

ИСТОРИЯ ФИЛОСОФИИ

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PRAGMATISM AND NEW DIRECTIONS FOR AMERICAN PHILOSOPHY: A TURN TO THE FUTURE VIA COMMITMENT TO SCIENTIFIC METHOD

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The three founding fathers of pragmatism – Charles Peirce, William James, and John Dewey – heralded pragmatism as a movement that turned philosophy toward the future. From their perspective, pragmatic philosophy contrasted with traditional metaphysics that they interpreted as an attempt to discover the necessary presuppositions for the existence of a phenomenal world. Some pragmatists analyzed the quest for necessary presuppositions as a turn toward the past. Pragmatic philosophy also rejected a Humean or empiricist metaphysics according to which impressions or sense data were representative of an underlying reality. The Humean account, in which there was no future confirmation of the data of experience, was considered by some pragmatist as a turn towards the present. The initiating turn towards the future within pragmatism was taken by Charles Peirce who defined the “real” as referring to what would be said to exist as a result of the convergence of a process of scientific inquiry towards the asymptotic limit of the inquiry. Thus, what was said to exist required confirmation by future experience. James accepted a Peircian account of the true as fixed by a convergence of beliefs through a process of confirmation of the consequences of these beliefs over the long, long run. For Dewey, the acceptance of Peirce’s turn to the future led to the adoption of scientific method as an instrument for human prediction, control, and even future transformation of the environment. Deweyan pragmatism expanded the application of scientific method to problems of society and culture with a vision of corrigible and progressive reconstruction of American institutions.

Keywords: pragmatism, scientific method, community of inquiry, future experience, reconstruction, moral progress, pluralism, democracy, economic planning, liberalism

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The development of pragmatism from its opening phases in the writings of each of its three founding fathers, Charles Peirce, William James, and John Dewey marked a new direction for American philosophy. For each of these three founding fathers of pragmatism, this new direction involved a turn toward an emphasis on future experience, via its commitment to scientific method as the primary instrument for human knowledge. This turn to the future was distinct from a philosophical emphasis on foundational presuppositions of experience, which was

considered to be a turn toward the past, or a philosophical emphasis on current sensations or “impressions” as representations of underlying reality, which was considered to be a turn to the present without any sign toward the future.

In two early essays of Charles Peirce that heralded the beginning of Pragmatism – “How to Make Our Ideas Clear” and “The Fixation of Belief” – the connection between the turn toward the future and the commitment to scientific method within pragmatic philosophy was initiated. This connection can be traced from Peirce’s definition of the truth as based upon the *future* convergence of hypotheses by a process of experimental verification, through William James’s emphasis on Pragmatism as a method of mediating between beliefs through an appeal to their *future* consequences, to Dewey’s emphasis on knowledge as an instrument of prediction and control of *future* experience of the human environment. This theme within Pragmatism as a shift of philosophy to the future was also emphasized in different ways by later generations, including Sidney Hook among Dewey’s first generation of students, and Richard Rorty, among later proponents of pragmatism.

One starting point for a survey of the turn toward the future within Pragmatic philosophy can be found, as noted above, in Charles Peirce’s essay “The Fixation of Belief.”

In that essay, Peirce distinguishes between the three methods of tenacity, intuition, or consensus and the method of scientific inquiry as ways of fixing belief (CP 5.377–387).¹ Peirce’s argument is that, unlike the methods of tenacity, intuition or consensus, which relate to the assertion of past or present beliefs, scientific method requires a community of inquiry that generates hypotheses with predictive consequences that are confirmed or refuted by *future* events and experiences. Peirce defends his own preference for scientific method by demonstrating that scientific method provides the best analysis of “truth” in its account of the convergence of a community of inquiry upon those hypotheses that have received confirmation of their experimentally predictable consequences. The turn to the future is emphasized in such a theory of scientific knowledge since this process of convergence by a succession of hypotheses, each of which is fallible, corrigible and progressive, is to be carried out toward an asymptotic limit. Even greater significance is ascribed to this turn toward the future, since the “real” is defined by Peirce as those entities that will be said to exist in the true statements that will be established by the process of scientific method in its future arrival at its asymptotic limit (CP 5.311; 5.316; 5.356). This identification of reality with scientific knowledge was taken as an indication of the elimination of metaphysics within Pragmatism. Such an elimination of metaphysics identified a bridge between the views of Logical Positivism and Pragmatism, which was emphasized when many members of the Logical Positivist movements were forced to immigrate to the United States and took up positions at American universities in the 1930s. On the other hand, the differences between the activist tendencies of American Pragmatism in its efforts at societal and cultural reconstruction as contrasted with the emphasis on linguistic analysis with its limitation of philosophical involvement in political activism remained.

