

Peirce and the Coimbra Jesuit Course: A Bond Far More Pervasive Than Commonly Believed

Robert Junqueira
martinsjunqueira@uc.pt

Institute for Philosophical Studies
Faculty of Arts and Humanities
University of Coimbra

2023

<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.7607786>

This paper has been presented at:

*The Charles S. Peirce Society's
10-Minute Thesis Initiative:
"His Glassy Essence in Relation"
on February 18, 2023,
where papers were also presented by
Professor Doctor António Manuel Martins
and Professor Doctor Mohammad Shafiei,
respectively affiliated to the
Coimbra Institute for Philosophical Studies
and Shahid Beheshti University.*

**The 10-Minute Thesis Initiative
is an ongoing cycle of the Charles S. Peirce Society.**

This edition in particular benefited from the collaboration of the
Coimbra Institute for Philosophical Studies and the Shahid Beheshti University.
This text has been published in *PhicaRe (Philosophy Care Repository)* of the Institute for
Philosophical Studies of the Faculty of Arts and Humanities of the University of Coimbra.
<https://www.uc.pt/fluc/uidief/publica/phicare>

The Common Belief

We argue that the union between Peirce and the CJC—i.e., the Coimbra Jesuit Course, a set of eight volumes published for the first time in Coimbra and Lisbon between 1592 and 1606—is far more pervasive than commonly believed. For the sake of brevity, we will refrain from digressing into introductory details. Everybody who is present here today is likely to be thoroughly aware of all things related to Peirce. We guess it harms nobody’s reputation to suggest that the same holds not true with respect to the CJC. To learn more about the authors of the CJC, please visit the online encyclopedia of the Conimbricenses.org Project¹, an open-access publication run by the Institute for Philosophical Studies of the Faculty of Arts and Humanities of the University of Coimbra.

In 2001, John Doyle said that Peirce was “very familiar” with the “Conimbricenses”². By “Conimbricenses”, Doyle refers to the CJC or their authors³. Of course, Doyle is just one—a rather remarkable one⁴—among many. In fact, more—and indeed earlier—references to the Peirce-CJC relation can be found in the scholarly literature, first and foremost owing to the zealous exertions of John Deely in dealing with all matters philosophical, namely with those key atlases—the CJC being a prominent example among them—related to the history of philosophy understood as the diachronic breadth of semiotics⁵. As a matter

¹Mário Santiago de Carvalho and Simone Guidi, eds., *Conimbricenses.Org Encyclopedia* (Coimbra: Instituto de Estudos Filosóficos, 2018-), <http://www.conimbricenses.org/encyclopedia>.

²John P. Doyle, “Introduction”, in *The Conimbricenses: Some Questions on Signs*, by Sebastião do Couto, trans. John P. Doyle, Mediaeval Philosophical Texts in Translation 38 (Milwaukee, Wis: Marquette University Press, 2001), 21.

³Admittedly it is true that the global community seems at times to be reducing Coimbra’s cultural heritage to the CJC. Geographical designations such as “Conimbricenses” or “Coimbra Course” or *Cursus Conimbricensis*—as well as, for that matter, CJC—, should be used with caution, considering that such designations include but are not limited to the CJC or their authors. See Mário Santiago de Carvalho, “Cursus Conimbricensis”, in *Conimbricenses.Org Encyclopedia*, ed. Mário Santiago de Carvalho and Simone Guidi (Coimbra: Instituto de Estudos Filosóficos, 2019). Nevertheless, such designations are still very commonly used, the first of which seems to be the closest to Peirce and the remaining English-speaking CJC readership’s minds.

⁴Doyle rendered the treatise on signs of the volume of the CJC *On the Whole of Dialectics* from Latin into English even before it had been translated into Portuguese by Amândio Coxito. Respectively Sebastião do Couto, *The Conimbricenses: Some Questions on Signs*, trans. John P. Doyle, Mediaeval Philosophical Texts in Translation 38 (Milwaukee, Wis: Marquette University Press, 2001) and Sebastião do Couto, *Curso Conimbricense: Os Sinais*, ed. and trans. Amândio Coxito, Recursos Em Linha (Coimbra: Instituto de Estudos Filosóficos, 2011), the latter subsequently released in a bilingual edition: Sebastião do Couto, *Os Sinais. De Signis*, ed. and trans. Amândio Coxito (Porto: Edições Afrontamento, 2013). The CJC volume *On the Whole of Dialectics* is Sebastião do Couto, *Commentarii Collegii Conimbricensis e Societate Jesu. In Universam Dialecticam Aristotelis Stagiritæ* (Coimbra: D. G. Loureyro, 1606)

⁵Although a lengthy list of works could be mentioned here, it suffices to consider two of Deely’s major historiographical works in order to fully acknowledge his accomplishments. We are referring to John Deely, *Four Ages of Understanding: The First Postmodern Survey of Philosophy from Ancient Times to the Turn of the Twenty-First Century*, Toronto Studies in Semiotics (Toronto and Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 2001) and John Deely, *Medieval Philosophy Redefined as the Latin Age: The Development of Cenoscopic Science, AD354*

of fact, Deely has been bringing the importance of the CJC to the attention of the English-speaking⁶ community of inquiry at least since 1981, and at least since 1995 he has been disseminating the meaningfulness of the Peirce-CJC relation⁷. Deely is to be credited as the father—a father who, in this particular instance, has yet to be surpassed by his heirs⁸—of the common belief about the Peirce-CJC relation. The common belief concerns only the triadic definition of the sign-relation and is neatly encapsulated in Deely’s statement that Peirce “took up” from the CJC “the idea of the sign as necessarily involving three terms in a single relation”⁹.

to 1644 (*From the Birth of Augustine to the Death of Poinot*) (South Bend, Indiana: St. Augustine’s Press, 2016). The latter has been published three different times, the first one in 2010 by the University of Scranton Press.

