealist: he belonged to a philosophical tradition reaching back to Pythagoras via Newton, Descartes and Leibnitz, to name but these; that is, to a tradition which holds that number is the key to our understanding of the world around us (CP 1.421 c. 1896).

He was aware of the possible '*anticipated suspicion .... that he forces divisions to a Procrustean bed of trichotomy*' (CP 1.568, 1910) that he might encounter over his insistence on the theoretical importance of the number three – its inevitable

association with the Trinity and thence with theology and religion – but declared himself innocent of ‘triadoman’, that is, of attaching ‘a superstitious or fanciful importance to the number three’ (CP 1.568, 1910). After all, by 1903 Peirce had founded his semiotics upon his theory of phenomenology, which itself turned upon the number three. Moreover, by virtue of the theorem mentioned above that any  $n$ -adic relation could be accounted for by a triad, he had argued but without real proof that three ‘objects’ or correlates were all that were necessary in such cases, and that any higher  $n$ -adic relation could be accounted for by a triad: ‘A triad is something more than a congeries of pairs .... Systems of more than three objects may be analyzed into congeries of triads’ (NEM4 307, 1894?). In matters of internal structure Peirce’s classifications are now far from Locke’s aggregate of sciences.

### Continuous interpretant series

Thus the sign relation that Peirce named ‘representation’ in his early work on cognition and which is obviously the object of his philosophy of representation of 1903 – ‘so far as representation can be known without any gathering of special facts beyond our ordinary daily life’ – can be considered as the archetype of all triadic relations, and the basis of all cognition. Just how the process pertains to the sign relation and its three relates is best seen in the light of the work on reference to an interpretant, particularly as it is realized in comparison. In a rough draft of a paper subsequently published under the title ‘On a New List of Categories’ (1867), Peirce defines the interpretant thus:

Reference to a correlate is clearly justified and made possible solely by comparison. Let us inquire, then, in what comparison consists .... Suppose, we look out the word *homme* in a French dictionary; we shall find opposite to it the word *man*, which, so placed, represents *homme* as representing the same two-legged creature which *man* represents. In a similar way, it will be found that every comparison requires, besides the related thing, the ground and the correlate, also a *mediating representation which represents the relate to be a representation of the same correlate which this mediating representation itself represents*. Such a mediating representation I call an *interpretant*, because it fulfils the office of an interpreter who says that a foreigner says the same thing that he himself says. (W1 522–23)

Within the theory of cognition this means that since there can be no first thought, or intuition, the system is set in motion, so to speak, by the sense data determined by the object of the cognition, and every thought determined by that

object determines an interpreting thought that refers to that same object within a continuous process which admits of no first stage. Empirically, this is difficult to accept, as we imagine cognitions to be the results of discrete events, but within the logic of continuity it presents no problem. The process is well illustrated by any text. Since they are recorded in an existential medium, all texts have a first sentence, of which all subsequent sentences are the successively more complex interpretants. By integrating previously given information, both negatively and positively (e.g. by ellipsis and repetition), these successive interpretant sentences collectively ensure the text's syntactical cohesion and semantic coherence. However, at 'thought level', so to speak, where the text originated, things are quite different, for logically what functions as the first sentence of the physical text is, in fact, an inference from prior cognitions, and it would be virtually impossible to trace the text to any such origins at this level.<sup>14</sup>

In this way thoughts are translatable, and indeed are translated by interpretant thoughts.<sup>15</sup> It is in this manner that the chain of inference progresses. Since Peirce denies that a cognition can be determined directly, immediately, by the object of perception, as Locke's epistemology would have us believe, and that even one's own existence is inferred and not intuited, three important principles follow from this. First, the triadic model of representation illustrates the 'kinetic' progression of the inferential processes involved in cognition. Second, no formal distinction need be made between our understanding of the world about us (including the understanding of images) and the interpretation of verbal signs. Since the two functions are isomorphic, Peirce dwells little on the 'grammar' of linguistic interpretation: language signs are simply one class of signs covered by the same general definition. Third, as we see below in the discussion of the extracts from the Lowell Lectures and the *Syllabus* that accompanied them, Peirce considered the interpretant itself to be a sign in 1903, and therefore that the interpretant series was continuous:

Genuine mediation is the character of a *Sign*. A *Sign* is anything which is related to a Second thing, its *Object*, in respect to a Quality, in such a way as to bring a Third thing, its *Interpretant*, into relation to the same Object, and that in such a way as to bring a Fourth into relation to that Object in the same form, *ad infinitum*. (CP 2.92, 1902)<sup>16</sup>

It follows that the dynamic continuity of sign-action as conceived in 1902 can be represented by Figure 1.1, where the symbol > signifies 'bring X into relation with Y', and O, S and I indicate, respectively, object, sign and interpretant, each subsequent interpretant becoming a sign for a new interpretant, ( $I_1 = S_2$ ) for example, and so on *ad infinitum*, as Peirce claimed.

$$O > S > (I_1 = S_2) > (I_2 = S_3) > (I_3 = S_4) \dots (I_n = S_{n+1})$$

**Figure 1.1** The continuous nature of semiosis as conceived in 1902

This principle of a ‘continuous’ interpretant series was a characteristic of the period in which Peirce conceived of the action of the sign as one of representation, with the sign ‘standing’ for its object, and he maintained it for a short time after 1903. However, as two later chapters will show, this was a concept that he was ultimately led to abandon: the notion of a continuous series of interpretant-signs was not to last in the manner stated in 1903.

### Sign, divisions and classes in 1903

The preceding sections should have provided sufficient background information concerning Peirce’s debt to the philosophical tradition and the ways in which he departs from it for the reader to understand Peirce’s semiotics of 1903. With this in mind, we examine the relevant features which characterize the sign-systems of the ‘philosophy of representation’ in what we can consider its final form presented at the Lowell Lectures and in the brief *Syllabus* which accompanied them. Most of this material comes from two manuscripts, R478 and R540, much of which can be found in chapters 20 and 21 of volume two of *The Essential Peirce*.<sup>17</sup> At this point the reader should remember that by the concept of ‘sign-system’ is meant not only definitions of the sign and sign-action, but also the typology these may generate.

We have seen that it was his phenomenology, or his ‘Categoric’ as he called it in the Carnegie Application of 1902, which justified his particular manner of organizing the branches of logic.<sup>18</sup> In the first of the eight lectures Peirce set out once more the purpose of logic and the logician, and terminated the lecture with another such highly organized classification of the three branches:

The ultimate purpose of the logician is to make out the theory of how knowledge is advanced .... So *Methodetic*, which is the last goal of logical study, is the theory of the advancement of knowledge of all kind. But this theory is not possible until the logician has first examined all the different elementary modes of getting at truth ... This part of logic is called *Critic*. But before it is possible to enter upon this business in any rational way the first thing that is necessary is to examine thoroughly all the ways in which thought can be expressed ... I, therefore, take a position ... in regarding this introductory part of logic as

nothing but an analysis of what kinds of signs are absolutely essential to the embodiment of thought. I call it ... *Speculative grammar*. I fully agree ... in thinking that this Speculative Grammar ought not to confine its studies to those conventional signs of which language is composed, but that it will do well to widen its field of view so as to take into consideration also kinds of signs which, not being conventional, are not of the nature of language. (EP2 256–57, 1903)

We note that in this case Peirce works backwards from the most specialized of the three branches, methodeutic, which, following the tradition of constructive philosophy alluded to earlier, is the branch which promotes ‘the advancement of knowledge of all kinds’; he then introduces critic, which deals with inferences and upon which methodeutic depends; he presents, finally, the branch that deals with ‘signhood’, that is, the branch of the grand logic which establishes the conditions qualifying a given entity as a sign, classifies all possible signs and establishes an inventory of them. This organization is another illustration of the dependency principle according to which branches appearing earlier in the general system provide those coming after with relevant theoretical concepts and processes. In what follows it is the last of the three mentioned in the extract, and the most important for a theory of what constitutes a sign and the ways in which it functions, namely speculative grammar, that we deal with, leaving critic aside completely and reserving brief concluding remarks for methodeutic or, as it was also referred to at the time, speculative rhetoric. After reviewing the manner in which Peirce presents his phenomenology and the purposes he ascribes to it, the sections to follow deal, first, with the sign, its definitions and its two correlates; then with the divisions he defined, first two and then three; finally, with the ten classes of signs which Peirce obtained from these three divisions. For reasons given in the Introduction, all the quotations to follow, except where stated otherwise, are necessarily from 1903 or earlier.

## Phenomenology

In the lectures Peirce approaches the problem of what constitutes a sign and the divisions and subdivisions it is involved in from two different directions – initially by the application of his categories and, in a later manuscript, by deducing the sign and its correlates in the signifying process by means of his theory of triadic relations. In both cases the reasoning he applies is justified by principles provided by his particular conception of phenomenology. This material is organized thematically in the *Collected Papers*, with the result that associated elements may appear out of chronological order. The prominence of

phenomenology and the categories in the sign theory of this period cannot be emphasized enough. Since the definition of the sign is a priority, we begin by examining the way in which the sign and its correlates were established.

### **Triadic relations, the sign and its correlates**

What makes the sign-systems of 1903 particularly impressive is the way in which many apparently diverse aspects of Peirce's philosophy seem to be woven into the theory. Referring once more to his phenomenology, Peirce introduces the concept of triadic relations with which he is going to define the sign as the unit or agency of representation:

The principles and analogies of Phenomenology enable us to describe, in a distant way, what the divisions of triadic relations must be .... In the case of triadic relations, no part of this work has, as yet, been satisfactorily performed, except in some measure for the most important class of triadic relations, those of signs, or representamens, to their objects and interpretants. (CP 2.233)

As seen above, he had already established the general concept of the triadic relation to his satisfaction by the early 1890s (NEM4 307). This accomplished, he had now to distinguish between the three correlates associated by the relation, and he did so by defining them in terms of relative 'complexity'. The three correlates are the representamen, the object and the interpretant. If any of the three is the simplest in nature, it is identified as the representamen, and therefore the first correlate; if any correlate of the relation is more complex than the others, it is the interpretant, while the object is of 'middling' complexity:

We must distinguish between the First, Second, and Third Correlate of any triadic relation.

The First Correlate is that one of the three which is regarded as of the simplest nature, being a mere possibility if any one of the three is of that nature, and not being a law unless all three are of that nature. (CP 2.235)

The Third Correlate is that one of the three which is regarded as of the most complex nature, being a law if any one of the three is a law, and not being a mere possibility unless all three are of that nature. (CP 2.236)

The Second Correlate is that one of the three which is regarded as of middling complexity, so that if any two are of the same nature, as to being either mere possibilities, actual existences, or laws, then the Second Correlate is of that same nature, while if the three are all of different natures, the Second Correlate is an actual existence. (CP 2.237)

The passage not only reflects the ordering structure of triadic relations but also introduces the concept of the three 'modes of being', namely, possibility, existence and law in order of increasing complexity. These are given by the categories and Peirce employs them as criteria in the classification of signs to be discussed below. From this system of representamen, object and interpretant Peirce then establishes the sign relation:

*A Representamen* is the First Correlate of a triadic relation, the Second Correlate being termed its *Object*, and the possible Third Correlate being termed its *Interpretant*, by which triadic relation the possible Interpretant is determined to be the First Correlate of the same triadic relation to the same Object, and for some possible Interpretant. A Sign is a representamen of which some interpretant is a cognition of a mind. Signs are the only representamens that have been much studied. (CP 2.242)

From this it follows that for all triadic relations the first correlate is the representamen. However, in the special case where the interpretant of a representamen is a 'cognition of a mind' then that representamen is a sign. The same idea is expressed in CP 2.274: 'A Sign is a Representamen with a mental Interpretant. Possibly there may be Representamens that are not Signs.' A sign, then, is a species of representamen, although as we now see, in this period Peirce employs both terms almost interchangeably. Either is the unit of representation as Peirce conceived the purpose of sign-action in 1903. The debate generated by the presence of both terms in various definitions of signs at this time has been vigorous, to say the least; however, discussion of it in this study is deferred to Chapter 2. Both terms appear in the definitions of 1903:

*A Sign, or Representamen*, is a First which stands in such a genuine triadic relation to a Second, called its *Object*, as to be capable of determining a Third, called its *Interpretant*, to assume the same triadic relation to its Object in which it stands itself to the same Object. The triadic relation is *genuine*, that is its three members are bound together by it in a way that does not consist in any complexus of dyadic relations. (CP 2.274)

The triadic relation thus defined is obviously composed of a single sign, a single object and a single interpretant. It should be noted, nevertheless, that by virtue of the properties of triadic relations the third correlate, the interpretant, 'is determined to be the First Correlate of the same triadic relation to the same Object, and for some possible interpretant' – in other words, while there is only one sign or representamen, and one object, the triadic relation guarantees a possible interpretant *series* as discussed above in the final section of the general philosophical background.

## Divisions of signs

Once the logical status of the sign and its two correlates has been established Peirce approaches the problem of identifying the divisions of signs from two distinct but related viewpoints and in both manuscripts. In the first text, R478, he introduces the problem with the following statement (in which the preferred term is 'representamen', but this is of no consequence):

Representamens are divided by two trichotomies. The first and most fundamental is that any Representamen is either an *Icon*, an *Index*, or a *Symbol*. Namely, while no Representamen actually functions as such until it actually determines an Interpretant, yet it becomes a Representamen as soon as it is fully capable of doing this; and its Representative Quality is not necessarily dependent upon its ever actually determining an Interpretant, nor even upon its actually having an Object. (EP2 273)

At this point Peirce envisages only two trichotomies of representamens or signs. Just why he should have considered the **S–O** trichotomy as the 'first and most fundamental' is obvious. It was 'first' for the simple reason that it was the division with which he had begun his research in logic almost forty years earlier in the mid-1860s. He held it fundamental in 1903, too, since at that time the sign was defined to represent an independent and usually absent entity, namely its object. It therefore follows that the sign's mode of representation is of paramount importance for the identification of that object. He no doubt realized subsequently that the three possible subclasses of the sign itself had to be defined before he could define the three modes of representation in a logical manner. This became possible once the status of the sign within his theory of triadic relations was clearly established in the later manuscript (R540), together with the degrees of complexity characterizing its three subclasses. In the paragraph containing the extract quoted above he also applied the categories recursively to the icon and introduced the concept of the three 'hypoicons' (EP2 273–74), image, diagram and metaphor. These were accorded a special status in the *Collected Papers* in the form of a separate paragraph, CP 2.277, presumably on account of their very original logical status. However, a detailed discussion of the hypoicons is deferred to Chapter 4, where they are compared to relevant aspects of Peirce's later semiotics.

The second trichotomy in the earlier manuscript, formed from the relation holding between the sign and the interpretant (**S–I**), distinguished between the three subdivisions of the symbol as Peirce conceived it in 1867: term, proposition and argument as presented in Table 1.1, and these are now, respectively, 'simple,



substitutive signs'; 'double, informational signs'; and, finally, 'triple, rationally persuasive signs' (EP2 275), their distinctive characteristics being indicated in this case more by number than category. However, Peirce was to define these two relational divisions more fully in the later manuscript (R540), and announced the final set in the following manner:

Signs are divisible by three trichotomies; first, according as the sign in itself is a mere quality, is an actual existent, or is a general law; secondly, according as the relation of the sign to its object consists in the sign's having some character in itself, or in some existential relation to that object, or in its relation to an interpretant; thirdly, according as its Interpretant represents it as a sign of possibility or as a sign of fact or a sign of reason. (CP 2.243)

To the two announced in the earlier text he has now added a third, non-relational trichotomy and placed it in initial position in the sequence, thereby reflecting the order of correlates in the triadic relation defining the sign, namely **S, S-O, S-I**: in other words, the order holding between representamen, object and interpretant in the basic triadic relation was extended to that of the three divisions. By now Peirce had no doubt realized that it was not logically possible to propose a rigorous definition of the relations holding between the sign and its object and the sign and its interpretant without having first established the categorial nature and logical status of the sign itself.

This first trichotomy distinguishes between qualisign, sinsign and legisign, these being, respectively, signs which are simple qualities, singular, existent signs and, finally, general signs, signs which are laws or are rule-governed (CP 2.244–246) and at the same time signs of laws. In order of growing complexity, they are realized as, for example, colours and feelings in the first case; an individual thing or occurrence, in the second; a regular sign such as the English definite article, or, indeed, any verbal sign, in the third. Peirce had already suggested that a sign by Thirdness 'without Secondness would be absurd' (EP2 270), and availing himself of the principle of degeneracy, he introduces at this point the concept of the replica: 'Every legisign signifies through an instance of its application, which may be termed a *Replica* of it. Thus, the word "the" will usually occur from fifteen to twenty-five times on a page. It is in all these occurrences one and the same word, the same legisign. Each single instance of it is a *Replica*' (CP 2.246). Thus through the application of his categories he has established that a replica is an individual existent instance of the general sign: all language signs, for example, are manifested through replicas, for the general signs themselves are thinkable but unperceivable.

## The implication principle

What is now the second trichotomy distinguishes between icon, index and symbol. The interesting feature of this division is the principle by which the subdivisions lower down the categorial scale are integrated – ‘involved’ is Peirce’s term – into the higher in such a way as to account for the specificity of the class of signs and its peculiar ‘perceivability’ or materiality. In this way the icon is defined as a sign which refers to its object ‘merely by characters of its own’ (CP 2.247) which it possesses irrespective of whether the object exists or not. The index, on the other hand, represents its object by virtue of a physical connection with that object. In that case it must somehow share some quality or qualities with that object, and, therefore, involves a ‘sort of icon,’ the sign by quality: the index must have some quality or qualities making it recognizable which can be prescind from it. For example, if we take a road-sign pointing to a nearby town as an index it is possible to prescind from it the quality of directionality, or in the case of an aria we prescind the tessitura quality of a soprano’s voice as we hear her singing. This is how Peirce describes the involvement of the icon in the index:

In so far as the Index is affected by the Object, it necessarily has some Quality in common with the Object, and it is in respect to these that it refers to the Object. It does, therefore, involve a sort of Icon, although an Icon of a peculiar kind; and it is not the mere resemblance of its Object, even in these respects which makes it a sign, but it is the actual modification of it by the Object. (CP 2.248)

In similar fashion the symbol represents its object by virtue of some law or general convention – by ‘an association of general ideas’ in Peirce’s terms – but it can only be interpreted by means of the instances it determines. This is how Peirce describes the implication principle as it concerns the symbol:

A *Symbol* is a sign which refers to the Object that it denotes by virtue of a law, usually an association of general ideas, which operates to cause the Symbol to be interpreted as referring to that Object. It is thus itself a general type or law, that is, is a *Legisign*. As such it acts through a *Replica* ... There must, therefore, be existent instances of what the Symbol denotes, although we must here understand by “existent”, existent in the possibly imaginary universe to which the Symbol refers. The Symbol will indirectly, through the association or other law, be affected by those instances; and thus the Symbol will involve a sort of Index, although an Index of a peculiar kind. It will not, however, be by any means true that the slight effect upon the Symbol of those instances accounts for the significant character of the Symbol. (CP 2.249)

It follows from this that if the symbol involves a sort of index, and the index a sort of icon, then at two removes a symbol, too, will by transitivity involve a sort of icon. For example, any Halt sign by a road junction is only one of a thousand such signs in any given country. It represents by its very existence the general law determined by the government, and is therefore a replica of that general injunction. As a replica it has indexical status in that it is placed in the exact position where the motorist is enjoined to stop his vehicle. In addition, it is only recognizable as a Halt sign by virtue of its distinctive characteristics or qualities – shape, colour, height, its verbal elements etc. In short, it also involves an icon: in this case Thirdness involves a Secondness which involves Firstnesses. This implication, or involvement, principle, which is sanctioned by the phenomenology, is an important characteristic of Peirce's conception of signs in this period, and concerns all three divisions.

The second trichotomy of R478 is now the third of R540, and distinguishes between rheme, dicisign and argument. The first is a sign of qualitative possibility; it is understood, says Peirce, as representing 'such and such a kind of possible object', and although it may provide information, it is not interpreted as doing so (CP 2.250). This is the case with any common noun or verb: on their own the words *book*, *wife* or *give* tell us nothing, they simply denote classes of objects or processes, and are neither true nor false. The dicisign or dicent sign, on the other hand, was defined in the earlier manuscript as an informational sign, and is therefore a step up the categorial scale from the rheme: *I gave my wife a book*, for example, is an informational sign. It can be either true or false, although dicisigns always represent themselves to be true representations of events or facts, otherwise communication would be impossible. It is a double sign with a 'syntax' which associates two elements: a subject and a predicate, or, paraphrasing statements in R478, an index and an icon (cf. CP 2.310). Finally the argument, or triple sign, is any inference, of which three principal forms – abduction, deduction and induction – are examined in the critic branch of the philosophy of representation. It is a triple sign as it generally involves two premisses and a conclusion as in any syllogism (CP 2.309).

### **The ten classes of signs of 1903**

The final feature of speculative grammar is the ultimate goal of all Peirce's work in this branch, the identification of classes of signs. Having defined the sign and its correlates, organized them into trichotomies and then subdivided these according to categorial distinctions, Peirce is able to extract from the resultant nine subdivisions ten classes of signs according to the complexity these

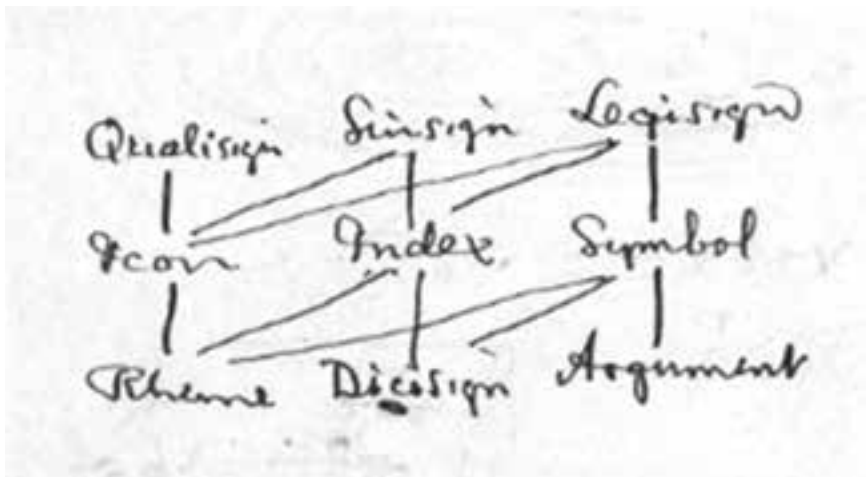
subdivisions exhibit. Table 1.2 summarizes the system of three trichotomies established by Peirce in 1903, while the three categories serve as the criteria on a scale of increasing complexity.

Table 1.2 is based upon a scheme to be found in Peirce’s ‘Logic Notebook’ and is reproduced as Figure 1.2. This shows how Peirce established the relations between the various subdivisions and so identified the ten classes.

The rules drawn by Peirce in Figure 1.2 are simple. First, two vertical lines associating three subdivisions form a class. For example, the first class, the *qualisign*, is obtained by tracing the leftmost pair of vertical lines from qualisign to rheme through icon. Similarly a second class is obtained by tracing from sinsign to dicisign through index, yielding a *dicent (indexical) sinsign*, a photograph for example. Finally, a third vertical trace leads from legisign to argument through symbol, yielding an *argument*. At this point we note that

**Table 1.2** A Synthesis of MSS R478 and R540, 1903

Category	Division		
	Sign	Sign-Object	Sign-Interpretant
Thirdness	Legisign	Symbol	Argument
Secondness	Sinsign	Index	Dicisign
Firstness	Qualisign	Icon	Rheme



**Figure 1.2** Extract from R339, 239v (H450)

there are redundant indications in some signs and so they are dropped in the final terminology. For example, since the two vertical lines lead necessarily from qualisign to icon to rheme, naming the latter two is superfluous; similarly, as the two vertical lines show, an argument can only be linked to a symbol and from the symbol to the legisign, so there is no point in mentioning either of the latter two in the designation. Similarly since the tracing from sinsign to dicisign necessarily passes through the index, mention of the latter is again superfluous.

The second rule allows a downward diagonal trace from right to left, going from the more complex subdivisions to the less. For example, it is possible to trace a class from sinsign to icon, which necessarily leads to rheme. This yields the *iconic sinsign*, 'a sign by likeness purely' (EP2 294), where mention of the rhematic status of such a sign is superfluous. Similarly, tracing from legisign to index to rheme yields the *rhematic indexical legisign*, a personal pronoun, for example. Note that since each stage in this particular tracing is on a different complexity level from the earlier, it has to be mentioned in the designation. In this way Peirce was able to extract ten such classes, which he numbered in order of relative complexity. His triangular table is to be found in paragraph CP 2.264, while there is a much clearer representation on page 296 of *Essential Peirce Two*. For completeness they are given as follows and can easily be traced in Figure 1.2: 1, qualisign; 2, iconic sinsign; 3, rhematic indexical sinsign; 4, dicent sinsign; 5, iconic legisign; 6, rhematic indexical legisign; 7, dicent indexical legisign; 8, rhematic symbol; 9, dicent symbol; 10 argument. As a conclusion to the discussion of the ten classes we examine three examples from the subdivisions of Peirce's 'first and most fundamental' trichotomy, since this is the best known of all. The first is an eighteenth-century drawing of the river Thames (Figure 1.3).

This image is composed of lines, shapes and, in the original, muted colours – all qualities. It is an example of a sign by likeness or similarity, and on it we recognize human figures, trees, buildings, boats and a river. It is thus what is generally referred to simply as an icon, although the term 'icon' itself is not a complete classification. As it is a sign by likeness alone it cannot offer proof of the existence of the objects it depicts, and if translated into a sort of proposition, its structure would be represented as '—is like this', where the dash means 'something, possibly' and the 'like this' is the pictorial representation: there may have been something with the qualities depicted but the image cannot prove this. However, as a class the image on its own is to be identified as an iconic sinsign – it must be inscribed on some sort of medium, here paper, otherwise we



**Figure 1.3** Cheyne Walk, London, © Museum of London Picture Library.

should be unable to perceive the qualities composing it. That paper medium is an existent object, hence the image is a sinsign. Continuing the analysis we note that it has a caption: *Cheyne Walk, London*. If we take this complex indexical proper noun into account, the syntactic structure of the sign is double and has the structure of a proposition: a complex index functioning as the subject plus an icon as predicate. The syntax of this more complex sign is now ‘Cheyne Walk, London, is like this’, where ‘this’ is the pictorial representation. Since the index is composed of verbal signs, it is necessarily a legisign or a replica of one. The complete sign of image plus caption composes a dicisign, namely a dicent indexical legisign.

Now compare Figure 1.4, a photograph. On its own as a photograph, it is a sign by physical connection with its object: the entities represented in the photograph have projected rays onto the film in the camera, thereby determining the visible patterns of light and shade on the print. In this case, the photograph is a type of index. However, if it is an index and hence a sign with its own existence, the object of the photograph must also be an existent object, which makes the photograph an informational sign, with a ‘double’ syntax (CP 2.309). This is how Peirce explains the informational capacity of the photograph: ‘A better example [of an informational index] is a photograph. The mere print does not, in itself, convey any information. But the fact, that it is virtually a section of rays projected from an object *otherwise*



**Figure 1.4** At the Summer Palace

*known*, renders it a Dicsign' (CP 2.320): the section of rays, he says, constitutes the quasi-subject of the photograph's propositional structure while the print itself is its quasi-predicate. In this case we classify the image in Figure 1.4 as a dicent (indexical) sinsign (the photograph was a 'one-off' at a particular, never-to-be-repeated time and in a particular place). Note, however, that if we take the verbal caption into account, this more complex sign contains instances of legisigns, here a place-name, and the photograph plus caption is classified in this case, too, as the replica of a dicent indexical legisign.

(1.1) *Today we have naming of parts*

Finally, the symbol. Utterance (1.1) is a verbal sign, composed of indices, namely the deictics *Today* and *we*, the preposition *of*, the invisible present tense marker of the verb *have*, and the plural marker *-s*. In addition, there are three symbolic elements, the verbs *have* and *name*, and the noun *parts* – these are signs by convention if only because we have to learn what they mean. The utterance is an informational sign as it is composed of a double syntax associating a subject and predicate. In terms of the class to which it belongs, it is the replica of a dicent symbol and is therefore more complex than the two images with their captions.

## Summary and discussion

In the light of the principles established in the preceding sections we can now draw up an inventory of the major characteristics of the grand logic, characteristics, therefore, of the philosophy of representation of 1903. Within this system the sign had a central function and position, being the determination of a single object and in its turn the determinant of a single interpretant, although the interpretant being conceived as a sign itself at this time determined a series of subsequent interpretant-signs. Together with his new science of phenomenology Peirce's logic of relations provided a set of criteria for the definition of the sign in the form of triadic relations composed of three correlates which Peirce identified as representamen, object and interpretant, a sign in this system being defined as a representamen with a mental interpretant, and also the unit of representation: 'I call that which represents, a representamen. A Representation is that relation of the representamen to its object which consists in it determining a third (the interpretant representamen) to be in the same relation to that object.' (R491, 1903).

To the original single 'first and most fundamental' trichotomy defining the icon, index and symbol Peirce added two more: first, the constitution of a separate sign-interpretant relational division to accommodate the term (now rheme), proposition (now dicisign) argument division which had earlier formed three subdivisions of the symbol in the original trichotomy of the mid-1860s; second, a division for the sign itself, distinguishing qualisign, sinsign and legisign in order of increasing complexity.

Peirce's phenomenology, which made the three categories of Firstness, Secondness and Thirdness that it defined independent of the logic, and by being 'outside' logic, were eligible to constitute the criteria for the subdivisions of the new, three-division typology. Thus by following a strict hierarchical rule according to which a subdivision could only be associated with a subdivision of equal or lower phenomenological complexity, the three divisions **S**, **S-O** and **S-I**, in that order, yielded ten classes of signs. Moreover, the principle of categorial degeneracy made it logically possible for a symbol to involve a 'sort of' index, and an index to involve a 'sort of icon', and therefore by transitivity, for a symbol, too, to involve at two removes a sort of icon, a principle which, as Jakobson first observed in a paper of 1965,<sup>19</sup> underwrote the principle of language motivation and the theory of iconicity. What we conclude from this is the pervasive influence of the phenomenology on the theory of the sign at this



time, and how its principles seemed to hold what might seem disparate features of the theory together.

However, this logically perfect and complete system was soon to be expanded and made to coexist with another, more complex system for at least two major reasons. First, the ten classes, although fully functional, were a meagre haul for a logician wishing to identify as many types of signs as possible, and these were all that could be obtained from the three correlates of the triadic relation. Second, in the following extract from the *Minute Logic*, Peirce is describing an earlier version of the grand logic and its three branches: obsistent logic (critic), originalian logic (speculative grammar) and, finally, transuasional logic (speculative rhetoric): 'Transuasional logic, which I term *Speculative Rhetoric*, is substantially what goes by the name of methodology, or better, of *methodeutic*. It is the doctrine of the general conditions of the reference of Symbols and other Signs to the Interpretants which they aim to determine' (CP 2.93, 1902). As we shall see, development of the interpretant system from 1904 on, together with the less prominent role of the sign in what Peirce was to call 'semiosis', neutralized the notion that a sign could 'aim' to determine anything at all, and it was to cede its primacy as a determining agency to the object.

One indication of the intense intellectual activity to come concerning the sign and its two correlates can be gathered from the definitions researchers have found of the sign over the long period of Peirce's work on it, approximately from 1865 to 1911. Robert Marty, for one, found seventy-six different definitions in the period,<sup>20</sup> while John Deely, in an appendix to his presentation at the 2014 Charles S. Peirce Centennial Congress, amended this number to eighty-five.<sup>21</sup> For Marty twenty-seven of the seventy-six definitions were recorded up to 1903, while thirty-four of Deely's eighty-five occur within the same period of almost forty years. This means that in each case almost two-thirds of the definitions were composed in the eight-year period *after* 1903. Allowing for the fact that for roughly fifteen years up to the mid-1880s, when Peirce came to reappraise the importance of the index, his research into signs took relatively little of his time, and also for the fact that several of the definitions from 1906 and 1907 come from single manuscripts (R793 in 1906 and R318 in 1907, for example), it is nevertheless clear that Peirce subjected the 1903 systems as described above to a very rigorous theoretical review. It is to this reappraisal of the systems that the following chapters are devoted.

Finally, readers wishing to turn to other accounts of the theoretical development of Peirce's thinking on semiotics in the period described above would do well to consult some or all of the following: Atkin (2010), an exhaustive

internet page in the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* on the development of Peirce's conception of semiotics from beginning to end; Fisch (1986: 321–55), Freadman (1996), a chapter in a collection of Peirce papers delivered at the Charles S. Peirce Sesquicentennial Congress in Harvard in 1989; Liszka (1996), although now over twenty years old, is still the best all-round introduction to Peirce's signs-systems, and is especially interesting on the period described above; Houser (1992), a general overview of the material discussed in the second part of the chapter, written by a philosopher and not by a semiotician; Short (2007), a wide-ranging discussion of all aspects of Peirce's theory of signs and includes material from the later period. Note, in this respect, that they are mainly hybrid descriptions: they associate concepts from later statements with those made in 1903, a strategy which, for purposes of comparison, I have avoided in this chapter.



## The Transition

This chapter traces some of the ways in which Peirce's triadic conception of sign-systems came under considerable pressure during the years following the Lowell Lectures, principally between 1904 and 1907, and examines the theoretical developments which occurred in this period, their contribution to the pioneering features of the later sign-systems and, ultimately, to the problematic status that befell the speculative rhetoric/methodeuteic branch of the general philosophy. Since the chronological approach has been adopted throughout this study, the transitional period from 1904 to 1907 is examined from the point of view of the various sign-systems Peirce developed prior to what constitutes a veritable semiotic revolution.<sup>1</sup>

From a methodological point of view, the chapter will examine material year by year from 1904, finishing with a discussion of a specific set of denominations of interpretants from 1907. However, this essentially chronological approach will, on occasion, require that material from later years be adduced in support of ideas advanced in earlier ones. There are many important texts – manuscripts, correspondence, published papers etc. – from this period which merit discussion, but since this is not a general introduction to Peirce's philosophy for reasons of clarity and economy I have chosen to prioritize one major text and a relevant classification per year.

It might be asked why we should bother to examine any of these classifications in detail. The reasons are simple. First, in the four and a half years between August 1904 and December 1908 Peirce established in letters, drafts and the Logic Notebook no fewer than twelve different, mainly complete, typologies – an amazing number – whereas in the almost forty-year period between 1866 and 1903 there was only one complete classification system – his single-division 'first and most fundamental' trichotomy – and none of significance from 1909 on, surely testimony to the considerable experimentation undertaken by Peirce in the period to which this chapter is devoted.

Second, in their often very diverse ways, these typologies yield important insights into the way Peirce's conception of sign-action developed between the two major statements on signs of 1903 and 1908, which is why a comprehensive sample from the Logic Notebook has been included as an appendix. Moreover such an analysis enables us to follow closely Peirce's own methodology, namely definition and division in the exemplary manner of a zoologist. The chronological approach is primordial as the well-known 1903 system has to vie with the later one from 1908 as a typological instrument, and it is of theoretical interest to track the stages by which the later emerged from the earlier: this can be seen from a comparison of selected typologies. In short, while Chapter 1 finished with Table 1.2, which set out the ten classes obtained from his 1903 triadic definition of the sign, the present chapter takes over from there, but the classifications, which in all but one case are set out in tabular fashion, differ significantly in that there are no longer just three correlates in his new conception of the action of a sign, but six.

Third, and most importantly, there is Peirce's testimony as to the importance of these classifications in his logical researches. Anticipating the discussions of the texts from which they have been extracted, we should consider the following statement:

My excuse for not answering the question scientifically [that those signs that have a logical interpretant are either general or closely connected with generals] is that I am, as far as I know, a pioneer, or rather a backwoodsman, in the work of clearing and opening up what I call *semiotic*, that is, the doctrine of the essential nature and fundamental varieties of possible semiosis; and I find the field too vast, the labor too great, for a first-comer. (R318 119, 1907)

There is no mistaking Peirce's research project here – it is to identify all *possible* varieties of signs. He doesn't mention classifications as such at this point, nor does he give a single typology of consequence in the text 'Pragmatism' from which the quotation is drawn. It is nevertheless by a complex process of definition and division and with the subsequent classification of the results that Peirce saw his task as a logician. Should there be any doubt as to this, the following statement from a letter to William James echoes the first, but in more detail: 'My classification of signs, however, is intended to be a classification of *possible* signs and therefore observation of existing signs is only of use in suggesting and reminding one of varieties that one might otherwise overlook' (EP2 500, 1909). The letter outlines the projected grand logic, the remnants of the philosophy of representation, here referred to as his 'System of Logic', and Peirce is describing yet again the field of speculative grammar.<sup>2</sup> Finally, it

should be noted that alterations made on the classifications by Peirce in the Logic Notebook, for example, concerning, principally, the denominations of the interpretants, and deemed of theoretical interest, are included in 'barred' form: for example, ~~proper~~ signified Interpretant, where the label 'proper' has been struck out in the manuscript.

However, before examining the definitions and the typologies they generated during this period the general scene is set by this astonishing judgement from Peirce on his work on the classification of signs to be found on the page dated 1 November 1909, in his Logic Notebook:

During the last 3 years I have been resting from my work on the Divisions of Signs and have only lately – in the last week or two been turning back to it; and I find my work of 1905 better than any since that time, though the latter doubtless has value and must not be passed by without consideration. Looking over the book labelled in red "The Prescott Book", and also this one, I find the entries in this book of "Provisional Classification of 1906 March 31" and of 1905 October 13 particularly important from my present (accidentally limited, no doubt) point of view; particularly in regard to the point made in the Prescott Book 1909 Oct 28 and what immediately precedes that in that book but is not dated.

*Namely*, a good deal of my early attempts to define the difference between Icon, Index, & Symbol, were adulterated with confusion with the distinction as to the Reference of the Dynamic Interpretant to the Sign. (R339 360r (H674))

What is striking about these remarks is that only a year earlier Peirce had confidently presented his six and ten divisions in a letter to Lady Welby dated 23 December, and had spent the days following working feverishly on attempts to organize the latter set. His remarks pertain specifically to the Logic Notebook, judging by the references to the typologies of 31 October 1905, and 31 March 1906, which seemed particularly important for their methodology and notational conventions, and one can only suppose that he had forgotten the 1908 letter to Lady Welby and the subsequent drafts in his portfolio. Surprisingly, too, the page also testifies to his dissatisfaction, some 40 years after having first introduced it, with aspects of the trichotomy defining the icon, the index and the symbol. The note continues thus:

The amount of labour still required upon the ten trichotomies of signs (and more than these ten I don't enquire into, not because I don't think they are in truth there, but simply because it will be all I possibly can do to *define* and to *prove* these ten) is enough of itself to occupy the ten ± years of efficient thinking that may remain to me if no accident cuts them short. (R339 360r (H674))

We can therefore conclude that six years after the Lowell Lectures on logic, Peirce was still not satisfied with his work on the classification of signs: his methodology of definition and division had even at this late date not produced results that satisfied him (if any would). This chapter therefore also seeks to investigate possible reasons causing this dissatisfaction – the intellectual restlessness which characterizes much of Peirce's work is insufficient justification – and it holds that these can reasonably be found in the typologies he developed during the period between the Lowell Lectures of 1903 and the revolutionary set of definitions and divisions set out in the letter of 23 December 1908, which is discussed in detail in Chapter 3.

## 1904

In spite of the fact that there are a number of texts of interest to a study of the development of Peirce's logic at this time, the main thrust of this section of the chapter concerns the letter to Lady Welby dated 12 October 1904: it offers an important definition of the sign and an accompanying six-division classification, and therefore makes a useful starting-point to the chapter. Rather in the manner of R478 (EP2 267–72), discussed in Chapter 1, the letter begins with a detailed account of the categories which leads naturally to the definitions. This in itself is of interest as the definitions of the sign and the twenty-eight or sixty-six classes to which it can be assigned as described in the letter dated 23 December 1908, on the other hand, are prefaced by a detailed discussion not of the categories, but of three universes and their modes of being.

### **Two objects**

In 1904 Peirce was led to expand the set of correlates involved in the action of a sign and, with this expansion, to envisage a corresponding amplification of the number of divisions of signs it made available: therein lay two theoretical problems he was never quite able to resolve, namely the problem of reconciling in a single typology two distinct types of trichotomy, one involving relations between correlates and one involving the correlates themselves, and that of establishing their order of occurrence in the classification. An early account of what this expansion involved can be seen in the introduction to the typology which he proposed to Lady Welby in the October 1904 letter, although he doesn't

seem to have mentioned the possibility of this initial hexadic system generating twenty-eight classes of signs:

I am now prepared to give my division of signs, as soon as I have pointed out that a sign has two objects, its object as it is represented and its object in itself. It has also three interpretants, its interpretant as represented or meant to be understood, its interpretant as it is produced, and its interpretant in itself. Now signs may be divided as to their own material nature, as to their relations to their objects, and as to their relation to their interpretants. (CP 8.333)

An initial problem to be addressed, then, is what might have led Peirce to expand the original correlate system in this way. One possible explanation concerns traditional accounts of the sign and the two objects. Peirce notes on several occasions that past logicians have generally recognized two objects, as in this extract from the 'Pragmatism' text: 'But all logicians distinguished two objects of a sign; the one, the Immediate object or object as the sign represents it, (and without this a sign would not be a sign); the other Real object, or object as it is independent of any particular idea representing it' (R318 373, 1907).<sup>3</sup> He adds to this as an afterthought a remark which, if taken independently of his attempts in this particular set of notes to use the semiotics as his proof of pragmatism, we would find particularly sibylline: 'Of course, many signs have no real objects.'

As with his use of the term 'representamen', as he originally called the sign, the adoption of the two objects could be accounted for by his acquaintance with the philosophy of the eighteenth-century Scottish philosopher Thomas Reid, through his knowledge of Sir William Hamilton's edition of his work. The following is a suggestive sample of Reid's discussion of cognition quoted by Deledalle (2000: 133):

The Leibnitio-Wolfians [...] distinguished three acts in the process of representative cognition: 1° the act of representing a (mediate) object to the mind; 2° the representation, or more properly speaking, *representamen*, itself as an (immediate or vicarious) object exhibited to the mind; 3° the act by which the mind is conscious immediately of the representative object, and, through it, immediately of the remote object represented. (Reid 1863: 877n.)