William James accepted Peirce’s shift to the future through the commitment to scientific method. In the series of lectures that made up James’ volume titled “Pragmatism,” James indicated that Pragmatism could mediate between competing

¹ These references cite the volume and paragraph numbers in *Collected Papers of Charles Sanders Peirce*. Cambridge, 1931–1958.

philosophical hypotheses by an appeal to their future consequences.² James's defense of Pragmatism was supported, in an independent fashion, by several Italian philosophers, most notably Giovanni Papini in the circle that published a journal on Italian Modernism called *Leonardo*. Papini invented the title of Futurism for James's version of Pragmatism. Papini transmitted the term "Futurism" for identification of an Italian school of artists, whose theme was directed toward the representation of the technological future of the natural and human environment. James did not, however, involve himself in a careful explication of Peircean statements regarding the "true" and the "real." James's affirmation of Pierce's turn to the future involved a further shift in idiom as in his identification of the "true" as that which would be useful to believe over the long, long run.

There were recognized problems among Pragmatists with both the theories of Peirce and the theories of James. In the case of Peirce, as Israel Scheffler was to point out in his book, *Four Pragmatists*, the existence of an asymptotic limit to a process of convergence, as proposed in Peirce's definition of truth, requires a proof for the existence of a limit as distinct from recognition of an ongoing process of convergence by a community of inquiry.³ In the case of James, the identification of the "true" with the useful appeared to introduce potential relativism of truth. The argument contra James was formulated through the criticism that James had replaced Peirce's grounds for accepting a belief through the criterion of confirmation by its experimental consequences with the thesis that a person could adopt a belief or an hypothesis if it "worked," thereby introducing the ambiguous formulation that a person could adopt a belief or hypothesis if its psychological and social consequences were advantageous for the believer over the long, long run.

William James' lectures on Pragmatism, including his popular phrase that defined the truth in terms of that which works in the future, had an impact beyond narrow philosophical circles in American culture. Santayana wrote of James "his scattered words caught fire in many parts of the world."⁴ One piquant illustration of this is shown in a comment by a major journalist of the group that was identified as the "muck-rakers" within American society, Lincoln Steffens. Upon his conversion to faith in the Soviet system after his return from the Soviet Union in the early 1920s, Steffens celebratedly and notoriously declared: "I have seen the future and it works."⁵

The development of pragmatism in the philosophy of John Dewey, whom James had recognized as the coming heir of the pragmatic school of thought a few years before James' own death, also demonstrated this emphasis on the future via a commitment to scientific method. Dewey advanced an account of human intelligence as an instrument for prediction and control of the future experiences of mankind. Accordingly, Dewey believed that this instrument possessed a potentiality for reconstructing contemporaneous American culture. For Dewey, the development of the social sciences in such fields as education, penology, politics, and international relations could result in the moral progress of the culture in the future. Dewey referred to human intelligence or to scientific method as an instrument, which, in the colloquial idiom of New England, "will do." Dewey

² See James, W. *Pragmatism: A New Name for Some Old Ways of Thinking*. New York, 1907, p. 18.

³ See Scheffler, I. *Four Pragmatists: A Critical Introduction to Peirce, James, Mead, and Dewey*. London, 1986, p. 65 ff.

⁴ Santayana, G. "The Genteel Tradition in American Philosophy," *The Essential Santayana: Selected Writings*. Bloomington, 2009, p. 353.

⁵ Hartshorn, P. *I Have Seen the Future: A Life of Lincoln Steffens*. Berkeley, CA, 2011, p. 315.

pointed out that the term “do” of the idiomatic phrase “will do” was a pragmatic one referring to the need for practice rather than theory, in its application to the problems of men. Dewey also pointed out that the term “will” in this phrase had a reference to the future such that the application of intelligence or scientific method to a problematic situation could result in a resolution of the problem and the transformation of future experience.