⁶Rounding down, in the sense that we are not here to restrict this effect to the native speakers of English. One example is the Mexican Mauricio Beuchot. A year before Deely laid the groundwork for the significance of studies to be carried out on this particular topic, Beuchot was a trailblazer by co-authoring with Deely a very meaningful article on the sources common to Peirce and João Poinot. The texts are, respectively, John Deely, “Why Investigate the Common Sources for the Semiotic of Charles Peirce and John Poinot?”, in *Semiotics 1994*, ed. John Deely and C. W. Spinks (New York: Peter Lang Verlag, 1996), 34–50 plus Mauricio Beuchot and John Deely, “Common Sources for the Semiotic of Charles Peirce and John Poinot”, *The Review of Metaphysics* 48, no. 3 (1995): 539–66. A further instance, this time a Germanic one, would be Carolin Behrmann, who relies on the work of Beuchot and Deely to address the Peirce-CJC relation. Carolin Behrmann, *Tyrann und Märtyrer: Bild und Ideengeschichte des Rechts um 1600* (De Gruyter, 2015), 55.

⁷Deely’s first mention of the CJC we have spotted is from John Deely, “The Relation of Logic to Semiotics”, *Semiotica* 35, no. 3–4 (1981): 193–265. In this paper, Deely mentions the CJC only marginally, when focusing on Pedro da Fonseca, the man who came up with the early impetus for designing something along the lines of the CJC. Nevertheless, in more than twenty different works, Deely underscores or discusses the centrality of the CJC in the history of philosophy, albeit not always with a view to emphasizing the key role of the Peirce-CJC relation. As for this particular subject, the most noteworthy works have already been mentioned in the previous footnotes, although it is worth mentioning here John Deely, “Foreword: A New Determination of the Middle Ages”, in *The Conimbricenses: Some Questions on Signs*, by Sebastião do Couto, trans. John P. Doyle, Mediaeval Philosophical Texts in Translation 38 (Milwaukee, Wis: Marquette University Press, 2001), 9–13. On Fonseca, there is an open access section of Conimbricenses.org which António Manuel Martins coordinates.

⁸It is true that Deely hardly ever goes beyond the issues of general semiotics that directly pertain to the conception of the sign. It is equally the case, however, that the common belief lies quite close to the surface as to what Deely has in effect managed to achieve. While he fails to broaden his views past general semiotics and even to delve as thoroughly as would be desirable—even in such matters—into the Peirce-CJC relation, Deely forays in relative depth into the matter at hand. The fact is that a comparison of the treatment of signs in the CJC and the one in Peirce’s writings that goes beyond the general definition of the sign has yet to be worked out. Nevertheless, Deely’s forays reach far deeper than what the community of inquiry seems to have succeeded in assimilating so far. Among other matters covered by Deely to which the wider community seems as yet to have paid insufficient attention—and here I have in mind not only the centrality of the CJC but also the very profound implications of the works of the Coimbra student João Poinot—is the following point he firmly emphasized: “Once it becomes clear that ‘all thought is in signs’ (the realization first formulated by Poinot’s teachers, the Conimbricenses, but credit for which these days is assigned customarily to Peirce), it becomes further clear that all objects are objects signified, or, to suppress the redundancy, that all objects are significates. Not all *things* are significates, but all *objects* are”. John Deely, “The Unmasking of Objectivity”, in *Person, Being, and History*, ed. Michael Baur and Robert E. Wood (Washington D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2011), 300–301.

⁹John Deely, *Purely Objective Reality*, Semiotics, Communication and Cognition 4 (Berlin

Deely has been most definitely effective in spreading the belief that the *doctrina signorum* of the CJC provided a stepping stone for Peirce, as earlier for João Poinset¹⁰, to arrive at the triadic definition of the sign understood as a sign-relation. The belief holds because not only did Peirce actually mention the CJC—we will come to it in a moment—, but the definition of the sign in the CJC also substantiates it. In the CJC, we read that the sign is “*omne id, quod potentiae cognoscenti aliquid a se distinctum repræsentat*”; in other words, “anything which represents something other than itself to a knowing power”¹¹. Behold the triadic definition of the sign-relation, which could be put in Peirce’s words in the following manner: “something, A, which denotes some fact or object, B, to some interpretant thought, C”¹².

The details in this matter have yet to be fully examined, but the common belief stands up nicely as to the impact of the CJC on Peirce as regards the triadic definition of the sign. But could the Peirce-CJC relation be restricted to just this? It is not true that it would be too little if this happened to be the case, but it is an equally clear truth that this is not so.

The Bond Beyond It

It is clear that we cannot simply conclude about the extent to which a particular text affects an author by taking the references of the latter to the former. And yet, this is a reliable and still unexplored avenue for us to grasp the extent of the impact of the CJC on Peirce. Let us take a look at Peirce’s references to the CJC. As it will transpire, this will suffice to bring out quite plainly how the common belief borders on shortsightedness.

