

mente e intellettualmente aperta e significativa della storia naturale» (Intr., p. 16).

Il confronto puntuale tra le diverse edizioni dell'opera, reso possibile dall'accurato lavoro di Marino, consente di coglierne non soltanto l'ampiezza disciplinare e la successione cronologica degli interventi al testo, ma anche il tentativo blumenbachiano di elaborare le sue idee in una unità coerente, nonostante l'apparente eterogeneità tematica. Marino coglie, inoltre, la connessione tra prima e seconda parte come rapporto tra «assunti teorici, metodologici e disciplinari» – la prima – e le loro «verifiche empiriche» – la seconda (Intr., p. 17). Rivolgendosi a un pubblico ampio di lettori non specialisti – lo stesso autore lo dichiara all'inizio del Discorso preliminare della parte prima (p. 72) – Blumenbach intende, nello stesso tempo, divulgare le sue più recenti indagini nell'ambito della storia naturale ma anche emendare, ampliare, arricchire le sue ricerche. Ciò è evidente anche dal lavoro di revisione che egli compie tra il 1790 e il 1806 prima di pubblicarne una seconda edizione (1811).

Nell'appendice filologica (pp. 153-177) l'accento è posto sulle modifiche terminologiche e concettuali che consentono di cogliere i progressi compiuti da Blumenbach nel quindicennio tra la pubblicazione della prima e della seconda parte dei *Beyträge*. Attraverso una ricostruzione cronologica e comparativa tra le diverse edizioni, si mostra appunto il percorso compiuto da Blumenbach, l'evolvere delle sue posizioni rispetto ai dibattiti dell'epoca su questioni di tipo naturalistico e antropologico, la sua esigenza di correggere, rivedere e sostituire determinati passaggi, termini o concetti che va di pari passo con gli sviluppi compiuti nell'ambito delle sue indagini empiriche. A tal proposito, Marino individua alcune tendenze che segnano il passaggio da un'edizione all'altra riguardanti sia questioni concettuali che di metodo, mostrando come, in particolare, Blumenbach si fosse sforzato di rendere più sistematica e rigorosa la sua disciplina.

Tra gli esempi più significativi di tali tendenze individuate da Marino nel saggio introduttivo e rintracciabili dal confronto tra le edizioni del 1790 e del 1806 è l'uso sempre più sistematico del termine 'razza' che Blumenbach sostituisce, nella seconda edizione, a quello di «varietà» (*Varietät, Spielart*), inizialmente privilegiato per indicare i differenti tipi umani. In connessione a ciò è fondamentale notare come, sempre dal confronto tra le due edizioni, emerga anche l'impegno umanistico, le preoccupazioni di tipo anti-razzista e anti-schiavista (Marino sottolinea, a tal proposito, il contatto di Blumenbach con «le centrali internazionali dell'abolizionismo», Intr., p. 44) e la difesa della tesi dell'esistenza di un unico genere umano, sostenuta anche da autorevoli studiosi come Linneo, Bonnet, Haller (p. 88). Marino riporta anche le tre note conclusive aggiunte da Blumenbach nel 1806 alla prima parte dei *Beyträge*, che sono anch'esse decisive per inquadrare meglio dal punto di vista 'teorico' quel mutamento terminologico da 'varietà' a 'razza'. Affermare che nella natura vi è una «successione graduale» di configurazioni (*Bildungen*), tali per cui «l'una si riversa nell'altra» (un concetto ribadito più volte da Blumenbach), significa, a ben vedere, avvalersi di un'immagine ben consolidata nelle concezioni della natura tra Sei e Settecento, quella cioè della 'scala' o della 'catena'. Ma tale affermazione,

ammonisce Blumenbach, non va intesa in senso 'metafisico', bensì – e qui a ragione Marino individua la matrice kantiana del discorso – nel suo «uso regolativo» (pp. 170-171; cf. Intr., pp. 28-29, 40 e 42, ma anche 64). Marino ricorda a tal proposito lo scambio epistolare tra Kant e Blumenbach, avvenuto proprio nel 1790 all'indomani dell'uscita della terza critica e dei *Beyträge* (che Blumenbach avrebbe inviato a Kant, il quale già li possedeva) e ascrive anche a tale scambio l'origine della revisione, da parte di Blumenbach, di alcuni punti della prima sezione dei *Beyträge* (Intr., p. 42 in nota, ma più nel dettaglio Oliva, D'Alessandro, Marino, *Storia*, pp. 319-320).

