

BOOK NOTES (cont.)

Hermann Günther Grassmann (1809–1877):
*Visionary Mathematician, Scientist and
Neohumanist Scholar*

Gert Schubring, ed.
Boston Studies in the Philosophy of
Science, vol. 187.
Kluwer Academic Publishers, Dordrecht,
1996, xxix + 359 pp.
ISBN 0-7923-4261-5 (Cloth)

Peirce was typical of those mathematicians and logicians who discovered the genius of Hermann Grassmann only in the 1870s, late in Grassmann's life. He saw a number of ideas of his own and his father's anticipated by Grassmann's work from the 1840s. This conference collection treats the many aspects of Grassmann's wide-ranging contributions to crystallography, colorimetry, and linguistics, as well as to mathematics. It also brings to the fore the even less-well-recognized work of his brother Robert in logic. For the most part Peirce is mentioned only in passing in a few papers, notably in Ivor Grattan-Guinness, "Where does Grassmann fit in the history of logic?" (pp. 211–16) and in Volker Peckhaus, "The influence of Hermann Günther Grassmann and Robert Grassmann on Ernst Schröder's algebra of logic" (pp. 217–27). Peirce plays a prominent and unusual part, however, in the paper by the Danish professor of engineering Ole Immanuel Franksen, "Invariance under nesting—an aspect of array-based logic with relation to Grassmann and Peirce" (pp. 303–35). Franksen presents aspects of his pioneering work in applying Trenchard More, Jr.'s theory of nested arrays to a formalization of logic and using this in technological applications. One of the key concepts is here developed using Peirce's detailed presentation of the matrix representation of quaternions as given in his letter to (of all people!) William James, 26 February 1909 (Eisele, *New Elements of Mathematics*, III/2, pp. 836–66).

*The Philosopher of Free Religion; Francis
Ellingwood Abbot, 183–1903.*

W. Creighton Peden
Peter Lang, 1992, 207 pp.
ISBN 0-8204-1747-5 (Cloth)

An intellectual biography in which Peden portrays Abbot as a radical Janus figure in the American Freethought tradition. The first chapter covers Abbot's early years, including his time as a student at the Harvard Divinity School, and what Peden calls his religious crisis. After a discussion of Abbot's early philosophy, Peden attends to the period when Abbot was editor of *The Index*. The book concludes with a discussion of the years after 1880, in which Abbot returns to graduate school at Harvard and writes his *Scientific Theism*, a book that greatly impressed Peirce. Peden's biography contains no name or

subject index, but gives an extensive bibliography of Abbott's work.

Beyond the Psychoanalytic Dyad; Developmental Semiotics in Freud, Peirce and Lacan

John P. Muller
Routledge, 1996, ix + 230 pp.
ISBN 0-415-91068-4 (Cloth)
ISBN 0-415-91069-2 (Paper)

Drawing upon the relation between Lacan's registers of experience (the imaginary, the symbolic, and the Real) and Peirce's categories, Muller seeks to employ Peirce's triadic structure of the sign to recover Lacan's notion of the Real (capitalized by the author), a notion he believes Lacan interpreters find particularly difficult to come to grips with (p. 8). It must be said that it is not altogether clear how this works. The Real, Muller argues, corresponds with Peirce's category of firstness (p. 32). This suggests that "beyond the psychoanalytic dyad" advocates a reinstatement of firstness as a basic category. Secondness, Muller argues, is governed by the imaginary register, and thirdness by the symbolic register (*ibid.*). However, in his rather vague conclusion, Muller suggests that his view avoids dichotomic thinking by taking into account also Peirce's category of *thirdness*, not firstness. Muller's main source of inspiration remains the work of Lacan, and his discussion contains many examples drawn from empirical research, especially with young children. Despite his rather cursory discussion of Peircean semeiotics, this makes the book a valuable read.

The Philosophy of C. S. Peirce

Risto Hilpinen, ed. *Synthese*, Vol. 106, No. 3,
1996, pp. 299–430.

This special volume of *Synthese* contains four papers on Peirce, and an extensive review by Tom Short of the first five volumes of the *Chronological Edition*. Joseph Brent begins with an autobiographical sketch of the Peirce biographer, after which he elaborates upon some aspects of Peirce's life. Randall Dipert examines iconicity, representation, and resemblance in the light of Peirce's theory of signs, Goodman's views on resemblance, and modern philosophies of language and mind. Finally, Robert Schwartz opposes the tendency in studies of mind to assume that the properties and principles of linguistic forms of representation must also hold for forms of thought. In his review article, Short uses the chronological presentation of Peirce's ideas as found in the *Chronological Edition* to challenge Max Fisch's well-known account of Peirce's progress from nominalism to realism.

Pour une pragmatique de la signification

Jean Fiset
XYZ éditeur, Montréal, Québec; coll.
"Documents", 1996, 299 pp. (in French)
ISBN 2-89261-165-2 (Paper)

How can we apply Peirce's semeiotic to literary analysis? Fiset's book is an excellent and highly suggestive exploration of that difficult question. The first of three parts establishes the theoretical ground with an original discussion of some "elementary" semiotic concepts. These include semiosis in relation to text, interpretance and interpretation in relation to pragmatistic foundations, and representamen/sign/ground, a controversial trilogy among Peirce interpreters (Fiset tries to do justice to all three terms, with a distinctive, Savan-inspired, preference for "ground"). The second part explores the variable connections between signs and objects, with much help from weathercocks and sunflowers. In the midst of many fascinating moves, Fiset subjects the Peircean analysis of representation to the powerful test of non-figurative art (where iconicity is found to be a key element), and he illuminates the process of signification with a penetrating analysis of passages from Jung, Andersen, and Dostoyevsky, among others. The third part offers a rich discussion of iconicity (icons and hypoicons), metaphor, enlarged sign, and movement of thought, with constant illustrations from and confrontations with the work of poet and painter Saint-Denis Garneau. This important book ends with an able translation of seventeen essential fragments extracted for the most part from the *Collected Papers*, plus a translation of an interesting letter from David Savan to the author. There is a bibliography, but no index.

The Thought and Character of William James

Ralph Barton Perry.
Vanderbilt University Press, 1996,
xvii + 402.
ISBN 0-8265-1279-8 (Paper)

This is a new paperback edition of Perry's classic biography of William James, which originally appeared in 1935. It should be noted, however, that, although there are no signs of this on the cover, this is actually a reprint of the *abbreviated* edition of 1947. Despite more than half a century of James scholarship after the appearance of the book, this biography remains a work of considerable value. The biography is thorough, well written, and allows James to speak for himself through many letters and related documents. The new edition comes with an introduction by Charlene Haddock Seigfried.