

'Relative' (pub. 22.08.15-18:38). Quote in M. Bergman & S. Paavola (Eds.), *The Commens Dictionary: Peirce's Terms in His Own Words. New Edition*. Retrieved from <http://www.commens.org/dictionary/entry/quote-logic-relatives-9>.

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**Term:** Relative

**Quote:** Our European languages are peculiar in their marked differentiation of common nouns from verbs. *Proper* nouns must exist in all languages; and so must such "pronouns," or indicative words, as *this, that, something, anything*. But it is probably true that in the great majority of the tongues of men, distinctive common nouns either do not exist or are exceptional formations. In their meaning as they stand in sentences, and in many comparatively widely-studied languages, common nouns are akin to participles, as being mere inflexions of verbs. If a language has a verb meaning "is a man," a noun "man" becomes a superfluity. For all men are mortals is perfectly expressed by "Anything either is-a-man not or is-a-mortal." Some man is a miser is expressed by "Something both is-a-man and is-a-miser." The best treatment of the logic of relatives, as I contend, will dispense altogether with class names and only use such verbs. A verb requiring an object or objects to complete the sense may be called a *complete relative*.

A verb by itself signifies a mere dream, an imagination unattached to any particular occasion. It calls up in the mind an icon. A *relative* is just that, an icon, or image, without attachments to experience, without "a local habitation and a name," but with indications of the need of such attachments.

**Source:** Peirce, C. S. (1897). The Logic of Relatives. *The Monist*, 7(2), 161-217.

**References:** CP 3.459

**Date of** 1897

**Quote:**

**URL:** <http://www.commens.org/dictionary/entry/quote-logic-relatives-9>