In addressing the logical quantities¹³, Peirce argues that the Scholastics diligently studied them, very well clarified what they meant, and provided them with various names. Then, without providing a bibliographic reference, Peirce

and New York: Mouton de Gruyter, 2009), 129.

¹⁰Herculano de Carvalho authored a comparative study of the CJC and Poinset’s doctrines of signs which may serve as a model for future comparative studies of the sort. See José Herculano de Carvalho, “Poinset’s Semiotics and the Conimbricenses”, *Cruzeiro Semiótico: Ensaios Em Homenagem a/Essays in Honor of Thomas A. Sebeok* 22 (1995): 129–35.

¹¹Sebastião do Couto, *The Conimbricenses: Some Questions on Signs*, trans. John P. Doyle, *Mediaeval Philosophical Texts in Translation* 38 (Milwaukee, Wis: Marquette University Press, 2001), 56–57.

¹²Charles S. Peirce, “Lowell Lectures on Some Topics of Logic Bearing on Questions Now Vexed. Part 1 of 3rd Draught of 3rd Lecture. MS [R] 464” (1903). Like this one, there are plenty of definitions of sign, invariably triadic, found in Peirce’s manuscripts that can be accessed for free in the online dictionary of the project Commens.org.

¹³What in English we might call, for example, extension/comprehension or breadth/depth. One would be unlikely to meet a single person who could deny in a valid way the vast and profound gravity of a topic such as that of logical quantities, and of course there is no shortage of literature on the subject. Yet, for an insightful perusal of Peirce (but also of Edmund Husserl) that could boost one’s understanding of the bearing of the topic, consider reading Francesco Bellucci, “Philosophy of Notation in the 19th Century. Peirce, Husserl, and All the Others on Inclusion and Assertion,” in *Peirce and Husserl: Mutual Insights on Logic, Mathematics and Cognition*, ed. Mohammad Shafiei and Ahti-Veikko Pietarinen, *Logic, Epistemology, and the Unity of Science* (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2019), 61–75.

mentions the “Conimbricenses” as an adequate source for those who wish to find synonyms to speak of logical quantities¹⁴. This pertains to a text dating from 1867, meaning that Peirce was engaged in a relationship with the CJC since at least his late twenties¹⁵. In the same year, Peirce turned to the CJC to write an account of “abstractive knowledge”, pointing to the anthropological volume *On the Soul*¹⁶. This account is in fact no more than a translation from Latin into English, presumably executed by Peirce, of an extract of the CJC¹⁷.

¹⁴Quantities are addressed in several volumes of the CJC. This includes the volumes we know Peirce dealt with. See Mário Santiago de Carvalho, *Dicionário Do Curso Filosófico Conimbricense*, Skiagraphia’s (Coimbra: Palimage, 2020), 378-381. This way, we can tell that, in dealing with the 3rd book of *On the Soul*, Peirce must have been in close proximity with the use of quantity as an example to explain the specificity of knowledge in both its abstractive and reflexive forms, as well as with the claim that there is such a thing as spiritual quantities. Manuel de Góis, Baltasar Álvares, and Cosme de Magalhães, *Commentarii Collegii Conimbricensis S. J. In Tres Libros de Anima Aristotelis Stagiritæ* (Coimbra: A. Mariz, 1598). The same is to be the case regarding Couto’s treatment, in *On the Whole of Dialectics*, of: the divisions, species, and predication of quantity; quantity’s attributes; the formal reason of quantity; and quantity’s locative effect. Sebastião do Couto, *Commentarii Collegii Conimbricensis e Societate Jesu. In Universam Dialecticam Aristotelis Stagiritæ* (Coimbra: D. G. Loureyro, 1606).

¹⁵Charles S. Peirce, “Terms: That These Conceptions Are Not so Modern as Has Been Represented”, in *Collected Papers of Charles Sanders Peirce*, ed. Charles Hartshorne and Paul Weiss, vol. II. Elements of Logic. Book II. Speculative Grammar (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1932), para. 391.

¹⁶Charles S. Peirce, “Specimen of a Dictionary of the Terms of Logic and Allied Sciences: A to ABS”, in *Writings of Charles S. Peirce: A Chronological Edition, Volume 2: 1867-1871*, ed. Edward C. Moore et al. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984), 117. The CJC volume *On the Soul* is Manuel de Góis, Baltasar Álvares, and Cosme de Magalhães, *Commentarii Collegii Conimbricensis S. J. In Tres Libros de Anima Aristotelis Stagiritæ* (Coimbra: A. Mariz, 1598). The Portuguese translation of this volume by Maria da Conceição Camps has not yet been entirely published by the Coimbra University Press, and is split into two halves. For the second half, credit for transcribing and/or translating will also have to be given to Filipa Medeiros. The section that Peirce refers to is the 1st article of the 3rd question of the 6th chapter of the 2nd book. Such a question is headed “*Utrum per divinam potentiam aliqua notitia abstractiva in externis sensibus dari queat*” (“Whether it is possible to some extent that abstract knowledge is imparted to the external senses by the divine power”), while the article is titled “*Quid in re proposita sentiendum videatur*” (“What ought to be considered in the proposed question”). The article under consideration is contained in the half that has already been published in a bilingual edition and can be read in Manuel de Góis, *Curso Aristotélico Jesuíta Conimbricense. Tomo IV: De Anima - Parte I*, trans. Maria da Conceição Camps, Coimbra University Press, Classica Digitalia: Portugalix Monumenta Neolatina (Imprensa da Universidade de Coimbra, 2022), 391-397.

