

Legisign

1903 | Syllabus: Nomenclature and Division of Triadic Relations, as far as they are determined | EP 2:291

A *Legisign* is a law that is a Sign. This law is usually established by men. Every conventional sign is a legisign. It is not a single object, but a general type which, it has been agreed, shall be significant. Every legisign signifies through an instance of its application, which may be termed a *Replica* of it. Thus, the word “the” will usually occur from fifteen to twenty-five times on a page. It is in all these occurrences one and the same word, the same legisign. Each single instance of it is a replica. The replica is a *sinsign*. Thus, every legisign requires *sinsigns*. But these are not ordinary *sinsigns*, such as are peculiar occurrences that are regarded as significant. Nor would the replica be significant if it were not for the law which renders it so.

1903 [c.] | P of L | MS [R] 800:4

...signs are divisible, first, according to their modes of being, as objects; secondly, according to the modes of their references to their objects; thirdly, according to the modes of their references to their interpretants. In the first way of dividing them, signs are either *qualisigns*, or signs that are abstract qualities (in a wide sense), or *suisigns*, signs that are essentially existent as individual objects or events, or *legisigns*, signs that [are] general types, laws, or habits.

1903 [c.] | P of L | MS [R] 800:2

...a sign which is of the nature of a general type, law, or habit, which I will call a *legisign*. Thus, the word ‘the’ occurs, on the average, twenty times on an English page (more or fewer times, according to the style), and all these are so many occurrences of one and the same word. In that sense a word is a ‘legisign.’ But a legisign can only exist in such occurrences, which I term its *replicas*; and each of these *replicas* is a *suisign*.

From an apparently discarded page

1904 | Letters to Lady Welby | SS 32

As it is in itself, a sign is either of the nature of an appearance, when I call it a *qualisign*; or secondly, it is an individual object or event, when I call it a *sinsign* (the syllable *sin* being the first syllable [*sic*] of *semel*, *simul*, *singular*, etc); or thirdly, it is of the nature of a general type, when I call it a *legisign*.

1904 | Firstness, Secondness, Thirdness, and the Reducibility of Fourthness [R] | MS [R] 914:6

...in the first place a sign may, in its own firstness, either be a mere idea or quality of feeling, or it may be a 'sinsign', that is, an individual existent (and P. holds, with Hegel, that existence consists in the blind reaction of the existent with the rest of the universe in which it exists), or it may (like a word) be a general type ('legisign') to which existents may conform.

1905 | Letters to Mario Calderoni | MS [R] L67:36

A sign in itself may be an indefinite possibility, when I term it as a *Qualisign*, or it may be an existent thing or event, when I term it a *Sinsign* (*sin-* is the *sim-* of *simul*, *simplex*, etc.), or it may be a general type, when I call it a *Legisign*.

Parentetical comment enclosed in square brackets in the original manuscript

1905 [c.] | The Basis of Pragmaticism | MS [R] 284:59

A *legisign* is a general type which is significant because it may be embodied in instances which have noticeable relations adapting them to be signs of the very objects denoted.