Dewey’s belief in the instrumental character of knowledge included both knowledge of value as well as knowledge of fact. Moral progress was possible through objective knowledge of values. Scientific method, which represented the enactment of human intelligence as an instrument of inquiry, could be directed toward the appraisal of different hypotheses for resolving problematic situations in moral contexts.

Subsequent philosophers of pragmatism after Dewey have continued this emphasis on the future. In the immediate generation of Dewey’s students, Sidney Hook, as previously mentioned, sought to synthesize this aspect of Deweyan thought with Marxism. In his 1933 book, *Towards the Understanding of Karl Marx: A Revolutionary Interpretation*, Hook aimed at uncovering common elements between a Marxist thesis of societal transformation by means of greater application of the laws of economic development with the Deweyan thesis of social reconstruction through the application of the social sciences to the problems of man. In support of this common ground, Hook cited one of Marx’s “theses on Feuerbach” as if it were a slogan value of Pragmatism. Hook’s rendering of Marx’s eleventh thesis on Feuerbach is: “philosophers have only interpreted the world in different ways. What is crucial however is to change it.”⁶ In the years that followed the publication of Hook’s interpretation of Marxism, however, Hook’s own essays on dialectic developed the argument for the distance between the fallibility and corrigibility in which the turn toward the future was carried out through the potential application of the social sciences in Dewey as contrasted with the inevitability and fixed sequences of historical determinism in the dialectical process of Hegelian Marxism. Thus, Hook’s later interpretations of Pragmatism removed any claim of similarity with Marxist theses regarding historical inevitability or the dialectical process of historical change.

Richard Rorty has also supported the pragmatic approach that places its emphasis upon the future through his strong polemic against knowledge as holding a mirror up to nature, in favor of knowledge as an instrument of prediction and control. Along these lines, Rorty argues that reality is “made” rather than “found.”⁷ The pragmatic rejection of correspondence as a representation of a reality which is to be found in the immediate impressions or sense data that are given in experience, does not necessarily coincide with Rorty’s view that the entities of the world are “made” rather than “found.” The metaphor of correspondence was used by Dewey not only with the attribution of holding a mirror up to nature. It was also used in the metaphor of correspondence as Sidney Hook affirmed from conversation with Dewey in the sense of an experiment sending a postcard to nature. Thus an experimental hypothesis with predictive consequences could be considered as directing a postcard toward nature in which a reply was received that

⁶ Hook, S. *Towards the Understanding of Karl Marx: A Revolutionary Interpretation*. New York, 1933, p. 63.

⁷ See Rorty, R. “Relativism: Finding and Making,” in: R. Rorty, *Philosophy and Social Hope*. Harmondsworth, 1999, pp. xvi–xxxii.

confirmed or refuted these predictive consequences. This latter species of correspondence had a reference to the future that was a characteristic of Pragmatism, as well as including the reference to naturalism or discovering objective facts about the environment which, to a degree, was a contested feature of Pragmatism. Even though Rorty's statement that reality is "made" not "found" shares a turn toward the future with the Deweyan emphasis upon the "takens" rather than the "givens" of experience,⁸ it would appear to be a discontinuity with the Deweyan claim in his metaphysical volume *Experience and Nature* that natural objects were disclosed by scientific inquiry.⁹

Peirce was the pioneer of Pragmatism in its commitment to scientific method. Peirce had earlier developed his argument that a genuine doubt rather than the universal methodological skepticism of Descartes was the starting point for inquiry (CP 5.265). Convergence of a community of inquiry could resolve this doubt into a fixed belief. Scientific truth excluded any claim of having arrived at absolute truth in the sense of being infallible or of having arrived at a point of termination of the ongoing process of scientific inquiry. Peirce did not exclude the application of scientific truths to changes in social practice. At the same time, his emphasis on the superiority of scientific method as a way of fixing belief did not aspire to Dewey's broader commitment to scientific method as a way of reconstructing social practice.