The terminology and concepts in this short extract are echoed in similar, if not identical, fashion by Peirce in his discussions of the sign and its two objects: 'representative object' and 'remote object' correspond, respectively, to what Peirce refers to in the letter to Lady Welby as the 'object as it is represented' and the 'object in itself', and thus, respectively, to what he most frequently refers to



as the sign's 'immediate' and 'dynamic' (also 'dynamical', or 'dynamoid') objects. In view of the preceding remarks, it is thus possible to conclude that Peirce was led to adopt the two objects through respect for a philosophical tradition which, according to Short (2007: 179–80), can be traced back to the Stoics.<sup>4</sup> Peirce himself had already used the expression back in 1868.<sup>5</sup> A justification for just two objects beside the three interpretants is to be found in the efforts to deduce his pragmatism from his semiotic theory:

As I said above, the object is the idea or thing that the sign finds, the meaning what it leaves. The immediate object resembles the emotional meaning in being common to all signs, and also in being subjective. The real object corresponds to the existential meaning very obviously. Plainly, the reason for there being a third meaning but no third object must be grounded in the essential differences between the relations of the two correlates of the sign. The object is antecedent, the meaning subsequent to the sign. That third meaning, therefore, must be in some sort of future tense. (R318 677–79, 1907)

There is, nevertheless, a more logically justified reason for establishing the two objects and three interpretants in 1904,<sup>6</sup> involving three important interrelated concepts, namely, the complexity structure of the triadic relation within which the sign operates and is exemplified in the correlate order of Representamen, Object and Interpretant of any triadic relation; the three categories – which Peirce had just defined anew in considerable detail in the letter to Lady Welby quoted earlier; and, also, the notion of 'degeneracy' within the categories discussed in Chapter 1. These were not new ideas in 1903, as Peirce had already developed the idea of degenerate grades in a 'Guess at the Riddle'. However, there is an intriguing entry in the Logic Notebook on the verso side of the page dated 10 July 1903 (R339 239v (H449)), although more likely to have been added at a date presumably later than 7 August 1904 (R339 240r (H451)), in which Peirce gives the genuine and degenerate forms of the icon-index-symbol division and the genuine and two degenerate forms of the rheme-dicent-argument division (Table 2.1).<sup>7</sup>

There are two things of importance to note here. First, genuine-degenerate categorial distinctions are used to define the subdivisions of the typology. With respect to the object, the letter A serves to indicate the 'degenerate' form in the first division and what is presumably in this period the 'doubly degenerate' form in the second, although Peirce doesn't mention the term. B is the genuine form in the first division and the degenerate in the second. C is the genuine form in the sign-interpretant division, while B is the degenerate form and A is the doubly degenerate form (indicated as 'Dedegenerate' in the final line). Second, rather in the manner of the quotation from EP2 275 (below)

**Table 2.1** The typology of August 1904?

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**August 1904? 239v (H450)**

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B Icon	B Index	B symbol
are Icon Index Symbol		
in the genuine sense		
A Icon	A Index	A Symbol
are Icon Index Symbol		
in the degenerate sense		
C Rheme	C Dicient	C Argument
are Rheme	Dicient	Argument
in the genuine sense		
Rheme is represented in the <del>proper</del> signified Interpretant as if a Quality of the Object		
Dicient is represent [sic] in the signified Interpretant as if in a Real Relation to its Object		
Argument is represented in the signified Interpretant as if it were a Sign		
Rheme professes to describe a quality		
Dicient has two terms professing to describe Quality & Existent		
Argument has 3 terms professing to be Major Quality, Minor Existent, Middle Sign		
B Rheme	B Dicient	B Argument
are Degenerate Rheme Dicient Argument		
B Rheme determines its interpretant formally by definition making it one sign		
B Dicient determines its interpretant by force		
B Argument determines its dynamic interpretant by its being represented as doing so		
B Dicient <i>has to be</i> asserted		C Dicient <i>may be</i> asserted
A Rheme	A Dicient	A Argument
are Dedegenerate Rheme Dicient Argument		

---

NB probably follows 7 August 1904

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Peirce associates the interpretants with the subdivisions of the two relational trichotomies he had now defined, although here rhemes, for example, are defined to be *represented in* the signified and dynamic interpretants, whereas in R478 a member of a given subdivision may have an element from another subdivision as its interpretant, for example, the index may have an 'Individual [Singular] Symbol' for its indirect Interpretant (EP2 275). The denominations of the interpretants have changed – but the principle is more or less the same. Moreover, there is no division corresponding to the sign on

the table. Nevertheless, even without the sign another notable feature of the table is the order of presentation of the correlates Peirce is using as criteria for the classification of the sign: the genuine precedes the degenerate form, which, with respect to the *single* interpretant in this case, precedes the doubly degenerate; another is the fact that the attempted typology deals with the classes of signs from 1903. In later typologies Peirce replaces this method of deriving subdivisions by divisions obtained by a combination of the six correlates themselves and four relational criteria, each subdivided by either of three modes of being, although Peirce may have conceived of a possible hexadic expansion of the original triadic relation as early as 1903, as Short has suggested:

Composed largely in one month, the 'Syllabus' shows a swift development of thought; for example, in the third section, signs are divided by two trichotomies, but in the fifth section, a third trichotomy is introduced and placed in first position [...]. In fact, several other trichotomies are suggested in the fifth section as well, although this seems not to have been noticed. (2007: 237)

Short doesn't enlarge on this statement. However, the idea that Peirce was thinking of further trichotomies in 1903 is supported not so much by the discussion of the various triadic relations in the fifth section of the *Syllabus* as, rather, by a reference to three interpretants – immediate, imperfect and indirect – in the earlier third section.

Although the immediate Interpretant of an Index must be an Index, yet since its Object may be the Object of an Individual [Singular] Symbol, the Index may have such a Symbol for its indirect Interpretant. Even a genuine Symbol may be an imperfect Interpretant of it. So an icon may have a degenerate Index, or an Abstract Symbol, for an indirect Interpretant, and a genuine Index or Symbol for an imperfect Interpretant. (CP 2.294, 1903)

This brings us to the interpretants, accounting for the emergence of which is more problematic. Whether by tradition or, more likely, as a result of Peirce's personal theory of the action of a sign, it is clear that the representamen and the two objects were established philosophical concepts in his system in 1903.<sup>8</sup> The three interpretants, on the other hand, were completely innovative. Furthermore, as can be seen from the surprising remarks quoted above from the Logic Notebook concerning the ten divisions (R339 360r (H674)), they also had to be *defined* and *proved*. In view of the terminological hesitations characterizing the various descriptions of the interpretants we cannot be sure that he was ever able to do this to his satisfaction. Here again, as before, it is the

combination of the theory of the categories together with the ordering and the relative complexity of the three correlates of 1903 that suggests the emergence of the three interpretants: 'It is now necessary to point out that there are three kinds of interpretant. Our categories suggest them, and the suggestion is confirmed by careful examination' he wrote in 1907 (R318, 251). To this should be added a description of the correlates from a relational perspective to be found in the same series of variants, in which the third interpretant is seen as a future tense:

If there are three interpretants and only two objects, – the object and the interpretant being the correlates of every sign, – the reason of this discrepancy can only lie in some difference between the relations of the Object and of the Interpretant, respectively, to the Sign. The object is the antecedent, the interpretant the consequent of the sign. The reason sought must, then, be in this, that the interpretant is, in some sense, in a *future tense*, relatively to the sign, while the object is in a past tense. (R318 381, 1907)

Even later he writes to Lady Welby that it is the definition of the sign that determines what the three interpretants are like: 'Your ideas of Sense, Meaning, and Significance seem to me to have been obtained through a prodigious sensitiveness of Perception that I cannot rival, while my three grades of Interpretant were worked out by reasoning from the definition of a Sign what sort of thing *ought* to be noticeable and *then* searching for its appearance' (SS 111, 1909). For whatever reasons he was led to establish three interpretants it is important to note that the letter to Lady Welby included a relatively full description of a new hexadic formula for the classification of signs. Table 2.2 sets out the gist of the typology proposed by Peirce in the letter and, like Table 2.1, is of interest for the way it reflects the innovative direction his conception of signs was taking.

### **The hexad of 1904**

Returning now to the letter itself it is interesting to note that after having detailed the six new divisions Peirce paradoxically completes his presentation of the material set out in Table 2.2 with the recapitulation of the ten classes obtained from the 1903 Lowell Lectures. He seems not to have envisaged either in the letter or in the Logic Notebook the possibility of generating twenty-eight classes of signs. He recapitulates the ten classes, too, in the postscript to the draft of 28 December 1908 (CP 8.376), which suggests not only that he was far from satisfied with his work on the ten divisions but also that he found the original 10-class system logically complete and correspondingly more satisfactory.

**Table 2.2** The six-division typology of October 1904

12 October 1904	Letter to Lady Welby	CP 8.334-8.339
As it is in itself, a sign is		
	of the nature of an appearance	= <i>qualisign</i>
	an individual object or event	= <i>sinsign</i>
	of the nature of a general type	= <i>legisign</i>
In respect to their relations to their dynamic objects		
Icon	sign determined by its dynamic object by virtue of its own internal nature	
Index	sign determined by its dynamic object by virtue of being in a real relation to it	
Symbol	sign determined by its dynamic object only in the sense that it will be so interpreted	
In respect to its immediate object a sign may either be a sign of quality, of an existent, or of a law		
In regard to its relation to its signified interpretant, a sign is either a Rheme, a Dicot, or an Argument		
A sign may appeal to its dynamic interpretant in three ways:		
1st, an argument only may be <i>submitted</i> to its interpretant		
2nd, an argument or dicot may be <i>urged</i> upon the interpretant by an act of <i>insistence</i> .		
3rd Argument or dicot may be and a rheme can only be, presented to the interpretant for <i>contemplation</i>		
In its relation to its immediate interpretant, I would divide signs into three classes as follows:		
1st, those which are interpretable in thoughts or signs of the same kind in infinite series		
2nd, those which are interpretable in actual experiences		
3rd, those which are interpretable in qualities of feelings or appearances		

The typology, like that of Table 2.1, maintains the subclasses of signs from 1903 – qualisign and icon, for example – but here includes a division for the sign itself. The order in which the divisions are presented and set out for purposes of comparison as Figure 2.1 is the same as that in Table 2.2,<sup>9</sup> an order which led Hardwick to remark that the ordering of the first and third of the three interpretant trichotomies differed from the one Peirce seemed to prefer (SS 35n22). Indeed the orderings displayed on the two tables above are the only examples to be found either in the correspondence or in the Logic Notebook.

## S, S–Od, S–Oi S–If, S–Id, S–Ii

**Figure 2.1** The six divisions of 1904

We note, too, that the terminology concerning the interpretants is identical to that in Table 2.1 and that the order in which they figure in the typology seems similarly to be determined by phenomenological complexity. Of the three interpretant trichotomies, the final one, **S–Ii**, was dropped, presumably because Peirce realized that neither the **Oi** nor the **Ii** divisions can be relational as he subsequently considered the correspondence between them as a sort of ‘mirror image’ of each other (not Peirce’s term): the immediate object representing the dynamic object and the immediate interpretant being the sign’s inherent interpretability (SS 111), and as such a necessary ‘semantic reflection’ of the former according to the sign’s particular mode of being.<sup>10</sup>

1905

**Sign**

Although this section deals with material from 1905, this year and the following one could easily have been taken together as the relevant texts overlap with respect to the theoretical material they contain. These are a draft dated by Hardwick as July 1905 (SS 189–94), a manuscript R793 from 1906 which presents a striking similitude to the 1905 draft, the relevant pages from the Logic Notebook and an important text from 9 March 1906. The draft of 1905 begins, as was the case in the Lowell Lectures and the 12 October 1904 letter to Lady Welby, with a discussion of the categories (‘My three categories appear always more clear to me’ (SS 189)), as a theoretical springboard for a presentation of the sign. His discussion of the ‘three grades of structure’ of what he now calls the ‘phaneron’ – Primans, Secundans and Tertians – leads him to define the sign in terms of active and passive correlates:

- A “Sign” is anything, A, which,  
 (1) in addition to characters of its own,  
 (2) stands in a dyadic relation  $r$ , to a purely active correlate,  
 (3) and is also in a triadic relation to B for a purely passive correlate,  
 C, this triadic relation being such as to determine C to be [in?]<sup>11</sup> a dyadic relation, S, to B, the relation S corresponding in a recognized way to the relation  $r$ .  
 (SS 192)

The importance of this definition is that the idea of sign-action being a process of representation is now replaced in this formal statement by the expressions 'stands in a dyadic relation ... and also in a triadic relation': we see Peirce here moving from the rigid triadic definition of a relation as in 1903 to this more dynamic conception of sign-action involving an active-passive constraint, surely evidence of a movement away from the sign as a substitute, 'standing for' its object.

## Representamen

Moreover, according to the definition S, a relation, is different from A, defined as the sign. This corresponds to remarks that Peirce then makes in the draft concerning the concept of the 'representamen', a long-standing source of contention among Peirce scholars and enthusiasts. He begins by introducing the preferred terminology: 'I use "Sign" in the widest sense of the definition. It is a wonderful case of an almost popular use of a very broad word in almost the exact sense of the scientific definition' (SS 193) and then goes on to add: 'I formerly preferred the word *representamen*. But there was no need of this horrid long word. On the contrary, it requires some stretching to cover such imperative ejaculations of drivers, as, "Hi!" or "Hullah" ...' (SS 193). He adds a little later in the draft that 'I thought of the representamen as taking the place of the thing; but a sign is not a substitute' (SS 193). The whole draft seems thus to suggest that during this period Peirce was beginning to realize that the correlates were independent, each with its own specificity and function, and that sign-action was to be represented as a truly dynamic process, positions confirmed by R793 and the draft of 1906.

Why should the concept of the representamen create a theoretical problem? The confusion turns on what scholars consider to be a sign and how it relates to the representamen. We have already referred to Peirce's 1903 definitions concerning triadic relations, which are composed of representamen, object and interpretant in order of increasing complexity (CP 2.235–237), and to the rider that 'A *Sign* is a Representamen of which some Interpretant is a cognition of a mind. Signs are the only representamens that have been much studied' (CP 2.242). In 1903 the sign was clearly a species of representamen, representamens also being the first correlates of triadic relations which do not necessarily have mental interpretants. However, some Peirce scholars advance the idea that the sign is, like semiosis, a process or relation in which representamen, object and interpretant participate as its three correlates. This is essentially the position adopted by Merrell, who writes:

Peirce's sign sports three components (Figure 2.1). What usually goes for sign in everyday talk Peirce called a **representamen**. He did so in order to distinguish the representamen from the other two sign components, that, as we shall note, can become signs in their own right. The representamen is something that enters into relation *with* its **object**, the second component of the sign .... The third component of the sign is the **interpretant**. (2001: 28)

Merrell's Figure 2.1 represents the sign as a rotor-type three-way structure with the three 'components' branching from a central hub. Quite apart from the dubious nature of the idea that the object can also *become* a sign, the passage and illustration clearly assimilate the sign to the entire triadic relation and consequently to what Peirce was later to define as the process of semiosis. This is essentially the idea advanced in Deely (2014), who doesn't state unequivocally that the sign has the representamen as one of its components, but quotes Benedict (1985), who does:

The undeniable use for "representamen" in semeiotic is to be the name of one of the three branches of the triadic relation. The other two branches have names; i.e., object and interpretant. The remaining branch frequently, nay, almost universally, has been called *sign*. However, that is really poor form! The word "sign" should be reserved for the triadic relation. Refusal to do this has generated and perpetuated a source of ambiguity that has been unnecessarily deceptive. (1985: 265–66)

I suggest that the source of ambiguity has been perpetuated by scholars who have not paid sufficient attention to Peirce's post-1903 theory of the sign, and to the 1905 draft in particular. For his part, Benedict was clearly indulging in a piece of wishful thinking: 'Concerning the matter of reinstating the term [representamen], there seems to be an *undeniable use* for the term in semeiotic. Of course, this assumes that the connotation of "sign" includes its being a triadic relation' (1985: 265). He has proved nothing but has neglected the later writings, drafts and correspondence. For, by this time, Peirce must have been beginning to think of the nature of the association of the *six* correlates and of the process of 'semeiosis', (CP 5.473, 1907) or semiosis, which he introduced in 1907 as being the cooperation of three subjects, a sign, its object and its interpretant:

It is important to understand what I mean by *semiosis*. All dynamical action, or action of brute force, physical or psychical, either takes place between two subjects [whether they react equally upon each other, or one is agent and the other patient, entirely or partially] or at any rate is a resultant of such actions between pairs. But by 'semiosis' I mean, on the contrary, an action, or influence,



which is, or involves, a coöperation of three subjects, such as a sign, its object, and its interpretant, this tri-relative influence not being in any way resolvable into actions between pairs. (CP 5.484, 1907)

This strongly suggests that the scholars mentioned above, and many others no doubt, have confused sign and semiosis, to the mystification of the newcomer to Peirce's semiotics. By this time Peirce preferred the term 'sign' and was in the process of replacing the sign's representative function ('a sign stands for ...') by one of mediation. The temporary rejection of the representamen was surely representative of a shift of perspective in Peirce's view of sign-action. The rejection of the term was indeed temporary, for in 1911, in a projected article titled 'A Sketch of Logical Critics' (R675), Peirce was to return to the concept of the representamen, attributing to it a slightly different logical status, one akin to the distinction made between symbols and their replicas in 1903, with the sign nevertheless retained as a species of representamen:

In the first place, a "Representamen", like a word, —indeed most words are Representamens, — is not a single thing, but is of the nature of a mental habit, it consists in the fact that something *would* be. The twenty odd *thes* on an ordinary page are all one and the same word, — that is, they are so many *instances* of a single word. Here are two instances of Representamens: "—killed—", "a man". The first of several characters which are each of them either essential to a sign's being truly called an instance of a Representamen or else necessary properties of such an object is that it should have power to draw the attention of any mind that is fit to "interpret" it to two or more "Objects" of it. The first of the above examples or instances of representamens has four objects; the second has two. (R675 39–40, 1911)<sup>12</sup>

In view, too, of the fact that by now Peirce had expanded the original triadic relation to what was effectively a hexad, the concept of the representamen defined as the first correlate of a triadic relation was presumably no longer operative. With this final remark regarding the possible reasons for Peirce's rejection of the concept of the representamen, we turn to the manuscript R793. This particular set of pages seems to have been transitional between the 1905 draft and that of 1906, since it shares feature of each. What it has in common with the 1905 draft is the reference to the phaneroscopic 'grades of structure', namely the Primans, Secundans and Tertians on which Peirce constructed the very formal definition of the sign given above. It shares with the draft the definition of sign-action as a sign which is passive in relation to the object but active in relation to the interpretant (R793 2). It also, more anecdotally, contains the same jocular reference to *seme*, the Italian for seed, from canto XXXIII of the *Inferno*: *Ma se le mie parole esser den seme*<sup>13</sup> (SS 194, 1905; R793 14,<sup>14</sup> c. 1906),

which seems to have been a cue for Peirce to introduce terminology which was to figure prominently both in the 1906 paper ‘Prolegomena to an Apology for Pragmaticism’ and the later, 1908 hexadic typology to be discussed in Chapter 3: ‘seme’ which he associated with ‘pheme’ and ‘delome’ in 1906 as alternatives to the original rheme-dicent-argument triad, and introducing the terms ‘type’ and ‘token’ which were to figure prominently in the later typologies on the same page (SS 194).<sup>15</sup> We return to R793 below with the discussion of the equally important draft of 9 March 1906. In the meantime, to complete this discussion of Peirce’s theorizing in 1905 we examine the typology for 13 October 1905, Table 2.3, one of the two which still found favour with him in the passage from the Logic Notebook of 1909 quoted earlier in the chapter. We know that Peirce was much occupied by classification systems during this period.<sup>16</sup>

Perhaps the most important feature of Table 2.3 is the fact that by 1905 the six correlates yield a total of ten divisions capable, although Peirce seems not

**Table 2.3** The typology of 13 October 1905

13 October 1905	262r	(H497)
<b>A Nature of Sign in itself</b>		
Abstraction	=	Qualisign
Existent	=	Sinsign
Combinant Type	=	Legisign
<b>B Of Object</b>		
<b>a Immediate</b>		
In what form Object is represented in Sign { Indef./ Sing. /General as far as affects Form of Sign		
<b>b. Dynamical</b>		
α Nature of Object in Itself {Abstraction/Concrete/Collection		
β Cause of/How Sign is/being determined to represent obj		
Causation of sign's representing Obj		
<b>C Of Interpretant</b>		
<b>a Immediate</b>		
In what form interpretant is repr. in sign		
As far as it affects form of sign {Interrog/Imper./Significat.		
<b>b Dynamical</b>		
α Nature of Interpretant in Itself		
As far as this affects Nature of sign {Feeling/ Fact/ Sign (? Sign.)		

$\beta$  Cause of sign being determined to affect/ being represented

Causation of Sign's affecting Interp. {Sympathy/Compulsion/Representat.

**c Representative**

$\alpha$  In what form sign is represented in Interpretant

As far as this affects form of sign,

$\beta$  Causation of representation of Sign by Interpretant

As far as this affects nature of the Sign,

$\gamma$  Rationale of Connection between Sign and Object effected by Interpretant

---

to have mentioned the possibility at the time, of generating sixty-six classes of signs, whereas the earlier typology in Table 2.2 was restricted to a possible twenty-eight. We note, too, that the order of presentation of the correlates differs considerably in 1905. In the letter of 12 October 1904, for example, the order for the two objects and the three (standardized as 'immediate', 'dynamic' and 'final') interpretants was **S–Od, S–Oi, S–If, S–Id, S–Ii**, in which the order of occurrence seems still to be dictated, like the material in Table 2.1 above, by the perceived phenomenological complexity of the correlate in question: the dynamic object is somehow genuine and therefore considered to be phenomenologically more complex than the immediate, which, by definition, can never represent it other than partially; and in this view, the final interpretant is genuine, the dynamic degenerate and the immediate doubly degenerate. What we find in Table 2.3, on the other hand, is 'correlate' order: the sign division comes first, followed by the two objects, and, finally by the three interpretants. However, within this order the immediate precedes the dynamic and the dynamic the final, which suggests that Peirce was already adopting the order of semiosis which characterizes the order the sign's correlates in the hexadic typology of 23 December 1908.<sup>17</sup>

By July 1905 the genuine-degenerate distinction had been replaced by a set of Greek letters, making the whole system more abstract. This is presumably one of the reasons why the typology found special favour with Peirce in 1909, together with the fact that it defined ten divisions. It is significant, too, that the descriptions of the various divisions are organized hierarchically from 'form' to 'nature' to 'connection-combinant', early realizations of the distinction between quality-possibility, existent and generality-necessitant characteristic of the later modes of being. Furthermore, the terminology employed to identify the correlates was beginning to take its final form: immediate and dynamic are relatively stable from now on, while the final interpretant, identified as

the representative interpretant in Table 2.3 was to be the object of a series of terminological hesitations. Finally, the typology in Table 2.3, unlike the two previously discussed classifications, offers tentative subdivisions for each of the criteria: qualisign, sinsign and legisign remain from 1903, but, surprisingly, icon, index and symbol have disappeared as subdivisions. Other divisions anticipate the typologies of 1908: Bba, for example, has the subdivisions Abstraction, Concrete, Collection, which later become the subdivisions corresponding, respectively, to the three universes to which the dynamic object can belong.

1906

### **A new definition of the sign**

We review Peirce's transitional description of the sign and its interpretants in a draft to Lady Welby dated 9 March 1906, before discussing one of the complex classifications the system generates.<sup>18</sup> In this, probably the most detailed and coherent exposition of his mature theory of semiotics, the several sheets devoted to logic occur towards the middle of a 55-page draft from the Peirce correspondence RL463 (pages 26–33 in the manuscript with pages repeated) in which Peirce discusses, at times quite sternly, a 'pragmatoidal' poem from a volume that Lady Welby had sent him, British and American diction ('spoken dialects') and spelling reform, while the relevant passage is sandwiched between a brief introduction to the Existential Graphs and a longer description of the Graphs illustrated by diagrams. In the following passage he first defines the sign in a radically different way from before and introduces the two objects, after which he proceeds to describe functional aspects of the three interpretants in relative detail. The resultant manner in which signs are now classified is no less radical, and has important implications for the third branch of the philosophy of representation, for a theory of communication and, indeed, for the ecology of signs:

I use the word "*Sign*" in the widest sense for any medium for the communication or extension of a Form (or feature). Being medium, it is determined by something, called its Object, and determines something, called its Interpretant or Interpretand. But some distinctions have to be borne in mind in order rightly to understand what is meant by the Object and by the Interpretant. In order that a Form may be extended or communicated, it is necessary that it should have been really embodied in a Subject independently of the communication; and it is necessary that there should be another subject in which the same form is embodied only as a consequence of the communication. The Form, (and the

Form is the Object of the Sign), as it really determines the former Subject, is quite independent of the sign; yet we may and indeed must say that the object of a sign can be nothing but what the sign represents it to be. Therefore, in order to reconcile these apparently conflicting Truths, it is indispensable to distinguish the *immediate* object from the *dynamical* object. (RL463 26–27, 1906)<sup>19</sup>

This definition of the sign, in a manner not dissimilar to that of the letter of 12 October 1904, introduces the two objects at the same time as the sign. This was not an isolated case of Peirce defining the sign as a medium: 'All my notions are too narrow. Instead of "Sign" ought I not to say Medium?' (R339 293r, 1906). As noted by the editors of EP2 this was a prominent feature of Peirce's research into and on the sign in 1906.<sup>20</sup> See, too, Robert Marty's discussion of the seventy-six definitions of signs.<sup>21</sup> The following extracts are from manuscript R793:

For the purposes of this inquiry a *Sign* may be defined as a Medium for the communication of a Form. It is not logically necessary that anything possessing consciousness, that is, feeling of the peculiar common quality of all our feeling should be concerned. But it is necessary that there should be two, if not three, *quasi-minds*, meaning things capable of varied determination as to forms of the kind communicated.

As a *medium*, the Sign is in an essentially triadic relation, to its Object which determined it and to its Interpretant which it determines. In its relation to the Object, the Sign is *passive*; that is to say, its correspondence to the Object is brought about by an effect upon the sign, the Object remaining unaffected ~~a circumstance otherwise expressed by saying the Object is real~~. On the other hand, in its relation to its interpretant the Sign is *active*, determining the interpretant without being itself thereby affected. (R793 1–2, 1906)<sup>22</sup>

These very radical, and indeed prophetic, definitions raise a number of interesting questions. What, for example, are we to understand by a sign being a medium? What, too, are we to understand by the form that is communicated from the object to the interpretants? And what are the 'subjects' that appear for the first time in a definition of the sign? The following paragraphs address these questions in turn.

## Medium

Peirce is using the term 'medium' both literally as a mediating element in the hexadic expansion of the original triadic relation, and metaphorically in the sense of 'vehicle', as an artist might, for whom media or vehicles such as oil and water bear pigments to make paint, while in Peirce's case the sign is a medium or

vehicle bearing form to produce meaning. Examples of media that can convey forms extended by the object in this way are to be found everywhere, from the humble painter's sketch-pad (Figure 2.2), blackboards, sound spectrograms and computer screens to the sorts of neon billboards and giant electronic hoardings outside department stores advertising the wares within: even human skin with branding signs and tattoos can function as a communicating medium according to the 1906 definition of the sign.

Figure 2.2 is a good, if simple, example of the way Peirce conceived the sign as a medium at this time. This is a portrait and is obviously far more easily followed as an example of the process of semiosis than, say, a written description of the same scene. It is also necessarily incomplete as only readers of this study can register and account for any interpretant effects that the sign has on them. If we 'go behind the frame' and ignore the fact that we are looking at a photograph, and describe the situation as artist and model experience it, we can see how the sign functions as a medium. We identify the dynamic object as the sitter. The immediate object functions as a 'filter' and is the determinant of the incomplete representation of the model's face being sketched on the sheet of paper, while the sign, as Peirce described it in 1906, is the particular sheet from the sketch-pad on which the artist is working. The artist, on the other hand, as we shall see, was not deemed by Peirce to play a logically significant role in the determining process at the time.



**Figure 2.2** Artist, model and representation, Adobe Stock.

## Form

Now both the quotation from the 1906 draft and the extracts from R793 insist upon the fact that the sign is a medium for the communication of a 'Form'. Peirce offers an explanation for this in a variant page 3 of the manuscript:

[That] which is communicated from the Object through the Sign to the Interpretant is a Form. It is not a singular thing; for if a Singular thing were first in the Object and afterward in the Interpretant outside the Object, it must thereby cease to be in the Object. The Form that is communicated does not necessarily cease to be in one thing when it comes to be in a different thing because its being is the being of a predicate. The Being of a Form consists in the truth of a conditional proposition. Under given circumstances something would be true. The Form is in the Object, entitatively as we may say, meaning that that conditional relation, or following of consequent upon reason, which constitutes the Form is literally true of the Object. In the Sign the Form may or may not be embodied entitatively, but it must be embodied representatively, that is, that is, in respect to the Form communicated, the Sign produces upon the interpretant an effect similar to that which the Object itself would under favorable circumstances. (R793 4–5)

Clearly, if what is communicated from the object to the sign is an existent, 'singular', entity it would cease to be in the object once it found its way into the sign, and would cease to be in the sign as soon as it inhaled in the interpretant. This is the basis of Peirce's rejection of the term 'vehicle' as a correlate in a triadic relation, for we find a certain hesitation in Peirce's usage of the term. In the 1905 paper 'Issues of Pragmatism in the Normative Sciences', for example, Peirce also introduces the definition of the sign as a medium of communication, proceeds to give an extended analysis of the term from the point of view of the active-passive correlate relations introduced in the definition of the sign in the 1905 draft above and justifies his reasons for not conceiving the sign as a vehicle at this time by suggesting that the transmission of a fever by a mosquito functioning as a vehicle is not a valid triadic relation since the 'entity of a zymotic disease' can't be in two places at the same time (EP2 391, 1905).<sup>23</sup> However this rejection is not consistent, see for example, CP2.231 from 1903, CP 5.547 and CP 5.599–601 from 1905 and CP 4.6 from 1906, and in any case, doesn't apply to form.

Continuing the discussion of form we see that it is necessarily a quality: that 'monadic element of the world' (CP 1.426, c. 1896) and consequently the only category of being that can be simultaneously embodied in sign, object and interpretant. In the abstract, the only forms that can be thus communicated

are monads, dyads and triads, or combinations thereof. This is Peirce's earlier description of them '... the logical categories of the monad, the dyad, and the polyad or higher set ... are categories of the forms of experience' discussed in Chapter 1 (CP 1.452, 1896). These are the basic forms structuring, for example, the predicates of Firstness, Secondness and Thirdness, the various subdivisions defined in all of his classificatory divisions and are, indeed, to be found throughout the logic. Media defined by the 1906 statement above simply need to be perceivable and to accommodate such forms emanating, of course, from the dynamic – or what Peirce sometimes called the 'real' – object (e.g. CP 2.310, 1903).

## **Subject**

The question of form in the definition of the sign from the draft of 9 March 1906 raises the further question: what are we to understand by the 'subjects' in the following extract from the quotation: 'In order that a Form may be extended or communicated, it is necessary that it should have been really embodied in a Subject independently of the communication; and it is necessary that there should be another subject in which the same form is embodied only as a consequence of the communication' (RL463 26)? By the term 'subjects' here Peirce is referring to the correlates involved in semiosis, namely the object, the sign and the interpretant (he identifies the utterer and the interpreter as two quasi-minds, who are in no way subjects in the process). This in itself is interesting since, as in another 1906 text, 'Prolegomena to an Apology for Pragmatism' (e.g. CP 4. 546), he is already anticipating with this terminology later definitions of the sign in which the correlates are subjects which can be referred, as we shall see in the next chapter, to one or other of three universes as opposed to the categories of 1904 and earlier.

But the draft, with its insistence on the communication of a form, is also prophetic in another way. We today, since the work of Marshal McLuhan, see communication in terms of contemporary technology. In Peirce's day some of the technological developments providing media were the rotary press for newspapers and mail-order catalogues, the photograph and the telegraph, together with Muybridge's moving photography and Edison's Kinetoscope which no doubt inspired him to conceive of his Existential Graphs as 'moving pictures of thought' (CP 4.8, 1906). For McLuhan what is communicated in a message – its 'form' in Peircean terms – is less important than the particular medium through which it is communicated ([1967] 2008: 8), and for McLuhan



the technology which functioned as the medium for the message even changed society – individual, family, work, leisure etc. In McLuhan's case the technology included the telephone, TV and radio, for example, and these, he thought, had a unifying influence, creating a 'global village' ([1967] 2008: 156–57). Nevertheless, the formal configurations structuring the messages borne by these technological advances cannot be other than those defined as the monad, dyad and triad – Peirce's categories of the forms of experience – irrespective of the specific medium communicating them.

The actual message may be less important than the medium conveying it, as McLuhan claimed, but what is *signified* by the message is a realization of one or other, or combinations, of the formal configurations defined by the categories of the forms of experience. Similarly, the media of today are supported most spectacularly by the internet: Facebook, LinkedIn and Skype, for example, offer not so much a global village as a global family or a global workplace. However, irrespective of the type of media, even in those of today, the 'ratio' of form to medium remains the same as when Peirce first defined it at the beginning of the last century.

### **The role of the object**

It is clear that the definition of the sign from the 1906 draft implies a very far-reaching determination principle: the sign, before being uttered, has been antecedently 'pre-formed' by what Peirce was subsequently led to identify as the sign's 'partial objects' and the relations holding between them. Whereas we might intuitively think that the structure of a well-known statement such as:

(2.1) *I saw the best minds of my generation destroyed by madness*

is determined spontaneously by the utterer, what Peirce is saying in the definition is that *from a logical point of view* it is the object composed of its partial objects and the relations holding between them that structure the sign. It follows, therefore, that the whole process of semiosis is 'objective' in the sense that the sole structuring 'agency' in the process is the dynamic object. This conception of sign-action has implications for Peirce's philosophy of representation, for the speculative rhetoric branch in particular, for it means that a rhetorical component in the traditional sense becomes redundant within this expanded logic, since any inflections produced, even if they originate in some animate agent, can only enter the sign through the structure of the object, if we accept the definitions above and their implications. In other words, any such rhetorical

or methodological intention is not ‘added’ to the sign in any way by the utterer, but is part of the form communicated to, or extended in, the sign by the object and thence to the interpretants, most notably to what Peirce, in the draft refers to as the ‘intentional interpretant’. Any rhetorical or methodological intent the sign may convey, then, is, within this exposition of the general theory, already programmed in the complex form extended by the object.

Another way of putting this is that in 1906 there is nothing in the sign that hasn’t come from the object, or, rather, there is nothing in the immediate object, for which the sign serves as the support, that hasn’t been as though filtered from the dynamic object, and by defining the sign simply as a medium Peirce is separating the materiality of the sign from the functionality it had enjoyed previously; the sign has been ‘de-reified’, so to speak, from the monolithic status it had in 1903, no doubt as a result of Peirce’s having defined six correlates of sign-action from 1904 on as opposed to the three from the period before. In other words, defining the sign as a medium frees it from the danger of the reification inherent in negligently classifying signs as icons or dicisigns, for example, for these are simply subdivisions.

### **The role of the utterer in 1906**

In this same 1906 draft, true to the principle that psychological considerations have no place in logic, Peirce minimizes the influence of utterer and interpreter on the structure of the sign by invoking instead, as mentioned earlier, the very much more abstract concept of the quasi-mind he had introduced earlier in the draft. Quasi-minds – ‘theatres of consciousness’ as he puts it in 1907 (EP2 403) – are the indispensable agents of any semiosis since without them there wouldn’t be a sign in the first place;<sup>24</sup> the commens itself being the most general ‘mind’ of all, the guarantor of every semiosis: ‘A sign is supposed to have an object or meaning, and also to determine an interpretant sign of the same object. It is convenient to speak as if the sign originated with an utterer and determined its interpretant in the mind of an interpreter’ (R11 1, 1903). *Logically*, however, neither utterer nor interpreter has any influence on the sign’s structure: it is the object which, in an older sense of the term, ‘informs’ the sign, moulding its structure in the process of semiosis.

Moreover, while it is obvious that for logical reasons and for reasons of commodity Peirce’s examples are generally verbocentric, this is not the motivation behind his choice of the term ‘utterer’ as the first of the two quasi-minds. Consider this from the manuscript: ‘To signify that a person puts forth a

sign whether vocal, ocular, or by touch, —and conventional signs mostly are of one or other of these three kinds or by taste, smell, and a sense of temperature which are the media of many natural *tests* and *symptoms*, —I like the word *utter*' (R793 14, 1906). Any artist, like the one in Figure 2.2, as an incarnation of Peirce's utterer, is necessarily 'outside' the determination process; he is what for Aristotle was the 'efficient' cause: difficult as it may be for us to admit, according to Peirce's conception of the sign as medium in 1906 it is the dynamic object which structures the representation on the sign, not the artist.<sup>25</sup>

### The three interpretants

After having introduced the dynamic (Peirce's term is 'dynamical', but for convenience the terminology has been standardized) and immediate objects and the sign itself, Peirce goes on to complete the description of the process by describing the three interpretants as follows:

There is the *Intentional* Interpretant, which is a determination of the mind of the utterer; the *Effectual* Interpretant, which is a determination of the mind of the interpreter; and the *Communicational* Interpretant, or say the *Cominterpretant*, which is a determination of that mind into which the minds of utterer and interpreter have to be fused in order that any communication should take place. This mind may be called the *commens*. It consists of all that is, and must be, well understood between utterer and interpreter, at the outset, in order that the sign in question should fulfill its function. (RL463 29, 1906)<sup>26</sup>

In view of the fact that the interpretants are presented in the order of intentional, effectual and communicational, and that the communication of the form is from object to interpretant via the sign, the relations between the correlates as described in 1906 can be represented in the scheme in Figure 2.3, in which the arrow '→' indicates that in the order of determination the correlate preceding determines the one following, which, it must be understood, has been reconstructed from the material in the draft:

Now the distinctions Peirce draws between the three interpretants are important for a number of reasons. To begin with, the logical disjunction between the intentional (i.e. immediate) interpretant as a determination of the mind of the utterer and the effectual (i.e. dynamic) interpretant as a determination of the

**Od → Oi → S → intentional-I → effectual-I → communicational-I**

**Figure 2.3** Hypothetical reconstruction of the hexad in the 1906 draft

mind of the interpreter is highly significant as it introduces what we might call an interpretive 'differential'. Not only does the 1906 draft confine the sign's structure to the objective nature of semiosis, but it also explains how signs can produce an effect or reaction which diverges from the one intended: if the two agencies or theatres of consciousness involved in the communication have widely differing experiences of the world, then the non-deterministic basis of Peirce's semiotic theory explains those cases where the effectual interpretant is not congruent with the intentional. This latter distinction accords with an initially surprising remark made in a discussion of the symbol by Peirce in the letter to Lady Welby of October 1904, to the effect that the interpretant is a determination of the 'field of the interpretant': 'I define a Symbol as a sign which is determined by its dynamic object only in the sense that it will be so interpreted. It thus depends either upon a convention, a habit, or a natural disposition of its interpretant or of the field of its interpretant (that of which the interpretant is a determination)' (CP 8.335).

In the verbal example (2.1) given above the addressee might signal surprise or commiseration by an appropriate facial expression or verbally thank the utterer for having made the remark, but might equally reply with an irritated *Nonsense!* or *So what?* These are all valid perceivable effectual interpretants, but only the first two would be congruent with the spirit of the utterance. Peirce had clearly found the need to account for the fact that interpreters interpret signs differentially, each according to their experience of the world. The field of the interpretant was a logical concept that accounted for this interpretative differential and reinforced the logical validity of an autonomous effectual interpretant. Moreover, the fact that interpreters can, and often do, dispute the event or situation represented by the utterance is proof of the viability of the 'commens': the sign has been interpreted, proving that the communicative process associating utterer and interpreter has functioned correctly in spite of any disagreement.

Finally, one further very significant consequence of the definition of the interpretants in this passage is that Peirce has broken with the more general description of the single interpretant of the 1903 system and, having defined three distinct interpretants, has assigned a specific function to each. Such a move is more than a simple attempt to characterize and name the three interpretants, it is a theoretical anticipation for the hexad of 1908, in which each as a 'subject' of semiosis can be associated with one or other of the three universes. This is a logical necessity as in 1908 the sign has to be classified according to the universes to which it, the two objects and the three interpretants happen to belong, evidence of the extreme theoretical tension to which the status of the interpretant in the original Sign-Interpretant branch of the grand logic was subjected after Peirce

had first envisaged it forty years earlier: not only do we have three interpretants but the commens draft actually ascribes a specific position in the sequence and recognizable function to each.

**Table 2.4** The typology of 31 March 1906

		31 March 1906 Provisional Classification of Signs			275r	(H521)
A Sign is		in its own Nature				
6	5 is either	<b>A Tone</b> What has all its being whether it exists or not	<b>A Token</b> Whose being exists in dyadic relations	<b>or A Type</b> whose being exists in the order of whatever may come hereafter to be or in the order that will be shown whenever certain kinds of action shall take place		
		in reference to its Immediate Object				
8	6 is either	<b>Indefinite</b>	<b>Singular</b>	<b>or General Sign</b>		*
		in reference to the Nature of its Real Object				
7	5 <sup>++</sup> is either	<b>Abstract</b>	<b>Concrete</b>	<b>or Collective</b>		*
		in reference to its relation to the Real Object				
9	7 is either	<b>Icon</b>	<b>Index</b>	<b>or Symbol</b>		*
		in reference to its Intended Interpretant (1906 August 30 Transpose first & third)				
5	4 is either	<b>Positive</b>	<b>Imperative</b>	<b>or Interrogative</b>		
		in reference to the Nature of its Dynamic Interpretant				
	4 is either	<b>Poetic</b> or excitant of feeling Eidoseme	<b>Stimulant</b> or excitant of action Ergoseme	<b>or Impressive</b> or determinant of a Habit Logoseme		
		in reference to its relation to its Dynamic Interpretant				
	3 is either	<b>Sympathetic</b>	<b>Compulsive</b>	<b>or Rational</b>		
		in reference to the Nature of its Normal Interpretant				
	2 is either	<b>Strange</b>	<b>Common</b>	<b>or Novel</b>		
		in reference to the Passion of its Normal Interpretant				
	4 is either	<b>Substitute</b> <b>Suggestive</b>	<b>Suggestive</b> <b>Reactive</b>	<b>or Argument</b>		
		in reference to the Significance of its Normal Interpretant				
	1 is either	<b>Monadic</b>	<b>Dyadic</b>	<b>Triadic</b>		??

To complete the discussion of the theoretical developments in Peirce's theory of the sign in 1906 we examine Table 2.4. There are two major taxonomies in the Logic Notebook for 1906. Table 2.4 displays the one from 1906 which found favour with Peirce as seen in the remarks of 1909 quoted at the beginning of the chapter. Comparing this to Table 2.1 we have a far more sophisticated classification system. There are seven columns on the table. The first is composed of amends where Peirce has hesitated as to which number to attribute to a given trichotomy. The first five entries in column one are therefore corrections while column two displays his original numbering, though what the numbers refer to is a mystery as the trichotomies are displayed down the page in the now regular correlate order.