Le intenzioni di Marino sono anche quelle di far chiarezza sulle posizioni teoriche del cosiddetto «geometra della razza» (Marino ricorda la «formula a effetto» usata da S.J. Gould, Intr., p. 12), il cui pensiero fu facilmente e volentieri frainteso quando Blumenbach era ancora in vita. Inquadrare Blumenbach come momento chiave della «storia dell'antropologia razziale» significa cogliere il suo contributo come «ricerca empirica teoricamente fondata e metodologicamente determinata» (Intr. P. 64) che trova spazio e applicazione, per la sua pregnanza, anche al di là della storia naturale, mostrando la capacità di quest'ultima – ancora con Marino – «di servire da scienza ausiliaria ad altre discipline», non ad ultimo, alla politica e «al diritto sulle delicate questioni della schiavitù e della discriminazione razziale» (Intr. P. 17). Tematiche anche molto attuali come i concetti di 'catastrofe', 'mutabilità', 'estinzione', 'razza' fanno di questo volumetto un «documento prezioso lungamente dimenticato» (Intr., p. 65) e tuttavia ad oggi ricco di nuovi spunti di ricerca. Vi è da pensare che questo sia soltanto un punto di partenza per la prosecuzione, anche in Italia, degli studi su Blumenbach e sul suo ruolo nella storia del pensiero scientifico e filosofico di età moderna.

Laura Follesa  
Friedrich-Schiller Universität Jena  
DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.3903565

Sami Pihlström, Friedrich Stadler, Niels Weidtmann (eds.), *Logical Empiricism and Pragmatism* (Dordrecht: Springer, 2017).

The 19<sup>th</sup> volume of the Vienna Circle Institute Yearbook contains most of the papers presented at the international conference on “Logical Empiricism and Pragmatism,” held at the University of Vienna on 7-9 November 2013. The volume explores several aspects of these two research programs, from both a historical and a theoretical perspective, in order to show to what extent they can be seen as comparable views of scientific knowledge. As one of the editors explains in his paper (p. 139 fn.) “logical empiricism” is preferred to “logical positivism,” the former expression meaning “the somewhat broader set of ideas and the slightly more inclusive philosophical approach that survived the collapse of the Vienna Circle (and thus the collapse of logical positivism in a strict sense).” The aim is therefore not to focus exclusively on the Viennese movement, but rather to go beyond the limits of the schematization that traditionally can be encount-

ered in the history of the philosophy of science, and look at the connections existing between pragmatism and logical empiricism from a broader point of view.

Because of the importance of logical positivism for the history of philosophy, some of the contributions collected in this volume of course deal with the personal and scholarly exchanges that after the First World War involved members of the Vienna Circle (even in its early form) and pragmatist philosophers. But their investigation is not limited to a reconstruction of the relationship between Charles S. Peirce, William James and John Dewey, and leading figures of the Logical Empiricism movement. On the contrary, the aim of these papers is primarily to focus on the theoretical issues approached by members of the Vienna group and stress their compliance with some perspectives developed by pragmatist thinkers.

In his paper on *William James and the Vienna Circle*, for example, Massimo Ferrari deals with the Viennese approach to the problem of truth and the issue of scientific knowledge, and, broadly, with the anti-metaphysical attitude which is defended by Hans Hahn, Philipp Frank and Otto Neurath. As Ferrari shows, the interests of these authors overlapped with those of the American pragmatists (especially James), and it can be argued that “in the Viennese milieu it was possible ... to grasp the veritable core of pragmatist account of truth as opposed to the correspondence theory” (p. 29). Furthermore, Ferrari argues that “for Neurath, Frank and the other young supporters of the scientific world-conception the pragmatist method had a great significance in the struggle against metaphysics they were involved in” (*ibid.*). In fact, as Ferrari aptly maintains, early on 1933 Hans Hahn was aware of the fact that the “great problem” of truth required a new solution, and claimed to “side with the pragmatist conception of truth” (p. 15). Moreover, Frank later agreed with Hahn that “logic need[ed] a drop of pragmatic oil” (p. 16), and Neurath found “in James a new kind of thinker, close to the renewed epistemological perspective” (p. 32). As Neurath wrote in 1937, it was clear to the founders of the Vienna Circle that they would have found “a friendly welcome ... in a country in which Peirce, James, Dewey and others have created a general atmosphere that [was] empiricist in many respect. The very fertile American manner of thinking successfully combines with the European in this field” (p. 17).

Hahn’s, Frank’s and Neurath’s interest in pragmatism is also addressed by Thomas Uebel (*American Pragmatism, Central-European Pragmatism and the First Vienna Circle*). In his contribution, Uebel argues that “the affinity between pragmatism’s conception of meaning and the views developed in the Vienna Circle became plane [after 1928], for only then did Frank and some of his colleagues appreciate the relevance of pragmatism for the philosophy of science the Circle was developing” (p. 88). In his interesting reconstruction of the relationship (effective and/or elective, depending on the case) between the many authors involved, Uebel defends the thesis that “the early sympathies of some Vienna Circle members were based to a large extent on their appreciation of the work of [some] Central-European philosopher-scientist rather than merely the then prominent key text of pragmatism” (p. 83). That is to say that the reason why James’s philosophy

has been positively received in Austria does not reside primarily in “the close relationship between the truth concept of the modern logical movement and that of pragmatism” stressed by Frank during the 1929 *Congress of German Mathematicians and Physicists* held in Prague (p. 89), but rather in the predisposing role played, for example, by Ernst Mach and Ludwig Boltzmann (p. 96).