James did not amplify Peirce's account of scientific method as distinct from James's interpretation of Peirce's pragmatic theory of truth. Thus, James argued that he was following Peirce since he required that true statements are subject to confirmation by their predictive consequences. As previously noted, James's formulation of Peirce's criterion for truth gave rise to ambiguity by its departure from the Peircean terms of experimental consequences of scientifically verifiable hypotheses as the sole criterion for the adoption of belief. It is noteworthy that James had maintained a complete commitment to scientific method in his own research on principles of psychology, and had imported from Germany a pioneering experimental psychologist to replace his own position at Harvard when he moved from the department of psychology to the department of philosophy.

James's commitment to scientific method brought with it his rejection of metaphysical Materialism and metaphysical Idealism, with the implication for James of the rejection of any philosophical Monism. Thus James arrived at the conclusion that a commitment to scientific method in the study of the universe implied a pluralistic universe. This belief in pluralism emerged as a continuing feature of pragmatic philosophy in the form of a rejection of any program of reduction of the social sciences to physical sciences. This generalized approach to anti-reductionism did not function to negate the possibilities of particular demonstrations of the reduction of some special areas of biology to chemistry, or of some special areas of chemistry to physics. The thesis of a wholesale or complete reduction of history, psychology or biology to physics on the model of a Laplacean or Comtean determinism is excluded within a pragmatic recognition of knowledge as an instrument for interpretation and shaping the environment. In a metaphor of William James, such a pluralistic analysis paved the way for an open universe as distinct from the closed universe of deterministic Monism.

⁸ Dewey, J. *The Quest for Certainty: A Study of the Relation of Knowledge and Action*. New York, 1929, p. 178.

⁹ Dewey, J. *Experience and Nature*. Chicago; London, 1925, pp. 1–2.

The hostility to metaphysical Monism can also be understood as part of James's critique of rationalist intellectualism in the creation of philosophical systems, which led James to his championing of Bergson as the supreme critic of the intellectualism of his age. James considered the philosophy of Henri Bergson, with its thesis of an *élan vital* as the dynamic factor in creative evolution, to be a fundamental way of rejecting metaphysical Materialism and metaphysical Idealism. Consequently, despite what might be considered to be Bergson's romantic opposition to science and James's pragmatic commitment to science, James viewed Bergson's views as consistent with the anti-intellectualist or anti-metaphysical approach of pragmatism.¹⁰

Dewey's account of scientific method differed in significant details from the Peircean model of convergence by a community of inquiry through a process of the confirmation or refutation of hypotheses toward an asymptotic true hypothesis. Dewey's point of departure was not identified as Peirce's had been with the development of a genuine doubt, but with what Dewey termed a "problematic situation." This problematic situation involves conflicting alternatives for the resolution of its problematic character. Scientific inquiry generates alternative hypotheses for the resolution of the problematic. Thus, scientific method as a method of inquiry provides an instrument for optimally resolving the problematic situation by carrying out experiments, which confirm or refute the competing hypotheses, each of which must admit of differing predictive consequences. The process of scientific inquiry provides reliable knowledge about the environing world. For Dewey, scientific inquiry was not only capable of resolving a problematic situation regarding the facts of Nature and the world or what is the case, but it was also capable of resolving a problematic situation regarding values or what ought to be the case.

Dewey's analysis of scientific method led him to confidence in the possibility of the application of the natural sciences and the social sciences toward improved prediction and control of the future environment of mankind. Accordingly for Deweyans, the development of the natural and social sciences rather than any Hegelian dialectical process of history became the instrument for human progress. Thus, confidence in the possibility of historical progress represents an important feature in any account of the application of scientific method in Deweyan pragmatism. Dewey's introduction of the term "reconstruction" indicated his commitment toward changing contemporaneous institutions such that not only the outward features of these social structures could be reformed, but even their foundational bases could be reconstructed. Deweyan pragmatism forged its way from its analysis of scientific method as an instrument which could be applied to the problematic situations of a culture to a comprehensive social and political philosophy which aimed at realizing change in societal and political institutions. Pragmatic social and political philosophy, with its approach of seeking to apply scientific method to societal reconstruction, was advanced by Dewey and his followers in a number of specific areas including progressive education, economic planning, political democracy, criminal justice reform and international peace via international law.