¹⁷In Peirce’s writing referenced in the preceding footnote one can read: “Abstractive knowledge is the cognition of a thing not as it is present; for example, the knowledge by which I know Socrates when absent, and that by which an astronomer in the house considers an eclipse which he does not observe, supposing that he knows that at that time the earth is between the moon and the sun. And also, that by which the philosopher from creatures knows that God is. For although these cognitions are directed to the thing as to its existence, yet they are not so directed to it that the presence of their object is discerned”. In the 2022 edition of the CJC text mentioned in the same footnote it reads, between pages 390-391: “*Notitia abstractiva, quæ etiam Simplicis intelligentiæ uocatur, est cognitio rei non ut præsens est, uerbi gratia, notitia, qua cogito de Socrate absente; et ea, qua Astrologus domi suæ considerat eclýpsim, quam non intuetur, esto sciat ea hora interponi terram inter lunam, et solem. Et item ea, qua Philosophus ex creaturis cognoscit Deum esse. Licet enim hæ cognitiones tendant in rem sub esse existentia; non tamen sic tendunt, ut per eas cernatur præsentia obiecti*”.

In 1869 or 1870, Peirce drew attention to “Sebastianus Contus”, the author of the CJC volume *On the Whole of Dialectics*. By this time, the belief that Peirce has considerable acquaintance with the CJC—and more than just a volume—grows in the mind. We have spoken of acquaintanceship, but this goes well beyond it, as it involves acknowledging great authority to the Coimbra school¹⁸ in matters pertaining to medieval logic. Here, Peirce leaves no room for doubt about his belief that what can be read in the CJC about Scotist logic is more correct than what both Duns Scotus and his followers professed about their own logic¹⁹.

In 1883, Peirce let it rest perfectly clear that he meant to encourage his students to “dip into” the old controversy about “whether logic is an art or a science” by “looking over the *Commentary* of the Conimbricenses”. Unfortunately, Peirce has not specified more precisely where to look²⁰. Around 1893, however, Peirce very well specified what should be carefully researched if one is to understand fully what he intends to signify when referring to “Thomistic Logic”, which is much more than just the works of the Angelic Doctor²¹. Apart from the works of Aquinas, Peirce has in mind his contemporary Antoine-Marie

¹⁸One may argue that the Coimbra school exists but is limited to the Aristotelianisms of the 16th-18th centuries; one may argue that such a school simply does not exist; one may argue in favor of quite a lot of alternative views. As we see it, not only does the Coimbra school exist but it is neither bound to be Aristotelian nor confined to a specific temporal epoch. As long as there will be philosophers based in Coimbra, there will be a Coimbra school. This school is both multifaceted and polyphonic, presenting a range of continuities and discontinuities, be they related to sources, themes, or methodologies. There is, though, a foundational unity resulting from the combination of territorial stability and the unfolding of time.

¹⁹See Charles S. Peirce, “A Practical Treatise on Logic and Methodology”, in *Writings of Charles S. Peirce: A Chronological Edition, Volume 2: 1867-1871*, ed. Peirce Edition Project (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984), 350-351. The matter at hand here comes down to whether logic is theoretical or practical.

²⁰Charles S. Peirce, “[Introductory Lecture on Logic]”, in *Writings of Charles S. Peirce: A Chronological Edition, Volume 4: 1879-1884*, ed. Christian J. W. Kloesel et al. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989), 509. It is open to everyone at last, nowadays, to systematically traverse the sea of pages of the CJC by means of the results of the X-ray that has been performed on all of its volumes in Mário Santiago de Carvalho, *Dicionário Do Curso Filosófico Conimbricense*, Skiagraphia’s (Coimbra: Palimage, 2020).

²¹Peirce means much more than the works of Thomas Aquinas, but also a whole lot less than the whole of the Thomistic tradition that has unfolded throughout the ages. An introductory overview, centered on the Christian philosophical and theological cultures, of the way Aquinas’ works have resonated from the heart of the Middle Ages up to the present day, can be found in Matthew Levering and Marcus Plested, eds., *The Oxford Handbook of the Reception of Aquinas*, 1st ed. (Oxford University Press, 2021). We would recommend this book to anyone wishing to get an elementary idea of the magnitude of what the label “Thomistic” stands for. It is worth mentioning, however, that the work is not focused on logic. Perhaps because of this—and because it is an incredibly short book; for, though it runs to more than 700 pages, this amounts to ‘peanuts’ when it comes to the theme under discussion—the CJC is not referred to a single time. Or else, being true that the CJC has brought forth a wealth of expertise reaching far beyond logic, it is perhaps the case that the individuals involved in editing and writing the book do not believe that the CJC ought to be covered under the umbrella of Thomism. Be that as it may, the most prodigious scholar to have studied in Coimbra since time immemorial, João Poinset, is in contrast featured in more than one chapter. Please note that Poinset is most frequently referred to by his religious name, that is, John of St. Thomas, and in the index of names and terms he is listed once for each name.