What theoretical advances are to be found on the table? First, much of the terminology is 'progressive' in the sense that the equivalent terminology of 1903 has been replaced by terms only to be found in the later typologies: for instance, 'tone' (or 'tuone', a blend of 'tone' and 'tune' as Peirce writes on the verso side of the sheet), 'token' and 'type' now stand for the original 'qualisign', 'sinsign' and 'legisign' found in Tables 2.1 and 2.2, and these are now defined in terms of their 'being', a term which anticipates the subdividing of the trichotomies with reference to universes as opposed to the categories of 1903. The earlier triad of rheme–dicent–argument is here represented as suggestive–reactive–argument. From another point of view, the third trichotomy anticipates the subdivisions of the **Od** trichotomy on the hexad of 1908, which will be discussed in the following chapter. Furthermore, the trichotomy concerning the nature of the dynamic interpretant will later be replaced by sympathetic, percussive and usual signs, which are similar to the subdivisions represented here as those of the relation between sign and dynamic interpretant. Finally, the Greek-inspired terms 'eidoseme', 'ergoseme' and 'logoseme' were not employed again although Peirce was later to replace the term 'representamen' by 'logon' in a text of 1911 (R675 39).

Just why Peirce should have included this as the second of the two typologies that he preferred in 1909 relates, presumably, to the sophistication of the table compared to earlier efforts. He has mastered the organization of the independent divisions, is relatively sure of his terminology, even though there are hesitations in the designations of the interpretants. However, that he was not entirely satisfied with the typology in 1906 can be seen from the logical transposition of 'positive' and 'interrogative' in the intended (elsewhere designated as the 'immediate') interpretant, the three asterisks and the two question marks at the bottom of column seven.

## 1907

1907 is important because Peirce introduces a new range of interpretants and thus paves the way in part for the theoretical innovations of 1908, and also because he is preoccupied by his theory of pragmatism and the need of what he calls in the text a 'logical' interpretant. The disparate sets of texts composing R318 are versions of a projected article on Peirce's conception of pragmatism, an article which was never published (cf. Editors' introduction, EP2 398). Interestingly, unlike his practice in the previous three years, the only classification system he offers in this important manuscript is verbal rather than the more usual tabular arrangement with its ten technical subdivisions. The only set of divisions to be found in the manuscript is that suggested in the passage below. The divisions are not identified as in the tabular versions examined above, although examples of the subdivisions in the divisions themselves enable us to divine an order.

Now how would you define a *sign*, Reader? I do not ask how the word is ordinarily used. I want such a definition as a zoologist would give of a fish, or a chemist of a fatty body, or of an aromatic body, – an analysis of the essential nature of a sign, if the word is to be used as applicable to everything which the most general science of *sēmeiōtic* must regard as its business to study; be it of the nature of a significant quality, or something that once uttered is gone forever, or an enduring pattern, like our sole definite article; whether it professes to stand for a possibility, for a single thing or event, or for a type of things or of truths; whether it is connected with the thing, be it truth or fiction, that it represents, by imitating it, or by being an effect of its object, or by a convention or habit; whether it appeals merely to feeling, like a tone of voice, or to action, or to thought; whether it makes its appeal by sympathy, by emphasis, or by familiarity; whether it is a single word, or a sentence or is Gibbon's *Decline and Fall*; whether it is interrogatory, imperative, or assertory; whether it is of the nature of a jest, or is sealed and attested, or relies upon artistic force; and I do not stop here because the varieties of signs are by any means exhausted. Such is the definitum which I seek to fit with a rational, comprehensive, scientific, structural definition, – such as one might give of "loom", "marriage", "musical cadence"; aiming, however, let me repeat, less at what the definitum conventionally does mean, than at what it were best, in reason, that it should mean. (R318 585–89)

Most are recognizable from the examples: the first is, of course, the division concerning the sign, the subdivisions being identifiable as tone, token and type (or, according to the earlier nomenclature, qualisign, sinsign and legisign); this is followed by examples of the **Oi** division and examples suggestive of the **S–Od**

division composed of icon ('by imitating'), index ('being the effect of its object') and symbol (convention or habit). This is followed by **Ii** ('feeling', 'action', 'thought'), then **Id** ('sympathy', 'emphasis', 'familiarity'). This division is followed by the nature of the final interpretant (word, sentence, whole work) after which there is a break in the conventional order of the interpretants with a return to the division concerning the relation holding between sign and dynamic interpretant (here 'interrogatory, imperative, or assertory' as opposed to 'suggestive/interrogative', 'imperative' and 'indicative').<sup>27</sup> Finally, he introduces a division which is difficult to identify, but he anticipates a remark quoted from the Logic Notebook of 1 November 1909 concerning the fact that the ten outlined are not necessarily definitive, though what the others are we are not told.<sup>28</sup> The last of the series above is a possible candidate.

### The logical interpretant

If the formal classifications are neglected in R318, there is, nevertheless, a set of interpretants which are dealt with quite extensively in the manuscript, and this identifies in order of increasing complexity the emotional, energetic and logical interpretants.<sup>29</sup> As with some other concepts developed by Peirce – the representamen is a notorious case – this series has caused much debate among commentators, dividing them essentially into three groups, as the following quoted remarks suggest. Since the purpose of this chapter is to follow the evolution of Peirce's conception of sign-action, the divisions of 1907 and the theoretical discussions they have provoked require attention. Briefly, the problem concerns the relation between this triad of interpretants and the one considered his final statements on the matter, namely the series described in a letter to Lady Welby identifying the destinate (immediate), the effective (dynamic) and explicit (final) interpretants, the first two of which had already figured in taxonomies examined above, the last being termed 'signified', 'significant', 'representative', 'normal' and 'eventual'. In a letter dated 14 March 1909 he informed his English correspondent that:

My three grades of Interpretant were worked out by reasoning from the definition of a Sign what sort of thing *ought* to be noticeable and *then* searching for its appearance. My Immediate Interpretant is implied in the fact that each Sign must have its peculiar Interpretability before it gets any Interpreter. My Dynamical Interpretant is that which is experienced in each act of Interpretation and is different in each from that of any other; and the Final Interpretant is the one interpretive result to which every Interpreter is destined to come if the



Sign is sufficiently considered. The Immediate Interpretant is an abstraction, consisting in a possibility. The Dynamical Interpretant is a single actual event. The Final Interpretant is that toward which the actual tends (SS 111)

The series immediate–dynamical–final can thus be taken as Peirce's last word on the subject (he describes them in more or less the same terms in another letter of 14 March 1909, to William James, CP 8.314, where we find 'dynamical' for 'dynamic' and where the final interpretant is also referred to as the 'ultimate'), and the problem raised by the series from R318 is whether or not it adumbrates the later or somehow exists as a 'parallel' triad. One initial attempt to integrate the 1907 series, emotional, energetic and logical is in Savan 1988, in which the author sees the triplet as realizations of the dynamic interpretant (1988: 55). On the other hand, Short describes the relation between the two in the following manner:

Much of this effort [the introduction of several divisions of object and interpretant] was directed toward providing principles for a sign taxonomy, developed in those same years.

We can see in that taxonomy ... that he needed two quite different trichotomies of interpretant. One, following from the teleological structure of semeiosis, pertains to each sign: the *immediate interpretant* is a potentiality in which consists the sign's interpretability; the *dynamic interpretant* is any interpretant actually formed (from zero to many); and the *final interpretant* is another potentiality, the ideal interpretant of that sign the interpretative purpose. The other trichotomy is an application of Peirce's phaneroscopy and distinguishes among signs: an *emotional* interpretant is a feeling or 1st; an *energetic* interpretant is an action or 2nd; and a *logical* interpretant is a 3rd, being a thought or other general sign or a habit formed or modified. An immediate interpretant may be either emotional, energetic, or logical, and so also dynamic and final interpretants may be of any category, actually or potentially. A sign's final interpretant, for example, is that potential feeling or potential action or potential thought, habit-change, and so on, that would best satisfy the purpose of interpreting that sign. (2007: 178)

For Short, then, the two series exist independently of each other but not in any form of conflict: the final one described in the letter to Lady Welby quoted above is teleological in nature; the second, from R318, is based upon Peirce's categories. This conception of the two series has been contested, notably by Lalor (1997), a paper which was based upon earlier expositions of Short's position. Lalor, as the following extract shows, conceives of the two series in terms of subordination and superordination, the one expounded in R318 (1907) being a special case of the later, more general series of 1909. Writing when R318 was still dated as

a manuscript of 1906, he describes the situation as follows: ‘My thesis is that the emotional/energetic/logical classification is a special case of the immediate/dynamical/final one. More specifically, the 1906 trichotomy reflects the concrete human case, the human experience of semiosis, while the 1909 trichotomy is more abstract and lends itself to a characterization of semiotics generally’ (1997: 34–35). For Lalor, then, the classification of the interpretants as emotional, energetic and logical reflects an anthropomorphic way of looking at semiosis, while the later one lays down a general structural pattern which includes the former (1997: 35).

Finally, Bergman (2009) adopts what can be seen as a conciliatory position: both series are held to be realizations of a more general, formal series based, as Short has it, on the categories: the macro-level with its immediate–dynamical–final series makes available a formal ‘format’ susceptible of various realizations, while the emotional–energetic–logical series reflects Lalor’s ‘anthropomorphic way of looking at semiosis’:

Instead of arguing that the more general of the divisions of interpretant identified by Peirce is *the* genus, both trichotomies may be seen as special cases of a formal triad of first, second, and third interpretant ... Consequently, the immediate–dynamical–final division may be seen as a description of the macro-level of sign action, while the emotional–energetic–logical division primarily characterizes the concrete field of human interpretation. (2009: 123–24)

Judging by the wealth of contributions to the issue (only three of which have been quoted above, but there are many others), this is clearly a matter of considerable philosophical interest, but for a semiotician these distinctions are difficult to admit. It doesn’t seem logical to imagine that in a single process of semiosis there should be available two distinct series of interpretants, as the extract from Short 2007 seems to suggest, or in the other cases as a choice between one based on the categories and the other based upon some teleological realization of a higher, more abstract formal interpretant system. Interpretants can only be ‘generated’, so to speak, by a sign, itself determined by two objects: for a given semiosis, there can be only one series of interpretants, not two in parallel or two in succession. Moreover, the idea of human semiosis alone involving the emotional–energetic–logical triad is reminiscent of the remark that Peirce makes concerning the difference between sign and representamen, namely that ‘A Sign is a Representamen with a mental Interpretant. Possibly there may be Representamens that are not Signs’ (CP 2.274, 1903). There is another way of looking at the series from R318, one which corresponds to the purpose of this chapter.

Consider, first, the context in which the series occurs. As mentioned above, the texts composing R318 are versions of an article on Peirce's conception of pragmatism. Peirce defines it thus: 'Suffice it to say once more that pragmatism is, in itself, no doctrine of metaphysics, no attempt to determine any truth of things. It is merely a method of ascertaining the meanings of hard words and of abstract concepts' (R318 15). Second, as far as I have been able to ascertain, R318 is the only text in which this particular interpretant series occurs: the logical interpretant, which has engendered most discussion, is a 'local' and chronologically limited concept, and there is no reason not to suppose that, as this chapter seeks to demonstrate, like the other series examined above, this one is part of Peirce's evolving conception of the interpretant which results in the triad of 1909. This hypothesis can be substantiated by an examination of this long extract from one of the (often disparate) variants to be found in R318 (it corresponds roughly to CP 5.475):

But all logicians have distinguished two objects of a sign; the one, the Immediate object or object as the sign represents it, (and without this sign would not be a sign); the other Real object, or object as it is independent of any particular idea representing it. Of course, many signs have no real objects. We turn to the interpretant, to see whether there is any corresponding distinction; and we find that in place of two, there are three different interpretants. First, there is the "emotional interpretant", which consists in a feeling, or rather in the quality of a feeling. It is sometimes formed into an image, yet is more usually merely a feeling which causes the interpreter of the sign to believe he recognizes of [*sic*] the import and intention of the sign. A concerted piece of music, for example, brings a succession of musical emotions answering to those of the composer. This is an extreme case; usually the emotional interpretant consists merely in a sense, more or less complex, perhaps amounting to an image, perhaps not, of the meaning of the sign. All signs whatsoever must, in order to fulfill their functions as signs, first of all produce such emotional interpretants. Next, many signs bring about actual events. The infantry officer's word of command "Ground arms!" produces as its existential interpretant, (the sign having been first apprehended in an "emotional interpretant",) the slamming down of the musket-butts. The less thought intervenes between the apprehension and this act, the better the sign fulfills its function. All signs that are not to evaporate in mere feelings must have such an existential interpretant, or as I might perhaps better have called it, such an energetic interpretant. These two interpretants correspond to the two objects of a sign. The emotional interpretant, immediately produced by the sign, corresponds to the immediate object. The existential, or energetic, interpretant, corresponds to the real object whose action is obscurely and indirectly the active

cause of the sign. But now there is a third interpretant, to which no object of the sign corresponds. It is what we commonly call the *meaning* of the sign; but I call it the logical interpretant, or logical meaning the sign. Obviously there is such an interpretant; for the definition of the term aims to give it; and every vigorous mind feels that such a definition, though aiming at the thing, hardly hits the bull's-eye. In rare cases it may; but as a general rule, it hits the target, but not the bull's-eye. (R318 373–79)

Here Peirce first defines the two objects, designated as 'Immediate' and 'Real'. He then turns to the interpretants, identifying them in turn as the emotional, the existential or energetic and, finally, the logical. In the course of this description he establishes correspondences between the emotional interpretant and the immediate object, and between the energetic interpretant and the real object. This in itself is surprising as it suggests that a piece of concerted music – or an air played on a guitar, another example Peirce gives – has no real object, only an immediate one, and can only produce or generate an immediate interpretant in the form of a feeling, whence, in 1907, the term 'emotional' interpretant. Similarly, commands such as the well-known 'Ground arms!' example are determined by a 'real' object and determine both an emotional and an energetic interpretant, in this case the slamming-down of the musket butts. At this point, as was noted earlier in the chapter, he introduces the even more surprising notion that there is a third interpretant 'to which no object of the sign corresponds': concepts have no object but determine all three interpretants. This is surely evidence that Peirce was still feeling his way through the problem of the interpretant sequence that he had introduced at least three years earlier, and that his thoughts on the problem were far from complete: he realized that a concept couldn't have an existent object but, rather a class, and he presumably began to think in terms of necessitant objects. In the case of the logical interpretant his explanation is as follows: 'Of what kind are signs which determine "logical interpretants"? They are exclusively such as embody and convey thought proper, whether in the form of the concept, or in that of the meaning of a proposition, or in that of the force of a reason, or argument' (R318 385–87). At this time, then, Peirce was restricting the third interpretant, whether we call it signified, representative or logical, to determination by thought, a type of sign which determined all three types of interpretant. The resultant hierarchical relations between object, sign and interpretant as conceived by Peirce in at least one variant of the intended article are set out according to Table 2.5, in which concepts and intellectual thoughts are shown not to have an object at all.

**Table 2.5** A tabular summary of objects, signs and interpretants from R318

Object	Sign	Interpretant
	Intellectual concept, thought	Logical Energetic Emotional
Real	The command 'Ground arms!'	Energetic Emotional
Immediate	Concerted piece of music	Emotional

What, if the explanation above is to be accepted, do we make of the 'ultimate' logical interpretant? This was, after all, an attempt to prove his version of pragmatism: 'Moreover, since pragmatism, in my view, relates to intellectual concepts exclusively, and since these are all general, the mental element we seek must be general. The principal general constituents of the mind are desires and habits' (R318 409). The only possible conclusion to any sequence of interpretants of the logical type is a habit or change in existing habits, and this is the role Peirce attributed at this time to what he conceived as the ultimate logical interpretant:

Shall we say that this effect may be a thought, that is to say, a mental sign? No doubt, it may be so; only, if this sign be of an intellectual kind – as it would have to be – it must itself have a logical interpretant; so that it cannot be the *ultimate* logical interpretant of the concept. It can be proved that the only mental effect that can be so produced and that is not a sign but is of a general application is a *habit-change*; meaning by a habit-change a modification of a person's tendencies toward action, resulting from previous experiences or from previous exertions of his will or acts, or from a complexus of both kinds of cause. (R318 67–69)

This is not, however, Peirce's final word on the interpretants, and as suggested earlier, these concepts are not found elsewhere either in an earlier or later text. They were the bases of his attempt to prove his pragmatism but belong, with the others from previous taxonomies, to this transitional period between 1903 and 1908.

## Summary and conclusions

The sign is defined no longer as a form of representation 'standing for' something else as a substitute. In 1906 Peirce breaks with the earlier conception of the sign and now defines it as a mediating agency between the objects and

the interpretant sequence which they mediately determine. As a consequence, it is the object which occupies the semiotic centre of influence, so to speak. The only thing which can be communicated to the interpretants from the dynamic object via the sign is the qualitative entity, form: were the influence of the object an existent of some sort, it would no longer remain in the object once it had been communicated to the sign – a semiotic impossibility. Form is thus the only structured entity which can be embodied simultaneously in objects, sign and interpretants. His temporary rejection of the concept of the representamen in 1905 is perhaps indicative of this movement from representation to mediation.

Within the various classifications discussed above and others in R339, the order of determination is that of the triadic relations established in 1903. In the first two hexadic taxonomies, we have **S, Od, Oi, If, Id, Ii**. After intensive work on the classifications between 8 October and 13 October in 1905 Peirce increased the number of divisions from six to ten, albeit with varying names for, principally, what is elsewhere in this study referred to as the Final Interpretant, and altered the ordering of the six correlates to **S, Oi, Od, Ii, Id, If**.

Of the three interpretants, the final is the most unstable over this period, being referred to as the signified (1903, 1904); the significant and the representative (1905); and the normal, eventual,<sup>30</sup> communicative and habitual (1906).<sup>31</sup> However, as seen above, this series terminates with the problematic and much disputed ‘logical’ interpretant with which Peirce sought to prove his version of pragmatism by means of his logic in 1907. We note, too, that he develops the idea, already present in 1903 and earlier, that the interpretant is a sign – see the terminology used for the final interpretant throughout the series. We end this long chapter with a quote from Short 2004:

The fundamental revolution in doctrine that occurred in 1907 was to have recognised that it is the habit itself, and not a concept of it, that is the interpretant (more precisely, the ultimate logical interpretant) of a concept. Verbal interpretants and verbal definitions, Peirce then said, are “very inferior to the living definition that grows up in the habit.”

The revolution of 1907 is, then, a revolution in Peirce’s pragmatism as well as in his semeiotic. In both, it is a step away from a too extreme intellectualism. 1907 is also the year when Peirce first drew his pragmatism and his semeiotic together into one formulation. (2004: 228)

I prefer to think that the real revolution occurred the following year, when Peirce breaks completely with the philosophical tradition described in Chapter 1, and it is to this revolution that we turn in the chapter to follow.



## The Sign-Systems of 1908

This chapter introduces the hexadic sign-systems which evolved from the principles discussed in the previous chapter. It shows how Peirce moves innovatively from his earlier category-based conception of signification and classification to one based upon three 'universes', each defined by its specific mode of being (possibility, actuality and necessity). The chapter necessarily deals extensively with problems concerning the ordering not only of the six divisions yielding twenty-eight classes but also, when appropriate, of the ten divisions from which Peirce was hoping to generate sixty-six, problems which continue to divide Peirce scholars. This is no doubt the most discussed aspect of Peirce's later sign-systems – to the almost complete neglect of the characterization and illustration of the sign-classes themselves. It is also the least understood, and, among other things, it is with this neglect and attendant misconceptions that the study seeks to engage.

A further reason for exploring the 28-class typology is that the letter to Lady Welby in which it is advanced is apparently the only reference Peirce ever makes to it, his ambition being, no doubt, to prove and exploit the more complex 66-class system. Moreover, the structure of this hexadic system is such that it holds potentially important implications for the philosophy of representation described in Chapter 1, in particular for what Peirce saw as speculative rhetoric or methodetic, the branch of the philosophy of representation which specifically enquires into the conditions determining the relations between the sign and the interpretants it determines.

The thematic structure of the chapter is determined by the order of appearance of the topics in Peirce's letter. The sections, which for obvious reasons necessarily vary in length and theoretical scope, introduce and describe in detail the most important aspects of the hexad of divisions yielding the twenty-eight classes of signs, discussing and commenting on its significance and the theoretical problems it has raised over the years. As the



present study concerns this particular typology the 66-class system which has received far more attention from Peirce scholars will only be discussed as the occasion requires: since the major theoretical issues concerning the hexad are also those of the 66-class system they can be dealt with, however briefly, at the same time.

### The 1904 hexad reviewed

In order to bring out the innovative character of the 28-class typology, we begin by recapitulating the nature of an earlier hexad, henceforth 'hexada'. Table 3.1 sets out the typology described by Peirce in the letter of 12 October 1904 in a more practical orthogonal form than the table presented in Chapter 2, since it is easy to read from left to right 'along' it to identify classes of signs. As in other texts, prior to presenting the sign and the six divisions which the expanded definition of the sign now generates, Peirce had elaborated on his theory of the categories, which he used at the time to justify the structure of the hexad. One of the important characteristics of the table is the fact that it exploits an unusual variant of what was referred to in Chapter 2 as 'correlate' order, the order in which Peirce defined the three correlates of any triadic relation, namely representamen (sign), object and interpretant in order of increasing 'complexity' (cf. EP2 290, and the discussion in Chapter 1). In the original description, the interpretants were identified, respectively, as signified, dynamic and immediate (SS 33–35), but in Table 3.1 the signified interpretant has here been standardized to 'final'.<sup>1</sup> The order of presentation of the various divisions in Peirce's 1904 letter is of interest as he seems to 'cycle' through the series, introducing the object series by the division involving sign and dynamic object followed by that of the immediate object, and the interpretant series first by the sign and final interpretant relation, followed by that between sign and dynamic interpretant, ending with the later-to-be-abandoned relation involving sign and immediate interpretant. As seen in Chapter 2, this and the typology hypothetically dated August 1904 were the only two that followed this particular order, as Peirce was inspired, one assumes, by considerations of relative complexity. Most of the other typologies, including the two from the drafts of late December 1908, adopt a strict correlate order. On the other hand, the 28-class system and the embryonic system from the 1906 draft adopt what will be called 'semiosis' order (see Figure 2.3 in Chapter 2).

**Table 3.1** The 1904 hexad of division set out in ‘cyclical’ correlate order

	S	S-Od	S-Oi	S-If	S-Id	S-Ii
<b>Thirdness</b>	legisign	symbol	S (law)	argument	submitted S	S interpretable in thoughts
<b>Secondness</b>	Sinsign	index	S (experience)	dicent	urged S	S int. in experiences
<b>Firstness</b>	qualisign	icon	S (quality)	rheme	contemplated S	S int. in feelings

### The hexad of 23 December 1908

What, then, makes the later, 28-class typology so innovative? In the letter dated 23 December 1908, he posited a hexad of divisions based upon the correlates themselves which are now ‘subjects’ or members of three universes in a specific order defined in the letter, this system generating twenty-eight classes of signs. In order to bring out what can be considered the truly original nature of this hexad we take the pertinent elements in the following order: the definition of the sign and its implications; the three universes which function as criteria for the classification of the various sign-classes; the three divisions described by Peirce in the letter, to which are added by a reconstruction the final three from other textual evidence.

### Sign and universe

Peirce begins the relevant passage in the letter by defining the sign and its two major correlates, referring not to the categories as before, but to three universes, distinguished by three modalities of being. In short, having defined a hexad of divisions in 1904 using the categories as distinguishing criteria he now defines another basing his distinctions on an entirely different set of criteria:

It is clearly indispensable to start with an accurate and broad analysis of the nature of a Sign. 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. My insertion of “upon a person” is a sop to Cerberus, because despair of making my own broader conception understood. I recognize three Universes, which are distinguished by three Modalities of Being. (SS 80–81)<sup>2</sup>

This immediately raises the problem, one which he had discussed in relative detail in the 1906 *Monist* article ‘Prolegomena to an Apology for Pragmaticism’,

concerning the logical difference between a category and a universe. One solution – the one adopted by most if not all of the authorities who have debated the 66-class system – is to consider that they are equivalent. Another, the one which we adopt in this study, is to assume that although undoubtedly related, they are, nevertheless, different, and that the difference is significant. What complicates matters at this point is that most authorities on Peirce either seem reluctant to adopt a clear position on this issue or else consider the two sets of criteria as being of the same nature.

Short (2007), for example, one of the most authoritative of Peirce commentators, has nothing to say of the modalities of being and only mentions the concept of a universe in a quotation from Nelson Goodman: implicitly in Short's case, there is no point in distinguishing between universe and category, even though the former is the far more frequently occurring concept in the late typologies. On the other hand, one of the earliest attempts to explain Peirce's 66-class typology was Savan (1988). In a laudable, pioneering effort to come to grips with the three values associated with the immediate interpretant, for example, he writes, 'Guided by his categories, Peirce somewhat hesitantly distinguished a Firstness, Secondness, and Thirdness of the Ii' (1988: 53). That Savan should refer to the categories is only natural given that the second section of his monograph is devoted precisely to this topic. That he should have assimilated category and universe is, on the other hand, less acceptable.

But Savan is not the only authority to have adopted this theoretical strategy. Anderson (1995), for example, in a commentary on Peirce's paper 'The Neglected Argument for the Reality of God', yet another text from 1908, has this to say: 'The final point of the first paragraph is Peirce's introduction of the "three Universes of Experience". As Peirce indicates, these refer to the phenomenological categories of Firstness, Secondness, and Thirdness. They are categories of experience precisely because they are forced on us when we examine phanera and because they are universal' (1995: 140). What Peirce actually states in fact is: 'The word "God" so "capitalized" (as we Americans say), is *the* definable proper name, signifying *Ens necessarium*; in my belief Really creator of all three Universes of Experience' (CP 6.452). Nowhere in either this or the following paragraphs does Peirce mention his categories, nor does he 'indicate' explicitly in the first paragraph that the universes refer to the categories. Nathan Houser adopts a similar position: his Table 1 sets out the ten divisions of signs in columns as does Peirce in most of his typologies. The criteria that Houser uses to classify the ten characteristics identifying the divisions are the categories of Firstness, Secondness and the Thirdness (2005: 459). However Peirce refers explicitly to

universes rather than categories when he experiments with a ‘cardinal points’ format in order to determine compatibilities for the first two divisions in his 25 December 1908 draft:

The inquiry ought, one would expect, to be an easy one, since both trichotomies depend on there being three Modes of Presence to the mind, which we may term

The Immediate, – The Direct, – The Familiar  
Mode of Presence.

The difference between the two trichotomies is that the one refers to the Presence to the Mind of the Sign and the other to that of the Immediate Object. The Sign may have any Modality of Being, i.e., *may belong to any one of the three Universes*; its Immediate Object must be in some sense, in which the Sign need not be, Internal. (CP 8.354, emphasis added)

And here, too:

To begin, then, it is evident that an Actisign, or one that belongs to the Universe of Experience, which Brutely acts on the person, can also be a Denominative, that is, that its Immediate Object is represented as belonging to the same Universe; so that 12:22, the central class of our block of nine, is possible. Indeed, a pointing finger is a familiar example of a Sign of that class. (CP 8.355)

As mentioned above, in this study we adopt the position that category and universe are not synonymous and mutually substitutable.

A second problem arises concerning the relation between the three universes mentioned in the letter and the better-known logical concept of the universe of discourse. James Liszka, for example, shows how Peirce defines the universe of discourse (1996: 91–92) but, ignoring the specific reference Peirce makes to the three more general universes in the letter to Lady Welby, discusses the typologies in terms of the categories. Bergman (2009: 104–05) assimilates the universe of discourse to the sorts of universe that Peirce discussed in his letters to James of 1909, and in doing so raises a slightly different problem, for in the course of his exposition in ‘Prolegomena to an Apology for Pragmatism,’ Peirce makes the following statement: ‘But of superior importance in Logic is the use of Indices to denote Categories and Universes, which are classes that, being enormously large, very promiscuous, and known but in small part, cannot be satisfactorily defined, and therefore can only be denoted by Indices’ (CP 4.544, 1906). This is the principle which justifies Peirce’s later remark to William James to the effect that the ‘Object of “Napoleon” is the Universe of Existence so far as it is determined by the fact of Napoleon being a Member of it’ (EP2 493, 1909), a problem to which we return in Chapter 5. However, the general logical concept of the universe of

discourse has nothing to do with the three universes mentioned by Peirce in the letter to Lady Welby quoted above, nor to the universe of existence about which Peirce wrote to James, for Peirce (and Mrs Ladd-Franklin) had earlier defined the universe of discourse in the following manner for Baldwin's *Dictionary of Philosophy and Psychology*:

*Universe* (in logic) of discourse, of a proposition, &c. In every proposition the circumstances of its enunciation show that it refers to some collection of individuals or of possibilities, which cannot be adequately described, but can only be indicated as something familiar to both speaker and auditor. At one time it may be the physical universe of sense (1), at another it may be the imaginary "world" of some play or novel, at another a range of possibilities. "Universe", 1902, vol. 2, p. 742.

But, as he states in a note to 'Prolegomena to an Apology for Pragmatism', Peirce's very personal use of the term 'universe' is unlikely to correspond to the more conventional notion of a universe of discourse as defined above:

I use the term *Universe* in a sense which excludes many of the so-called "universes of discourse" of which Boole [*An Investigation of the Laws of Thought* etc. pp. 42, 167], De Morgan [*Cambridge Philosophical Transactions* VIII 380 *Formal Logic*, pp. 37–8] and many subsequent logicians speak, but which, being perfectly definable, would in the present system be denoted by the aid of a graph. (CP 4.544 n)

We can assume, therefore, that whenever he uses the term 'universe' in the late semiotics Peirce is not referring to some universe of discourse or other unless he specifically states that this is the case. As for the three modalities of being, these fare even less well among Peirce scholars than the three universes, one notable exception being Murphey (1993).<sup>3</sup> As the 28-class system, based specifically upon universes as distinguishing criteria, yields a set of entirely different classes of sign from those previously advanced by Peirce – for example, the ten from 1903 – it is logically essential to respect the formulations given in the letter of 23 December 1908.

### **The three universes**

The position, then, here, is that the assimilation of the three categories to the three universes mentioned in the letter to Lady Welby is highly problematic and potentially misleading. This does not mean, of course, that Peirce had now discarded his categories – indeed he continues to discuss them in his

correspondence with Lady Welby and elsewhere (e.g. CP 1.288–292, c. 1908). However, since ‘universe’ is the concept he uses in the letter of 23 December, this is the concept employed in the following discussion: the three universes are not categories although they are clearly related to the three categories of the forms of experience, and are distinguished by the three modalities of being. Given this decision, how are we to understand the notion of universe in this context? At one point in ‘Prolegomena to an Apology for Pragmaticism’ Peirce indicates a preference for the term ‘predicament’ over that of ‘category’ (CP 4.549) – ‘predicament’ being defined by the *OED* as ‘That which is predicated or asserted’, or ‘a class about which a particular statement is made’ – having already proposed the difference between a category and a logical universe:

Oh, I overhear what you are saying, O Reader: that a Universe and a Category are not at all the same thing; a Universe being a receptacle or class of Subjects, and a Category being a mode of Predication, or class of Predicates. I never said they were the same thing; but whether you describe the two correctly is a question for careful study. (CP 4.545)

A category, says Peirce in this slightly inconsequential discussion with an imaginary interlocutor, is not the same as a universe: ‘Let us begin with the question of Universes. It is rather a question of an advisable point of view than of the truth of a doctrine. A logical universe is, no doubt, a collection of logical subjects, but not necessarily of metaphysical Subjects, or “substances”; for it may be composed of characters, of elementary facts, etc.’ (CP 4.546, 1906). This would clearly endorse the principle that ‘the Universes are receptacles of Subjects’ (CP 4.548). The correlates involved in semiosis must thus be considered as ‘subjects’ susceptible of belonging to one or other of three universes. This is not a new position on Peirce’s part, as in the 1906 draft to Lady Welby discussed in Chapter 2 he had already employed the concept of the ‘subject’ in order to distinguish between dynamic and immediate object:

In order that a Form may be extended or communicated, it is necessary that it should have been really embodied in a Subject independently of the communication; and it is necessary that there should be another subject in which the same form is embodied only as a consequence of the communication. The Form, (and the Form is the Object of the Sign), as it really determines the former Subject, is quite independent of the sign; yet we may and indeed must say that the object of a sign can be nothing but what the sign represents it to be. Therefore, in order to reconcile these apparently conflicting Truths, it is indispensable to distinguish the *immediate* object from the *dynamical* object. (RL463 26–27, 1906)

In this case, as in the later letter, the correlates thus described are not subdivided in any way by Firstness, Secondness or Thirdness but are subjects or members of a given universe: the dynamic object is one subject, the sign is another. This means that the interpretant is the subject in which the same form is embodied as a consequence of the communication, and that the applications of category or universe as criteria to the features of the sign to be classified follow distinct processes. This is how Peirce introduces the universes in the letter of 1908:

One of these Universes embraces whatever has its Being in itself alone, except that whatever is in this Universe must be present to one consciousness, or be capable of being so present in its entire Being. It follows that a member of this universe need not be subject to any law, not even to the principle of contradiction. I denominate the objects of this Universe *Ideas*, or *Possibles*, although the latter designation does not imply capability of actualization. On the contrary as a general rule, if not a universal one, an Idea is incapable of perfect actualization on account of its essential vagueness if for no other reason.

Another Universe is that of, 1st, Objects whose Being consists in their Brute reactions, and of, 2nd, the Facts (reactions, events, qualities etc.) concerning those Objects, all of which facts, in the last analysis, consist in their reactions. I call the Objects, Things, or more unambiguously, *Existents*, and the facts about them I call Facts. Every member of this Universe is either a Single Object subject alike to the Principles of Contradiction and to that of Excluded Middle, or it is expressible by a proposition having such a singular subject.

The third Universe consists of the co-being of whatever is in its Nature *necessitant*, that is, is a Habit, a law, or something expressible in a universal proposition. Especially, *continua* are of this nature. I call objects of this universe *Necessitants*. It includes whatever we can know by logically valid reasoning. (SS 81–82)

Why should Peirce turn to a classification in which the six correlates are held to be subjects of one or other of three universes of possibles, existents and necessitants? It is not implausible that the decision on his part should have something to do with the expanded system of correlates which he only established fully in 1904, whether or not he had already envisaged two objects either from Hamilton or from the philosophical tradition or both (it will be shown in Chapter 5, in fact, that the definition of the three universes corresponds to the greater scope attributed to the dynamic object after 1906). As noted by the editors of volume two of *The Essential Peirce* (EP2 555n3), Peirce's use of the concept of a universe occurs frequently at this time.<sup>4</sup> Just as 1905–06 seems to have been

the period in which Peirce began to define the sign as medium, so too, the years 1906–08 see Peirce beginning to develop the notion of three universes, each defined by its own peculiar modality of being, and consequently, as mentioned earlier, with no direct relation to the concept of the universe of discourse introduced into logic much earlier by De Morgan. After 1908, particularly in the correspondence, Peirce develops the broader notion of the ‘universe of existence’ (Cf. EP2: 492–94), another concept to be discussed in Chapter 4.

### Classes of signs

After having proposed his new definition of the sign and its relation to the three universes, Peirce begins the task of describing the sorts of signs the system yields, and, discarding the qualisign, sinsign and legisign designations forming the first division of the 1903 10-class system, introduces a new set: tone (or mark), token<sup>5</sup> and type, characterized by the particular universe to which each is referred.

A Sign may *itself* have a “possible” Mode of Being. E.g. a hexagon inscribed in or circumscribed about a conic. It is a Sign, in that the collinearity of the intersections of opposite sides shows the curve to be a conic, if the hexagon is inscribed ... Its Mode of Being may be Actuality: as with any barometer. Or Necessitant: as the word “the” or any other in the dictionary. For a “possible” Sign I have no better designation than a *Tone*, though I am considering replacing this by “Mark.” Can you suggest a really good name? An Actual sign I call a *Token*; a Necessitant Sign a *Type*;<sup>6</sup>

It is usual and proper to distinguish two Objects of a Sign, the Mediate without, and the Immediate within the Sign. Its Interpretant is all that the Sign conveys: acquaintance with its Object must be gained by collateral experience. The Mediate Object is the Object outside of the Sign; I call it the *Dynamoid* Object. The Sign must indicate it by a hint; and this hint, or its substance, is the *Immediate* Object. Each of these two Objects may be said to be capable of either of the three Modalities, though in the case of the Immediate Object, this is not quite literally true. (SS 83)

As in the letter to Lady Welby of 12 October 1904, Peirce begins the account of his theory of signs with the classification of the sign itself. However, the order in which this account develops, namely the correlate order as in Table 3.1 and the other variant so frequent in earlier taxonomies, has no particular relevance to the order of occurrence of the correlates in the corresponding hexadic classification. Note, too, that if, as Peirce suggests in this passage, it is



not quite literally true that the immediate object is capable of either of the three modalities he sets up, neither the 28-class system nor the more complex system could possibly yield their full quota of sign classes. Why the immediate object should not be capable of the three modalities has to remain a mystery, as this seems to be the only allusion Peirce makes to the problem.<sup>7</sup> This is followed by the subdivisions obtained for the dynamic and immediate objects, in that order:

Accordingly, the Dynamoid Object may be a Possible; when I term the sign an *Abstractive*; such as the word *Beauty*; and it will be none the less an *Abstractive* if I speak of "the Beautiful" since it is the ultimate reference, and not the grammatical form, that makes the sign an *Abstractive*. When the Dynamoid Object is an Occurrence (Existent thing or Actual fact of past or future,) I term the Sign a *Concrete*; any one barometer is an example; and so is a written narrative of any series of events. For a *Sign* whose Dynamoid Object is a Necessitant, I have at present no better designation than a "*Collective*" which is not quite so bad a name as it sounds to be until one studies the matter ... If the Immediate Object is a "Possible" that is, if the Dynamoid Object is indicated (always more or less vaguely) by means of its Qualities, etc., I call the Sign a *Descriptive*; if the Immediate [Object] is an Occurrence, I call the Sign a *Designative*; and if the Immediate Object is a Necessitant, I call the sign a *Copulant*; for in that case the object has to be so identified by the Interpreter that the Sign may represent a necessitation. My name is certainly a temporary expedient. (SS 83–84)

We return to the remarks Peirce makes in this passage about the common noun *beauty* below. In the meantime it should be noted that the description leads to the following highly original formulation of the principle behind the twenty-eight classes of signs. Peirce had already introduced the universes in his definition of the sign, but the following passage now shows how the system fits together. It begins with the statement of the hierarchy holding between the three universes – strongly reminiscent of the terse manner in which he first defined types of triadic relations in the *Syllabus* of 1903 (CP 2.235–347) – and applies this to the determination sequence in this expanded version of semiosis, now a cooperation between six elements and not the three mentioned in his 'Pragmatism' definition (R318 99–101):<sup>8</sup>

It is evident that a possible can determine nothing but a Possible, it is equally so that Necessitant can be determined by nothing but a Necessitant. Hence it follows from the Definition of a Sign that since the Dynamoid Object determines the Immediate Object,

Which determines the Sign itself,  
which determines the Destinate Interpretant,

which determines the Effective Interpretant,  
 which determines the Explicit Interpretant,

the six trichotomies, instead of determining 729 classes of signs, as they would if they were independent, only yield twenty-eight classes; and if, as I strongly opine (not to say almost prove) there are four other trichotomies of signs of the same order of importance, instead of making 59049 classes, these will only come to sixty-six. The additional 4 trichotomies are undoubtedly 1st,

Icons (or Simulacra Aristotle's	Indices	Symbols
<i>όνοίωμητα</i> )		

and then 3 referring to the Interpretants. One of these I am pretty confident is into: *Suggestives, Imperatives, Indicatives*, where the Imperatives include Interrogatives. Of the other two I *think* that one must be into Sign assuring the Interpretants by

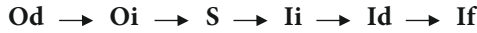
Instinct	Experience	Form
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The other I suppose to be what, in my Monist exposition of Existential Graphs, I called

Semes	Phemes	Delomes (SS 84–85) <sup>9</sup>
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The very important first sentence of the extract clearly applies both to determination order in semiosis *and*, I maintain, to the structure of the classification system to which, by extension, it gives rise. The formula employed so concisely by Peirce sets out the relations holding between necessitants and possibles in such a way as to make any mention of existents redundant and, at the same time, establishes a ‘universe hierarchy principle’ which renders the subclasses of signs made available by the six trichotomies dependent upon each other, and so reduces the 729 possible classes to twenty-eight.

The order of determination described in the second sentence of the extract can be represented simply by the scheme in Figure 3.1 (in which, it should be noted, the interpretants have been standardized for convenience to immediate, dynamic and final, in that order, respectively, to **Ii**, **Id** and **If** in Figure 3.1). Whether this is the order of the trichotomies in the classification system yielding twenty-eight classes of signs is another matter, as we shall see below. Indeed, more generally, while the order of the first six divisions seems to be clearly set out in the ‘definition’ preceded by the hierarchy holding between the three universes in the extract above, there is no guarantee that the introduction of the four additional divisions corresponds to any particular theoretical order. In spite of this, the hexadic structure of semiosis as Peirce defined it in 1908 corresponds to the order at which he hinted in the draft of March 1906 discussed in detail in Chapter 2, and is represented in Figure 3.1 as the following ‘formula’, in which the arrows are intended to correspond to the determination process:



**Figure 3.1** The determination order of the correlates involved in semiosis.

Table 3.2 displays the 729 (3<sup>6</sup>) possible combinations of subject ‘features’ or ‘characteristics’ of a given sign, which, when organized according to the hierarchy principle that prefaces the description of semiosis given above, finally yield twenty-eight classes.<sup>10</sup> For example, anticipating a fuller discussion of the subdivisions, a collective sign is compatible with a copulant, a designative or even with a descriptive sign, according to which universe the sign’s immediate object happens to belong. In other words, a given sign can be a collective, copulant type etc., since the table displays compatibilities between the characteristics, or what Peirce calls the different ‘respects’, of a given sign (CP 8.343) as regards the universes to which the latter and its correlates happen to belong. Since the classes are yielded by a static typology and not a dynamic process such as semiosis, it might be wiser to conceive the relation between subjects in terms of compatibility rather than state categorically that collectives determine copulants, for example: collectives are compatible not only with the copulant, but also with the designative and descriptive facets of signs. Thus the twenty-eight classes offered by Table 3.2 are all subject to such compatibilities as the hierarchy allows: to give another example, the combination of a designative sign – an existent – by division **Oi** with a type – a necessitant – in the **S** division would be illogical, as it would infringe the hierarchy rule.

There are three points to be noted regarding Table 3.2, which represents what will henceforth be referred to as ‘hexadb’. First, as in the case of Table 3.1, Peirce never set out his typologies ‘horizontally’, but, rather, ‘vertically’ in the manner of the tables reproduced in Chapter 2 and the Appendix. The advantage of the layout of the typologies in Tables 3.1 and 3.2 is that the classes of signs can be read quite

**Table 3.2** A reconstruction of the 1908 hexad of divisions yielding twenty-eight classes of signs

	Subject					
	Od	Oi	S	Ii	Id	If
<b>Universe</b>						
<b>Necessitant</b>	collective	copulant	type	relative	usual	to produce self-control
<b>Existent</b>	concretive	designative	token	categorical	percussive	to produce action
<b>Possible</b>	abstractive	descriptive	mark	hypothetical	sympathetic	gratific

simply across the page. For example, a sign in Table 3.2 which is to produce self-control is necessarily collective, and an abstractive sign is necessarily gratific, if the hierarchy is respected. The way Peirce set out his typologies was very different but this in no way invalidates the organization of reconstructed Tables 3.1 and 3.2.

