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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 methodeutic, 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'.¹ 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
Thirdness	legisign	symbol	S (law)	argument	submitted S	S interpretable in thoughts
Secondness	Sinsign	index	S (experience)	dicent	urged S	S int. in experiences
Firstness	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)²

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 Pragmaticism', 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).³ 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.⁴ 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), token⁵ 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*;⁶

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.⁷ 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 *Concretive*; 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):⁸

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) ⁹
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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:

$$\text{Od} \rightarrow \text{Oi} \rightarrow \text{S} \rightarrow \text{Ii} \rightarrow \text{Id} \rightarrow \text{If}$$

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

Table 3.2 displays the 729 (3⁶) 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.¹⁰ 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
Universe						
Necessitant	collective	copulant	type	relative	usual	to produce self-control
Existent	concretive	designative	token	categorical	percussive	to produce action
Possible	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.¹¹ 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).¹² 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).¹³ 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;¹⁴ 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).¹⁵ What Peirce actually wrote in 1907 was this: 'For the proper significate 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?¹⁶ 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, Ifα, Ifβ, Ifγ
06/03/1906	Od, Oi, S, Ii, Id, If (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	Od, Oi, S, Ii, Id, If , 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.¹⁷ 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
Universe						
Necessitant <i>beauty</i>		copulant				
Existent		designative				
Possible		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.¹⁸ 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 discisign 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.¹⁹ 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).²⁰

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;²¹ 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.²²

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**),²³ 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.²⁴ 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.²⁵

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

<i>Universe</i>	Subjects					
	<i>Od</i>	<i>Oi</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>li</i>	<i>Id</i>	<i>If</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.