

A NOTE ON THE ROOTS OF PEIRCE'S DIVISION
 OF LOGIC INTO THREE BRANCHES

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In a manuscript written around 1897 Peirce says that "*Logic*, in its general sense, is, as I believe I have shown, only another name for *semiotic* (σημηλωτικη), the quasi-necessary, or formal, doctrine of signs." (2.227). He further explains that "the science of semiotic has three branches" (2.229); these branches are pure grammar, logic proper and pure rhetoric. As early as 1865, before he had published any papers in philosophy, Peirce, in his first university lecture,¹ similarly says that the general study of symbols (logic in the broad sense) involves three sciences, viz. Formal Grammar, Formal Logic, and Formal Rhetoric. Peirce's early division of the science of symbols (or the semiotic of symbols as it was called in a fragment dated May 14, 1865)² was inspired by two sources:

(1) Peirce, in dividing semiotic into three branches, was in part influenced by Kant, whose *Transcendental Logic* was divided into Stoichiology, Logic, and Methodology.³ Peirce, in ms. 349, 1865, indicates that he was influenced by Kant's division of logic (in the wider sense of *Transcendental Logic*) into these three branches.

(2) Peirce's terminology was influenced by the Scholastic Logicians, known to Peirce at this early date (i.e., 1865) through, for example, Hamilton, Bowen, and Prantl.⁴ The course of study of the Medieval schools included

1. Ms. 340, Lecture 1 of a lecture series presented at Harvard in the spring of 1865.

2. Ms. 802, a fragment entitled *Teleological Logic*.

3. Hamilton, whose logic was studied by Peirce as an undergraduate, follows the Kantian division in his own presentation of his logic.

4. For discussion of Peirce's knowledge of the Scholastics see my paper "Peirce's Earliest Contact with Scholastic Logic," *Transactions of the Peirce Society*, (forthcoming).

the Trivium, *grammar*, *logic*, and *rhetoric* and the Quadrivium, arithmetic, geometry, music, and astronomy. The three sciences of the Trivium were classed under a general science, called *scientia sermocinalis* (e.g., by William of Sherwood), or alternatively, *scientia rationalis* (e.g., by Avicenna and Peter of Spain).

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