Second, in his letter to Lady Welby, Peirce only identified the first three divisions and the subdivisions they define. The final three trichotomies in Table 3.2 concerning the interpretants have been drawn from the typologies Peirce established in drafts in the days following the 23 December letter. In this way, for example, the three subdivisions related to the *Destinate* (standardized to 'immediate', **II**, in Table 3.2) interpretant are, in order of increasing complexity, hypothetical, categorical and relative. Note, too, that Peirce was not entirely happy with this particular division, as can be seen from paragraph CP 8.369: 'V. As to the nature of the Immediate (or Felt?) Interpretant, a sign may be: Ejaculative, or merely giving utterance to feeling; Imperative, including, of course, Interrogatives; Significative. But later I made this the 7th Trichotomy and for the fifth substituted – with great hesitation – : Hypothetic, Categorical, Relative' (the seventh division as he re-worked it would be ineligible to figure in the hexad in Table 3.2 as the characteristic or facet it constitutes is a relation, namely **S-Id**, and not an individual subject). Similarly, the *Effective* (dynamic) Interpretant trichotomy is based upon the sixth division in CP 8.370: 'VI. As to the Nature of the Dynamical Interpretant: Sympathetic, or Congruentive; Shocking, or Percussive; Usual.' The division containing the classes of signs identified by the nature of the final interpretant, referred to in the letter as the 'Explicit' interpretant, distinguishes between signs intended to produce, respectively, in order of increasing complexity, feeling, action or self-control. The 'purpose' of the final interpretant which is, after all, the defining characteristic of the signs which this division identifies, might be considered different from its 'nature', but by a process of elimination, the classes of signs thus defined can be assumed to correspond to this division in earlier typologies. Table 3.2 has in this way been obtained from an incomplete description by Peirce but is easily reconstructed from other typologies, in spite of his misgivings concerning the viability of the classes forming the immediate interpretant division.

Returning to Table 3.2, we note two immensely significant consequences of its fundamentally different way of classifying signs from the single division of the period from 1867 to 1902 and from the three divisions yielding the ten classes of 1903. To begin with, the **S-Od** division which Peirce claimed to be the one he used most (CP 8.368) and the one yielding the universally known

division into icon, index and symbol, has disappeared from the scheme in Table 3.2. The system here is based not on *how* a sign represents its object – is not based on the sign's mode of representation, in other words – but, among other things, upon *the sorts of objects* it represents.<sup>11</sup> Gone, too, is the **S-If** division defining rheme, dicent and argument, the absence of the dicisign being particularly significant in view of the importance Peirce seems to have accorded it in the 1906 draft and of the importance attributed to the proposition in traditional theories of logic, and it is no wonder that Peirce was at pains to retain these two divisions in particular in his projected 66-class system.

### Principles determining typology order

The abrupt passage from Peirce's hexadic definition of semiosis in the letter of 23 December 1908 to the incomplete classification of the projected twenty-eight possible classes of signs suggests, but in no way proves, that the latter should be modelled on the former. This raises the problem of the order of occurrence of the correlates in the two late typologies – both the 28- and 66-class systems – a problem which preoccupied Peirce late in December 1908 (cf. CP 8.342–379) and numerous Peirce authorities since. Restricting the discussion to the hexadic system illustrated in Table 3.2, there are conflicting considerations that merit discussion. To begin with, semiosis is a dynamic process defined formally within the logic, while the various divisions established and employed in sign typologies are the product of a different, if related, methodology. There may be no reason for the second to be organized according to the order of occurrence of the correlates participating in the former, although Peirce's cryptic definition in the remarks he made to Lady Welby in the letter of 23 December (SS 84), while hardly helpful in this respect, suggests that this is indeed the case with this particular hexadic typology in spite of persuasive arguments to the contrary. Indeed, it has been suggested that by placing the Sign division (**S** in Table 3.2) in initial position in the typology, as his remarks on the English common noun *beauty* suggest, Peirce was justified in classifying this particular sign as an abstractive type (SS 83–84).<sup>12</sup> This can only be done if the sign division precedes that of the dynamic object in the classification system, in complete contrast to the initial order given in Table 3.2.

Unfortunately, the exact position of the sign division is not the only problem to have been raised in discussions of the ordering of the six and ten divisions.

Another issue stems from the way in which Savan (1988) and others have interpreted Peirce's sometimes disturbing, but understandable, habit of providing the interpretants with alternative names. This was quite clear from the discussion in Chapter 2 of the numerous typologies Peirce established between 1904 and 1908. For example, in the passage from the letter quoted above Peirce sets out the interpretant order as Destinate, Effective and Explicit. With respect to this issue Savan makes the following statement in an explanatory note: '(N: Peirce sometimes used "Explicit Interpretant" as an alternative name for the Immediate Interpretant, as in the Welby Correspondence (PW 84 [= SS 84]). Weiss and Burks, and Lieb, mistakenly identify the Explicit Interpretant with the Final Interpretant)' (1988: 52). If this were the case, then the interpretant order for hexadb above would be **If**, **Id** and **Ii** since 'Explicit' has been standardized to 'final' on the table, and for the ten divisions a similar order with the relational divisions interleaved according to the opinion of the commentator. The order established by Weiss and Burks, for example, basing their information concerning the later sign-systems on material from Ogden and Richards' Appendix D, adopts the order of the hexad given in Table 3.2, with the final interpretant in final position among the interpretant divisions, followed by the relational divisions **S-Od**, **S-Id**, **S-If** and **S-O-I** (1945: 385–87). This is the order, too, adopted by Irwin Lieb, according to the list established by Hardwick in Appendix B in the Peirce-Welby correspondence (SS 162–163).<sup>13</sup> Savan has clearly confused the explicit interpretant with the immediate, following the principle of correlate order discussed earlier, which is not the order given by Peirce in the letter to Lady Welby: *pace* Savan and others, the explicit interpretant is simply an alternative designation for the final interpretant.

### Phenomenological criteria

Savan is not the only Peirce scholar to dispute an order such as the one given in Table 3.2. Yet other authorities prefer what was referred to above as 'cyclical' correlate order, in other words an ordering system which places the sign division first, then the object divisions with the dynamic preceding the immediate, followed by the interpretant series beginning with the final interpretant and finishing with the immediate, the whole series interspersed with the relational divisions according to the decisions of the authority concerned. This final–dynamic–immediate order is favoured by, for example Morand, who offers a 'phaneroscopic' justification of the order (2004: 209–20). This is the case, too, with Müller (1994: 145–49), who contests the 'categorical' order established

by, for example, Weiss and Burks, and considers, like Morand (2004), that the immediate and dynamic interpretants and the immediate object are somehow degenerate forms of the final interpretant (Müller's term is 'normal') and the dynamic object, respectively. Similarly, too, Diversey (2014) establishes his 'correct' order by means of three rules, based, essentially, on different levels within the basic **S-O-I** triad, and, significantly, the phenomenological principle that genuine trichotomies [e.g. **Od, If**] precede allegedly degenerate ones [e.g. **Oi, Id, Ii**].

This particular explanatory strategy, based on Peirce's phenomenology, seems to have originated with Weiss and Burks. They set out five principles governing the construction of the various divisions (1945: 384), the fourth of which being: 'Thirds [e.g. legisigns, but their conception is broader than this] have two degenerate forms, Seconds one degenerate form (1.365). The application of this principle to the three divisions yields *ten* divisions.' In other words, while Peirce was discussing his categories in the passage cited – CP 1.365 is from 'A Guess at the Riddle', composed almost thirty years earlier than the 23 December letter – Weiss and Burks have extended the principle to the sign relation, and for them the dynamic object has the immediate object as its degenerate form while the final interpretant has the dynamic and immediate interpretants for its degenerate and doubly degenerate forms, respectively. See, for example, their entry for division (D) 'The Nature of the Doubly Degenerate or Immediate (Destinate, Emotional) Interpretant' (1945: 386).

However, it is important to see in this matter that as far as the phaneroscopic nature of the table is concerned, the only way in which we can measure genuineness and degeneracy if we have to – and such a project is surely irrelevant to the 'universal' criterion adopted by Peirce here – is not orthogonally from dynamic object to immediate and from final interpretant to immediate via the dynamic interpretant, but, rather *down* Table 3.2, from necessitant to possible. If anything on the table has to be doubly degenerate, it is surely an abstractive, for example, with respect to a collective, should we wish to introduce phaneroscopic criteria into the classification. There is evidence, however, from Peirce himself, and from the way the type/token distinction functions in the later sign-systems, that he found distinctions based on phenomenological principles less important than in 1903;<sup>14</sup> and in any case the typology of 23 December is not based on the categories but on three universes: the classificatory criteria are ontological rather than phenomenological.

## Terminological confusion

It seems probable in such cases, too, that the ordering choices of the authorities in question depend upon how they, like Savan, have interpreted the denominations 'destinate' and 'explicit'. The question is why should 'destinate' be equivalent to 'final', and 'explicit' to 'immediate'? Savan, for example, adduces evidence for his decision by half-quoting Peirce himself: 'It is this significance, conveyed by the simple presentation of the sign itself, that is the Immediate Interpretant. In a passage that suggests why it might be called the Explicit Interpretant, Peirce wrote that this interpretant is "all that is explicit in the sign itself apart from its context and circumstances of utterance" (B 276)' (1988: 53).<sup>15</sup> What Peirce actually wrote in 1907 was this: 'For the proper significante outcome of a sign, I propose the name, the *interpretant* of the sign ... On these terms, it is very easy ... to see what the interpretant of a sign is: it is all that is explicit in the sign itself apart from its context and circumstances of utterance' (B 275–76). Peirce is, in fact, defining the interpretant of any sign as whatever is explicit in the sign independently of conditions of use, and Savan here is victim of his own misquotation. In this particular extract from the 'Pragmatism' variants of 1907, the interpretants were, remember, in order of increasing complexity, emotional, energetic and logical, namely those discussed in the final sections of Chapter 2, and Savan has surely misinterpreted Peirce at this point by assimilating the use of the adjective *explicit* to the designation of a particular interpretant. There is no logical reason why the Explicit Interpretant represented as **If** in Table 3.2 and in the 'determination' passage from the letter of 23 December quoted above should be anything other than another term for the final interpretant, and this for two reasons.

First, consider Table 3.3, which sets out in linear sequence the order of the 'subjects' in the typologies discussed in Chapter 2. With the exception of the first two typologies, from August 1904?<sup>16</sup> and 12 October 1904, *all* the others adopt the **Ii**, **Id** and **If** order of divisions, even when relational divisions are interspersed between them in the sequence. This being the case, it is difficult to see why anyone would want to resuscitate a rare version of correlate order that Peirce himself had abandoned very early in his researches into six and ten divisions of signs.

Second, if we return to the 1906 draft letter to Lady Welby discussed in Chapter 2 we find the terminology concerning the more conventional designation 'immediate' interpretant similar to that of the 1908 letter. Peirce, remember, referred to it at the time as the 'intentional' interpretant, stating



**Table 3.3** Division order in typologies from 1903–04 to 1908, with some interpretant series standardized to Ii, Id and If

Date	Typology order
Aug? 1904	(S); S-Od, Oi; Isig (=If), Id, I(i)?
07/08/1904	(S), Oi, S-Od, Ii, Id, Isignified
12/10/1904	S, S-Od, S-Oi; S-If, S-Id, S-Ii
08/10/1905	S, Oi, Od, Ii, Id, Isig (=If)
09/10/1905	S, Oi, Od, If (incomplete)
13/10/1905	S, Oi, Oda, Odβ, Ii, Ida, Idβ, Ifa, Ifβ, Ify
06/03/1906	<b>Od, Oi, S, Ii, Id, If</b> (reconstructed with interpretants standardized)
31/03/1906	S, Oi, Od, S-Od, Ii, Id, S-Id, If, Pass(If), Signif(If)
31/08/1906	S, Oi, Od, S-Od, Ii, Id, '(S-Id)', purpose(If), influence(S), Ass. of S to Interp.
23/12/1908	<b>Od, Oi, S, Ii, Id, If</b> , S-Od, S-Id, S-O-I, S-If (interpretants standardized)
24/12/1908	S, Oi, Od, S-Od, Ii, Id, S-Id, If, S-If, S-Od-If (interpretants standardized)
25/12/1908	S, Oi, Od, S-Od, Ii, Id, S-Id, If, S-If, S-O-If (interpretants standardized)

that it was a determination of the sign, a condition which makes it immediate in the determination sequence and necessarily the first of the interpretants in that sequence. Furthermore, the intentional has to correspond to the immediate if only because it is inconceivable that what Peirce referred to at that time as the ‘communicational’ interpretant could be anything other than the final interpretant in the series. For these reasons, then, in this study the interpretant order established by Peirce in the 23 December letter of 1908 corresponds, as standardized (in bold) in Table 3.3, to immediate, dynamic and final.

Continuing with this line of thought, consider Table 3.3 once more, which sets out the nine typologies (one incomplete, another reconstructed from the draft) which Peirce established in the years between 1904 and 1906, followed by the three to be found in the letter and draft letters intended for Lady Welby of December 1908. The typology reconstructed in Table 3.3 from the important 1906 draft (in bold, line 7 on the table) specifically places the interpretants in a set logical sequence from the intentional (immediate interpretant **Ii** in Table 3.4) to the communicational (final interpretant **If** in Table 3.3), with the effectual (i.e. dynamic, **Id**) interpretant inserted between them. A determination of the mind of the utterer, the intentional interpretant is thus both the determination of the

sign and the determinant of the effectual interpretant (SS 196), an early implicit indication of the order of semiosis explicitly stated in the letter of 23 December. This is not only further justification of the order of the correlates adopted in Table 3.2, since the 1906 draft, as seen in Chapter 2, anticipates embryonically the order of semiosis, but also justifies the identification of the three interpretants described in the letter as Destinate, Effective and Explicit (respectively, immediate, dynamic and final). As Table 3.3 clearly shows, the correlate order adopted in the great majority of typologies is such that the interpretant sequence invariably begins with the immediate. Moreover, in the typology of 31 March 1906 (Table 2.4), Peirce distinguishes between intended, dynamic and normal interpretants, where ‘intended’ and ‘intentional’ in, respectively, the 31 March 1906 typology and the 1906 draft, can be considered virtually synonymous with Destinate in this context.<sup>17</sup> If the two terms are not *exactly* synonymous from a semantic point of view ‘intentional’ and ‘intended’ are surely closer to ‘destinate’ than ‘explicit’ is.

Finally, if we set out the order of correlates in the classification as **S, Od, Oi, Ii, Id, If** or even **S, Od, Oi, If, Id, Ii**, that is, with **S** in initial position in either case, there is a strong possibility that such systems would have been dismissed as rank nominalism by Peirce, as they make the compatibility status of the dynamic object dependent upon that of the sign, thereby implying that all reality comes under the ‘sway’ of categorematic verbal signs, whereas reality is, in fact, defined as whatever *is* independently of what we think or say it to be:

Objects are divided into figments, dreams, etc., on the one hand, and realities on the other. The former are those which exist only inasmuch as you or I or some man imagines them; the latter are those which have an existence independent of your mind or mine or that of any number of persons. The real is that which is not whatever we happen to think it, but is unaffected by what we may think of it. (CP 8.12, 1871)

**Table 3.4** Hypothetical correlate classification of the noun beauty

	Subject					
	S	Oi	Od	Ii	Id	If
<b>Universe</b>						
<b>Necessitant</b> <i>beauty</i>		copulant				
<b>Existent</b>		designative				
<b>Possible</b>		descriptive	abstractive	hypothetical	sympathetic	gratific

In other words, he held that there was a reality 'out there' that was independent of minds, signs and, more pertinently in the present context, language: reality is such as it is, independently of what anyone thinks it to be and irrespective of the language they speak. This suggests that, as in semiosis, it is the object which determines the language sign, and not the other way around, and that the principle can also be applied to the typology that semiosis determines.

## Beauty

In addition to the discussion above, a number of other persuasive criteria seem to argue in favour of the order retained in Table 3.2, which is, after all, the order of semiosis. First, if in such a process a dynamic object and then an immediate object can 'determine' a sign, that is, cause it to be such as it is, there is clearly a logical reason why the sign must appear *after* these two correlates in the table. If the sequence given in Figure 3.1 is correct – the hierarchy ordering the universes applies to this as much as to the classifying system – then it is difficult to see how in the *process* of semiosis the concept of beauty, for example (a possible, according to Peirce (SS 83–84)), could determine the type (a necessitant) that names it: such a determination would violate the universe hierarchy principle. Moreover, in CP 8.366 Peirce later identifies as abstractives such basic material qualities as colour, mass and whiteness: these can be found, for example, in a painting or on frescoes (unlike intellectual concepts such as that represented by the noun *beauty*), and as such would be compatible not with a type, but, rather, with a simple mark. Note, too, that Peirce makes the following comment:

I was of the opinion that if the Dynamical Object be a mere Possible the Immediate Object could only be of the same nature, while if the Immediate Object were a Tendency or Habit then the Dynamical Object must be of the same nature. Consequently an Abstractive must be a Mark, while a Type must be a Collective, which shows how I conceived Abstractives and Collectives. (CP 8.367, 1908)

The type *beauty* – all words in a dictionary are by nature necessitant, and are therefore classified as types (SS 83) – can only be classified as an abstractive if the sign *precedes* the dynamic object in the classification system. As noted above, the order displayed in Table 3.2 would be incorrect, and would need to be replaced by a system displaying correlate order. Peirce's surprising description of the common noun *beauty* as an abstractive sign (SS 83–84) has potentially significant consequences for the choice between correlate and 'semiosis' order,

and therefore requires examination. There are at least two ways in which to approach the problem: first, to analyse the term with the sign in initial position as Peirce places it in most of his correlate-order typologies, and as his remarks to Lady Welby imply; second, to examine the problem from a more empirical perspective.

In Table 3.4 the noun has been placed in the initial necessitant sign position as Peirce's comments suggest, while with respect to the dynamic object it is classified as an abstractive.<sup>18</sup> Now, according to the hierarchy principle, an abstractive sign – necessarily a sign with a possible object by the Od division in Table 3.4 – can only determine an immediate object and a sequence of interpretants from the universe of possibles, identifying the sign here as also hypothetical, sympathetic and gratific. This, in fact, is the real problem concerning the classification of the common noun *beauty* as an abstractive sign: namely, the interpretant sequence that it would determine if the solution proposed in Table 3.4 were adopted. For it is difficult to see how the effect produced by a verbal sign might be limited to feelings. Such a sign's meaning has first to be 'processed,' so to speak, at the immediate interpretant stage in semiosis for it to be capable of producing any subsequent effect at all, even a feeling: the object deemed beautiful might excite a feeling of pleasure or well-being, but the word *beauty* itself, like any other verbal sign, must surely require a mental immediate interpretant for the interpreter to be able to understand it.

An alternative, but complementary, way of resolving this issue is by adopting a more empirical approach to what appears to be a contradiction on Peirce's part: we hypothesize that as a common noun, *beauty* is neither a 'complete' informational sign (as a *dicisign* is) in the 10-class system nor is it a complete representation of an object for classification by means of the hexad in Table 3.2. However, once integrated into a full sentence classification poses no problem. The justification for this is to be found in the way Peirce describes the relation between a complete sign such as an utterance and the object or fact it represents in 1907: 'Thus the partial objects of an ordinary transitive verb are an agent and a patient. These distinctive characters have nothing to do with the form of a verb, as a sign, but are derived from the fact signified' (EP2 408). In other words, it is the object in all its completeness (it can't be otherwise) which determines the sign, and this is the principle at work in the 28-class typology, since signs are classified initially according to the sorts of objects they represent.

Moreover, it was seen in Chapter 2 that it is necessarily the case that there is nothing in the sign that is not already in the object. The event or fact represented determines the structure of the sentence representing it. This being the case, how

does Peirce's *beauty* example satisfy this condition? Consider, by contrast, the 'complete' generic utterance *Beauty is truth, truth beauty*. This very well-known compound sentence postulates as equivalent collections of entities sharing certain properties as exemplified by the following propositions: 'Whatever is beautiful is true and whatever is true is beautiful'; or 'Beautiful things all possess truth and true things all possess beauty', or something of that sort. Keats's line is a complete sign, a *dicisign* in the 1903 system but a collective copulant type in that of 1908, and it has to be analysed in terms of all the objects that determined it and the interpretant effects that it produced, or was calculated to produce, in order to classify it.

All of which brings us back to Peirce's remarks concerning the 'simple' common noun *beauty*. Clearly *beauty* is not a complete sign. As Peirce tells Lady Welby, 'it is the ultimate reference, and not the grammatical form, that makes the sign [the word *beauty*] an *Abstractive*' (EP2 480), the problem being to determine the ultimate reference of what is, as it stands, nothing more than a simple dictionary entry. It is difficult to conceive of the conditions in which one might utter the word in a true situation of communication: *Beauty!* might be a (highly elliptical) summons to a horse, or to one's dog or cat. In any other conditions the utterance would be laconic and mystifying to say the least.<sup>19</sup> People simply do not communicate by means of single-word utterances of this type, assuming *beauty* to be an effectively uttered sign, which it clearly is not – we might encounter exclamative utterances such as *Idiot!* or *Clever clogs!* but only in specific contexts. The word in Keats's line refers obliquely to part of the more general object, the beautiful part, but cannot be classified in isolation from the generic utterance that represents that general object. It can, on the other hand, be classified without difficulty within the 1903 system, simply because at that time the object in itself was not a criterion needed to classify a sign: Peirce often stated that the English definite article was the epitome of the *legisign*, but he never went so far as to say what sort of object it was the sign of. What interested Peirce was the sign, its mode of representation and the relation holding between the sign and its interpretant, its information value. As a term or rheme, *beauty* is not an informational sign. On the other hand, the hexad of 1908 classifies signs according to the nature of the sorts of objects represented and as a linguistic sign *beauty* is simply a collective type or *famisign* (CP 8.359).<sup>20</sup>

Perhaps the whole *beauty* question was yet another case of Peirce simplifying matters as a 'sop to Cerberus'. The word *beauty* is certainly an abstract noun with respect to English grammar, but in addition to the discussion above, it is difficult to see how Peirce would have associated a noun – a language sign – with an emotional interpretant, since this is what an *abstractive* would have to do in

the 1907 interpretant system discussed in Chapter 2. As a noun, he would surely have associated the term with what he saw then as the logical interpretant, the interpretant to which only concepts could appeal according to his pragmatism of the time. Presumably, if a classification of the noun on its own were required it would be a self-control producing collective, much like a dictionary definition: 'Such combined perfection of form and charm of colouring as affords keen pleasure to the sense of sight: in the human face or figure' (*OED*). The definition introduces us to the concept; it is classified as 'usual' at the **Id** stage and confirms a prior interpretation;<sup>21</sup> and as such the combination of term plus definition functions as a self-controlling sign. Whatever the solution adopted, it is clear that anyone wishing to determine the order of occurrence of the divisions in the more complex 66-class system will have problems of the sort posed by Peirce's example of *beauty* to contend with.

## Hexadic classification

After this long discussion of the order of the subjects in Table 3.2, we examine some of the sorts of classes of sign the subjects themselves determine, as they constitute another major innovation in the 1908 hexad. As the table shows, the list is composed of two divisions concerning the objects, one for the sign and three for the interpretants. Moreover, each division is a trichotomy the subclasses of which are obtained by reference to one or other of the three universes of experience. The question now is what sorts of subclasses and what sorts of signs does such a structure yield? As with other areas of the late semiotics, Peirce has only provided an incomplete statement.

### The objects

As far as the two object divisions are concerned we do have Peirce's brief examples to work with. In the draft of 25 December he has this to say of the dynamic object division:

- III. In respect to the Nature of their Dynamical Objects, Signs I found to be either
1. Signs of Possibles. That is *Abstractives* such as Color, Mass, Whiteness, etc.
  2. Signs of Occurrences. That is *Concretives* such as Man, Charlemagne.
  3. Signs of Collections. That is *Collectives* such as Mankind, the Human Race, etc.

By Abstractives I meant signs of immediate abstractions; but was in some doubt what to do with abstractions resulting from experiment. I thought it would be requisite to study subdivisions of these classes but never went into that research. (CP 8.366)

We return to the discussion of the dynamic object in Chapter 5, as Peirce develops the range of potential dynamic objects both in the 'Neglected Argument' text of 1908 and in letters to William James from 1909. For the time being suffice it to note that in order of increasing complexity he distinguishes between qualitative objects (colour, mass etc., as noted earlier); such existential singular objects (which can also be found in groups or collections of singulars as in a class of pupils, or twenty-two individuals running after a leather ball on a football pitch) as humans, named individuals (e.g. Napoleon, Charlemagne, River Rat Jimmy), tables, towns, aeroplanes etc.; and, finally, classes of entities such as those covered by concepts like mankind etc., and usually represented, in English, by common nouns.

Within the immediate object division Peirce distinguishes between the three ways in which a sign's object can be 'presented', that is, represented immediately on the sign-medium: as 'mere ideas', as 'brutely compelling attention' or as 'rationally recommending themselves' (CP 8.349, 1908), such presentations yielding, moving from the possible to the necessitant via the existent, the following three classes of signs with reference to their immediate objects:

A. *Descriptives*, which determine their Objects by stating the characters of the latter.

B. *Designatives* (or Denotatives), or Indicatives, Denominatives, which like a Demonstrative pronoun, or a pointing finger, brutally direct the mental eyeballs of the interpreter to the object in question, which in this case cannot be given by independent reasoning.

C. *Copulants*, which neither describe nor denote their Objects, but merely express the logical relations of these latter to something otherwise referred to. Such, among linguistic signs, as "If - then -," " - is -," " - causes -," " - would be -," " - is relative to - for -" "Whatever" etc. (CP 8.350)

Alternative designations for these classes of signs are to be found in the drafts from the days following the letter of 23 December, for example, descriptive, denominative and copulative/distributive (EP2, 488), but in Table 3.2 we retain those mentioned in Peirce's letter. Note, too, that in the 1904 hexadic typology given earlier (Table 3.1) the **S-Oi** trichotomy divides more vaguely into sign of law, sign of experience and, finally, sign of quality. At the time Peirce was employing the categories as criteria. In Chapter 4 we examine the sorts of signs the two objects thus described actually determine, but for now we simply note

the properties Peirce ascribes to them in the letter, and that since both sign and object can be individual, existent entities, the immediate object functions as a sort of semiotic filter between them.

## The sign

The final division for the subclasses of which Peirce actually provides examples is the Sign division. In the 1903 triadic typology, he distinguished between legisign, sinsign and qualisign (as have many commentators since in their discussions of the 66-class system in spite of the fact that Peirce had introduced a new terminology for these subdivisions). In the 1908 hexadic typology set out in Table 3.2, the division was composed of type, token and mark. However, in the extract below, written at most two days later, he suggests the triplet: potisign, actisign and famisign. The latter term is a particularly felicitous denomination as the idea of a legisign being a sign of law, etc., suggests a distance or remoteness by virtue of its generality, while the term ‘famisign’, on the other hand, accentuates the routine and familiar nature of the general signs that make up our daily lives.<sup>22</sup>

Consequently, Signs, in respect to their Modes of possible Presentation, are divisible (S) into

A. *Potisigns*, or Objects which are signs so far as they are merely possible, but felt to be positively possible; as, for example, the seventh ray that passes through the three intersections of opposite sides of Pascal’s hexagram.

B. *Actisigns*, or Objects which are Signs as Experienced *hic et nunc*; such as any single word in a single place in a single sentence of a single paragraph of a single page of a single copy of a book. There may be repetition of the whole paragraph, this word included, in another place. But that other occurrence is not *this* word. The book may be printed in an edition of ten thousand; but THIS word is only in my copy.

C. *Famisigns*, familiar signs, which must be General, as General signs must be familiar or composed of Familiar signs. (I speak of signs which are “general”, not in the sense of signifying Generals, but as being themselves general; just as Charlemagne is general, in that it occurs many times with one and the same denotation.) (CP 8.347)

## The interpretants

However, it is surely the subdivisions of the three interpretants which are the most innovative feature of the hexad defined by semiosis. They are also, unfortunately for the researcher, the ones for which we have least information from Peirce



himself. Remember that the hexadic system Peirce described to Lady Welby in his letter of 12 October 1904 was composed of a correlate division (**S**) and five relational ones (**S–Od**, **S–Oi**, **S–If**, **S–Id**, **S–Ii**),<sup>23</sup> each division subdivided into three classes with respect to Peirce's three categories. Although logically possible, the twenty-eight-class potential of the 1904 typology seems to have been neglected by Peirce as there seems to be no editorial evidence of him referring to such a system before the 23 December 1908 letter. Alternatively, perhaps Peirce imagined that the actual ordering of a series of relational characteristics of a sign was problematic. As it was, he appended in a postscript the ten classes he had established in 1903, adding 'On the whole, then, I should say there were ten principal classes of signs' (SS 35), which suggests that any attempt to derive twenty-eight classes from the 1904 hexad was unlikely to have been on Peirce's agenda at that point.

Whatever the case in 1904, there seems to have been a form of regression in 1907, a time when Peirce was trying to work out the relations between the logical, energetic and emotional interpretants and his theory of pragmatism. These were presented 'of a piece', that is, without the subdivisions mentioned in some of the earlier typologies to be found in the Logic Notebook and discussed in Chapter 2, and each corresponded to a specific type of sign: respectively, concept, military command and performance of a piece of music, for example. This was presumably the reason why some Peirce scholars (e.g. Lalor (1997), discussed in Chapter 2, considered the emotional, energetic and logical set of interpretants as the specifically 'human' versions of the immediate, dynamic and final interpretants.

The situation changes quite radically in the system presented less than a year later in the 23 December letter, for each of the three interpretants is now subdivided into what can be considered loosely as feeling, action and habit or thought values, according to which universe signs are referred to. For example, looking at the subdivisions from an orthogonal perspective we find that as subjects of the universe of possibles, the immediate, dynamic and final interpretants all present a monadic, qualitative, insubstantial character: with respect to the first a sign is hypothetical, to the second it is sympathetic and to the third the sign is gratific, signifying, one assumes, that its purpose is to produce positive feeling.<sup>24</sup> The triple distinction between feeling, action and habit runs orthogonally through the entire interpretant series.

From a 'perpendicular' perspective, on the other hand, taking the **Id** division as an example, Table 3.2 shows a three-way distinction between usual, percussive and sympathetic. This was the sixth division of the earlier (decadic) typology

established on 31 August 1906 (R339 285r (H534)), distributed 'according to the Nature of the Middle Interpretant'. In that particular case, Peirce offered the following alternative but equivalent values: 'congruentive' for the possible subclass and 'shocking' for the existent one. While the congruentive/sympathetic subdivision of signs can be understood with respect to an emotional response, and the shocking/percussive subdivision with respect to an active, dynamic one, too, the 'usual' subdivision is less easily understood. Presumably, by a usual sign Peirce means that such a sign doesn't disturb the interpreter's mental equilibrium and conforms in this way to experience and expectation, which it ultimately confirms. Whatever the case, the sign must, as with all necessitant subjects, be quite general. Indeed in most cases it must be something of the nature of thought. Taking another example, if we examine now the case of the type, a necessitant sign, we know it has to be collective by **Od**, and copulant by **Oi**. What sort of sign will it be if, in the **If** division, its purpose is to produce self-control? The only general sort of sign that could fit such a format is thought itself or habit, and, unlike an action-producing token, is necessarily unavailable for inspection.<sup>25</sup>

It follows, therefore, from the extended description of the interpretants and the late development of the trichotomies defined within the Sign-Interpretant branch of the grand logic that researchers now have to determine just what it means, for example, for the mode of being of a dynamic interpretant to be necessitant, or for the mode of being of an immediate interpretant to be that of existence, if they are to understand the signs these distinctions enable them to classify, and also if Houser's programme for semiotics is to be undertaken. Or, from another point of view, researchers have also to determine just what it means for a sign to be, to name just two of the new series, relative or categorical. True, some of the denominations of the subdivisions defined in the hexad are familiar. For example, the three subdivisions of signs determined by the dynamic object are 'abstractive', 'concretive' and 'collective', a series which echoes the grammatical distinctions between the abstract, concrete and collective common nouns of the grammar of English. Furthermore, the three subdivisions of signs in the immediate interpretant trichotomy follow distinctions traditionally made between relative, categorical and hypothetical propositions (cf. CP 2.325-6). Nevertheless, although he was to refer on occasion to the sorts of 'universes of existence' which might enable the researcher to comprehend at least one of the universes to which the objects determining whether a sign was an abstractive, a concretive or a collective belonged (e.g. CP 6.455 and CP 8.178, both from 1908), as Peirce left it the system poses many problems of identification

and classification, and it is little wonder, then, that he never was able to complete a description of the posited twenty-eight and sixty-six classes of signs, and had difficulty in developing the Sign-Interpretant branch of the grand logic to his satisfaction.

In short, the interpretant sequence as it appears in both the six- and ten-division systems suggests two lines of enquiry within the semiotics. First, the subdivision of all the interpretants into possible, existent and necessitant universes modifies the principle of continuous semiosis entailed by the earlier principle in which one interpretant, as a sign, determines a following interpretant – another sign – in a potentially unlimited series: this is now only possible for one of the twenty-eight possible classes, the self-control producing collective. Since action-producing signs terminate in ‘brute’ experience when referred to an existent final interpretant, any such logical continuity immediately ceases. Second, the interpretant sequence as presented in Table 3.2 requires us to review, too, aspects of the general philosophy of representation described in Chapter 1, in particular the speculative rhetoric/methodeutic branch. We return to this problem in Chapters 4 and 5.

Figure 3.2 displays the major differences in the classificatory principles employed by the 10-class typology of 1903 and the 28-class system of 1908. The first has a predicate-based organizing principle (the criteria for classification are the predicaments or categories) which applies to the sign and two relational facets of signhood; the second presents an array of subjects arranged in the order of semiosis, each divisible in three ways according to the three modalities of being which Peirce described to Lady Welby in the letter of 23 December; in other words, according to whether the particular subject is necessitant, existent (is an ‘occurrence’ or a fact concerning one) or possible.

We note, too, that unlike the triadic system of 1903 with its ten classes of signs, the complex typological structure displayed in Table 3.2 generates twenty-eight very different classes: one of abstractives, six of concretives and twenty-one classes of collectives – the most complex class of all – and even to name them requires considerable imagination. What sort of semiotic entity,

<i>Category</i>	<i>Sign + relations</i>		
	<i>S</i>	<i>O-S</i>	<i>S-I</i>
Thirdness			
Secondness			
Firstness			

<i>Universe</i>	<i>Subjects</i>					
	<i>Od</i>	<i>Oi</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>li</i>	<i>ld</i>	<i>lf</i>
Necessitant						
Existent						
Possible						

**Figure 3.2** The typologies of 1903 and 1908 compared

for example, would be classified as a copulant, categorical sympathetic sign, or one classified as a gratific percussive relative (note that as a consequence of the logical constraints imposed by the hierarchy governing the three universes, in the first case if the sign is copulant, it is necessarily collective, and, in the second, if relative it will also necessarily be a copulant, collective type)? We are now a far cry from the relative comfort of the rhematic symbols and iconic sinsigns of yore ...

More problematic, however, is the requirement that two apparently contrasting classificatory principles should be combined if we are to obtain sixty-six viable classes of signs. Just how compatible, we have to discover, are predicates and universes, even though we can divine Peirce's three categories of the forms of experience – monad, dyad and triad – behind each? More specifically, is it possible to add, as Peirce suggested at the end of his 23 December letter, a further four more relational divisions to the organically ordered six in order to obtain a logical ordering for the ten divisions and the projected sixty-six classes Peirce hoped to derive from them, an issue to which an important branch of Peirce scholarship for the last seventy years has applied itself? Whatever the theoretical difficulties of such a task, we know that both systems, in spite of their differences, are capable of accounting differentially for the very same semiotic phenomena that we encounter everyday of our lives.

## Summary and discussion

This chapter has sought to introduce and describe the theoretical aspects of the 28-class system of December 1908; to discuss the problems left to researchers by Peirce's scant indications as to how it is to be organized and used; and to determine how such a system might be combined with other divisions to yield the sixty-six classes of signs that preoccupied Peirce late in his career. It first introduced the hexad and compared it with the earlier one from 1904. The innovative features were: the nature of the divisions, here based on the correlates of the sign in the effectively hexadic conception of semiosis implicit in the letter to Lady Welby of 23 December 1908; the fact that these new divisions were subdivided by referring each correlate to one of three universes – of possible, existent and necessitant entities; the consequent disappearance of Peirce's first and most fundamental trichotomy identifying icon, index and symbol, and the disappearance, too, of the sign–interpretant division which subdivides into rheme, dicisign and argument.

With respect to this ordering problem, the material examined suggests that the difficulties encountered may be due to conflicting interpretations of Peirce's varied terminology concerning the interpretants, and that they may also be a consequence of an incompatibility between a predicate-based classification and one based upon universes and the sorts of subjects they contain. Further contributing issues of debate are, first, the attempts by many authorities to establish phenomenological hierarchies between the subjects themselves as opposed to hierarchies within divisions; second, the fact that these phenomenological projects fail to take into account that in a predicative, category-based system, items are classified according to shared properties. All legisigns, for example, share the same law-like properties, whereas in a universe-based system the subjects, namely the sign and its five correlates in the new hexadic conception of semiosis, are not necessarily alike: objects, signs and interpretants differ from one another, while the two objects and three interpretants differ among themselves, but they nevertheless are members of one or other of three universes or classes defined by their respective 'modalities of being'.

It is therefore quite possible that a predicate-based system like that of 1903 might prove incompatible with the universe-based system of 1908. Indeed, the attempt to organize the sixty-six classes is hampered by three potential incompatibilities. To begin with, the ten divisions combine classes classified in two very different ways (category vs. universe). Then there is the fact that the two sets of divisions are derived from very different definitions of the sign, the 1903 version being a triad (**O** determines **S** which determines **I**, so that **I** is mediately determined by **O**) as opposed to the 1908 version where there is a chain of determinations in which each 'subject' determines the one that follows immediately (**Od** > **Oi** > **S** > **Ii** > **Id** > **If**). Finally, the ten divisions combine classes obtained from these two very different definitions of the sign.

What many authorities have failed to see, too, is that what we have in hexadb is an alternative, independent, autonomous sign-system which can function without the icon-index-symbol subclasses and arguments and dicisigns. Its theoretical bases reside in at least three features with implications for the entire edifice of the philosophy of representation as described in Chapter 1. First, the 1906 description of sign-action acknowledges that while the sign communicates form to the interpretants it is not the sign as conceived around 1902–03 but the *object* which is logically the origin of the process, and that neither sign nor object 'aims' to do anything in semiosis. Second, while in 1903 both sign-action and the triadic classification system related the sign to a single, comprehensive interpretant albeit with the capacity to generate an interpretant series, the

identification of the nature and function of the three distinct interpretants and the way in which they are represented in, for example, Table 3.2, are surely evidence of Peirce's growing understanding of the role of the interpretant. Third, the classification of the sign with respect to the three interpretants in the 1908 system is a very feasible solution to the inquiry into what he had earlier seen as those 'general conditions of reference of symbols and other signs into the interpretants they aim to determine' of 1902, while the labels themselves identifying classes of signs with respect, in particular, to their final interpretants, give a logical, impersonal account of every sign's telic, purposive nature. Clearly, Peirce has now left the heritage of Locke and Kant far behind.

Five years after the Lowell Lectures and the logically complete sign systems described in Chapter 1 Peirce produced another fully autonomous system, hexadb, but never exploited its potential. It is this task that Chapters 4 and 5 modestly take up. Having described hexadb in what must seem very abstract detail we turn first, in Chapter 4, to concrete applications of the system and its potential for rhetorical analysis and, at the same time, to a comparison of the typologies of 1903 and 1908 in order to assess their compatibility.



## Rhetorical Concerns

The previous three chapters have described, respectively, the 1903 philosophy of representation, some of the stages characterizing the development of Peirce's conceptions of signs, sign-systems and the typologies they gave rise to in the period 1904–07, and, finally in Chapter 3, the hexad of 1908. After these at times highly technical chapters, we turn now to two chapters concerned with concrete examples of how the two systems function and, above all, how they differ. Since one of the purposes of this study is to assess the compatibility between the various divisions composing the three of 1903 and the six of 1908, the present chapter seeks to compare the way each 'accommodates' a variety of semiotic phenomena of obvious rhetorical intent – not, of course, with the intention of deciding which is the better or the more adequate but simply to show how they differ. This will also provide the opportunity to classify signs by means of at least one of the innovative 1908 typologies, a task which most commentators on the ordering of the ten divisions have conspicuously eschewed.

To this end the chapter first returns to the philosophy of representation and, in particular, to its third branch: speculative rhetoric. This is followed by a detailed exposition of an important concept developed within the 1903 ten-class system, namely Peirce's theory of the hypoicons. This has been held over to achieve the specific purpose of this chapter since, to all intents and purposes, it can be considered as a specifically rhetorical 'module' within the earlier typology. The chapter continues by analysing some of the examples discussed in Chapter 1 before examining a series of case studies. In this way, the chapter makes it possible to render in concrete terms the two very different conceptions of the sign in 1903 and 1908 by showing how the later typology differs from the earlier concerning their respective capacities to accommodate signs presenting this evident rhetorical intent.



## Speculative rhetoric

Speculative Rhetoric, it will be recalled, is the final branch of the Philosophy of Representation before Peirce declared his preference for the appellation 'methodeutic', while the domain from which the examples are drawn is that of rhetorically motivated signs, both verbal and pictorial. To see why, we return to a pronouncement already mentioned in Chapter 1 concerning speculative rhetoric from the 'Minute Logic': 'Transuational logic, which I term Speculative Rhetoric, is substantially what goes by the name of methodology, or better, of methodeutic. *It is the doctrine of the general conditions of the reference of Symbols and other Signs to the Interpretants which they aim to determine*' (CP 2.93, 1902, emphasis added). This confident statement, characteristic of the 1902–03 period of the evolution of Peirce's theorizing on signs, obviously concerned at the time the single division from 1866 to 1867. The general conditions Peirce mentioned are necessarily logical conditions, and are the province of the Sign–Interpretant branch of the grand logic. The importance of the 1902 statement is that rhetoric concerns not only the traditional field of verbal communication but must be extended innovatively to include indices and icons, the 'other Signs' of the definition: by this token, like verbal signs, photographs and paintings with or without captions also fall within the scope of speculative rhetoric. However, we have to bear in mind one of the major differences between the 1903 conception of speculative rhetoric and the 1908 hexad: by 1908 Peirce was working with not one but three interpretants.

A second definition makes a similar claim: '[Speculative rhetoric]'s most essential business is to ascertain by logical analysis, greatly facilitated by the development of the other branches of semeiotics, what are the indispensable conditions of a sign's acting to determine another sign nearly equivalent to itself' (EP2 328, 1904). It also states that the rhetoric benefits from the two branches coming earlier in the general philosophy of representation. Equally significantly, this same text, 'Ideas, Stray or Stolen, about Scientific Writing', promotes the idea of a perceived similarity with the traditional art of rhetoric by suggesting that good logical methodology involves signs efficiently determining their intended interpretants, a technically flavoured formula not only for efficient persuasion but also, more importantly, for efficient reasoning and hypothesizing.