In the case of progressive education, Dewey conditioned his acceptance of an academic position at a university, whether at Chicago or Columbia, with the university's commitment to develop an experimental elementary school for progressive education. Dewey argued that the application of scientific method to educational practice would result in reform of the traditional model of authority in the public school. This could bring about a preferable model of a democratic

¹⁰ James, W. "The Philosophy of Bergson," *Hibbert Journal*, 1909, Vol. 7, pp. 562–577.

school with greater freedom of expression for students that would result in higher performance since the students would be motivated by their free choice for cooperative inquiry rather than a dictated requirement of rote learning.

Dewey also believed that the application of scientific method to economics could bring beneficial results. A program of economic planning that was to be the consequence of the development of the science of economics would replace the model of competitive free markets with their demonstrated vulnerability of cyclical periods of economic depression as the burdensome price of periods of expansion with greater production. Dewey had argued during the Depression in *Individualism Old and New* that a new model of economic planning would replace the broken individualism that had emerged within the new corporate structure of American capitalism bringing with it a new individualism that would reflect the scientific culture of the new age.¹¹

To a degree, Dewey ventured further along the lines of political reform with the expectation that a democratic model of society could function analogously to a scientific model of inquiry, according to which there would be convergence toward a greater degree of truth as a result of the continuation of democratic process in successive elections analogous to the continuation and convergence of scientific inquiry. This analogy has been continued in some theories of deliberative democracy advanced by post-pragmatic philosophers. The idea seems to be that the continuing practice of democracy across the decades can lead to a public that is more knowledgeable regarding the public interest, and benefits from realizing the connection between the ways in which the public organizes its advocacy or electoral demands and the response to these demands in the performance of its elected representatives. Accordingly, on this view, there is a basis for an analogy between scientific method and the process of democratic practice.

Alternative analyses of democracy like Joseph Schumpeter's thesis on the relationship of group interests to democratic choices and more particularly the election of anti-democratic parties in formerly democratic states have tended to undermine any species of analogy between scientific method and electoral processes within established democratic states.

In the decade after the end of the First World War, Dewey hoped that the advance of intelligence in international relations could bring about a rule of law in international affairs such that the resolution of conflict through armed warfare would be eliminated by international agreement. In a period in the late 1920's in which an international agreement like the Kellogg-Briand Treaty was drafted in an effort to guarantee international peace, Dewey advocated the development of international conventions to outlaw war as an acceptable means for the resolution of international conflict.

In more general terms, the Deweyan argument had been that the application of scientific method could bring about progressive change in human history. The *prima facie* basis for such a thesis has been laid in the Peircean argument that the scientific method yielded corrigible and progressive hypotheses about their subject matter. The extension of this idea indicated that the application of scientific method would yield improved knowledge on human problems that would result in societal progress. Dewey's metaphor for progress in American society did not derive from his useful belief in Hegelianism but did refer to the American metaphor of a "frontier" which could move forward through the progressive

¹¹ See Dewey, J. *Individualism Old and New*. London, 1931, pp. 88–94.

development and the application of the natural and social sciences. Although this metaphor expressed the optimism of Deweyan pragmatism, Dewey and his immediate followers rejected utopian philosophies and did not indulge in visionary formulations of future historical progress on the model of Condorcet or of an Hegelian end of history.

Dewey's writings also included significant reservations on any doctrine of historical progress. Dewey did not view historical progress as a linear growth of Enlightenment emerging from the ages of darkness, or as an *élan vital* coursing through the dynamism of historical evolution or revolution demarcating the new ages from the old. The Deweyan claim for reconstruction of society took place in the context in which societal institutions which were formerly coherent and had met the needs of their constituents, had failed to adapt to changing human needs and had developed conflicts with other institutions of that society. Thus, in Dewey's *Individualism Old and New*, the background for proposed social progress was the problematic situation of an older, and once successful American individualism. These American individuals had been independent farmers and craftsmen, living as members of a coherent religious faith in a productive economic community. The challenge arose when these persons were unemployed workers in the American huge corporate enterprises, which had replaced small private enterprises by the 1930s. The resolution of this problematic situation required new forms of economic planning that would bring about a new individualism within the labor market of a more cooperative economy, while at the same time introducing reconciliation in the conflict between the previously coherent religious culture of the community, and the newly established Darwinian scientific beliefs.

