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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,¹ 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
Category			
Thirdness	Legisign	Symbol	Argument
Secondness	Sinsign	Index	Dicisign
Firstness	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?² 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:³

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 sinsign. 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 sinsign 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 of // 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,⁴ 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.⁵ 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.⁶ 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 concretive 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
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

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 concretes 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.⁷

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.⁸ 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,⁹ 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,¹⁰ 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.¹¹

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 **Oi** 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.¹² 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 hexad. 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!¹³ After an extensive discussion of Roman Jakobson's concept of the 'shifter'¹⁴ – 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),¹⁵ this under the section title of the 'divine irrelevance 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.¹⁶ 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 methodeutic 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)¹⁷ 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.¹⁸ 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 methodeutic. 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 methodeutic 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.