Furthermore, Peirce had earlier made a crucially important distinction between speculative rhetoric and speculative grammar: 'In coming to Speculative Rhetoric, after the main conceptions of logic have been well settled, there can be no serious objection to relaxing the severity of our rule of excluding psychological matter, observations of how we think, and the like' (CP 2.107, 1902). In other words,

while speculative grammar is an empty formalism specifying the purely systemic constraints on signhood and consequently is free from human bias, there is absolutely no theoretical reason why the rhetorical branch of the grand logic should not explicitly exploit the human factor in communication. Among other things, at this time, Peirce authorizes us to consider the speaker's communicative purpose in the production of utterances. In 1904 he also suggests that the theoretical boundaries between speculative, 'theoretical' rhetoric and the traditional 'art' should be neutralized in a number of ways: 'A proposition of geometry, a definition of a botanical species, a description of a crystal or of a telescopic nebula is subjected to a mandatory form of statement that is artificial in the extreme. *Evidently, our conception of rhetoric has got to be generalized; and while we are about it, why not remove the restriction of rhetoric to speech?*' (EP2 326, 1904, emphasis added). The originality of this suggestion can be seen in the following extract from Peirce's heterogeneous sample of the variety of intentional signs susceptible of rhetorical treatment: 'every picture, diagram, natural cry, pointing finger, wink, knot in one's handkerchief, memory, dream, fancy, concept, indication, token, symptom, letter, numeral, word, sentence, chapter, book, library, ...' (EP2 326, 1904). In other words, unlike Roland Barthes, for example, who in his essay 'Rhetoric of the Image' states that at least 'in advertising the signification of the image is undoubtedly intentional' (1977: 33), Peirce is here suggesting that there is no aspect of human communication, let alone advertising, which does not involve some form of rhetorical, persuasive intention. This, if we follow the gist of the 1904 essay, is the field of application of both common (cenoscopic) rhetoric and its special (idioscopic), traditional predecessor, a field which deals with potentially metaphorical signs as diverse as images and verbal utterances, for example.

It was seen in the previous chapter that of the ten divisions on which he sought to establish sixty-six classes of signs, Peirce considered the fourth trichotomy defining the icon, index and symbol to be the one he used most (CP 8.368). This being the case, one of the surprising aspects of his mature conception of semiosis is the fact that the hexad examined in Chapter 3 eliminates not only the three modes of representation (resemblance, physical connection and convention), which are functions of the relation holding between the sign and its object, but also, as a consequence, one of Peirce's most notable subclasses of the icon, namely the diagram, which he himself put to considerable use in his Existential Graphs, and, concomitantly, his innovative conception of metaphor. It is this problem which makes it of considerable theoretical interest to distinguish logically between literal and metaphorical representation within the two distinct conceptions of signs. Enter, then, the hypoicons.

## The hypoicons

In this section we deal successively with the editorial problem concerning the hypoicons, why Peirce should have developed them, discussion of a small illustrative corpus and a series of case studies of pictorial artworks, the rhetoric of which is, in Barthes's words, 'undoubtedly intentional'.

The theoretical justification of the hypoicons is to be found in the two drafts of Peirce's late 1903 Lowell Lectures discussed in Chapter 1, namely R478 and R540, which, as we saw, represent two distinct and complementary approaches to the definition of the sign. R540 identifies more fully the three correlates of any triadic relation and the three divisions they yield, whereas R478 first describes the categories and the various processes of separation, and exploits them to define two relational divisions: **S-O** and **S-I**.

Peirce's original formulation is, as we saw in Chapter 1, as follows: 'Representamens are divided by two trichotomies. The first and most fundamental is that any Representamen is either an *Icon*, an *Index*, or a *Symbol*' (EP2 273), the first sentence of which was edited out of the *Collected Papers*. It should be noted, too, that while the definition of the three hypoicons concludes a parent paragraph in the manuscript (EP2 274), paragraph 2.277 was published as an independent paragraph in the *Collected Papers*. Originally, then, what we know as CP 2.277 was simply the logical development of a trichotomy which was subsequently 'postponed' to second position in Peirce's 1903 triadic classification system once he had defined the division concerning the sign itself in R540. This is the passage from R478 in which Peirce introduces the concept of the hypoicon:

An *Icon* is a Representamen whose Representative Quality is a Firstness of it as a First. That is, a quality that it has *qua* thing renders it fit to be a Representamen ... But a sign may be *iconic*, that is, may represent its object mainly by its similarity, no matter what its mode of being. If a substantive be wanted, an iconic Representamen may be termed a *hypoicon*. Any material image, as a painting, is largely conventional in its mode of representation; but in itself, without legend or label it may be called a *hypoicon*. (CP 2.276, 1903)

Since the categories had enabled him to establish the three possible degrees of complexity of the sign, or 'representamen' as he called it at that time, he was finally able to justify *logically* the three modes of representation, namely, in order of increasing complexity, by resemblance,<sup>1</sup> by physical connection and, finally, by convention. In the original manuscript (R478) he simply applied this categorial principle to the icon itself, by analysing the nature of the similarity which characterizes the icon. The result is the system set out in Table 4.1, which completes Table 1.2 from Chapter 1.

**Table 4.1** A synthesis of MSS R478 and R540 (1903) showing the hypoicons

	Division		
	Sign	Sign-Object	Sign-Interpretant
<b>Category</b>			
<b>Thirdness</b>	Legisign	Symbol	Argument
<b>Secondness</b>	Sinsign	Index	Dicisign
<b>Firstness</b>	Qualisign	Icon <i>metaphor</i> <i>diagram</i> <i>image</i>	Rheme

### Three grades of resemblance

Why should Peirce have deemed it necessary to trichotomize the icon and thereby define the hypoicons?<sup>2</sup> It is safe to assume that if anyone had ever asked him in how many ways one entity can resemble another, he would never have approved of the idea that there was only one possible way. And, indeed, after having derived the icon, index and symbol subdivisions through the application of his categories he proceeded to derive the three hypoicons by recursively applying the categories to the icon itself, a process recorded in an uncompromising statement establishing the three degrees of structural complexity – in effect three grades of resemblance – exhibited by the hypoicons. The trichotomy resulting from this recursive process is the definition singularized as paragraph CP 2.277 in the *Collected Papers* describing image, diagram and metaphor in order of increasing complexity:<sup>3</sup>

Hypoicons may roughly [be] divided according to the mode of Firstness which they partake. Those which partake the simple qualities, or First Firstnesses, are *images*; those which represent the relations, mainly dyadic, or so regarded, of the parts of one thing by analogous relations in their own parts, are *diagrams*; those which represent the representative character of a representamen by representing a parallelism in something else, are *metaphors*. (EP2 274, 1903)

Since, as we saw in Chapter 1, R478 describes the categories in detail, it comes as no surprise that these categories should be applied in the same manuscript to the sign-object relation and recursively to the icon, the most basic of the three subclasses thus derived. Furthermore, Peirce had already described his theory of separation in detail in this very same manuscript. This made it possible for him to state in the later manuscript that the index involves a sort of icon and the symbol a sort of index (EP2 291–2). Since the recursive application of the categories to the icon yields image, diagram and metaphor, it follows by transitivity that

symbols will involve an icon and, consequently, any or all of the three hypoicons. Moreover, since, too, it can be hypothesized that the 1903 triadic definition of the sign and the 1908 hexadic conception of semiosis and the set of divisions each determines are logically compatible even though the criteria used by each are different, the chapter addresses the problem posed by the later exclusion of the icon and its three subdivisions, and shows that although these subdivisions cannot be explicitly identified within the hexadic system, it is possible to derive from it the sorts of distinctions the hypoicons realize.

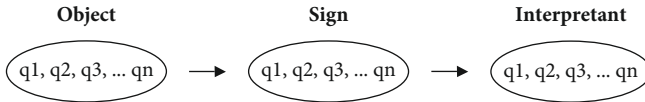
### **Hypoicon, determination and the medium**

The notion of sign–action as a process of determination began to enter Peirce's definitions of the sign from about 1902 onwards. See, for example, '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 an infinitum' (CP 2.303, 1902), for example, or 'A REPRESENTAMEN is a subject of a triadic relation TO a second, called its OBJECT, FOR a third, called is INTERPRETANT, this triadic relation being such that the REPRESENTAMEN determines its interpretant to stand in the same triadic relation to the same object for some interpretant' (CP 1.541, 1903). In these and subsequent definitions the interpretant is mediately 'determined'; that is, caused to be such as it is, by the object via the sign. The process is represented by the following diagrammatic conventions: in Figure 4.1 the 'ellipses' represent the three correlates and the arrows the stages in the mediation of the sign between a single object and a single interpretant, a representation which will, hopefully, render this complex system comprehensible.

Variations in this determination or mediation process in sign-action as conceived in 1903 are represented in Figures 4.2 through 4.5 – respectively, simple illustrations of the three increasingly complex types of internal structure – in which some dynamic object mediately determines an interpretant by means of a sign whose structure that object has already determined, a sign which, depending upon the nature of the relation holding between it and its object, may be an icon, an index or a symbol.



**Figure 4.1** Sign-action as conceived in 1903



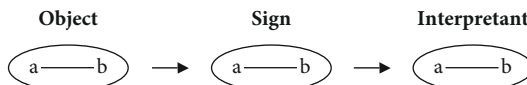
**Figure 4.2** The hypoiconicity of a sign with image structure

The three ways in which the sign can resemble its object by virtue of Peirce's categorical principle are thus represented by Figures 4.2, 4.3, 4.4 and 4.5, respectively, generic image, diagram and metaphor and a concrete example of metaphor, while the arrows represent both the process of determination and the instantiation of the sign as an inescapably 'sensible' – in other words, existential – medium such as a sheet of paper, a cinema screen or the front page of a newspaper. Note that it is the sign alone which has hypoiconic structure since it is the 'representing' correlate in the process.

Figure 4.2 is a very basic representation of the *qualities* inhering in some object which determine corresponding qualities – the First Firstnesses of the definition – in a given sign. As Peirce suggests in the first of the two definitions introducing the hypoicons given above, 'Any material image, as a painting', illustrates the process: Leonardo's *Mona Lisa* is a sign composed of such qualities as lines, forms and colours arranged in a distinctive manner.

Figure 4.3 represents the structure of a very basic diagram, an icon composed essentially of Second Firstnesses, namely the dyadic *relations* mentioned in the definition and represented as the relation **a–b** between the two partial objects **a** and **b** in the fact represented by the sign, such relations being a step up the phenomenological scale from the Firstnesses composing the image. The diagram is thus an icon of at least one of whatever dyadic relations inform the object it represents (CP 4.418, 1903), and structures not only verbal utterances and photographs but also all manner of instruments of measurement, the instructions for building kits or installing electrical appliances, and the illustrations in geometry manuals, for example.

Finally, metaphor is the hypoiconic structure partaking of Third Firstnesses – mediation, synthesis, representation (see, for example, CP 1.378, c. 1890). Whereas the simplified scheme of the diagram in Figure 4.3 contains a relation

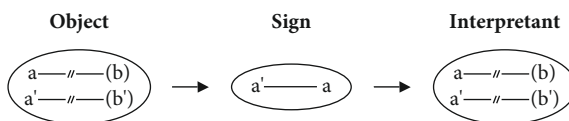


**Figure 4.3** The hypoiconicity of a sign with diagram structure

constitutive of some fact such as 'I shot the sheriff', metaphor as defined by Peirce places two such relations in parallel (indicated by the pairs // symbols in Figure 4.4). These present counterpart mappings from elements belonging to some generally uncontroversial, well-known fact or relation ( $a$ // $b$ ), and referred to within cognitive linguistics as the 'base domain', which is the fact considered to be the basis of the judgement and hopefully self-evident to the addressee or interpreter, to the elements ( $a'$ // $b'$ ), elements in the target relation or 'target domain', which is the fact or relation that is being judged or commented upon, or is somehow controversial and not yet accepted. Note that the repetition of the structure of the object in the structure of the interpretant is a way of showing that the metaphor has been correctly interpreted. Should a child hear an adult state that man is a wolf, for example, the child might reply, 'But that's silly, a wolf is an animal.' In such a case, the structure of the interpretant probably would not realize the intended parallelism.

It should be evident from Figure 4.4 that some of the information given in the simple parallelism in the object is missing from the sign, which displays a single relation holding between partial objects drawn from the two distinct domains. In this case, as the other partial objects in the original parallel are missing from the sign, the sign is said to be 'underspecified' with respect to its object: the sign can have no structure or form, as we saw in Chapter 2, that has not been communicated by the object, but in the case of metaphor it doesn't represent *all* the elements characterizing the structure of the object. Furthermore, the elements which the sign contains are drawn from two very distinct relations, here  $a'$  and  $a$ , with the result that metaphorical signs are diagnostically incongruous. For these two reasons the ellipse representing the sign in Figure 4.4 contains a single relation, although some metaphorical signs, as we see below, can represent vectorially more than two.

It was Peirce's logical nous that enabled him to see that there are signs more complex than the common diagrammatic type, signs which represent an object structurally and, as he saw it at the time, phenomenologically more complex than themselves; signs, finally, which 'synthesize' in the guise of a judgement elements from two distinct relations, representing two distinct 'worlds' or 'universes of



**Figure 4.4** The hypoiconicity of a sign with metaphor structure

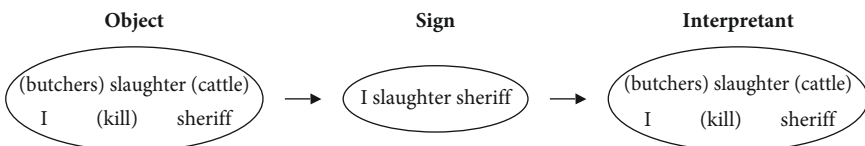
existence' (cf., for example, EP2 492–97, and below). However, this 'two-tiered' parallel structure is too complex to be accommodated fully by the Secondness of the existential medium (airwaves, paper, blackboard, computer screen etc.) through which the structure of the object has perforce to be communicated, and results in such one-dimensional, vectorial structures as the one displayed in the sign in Figure 4.4. This is the necessarily simplified scheme of the structure of the verbal sign (4.3) below represented as a phenomenological 'bottleneck' in Figure 4.5, where the bracketed items in the parallelism informing the object are 'sifted out' by a phenomenologically less complex medium, which in this way restricts the perceivable form of the sign, rendering it both underspecified and incongruous. Consider the following simple verbal examples:

(4.1) *I killed the sheriff.*

(4.2) *I shot the sheriff.*

(4.3) *I slaughtered the sheriff.*

It follows from what was seen above that the object in each case is composed of the partial objects *I* (in this case, of course, the utterer) and *the sheriff*. On the other hand, the part of each utterance appropriated to representing how the sign represents the relation between these partial objects is signified by a transitive verb. In (4.1) *killed* is a neutral representation of the change-of-state process involved in the fact represented. In (4.2) *shot*, as is generally the case in English, represents additionally the manner of change of state: to shoot someone is to kill them in a certain way, with a bow and arrow, for example, or, more probably in this case, with a gun. Both verbs are literal verbal representations of this process, which necessarily belongs to the same 'universe' or 'world' as the protagonists. The hypoiconic structure of each is diagrammatic – a straightforward dyadic relation holding between the two partial objects displayed in a very elliptical and abstract manner in Figure 4.3, where the partial objects *I* and *the sheriff* are represented, respectively, by the letters **a** and **b**, and the verbal process associating them by a line. This is the basic structure of such utterances as *John*



**Figure 4.5** The metaphorical structure of the sign *I slaughtered the sheriff*



is in love with Helen and Cain killed Abel. It is also the basic simplex structure of any clefts constructed on, for example (4.2) above:

(4.4) *It was the sheriff that I shot.*

(4.5) *What I did was shoot the sheriff.*

In (4.3), on the other hand, the verbal form *slaughtered* is highly charged from a figurative point of view: it is both hyperbolic and metaphorical, for while the two partial objects belong to the same universe of existence, the part of the sign serving to represent the relation holding between them draws upon the entirely different universe of the wholesale killing by butchers or slaughterhouse workers of cattle, sheep or other animals for food: to slaughter the sheriff is to treat him not as a human being but as an anonymous piece of meat. This is the basic structure illustrated in Figure 4.5, which shows the original parallelism in the object where the elements not appearing in the sign are in brackets. The culturally well-known relation between butchers and cattle occupies the base domain,<sup>4</sup> while the controversial relation between the speaker (I) and the sheriff occupies the target domain beneath. It is for this reason that any counterparts in either relation not appearing in the sign can conveniently be indicated in Figure 4.5 (and subsequent diagrammatic representations of metaphoric structure) within parentheses, as they have been 'bracketed out' from the structure in the object by the necessity of communicating this form through an existential medium.

Now the process of drawing together facts belonging to distinct universes of existence and placing them in parallel is obviously dependent upon, if we retain Peirce's preferred abstract conceptualization, some 'quasi-mind' having perceived a resemblance between them and wishing to communicate it, and the paragraph defining the hypoicons turns out to be pivotal between speculative grammar, in which it is defined, Peirce's category theory on which the definition was based in 1903, and an early awareness of the universes of existence which enables us to understand where the parallelism in metaphor, for example, comes from.

Moreover, this complex situation is an ecological one, depending upon the necessarily existential nature of the sign as medium – we couldn't perceive it if it didn't exist – more precisely upon the three distinct structural configurations informing the relation holding between an iconic sign and the existential medium by means of which it has necessarily to be communicated, for example on the page of a book. The hypoicons as defined in CP 2.277 in 1903 can therefore be

understood to be a logical accommodation of this complex ecological situation.<sup>5</sup> As can be seen from the simple examples above, the form communicated by the object to the medium is only fully represented in the first two cases. This problem can be understood in terms of the relation or 'ratio' characterizing the complexity of the form to be communicated, the number of universes of existence composing the object and the necessarily existent and therefore, singular, status of the sign as a perceivable medium. The explanation as to why metaphoric signs are underspecified and incongruous can be explained logically as opposed to phenomenologically in the hexad.

The hypoicons, then, constituted a module within the S-O division redefining the scope of rhetorical phenomena, increasing its range from the traditional binary literal – figurative distinction to a three-way division between image, diagram and metaphor, based upon the three categories of the forms of experience, namely the monad, the dyad and the triad, as seen earlier. In short, Peirce's hypoicons were one of the philosophy of representation's major contributions to the analysis of the whole range of 'true representation, so far as representation can be known without any gathering of special facts beyond our ordinary daily life' as Peirce has it in 1903 (CP 1.539). It was also the source of a very vigorous branch of contemporary linguistic research, namely iconicity theory, demonstrating that languages are not arbitrary in structure – they would be unlearnable if this were the case – but, rather, motivated, even if the nature of the motivation is not always immediately observable in verbal signs.<sup>6</sup> We turn now to the task of comparing the hypoicons with the analytic system provided by the hexad of 1908. In what follows, the classification of each sign is not intended to be definitive, as such an exercise could easily become repetitive and jejune, but principally a heuristic for exploring the potential of the system. We begin by examining some of the illustrations from Chapter 1.

Figure 1.3 in Chapter 1, the drawing of Cheyne Walk, was classified as an iconic sinsign. We saw that as such it presents a likeness with some object but, unlike a photograph, cannot afford proof of the existence of that object – an icon is a relation, not an independent correlate. It has a rhematic syntax that we can represent as '— is like this' much like a predicate function. From the hypoiconic point of view, the drawing on its own is imagic: it consists in a series of qualities on an existent sheet of paper arranged in such a way that we recognize people standing on the bank of a river. If we add the original caption it becomes the replica of a dicent indexical legisign: the sign's new syntax is such as to establish a dicent association between the caption, a verbal sign and therefore a legisign and the image. The resultant sign can be paraphrased as 'Cheyne Walk is like

this', where 'this' is the sum total of qualities on the image. In this way the degree of hypoiconicity increases, too, and the new completer sign composed of image plus caption is structured by a simple dyad and is therefore diagrammatic like the verbal examples (4.1) and (4.2) above.

The problem is how to classify this illustration by hexadb. For convenience, Table 3.2 from Chapter 3 is reproduced as Table 4.2. If we analyse the image from the perspective of the hexad, the approach is very different. The first point to note is that what we are looking at and classifying is, in fact, the way the sign's immediate object has composed the lines, colours and shapes into an immediately recognizable representation of a given set of partial objects. We saw in the preceding chapter that in the draft of 25 December 1908 (CP 8.366) Peirce identified the range of dynamic objects of signs according to the universe to which they belong: possibles (colour, mass, whiteness etc.), existent objects (humans, individuals such as Charlemagne) and collections or classes (mankind, humanity etc.). In view of this, Figure 1.3, which clearly represents existent objects such as humans, trees, buildings and river banks, among other things, is a concreative sign – the fact that it is a drawing and possibly the fruit of the artist's imagination makes no difference; it is what it represents that counts, here members of classes of existent entities. As it is, in itself, namely a sheet of paper and an existent object, therefore, the drawing is classified as a token, and logically must be designative.

As far as the interpretants are concerned, there is necessarily a problem (which would beset any attempt at classification within the 66-class system, too), namely how to identify the interpretants in such a case. There are two ways to classify the interpretant sequence in Table 4.2: *a priori* as a prospective deployment of the interpretants in, for example, a publicity campaign, or *a posteriori* as when classifying an interpretation that has been witnessed and

**Table 4.2** A reconstruction of the 23 December 1908 hexadic typology

	Subject					
	Od	Oi	S	li	ld	lf
<b>Universe</b>						
<b>Necessitant</b>	collective	copulant	type	relative	usual	to produce self-control
<b>Existent</b>	concreative	designative	token	categorical	percussive	to produce action
<b>Possible</b>	abstractive	descriptive	mark	hypothetical	sympathetic	gratific

recorded. While with a little ingenuity and a lot of luck it would be possible to follow the series of interpretants in a real-life interpretation sequence, in an exercise like the present it has to be a matter of informed guesswork. Working back from the final interpretant division for convenience, we can say that since Figure 1.3 is a drawing we can assume that for the final interpretant the sign is gratific, that is, intended to produce a feeling (it is hard to think that it might have been part of some nineteenth-century town planning campaign targeting council action on a new housing estate, for example). In this case, it may have produced a verbal reaction from one or other of its viewers – ‘*How nice!*’ or ‘*The perspective is wrong.*’ Or even ‘*The river is too close to the buildings.*’ These are all viable dynamic interpretants and would make the sign percussive. Finally, if percussive, the sign at **Ii** is likely to be categorical: the immediate interpretant is what we might call the ‘semantic’ stage in interpretation, the stage in which we turn the squiggles on the paper medium of Figure 1.3 into creatures from the physical world – humans, river banks, trees and buildings. Another example of this semantic stage of the process of interpretation is when we mentally transform the colours, lines and shapes dancing on the medium of the cinema screen into the creatures of our experience – men, women, Martians and so on – before the next, active, dynamic interpretant stage when we laugh out loud, cower in our seats or furtively wipe a tear from our cheeks.

Now let us examine Figure 1.4 once more, which shows two young Chinese women sheltering from the sun beneath a parasol beside a lake at the Summer Palace in Beijing. This is, as we saw earlier, a dicent (indexical) sinsign (cf. CP 2.320, in which Peirce defines the section of rays from the model of a photograph as its quasi-subject and the print thus obtained as its quasi-predicate). Its hypoiconic status as a photograph is clearly diagrammatic since the relations between the areas of light and dark on the print correspond term by term to relations holding between the objects participating in the original situation, although it also ‘involves’ in the sense of CP 2.247–248 clearly imagic complex areas of light and shade which enable us to recognize via the immediate interpretant stage the entities represented before we actually react to the image.

By hexadb, the photograph again is concretive since it represents exemplars of existent objects: females, leaves, trees, boats on the lake and so on, and the sign’s immediate object has communicated to the sign forms of fully recognizable entities. The photographic print exhibiting these forms is a physical medium, and therefore a token. Working back from a putative final interpretant again, we assume that the photograph is gratific, intended not to produce some sort of action – prohibit the use of personal parasols in these private grounds, or

introduce the hire of parasols on hot days, for example – but to produce a feeling of compassion, amazement or wonder at the beauty of the photograph. If this is the case, then the immediate interpretant is again the semantic stage when we mentally transform the patches of light and shade on the print into the creatures that we recognize – females, trees, boats and so on.

The important point is that whereas there is a significant difference between Figures 1.3 and 1.4 within the 1903 classification – one is an icon, the other an index – by hexadb both are classified in identical manner: they are gratific, percussive, concrete signs, since both represent exemplars of objects that exist. There is, nevertheless, an advantage in the hexadic classification. The 1903 system is predicate-based: the system employs Peirce's categories in order to distinguish the various subdivisions within a given trichotomy. Consequently, whatever representation is classified as an iconic sinsign is logically the same as any other iconic sinsign, and by this token there is no *logical* difference between Figure 1.3 and, say, Leonardo's *Mona Lisa*. Similarly, there is no *logical* difference between Figure 1.4, the photograph of the two young women taken in 2015 in China and Figure 4.6, the photograph of a train that fell through a station wall in Paris 120 years earlier.

At this point the reader is no doubt thinking 'This is as may be, but I can see that one illustration depicts tiny humans on a river bank, and I know that Leonardo's painting has a seated woman smiling enigmatically' or 'But one shows two women and a lake, the other an old-fashioned train'. Nevertheless, if any one iconic sinsign or any one dicent sinsign were logically different from all the others, Peirce's system would be inconsistent. It follows, then, that when making judgements concerning the *items* in a pictorial sign, for example, the reader is unwittingly employing the methodology of hexadb, for this typology classifies a sign not according to *how* it represents its object (and *how* it relates to its interpretant) as does the 1903 system, but, first and foremost, according to the readily identifiable *sorts of things, entities or objects* that it represents. Unlike the system of 1903, a typology such as hexadb authorizes us, among other things, to seek to identify the sorts of partial objects in the fact or event 'filtered' by the immediate object onto the sign before us, whereas such a strategy in the earlier system is not validated by the logic.

In short, from a semiotic perspective, any iconic sinsign with or without a caption resembles nothing so much as any other iconic sinsign; any dicisign resembles nothing so much as any other dicisign – and this without distinction, since each and every one shares the properties which enable them to be classified



**Figure 4.6** Train wreck at Montparnasse, 1895, Wikimedia Commons

as such. On the other hand, while every concrete sign (the division at **Od** in Table 4.2) must be logically similar to every other concrete sign to qualify as such, we are authorized to identify and list the different partial objects each represents, for were we not able to do so, we should be unable to classify such signs as concretives in the first place. Similarly, we recognize collectives and abstractives, respectively, as such by virtue of the classes and qualities and so on that they represent.

## Universes

The following section of the chapter is now devoted to the way the hexad of 1908 accommodates rhetorical phenomena without recourse to hypoiconicity and reference to icons, indices and symbols. The general theoretical framework is provided by the concept of the universe of existence, which Peirce introduced explicitly in his correspondence with William James. Although less detailed in nature than the system of hypoicons, it is nevertheless applicable to a wide variety of signs since it exploits the basic principle of the hexad, namely that we analyse the sorts of objects that the sign represents rather than the manner or mode in which it represents them. It is within this framework, therefore, that the theoretical problems raised by the case studies can most conveniently be examined.

### Dylan Thomas

We begin with another verbal example, an extract from Dylan Thomas's poetic profession of faith, his brief *Ars poetica*, 'In My Craft and Sullen Art':

I labour by singing light  
Not for ambition or bread  
Or the strut and trade of charms  
On the ivory stages ....

From the point of view of the *topoi* of classical rhetoric this extract is very rich: hypallage in the first line (lights don't normally sing, whereas humans writing beneath them might do), the metonymy of *bread*, here representing more generally the poet's livelihood, and, finally, the highly complex associations in his assertion that he doesn't write poetry for the 'strut and trade of charms / on the ivory stages' either. In terms of paragraph CP 2.277 the hypoiconic structure of these lines is definitely metaphoric, although it would take a far more complex diagrammatization of the sequence of intricate parallelisms informing the text than the one in Figure 4.4. Nevertheless, the 1903 system enables us to identify the diagrammatic form of hypallage and metonymy, and at least understand that it is informed by a series of parallelisms characteristic of metaphoric structure.

What of the system of 1908? The principal purpose of the chapter is to compare and contrast the two systems and the way each accommodates rhetorical material. It is important to evaluate their differences and to attempt to assess their compatibility since both contribute to the ten divisions that are intended to yield

sixty-six classes of signs. The concept of the universe of existence associated with the two sign-systems of 1908 (i.e. the definition and the typology it generates) offers an alternative method of teasing out the complex relations to be found in the extract from Thomas's poem, since the universe of existence in this case is composed of the complex association of features involved in Thomas's conception of poetic creation.<sup>7</sup>

An initial indication of the theoretical interest of the principle involved is provided in the following extract from a draft letter to William James composed barely two months after the one to Lady Welby in which the twenty-eight and sixty-six classes of signs were first mentioned. In it Peirce details a number of cases where the sign's dynamic object corresponds to what he terms the 'universe of existence', and he makes what at first sight seems to be a very surprising affirmation:

The Object of a Sign may be something to be created by the Sign. For the Object of "Napoleon" is the Universe of Existence so far as it is determined by the fact of Napoleon being a Member of it. The Object of the sentence "Hamlet was insane" is the Universe of Shakespeare's Creation so far as it is determined by Hamlet being part of it. (EP2 493, 1909)

In most of the definitions of the sign in which it appears, the dynamic object had hitherto been defined as the determinant of the sign and, mediately, of its three interpretants. It comes as somewhat of a surprise to find now that the object can also be a determination or creation of the sign. However, Peirce's conception of the dynamic object, as we see in greater detail in the chapter to come, was undergoing considerable development in the years 1908–09, as the following definition shows:

We must distinguish between the Immediate Object,—i.e. the Object as represented in the sign,—and the Real (no, because perhaps the Object is altogether fictive, I must choose a different term, therefore), say rather the Dynamical Object, which, from the nature of things, the Sign *cannot* express, which it can only *indicate* and leave the interpreter to find out by *collateral* experience. (CP 8.314, 1909)

The reference to the notion that 'perhaps the Object is altogether fictive' explains the remark suggesting that the object may be a creation of the sign. In the James draft Peirce gives the example of the proper noun *Napoleon*, noting that its object is the 'Universe of Existence' so far as Napoleon the historical figure is a member of that universe: it is the universe itself which constitutes the sign's dynamic object. At this late date, then, the object of any proper noun is in



this way the universe determined by the referent of that proper noun's being a member of it. Similarly, the writer of the present study and any and every reader of it belong to a common universe of existence, and Napoleon, although a person of the past, also determines it. Hamlet, on the other hand, a 'fictive' personage, nevertheless also determines a universe (which, of course, impinges on our own through our having seen the play or learnt about it somehow), namely the universe of Shakespeare's creation. In the draft letter to James, Peirce discusses other examples of such 'universes', but the important point to note is that at this time not only was he expanding his conception of the sign's dynamic object but also that he was coming to associate it more and more with the concept of the universe of existence, one of the three enabling him to distinguish between the subdivisions of the six or ten trichotomies yielding twenty-eight or sixty-six classes of signs.<sup>8</sup> It is this concept of the universe of existence, or, quite simply of a universe of which the protagonist(s) represented in the sign Peirce calls the 'Special Object' (EP2 492), that provides a framework within which to interpret the complex figurative language in the extract from Dylan Thomas's poem quoted above from the hexadic perspective.

With respect to the classification of the extract by hexadb, the exact nature of the dynamic and final interpretants remains problematic. However, we do know from what Peirce wrote to Lady Welby that all the words in a dictionary are necessarily types (SS 83). This being the case, and temporarily setting aside the type-instance (token) distinction for the sake of simplicity, the sentence in the extract is necessarily collective and copulant (the multiple associations to be examined below are also evidence of this). At division **II** the sign is relative, by which Peirce presumably means that the interpretability of such a sign involves, here too, the processing of multiple cognitive associations (syntactic, semantic and rhetorical) as opposed to identifying people, for example, in a painting by means of a categorical-determining immediate interpretant, since at the necessitant level the six 'subjects' of the typology are referred to a universe of generality and habit, a level where, for example, thought and not air waves or the written page is the medium of the type. If the recited poem produces an audible enthusiastic reception from whoever reads it, the sign is percussive, and, one assumes, given the genre, that this deliberately enigmatic poem is gratific rather than action-producing. In short, whereas the sign is the complex replica of a dicent symbol by the early typology, it is a gratific, percussive, relative sign by the later. On their own, such classifications have a mainly theoretical interest and contribute little in either case to our understanding and appreciation of the poem: it is not the final classification which is interesting but rather the abductive

processes that the interpreter employs heuristically in order to obtain it. A more interesting form of analysis is, in fact, the reconstruction of those elements of the universe of poetic creation that the poet rejects, poetic inspiration being the particular universe of existence within which the meaning of the extract is constructed. What follows, then, is a brief inventory of some of the allusions by means of which the poet has composed this universe. To simplify, we restrict the analysis to the final two lines of metaphor, a particularly important problem in view of the fact that the hexad has no icon and therefore no hypoicons to facilitate the task. Herewith the final two lines from the extract once more:

Or the strut and trade of charms  
On the ivory stages ....

The primary theoretical interest here is that the sources of Thomas's inspiration are defined negatively in the extract: the full extract lists not the causes or reasons for composing poetry but some of the sources of inspiration which do not belong in his universe of creation – he is not driven by ambition nor does he write simply to earn a living, for example. In the final lines of the extract, the 'strut and trade of charms' introduces the rejection of another reason for composing poetry disguised in a number of luminously combined allusions to universe-determining 'objects' or 'special objects' intended to enable us to appreciate the poet's ethical position and to reconstruct *a contrario* the particular creative universe that the poet *is* targeting. The 'strut' is that of the peacock and of a poet parading a gaudy appearance that dazzles the public, while the object 'trade of charms' characterizes a flashy, creation-debasing activity from the world of finance. The expression 'ivory stages' denotes a further complex association of objects – the ivory of the teeth is a synecdoche of the mouth, itself a metonym for speech and the organ for reciting. The 'ivory stages,' like the 'sullen craft' of the poem's title, constitute yet another case of hypallage,<sup>9</sup> as the stages are not the location where the mouth produces the recitation but the mouth itself. In this case, too, we have a 'universal' correspondence, hypallage being in this theory the attribution of a property of an object from one universe of existence to an object belonging to another.

As a poet, Thomas, thinking possibly of the Eisteddfod, but more likely and more mischievously, of lucrative public poetry reading sessions, claims to be rejecting this latter institution which bestows public fame, appearance and fortune as a reason for composing his poetry (this from a poet not averse to giving poetry recitations on lecture tours!), writing only for the lovers, abed with their arms round the 'griefs of the ages,' one of the positive elements determining

his creative universe alluded to in the poem. Finally, there is a veiled reference to the universe of Shakespearean drama, *Macbeth* to be precise, in the echo of the 'poor player, that struts and frets his hour upon the stage, and then is heard no more.' The 'strut and trade of charms / on the ivory stages' thus turns out to be Dylan Thomas's striking description of what we would more mundanely refer to as 'remunerated public readings of pretty-sounding poetry.'

The analysis above was intended to set out the broad lines of the 1908 approach made possible by Peirce's late conception of the dynamic object and the sorts of universes its special objects can determine: the poem blends a number of both positive and negative objects of this sort. This broader conception of the dynamic object is of particular importance within the theme of the chapter, of which the remainder deals with a number of pictorial case studies where the differences between hypoiconicity and this posited universe approach will be made in greater detail.

### **Jerry Uelsmann: *Symbolic Mutation***

In this case we compare two photographs depicting the male fist and the female face or, more generally, the vulnerability of the female at the hands of a potentially violent male, a photograph being able to freeze its dynamic object(s) in a determining moment of a universe in the Peircean sense. The immediate object as communicated to the sign in Figure 4.7 displays an imminent attack by a male on a cowering female victim. The partial objects thus represented determine the clearly recognizable universe of existence of violence against women. The elements composing Jerry Uelsmann's photograph, *Symbolic Mutation* (1961), on the other hand, determine a far more elusive universe which, as in the interpretation of the Thomas extract above, we have to decipher from the clues, here pictorial, provided by the image.

The reader will no doubt have realized that like the verbal utterances (4.2) and (4.3), two replicas of dicent symbols discussed above, the two photographs, although both dicent sinsigns, display markedly different hypoiconic structure. Figure 4.7 is a straightforward dramatic diagram-structured representation of the imminent violence, while Jerry Uelsmann's image, Figure 4.8, like much of his nature photography of the period, and indeed like much of his contemporary photography which he continues to create in the analogue mode,<sup>10</sup> is subtly metaphorical, blending elements from two different contexts, a structure which Figure 4.9 is intended to show in its barest essentials.



**Figure 4.7** An image of domestic violence, Adobe Stock



**Figure 4.8** Jerry Uelsmann, *Symbolic Mutation*, 1961, Courtesy of the artist



**Figure 4.9** The pictorial parallelism in *Symbolic Mutation*

From the point of view of hexadb we note, first, that the dynamic objects represented by the two photographs are existents, a male and a female in each case, which means that within the **Od** division both signs are *theoretically* concrete. As signs, both are tokens, and with respect to their immediate interpretants are categorical – we recognize the lines, shading and shapes on the prints as the representations of human beings. Their disturbing tenor no doubt provokes reactions of disgust or surprise as dynamic interpretants, and we can therefore classify both in the dynamic interpretant division as percussive.

However, if displayed on a poster, for example, and in view of the telic nature of the sign at the final stage of the interpretation process – to produce self-control, an action or a feeling – Figure 4.7 would presumably be intended to produce some sort of social change or at least consciousness-raising in the observers of the image, and in this case would be a ‘literal’ action-producing concrete. Uelsmann’s complex composite photograph, on the other hand, is not literal but doubly figurative. First, it blends elements from two distinct universes: different negatives, different moments and different worlds – the fragile and vulnerable world of the female and the seemingly brutal world of the male. Second, the partial objects of these distinct worlds are represented, respectively, by synecdoche: the hairy-fingered male fist enclosing the fragile face of the woman is all we see of either protagonist. In a manner recalling the metonymic references in Bulmer Lytton’s ‘The pen is mightier than the sword’ – in other words, the journalist/writer is a more powerful agent of social change than the soldier – or Wordsworth’s ‘The child is father of the man’, in which the nominal elements stand not for an individual child, father or man (existents), but as the representatives of general classes (necessitants), Uelsmann’s magnificent image has generic as opposed to singular scope, and can be interpreted to represent two general classes rather than two individuals. This suggests that the sign, while apparently a concrete – it represents existents, namely a man and a woman – is not a typical photographic concrete like the one in Figure 4.7. It is a token combining existents defining two distinct universes: by its immediate object it is thus copulant and with respect to its dynamic it is collective.<sup>11</sup>

In conclusion, then, we find two divisions within the hexadic system in which Uelsmann's photographic masterpiece differs from Figure 4.7. First, this is a work of art and in spite of the negative judgement it appears to make on male-female relations, with respect to its final interpretant, it is surely to be classified gratific in a sense broader than merely giving pleasure. Second, in view of the synecdochical structure of the photograph which transforms the individual man and woman into representatives of general classes, in interpreting it we unwittingly 'promote' the photograph in the dynamic object division to the status of a collective. If this (necessarily speculative) analysis is correct, Figure 4.8 is a gratific, percussive, copulant (the image obviously represents its partial objects as humans but the striking synecdochical arrangement is determined by a complex structuring at the necessitant **O<sub>i</sub>** stage which produces the generic impression) collective sign, the photograph's immediate interpretant being the mental conversion of the pictorial elements of the two quite distinct universes which are represented elliptically in the forms communicated by its immediate object.

### **John Goto: Flower Seller**

John Goto's 2002 photographic tableau *Flower Seller*, Figure 4.10, is another example of how the partial objects frozen in the image determine a micro-universe. Within the 1903 system, it would be classified (independently of its caption) as a dicent sinsign – an informational sign – as is the case with all photographs, this one being, within this sort of analysis, no different logically from any other dicent sinsign. However, *independently* of any classification, any observer of the photograph would surely recognize the tension generated in the image between the plight of the ex-serviceman and the emblems of his service to his country. The 1908 system, which has no means of identifying icons, indices and dicent signs and so on, requires therefore that we 'enter' the image. In this way, the sign's ideologically charged message is to be inferred from the analysis and not simply from collateral knowledge of British politics of the period. This will involve, too, reconstructing another universe of existence, the universe of which this bleak tableau is the antithesis.

What are the significant details to be seen in the image? An inventory of the objects composing the situation depicted confirms a depressing, cold winter scene in what appears to be a deserted, ultramodern shopping precinct.<sup>12</sup> The drab grey-blue backdrop (in the original) is formed of a building dominated by curtained windows, the multiple glass panes separated by steel struts and



**Figure 4.10** John Goto, *Flower Seller*, 2002, Courtesy of the artist

bars. There are more grey metallic tubes forming a cage-like enclosure round the ex-serviceman, this dehumanized tube motif picked up by the Zimmer frame he is obliged to support himself with. Apart from the man and the bucket of flowers, these mineral surroundings are broken by a single plane-tree, its bare branches bearing one or two lingering green leaves. These, together with the barely visible flowers and the insignia, are the only bright colours in the image. The ex-serviceman wears an old-fashioned mackintosh, now a world too wide for his shrunk frame and probably acquired from a charity shop. He stares grimly into the distance, waiting for a sale from the two buckets of flowers at his feet, from which we infer, even without the title of the image, that he has to sell bouquets of flowers to survive: in short, he has been forced into a form of

begging. In contrast to this sorry plight the ex-serviceman sports two stars and a medal, insignia which testify to his wartime devotion to his country. Worn in the correct order, we find the 1939–1945 Star showing that he had served in the Battle of Britain, the Air Crew Europe Star and, finally, the War Medal 1939–1945 bearing an oak leaf emblem awarded additionally for brave conduct.

*Flower Seller* is one of a series of digitally manipulated photographic tableaux from 2002. This tableau is from the third part of a general series. This particular series, *Gilt City*, is a satirical reflection of British capitalist culture under the government of the time, although not all the tableaux are as desolate as *Flower Seller* in spite of the critical regard to which they subject contemporary society. The context is the economic situation in Britain in the early years of the century. The title *Gilt City* plays on the homophonic similarities between the words *gilt* (a thin layer of gold and a type of security issued by banks) and *guilt* (recognition of a dereliction of duty), whereas the general title of the three series of tableaux, *Ukadia*, is a mocking fusing of *UK* and *Arcadia*, a mythical pastoral, uncorrupted and harmonious utopia. However, the ironic tension between the straitened, far from Arcadian circumstances of the ex-serviceman and the insignia testifying to his distinguished and selfless service to his country is to be seen as a virulent condemnation of social neglect.