Bensa, the 15th-century Cologne master Lambertus de Monte, and “the highly esteemed Logic of the Doctors of Coimbra”²².

In 1893, Peirce appealed to the authority of the CJC when countering an opinion he attributes to Carl von Prantl regarding Aquinas’ logic, to wit: that the authorship of Aquinas’ commentary on Aristotle’s *Peri Hermeneias* has incorrectly been attributed to Aquinas. Peirce claimed that if Prantl had been right about the said controversy, it would seem beyond belief that “men of such learning as the doctors of Coimbra” failed to make precisely the same point as Prantl²³. It is perhaps not overstating the case that Peirce’s Latin was more finely tuned than his German, as one reads no such thing in Prantl’s opus, and so perhaps the high authority Peirce acknowledges to the CJC regarding such matters ought not to be so vociferously—or perhaps not at all—contrasted with that of the Bavarian knight²⁴.

²²Charles S. Peirce, “The Essence of Reasoning: Some Historical Notes”, in *Collected Papers of Charles Sanders Peirce*, ed. Charles Hartshorne and Paul Weiss, vol. IV. The Simplest Mathematics. BOOK I. Logic and Mathematics (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1933), para. 27. For some further details concerning Lambert of Cologne, particularly of relevance with respect to polemics over authorship attribution, see E. Jennifer Ashworth, “The Post-Medieval Period”, in *The Cambridge Companion to Medieval Logic*, ed. Catarina Dutilh Novaes and Stephen Read, Cambridge Companions to Philosophy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 172. About Bensa, a professor of philosophy and theology based in Nice, it is possible to find a stepping stone regarding his contributions beyond logic in Sylvio Hermann De Franceschi, “L’Invention chrétienne de la prépondérance française. La monarchie henricienne et la défense d’un ordre de Chrétienté au tournant des xv^e et xvii^e siècles,” *Revue Française d’Histoire des Idées Politiques* 44, no. 2 (2016): 249–252. The literature on Bensa is so scarce that it would be surprising if young researchers who are interested in Peirce’s sources and 19th-century logic are not encouraged to tackle this author for their doctoral studies, for they would be bringing some definite breakthroughs to the community of inquiry.

²³See Charles S. Peirce, “The Essence of Reasoning: The Proposition,” in *Collected Papers of Charles Sanders Peirce*, ed. Charles Hartshorne and Paul Weiss, vol. IV. The Simplest Mathematics. BOOK I. Logic and Mathematics (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1933), para. 38. Prantl has been involved in other such polemics. Some information about yet another controversy, relating to Galen of Pergamon, is brought up in footnote 14 of Neal Ward Gilbert, *Renaissance Concepts of Method* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1960), 14. In the case of Aquinas, there is some background that can help us understand why a bit of controversy arises at this point. Peter Thomas Geach teaches that, notwithstanding the fact that “in the practice of theological argument he [Aquinas] was well aware of the need for having sharp logical tools and a good stock of them”, and that “some of the logical distinctions he finds it necessary to draw (...) are of an importance that could hardly be exaggerated”, Aquinas “was not much interested in formal logic for its own sake, as many medieval philosophers were”, so Aquinas “never bothered to finish his commentary on the *De Interpretatione*”; so Geach concludes that, barring one or another exception (which he flags), “what there is of his [Aquinas’] commentary is of little intrinsic interest”. Peter Thomas Geach, *Logic Matters* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1972), 300. Aquinas’ commentary was finished in 1496 by Thomas Cajetan and has now been available for over six decades to the English-speaking readership in Thomas Aquinas and Thomas Cajetan, *On Interpretation: Commentary by St. Thomas and Cajetan of Aristotle on Interpretation (Peri Hermeneias)*, trans. Jean T. Oesterle (Milwaukee, Wisconsin: Marquette University Press, 1962).

²⁴The following is Prantl’s statement: “... bemerke ich, dass mir in Uebereinstimmung mit älteren und neueren Untersuchungen unter den zur Logik gehörigen (...) kleineren Schriften nur folgende als ächt gelten” (Our translation: “I remark that, in line with earlier and more recent inquiries, only the following minor writings pertaining to logic are authentic”); this is where Prantl lists a number of works—for sure not listing the Commentary to the *Peri*

In 1902, Peirce puts forward various sorts of predication and, immediately after introducing two instances of “identical predication”, he pointed to the CJC, particularly to *On the Whole of Dialectics*. Mind that the definition and examples of identical predication are not all that Peirce has borrowed from the CJC, for he took from it the whole divide between natural and non-natural predication and their further divisions²⁵. In the same year, right after quietly translating an excerpt of the CJC (check out the next footnote) and briefing the reader on a “great controversy” between the Thomists, the Scotists, and the nominalists pertaining to matters at the crossroads between cognition and logic—namely how it happens and what it means that a proposition is known *per se*—, Peirce invites the reader to surf the pages of the CJC²⁶. Also in 1902,

Hermeneias—and, upon having done so, goes on: “Die übrigen als unächt vorläufig bei Seite lassend muss ich, wie sich von selbst versteht ausser den Commentaren zu De interpr., zur zweiten Analytik und zur Metaphysik auch die einzelnen entscheidenden Stellen aus den bekanntesten Hauptwerken (...) beiziehen” (Our translation: “Ignoring the remaining ones for the time being as being unauthentic, I have to consult, as stands to reason, besides the Commentary on *De Interpretatione*, the ones on the *Posterior Analytics* and the *Metaphysics*, as well the specific decisive passages from the well-known major works...”). Carl von Prantl, *Geschichte der Logik im Abendlande*, vol. III (Leipzig: Verlag von S. Hirzel, 1867), 108. Jürgen Müller assured us that the translation is far from perfect but it is faithful to the meaning of Prantl’s message. Müller’s help stood far from perfect but we are fully grateful.