Dewey also recognized that even beneficial change in one area of society could bring with it loss in some other area of society. Further, Dewey recognized that there was a price for progress and that this price could represent, in some cases, a very high price to be paid for minor gains.

The great regressions of twentieth-century history including the turn to authoritarian and totalitarian regimes as well as the Second World War and multiple cases of genocide dealt a fatal blow to even minimal doctrines of historical progress that had been affirmed by philosophers of pragmatism in the seemingly halcyon years before the First World War that may have been sustained by some as late as the 1920s. The post-war skepticism that emerged from the realities of historical regression, including the shock of revelation of the magnitude of the concentration camp universe, the Gulag, and genocide of the current time or recent past received significant support with the great popularity of Reinhold Niebuhr's writings. Niebuhr's theological realism restored a recognition of the reality of historical regression with its recognition of the human potential for self-destruction through its use of the Christian metaphor of mankind's "original sin." The counter response of a philosopher who was sympathetic to Deweyan pragmatism like Charles Frankel of Columbia University in his book, *The Case for Modern Man*, affirmed the Deweyan belief in the plasticity of human nature with its potential for societal reform. Yet Frankel excluded, as did most post-war pragmatists, any thesis of general or universal historical problems.¹² In the postwar period, American pragmatists who maintained Deweyan optimism about the plasticity of human nature contra Niebuhrian doctrine of mankind's original sin were much more realistic in their expectations of historical progress than were the earlier pragmatists. Whereas William James had confronted

¹² See Frankel, C. *The Case for Modern Man*. New York, 1956.

his brother Henry James over his failure to appreciate American progress during their lifetime, and John Dewey had expressed his optimism about progressive change in America there emerged in the postwar generation from Sidney Hook to Richard Rorty a recognition of historical regress as well as progress. If the progressive vision of the end of the age of imperial domination of colonial dependent states had emerged in the twentieth century, such a vision of progress was mixed by the realistic recognition of the absence of democracy, initiation of multiple civil wars, and economic underdevelopment in many of the post-colonial states.

Dewey himself recognized the distance that could develop between the promises advanced within a liberal political philosophy, and the realities that could emerge that would mandate change in the effort to fulfill the promise of liberalism. One example is Dewey's belief, in the spring of 1939, that an American policy of neutrality in the coming European war could avoid the error of American participation in the First World War, and lead to a better and more peaceful resolution of the conflict.¹³ Like many liberals who supported neutrality and freedom, however, the realities of historical developments led Dewey to support an American commitment to Allied victory against the coalition of German Nazism, Italian fascism, and Japanese militarism.

More generally, whether because the development of the natural sciences in the 20th century appeared to be a two-edged sword with greater potentialities for destruction alongside enhanced benefits for human welfare, or whether because expectations in the development of the social sciences turned out to be highly excessive, or whether because the vision of scientific progress had incorrectly eclipsed the limited range of improvement in the nature of human nature, or the multiples of these factors *inter alia*, the Deweyan account of the connection between the application of scientific method and historical progress was not born out by the main historical developments within the 20th century. From the retrospective perspective of the regressions in political and international affairs in the 1930s, as well as the horrors of war and genocide in the 1940s, it is not difficult to recognize the element of excessive expectations that had been projected, to a greater degree, by utopian social philosophies of the period, and to a lesser degree, by pragmatic theorists of progress through the application of scientific method. In diverse areas where progress had been heralded, the recognition of regression or the high price to be paid for progress became evident. Thus, in the context of the natural sciences, the ongoing progress in aerodynamics and unmanned flight, Winston Churchill could declare, when the V-2 rockets fell on London, "the Dark Ages return... on the gleaming wings of science."¹⁴

In an area, which was an essential feature of Deweyan advocacy, namely progressive education, the record of achievement was also mixed. On the one hand, Dewey's insistence on the development of progressive schools by universities as a condition for his own employment made possible laboratory schools which overcame traditional rigid authoritarianism and pioneered new methods of student learning through cooperative inquiry in experimental scientific projects and critical literary conversations. Yet, there was a reaction against many of these schools and their innovative educators on the ground that the students graduated without

¹³ See Dewey, J. "No Matter What Happens – Stay Out," *Common Sense*, 1939, No. 7, p. 11.