Hypocionically, irony is a diagrammatic structure, but this tells us little without taking the sign's immediate object into account, a theoretical manoeuvre made available by hexadb. How, in this case, do we account for irony from the object-universe perspective? Consider, to begin with, the following definition of irony provided by the *OED*: '1. A figure of speech in which the intended meaning is the opposite of that expressed by the words used; usually taking the form of sarcasm or ridicule in which laudatory expressions are used to imply condemnation or contempt.'

Translated into the analytic process ascribed to the hexad of 1908 irony can be seen as the tension between what should be the case (an ideal universe) and what actually happens to be the case (the universe represented), and while irony can often be humorous here it is used as an acerbic comment upon the economic priorities of the British government in the early years of the century. In the manner of the rag-and-bones man and cockle and mussels sellers like Molly Malone, flower sellers have all but disappeared from modern cities, a situation which adds to the irony of Goto's tableau. In contrast, nineteenth-century representations of the flower seller usually depict smiling young girls with flowers in a basket, not in the metal buckets of Goto's veteran, and these constitute the conventional determinants of the positive universe implied by the



irony of Figure 4.10. As a work of art the photograph is a (collective) copulant token: what makes it figurative is the filtering out of the implicit universe at the **Oi** stage, leaving us to contemplate its depressing antithesis.

Thus, the irony in the sign's ideologically charged message is to be inferred from the mental contrasting of these two universes. The disparity between the bleak universe of existence seen and the generous universe in which the ex-serviceman's wartime valour would be recognized and rewarded implied in the derisive title of the general series is the source of the irony of the image, and constitutes a derisive condemnation of the seemingly widespread heartless manner in which supposedly advanced cultures neglect the welfare of their former warriors.

### **Cindy Sherman: *Untitled Film Still #14***

For Peirce, as seen in Chapter 1, the index is a sign whose relation to its object is one of physical connection. The rays emanating from the model constitute 'a section of rays projected from an object otherwise known' (CP 2.320), while the print itself is, as we saw, a sort of quasi-predicate. There is, nevertheless, an aspect concerning the index which requires investigation. From what has been seen and in view of the important existential status of the index in the communication of information, it might seem that existence exerts an inescapable 'tyranny' on the sign-user. The indexical nature of the photograph is thus the problem submitted to the two sign-systems in this section. We examine this problem through a study of Cindy Sherman's *Untitled Film Still #14* (Figure 4.11).

The image represents a young well-dressed woman standing beside a mirror through which we see a glass of champagne on the far side of the table in the foreground. She looks anxiously off-camera and is holding what looks like a knife in a woollen sheath in her right hand. The still, number 14 out of almost seventy such images, purports to be a publicity genre once much used in the film industry for promotional purposes: photographs taken on the set with the actors, for example, were used to give advanced publicity of the film and also, as here, of its stars, in newspapers and magazines. As a photograph, Figure 4.11 is to be classified conventionally as a dicent sinsign. It is theoretically diagrammatical in structure, but as it has no meaningful title to 'arrest' interpretation, there is no reason to rule out its being metaphorical or, indeed, allegorical – which is the whole purpose of not attributing a title to a work of art. And yet we know from the caption that this is one of a series, and from collateral experience that the photographer is Cindy Sherman, and that she is the protagonist of the entire set of sixty-nine such stills.



**Figure 4.11** Cindy Sherman, *Untitled Film Still #14*, 1978, Courtesy of the artist, Sprüth Magers and Metro Pictures, New York

The context is the 1970s. In 1977 the art critic Rosalind Krauss published an article in two parts celebrating the consecration of the photograph as an art form in the review *October* (Krauss 1977) and this the year that Susan Sontag published a very different view of the indexical realism of the photograph!<sup>13</sup> After an extensive discussion of Roman Jakobson's concept of the 'shifter'<sup>14</sup> – Jakobson's name, borrowed from Otto Jespersen, for indexical expressions such

as *I*, *you* and the demonstratives and so on – in works by Marcel Duchamp, she had this to say of the photograph's artistic basis:

13. If we are to ask what the art of the '70s has to do with Duchamp and the shifter, we could summarize it very briefly by pointing to the pervasiveness of the photograph as a means of representation. It is not only there in the obvious case of photo-realism, but in all those forms which depend on documentation – earthworks, particularly as they have evolved in the last several years, body art, story art – and of course in video. But it is not this heightened presence of the photograph itself that is significant. Rather it is the photograph combined with the explicit terms of the index. (1977: 78)

The reasons for dignifying the explicitly indexical nature of the photograph in this way were no doubt due to the works of numerous photographic artists from Alfred Stieglitz to Edward Weston and, in a more realistic register, from Weegee to Diane Arbus. Although she had died eight years before the publication of this article, Diane Arbus was probably the photographer who had most exploited the deictic potential of the photograph. Directing her camera at the denizens of the streets and homes of New York, she produced a corpus of astonishing portraits characteristic of that very American motif, the grotesque: a giant dwarfing his parents in their living room, a wild-eyed child in a park with a toy grenade and a middle-aged couple sitting naked and drinking tea together, all starkly captured by the 'explicit terms' of the index and the inescapable realism of the photograph that Rosalind Krauss was later to celebrate. It is to the existential force of the index that this apparent referential tyranny is due, and it might suggest that the photograph is a 'nominalist' medium: what you see is what you get.

But this would be to ignore the creative imagination of the photographer. For while the art critic was celebrating the apotheosis of the photograph as index, an obsessive young photographer was working intently to subvert it: the sixty-nine stills from Cindy Sherman's photographic series, *Untitled Film Stills*, produced between 1977 and 1979, show the artist in various guises imitating the heroines to be found in the stills that were taken during shooting sessions of films made in the 1930s, 1940s and 1950s for the promotional purposes mentioned earlier. Here we have a photographer playing the part of an actress playing the part of a 'real' person. Sherman's stills, no less than any other photographs, including those made digitally or digitally modified, necessarily represent themselves to be true representations of the world – they are dicent quasi-propositions, remember – and what we get is indeed what we see on ... the print. However, Sherman's creative genius was to circumvent the alleged referential inviolability of the index by simulating the one element one would expect to remain inviolable in a

dicent sign such as a photograph – its dynamic object, that logical determinant of a myriad universes.

Within the hexadic typology Sherman's film still can be classified as a sympathetic, categorical copulant collective token – it was produced for aesthetic reasons, to produce some sort of feeling; as a sign it is neither percussive nor usual (a logical impossibility) but sympathetic, and if sympathetic it is necessarily gratific; it is categorical, for when we examine it, we recognize the apprehensive female protagonist of some plot; as it represents a human being, in other words an entity from the universe of existents, it would seem necessarily to be concreative. But this would be to discount its representing not one but three universes, with Sherman's still placed 'in front' of two others, and in this case the sign is also, logically, copulant at **Oi**, which 'hides' the two 'earlier' universes forming a necessitant, that is, complex, object at **Od**. Note that stills of the original genre, which were produced for practical reasons to publicize a film, would be classified as concretives intended to produce action – attract audiences to the cinema.

However, the more interesting analysis involves the sorts of universes that constitute the photograph's dynamic object. Whereas the irony of John Goto's flower seller tableau places two universes 'side by side', Cindy Sherman has placed one in front of the other, this other being itself in front of the 'real' universe simulated by the actress: we see one feigned universe and divine at one remove behind it the real world, similarly feigned, reminding us irresistibly of how Jean Baudrillard defined simulation: 'To dissimulate is to feign not to have what one has. To simulate is to feign to have what one hasn't. One implies a presence, the other an absence' (1988: 167),<sup>15</sup> this under the section title of the 'divine irreferent of images'. It follows from this that some images may simply not have what they feign to have, that they may not refer to what they seem to refer to – they are 'irreferent' – and Sherman's stills are a marvellously imaginative case in point.<sup>16</sup> Moreover, by not giving the stills a title, the observer is drawn into trying to identify the genre of the still: some suggest a Hitchcock-style thriller, others, with Sherman disguised as a Loren-type heroine, seem to imitate films from the Italian repertoire. Although Sherman herself may not have read it, her teachers at Buffalo State College most probably had, and the influence of Derrida's 'Structure, Sign, and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences' (1970) is evident in her refusal to 'close' and 'arrest' interpretation of the stills by giving them a title. In the *Stills*, then, Sherman simulates; she simulates jubilantly, in a movement of post-structuralist excess that Baudrillard would no doubt have approved of. She simulates at two removes: she simulates

a genre which represents actors simulating some event, and the photographs' dynamic objects are not really what they seem, yielding a form of simulation *en abîme* as it were.

## Summary and discussion

The chapter has sought to show how the two conceptions of the sign differ in the manner in which they enable us to approach deliberately chosen rhetorical signs. Although Peirce dropped the designation of 'speculative rhetoric', the transuational nature of methodoetic makes it possible to review the status of the philosophy of representation in the period 1908–09, and it was for this reason that the exposition of the hypoicons was held over from Chapter 1. The material discussed above calls for a number of remarks.

First, it follows from the examination of the examples that since there is no possibility of referring to the icon and its subdivisions, Peirce's conception of semiosis and the typologies it generates in the 1908–09 period don't allow us to make the traditional literal and metaphorical distinction. On the contrary, they draw us into a quite different analytical and critical paradigm or model which should not be seen as an attempt to introduce a new method of analysing literature and pictorial signs, but, rather, simply an exposition of the way the 1908 system might deal with such signs: this is semiotics, not literary criticism or picture theory. Whereas hypoiconicity enables us to decide that the sign is literal, or, in a more logical formulation, diagrammatic, or is metaphorical in Peirce's logical sense, the later system invites us to examine the nature and number of universes of existence represented or implied by the sign. The theoretical interest of such universes of existence cannot be emphasized enough, though there is much work to be done in the field. They are the forerunners of the conceptual domains of the cognitive linguist, the base and target domains referred to in present-day discussions of metaphoric structure (as in the case of Figures 4.4, 4.5 and 4.9)<sup>17</sup> and the input and blended spaces and generic structures of blend theory, set out, albeit sketchily, in the draft letter to James three quarters of a century earlier. They are in the embryonic forerunners, too, of the ontologies of AI and of computer and information science.

Returning to the case studies, it was seen that in the case of the Thomas extract, the principal universe was that of his conception of poetic creation, which, in the extract, he defined in negative terms. The metaphorical element of the extract was shown to rest on allusions to several very different universes

of existence: peacocks and preening, the Stock Exchange, the eternal troubled relations of lovers, a Jacobean play and recitation in theatre and auditorium. Similarly, the analysis of the photographic cases within the later system required recourse to universes of existence placed side by side in the same image, or, in the case of irony a second universe implied by the one represented, or finally, in the case of simulation, a series of universes placed, as it were, one in front of the other.

Now it is possible that a photograph such as Figure 4.8 would not be considered metaphorical within conventional theories of rhetoric, but according to Peirce's 1903 definition in CP 2.277, metaphor is a complex *form* and applies far beyond the scope of the traditional trope. And it is not inconceivable that his awareness of the association of partial objects from two or more distinct universes within a single sign had led Peirce to entertain the notion of a parallelism as mentioned in CP 2.277, partial objects being a concept that from 1907 on was becoming increasingly important in Peirce's later conception of signs. Just why metaphorical signs such as the two examined above – one verbal and the other photographic – should always be underspecified and, consequently, incongruous, is, of course, another question, no doubt a consequence of the tension between the two-tiered parallel structure characterizing the dynamic object and the singularity of the inescapably existential medium of the sign. Nor is it hard to imagine that the irony in Figure 4.10 and, above all, the simulation in Figure 4.11 would be refused figurative status within a conventional theory of rhetoric. And yet, through recourse to Peirce's conception of the universe of existence it is possible to detect and to analyse these signs in a rigorous if unconventional manner. The power of this conception, as we see from the examples Peirce offers to William James in the draft, is that it neutralizes any distinction between the supposedly 'real' world and the worlds created by fiction, poetry and film: the universes as determined by the entities they exhibit are all universes of existence, even the 'fictive' ones. They involve actions and plots that we try to follow using our experience of human intercourse irrespective of whether the representation is a universe inhabited by one hundred and one spotted dogs, by the heroines of the novels of Jane Austen or by the histrionics of the protagonists in a televised football match.

This said, it has to be admitted that paragraph 2.277 has been problematic for Peirce scholars. Thomas Short, for example, simply quotes the paragraph and declines to comment on it (2007: 218). David Pharies, on the other hand, in an interesting study of image and diagram, makes the following disarming observation on the passage: 'This is one of the more obscure passages I have had

occasion to quote, and I do not profess to understand it completely. The central message, however, seems to be that hypoicons have three degrees of complexity' (1985: 36). This is understandable as the passage is obscure to say the least. The description of image, diagram and metaphor given in the paragraphs above is my own reading of CP 2.277, but of course it is not the only one. Peirce himself developed the theory of the diagram in his *Existential Graphs*, and there are other accounts of Peircean metaphor. The interested reader may like to consult the following brief selection: Anderson (1985), Haley (1988), Shapiro and Shapiro (1988), Factor (1996), Haussman (1996), Danaher (1998) and, more recently, Lattmann (2012). Shapiro (1998) is a remarkable microscopic study of a certain form of iconicity exhibited by Shakespeare's sonnets, and is the perfect illustration of the sort of analysis for which the hexad of 1908 is totally ill-fitted.

The second conclusion to be drawn from the problems discussed in the chapter is that if we remain within the 1903 system and the triple distinction between icon, index and symbol all captionless paintings are necessarily classified alike, namely as iconic sinsigns, and all photographs as dicent sinsigns along with others of the same class, such as barometers, thermometers and windsocks along a motor way: there is no *logical* way of distinguishing between the countless members of each of these two general classes, since the members of each necessarily share the same properties. The only way we have to distinguish between them is by looking at their internal contents, and that, precisely, is the logical scope of the hexadic system, which, as we saw in Chapter 3, classifies signs not according to how they represent but according to the sorts of objects they represent, such objects being members of the three distinct universes indicated in Table 4.2, each distinguished by its specific mode of being.<sup>18</sup> In short, as we saw in Table 3.5 from the previous chapter, in the first case elements of the typology such as the sign, the Sign–Object relation and so on are subdivided by categories, which are simply predicates, while in the later system the subdivisions are referred to one or other of three universes, which, as Peirce notes in 'Prolegomena to an Apology for Pragmaticism', are receptacles. As semioticians we are authorized therefore to examine the contents of these receptacles in the ways in which they have been filtered into the sign by its immediate object.

The third remark concerns the combined problems of interpretation, speculative rhetoric and the philosophy of representation. As we saw above, Peirce defined speculative rhetoric/methodeutic as transuational logic, which was 'the doctrine of the general conditions of the reference of Symbols and other Signs to the Interpretants which they aim to determine' (CP 2.93, 1902). The role of the sign within semiosis underwent a theoretical revision in the period

following and the turning point most probably occurred in 1906, when we find Peirce abandoning the term 'speculative rhetoric' in a fragment from 1906:

Therefore, I extend logic to embrace all the necessary principles of semeiotic, and I recognize a logic of icons, and a logic of indices, as well as a logic of symbols; and in this last I recognize three divisions: Stecheotic (or stoicheiology), which I formerly called Speculative Grammar; Critic, which I formerly called Logic; and Methodeutic, which I formerly called Speculative Rhetoric. (CP 4.9)

This was the period in which he was beginning to define the sign as a medium for the communication of a form in the 9 March 1906 draft to Lady Welby (RL463; SS 195–201), the manuscript 'The Basis of Pragmaticism in the Normative Sciences' (R283; EP2 371-397) and R793, all of which were discussed in Chapter 2. Moreover, with this definition came the re-evaluation of the role of the dynamic object in semiosis. With the realization that the number of divisions of signs was significantly greater than the original three of 1903, Peirce must also have become aware of the extreme theoretical tension to which the original Sign–Interpretant branch of the grand logic was now subjected. Instead of the three subdivisions concerning the interpretant, he now had nine different 'values' to attach to the sign within the 28-class system. As evidence of the problematic status of speculative rhetoric/methodeutic in 1908, consider the following passage from Susan Sontag's *On Photography*:

Photographs shock in so far as they show something novel. Unfortunately, the ante- keeps getting raised—partly through the very proliferation of such images of horror. One's first encounter with the photographic inventory of ultimate horror is a kind of revelation, the prototypically modern revelation: a negative epiphany. For me, it was photographs of Bergen-Belsen and Dachau which I came across by chance in a bookstore in Santa Monica in July 1945. Nothing I have seen—in photographs or in real life—ever cut me as sharply, deeply, instantaneously. Indeed, it seems plausible to me to divide my life into two parts, before I saw those photographs (I was twelve) and after, though it was several years before I understood fully what they were about. What good was served by seeing them? They were only photographs—of an event I had scarcely heard of and could do nothing to affect, of suffering I could hardly imagine and could do nothing to relieve. When I looked at those photographs, something broke. Some limit had been reached, and not only that of horror; I felt irrevocably grieved, wounded, but a part of my feelings started to tighten; something went dead; something is still crying. (1977: 19–20)

The extract illustrates the ambivalence of Peirce's conception of the interpretants in 1908 and as represented in Table 4.2. The text can be analysed



into stages in what we might call an interpretant 'chain', and as suggested earlier, working with the interpretants involves either classifying observed effects on people and so on or in planning rhetorical protocols. In Sontag's case, the former applies: the immediate interpretant is when the child of twelve identifies the lines, shapes and patches of grey as terrible, emaciated human forms. The images were percussive ('something went dead; something is still crying'), and as far as the final interpretant was concerned, the interpretive process had not terminated in 1977. This is a brief analysis *a posteriori*; that is, we take an interpretation and follow it through the various stages of its evolution, in this case in a rather schematic manner. However, there is nothing to stop us from using the system *a priori* as a publicist might: planning the image to be given of the product (by manipulation of the immediate object), the support on which the inherited forms are to be communicated (the sign), planning the immediate interpretant (for this, after all, as Peirce states in the draft of 9 March 1906, is a determination of the mind of the sign's utterer (SS 196)), targeting the dynamic interpretant and, finally, persuading the observer to act (by buying the product, for example). Such strategies raise a very important issue, which we see in the passage above, namely the status and nature of the dynamic object. In the text it is clear that the images after due reflection ('several years before ...') represent not so much suffering humans as ultimate horror: this being the case the dynamic object is far more general than its very physical representation. Similarly, in the hypothetical case of the publicist, there is no logical necessity for the dynamic object to resemble its necessarily incomplete representation communicated by the immediate object. Indeed, as Peirce explains in the Logic Notebook, the 'immediate object of a sign may be of quite a different nature from the real, dynamical object' (R339 277r (H523), 1906). If there are cases where the dynamic object of a sign may not be what it seems to be, how is semiotic theory to accommodate such a situation?

Thus the need to establish the values of the interpretant division and their subdivisions, in addition to the broader conception of the dynamic object, seems to have placed an intolerable strain on Peirce's conception of methodetic. In the letter to William James of December 1909, Peirce describes in relative detail the first two books – the former speculative grammar and critic – of a projected treatise on the system of logic, this being a 1909 version of the philosophy of representation, and then laconically summarizes the scope of methodetic by means of a simple 'My Book III treats of methods of research' (EP2: 500–2, 1909). This was the branch of the grand logic of which he had confidently asserted in the first of his Lowell Lectures on logic in 1903 that it was the last goal of logical

study, the 'theory of the advancement of knowledge of all kinds' (EP2 256). In the end, the task seems to have proved beyond him, and perhaps like Samson, calm of mind all passion spent, in a letter to Lady Welby, he deferred completion of the typologies and the search for further examples to the attention of later investigators:

On these considerations [his definitions of the six correlates in semiosis] I base a recognition of ten respects in which Signs may be divided. I do not say that these divisions are enough. But since every one of them turns out to be a trichotomy, it follows that in order to decide what classes of signs result from them, I have 310 or 59049, difficult questions to carefully consider; and therefore I will not undertake to carry my systematical division of signs any further, but will leave that for future explorers. (CP 8.343, 1908)

If Peirce here expresses doubts as to his ability to take the task he has set himself further, and if the methodeutic branch of the grand logic seems to defy completion, there remains, nevertheless, hope for an explanation of how dynamic objects may differ from their representations in the sign. It is to this problem that Chapter 5 is devoted.



## Interpretation, Worldviews and the Object

In the previous chapter a number of signs were analysed within the theoretical frameworks of the 1903 and 1908 sign-systems in order to assess their differences. In this final chapter, we examine a number of features of Peirce's late semiotics in its own right, investigating primarily the importance of the object as he developed it during the years 1908 and 1909. It is universally admitted that his introduction of the concept of the interpretant and the profound revisions it was subjected to over a period of nearly fifty years were one of Peirce's greatest contributions to logic. Less chronicled is the fact that his conception of the object also underwent an important evolution, and thus it is the principal objective of the chapter to explore and exploit its interest for semiotic analysis. The major problem, already alluded to towards the end of the previous chapter, concerns specifically the semiotic status of the dynamic object, its relation to the way it is represented in the sign by its immediate object and the interpretations it gives rise to. For example, it was suggested that there was no reason not to employ the structure of hexadb in *a priori* fashion as a publicist might: planning the public image to be given of some product, its carefully planned form as it is to appear on a given support or medium (hoarding, television spot, advertisement in a newspaper etc.). Such a strategy raises the problem of the status and nature of the dynamic object of such a campaign, given that the dynamic object is, after all, the determinant of the sign: the image the team of publicists wishes to give of the product or the sponsor or, perhaps, the product itself as it appears on the advertisement, or perhaps some more nebulous object involving marketing dynamics. It is essentially to this complex relation holding between what actually constitutes a dynamic object and the way a sign represents it that the following sections are devoted.<sup>1</sup>

### The problem

Considering once more Susan Sontag's remark in *On Photography* to the effect that 'one's first encounter with the photographic inventory of ultimate horror is

a kind of revelation, the prototypically modern revelation: a negative epiphany' (1977: 19), the question arises as to what the dynamic object of this particular photographic inventory might be. Is it the emaciated faces or bodies of the victims of these atrocities, is it some more general agency or is it, as Sontag suggests, 'ultimate horror'? Yet another example is to be found in the previous chapter: when introducing the two photographs representing, respectively, an individual man and woman (Figure 4.7) and the two classes of men and women (Figure 4.8), it was suggested that the partial objects they represented characterized the clearly recognizable universe of existence of violence against women. The reader, indeed, may have thought that they were both different representations of the same problem – domestic violence. In either case we have two dynamic objects considerably more general than the references to men and women. The general potential of the dynamic object can be illustrated, too, by any of the analyses to be found in Hariman and Lucaites's *No Caption Needed*, a meticulous study of the ideological implications of what they call 'iconic images', that is, 'famous pictures from the news media' (2007: 6). They show, for example, a photograph of the Kent State University massacre of 1970 to be far more than the representation of a screaming, kneeling female student beside the body of her dead comrade (2007: 139–60). For what we see in many images, whether photographs or paintings, cannot simply be reduced to what is 'literally' represented. These three examples, the Sontag extract, the Uelsmann photograph and the Kent State massacre photograph<sup>2</sup> are all, in various ways, interpreted to represent an object more complex than the 'contents' of the image, in spite of the fact that their respective immediate objects can only communicate parts of that object to the sign representing it; and they all are ideologically charged. This relation between object and ideology must also be accounted for.

A less contentious example of how the object of the sign can be interpreted as being different from what appears to be the object depicted is to be found in the discussion of a Dutch painting titled *A Young Man and Woman Making Music*, c. 1630, by Jan Miense Molenaer. The painting was the subject of part of a podcast from the National Gallery of London devoted to an exhibition titled 'Vermeer and Music: the Art of Love and Leisure'.<sup>3</sup> The curator of the exhibition, Betsy Wieseman, describes the painting to a visitor towards the end of the podcast, and in the course of her description of what the musicians are wearing, and how the painting relates to the period, she remarks that what it really represents is not so much a couple making music together but, rather, 'a sort of *joie de vivre*': 'I always have the sense that they've just reached the rousing chorus of the song ... that they're really into it and they're having a good time

and the music has taken over. *It really represents a sort of "joie de vivre"*. And Molenaer communicates that in such a vivid way' [emphasis added].<sup>4</sup> In short, the painting really represents not so much a couple playing music but the joy of living, a warm feeling of enjoyment of life, exuberance and youthful high spirits. The sentence containing the adversative value of the adverb *really* suggests that what the observer is looking at is somehow different from the figures and their pose represented on the canvas: what we are looking at, in fact, is more complex than what is to be identified superficially by an inventory of the partial objects represented on the painting. Such representations seem somehow to redirect the observer or the reader to the real object.

The problem for Peircean semiotics, then, is to account for this discrepancy between what we see and what the painting, photograph or other, not necessarily pictorial, sign *really* represents and how it does so. Other examples of this particular type of indirection are 'it actually represents ...', 'what it actually represents is ...', 'what it really represents is ...'. Such expressions, which on any Internet search turn out to be too numerous to quote, represent differences in interpretation, no doubt, but, above all, a perceived disparity between what is apparently represented, or what has already been proposed as an interpretation, and what someone thinks is really, or actually represented: in Peircean terms a difference or tension between the immediately perceived object – in a representation, in an action, in almost any *significant* aspect of everyday life – and the real object, the object which the observer/speaker thinks is really/actually/ in fact the case, the real or actual determinant of the sign. The problem, then, is not to decide who is right or what the correct interpretation is, but to discover, as in the case of the photographs and text mentioned above, the semiotic principle behind this very frequently encountered tension between the perceived entity and what it represents.

## Symbols

One possibility of accounting for the special form of indirection implicit in Wieseman's remark above within the 1903 paradigm is the symbol, since this is a sign which within the semiotics represents general objects. This Peirce had defined in 1903 in an extract already discussed in Chapter 1:

A Symbol is a sign which refers to the Object that it denotes by virtue of a law, usually an association of general ideas, which operates to cause the Symbol to be interpreted as referring to that Object. It is thus itself a general type or law,

that is, is a Legisign. As such it acts through a Replica. Not only is it general itself, but the Object to which it refers is of a general nature. Now that which is general has its being in the instances which it will determine. There must, therefore, be existent instances of what the Symbol denotes, although we must here understand by 'existent,' existent in the possibly imaginary universe to which the Symbol refers. (CP 2.249)

Now various forms of symbolism are, no doubt, to be found in all cultures. For example, peaches symbolizing longevity are a common symbol in Chinese art, appearing in depictions or descriptions in a number of fables, paintings and other forms of art, often in association with thematically similar iconography such as deer or cranes. In itself, a peach represented in an image or offered as a gift is, on one 'literal' level, a simple piece of fruit, but can on a second, more general, level, like the representations of deer or cranes, refer or redirect the interpreting mind to a more general object – longevity or immortality. In a similar manner, the Ancient Greeks believed the flesh of the peacock to be imputrescible – it was held not to be subject to decomposition after death, and thus became a symbol of immortality, and later figured in much early Church imagery and architecture (in iconostases, for example) as a symbol of the promised afterlife.

What is common to all symbols, as understood in the above manner, is the fact that their instances represent themselves as existent entities, and, at the same time, as something general. Yet another example of a symbol can be seen in the little dog which accompanies the music-making in Molenaer's painting mentioned earlier: by a form of indirection a dog can often be found in much Christian imagery as symbol of fidelity in marriage and, by extension, in religious faith: see, for example, van Eyck's *Arnolfini Portrait* in the National Gallery or Carpaccio's *Vision of St Augustine*. The instances Peirce's definition identifies are existent instances of general types or laws. The best examples of symbols in this sense are the words of any natural language – nouns and verbs in English, for example. As we saw in Chapter 1, from his earliest writings on signs until 1902, symbols were either arguments, propositions or terms, the traditional matter of logic. In 1903 he established these in a separate division, the Sign-Interpretant division discussed in Chapter 1, and maintained their verbocentric bias (EP2 275–76).<sup>5</sup> To qualify as symbol a sign has to be a legisign, a sign that is interpreted in a regular, law-like fashion. This is the case with peaches, peacocks and little dogs, even though they don't enter into complex legisign patternings in the manner of a verbal sign such as a definite article and the common noun with which it is associated. Nonverbal symbols are the creations of habit and experience and are no less law-like than a rule of grammar,

a fact which determines the sorts of object they represent. The problem is that although the little dog in Molenaer's painting may be for us and for the Christian Church a symbol of fidelity, this doesn't enable us to explain how the painting really represents an object other than the participants represented in the music-making. In fact the reason is quite simple: anyone observing a painting with a dog in it, for example, and judging it to be a symbol of 'fidelity', is clearly using the term 'symbol' in the Peircean sense of 1903, but, and this is an important point, is identifying the object 'fidelity' by means of the 1908 system. A symbol is defined to be a conventional *way of representing* an object – it doesn't *identify* that object. To do this we look in 1908-fashion 'directly' at the forms which the sign's immediate object has communicated to it. In this way the immediate object functions as a logical filter 'shifting' part of the dynamic object's form to the sign, irrespective of the universe to which it belongs, and enables us to attempt to identify the dynamic object. In short, the symbol of 1903 doesn't enable us to identify an 'indirect' object of the sort exemplified in statements by Sontag, Hariman and Lucaites, and in the Molenaer painting, the identification is obtained in a different way.

There remains another possibility of accounting for what, in the system of 1903, a given sign might *really* represent, and for how it might represent something other than the object represented by the sign as in Molenaer's painting, and this can be sought in Peirce's conception of the hypoicon, which was exploited in Chapter 4. Since through the implication principle, an index can involve a sort of icon and a symbol can involve a sort of index, it was seen that from this a symbol can by transitivity involve a sort of icon, and, necessarily, one or other of the three hypoicons. The problem is that when we identify the metaphorical or diagrammatic status of a sign we are again simply stating how it is organized internally – iconicity cannot tell us *what* the sign represents, only *how* it represents it, since iconicity is the 'sub-form' of any sign's mode of representation. In this respect the hypoicons are no different from the index and symbol: these inform us not of what the object is, or of what it might be *really*, but simply of how it is represented, by physical contact or by convention. For instance, when Peirce tells us that 'Examples of Indices are the hand of a clock, and the veering of a weathercock' (EP2 274, 1903), he is talking about these as signs, indicating *how* they represent their objects but not the objects themselves, for example, the time of day or the direction the wind is coming from. He does give many examples of the objects of signs but they are not obtained from the mode of representation. Consider, too, at this point, this extract from 'New Elements': 'It will be observed that the icon is very perfect in respect to signification, bringing its interpreter



face to face with the very character signified' (NEM4 242, 1904). In fact, from the point of view of the 1908 hexad, what the interpreter is brought face to face with is, rather, the form inherited from the immediate object for which the sign functions as the medium. It seems reasonable to conclude, then, that even when a symbol in the Peircean sense is informed by hypoiconicity, whatever the *real* object of that sign may be, whatever it *really* represents, hypoiconicity on its own cannot provide a satisfactory explanation of this form of indirection, which is why we need to review the various stages in the theoretical development of the object in semiosis.

### A brief historical review of the object

The first stage is formed, of course, during the period from the mid-1860s to 1903. This, as we saw earlier, was a period in which Peirce had defined a single division with the subdivisions of likeness, index or sign and symbol. The latter was, until 1902–03, subdivided into term, proposition and argument before these became explicitly an independent division at the time of the Lowell Lectures in 1903. Returning to a passage of which a part was already discussed in Chapter 1, we can see how the object participated in the single division in 1866:

As relations separate into two kinds on account of the double reference they contain, so representations from containing a triple reference separate into three kinds. For the relation of a representa<sup>m</sup>en to its object (correlate) maybe a real relation and, then, either an agreement or a difference, or it may be an ideal r[elati]on or one from which the reference to a correspondent (subject of representation) cannot be prescinded by position. (W1 355)

The object was a non-predicable 'substance' or IT or 'thing', as Peirce was later to refer to it in 'On a New List of Categories' (CP 1.547, 1867), an idea which corresponds to later definitions of the dicisign in which the subject is not a predicate, of course, but can be associated with one. Note, too, that what was later to become the 'second correlate' in Peirce's formal definition of representation (EP2 290, 1903) had already also been defined as a correlate: 'A ground is that pure abstraction, the embodiment of which makes a quality. A correlate is a second substance with which the first is in a comparison. An interpretant is a representation which represents that which is referred to it as a representation of the same object which it does itself represent' (W1 524, 1866). This was the situation by 1903, one much more fully documented in Chapter 1. A second

stage comes in 1904, which is an important year for two reasons. This can be seen first in this long extract from the text ‘New Elements’:

A *sign* is connected with the “Truth” i.e. the entire Universe of being, or, as some say, the Absolute, in three distinct ways. In the first place, a sign is not a real thing. It is of such a nature as to exist in *replicas*. Look down a printed page, and every *the* you see is the same word, every *e* the same letter. A real thing does not so exist in replica. The being of a sign is merely *being represented*. Now *really being* and *being represented* are very different. Giving to the word *sign* the full scope that reasonably belongs to it for logical purposes, a whole book is a sign; and a translation of it is a replica of the same sign. A whole literature is a sign. The sentence “Roxana was the queen of Alexander” is a sign of Roxana and of Alexander, and though there is a grammatical emphasis on the former, logically the name “Alexander” is as much a *subject* as is the name “Roxana”; and the real persons Roxana and Alexander are *real objects* of the sign. Every sign that is sufficiently complete refers to sundry real objects. All these objects, even if we are talking of Hamlet’s madness, are parts of one and the same Universe of being, the “Truth.” But so far as the “Truth” is merely the *object* of a sign, it is merely the Aristotelian *Matter* of it that is so .... All these characters are elements of the “Truth.” Every sign signifies the “Truth.” But it is only the Aristotelian *Form* of the universe that it signifies. (NEM4 238–39, 1904)

According to the Editors of EP2<sup>6</sup> this text was probably written early in 1904. Consequently we find no trace of the distinction between immediate and dynamic objects Peirce was to develop in his letter to Lady Welby the following October. Nevertheless, as the quotation shows, the text anticipates the three universes described in the letter and drafts to Lady Welby of December 1908 and the universe of existence defined in a draft letter to William James of February 1909 (EP2 492–97). The notion of a universe of existence as such is not developed in the passage – what we have here is a universe of being presenting, in its reference to the object of a sign being the ‘Truth’, a more metaphysical than ontological character, which suggests that Peirce had the three types of inference in mind when he was working on this part of the text (cf., for example, CP 2.229, CP 2.253, 1903). Nevertheless, we see Peirce already contemplating the idea that the object of a sign is the universe which is determined by the ‘real’ objects which are members of it, these real objects becoming the ‘partial objects’ of 1907 and the ‘special’ objects of 1909; and there is, too, the reference to Hamlet’s madness that we find in a draft letter to William James of 1909.

In this context, then, the letter of October 1904 also heralds a new stage in the development of the object, for as seen in Chapter 2, within a year of giving the Lowell

Lectures Peirce had expanded the original triad of correlates to six: two objects, the sign and three interpretants. Concerning the two objects he made this highly relevant remark: 'I'm now prepared to give my division of signs, as soon as I've pointed out that a sign has two objects, its object as it is represented and its object in itself' (CP 8.333). Another way of describing them, and one highly pertinent to the present topic, is, as we saw in Chapter 2, to distinguish between the object as it informs the sign and the object as it *really* is independently of its representation. The very *possibility* that a single sign should be capable of representing an object other than the one perceived as in the examples discussed earlier in the chapter thus stems from the now explicit distinction between the immediate and the dynamic objects, a distinction reiterated by Peirce on too many occasions to cite. What we need now is a means of ascertaining the sorts of dynamic objects of which the immediate objects might be the determinations. In short, we have to distinguish clearly between the two, and yet this has proved to be highly problematic with Peirce scholars. Consider, first, a statement by Thomas Short:

However, while no sign represents its dynamic object completely, many signs, such as pure icons and pure indices, cannot misrepresent their objects. For the object of such a sign is exactly whatever is presented or indicated. As no further representation is made within that sign that might be false of that object, the sign cannot be mistaken or misleading. In that respect, while there will be differences, there can be no discrepancy between such a sign's immediate and dynamic objects.

A last word on this distinction: the immediate and dynamic objects are not different entities. The distinction pertains, rather, to how one and the same object is considered. The immediate object *is* the dynamic object *as* it is represented, however incompletely or inaccurately, in a given sign. (2007: 196)

While, in light of the material discussed in Chapters 2 and 3, we can simplify the situation by accepting that the 'immediate object is the dynamic object *as* it is represented,'<sup>7</sup> it is nevertheless logically incorrect to consider the two as facets of one and the same entity. Consider now, an extract from Haussman (2012), an extensive attempt to identify and isolate the specific characteristics of the dynamic object:

I also describe this distinction [between the immediate and dynamical objects] by saying that there is one referent of a sign and that the referent has two sides or aspects. Perhaps it is helpful to say that the referent of a sign consists of two interactive objects, the immediate object and the dynamical, or real, object, a distinction to be considered later.

The dynamical object seems to be the object that functions as the beginning of and basis for semeiosis or the interpretive process, for it is that which is to be interpreted. And, as I mentioned earlier, the immediate object is the interpreted dynamical object. It is the outcome of interpreting the initiating object. (2012: 81)

The author, like other Peirce scholars, has adopted the distinctions and terminology of 1904 for the two objects but has declined to consider the lessons of the draft of 1906 or the way the two are integrated, along with the three interpretants, into the six and ten divisions of 1908. In the later systems it is simply not possible for immediate and dynamic objects to be, as Short also appears to think, aspects of a single object, or for the immediate object to be an 'interpreted dynamical object', since it follows the dynamic object in semiosis and precedes both the sign and the three interpretants: the immediate object can't interpret the dynamic; it receives form from it, which it communicates to the sign, which then generates the sequence of interpretants.

The immediate and dynamic objects are, as was seen in Chapters 2 and 3, clearly quite different entities – they instantiate different trichotomies within the six- and ten-division typologies established by Peirce after 1904, and can be referred to one or other of the three completely distinct universes in the classification of a given sign.<sup>8</sup> Moreover, by 1907 Peirce had begun to refer to the requirement of collateral observation, experience or acquaintance of an object in the interpretation of the sign. The concept of 'collateral observation' seems to have been first introduced in the 'Pragmatism' text discussed briefly in the final section of Chapter 2 (e.g. R318 601, 611, 613, 623; CP 8.178; EP2 493), while 'collateral experience' (EP2 480, 493, 495 and 498, CP 8.183) and 'collateral acquaintance' (EP2 496, CP 8.183) figure in many definitions of the sign thereafter. Recourse to such collateral experience in order to identify the dynamic object is surely proof of the very real theoretical difference between the two: how else should we know that Cindy Sherman's film stills simulate a genre that simulates real life? Classifying them as dicent sinsigns or as gratific, sympathetic, categorical concretives tells us little or nothing about the object represented, although in the second case we have to take it into account in order to classify the sign as such. It is Peirce who has the last word: 'Say the Interpretant is that which the Sign brings into correspondence with the Object. The Object is plainly Twofold. The Dynamic Object is the Real Object according to the above definition [that which determines the sign]. The Immediate Object is the Object as presented in the Sign' (R399, 276r (H522)). And here, too: in a letter to William James of 14 March 1909, he summarizes his position concerning the two objects with the following statement discussed earlier:

We must distinguish between the Immediate Object,—i.e., the Object as represented in the Sign,— and the Real (no, because perhaps the Object is altogether fictive, I must choose a different term; therefore:), say rather the Dynamical Object, which, from the nature of things, the Sign *cannot* express, which it can only *indicate* and leave the interpreter to find out by *collateral experience*. (CP 8.314)

However, in spite of these notable advances in Peirce's understanding of the object, another stage occurs between 1906 and 1908 and begins with the draft letter to Lady Welby of March 1906, which was discussed at length in Chapter 2. I will simply summarize the important points. In addition to the distinction between immediate and dynamic object, Peirce also redefines the sign as the medium for the communication of a form originating in the dynamic object and introduces important distinctions concerning the interpretants (SS 97). In the present context what is important is that by defining the sign as a medium he attributed a greater role to the object in semiosis: it communicates form via the immediate object to the sign, which then communicates it to the series of interpretants, the form in question being the realization of one or other or all of the categories of the forms of experience (CP 1.452, 1896), and this independently of the utterer and the interpreter as participants in the semiosis.

If we consider anew the description of the Molenaer painting given earlier in the chapter, it is possible to see how it would fit into the scheme of 1906. The persons represented can be seen as the artist's models, the apparent dynamic objects of this complex, portrait-like painting. The representation which an observer sees finished but which must have advanced in various stages of completion is a determination of the immediate object – that is, the models, the musical instruments and furniture and so on, *as represented*. The piece of canvas itself is the medium – the material entity which receives the compound form communicated by the immediate object and conveys it to whatever potential interpretant sequence the image may produce. In this case, having immediately interpreted the marks on the canvas as humans, dog, instruments and furniture, Wieseman proffers the potentially surprising remark that it represents a sort of *joie de vivre*. It was this *joie de vivre* that determined the painting, in other words, not the artist. As was suggested in Chapter 2, the artist, a version of Peirce's utterer, is outside the process. He executes the painting, but in doing so he is simply the vector of the artistic trends and public and private ideologies of the age and, if there was one, the desires of the patron paying for the work: according to Peirce's conception of the sign as medium in 1906, it is the dynamic object which structures the representation on the sign, not the artist.

From the 1906 draft on, then, in theory only the object can determine the sign, since the 1906 redefinition of the sign simply as a medium had the effect of diminishing the importance of both the sign itself and the utterer and interpreter in semiosis. These are indispensable agencies in any semiosis, for there would not be a sign in the first place without them. Note that the structure of the sign can only come from the object since the utterer is simply a vector: in the case of music or non-figurative art, for example, we feel that it is the composer or artist who creates the sign, but like the utterer and interpreter in Peirce's examples, these are 'outside semiosis', so to speak, as indispensable but 'inefficient' quasi-minds. It is the object which 'efficiently' structures the sign. Any wave of Puccini orchestral sound or any patch of colour on a non-figurative canvas must be the determination of an orchestra and its sets of instruments and musicians or of a brush and paint. If the qualities of these sounds and images were classified as 'abstractives', they would be 'possible' objects and we should be unable to perceive them.<sup>9</sup> Just what sort of objects might determine such works, and any others, and just what role the utterer might ultimately have in the process Peirce was to review to in 1908 and 1909.

Summarizing the evolution of the object so far, we find, first, that Peirce has now introduced the crucial distinction between the two objects, a distinction to be found in all future definitions of the sign and, more importantly, a distinction which makes it logically possible for the dynamic not to be at all like the immediate. Second, we find that the material from the 1906 definition of the sign as medium had the effect of diminishing the importance of the sign in semiosis, and at the same time it gave the immediate object a specific representative status as a sort of filter, communicating parts of the form or structure of the dynamic object to the sign. Third, the 1908 letter to Lady Welby set out a new way of classifying the sign with reference to three universes instead of the three categories of 1903, with the object as the initial determining element in the semiotic sequence, as illustrated in Table 4.2.