²⁵See Charles S. Peirce, “Propositions: Predication”, in *Collected Papers of Charles Sanders Peirce*, ed. Charles Hartshorne and Paul Weiss, vol. II. Elements of Logic. Book II. Speculative Grammar (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1932), para. 361. In the CJC, natural predication is split into two genera: identical and direct predication. Non-natural predication, for its part, is divided into predication contrary to nature—which Peirce also calls “indirect predication” (cf. *Ibid.*); in this he also follows Couto, who reads “*contra naturam, siue indirecta*”—and predication beyond nature (*praeter naturam*). In dealing with such distinctions, Peirce relied wholly on what can be read in Sebastião do Couto, *Commentarii Collegii Conimbricensis e Societate Jesu. In Universam Dialecticam Aristotelis Stagiritæ* (Coimbra: D. G. Loureyro, 1606), 68-69 (the 1st pp. 68-69, for the book is divided into two sets of pagination). This is, in any case, just the first step towards examining the treatment given to the subject of predication in Couto’s opus. For a detailed chart to navigate the maze of *On the Whole of Dialectics* with precision, look for Mário Santiago de Carvalho, *Dicionário Do Curso Filosófico Conimbricense*, Skiagraphia’s (Coimbra: Palimage, 2020), 355-359.

²⁶See Charles S. Peirce, “Note on Metaphysics: Perseity and Per Se”, in *Collected Papers of Charles Sanders Peirce*, ed. Charles Hartshorne and Paul Weiss, vol. VI. Scientific Metaphysics. Book I. Ontology and Cosmology: B. Synchism and Agapism (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1935), para. 385. Here Peirce refers to the CJC, undoubtedly having in mind Sebastião do Couto, *Commentarii Collegii Conimbricensis e Societate Jesu. In Universam Dialecticam Aristotelis Stagiritæ* (Coimbra: D. G. Loureyro, 1606), 382-396 (the 2nd pp. 382-396). It is only too clear how fruitfully Peirce surfed through these pages. Apart from the whole education in the history of logic that Peirce received and treasured on the basis of the CJC, the very synchronic scale of his thinking was yet again further powered by this wellspring. Suffice it to draw a comparison, starting straight away at the very moment of defining what in this regard would amount to ‘the basics’. According to Peirce, “A proposition is known *per se* if, and only if, it is cognoscible from its own terms but not cognoscible in any other way” (the reference is exactly the one at the beginning of the present footnote). Couto says it in Latin “*Propositio per se nota est cognoscibilis ex suis terminis, & non est cognoscibilis per aliud*” (p. 389-390, reference above). The examples given by Peirce are the same or otherwise akin to those of Couto, with slight variations of the sort of “that the letters on this page are black is not known *per se*, because it may be proved by testimony” (Peirce) in respect to “*Prima non esse propositionem per se notam, qua indico hanc papyrus esse albam, quanuis hoc iudicem ex terminis absque ullo medio, quia demonstrari potest*” (Couto).

at last, we can read that due to “the neglect of fallacies by the more scientific logicians, it is not easy to cite many who define the fallacy [of the converse] correctly. The Conimbricenses (than whom no authority is higher) do so”. Then, we find a reference to a section of *On the Whole of Dialectics*²⁷.

Believing Ahead?

All in all, it is abundantly apparent that a more secure belief has to be established within the community of inquiry concerning the Peirce-CJC relation, a belief that reaches far wider than just contemplating the triadic conception of the sign. Quite remarkably, the fact that never when defining the sign does Peirce make reference to the CJC suggests that a sound understanding of how thoroughly Peirce borrowed from the CJC will entail a substantial deal of work on the part of the community and, in fact, a fair share of time before it can become a fixed belief, for it will involve a series of in-depth and far-reaching comparative analyses of Peirce’s writings in relation to the pages of the CJC.

So should we not believe straight away that, apart from all the topics raised here so far, the impact of the CJC on Peirce has been wider and deeper, foreshadowing right at the outset the obsolescence of our new belief, renewed by Peirce’s references to the CJC? We would hold that belief is perhaps preferably not believed all too soon. The details of the impact of the CJC on Peirce remain to be duly studied as regards an already well-rounded array of topics with regard to which Peirce refers directly to the CJC, as well as one other, that of the sign-relation, wherein Peirce refrains from mentioning the CJC, although the community has already dutifully flagged it.

What is for sure, and that is why we can conclude nothing other than that, is that however relevant the triadic understanding of sign-relations may be, the bond between Peirce and the CJC is far more pervasive than commonly believed.

