

Table 1: Peirce's trichotomy of representamens, 1867

Sign-Object	
Symbol	argument proposition term
Index/sign	
Likeness	

Table 2: The ten-class typology of 1903

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

Table 3: Hexada, 1904

Respect	Category		
	Firstness	Secondness	Thirdness
S	qualisign	sinsign	legisign
S-Od	icon	index	symbol
S-Oi (Oi)	S of quality	S of experience	S of law
S-If	rheme	dicent	argument
S-Id	contemplated S	urged S	submitted S
S-li	S interpreted by feeling	S interpreted by experience	S interpreted by thought

Table 4: Hexadb, 1908

	Subject					
	Od	Oi	S	li	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

3.2. The ordering problem

In view of remarks Peirce makes to Lady Welby in the letter of 23 December 1908 and in view, too, of the sometimes fierce debate concerning the correct ordering of the ten divisions among Peirce scholars, it is important to justify the order proposed in this paper. Two persuasive arguments plead in favour of the order retained on Table 4, which is, after all, the order of semiosis. First, if in semiosis a dynamic object and then an immediate object can ‘determine’ a sign, i.e. 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 on Table 4 is correct – the hierarchy ordering the universes applies to the classifying system as much as to the order of semiosis – it is difficult to see how in the *process* of semiosis the concept of beauty, for example, which is of a possible nature – *beauty* is an abstractive sign 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, a sculpture or a piece of architecture, and as such would be compatible not with a type, but, rather, with a simple mark. Note, too, that in the immediately following paragraph illustrating the way the universe hierarchy principle operates Peirce explicitly asserts the necessary compatibility of an abstractive and a mark:

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).

Now, referring to Table 4, if the compatibility of a type is restricted to a (copulant) collective sign, the dynamic object must precede it in the typology: were the sign to occupy initial position on the table it would be compatible not only with collective signs but also with concretives and abstractives. Similarly, for the compatibility of an abstractive sign to be restricted to a mark, in this case, too, the dynamic object needs to precede the sign, as can clearly be seen from the table. The situation is complicated, however, by the fact that the order retained on Table 4 is in sharp contradiction with the order implied by remarks made by Peirce to Lady Welby concerning the noun *beauty*. In the letter he suggests to Lady Welby that ‘it is the ultimate reference, and not the grammatical form, that makes the sign [the word *beauty*] an *Abstractive*’ (SS 83). Although there are other criteria, the *beauty* example nevertheless offers a most compelling second argument in favor of the order retained on Table 4. Peirce’s remark concerning *beauty* is problematic as the word *beauty* is a type – all words in a dictionary are by definition necessitant and are therefore classified as types (SS 83). However, a type can only be classified as an abstractive sign whose dynamic object is a member of the universe of possibles if it *precedes* the dynamic object in the classification system. In this case, the order displayed on Table 4 would be incorrect, and would need to be replaced by a system displaying the order **S, Oi, Od, li, Id, If**, for example (Table 5).¹ Peirce’s disconcerting description of the common noun *beauty* as an abstractive sign therefore has significant consequences for the way the table is to be ordered.

1 In this case the correlates are set out in an order favoured by Peirce in most of his typologies. See Jappy (in press: Ch. 3) for a discussion.