The final stage in the development of Peirce's conception of the object concerns the two ways in which he expanded its scope in 1908 and 1909. Indeed, his final statements on the universes of necessitant, existent and possible entities and the types of subjects these universes 'hold' or contain enable us to establish just how it is that the interpreter, like Susan Sontag looking at images of Bergen-Belsen, Hariman and Lucaites analysing the importance of the screaming student in the image of the Kent State massacre and Betsy Wieseman in the quotation from the beginning of the chapter, actually identifies an object which is not necessarily like its representation. This final part of our review of the development of the

object and of our examination of what signs might *really* represent involves two lines of enquiry. The first is Peirce's conception of the three universes mentioned in the 1908 letter to Lady Welby and their modes of being as they were described in Chapter 3, and second, as seen in the previous chapter, the idea that the object itself constitutes in fact a universe of existence.

In the case of the three universes, Peirce is quite explicit as to their different modes of being in the same letter. However, with the exception of the oversimplifying remarks concerning the English common noun *beauty*, he gives little indication of the sorts of objects that are members of each of the three universes and in terms of which signs can be classified as, for example, collective, concretion or abstraction. However, as seen in Chapter 3, in a draft to Lady Welby dated two days later, which presumably was never sent (CP 8.366), he illustrated the range of dynamic objects of signs according to the universe to which they belong: possibles (signs of such objects being abstractions), existent objects (individuals and the facts concerning them, signs of these being concretions) and collections or classes (signs of these being collectives), thereby giving us some idea of the sorts of entities these universes might be the receptacles of.

In the first case the objects are qualitative entities represented by colours, mass, texture and so on; in the second, existents such as humans, animals, tables, individuals and named individuals such as Napoleon, Charlemagne and Dean Moriarty; finally, in the third, general classes such as mankind, prime numbers, classes, categories, habits and types. However, in another text of 1908, 'The Neglected Argument for the Reality of God', he breaks new ground, describing the three universes and, more importantly, the sorts of objects they comprise in greater detail. The least complex, the universe of possible objects, 'holds' ideas; the second universe is composed of existent objects – occurrences and the facts containing them; and the third and most complex universe comprises more general objects:

Of the three Universes of Experience familiar to us all, the first comprises all mere Ideas, those airy nothings to which the mind of poet, pure mathematician, or another *might* give local habitation and a name within that mind. Their very airy-nothingness, the fact that their Being consists in mere capability of getting thought, not in anybody's Actually thinking them, saves their reality. The second Universe is that of the Brute Actuality of things and facts. I am confident that their Being consists in reactions against Brute forces, notwithstanding objections redoubtable until they are closely and fairly examined. The third Universe comprises everything whose Being consists in active power to establish connections between different objects, especially between objects in different

Universes. Such is everything which is essentially a Sign, – not the mere body of the sign, which is not essentially such, but, so to speak, the Sign's Soul, which has its Being in its power of serving as intermediary between its Object and a Mind. Such, too, is a living consciousness, and such the life, the power of growth, of a plant. Such is a living institution, – a daily newspaper, a great fortune, a social “movement” (CP 6.455)

It follows from the sections above that what we see when we look at an image of any sort, or what we hear when we process an utterance of any sort, or what we read in a text of any sort is, of course, what their immediate object has filtered through to them from the object they represent. We also know now that by 1908 Peirce had defined the range of possible dynamic objects to be virtually inexhaustible, and that the dynamic object is not in any way necessarily like the immediate. Peirce's late illustration of various types of dynamic objects – ‘a daily newspaper, a great fortune, a social “movement”’ – not only opens up our understanding of how others interpret signs but also liberates our own conception of what a sign might stand for. Barely three months later in a draft letter to William James, Peirce offered a frustratingly brief description of the relation holding between the universes and the objects which determined them, a topic referred to in the previous chapter.

### **The object as universe**

The 26 February 1909 letter (EP2 492–497) raises a delicate problem already alluded to in the Introduction. It is a draft letter, and as we have seen throughout the book, there are a number of antecedent drafts that have raised important theoretical issues but which, for various reasons, were probably never dispatched to their intended recipient. For example, the draft of July 1905 to Lady Welby dismissed the representamen from Peirce's theory of signs of the period, and yet we know that he subsequently re-used the term in at least one of his final texts. The draft of 9 March 1906, like several other texts of that period, introduced the idea that the sign was a medium, but Peirce never really developed the theoretical potential of the idea, and, judging by the contents of Ogden and Richards' Appendix D, the letter of which we have the draft was never sent. There were drafts of December 1908 that contain most of what we know of the ten divisions supposedly yielding sixty-six classes of signs, but they were never sent either, although Peirce in a letter of 14 March 1909 does admit to Lady Welby to having found one of them in his portfolio, and expresses the hope that he had actually sent it (SS 109). As in the case of the draft letter to



William James, one wonders whether these were never sent because Peirce had forgotten them in his portfolio or had simply lost interest in the theoretical points they contained. Whatever the reasons why the draft to James was never sent, it nevertheless constitutes a remarkable statement on the object of the sign. As mentioned briefly in the previous chapter, he now associated the object with one or other of the three universes – not the categories, note – subdividing the divisions to which signs were referred in the course of classification. This is a useful opening statement:

A Sign is a Cognizable that, on the one hand, is so determined (i.e., specialized, *bestimmt*) by something *other than itself*, called its Object (or, in some cases, as if the Sign be the sentence “Cain killed Abel” in which Cain and Abel are equally Partial Objects, it may be more convenient to say that that which determines the Sign is the Complexus, or Totality, of Partial Objects. And in every case the Object is accurately the Universe of which the Special Object is member, or part, while, on the other hand, it so determines some actual or potential Mind, the determination whereof I term the Interpretant created by the Sign, that that Interpreting Mind is therein determined mediately by the Object. (EP2 492)

Peirce's problem here is to distinguish the parts from the whole. For example, in an earlier version of the theory the model in the portrait in Figure 2.2 is what we assume to be the dynamic object of the representation on the artist's sketch pad. Now that the object in 1909 constitutes by itself the universe of existence the theoretical status of that model becomes problematic. Peirce's answer is in the new vocabulary that he employs. Cain and Abel are now both 'partial objects', a term which, as mentioned earlier, he seems first to have used in 1907.<sup>10</sup> The strategy here is somewhat reminiscent of the way Peirce describes the *dicisign* in 1906. This latter class of signs has the advantage of being composed of two readily identifiable parts: in the 1903 system the proposition, a *dicisign* obviously, was defined as a double sign associating an index and a rheme (CP 2.251). In the relatively informal epistolary statement of 1906, these two terms are abandoned and Peirce simply refers to the 'part appropriated to representing the object, and another to representing how [the] sign itself represents that object' (RL 463, 28); in other words one part representing the sign's partial objects (the indexical element of 1903), and another signifying the form of the *relations* holding between these partial objects. The theoretical entity we are dealing with now is, of course, far more complex than a proposition or *dicisign*, but Peirce makes an analogical distinction between the components of the universe and the universe itself.

The term ‘partial object’ is simply a syntactical convenience – both Cain and Abel are ‘subjects’ of the example sentence in the Peircean sense, whereas, grammatically speaking, Cain is the subject and Abel the direct object; both, too, are partial objects in the new terminology. However, he introduces for the first and only time as far as I have been able to tell, the term ‘Special Object’ to refer to the erstwhile dynamic object. In the case of the sentence ‘Napoleon is lethargic’, both Napoleon and lethargy are partial objects, but of the two, lethargy surely cannot be the special object – the universe would be too great, comprising not only Napoleon but also many politicians, university administrators, a few students and so on, whereas we surely interpret Napoleon as being more ‘thematic’ and therefore the special object. This is the case, too, with the wrecked train in Figure 4.6: although there are other partial objects on the photograph – windows, an awning, pillars and so on, it is surely the locomotive itself which is the special object of the photograph, while in the case of Cain and Abel both must be special objects. So much for the special object, what follows is equally innovative:

In the sentence instanced [‘Napoleon is lethargic’] Napoleon is not the only Object. Another Partial Object is Lethargy; and the sentence cannot convey its meaning unless collateral experience has taught its Interpreter what Lethargy is, or what that is that “lethargy” means in this sentence. The Object of a Sign may be something to be created by the Sign. For the object of “Napoleon” is the Universe of Existence so far as it is determined by the fact of Napoleon being a Member of it. The Object of the sentence “Hamlet was insane” is the Universe of Shakespeare’s Creation so far as it is determined by Hamlet being a part of it. The Object of the Command “Ground arms!” is the immediately subsequent action of the soldiers so far as it is affected by the molition expressed in the command. It cannot be understood unless collateral observation shows the speaker’s relation to the rank of soldiers. You may say, if you like, that the Object is in the Universe of things desired by the Commanding Captain at that moment. Or since the obedience is fully expected, it is in the Universe of his expectation. At any rate, it determines the Sign although it is to be created by the Sign by the circumstance that its Universe is relative to the momentary state of mind of the officer.

The Sign creates something in the Mind of the Interpreter, which something, in that it has been so created by the Sign, has been, in a mediate and *relative* way, also created by the Object of the Sign, although the Object is essentially other than the Sign. And this creature of the Sign is called the Interpretant. It is created by the Sign; but not by the Sign *quâ* member of whichever of the Universes it belongs to; but it has been created by the Sign in its capacity of bearing the determination by the Object. (EP2 493)

Like the extract from 'The Neglected Argument for the Reality of God' discussed above, this extract introduces a series of examples of how a universe is determined by the partial or special objects that are members of it. For one thing, as we saw in the previous chapter, it neutralizes neatly and economically the conventional distinction between fact and fiction, between cases where the universe is 'real' and where it is 'fictive' as in the quotation from EP2 498 above. The universe determined by Napoleon's being a member of it and the universe determined by Hamlet's being a member of it are logically the same sorts of universe; this means, too, that Neal Cassady and Dean Moriarty determine their respective universes, and *from a logical point of view* there is absolutely no difference between them, either. Note, too, that without indulging in any form of psychologism, Peirce has redefined the participation of the utterer in semiosis: whatever motivation he or she has, the object of the motivation is in a universe defined by that very object – desire, expectation, volition: this is an important statement which in no way invalidates the earlier principle that there is nothing in the sign that doesn't originate in the object or in the universe defined by that object.

We also have in this passage from the draft a partial theoretical explanation of the strategies of interpretation when people read a novel or a newspaper or watch a documentary on TV or a wildly imaginative science-fiction film at the cinema: they become involved in, bored or thrilled by, a universe of existence determined by its protagonists. Since such universes are always anthropomorphic and thus composed of events of everyday experience, we come prepared to novel, newspaper, documentary or film with a store of collateral experience enabling us to follow events and to disregard the boundaries between fact and fantasy.

The determination by its members of a universe of existence also enables us to explain another important difference between the hexad of 1908 and the 10-class system of 1903. The icon was then defined in such a way as to be able to represent an object but, unlike the index, not to be able to offer any proof of its existence: it is a sinsign whose relation to its object is purely qualitative, not existential: Figure 1.3, the drawing of Cheyne Walk beside the Thames, is an iconic sinsign. However, when examining the very same image from the point of view of the hexad, the sign is necessarily concreate: it represents humans, trees, a river and boats, buildings and so on, all of which determine a universe of existence, even though certain or all of the characters and trees represented never actually existed. As suggested earlier, in its very simple way Peirce's theory of the object as it is presented in the draft to William James is an embryonic theory for an ontology in the modern sense: it is not a theory of being or existence in the

conventional philosophical sense, but a skeletal theory of the sorts of realizations of objects and relations occurring within particular representational genres such as film, novel, poetry, photography and so on.

We come now to the final stage in Peirce's development of the object and its implications. The reader will probably be wondering what sort of logic enables Peirce to claim that a newspaper or a social movement can be the dynamic object of a sign, and what sort of sign that might be. It is to the answers of such questions that we turn now through the analysis of three case studies. Since the universes of existence were discussed as analytical instruments in the previous chapter, the remainder of this one will be devoted to Peirce's late inventory of the diverse classes of dynamic objects as described above. But first we need the logical justification for such an inventory. As in the cases studies in Chapter 4 exploiting the universes of existence, the purpose is not to suggest or to provide a new methodology for the arts, but is, rather, an attempt to apply Peirce's late definitions to a variety of complex signs.

The fundamental semiotic principles involved can be established if we return briefly to hexadb as represented in Table 4.2, from which we can infer that unlike a universe of existence such as the one determined by Napoleon's being a member of it, or the one determined by Dean Moriarty's being a member of it, the universe determined by 'a living consciousness, the life, the power of growth, of a plant .... a living institution, – a daily newspaper, a great fortune, a social "movement"' enjoys a more complex logical status: these are objects from the universe of necessitants, and therefore the signs representing them are to be classified, at that point in the hexad in Table 4.2 (**Od**), as collectives. However, as the table also shows, while a given sign can be classified as a collective in reference to its dynamic object, at the immediate object stage (**Oi**) that same sign can be classified as either copulant, designative or descriptive. Now if the sign is designative or descriptive, the immediate object will necessarily belong to a different universe from that of the dynamic. Furthermore, even if in the immediate object division the sign is copulant, to be physically perceivable at all it will have itself to be a token at (**S**): a given sign can therefore have both an immediate and a dynamic object more complex than itself. The possibility for a sign to be classified according to objects in different universes from itself, as in the case of a collective designative hypothetical token, clearly bears out Peirce's earlier remark in the Logic Notebook to the effect that the immediate object may not be at all like the dynamic: 'The immediate object of a sign may be of quite a different nature from the real dynamical object' (R339 277r (H523), 1906).

It follows from this that in the case studies with which we engage below, the signs are necessarily tokens and that what we shall be examining is the way they have been structured by their respective immediate objects. It follows, too, that even if the immediate objects are in these cases existents, making the sign a designative, this doesn't prevent their dynamic objects from being necessitant and not perceivable: such objects are general and hence can only be inferred. For these reasons, the case studies are based on two premises: first, that the dynamic objects represented can logically be more complex than the signs and immediate objects representing them, and second, consequently, that such dynamic objects may not be at all like the immediate objects that they determine.

## Worldviews and social movements

### Westward the course of empire

We begin with a concrete example, Figure 5.1, artist Emmanuel Leutze's study for the mural *Westward the Course of Empire Takes Its Way* located in the House



**Figure 5.1** Emanuel Leutze, *Westward the Course of Empire Takes Its Way*, 1862, Smithsonian American Art Museum, Bequest of Sara Carr Upton 1931.6.1

wing, west stairway of the US Capitol. It is a stirring depiction of a wagon train formed of a group of pioneer settlers and their scouts heading westwards through a mountain pass. Beneath the main image is a cartouche showing their destination, San Francisco Bay. This is the exhibition label proposed by the Smithsonian American Art Museum accompanying the study:<sup>11</sup>

Leutze's mural study for the Capitol in Washington celebrated the idea of Manifest Destiny just when the Civil War threatened the republic. The surging crowd of figures [on the mural] records the births, deaths, and battles fought as European Americans settled the continent to the edge of the Pacific. Like Moses and the Israelites who appear in the ornate borders of the painting, these pioneers stand at the threshold of the Promised Land, ready to fulfill what many nineteenth-century Americans believed was God's plan for the nation.

Figure 5.1 reproduces the study rather than the mural for reasons of legibility and simplicity.<sup>12</sup> What this and other similar images seem to represent is not so much the almost religious notion of the Manifest Destiny, as the exhibition label for the Smithsonian study has it, but rather the project of a new, hopefully just, expanding empire to be created on American soil in the New World.

Frances Palmer's *Across the Continent: 'The Course of Empire Takes Its Way'* (Figure 5.2) echoes the title of Leutze's mural and study, and displays a later, more aggressive image of western expansion: the coloured lithograph is divided diagonally by a railway line and displays contemporary signs of the social, technological and transportation superiority of the settlers from the East – a school and log cabins, a railway line, roads, covered wagons and the telegraph – on one side, and on the other a wilderness with a group of Indians on horseback engulfed by smoke from a locomotive.<sup>13</sup>

The image clearly illustrates contemporary perceptions of westward expansion and the idea Frederick Turner was later to give of the frontier as 'the outer edge of the wave [of westward expansion] – the meeting point between savagery and civilization.'<sup>14</sup> Four years later, John Gast executed *American Progress* (Figure 5.3), a more complex allegorical painting which displays a female figure floating westwards above yet another representation of the superiority of the means of transportation and techniques for the exploitation of the land issuing from the East with the advent of the settlers over that of the soon-to-be-overcome hunter-gatherer, nomadic Indians.

If, in Table 4.2 once more, we neglect for convenience the series of interpretants and work back from the sign division, we classify all three images as, of course,



**Figure 5.2** Frances Flora Bond Palmer, *Across the Continent. Westward the Course of Empire Takes Its Way*, 1868, Philadelphia Museum of Art, Hand-colored lithograph, Image: 17 5/8 × 27 1/4 inches (44.8 × 69.2 cm) Sheet: 21 5/16 × 30 1/8 inches (54.1 × 76.5 cm), Gift of Kathy and Ted Fernberger, 2009-215-2

tokens, and the fact that they may have been duplicated many times is of no logical import. As far as the **O<sub>i</sub>** division is concerned, Leutze's study and mural and Palmer's lithograph are designative. The allegorical *American Progress*, on the other hand, which associates a spirit of progress with the various means of transportation and so on, is interpreted as copulant with respect to the **O<sub>i</sub>** division: we observe a physical sign in which the complex association of a wraith from one universe of experience has been combined with groups of humans from another, quite distinct, universe of experience by an immediate object necessarily more complex than the painting itself. Now the protagonists of all three images are human, suggesting that they all should theoretically be classified as concrete signs. However, as the exhibition label suggests, Leutze's study – the other two images likewise – celebrates something far more general than the sum of the beings that we can see on them. What these three very different images represent is surely more than settlers supplanting the indigenous populations on American soil – they validate an idea, an idea which itself legitimated westward



**Figure 5.3** John Gast, *American Progress*, 1872, Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress

expansion – and so all three are collective signs at **Od**.<sup>15</sup> The exhibition label for Leutze’s study for *Westward the Empire Takes Its Way* suggests that it celebrated the idea of Manifest Destiny, a concept owed to the journalist John O’Sullivan. However, although O’Sullivan was to coin the expression in an article titled ‘Annexation’ in 1845, in an earlier text he had suggested that America should turn its back on the Old World model of empire:

How many nations have had their decline and fall, because the equal rights of the minority were trampled on by the despotism of the majority; or the interests of the many sacrificed to the aristocracy of the few; or the rights and interests of all given up to the monarchy of one? ... So far as regards the entire development of the natural rights of man, in moral, political, and national life, we may confidently assume that our country is destined to be *the great nation* of futurity. (1839: 426)

What philanthropist can contemplate the oppressions, the cruelties, and injustice inflicted by the monarchies and aristocracies of antiquity and, by implication, contemporary European nations on the masses of mankind, and not turn with moral horror from the retrospect?

America is destined for better deeds. (1839: 427).<sup>16</sup>



What the Indians and the African slaves would have made of these clearly idealistic remarks is not hard to imagine, but they formed nevertheless the basis of a very powerful set of expansionist ideas. The idea of the empire as one way of dominating a territory was not new. While the title of both of Leutze's works is probably an innocent quotation from a poem of 1727 by Bishop Berkeley, there is clearly a reference to the inevitability of the fall of Old World empires as described in Gibbon's *Decline and Fall* in O'Sullivan's rejection of the earlier instances of such empires. Furthermore, the rise and fall of such empires had been illustrated only a few years earlier by the five tableaux of Thomas Cole's *The Course of Empire* (1833–36), which seem to have inspired the title of Leutze's mural and study. The concept of empire was clearly in the air of the times, especially, no doubt, in the sense of a country or territory not owing allegiance to any foreign power or influence. So what these images seem to celebrate is not so much a 'Manifest Destiny' as the ideal of a new form of empire, for which, by celebrating it pictorially, they provided a legitimacy. The three images may seem quaint, even innocuous, to us today more than a hundred and fifty years later, but at the time their object was nothing less than a propaganda effort, for they are militant images, determined not by real pioneers and Indians but by the concept of a new empire whose sovereign was held to be the people, in short, determined by a dynamic object of a very complex type. As vehicles of this propaganda, they were nevertheless far less extreme than other images determined by the same object – for example, James Earl Taylor's *Scrapbook* sketches of heroic cavalry officers and settlers, the outnumbered victims of indigenous savages and these designative tokens, too, were a particular determination of the same general object.

### **The Lady of Shalott**

Another case of a much more general dynamic object than might first be thought is provided by a painting from a series by the British painter John William Waterhouse. It is the last in the series of three, but the first in relation to the sequence of events in the medieval tale made famous earlier by the poet Tennyson. The ballad recounts the tragic plight of the heroine of a medieval legend, the Lady of Shalott. The story, briefly, is as follows. The Lady of Shalott has been cursed for some unspoken reason. She has been condemned to live alone in a tower, where she weaves a magic web and is only able to look at the world outside by means of a mirror which reflects people passing along the road

to Camelot. She becomes dissatisfied with her lonely existence. The following relevant short extract is from the 1842 version of the poem:

But in her web she still delights  
To weave the mirror's magic sights,  
For often through the silent nights  
A funeral, with plumes and lights  
And music, went to Camelot:  
Or when the moon was overhead,  
Came two young lovers lately wed;  
'I am half sick of shadows,' said  
The Lady of Shalott.

One day the handsome Sir Lancelot rides by. She stops weaving and looks directly out of the window at him instead of using the mirror, thereby defying the curse. She leaves her castle, finds a boat and drifts downriver to her death. Ostensibly the story is about the female victim of a curse – she is the principal dynamic object, the ballad's 'special' object, but there are, of course, other partial objects (Lancelot, the town of Camelot, for example) in the poem – but that is not the only way the poem has been interpreted. The following is a sample of the critical opinions quoted in Wikipedia concerning what the poem really represents. Feminist critics, it is claimed, see the poem as dealing with issues of women's sexuality and their place in the Victorian world or with the temptation of sexuality, where the Lady of Shalott's innocence is preserved by death. The act of leaving the tower is considered as an act of defiance or a symbol of female empowerment, or is thought to allow the Lady of Shalott to break free emotionally and come into terms with her sexuality. The depiction of her death has also been interpreted as sleep, with its connotation of physical abandonment and vulnerability. Yet other critics have suggested that the poem is a representation of how a poet like Tennyson lives separated from the rest of society, and that the mirror functions as a filter, providing a form of artistic licence.<sup>17</sup>

These divergent interpretations once more raise the problem of what a poem, novel or pictorial representation really represents, as in the cases mentioned earlier in the chapter. We approach the problem not by means of the poem, but from an artist's depiction of one of the episodes. Waterhouse's painting (Figure 5.4) in fact represents the earliest. Such serial paintings were not unusual in the Victorian era, although this one, paradoxically, is Edwardian. In Waterhouse's case the first visually dramatic episode is from



**Figure 5.4** John William Waterhouse, “*I am half sick of shadows,*” said *The Lady of Shalott*’ (Alfred, Lord Tennyson, *The Lady of Shalott*, Part II), 1915, oil on canvas, Overall: 100.3 × 73.7 cm (39 ½ × 29 in.) Art Gallery of Ontario, Gift of Mrs. Philip B. Jackson, 1971, 71/18, © 2016 Art Gallery of Ontario

1888: on display in the Tate Gallery, it depicts the Lady of Shalott drifting downstream to her death.<sup>18</sup> The second, from 1894, catches the heroine at the fateful moment when she sees Lancelot in the mirror and turns to look

directly out of the window at him, thereby breaking the curse. Waterhouse's representation of the Lady of Shalott in this final version of 1915 shows her sitting in front of her loom with the mirror on the wall beside her. She is gazing reflectively into space, having just seen the 'two young lovers lately wed' at the bottom right of the mirror. This leads her to question her life without love in the isolation of the tower.

Referring to Table 4.2, the painting as a piece of canvass has to be classified as a token, and indeed is actually hanging in an art gallery in Toronto, Canada. Working back, there are two possibilities: the sign at **O<sub>i</sub>** can either be a copulant, like Jerry Uelsmann's photograph from the previous chapter and Gast's painting, or else designative. If designative, as is more likely, the sign at **O<sub>d</sub>** either represents a necessitant object – a class or collection or some other general entity – making it a collective, or else represents an existent, making it a concrete like the photograph and the drawing from Chapter 1. In view of the materiality of the subject, the latter seems initially to be the more likely option, and yet this would be to disregard one of the most pervasive themes of Victorian paintings. This is immediately obvious when Waterhouse's image is compared with Figure 5.5. Richard Redgrave's very different painting, *The Outcast*, depicts



**Figure 5.5** Richard Redgrave, *The Outcast*, 1851, © Royal Academy of Arts, London; Photographer: John Hammond

yet another aspect of the predicament of women in the Victorian era, but in a far more realistic manner. We are presented with the daughter of a middle-class family and her illegitimate child being driven from her home by her stern and unyielding Old Testament father, oblivious to the supplications of the other members of the family.

In spite of their obvious differences, the paintings can be construed as two representations of middle-class Victorian anxieties concerning female sexuality. Within this pervasive ideology the possibility for the sexual freedom of females to be on a par with that of males represented a danger to the fabric of family and society, and was, as paintings by Redgrave and others and the novels of Dickens, Eliot and Hardy in particular show, often severely repressed. Augustus Egg, for example, produced a series of three paintings depicting the downfall of an unfaithful wife and her baby titled *Past and Present* (all of 1858).<sup>19</sup> The persistent influence of this moralizing worldview was absorbed more or less consciously by contemporary painters such as Holman Hunt – his *The Awakening Conscience* (1853)<sup>20</sup> and John Stanhope's *Thoughts of the Past* (1859)<sup>21</sup> portray, respectively, a mistress with her 'gentleman' and a prostitute in a room beside a port, two variations on a much-worked Victorian stereotype, namely the fallen woman – while its influence is to be seen antithetically in its rejection by artists such as Whistler and Beardsley.

In view of this, Waterhouse's late depiction of the Lady of Shalott is more likely to be collective than concrete, copulant than designative: Arthurian legends clearly interested him as they did other Pre-Raphaelite painters, but beyond the illustration of a medieval tale the series of paintings can be interpreted, as was the poem, as an allegory of female containment and repression within a stern and severely patriarchal Victorian middle-class ideology.<sup>22</sup> If this is the case the heroine in the image represents allegorically, and therefore indirectly, not an individual but, rather, the 'collection' of Victorian middle-class females, while the general object of the series is this very ideology, and in particular

that compulsive masculine fantasy one might call the official Victorian attitude [to the socio-sexual division]. Its other side, the darker side of the male attitude, can be found in fiction, and especially in poetry. The dark woman, the period avatar of feminine evil, lurks there in subterranean menace, stationed at intervals all the way from Tennyson's verse to the more scabrous pornography of the age. (Millet 1972: 122)

In other words, Victorian middle-class fears of the havoc that unbridled female sexuality might wreak on the stability and social cohesion of family and country alike determined more or less conscious creative responses – signs, therefore – from novelists like George Eliot, poets like Tennyson and artists like Waterhouse.

### A Sunday march

Finally, the reader is invited to examine the photograph on Figure 5.6, which records some of the forty thousand and more people walking quietly but determinedly through a French town in the winter sunshine.

If we adopt the system of 1903, the dynamic object of this photograph, as in the case of all photographs, is composed collectively by the protagonists of the image – the people we see on the photograph. According to Peirce's definition for the *Syllabus* the photograph is a quasi-proposition; the section of rays (projected from an object, Peirce says in 1903, 'otherwise known') constitutes the quasi-subject while the print is its quasi-predicate. The 1906 definition of the *dicisign* examined briefly above would, if applied to a photograph, define the section of rays as the part appropriated to representing the object and the print as the part



**Figure 5.6** A crowd walking peacefully through a French town

representing the way the sign represents that object. But these definitions, in view of the later development of the status of the object, together constitute too simple a view, for this is not what the image really represents.

Even if we momentarily forget that this is a photograph and go 'behind the frame' as Meyer Schapiro invites us to (1994: 7), and in imagination join the walkers, there still remains the question of what caused a third of its population to be walking around a town on a Sunday morning in the south of France in winter. The photographer is the vector not so much of a culture's obsession with using its mobile phones to take innumerable images of the self, monuments and the here and now, but in this case of a worldview that was brought violently into being four days before the photograph was taken. This is 11 January 2015, and throughout France citizens marched through their towns, motivated by a sympathy for the victims of the 7 January 2015 massacre of the Charlie Hebdo journalists, and by their resolute defence of the principle of the freedom of speech. What the photograph represents, and indeed what the crowd itself represents, is, according to Peirce's wide-ranging late inventory of the entities that can constitute necessitant dynamic objects, nothing less than a social movement. It is this general social movement, then, that the photograph *really* represents, not just a collection of individuals: the individuals represent collectively a complex general object, which the photograph records at two removes.

How do the foregoing analyses relate to the hexad in Table 4.2? If correctly classified as representing a necessitant object, all the images in this chapter are collectives. However, there are significant differences between them. The crowd photograph is necessarily literal and Redgrave's painting is likely to be a literal representation of the fallen woman: at **Oi**, then, both are designative. On the other hand, Leutze's mural and study, judging by their respective exhibition labels, are not to be taken simply literally, while the paintings by Gast and Waterhouse are both clearly allegorical (the latter represents a contemporary female predicament by means of a medieval legend). In this case, their immediate object, which communicates a complex structure to the sign it determines, is necessitant, and these works, like Jerry Uelsmann's photograph from Chapter 4, are all copulant at this stage of the classification process. As they are all necessarily tokens (a wall, canvases and photographic prints with arrangements of pigments on their surfaces), Redgrave's painting and the crowd photograph are collective designative tokens, while the others are copulant (collective) tokens. What their respective interpretants are, or have been, is, of course, impossible to determine.

## Summary and discussion

When Peirce defined logic in 1903 as the philosophy of all representation, 'so far as representation can be known without any gathering of special facts beyond our ordinary daily life', the logic had a restricted definition of the sort of entity that an object might be. In order to show how the later semiotics expanded this conception, the chapter has traced the evolution of Peirce's conception of the sign's object through two important stages: first, the distinction between the immediate and the dynamic object, a significant development in its own right, but, more importantly, making it theoretically possible for there to be a representational discrepancy between the two; second, the extended inventory of potential dynamic objects established in the years 1908 and 1909 which reflected the virtually limitless potential of the three universes. Indeed, as these case studies have shown, the late conceptions of 1908 and 1909 provide the researcher with a very powerful range of necessitant objects which all participate, at times imperceptibly, in our ordinary daily lives. On the other hand this extensive expansion of the 1903 system might, for some, mean that Peircean semiotics has now reached a stage of formal break-up where 'anything goes'. There are at least three answers to such a charge.

First, we note that Peirce's conception of the final interpretant underwent a series of revisions contemporaneous with those of the object once he had expanded his interpretant system from one to three. In 1906 in 'Prolegomena to an Apology for Pragmaticism', for example, in an early reference to the concept, he defined the final interpretant in the following manner: 'Finally there is what I provisionally term the Final Interpretant, which refers to the manner in which the Sign tends to represent itself to be related to its Object' (CP 4.536). Examination in Chapter 2 of the various typologies Peirce established in the years 1904–1906 showed great hesitation in the naming and status of what was in 1909 to become the final interpretant, and in most cases at the time this was associated, as in the definition above, with the way the sign represents itself to be related to the object. However, definitions from 1909 suggest a much broader view, in which what might be called the 'consensual' logical status of the final interpretant placed the onus of interpretation on the community of interpreters rather than on the intrinsic manner in which signs tend to represent themselves to be related to their objects, as in the definition of 1906. The following is from the draft letter to James dated January 1909 discussed above:



As to the Interpretant, i.e., the “signification,” or “interpretation” rather, of a sign, we must distinguish an Immediate and a Dynamical, as we must the Immediate and Dynamical Objects. But we must also note that there is certainly a third kind of Interpretant, which I call the Final Interpretant, because it is that which *would* finally be decided to be the true interpretation if consideration of the matter were carried so far that an ultimate opinion were reached. (EP2 496, 1909)

To this we can add a similar definition in a letter addressed to Lady Welby two months later: ‘the Final Interpretant is the one Interpretative result to which every Interpreter is destined to come if the sign is sufficiently considered ... The Final Interpretant is that toward which the actual tends’ (SS 111, 1909), by which we understand that the purpose of signs for such an interpretant must, at **If** in Table 4.2, be self-control. By this time, however, Peirce appears to have dropped the strict formality of previous definitions – the definition of hexadic semiosis and the ten-division classification postulated in the letter to Lady Welby of 23 December 1908, for example – in favour of a more relaxed, even anecdotal approach in his late correspondence. This is confirmed by the following definition addressed this time to William James a further month later: ‘The Final Interpretant does not consist in the way in which any mind does act but in the way in which every mind would act’ (EP2 499, 1909), where by the expression ‘the way every mind would act’ we are to understand the establishment of a ‘communal’ habit (he is discussing yet again the ‘Ground arms!’ military command, here with respect to the three interpretants).

A second reason to reject the notion that the late systems have reached a stage where interpretation has become anarchic and idiosyncratic lies in the very nature of representation. In view of the fact that the hexad of 1908 involves a very different approach to signs from that of 1903 – in the case of an image, for example, the system of 1908 invites the semiotician to examine the form inherited from its immediate object and draw up an inventory of its ‘contents’ – the analyses given above might be mistaken for the methodology developed by Barthes in *Mythologies*, ‘Rhetoric of the image’ and ‘Éléments de sémiologie’ (Barthes 1970, 1977, 1964, respectively), in which he identified the signifying elements in a court trial, advertisement, magazine cover and so on, and, by means of a complex semiotic superstructure, censured the bourgeois ideology which had, he thought, determined them. But Peirce was no proto-structuralist, and the analyses conducted in the course of the case studies above were not informed by any ‘semioclastic’ intention any more than Peirce’s own discussions of example signs. It is simply that, rather in the manner of Eco’s *opera aperta* principle, once a representation has been made public and recognized

as such, there is no theoretical limit to the interpretations it can stimulate, irrespective of what the original sign-producer intended. And so it is only in the long run, if ever, that any consensus can be reached by any single group – a social ‘commens’ – concerning a given sign’s appropriate final interpretation and with it the identification of its dynamic object, namely, the identification of what it really represents. Sontag, Hariman and Lucaites and Wieseman in the examples given earlier interpreted photographs and a painting by looking at their immediately perceivable objects and then drawing conclusions based upon their experience, that ‘cognitive resultant’ of their past lives, as to what the images mediately represented, which, in every case, turned out to be something more complex than the elements immediately displayed: ultimate horror, the tension between individual rights and collective obligations – ‘the concepts of democratic citizenship and dissent’ (Hariman and Lucaites 2007: 48) – and *joie de vivre*. They may have been mistaken in their interpretations, but that is beside the point: they posited a concept, a necessitant object, for very existential signs independently of any theory of semiotics: these were genuine interpretations. For similar reasons, the very obvious lack of consensus in the various critical responses to Tennyson’s ballad culled from Wikipedia and quoted above is evidence that interpretation of the work is far from complete and that any final interpretation lies in a probably distant future. But this is not a situation to deprecate or to combat on some anxious theoretical front; it is a perfectly normal situation and one for which Peirce’s late conception of the interpretants provides a logical explanation.

Finally, it is important to realize that Peirce’s late sign-systems and the broadening of the scope of the dynamic object has developed our understanding of what was identified above as an ideologically charged object following Peirce’s extension of the list of necessitant objects in ‘The Neglected Argument for the Reality of God’. Now, it is obvious from the logical possibility of concreate and abstractive signs that not every object is necessarily necessitant, and even when necessitant, not necessarily ideological in nature. Nevertheless, the criterion Peirce offers concerning objects belonging to the universe of necessitants is to be found in this extract from a quotation given earlier: ‘The third Universe comprises everything whose Being consists in active power to establish connections between different objects, especially between objects in different Universes’ (EP2 435). Any object of this universe has at least to be systematic, that is, to belong to a set of entities interconnected by some relation: ‘Now, a *class* is a set of objects comprising all that stand to one another in a special relation of similarity. But where ordinary logic talks of classes the logic of relatives talks of *systems*. A *system* is a set of

objects comprising all that stand to one another in a group of connected relations' (CP 4.5, 1898). Consider in the light of this two definitions, both from the *OED*: 'Ideology: 4. A systematic scheme of ideas, usually relating to politics or society, or to the conduct of a class or group, and regarded as justifying actions.' Returning to the examples it would surely be gross naivety to think that the Lady of Shalott serial paintings are simply a pictorial reworking of a medieval Italian tale of a young woman mysteriously imprisoned in an ivory tower, ignoring the Victorian capitalist ideology that allowed owners of factories and mills not only to exploit women (and children) in complete impunity but also to keep their females as though in a gynaeceum. And the *OED* has this for propaganda: '3. The systematic propagation of information or ideas by an interested party, esp. in a tendentious way in order to encourage or instil a particular attitude or response. Also, the ideas, doctrines, etc., disseminated thus; the vehicle of such propagation.' And so it would also be gross naivety to think that Leutze's mural and study, Palmer's lithograph and Gast's painting are simply ingenuous records of the movement westward and its attendant dangers: they were, rather, contributions to, and determinations of, what was in fact imperialist propaganda.

By focusing on the object of complex signs such as advertising, slogans, Internet blogs, paintings, photographs and written documents past and present and so on, it is now possible within Peircean semiotics to identify and examine their ideological determinants.<sup>23</sup> Although analysts adopting the 1903 system obviously have little difficulty in inferring the ideology behind a given sign, that particular system is not entirely suitable for ideological analysis: there is no class of signs in the system which enables us to identify the sign's dynamic object – such a strategy requires recourse to the 1908 28-class system since this provides access to what a given sign's immediate object has communicated to it and thus to 'contents' from which to infer the possibly necessitant object, and offers a theoretical approach much closer to our everyday engagement with signs both familiar and unfamiliar.

Should there be readers still in doubt as to the ideological character that certain signs can present, they might like to decide whether the first two lines of a recent poem by Lawrence Ferlinghetti refer to a bucolic world of nymphs, shepherds and sheep or, rather, to something more sinister: 'Pity the nation whose people are sheep/And whose shepherds mislead them.' They might also like to identify the sort of object John Goto's photographic tableau *Deluge*, number VIII in the series *High Summer*, really represents.<sup>24</sup> The final word goes to Peirce: 'A Sign necessarily has for its Object some fragment of history, that is, of history of ideas' (R849, 1911).

## Conclusion

This study began with a reference to a programme for semioticians which might further our understanding of Peirce's sixty-six classes of signs. The research undertaken in the previous chapters involved a less ambitious project, one that sought to exploit not all of the original ten divisions announced in the 1908 letter to Lady Welby but a subset of six of those divisions, and to contrast it with his better-known three-division system from 1903. The very significant differences that the study has brought out between the two can be summarized as follows. In the first case, the 10-class typology was defined within a phenomenological framework since it used three categories – predicates bearing on whatever can be present to the mind – as the criteria by means of which to subdivide the sign and two sign-correlate relations. The second typology, on the other hand, was defined within an ontological framework, and employed three universes – receptacles of what there is, embracing possible, existent and general objects – to define the subdivisions of the six correlates of semiosis which, when properly combined, generate twenty-eight very different classes. Such an 'ontological turn' – modal and diagnostically triadic – can be nothing but the inevitable consequence of Peirce's unremitting realism: collections are real and so are the collective signs that represent them.

In view of his desire to classify as many possible signs as was in his power, the attraction of establishing sixty-six classes must have far outweighed the twenty-eight offered by the six divisions as described in the study, and this probably explains why Peirce never sought to develop and exploit what is in effect an organically organized set of divisions. Moreover, as he admitted to William James in the 25 December 1909 letter mentioned in Chapter 2, he was not so much interested in classifying existing classes of signs as in discovering new ones: in his search for possible signs Peirce presumably passed over the semiotic interest of the 28-class system, and one can only surmise what might have happened if he had developed the full potential of the 1908 hexad. In spite of this evident lack of interest on Peirce's part, within the restricted but more feasible project adopted in the study, the following conclusions can be drawn, although they might better be considered as programmes for future research.

First, one of the very interesting results of the work on the hexad has been to identify clearly the relations holding between the two objects and the sign with respect to one another and the way these relations come to determine the structure of the latter, with interesting implications for future work in the field of rhetoric. The definitions and conventions attributed by Peirce to the hexad have shown that each of the three can belong to one or other of three universes of increasing complexity. This means that the sign can be as complex as, or less complex than, the two objects, and that the immediate object can be as complex as, or less complex than, the dynamic. This being the case, tokens, which form the vast majority of the signs we use to communicate with others, can be classified with respect to two objects as complex as, or more complex than, themselves. This makes it possible to explain how allegorical and metaphorical utterances, text and images, and so on, which perforce are existential themselves, can present a form which may be underspecified with respect to their respective dynamic objects. It was seen to be the immediate object, functioning as a sort of filter, which determines what form or forms emanating from the dynamic object find expression in the sign. If the immediate object is a necessitant, for example, the dynamic object must be, too, while the sign, if it is a perceivable and therefore existent entity such as a painting, a photograph or an utterance in a conversation, will display a complex, sometimes incongruous but logically valid structure. This incongruity stems from the sign's being identified as copulant with respect to a necessitant immediate object, a class of objects 'which neither describe nor denote their Objects, but merely express the logical relations of these latter to something otherwise referred to' (CP 8.350). It is these logical relations which determine the complex structure that has to be accommodated by an existent, simply structured token, leading to underspecification and incongruity. Such underspecification and incongruity were accommodated in the 1903 system by Peirce's theory of the hypoicons, but the theoretical justification of how these functioned semiotically was never given: however, the notion that metaphor is a formal configuration representing a parallelism between two or more universes can now be justified logically by the semiotic differential between the two objects and the sign as defined within the hexad of 1908.

Second, the study has brought out the explanatory power of Peirce's late definition of the object, which led to several lines of enquiry. For example, it was shown in Chapter 4 that reference to one or more universes organized in very specific ways but represented in a single sign offered an alternative analytical methodology to the hypoicons in the analysis of certain types of figurative signs, metaphor, irony and simulation being the cases in point.

Here, too, there is much promising work to be done. Another line of enquiry involving the concept of the universe of existence was explored in Chapter 5 and concerned the sorts of objects identified by Peirce in 1908. Now, at the time of writing, Britain is preparing for a referendum on its continued presence in the European Union, while in the United States presidential candidates are vociferously debating their differences. In both cases, battle lines between newspapers have been drawn, with each expressing its particular editorial stance, and although the articles published are written by individuals, it is the opinion of the institution – a necessitant object – which is being canvassed (a more sinister scenario would have obscure, money-hungry gnomes working the strings of their puppet media, but even in such cases the object is quite general). These living institutions, daily newspapers, together with other sources of public expression unimaginable in Peirce's time – social media such as Facebook, Twitter and the applications on mobile telephones – are the new realizations of Peirce's extended conception of the sign's object. The logic now has the theoretical means to specify the sign's dynamic object more fully than in 1903, with the result that in addition to changes in the direction of the wind and the unexpected presence of another human on an island, the inventory of potential objects can now be extended to include propaganda, worldviews and social movements. Peircean semiotics, which appeared to be 'frozen' in 1903 and the triadic system developed for the Lowell Lectures with its reassuring abundance of examples and comments from Peirce himself and an often perfunctory reference to the two objects and three interpretants from its commentators, has, with the later systems, been shown to be logically capable of accommodating the complex signs of our age.