Under the sign of gratitude,

RAMJu
Lagares da Beira, Coimbra

²⁷Charles Peirce and Christine Ladd-Franklin, “Notes on Explicative Reasoning: Fallacies”, in *Collected Papers of Charles Sanders Peirce*, ed. Charles Hartshorne and Paul Weiss, vol. II. Elements of Logic. Book III. Critical Logic: A. Explicative Reasoning (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1932), para. 613. Here the CJC is mentioned first of all, followed only by Couto and Poinot’s French contemporary, Eustachius of Saint Paul, and Peirce’s slightly older British contemporary, Edward Meredith Cope. The topic at hand is that of the fallacies, and in particular that of the *fallacia consequentis*, a fallacy regarding which Peirce writes (in the previously mentioned place) that, in his day, it was already customary among scholars to refer to it simply as the ‘*non sequitur*’, i.e., “it does not follow”. In the context of CJC, this sort of fallacy belongs not to the genre of fallacies whose being invalid is justified by the way one puts what is being claimed, but to the genre of fallacies whose being invalid is independent of how one puts it. The definition of the CJC can be found in Sebastião do Couto, *Commentarii Collegii Conimbricensis e Societate Jesu. In Universam Dialecticam Aristotelis Stagiritæ* (Coimbra: D. G. Loureiro, 1606), 545-546.

References

- AQUINAS, Thomas, and Thomas Cajetan.
- 1962 *On Interpretation: Commentary by St. Thomas and Cajetan of Aristotle on Interpretation (Peri Hermeneias)*. Translated by Jean T. Oesterle. Milwaukee, Wisconsin: Marquette University Press.
<https://isidore.co/aquinas/english/PeriHermeneias.htm>.
- ASHWORTH, E. Jennifer.
- 2016 “The Post- Medieval Period”. In *The Cambridge Companion to Medieval Logic*, edited by Catarina Dutilh Novaes and Stephen Read, 166–92. Cambridge Companions to Philosophy. Cambridge University Press.
<https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781107449862.008>.
- BEHRMANN, Carolin.
- 2015 *Tyrann und Märtyrer: Bild und Ideengeschichte des Rechts um 1600*. De Gruyter.
<https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110363647>.
- BELLUCCI, Francesco.
- 2019 “Philosophy of Notation in the 19th Century. Peirce, Husserl, and All the Others on Inclusion and Assertion”. In *Peirce and Husserl: Mutual Insights on Logic, Mathematics and Cognition*, edited by Mohammad Shafei and Ahti-Veikko Pietarinen, 61–75. Logic, Epistemology, and the Unity of Science. Cham: Springer International Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-25800-9_4.
- BEUCHOT, Mauricio, and John Deely.
- 1995 “Common Sources for the Semiotic of Charles Peirce and John Poinset”. *The Review of Metaphysics* 48, no. 3: 539–66.
- CARVALHO, José Herculano de.
- 1995 “Poinset’s Semiotics and the Conimbricenses”. *Cruzeiro Semiótico: Ensaios Em Homenagem a/Essays in Honor of Thomas A. Sebeok* 22: 129–35.
- CARVALHO, Mário Santiago de.
- 2019 “Cursus Conimbricensis”. In *Conimbricenses.Org Encyclopedia*, edited by Mário Santiago de Carvalho and Simone Guidi. Coimbra: Instituto de Estudos Filosóficos. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.3234133>.
- 2020 *Dicionário Do Curso Filosófico Conimbricense*. Skiagraphia’s. Coimbra: Palimage. <https://estudogeral.uc.pt/handle/10316/91082>
- CARVALHO, Mário Santiago de, and Simone Guidi, eds.
- 2018- *Conimbricenses.Org Encyclopedia*. Coimbra: Instituto de Estudos Filosóficos.
<http://www.conimbricenses.org/encyclopedia>.
- COUTO, Sebastião do.
- 1606 *Commentarii Collegii Conimbricensis e Societate Jesu. In Universam Dialecticam Aristotelis Stagiritæ*. Coimbra: D. G. Loureyro.
<http://www.conimbricenses.org/resources/>.
- 2001 *The Conimbricenses: Some Questions on Signs*. Translated by John P. Doyle. Mediaeval Philosophical Texts in Translation 38. Marquette University Press.