¹⁴ Quoted in Jones, R.V. "Churchill and Science," *Churchill*. Oxford, 1993, p. 440.

knowledge of basic texts in literature and history, as well as with mixed abilities of mastery of necessary areas of knowledge in mathematics and the natural sciences.

A final retrospective word can be inserted for any pragmatic philosopher at the turn of the 20th century who entertained a version of historical progress. The great regressions of 20th century history have mandated the rethinking or re-formulation of those expectations.

Later pragmatists have sought to resuscitate a theory of progress in alternative ways. Richard Rorty, in his book on *Achieving Our Country* has indicated that there have been realizations of progress within American culture, such as, in his view, the achievement of gay rights, as well as, the promise of liberal democratic unity toward a more egalitarian society.¹⁵ Philip Kitcher in a 2017 essay titled "Social Progress" has pointed to the empirical evidence of realized progress in specific areas as the basis for a pragmatic thesis of the reality of historical progress.¹⁶ Such a thesis would avoid the visionary or utopian claims that have dogged theories of human progress in previous philosophical writings. It would base its claim upon the clear evidence that progress takes place in specific areas that would be readily conceded, whether from progress in the internal combustion engine through child mortality rates to progress in space travel. The assessment of these positive developments as claims for human progress, however, requires their being balanced against such great regressive movements of the 20th century, as fascism, Nazism, and genocide, as well as such postwar developments as the multiplication of civil wars in postcolonial countries and the growth or persistence of dictatorial governments.

From the retrospective perspective of 150 years of Pragmatism, the rate of tendencies from the Pragmatic movement of an optimistic turn to the future combined with the centrality of scientific method for the fixation of belief marked a continual blazing of new directions against the previously dominant traditions of American philosophy. Yet the optimistic faith in progress that often accompanied this new turn in philosophy has waned with the recognition in light of the evidence of the previous 150 years of historical progress and historical regress that the thesis of moral progress in history through the application of scientific method remains contested.

Abbreviations

CP - *Collected Papers of Charles Sanders Peirce*, ed. by C. Hartshorne, P. Weiss and A.W. Burks. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1931–1958.

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¹⁵ Rorty, R. *Achieving Our Country: Leftist Thought in Twentieth-Century America*. Cambridge, Mass., 1998, pp. 79–83.

¹⁶ Kitcher, P. "Social Progress," *Social Philosophy and Policy*, 2017, Vol. 34, No. 2, pp. 46–65.

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Прагматизм и новые направления для развития американской философии: обращение к будущему через приверженность научному методу

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С точки зрения отцов-основателей прагматизма – Ч. Пирса, У. Джеймса и Дж. Дьюи – это направление обращало философию к будущему. По их мнению, философия прагматизма отличалась от традиционной метафизики, которую они считали попыткой обнаружить необходимые допущения, лежащие в основании существования феноменального мира. Некоторые прагматисты рассматривали поиск таких необходимых допущений как обращение к прошлому. Прагматическая философия также отрицала и эмпиристскую, или юмианскую, метафизику, согласно которой впечатления или данные чувств были представителями порождающей их реальности. Позиция Юма, согласно которой данные чувственного опыта не могли получить подтверждения в будущем, воспринималась некоторыми прагматистами как обращение к настоящему. В рамках прагматизма исходный импульс обращения к будущему был дан Чарльзом Пирсом, который определил термин «реальное» как указывающий на то, что будет признано существующим в тот момент, когда процесс научного исследования достигнет асимптотического предела этого исследования. Таким образом, признание чего-либо существующим требовало подтверждения будущим опытом. Джеймс принял воззрения Пирса на истинное как то, что фиксируется конвергенцией верований, возникающей в процессе подтверждения последствий этих верований в долгосрочной перспективе. Для Дьюи принятие провозглашенного Пирсом обращения к будущему привело и к принятию научного метода как инструмента для осуществления предсказаний, управления и даже будущей трансформации окружающей среды. В прагматизме Дьюи сфера приложения научного метода была расширена и включила в себя проблемы общества

и культуры. Он предполагал, что научный метод поможет осуществить поэтапную и прогрессивную реконструкцию американских институтов.

Ключевые слова: прагматизм, научный метод, исследовательское сообщество, будущий опыт, реконструкция, прогресс в морали, плюрализм, демократия, экономическое планирование, либерализм

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