Third, the study has contributed to the specificity of Houser's programme by isolating the 28-class system and establishing its viability as a means of analysing signs. There obviously remains much research to be conducted in this field, too, particularly with respect to the interpretants, but discussion of the ordering problems encountered in Chapter 3, for example, offers researchers interested in the 66-class system a number of lines of enquiry, and shows that in attempting to establish the correct order of the ten divisions, it is a theoretical necessity and a source of considerable semiotic interest to work out what sorts of sign classes the hypothetical arrangement might lead to, and actually give examples of them – a challenging enterprise. The hexad has been shown to be a fully functional, organically organized and autonomous system, enabling the researcher not only to analyse signs but understand better the way the various subjects of the typology relate to each other.

What of the sixty-six classes of signs? As far as adding the four supplementary divisions as Peirce suggests in the 1908 letter, there are two possible strategies: first, to add them to the end of the hexad in the order Peirce suggested, or some variant of it, and in effect combine divisions obtained within distinct theoretical frameworks; second, as several authorities have tried to do, interleave them with the divisions of the hexad. In the first case, it may be possible to find some arrangement which, respecting the universe hierarchy rule, might generate the sixty-six classes; in the second, disturbing the order of the hexad by interleaving, for example, the division concerning the relation between sign and dynamic object, the sign's mode of representation, in other words, between the divisions of the dynamic and immediate objects might disturb the organic unity of the original association of the two and introduce 'noise' into the hexadic system. Such a strategy might work, but the lessons to be drawn from the comparisons conducted in Chapter 4 incline to doubt.

As for the philosophy of representation which occupied much of Chapter 1, the 10-class system remains, but the project of a grand logic with all its branches accounted for is a task for future Peirce scholars since the great man was forced by age, ill health, overwork and incredible poverty to abandon this mission. This will not be an easy task: as the later sign-systems grew in importance, the hopes of a grand logic seemed to diminish. What we are left with, on the other hand, shows how Peirce had departed from the European tradition in which he began his logical investigations and had finally forged his own.

The third branch of Peirce's grand logic may never be satisfactorily developed. There may never be a solution to the problem of the correct ordering of the ten divisions, either. Whatever the case, the present study will, perhaps, contribute to Houser's programme by stimulating informed reactions to it or further research into the classes of signs made available by the late sign-systems, the more manageable hexadb in particular. A final word, now, and a personal one: the research reported in the previous chapters was undertaken by a – hopefully – responsible academic, who is also – most certainly – an unregenerate member of the 'wrong crowd'.

## Appendix

The eight typologies from Peirce's Logic Notebook (R339) to follow were produced by Peirce between August 1904 and August 1906, and testify to his growing mastery of the classification of signs in this period; they also show him passing from six divisions to ten. As mentioned in the Abbreviations page, the Houghton sequences are not synchronized with the page numbers of the Logic Notebook, and so the appropriate sequence number in parentheses has been added for readers wishing to check the manuscript themselves. Three of the tables have already appeared in the main text with comments, while on Table A.4, from the entry for 8 October 1905 (page 3), the notes added by Peirce beside each of the three interpretants have been placed at the bottom of the page. As mentioned in the introduction to Chapter 2, Peirce reviewed and replaced a number of labels in his typologies. Those that seemed important to me have been retained in barred form in the following tables. Note, finally, that the tables have been presented as they appear in the Logic Notebook, and have received no special formatting.



**Table A.1** August 1904?

<b>Aug 1904? 239v</b>	<b>(H450)</b>		
B Icon	B Index	B symbol	
are Icon Index Symbol			
in the genuine sense			
A Icon	A Index	A Symbol	
are Icon Index Symbol			
in the degenerate sense			
C Rheme	C Dicit	C Argument	
are Rheme Dicit Argument			
in the genuine sense			
Rheme is represented in the proper signified Interpretant as if a Quality of the Object			
Dicit is represent [sic] in the signified Interpretant as if in a Real Relation to its Object			
Argument is represented in the signified Interpretant as if it were a Sign			
Rheme professes to describe a quality			
Dicit has two terms professing to describe Quality & Existent			
Argument has 3 terms professing to be Major Quality, Minor Existent, Middle Sign			
B Rheme	B Dicit	B Argument	
are Degenerate Rheme Dicit Argument			
B Rheme determines its interpretant formally by definition making it one sign			
B Dicit determines its interpretant by force			
B Argument determines its dynamic interpretant by its being represented as doing so			
B Dicit <i>has to be</i> asserted		C Dicit <i>may be</i> asserted	
A Rheme	A Dicit	A Argument	
are Dedegenerate Rheme Dicit Argument			

NB. The hesitation in the dating is explained in Note 7 of Chapter 2.

**Table A.2** 7 August 1904

<b>7 August 1904</b>	<b>240r</b>		<b>(H451)</b>
The distinction of Icon Index Symbol may be two ways defined			
1st	A_ Icon A_ Index A_ Symbol	} has for its immediate object	{ <sup>formal</sup> Quality Existent Law
2nd	B_ Icon B_ Index B_ Symbol	} is determined by its dynamic object by virtue of	{ Own Internal nature Real Relation to Object Being Interpreted as such (Imputed in Interpretant)
The distinction of Rheme Dicisign Argument should, then, be three ways defined			
	A_ Rheme A_ Dicisign A_ Argument	} has for immediate Interpretant	{ <sup>formal</sup> Quality Existent Law
	B_ Rheme B_ Dicisign B_ Argument	} <sup>refers to</sup> determines its dynamic Interpretant by virtue of	{ Own Internal Nature Real Relation to it Interpreted as such
	C_ Rheme C_ Dicisign C_ Argument	} <sup>refers to</sup> is represented by its <sup>proper</sup> signified Interpretant as if	{ Quale Second Sign

**Table A.3** 8 October 1905

<b>8 October 1905</b>	<b>252r</b>	<b>(H477)</b>
	Division of Signs	
A As to being of Sign	Qualisign — Sign is Presentment or Abstraction Sinsign — Sign is Existent Legisign — Sign is Generality in itself	
B As to Object	a As to Immediate Object <i>Vague Sign</i> Sign represents object as Indefinite <i>Singular Sign</i> Sign represents " " Individual {Abstract/Concrete/Collective <i>General Sign</i> " " " " Distributive general	
	b. As to Dynamic Object	
	<i>Icon</i> Sign affected agrees with object by virtue of <i>Common Quality</i>	
	<i>Index</i> " " " " " " " " <i>Being Really</i> <i>acted on by it</i>	
	<i>Symbol</i> " " " " " " " " <i>Being so</i> <i>interpreted</i>	
C As to Interpretant	a As to Immediate Interpretant The sign represents interpretant as feeling (Interjection) Action (Imperative) Thought Sign (Indicative)	
	b Dynamic Interpretant	
	Interprets by Sympathy by Compulsion by Reason	
	c Significant Interpretant	
	The interp. represents sign as in Rheme, Proposition, Argument	

Table A.4 8 October 1905

8 October 1905 (page 3) 253r (H479)

## A Division according to the Matter of the Sign

Qualisign

Sinsign

Legisign

## B Divisions according to the Object

**a. According to the Immediate Object (how represented)**

Indefinite Sign

Singular Sign {Abstract/Concrete/Collective

Distributed General Sign

**b. According to the Dynamic Object** $\alpha$  Matter of the Dynamic Object

Abstract

Concrete

Collection

 $\beta$  Mode of representing Object

Icon

Index

Symbol

## C Division according to Interpretant

**a. According to Immediate interpretant (how represented) Oct 9↓**

Immediate interpretant represented as Vague Clamatory

" " " " Singular Imperative

" " " " Distrib. General

Representative

**b. According to Dynamic Interpretant** $\alpha$  Matter of Dynamic Interpretant

Feeling

~~Action~~ Conduct

Thought

 $\beta$  Mode of affecting Dynamic Interp.

By sympathy

By compulsion

By reason

**c According to Representative Interpretant**

α Matter of Representative Interpretant

- 
- 
- 

β Mode of being affected represented by Representative Interpretant

- 
- 
- 

γ Mode of being represented to represent object by Repr. Interp

- 
- 
- 

NB1 Immediate Interpretant is the Interpretant as Represented in the Sign or as a determination of the sign. To what the sign appeals

NB2 The dynamic Interpretant is the determination of a field of representation exterior to the sign (such a field is an interpreter's consciousness) which determination is effected by the sign.

NB3 The representative Interpretant is the interpretant that truly represents that the Sign represents its Object as it does

Table A.5 9 October 1905

**9 October 1905 continued 255r (H483)**

As it now seems to me the Representative Interpretant is that which correctly Represents the Sign to be a Sign of its Object and the divisions are

$\alpha$  According to the nature the Sign is Represented as having in itself or as having in reference to its immediate object

$\beta$  According to the Nature of the Sign as Represented to be determined by its Object  
 as Icon in a term  
 as Index in a proposition  
 as Symbol in an argument

$\gamma$  According to the Nature of the Sign as represented in the Representative Interpretant as determining its Interpretant

Professes to be exclamatory Abductive  
 " " " imperative Deductive  
 " " " enlightening Inductive

**Table A.6** 13 October 1905**13 October 1905****262r****(H497)****A Nature of Sign in itself**

Abstraction = Qualisign  
 Existent = Sinsign  
 Combinant Type = Legisign

**B Of Object****a Immediate**

In what form Object is represented in Sign { Indef./ Sing. /  
 General  
 as far as affects Form of Sign

**b. Dynamical**

$\alpha$  Nature of Object in Itself {Abstraction/Concrete/Collection  
 $\beta$  ~~Cause of/How Sign is/being determined to represent obj~~  
 Causation of sign's representing Obj

**C Of Interpretant****a Immediate**

In what form interpretant is repr. in sign  
 As far as it affects form of sign {Interrog/Imper./Significat.

**b Dynamical**

$\alpha$  Nature of Interpretant in Itself  
 As far as this affects Nature of sign {Feeling/ Fact/ Sign (? Sign.)  
 $\beta$  ~~Cause of sign being determined to affect/ being represented~~  
 Causation of Sign's affecting Interp. {Sympathy/Compulsion/  
 Representat.

**c Representative**

$\alpha$  In what form sign is represented in Interpretant  
 As far as this affects form of sign,

$\beta$  Causation of representation of Sign by Interpretant  
 As far as this affects nature of the Sign,

$\gamma$  Rationale of Connection between Sign and Object effected by  
 Interpretant

Table A.7 31 March 1906

Provisional Classification of Signs		275r	(H521)	31 March 1906
	A Sign is		in its own Nature	
6	5 is either	<b>A Tone</b> What has all its being whether it exists or not	<b>A Token</b> Whose being exists in dyadic relations	<b>or A Type</b> whose being exists in the order of whatever may come hereafter to be or in the order that will be shown whenever certain kinds of action shall take place
			in reference to its Immediate Object	
8	6 is either	<b>Indefinite</b>	<b>Singular</b>	<b>or General Sign</b> *
			in reference to the Nature of its Real Object	
7	5 <sup>++</sup> ? is either	<b>Abstract</b>	<b>Concrete</b>	<b>or Collective</b> *
			in reference to its relation to the Real Object	
9	7 is either	<b>Icon</b>	<b>Index</b>	<b>or Symbol</b> *
			in reference to its Intended Interpretant	
				(1906 August 30 Transpose first & third)
5	4 is either	<b>Positive</b>	<b>Imperative</b>	<b>or Interrogative</b>
			in reference to the Nature of its Dynamic Interpretant	
	4 is either	<b>Poetic</b> or excitant of feeling Eidoseme	<b>Stimulant</b> or excitant of action Ergoseme	<b>or Impressive</b> or determinant of a Habit Logoseme
			in reference to its relation to its Dynamic Interpretant	
	3 is either	<b>Sympathetic</b>	<b>Compulsive</b>	<b>or Rational</b>
			in reference to the Nature of its Normal Interpretant	
	2 is either	<b>Strange</b>	<b>Common</b>	<b>or Novel</b>
			in reference to the Passion of its Normal Interpretant	
	4 is either	Substitute <b>Suggestive</b>	Suggestive <b>Reactive</b>	<b>or Argument</b>
			in reference to the Significance of its Normal Interpretant	
	1 is either	<b>Monadic</b>	<b>Dyadic</b>	<b>Triadic</b> ??



**Table A.8** 31 August 1906

**PROVISIONAL DIVISION OF SIGNS 31 Aug 1906 285r (H534)**

**I. 1st Division according to the Matter of the Sign**

Tinge	Token	Type
Vague Quality	Thing or Fact	

**II.i. 2nd Division according to the Form under which the Sign presents the Immediate Object**

<b>Indefinite</b>	<b>Designation</b>	<b>General</b>
-------------------	--------------------	----------------

**II.ii.1. 3rd Division, according to the Nature of the Real Object**

<b>Abstract</b>	<b>Concrete</b>	<b>Collection</b>
		or other Ens Rationis

**II.ii.2. 4th Division, according to the Connection of the Sign with its Object**

Icon	Index	Symbol
------	-------	--------

**III.i. 5th Division, according to the Form of Signification of Immediate Initial Interpretant**

<b>Medad Monad</b>	<b>Dyad</b>	<b>Polyad</b>
perhaps Hypothetic	Categorical	Relative

**III.ii.1. 6th Division, according to the Nature of the Middle Interpretant**

<b>Sympathetic</b>	<b>Shocking</b>	<b>Usual</b>
Congruentive	Percussive	

**III.ii.2. 7th Division, according to the Manner of Appeal to the Middle Interpretant**

<b>Interrogative</b>	<b>Imperative</b>	<b>Indicative</b>
(or Suggestive)		

**III.iii.1. 8th Division, according to the Nature Purpose of the Eventual Interpretant**

<b>Gratific</b>	<b>Stidious Actuous</b>	<b>Moral or Temperative</b>
		to Produced Self-Control

**III.iii.2. 9th Division, according to the Nature of the Influence the Sign is intended to exert**

Rheme	Dicisign	Argument
<b>Seme</b>	<b>PHEME</b>	<b>Delome</b>

**III.iii.3. 10th Division, according to the Nature of the Assurance afforded the Interpreter of taking the Sign according to its Purpose**

<b>Abducent</b>	<b>Inducent</b>	<b>Deducent</b>
assurance of instinct	assurance of experience	assurance of Form

# Notes

## Placeholder for back of book note content Introduction

- 1 From R343, 1902, and quoted in Fisch (1983: xxvii).
- 2 The *Writings of Charles S. Peirce: A Chronological Edition* (1982–), Peirce Edition Project (Eds), Bloomington: Indiana University Press. Volume Eight, the latest in the series, covers the period 1890–1892.
- 3 '[T]he numerical spinning of classes of signs is most confusing, and I suspect, like Gary Sanders (1970), that attempts to detail all classes of signs is counter-productive.' Spinks (1991: 235n).
- 4 'The final typology adds four new trichotomies, bringing the total to 10. However, although the final typology is an interesting experiment, it is rather underdeveloped and tentative in Peirce. For this reason, and for the reason that the most detailed classification of signs is associated with the interim typology, focus on the 1903 typology might be the most fruitful.' Liszka (1996: 35).
- 5 Although it does reappear as one of four supplementary divisions of the 66-class system.
- 6 Peirce's terminology varied between 'semiotic' and 'semeiotic', but I have retained the more usual term 'semiotics' in this study.

## Chapter 1

- 1 It was, in fact, finalized in the first few months of 1904 but this is of little consequence since Peirce expanded the system to six correlates the following October.
- 2 In the manuscript R465 there are no commas in the final sentence but it has uppercase T, P and R, which the editors of the *Collected Papers* have 'corrected'. I have retained the original spelling and punctuation.
- 3 'As to my terminology, I confine the word representation to the operation of a sign or its relation to the object for the interpreter of the representation.' (CP 1.540, 1903)
- 4 For the reader not familiar with Peirce the *Syllabus of Certain Topics of Logic* was a pamphlet published as a supplement to the lectures themselves. It ran to 23 pages and consequently omitted much of the material of the lectures.

- 5 'Logic will here be defined as formal semiotic. A definition of a sign will be given which no more refers to human thought than does the definition of a line as the place which a particle occupies, part by part, during a lapse of time. Namely, a sign is something, A, which brings something, B, its interpretant sign determined or created by it, into the same sort of correspondence with something, C, its object, as that in which itself stands to C. It is from this definition, together with a definition of "formal", that I deduce mathematically the principles of logic. I also make a historical review of all the definitions and conceptions of logic, and show, not merely that my definition is no novelty, but that my non-psychological conception of logic has virtually been quite generally held, though not generally recognized' (NEM4 20–21, 1902).
- 6 See, too, Peirce (1982: xxxiii).
- 7 Max Fisch, Introduction to *Writings, Volume One*, page xxxiii, and (1986: 338–341).
- 8 Quotations from the *Critique of Pure Reason* are by reference to Meiklejohn's 1855 translation of the second edition (1787), the text used by Peirce himself, and not by the more conventional reference to the A and B page numbers of, respectively, the first and second editions.
- 9 Later to be titled 'phaneroscopy', which studies the 'phaneron.' This, Peirce suggests, bears similarities to the 'ideas' of, for example, a philosopher like Locke: see CP 1.285. Peirce also referred to the science as 'ideoscopy' in a letter to Lady Welby, and to the categories as 'cenopythagorean', that is, determined by number (SS 23–24, 1904).
- 10 Peirce had suggested as early as 1866 that Kant's deduction of the categories from the faculty of judgement is flawed in that there is no guarantee that the table of judgements itself is correct (cf. W1 351).
- 11 Peirce never actually proved the theorem, but cf. Herzberger (1981).
- 12 'And so you will find out that it is a universal rule that to have a *testing art* we need no other knowledge than a *classifying science*. And, accordingly, if we wish to be able to test arguments, what we have to do, is to take all the arguments we can find, scrutinize them and put those which are alike in a class by themselves and then examine these different kinds and learn their properties. Now the classificatory science of reasons so produced is the science of Logic.' (W1 359)
- 13 By 'ground' Peirce seems to mean qualitative continuity: 'The *ground* is the self abstracted from the concreteness which implies the possibility of another.' (CP 1.556, 1867)
- 14 Peirce himself likened the cognitive process to dipping a triangle apex-first into water. Before the triangle touches the water, there is no cognition, but subsequently, the lines drawn by the water on the triangle represent degrees of ever-increasing 'liveliness.' There is no first line, and as each successive line is greater, each successive cognition more lively than the one before. Cf. CP 5.263 (1868).

- 15 'Thought, however, is in itself essentially of the nature of a sign. But a sign is not a sign unless it translates itself into another sign in which it is more developed' (CP 5.594, 1898). Note that although Locke does not state the matter in such terms, by making ideas the signs of other ideas, he anticipates Peirce's theory of the interpretant as expounded in the early years of the century.
- 16 Cf., too, 'The easiest of those which are of philosophical interest is the idea of a sign, or representation. A sign stands *for* something *to* the idea which it produces, or modifies. Or, it is a vehicle conveying into the mind something from without. That for which it stands is called its *object*; that which it conveys, its *meaning*; and the idea to which it gives rise, its *interpretant*. The object of representation can be nothing but a representation of which the first representation is the interpretant. But an endless series of representations, each representing the one behind it, may be conceived to have an absolute object at its limit. The meaning of a representation can be nothing but a representation. In fact, it is nothing but the representation itself conceived as stripped of irrelevant clothing. But this clothing never can be completely stripped off; it is only changed for something more diaphanous. So there is an infinite regression here. Finally, the interpretant is nothing but another representation to which the torch of truth is handed along; and as representation, it has its interpretant again. Lo, another infinite series.' (NEM4 309–10, 1894?)
- 17 Titled respectively, 'Sundry Logical Conceptions' and 'Nomenclature and Divisions of Triadic Relations, as Far as They are Determined'.
- 18 'By an application of Categorical, I show that the primary division of logic should be into Stechiology [Speculative grammar], Critic and Methodetic.' Memoir 13 (NEM4 21, 1902).
- 19 Jakobson ([1965] 1971).
- 20 Marty (nd.).
- 21 Deely (2014): 'Appendix A: Table and Texts of the 85 Peirce Definitions of Sign in Chronological Order'.

## Chapter 2

- 1 Some unpublished material in this chapter was presented at the Charles S. Peirce International Centennial Congress in Lowell in September 2014, and at the International Symposium on Cultural and Communication Semiotics, Sichuan University, Chengdu, China, in July, 2015.
- 2 Cf., too, this by Max Fisch: 'We may add now that logic also is a classificatory science .... and that in his own lifetime as a whole, he devoted more labor to the classification of signs than to any other single field of research.' (1982: xxii)

- 3 Short (2007: 191), suggests that the two objects have their origin in the work of the Stoics. Cf. 'It will do no harm to note here that philosophists are in the habit of distinguishing two objects of many signs, the immediate and the real. The former is an image, or notion, which the interpreter is supposed to have already formed in his mind before the sign is uttered.' (R318 399–401, 1907)
- 4 Cf., too: 'Objects of many signs: the immediate and the real object. The former is the notion the interpreter is presumed already to have of the object.' (R318 529, 1907)
- 5 'The thought-sign stands for its object in the respect which is thought; that is to say this respect is the immediate object of consciousness in the thought, or, in other words, it is the thought itself, or at least what the thought is thought to be in the subsequent thought to which it is a sign.' (EP1 38–39, 1868)
- 6 'Now the reason why there should be three meanings but only two objects must lie in the difference between the nature of the relation of the one and the other to the sign. The principal difference of this kind is that the object, being the determining cause of the sign, is previous to it, while the meaning, or interpretant, being determined by the sign as its essential effect, is subsequent to it. This sought for something must be of a mental nature, because such is the nature of the sign.' (R318 407–409, 1907)
- 7 It is difficult to date this particular page and typology. It occurs on the verso of page 239 dated 10 July 1903 (H450), facing a similar hexadic typology on 240r (H451) dated 7 August 1904. Peirce seems to have added it after the August typology, which is why I have added a question mark. In any case, it is obvious it is from 1904 and not 1903.
- 8 See, for a different point of view, Joseph Ransdell's essay 'On the Use and Abuse of the Immediate/Dynamical Object Distinction' on the Arisbe site: <http://www.iupui.edu/~arisbe/menu/library/aboutcsp/ransdell/useabuse.htm> (Accessed March 2016).
- 9 Note that an intervening classification of 7 August 1904 (R339, 240r (H451)) sets out the divisions as (S), **Oi**, **S–Od**, **Ii**, **Id**, **If** (the latter is referred to as 'signified interpretant' in the typology), with the three interpretants relating to different ways of distinguishing between rheme, dicent and argument. **S–Od** is the only relational division in this typology.
- 10 Note that Peirce appears to be inconsistent at this point, although it is more likely that the sentence is simply elliptical. The general introduction to the typology reads: 'Now signs may be divided as to their own material nature, as to their relations to their objects, and as to their relations to their interpretants' (CP 8.333), but he refers to the **Oi** division as though it is independent: 'In *respect to its immediate object* a sign ... [Emphasis added]' (CP 8.336). References to this division will simply show the relation **S–Oi** as in Figure 2.1.

- 11 Cf. R793 9, which reads ‘this triadic relation being such as to determine C to be in a relation ...’
- 12 The actual quotation is from pages numbered by Peirce as ‘26’ and ‘27’, but the sequences themselves are numbers 39 and 40 out of eighty-one pages of manuscript. The two objects in each case refer to the immediate and dynamic objects: ‘-killed-’ is composed of two partial objects and therefore has two dynamic and two immediate objects in each place-marker; the second, a monad, had one dynamic and one immediate object.
- 13 ‘But if my words (can) be the seed (of infamy’s fruit) ...’
- 14 The page is numbered ‘14’ by Peirce but the quotation appears on sequence 17 of the manuscript.
- 15 In 1903 ‘seme’ was an alternative term for the index (CP 2.283).
- 16 ‘From the summer of 1905 to the same time in 1906, I devoted much study to my ten trichotomies of signs.’ (CP 8.363, 1908)
- 17 Hardwick (SS 35n) notes that the order in the last two trichotomies of the hexad of 12 October 1904 is unusual for Peirce. This is because subsequently Peirce opted for an ordering of the divisions based upon the ‘order of occurrence’ of the correlates in semiosis.
- 18 Extracts from this draft are to be found in two pages of EP2 196–197, and seven in SS 195–201.
- 19 Note that the page numbers in the references are those of Peirce himself.
- 20 EP2 544 n22.
- 21 ‘Analysis of the 76 definitions of the sign’ <http://www.iupui.edu/~arisbe/resources/76DEFS/76defs.HTM> (Accessed March 2016).
- 22 Cf., too, the entry in the Logic Notebook for 30 January 1906: ‘A sign is a species of medium for intercommunication’ (R339 271r (H515)).
- 23 See, too, Bergman (2009: 128–129) for a discussion.
- 24 Cf. EP2 407 for a similar remark.
- 25 But see, too, ‘It seems best to regard a sign as a determination of a quasi-mind; for if we regard it as an outward object, and as addressing itself to a human mind, that mind must first apprehend it as an object in itself, and only after that consider it in its significance; and the like must happen if the sign addresses itself to any quasi-mind. It must begin by forming a determination of that quasi-mind, and nothing will be lost by regarding that determination as the sign.’ (EP2 391, 1905)
- 26 A slightly different version of the concept of the commens is to be found in the ‘Prolegomena’ text of 1906: ‘Moreover, signs require at least two Quasi-minds; a *Quasi-utterer* and a *Quasi-interpreter*; and although these two are at one (i.e. are one mind) in the sign itself, they must nevertheless be distinct. In the Sign they are, so to say, welded. Accordingly, it is not merely a fact of human Psychology, but a necessity of Logic, that every logical evolution of thought should be dialogic.’ (CP 4.551, 1906)

- 27 See the table for August 31, 1906, in the Appendix.
- 28 Cf. ‘and more than these ten I don’t enquire into, not because I don’t think they are in truth there, but simply because it will be all I possibly can do to *define* and to *prove* these ten.’ (R339 360r (H674))
- 29 See Liszka (1996: 120–123) for a useful discussion of the problem.
- 30 ‘Eventual’ and ‘normal’ are terms to which he returns on consecutive days in December 1908 (CP 8.344, 8.372).
- 31 R339 271r (H515), 30 January 1906.

### Chapter 3

- 1 The **S–Ii** division is one that Peirce subsequently dropped.
- 2 The letter is also reproduced in EP2 478–81.
- 3 ‘Traditionally the three modes of being are possibility, actuality, and necessity, and it was natural that Peirce should have tried to correlate his categories with the classic triad (6.342) The correlation, however leaves much to be desired. There is no problem in matching Secondness with actuality, but Firstness and Thirdness do not correspond easily with possibility and necessity ... Thus any First is a description of a possible object. But if this is all that is meant, it is obvious that there are two kinds of possibility – relational and nonrelational – so the possibility is not confined to Firstness but must be reintroduced in the other categories as well. In respect to Thirdness and necessity the lack of correlation is even more obvious. Peirce seeks to justify his position by arguing that just as the logical verb reappears in metaphysics as quality, and the individual subject as a thing, “so the logical reason, or premiss, reappears in metaphysics as a reason, an *ens* having a *reality* consisting in a ruling both of the outward and the inward world, as its mode of being” (CP 1.515).’ Murphey (1993: 394).
- 4 Note, too, the rather curious entry in R339 concerning Peirce’s cosmological investigations in 1908, the year of ‘The Neglected Argument for the Reality of God’: ‘Scheme of a Series of Papers, On the Cosmology of the Here and Hereafter .... I now state the purpose of these papers. It is to show what logic demands that our hypotheses should be in order to explain the most general phenomena of the three Universes, in view of what science has hitherto brought to light and assuming that we are sometimes able to communicate with the dead, and in view of the general nature of such apparent communications. I mean, especially that 999 out of’ [incomplete], R339 305v (H569), 2 September 1908.
- 5 The designation ‘token’ had already been introduced in 1885 along with index and icon, but as an alternative to ‘symbol’: ‘A sign is in a conjoint relation to the thing denoted and to the mind ... Such signs are always abstract and general, because

habits are general rules to which the organism has become subjected. They are, for the most part, conventional or arbitrary. They include all general words, the main body of speech, and any mode of conveying a judgment. For the sake of brevity I will call them *tokens*.' (CP 3.360)

- 6 Cf., too, a letter to William James (EP2 497).
- 7 Stjernfelt suggests that what Peirce means by this rather surprising reservation is that the immediate object necessarily leaves part of the dynamic object unspecified (2014: 99). Since the immediate object acts as a filter in the sequence, and determines which parts of the dynamic object 'reach' the sign, this seems a very plausible explanation.
- 8 In his analysis of the 70-plus definitions of the sign, Robert Marty distinguishes between the original three correlates of the triadic relation as 'global triadic' and the later six-element definition as being 'analytic triadic'. See his very useful 'Analysis of the 76 definitions of the sign' <http://www.iupui.edu/~arisbe/resources/76DEFS/76defs.HTM> (Accessed March 2016).
- 9 The order in the case of the three 'additional' divisions being **S–Od**, **S–Id**, **S–Od–If**, and **S–If**.
- 10 It must be understood that Peirce did not isolate the six correlates in this way, they were included in the ten, but in a problematic order. Nor did he ever set out a table in this 'orthogonal' manner.
- 11 The icon-index-symbol division is one of four divisions appended to the description of the hexad in the 23 December letter (SS 84–85), and becomes the fourth trichotomy in the ten Peirce describes in the draft of 25 December 1908 (EP2 489).
- 12 Andrew Diversey, personal communication.
- 13 Here again, as with Savan, the order presented for Lieb by Hardwick depends crucially upon how we interpret the terms 'destinate' and 'explicit': for Weiss and Burks, for Lieb and for the position adopted in this book, the terms correspond, respectively, to immediate and final. Diversey (2014), like Savan, has mistakenly inverted the order.
- 14 Cf. CP 8.347, where he is describing actisigns, this particular draft's version of the token: 'B. *Actisigns*, or Objects which are Signs as Experienced *hic et nunc*; such as any single word in a single place in a single sentence of a single paragraph of a single page of a single copy of a book. There may be repetition of the whole paragraph, this word included, in another place. But that other occurrence is not this word. The book may be printed in an edition of ten thousand; but THIS word is only in my copy.' In other words, the legisign – replica distinction of 1903 seems to have been, if not completely discarded, at least neutralized temporarily.



- 15 Savan quoted Peirce from Buchler's selection (Buchler [1940] 2011), presumably for copyright reasons. In this instance the reference to Buchler 275–276 corresponds to CP 5.473.
- 16 See Chapter 2, n 7.
- 17 Cf. *OED*, entry 'Destinate: 2.2 Set apart for a particular purpose; ordained; intended'.
- 18 Within his later systems, in which the type/instance distinction seems less important (CP 8.347), the noun could conceivably have been placed at existent 'level', so to speak, as a token. In CP 8.359 he maintains the distinction between the 'general' word and its instances. Note, too, that it is immaterial whether the immediate object division precedes or follows that of the dynamic. It is the interpretant sequence determined by a possible dynamic object which counts.
- 19 This was the reasoning I suggested in Jappy (1985), and thirty years later I see no reason to change my point of view.
- 20 'The verbal expression "If—, then—" is a Famisign, as all words are (in the sense in which two that are just alike are the very same "word").' (CP 8.359)
- 21 Peirce had already used this denomination in the typology of 31 August 1906 (Table 8 in the Appendix).
- 22 The justification given for the contents of this particular division is to be found in the preceding paragraphs, given here (CP 8.346): 'I. A Sign is necessarily in itself present to the Mind of its Interpreter. Now there are three entirely different ways in which Objects are present to minds:  
 First, in themselves as they are in themselves. Namely, Feelings are so present. At the first instant of waking from profound sleep when thought, or even distinct perception, is not yet awake, if one has gone to bed more asleep than awake in a large, strange room with one dim candle. At the instant of waking the *tout ensemble* is felt as a unit. The feeling of the skylark's song in the morning, of one's first hearing of the English nightingale.  
 Secondly, the sense of something opposing one's Effort, something preventing one from opening a door slightly ajar; which is known in its individuality by the actual shock, the Surprising element, in any Experience which makes it sui generis. Thirdly, that which is stored away in one's Memory; Familiar, and as such, General.'
- 23 See Chapter 2, n 10.
- 24 Savan has suggested convincingly that Peirce was influenced at this stage by the Greek concept of 'καλοσ' (1988: 64).
- 25 Remember that in 1908 the earlier distinction between sinsign and replica of a legisign is less rigorously stated since the token doubles for both, in spite of some references to 'instances' (compare CP 8.345 and CP 8.347, for example).

## Chapter 4

- 1 'Resemblance is an identity of characters; and this is the same as to say that the mind gathers the resembling ideas together into one conception' (CP 1.365, c. 1890).
- 2 Even before working on the various drafts for the Lowell Lectures on logic, Peirce had already envisaged employing the categories to trichotomize the icon in his Harvard Lectures on pragmatism presented earlier in the year: 'Now the *Icon* may undoubtedly be divided according to the categories; but the mere completeness of the notion of the icon does not imperatively call for any such division. For a pure icon does not draw any distinction between itself and its object. It represents whatever it may represent, and whatever it is like, it in so far is. It is an affair of suchness only' (CP 5.74, 1903).
- 3 There is also an earlier version of this particular statement: 'Icons may be distinguished, though only roughly, into those which [represent] are icons in respect to the qualities of sense, being *images*, and those which are icons in respect to the dyadic relations of their parts to one another being *diagrams* or dyadic analogues, and those which are icons in respect to their intellectual characters, being *examples*' (Lattmann 2012, 536n2). According to André de Tienne, director of the Peirce Edition Project (personal communication), the passage is not a variant, as Lattmann suggests, but is in fact part of a text that precedes the composition of what was published as CP 2.277. I assume, therefore, that Peirce preferred the version to be found in volume two of *The Essential Peirce* (274) and the *Collected Papers* and which I have quoted in the main text.
- 4 'Slaughter-house workers' would have been more appropriate but would have complicated Figure 4.5. Hence 'butchers'.
- 5 See chapter five of Jappy (2013) for a fuller discussion.
- 6 It would be irrelevant to give the details of this linguistic movement here, but the interested reader can consult Jappy (1999) and references.
- 7 Note that it has to be a universe of existence; otherwise we should be unable to perceive it. A universe of necessitants would be invisible, and a universe of ideas and qualities would be an indefinite chaos.
- 8 The notion was not entirely new: 'All propositions relate to the same ever-reacting singular; namely, to the totality of all real objects. It is true that when the Arabian romancer tells us that there was a lady named Scherherazade, he does not mean to be understood as speaking of the world of outward realities, and there is a great deal of fiction in what he is talking about. For the *fictive* is that whose characters depend upon what characters somebody attributes to it; and the story is, of course, the mere creation of the poet's thought. Nevertheless, once he has imagined Scherherazade and made her young, beautiful, and endowed with a gift of spinning

- stories, it becomes a real fact that so he has imagined her, which fact he cannot destroy by pretending or thinking that he imagined her to be otherwise. What he wishes us to understand is what he might have expressed in plain prose by saying, "I have imagined a lady, Scherherazade by name, young, beautiful and a tireless teller of tales, and I am going on to imagine what tales she told." This would have been a plain expression of professed fact relating to the sum total of realities' (CP 5.152, 1903). The association seems to have been inspired initially by his work on the graphs. See, for example, CP 4.421 of 1903.
- 9 A figure much favoured by Dylan Thomas: 'Fern Hill' begins with a number of cases.
  - 10 See, for example, Jerry Uelsmann's contemporary art photography in Uelsmann et al. (2013).
  - 11 If the analysis is correct, the photograph is a gratific, concussive, collective copulant token, a rather soulless label for such a magnificent image.
  - 12 The image is set, in fact, in the City of London's financial district. The portrait is first made in the studio and then mapped digitally onto settings like the one in *Flower Seller*. For a general introduction to the series the reader can consult, as I have, Professor Mark Durden's essay on how Goto's tableaux subvert conventional documentary photography: Mark Durden, 'Mixed Messages: Disordering Documentary' <http://www.johngoto.org.uk/essays/%20Gilt%20City%20essay/Durden.htm> (Accessed March 2016).
  - 13 Sontag (1977).
  - 14 Briefly, shifters are verbal items whose meaning is determined by their relation to a 'deictic centre' composed of speaker, place and time of utterance. In other words, instead of there being a reference in the utterance to something outside the utterance, the reference is to the act of uttering. This relation is obviously existential, hence their classification by Peircean linguists as lexical. Peirce himself suggests that an index is a sign of 'direct experience so far as it directs attention to an Object' (CP 2.255). See, too, CP 2.287–290, for a detailed discussion and examples.
  - 15 'Simulacra and Simulations', from Jean Baudrillard, *Selected Writings*, Mark Poster (ed.), Stanford; Stanford University Press (1988: 166–184).
  - 16 Similarly, Barbara Kruger was to subvert and at the same time emasculate, so to speak, the existential power of the index by photographing other peoples' photographs, generally from the 1950s, and placing lines of text on them, a strategy which destroys their deictic character by lowering their indexical status in the hierarchy and turning them into icons. We see, then, that although the photograph is a truly indexical medium, the existential nature of the relation holding between model and camera is, in fact, anything but tyrannical.

- 17 Lakoff and Johnson (1980) was *the* groundbreaking study in the field, and it showed how combinations of the universes of everyday experience contributed to the construction and production of metaphor.
- 18 Cf. CP 6.338–348 and EP2 478–79.

## Chapter 5

- 1 As mentioned in the Acknowledgements, some of the ideas in this chapter were worked out in a paper published in *Semiotics and Language Studies*, Volume 1, No. 4, 2015 (Jappy 2015).
- 2 It is an ‘icon of dissent’ (2007: 148).
- 3 The National Gallery Podcast: Episode 81, July 2013. <http://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/podcasts/the-national-gallery-podcast-episode-eighty-one> (Accessed March 2016). The extract from the podcast and the painting itself can be seen in Jappy (2015: 2).
- 4 <http://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/paintings/jan-miense-molenaer-a-young-man-and-woman-making-music> (Accessed March 2016).
- 5 Peirce did not, of course, suggest that symbols were fixed once and for all. ‘Symbols grow’, he wrote in 1894 (EP2 10). In 1903 he made the following remark: ‘For every symbol is a living thing, in a very strict sense that is no mere figure of speech. The body of the symbol changes slowly, but its meaning inevitably grows, incorporates new elements and throws off old ones ... Every symbol is, in its origin, either an image of the idea signified, or a reminiscence of some individual occurrence, person or thing, connected with its meaning, or is a metaphor’ (CP 2.222). This does not mean, however, that it can represent two distinct objects at the same time as a theory of indirection requires: for this we really need the distinction between immediate and dynamic object.
- 6 EP2 300.
- 7 If Short had investigated the hypoicons, metaphor in particular, he might not have made this statement.
- 8 Short’s remark is possibly due in part to the fact that Peirce uses the term ‘immediate object’ in at least three distinct manners. The first is the familiar semiotic distinction that he made in 1908 between the dynamic and immediate objects of any sign and is an important subject of the present study. The second, earlier, conception was used in a metaphysical sense in relation to cognition in general: ‘Every cognition involves something represented, or that of which we are conscious, and some action or passion of the self whereby it becomes represented. The former shall be termed the objective, the latter the subjective, element of the cognition. The cognition itself is an intuition of its objective element, which may

therefore be called, also, the immediate object' (CP 5.238, 1868), while almost forty years later, as in this extract from 'Prolegomena to an Apology for Pragmaticism,' he was to write: 'The Immediate Object of all knowledge and all thought is, in the last analysis, the Percept. This doctrine in no wise conflicts with Pragmaticism, which holds that the Immediate Interpretant of all thought proper is Conduct' (CP 4.539, 1906). The third is confusing, and seems to be a mirror image of the immediate interpretant inasmuch as it is the idea or notion the interpreter of, say, a verbal utterance is supposed by the utterer to have of the dynamic object of the utterance: 'Objects of many signs; the immediate and the real object. The former is the notion the interpreter is presumed already to have of the object' (R318 529 and also at R318 401, 1907). This comes from the complex 'Pragmatism' text in which Peirce is principally concerned with conceptions for which, as we saw in Chapter 2, he suggested in his pursuit of the logical interpretant that the dynamic and immediate objects were the determinants of the energetic and emotional interpretants, respectively.

- 9 Note, however, when a label such as 'Nocturne' or 'Serenade' or 'Symphony No. 9' is attached to them, the classification, even in hexadb, would be different.
- 10 'The different members of the set which is the object of a verb, – its *partial* objects as they may be called, – often have distinctive characters which are the same for large numbers of verbs' (R318 627, 1907).
- 11 The Gallery label describes the mural thus: '**Emanuel Leutze's mural celebrates the western expansion of the United States.** A group of pioneers and their train of covered wagons are pictured at the continental divide, looking towards the sunset and the Pacific Ocean. The border depicts vignettes of exploration and frontier mythology. Beneath the central composition is a panoramic view of their destination "Golden Gate," in San Francisco Bay. The mural's title is a verse from the poem "On the Prospect of Planting Arts and Learning in America" by Bishop George Berkeley (1685–1753)' <http://americanart.si.edu/collections/search/artwork/?id=14569> (Accessed March 2016).
- 12 <http://www.aoc.gov/capitol-hill/other-paintings-and-murals/westward-course-empire-takes-its-way> (Accessed March 2016).
- 13 The coloured original can be seen here: <http://www.philamuseum.org/collections/permanent/308328.html> (Accessed March 2016).
- 14 Turner (1893), 'The Significance of the Frontier in American History' (PDF). <http://nationalhumanitiescenter.org/pds/gilded/empire/text1/turner.pdf> (Accessed March 2016).
- 15 Within the 10-class system all three would be classified as replicas of decent indexical legisigns with their respective captions, and iconic sinsigns without. To identify what they represent, we have to have recourse to the 1908 hexad.

- 16 <http://ebooks.library.cornell.edu/cgi/t/text/pageviewer-idx?c=usde;cc=usde;rgn=full%20text;idno=usde0006-4;didno=usde0006-4;view=image;seq=0350;node=usde0006-4%3A6> (Accessed March 2016).
- 17 [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_Lady\\_of\\_Shalott](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Lady_of_Shalott) (Accessed March 2016).
- 18 <http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/waterhouse-the-lady-of-shalott-n01543> (Accessed March 2016).
- 19 <http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/egg-past-and-present-no-1-n03278> (Accessed March 2016).
- 20 <http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/hunt-the-awakening-conscience-t02075/text-summary> (Accessed March 2016).
- 21 <http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/stanhope-thoughts-of-the-past-n03338> (Accessed March 2016).
- 22 See Roberts (1972) for a review of how Victorian artists portrayed the often severely restricted roles Victorian society reserved for women, and the retribution visited on the poor creatures who failed to respect them by stony-hearted fathers and husbands.
- 23 It should be noted that 'ideology' was not a term that Peirce used – his version was the first branch of philosophy and was variously titled 'phenomenology' and 'phaneroscopy' (he follows the French 'Idéologues' from the French Revolution and their 'science of ideas') and was oriented towards 'conventional' phenomenology.
- 24 <http://www.johngoto.org.uk/summer/8.htm> (Accessed March 2016).

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