- 2011 *Curso Conimbricense: Os Sinais*. Edited and translated by Amândio Coxito. Recursos Em Linha. Coimbra: Instituto de Estudos Filosóficos. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.4033496>.
- 2013 *Os Sinais*. De Signis. Edited and translated by Amândio Coxito. Porto: Edições Afrontamento.
- DE FRANCESCHI, Sylvio Hermann.
- 2016 “L’Invention chrétienne de la prépondérance française. La monarchie henricienne et la défense d’un ordre de Chrétienté au tournant des xvie et xviii siècles”. *Revue Française d’Histoire des Idées Politiques* 44, no. 2: 241–77. <https://doi.org/10.3917/rfhip1.044.0241>.
- DEELY, John.
- 1981 “The Relation of Logic to Semiotics”. *Semiotica* 35, no. 3–4: 193–265. <https://doi.org/10.1515/semi.1981.35.3-4.193>.
- 1996 “Why Investigate the Common Sources for the Semiotic of Charles Peirce and John Poinsett?”. In *Semiotics 1994*, edited by John Deely and C. W. Spinks, 34–50. New York: Peter Lang Verlag. <https://doi.org/10.5840/cpsem19941>.
- 2001 “Foreword: A New Determination of the Middle Ages”. In *The Conimbricenses: Some Questions on Signs*, by Sebastião do Couto, 9–13. Translated by John P. Doyle. Mediaeval Philosophical Texts in Translation 38. Milwaukee, Wis: Marquette University Press.
- 2001 *Four Ages of Understanding: The First Postmodern Survey of Philosophy from Ancient Times to the Turn of the Twenty-First Century*. Toronto Studies in Semiotics. Toronto and Buffalo: University of Toronto Press. <https://doi.org/10.3138/9781442675032>.
- 2009 *Purely Objective Reality*. Semiotics, Communication and Cognition 4. Berlin and New York: Mouton de Gruyter. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9781934078099>.
- 2011 “The Unmasking of Objectivity”. In *Person, Being, and History*, edited by Michael Baur and Robert E. Wood, 284–303. Washington D.C.: Catholic University of America Press. <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt284zh3>.
- 2016 *Medieval Philosophy Redefined as the Latin Age: The Development of Cosmological Science, AD354 to 1644 (From the Birth of Augustine to the Death of Poinsett)*. South Bend, Indiana: St. Augustine’s Press.
- DOYLE, John P.
- 2001 “Introduction”. In *The Conimbricenses: Some Questions on Signs*, by Sebastião do Couto, 15–29. translated by John P. Doyle. Mediaeval Philosophical Texts in Translation 38. Marquette University Press.
- GEACH, Peter Thomas.
- 1972 *Logic Matters*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
- GILBERT, Neal Ward.
- 1960 *Renaissance Concepts of Method*. New York: Columbia University Press. <http://archive.org/details/renaissanceconce00gilb>.
- GÓIS, Manuel de.
- 2022 *Curso Aristotélico Jesuíta Conimbricense. Tomo IV: De Anima - Parte I*. Translated by Maria da Conceição Camps. Classica Digitalia: Portugaliae Monumenta Neolatina. Imprensa da Universidade de Coimbra. <https://doi.org/10.14195/978-989-26-2217-0>.

- GÓIS, Manuel de, Baltasar Álvares, and Cosme de Magalhães.
- 1598 *Commentarii Collegii Conimbricensis S. J. In Tres Libros de Anima Aristotelis Stagiritæ*. Coimbra: A. Mariz. <http://www.conimbricenses.org/resources>.
- LEVERING, Matthew, and Marcus Plested, eds.
- 2021 *The Oxford Handbook of the Reception of Aquinas*. Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780198798026.001.0001>.
- PEIRCE, Charles, and Christine Ladd-Franklin.
- 1932 “Notes on Explicative Reasoning: Fallacies”. In *Collected Papers of Charles Sanders Peirce*, edited by Charles Hartshorne and Paul Weiss, II. Elements of Logic. Book III. Critical Logic: A. Explicative Reasoning: para. 613-617. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- PEIRCE, Charles S.
- 1903 “Lowell Lectures on Some Topics of Logic Bearing on Questions Now Vexed. Part 1 of 3rd Draught of 3rd Lecture. MS [R] 464”. <http://commens.org/dictionary>.
- 1932 “Propositions: Predication”. In *Collected Papers of Charles Sanders Peirce*, edited by Charles Hartshorne and Paul Weiss, II. Elements of Logic. Book II. Speculative Grammar: para. 359-361. Harvard University Press.
- 1932 “Terms: That These Conceptions Are Not so Modern as Has Been Represented”. In *Collected Papers of Charles Sanders Peirce*, edited by Charles Hartshorne and Paul Weiss, II. Elements of Logic. Book II. Speculative Grammar: para. 391-392. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- 1933 “The Essence of Reasoning: Some Historical Notes”. In *Collected Papers of Charles Sanders Peirce*, edited by Charles Hartshorne and Paul Weiss, IV. The Simplest Mathematics. BOOK I. Logic and Mathematics: para. 21-37. Harvard University Press.
- 1933 “The Essence of Reasoning: The Proposition”. In *Collected Papers of Charles Sanders Peirce*, edited by Charles Hartshorne and Paul Weiss, IV. The Simplest Mathematics. BOOK I. Logic and Mathematics: para. 38-46. Harv. Univ. Press.
- 1935 “Note on Metaphysics: Perseity and Per Se”. In *Collected Papers of Charles Sanders Peirce*, edited by Charles Hartshorne and Paul Weiss, VI. Scientific Metaphysics. Book I. Ontology and Cosmology: B. Synchism and Agapism: para. 385. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- 1984 “Specimen of a Dictionary of the Terms of Logic and Allied Sciences: A to ABS”. In *Writings of Charles S. Peirce: A Chronological Edition, Volume 2: 1867-1871*, edited by Edward C. Moore, Max H. Fisch, Christian J. W. Kloesel, Don D. Roberts, and Lynn A. Ziegler, 105-22. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- 1984 “A Practical Treatise on Logic and Methodology”. In *Writings of Charles S. Peirce: A Chronological Edition, Volume 2: 1867-1871*, edited by the Peirce Edition Project, 350-51. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- 1989 “[Introductory Lecture on Logic]”. In *Writings of Charles S. Peirce: A Chronological Edition, Volume 4: 1879-1884*, edited by Christian J. W. Kloesel, Max H. Fisch, Nathan Houser, Ursula Niklas, Marc Simon, Don D. Roberts, and Aleta Houser, 507-10. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- PRANTL, Carl von.
- 1867 *Geschichte der Logik im Abendlande*. Vol. III. Leipzig: Verlag von S. Hirzel.