For what concerns Mach, his role is particularly emphasized by Friedrich Stadler, who contributed to the volume with a paper that focuses on Mach’s 1895 book (*Ernst Mach and Pragmatism – The case of Mach’s Popular Scientific Lectures*). In exploring the several connections that can be encountered between Mach and James, and in stressing the elements that Mach’s epistemology has in common with fundamental pragmatist ideas, Stadler conceives the *Popular Scientific Lectures* as reflecting “the context of the time, while also revealing an approach to the sciences that places emphasis on the historical-genetic perspective and enriches the social role of research between the everyday world and the professional world even from today’s perspective” (p. 13). As Stadler argues, this approach can also be found in North-American pragmatism, and it is thus possible to “conclude that pragmatic philosophy was already present in Austria and Germany in parallel, but not explicitly under this notion and American label” (p. 14). In fact, “Mach had already claimed pragmatic positions in epistemology and methodology before his reading of Peirce and direct encounter with James” (*ibid.*). The audience was therefore ready to receive James’s 1907 book on *Pragmatism*, which has been immediately translated, supported and popularized in Austria by Wilhelm Jerusalem, to whom Stadler, Uebel and Ferrari all pay particular attention (see e.g. pp. 11, 22 ff. and 91).

The above quoted papers give an important contribution to the volume, for they emphasize some mostly neglected elements pertaining to the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century history of philosophy. But this does not exhaust the aims of the book, which also collects some chapters more theoretically oriented, e.g. those written by Donata Romizi (*Classical Pragmatism and Metaphysics: James and Peirce on Scientific Determinism*) and Giovanni Rubeis (*Beyond Realism and Antirealism? The Strange Case of Dewey’s Instrumentalism*). As the titles of these chapters suggest, they deal with the views of leading figures of classic pragmatism on some fundamental issues of the philosophy of science, namely scientific determinism and realism. Romizi especially focuses on the issue of scientific determinism, and argues that “despite its being ‘metaphysical’ and thereby ‘nonsensical’ according to the Vienna Circle’s ‘scientific world conception’, [that issue] bothered philosophers like William James and Charles Peirce” (p. 43). The investigation on these authors is carried on through a contextualization of their views in the late nineteenth-century French anti-deterministic tradition. Romizi deals with the ideas developed by Charles Renouvier, Henri Poincaré, Henri Bergson, and Émile Boutroux, in order to show that, within this French tradition, determinism is criticized for being “the product of a rationalist perspective which neglects many aspects of reality and focuses on quantities” (p. 49). According to Romizi, the anti-determinism which

both James and Peirce defended can be compared to that view. For example, the Jamesian criticism of “intellectualism” converges in many ways with the ideas of Boutroux and Bergson. Furthermore, the debate concerning the problem of necessity – and, therefore, determinism – provoked by Peirce on *The Monist* between 1891 and 1893, involves some aspects that Boutroux stressed, too (p. 57 f.).

This is only a selection of the elements that Romizi takes into account, in order to argue that it would be necessary to reconsider the pragmatist anti-deterministic attitude, and not to conceive it as a merely “metaphysical or irrationalistic reaction against science” (p. 63). On the contrary, according to Romizi “most arguments against scientific determinism put forward ... by Renouvier, Boutroux, Poincaré and Bergson, as well as by James and Peirce, ... were rooted in an empiricist attitude, which emphasized the value of experience, observation and practice against a deductivist, rationalistic and theoretical standpoint” (*ibid.*). Following this line of thought, it would thus be possible to reconceive the very meaning of metaphysical questions, and especially to compare the pragmatist and the logical empiricist view of them. According to the logical empiricists, an issue such as the contraposition between determinism and indeterminism is fundamentally nonsensical. From the pragmatist standpoint, we can rather make sense of some metaphysical questions, for they appear “to have consequences not only for practical life in general, but also ... for scientific practice” (p. 64). Therefore, there seems to be room for a new entrée of metaphysics, even though pragmatically (re)conceived.

Something similar can be argued of John Dewey, as Rubeis’s paper suggests. Rubeis explores selected aspects of Dewey’s instrumentalism and tries to show that, contrary to what one could expect, it may be compatible with a moderate form of realism. Rubeis especially considers some interpretations of Deweyan instrumentalism, e.g. Hans Reichenbach’s, according to which one must interpret it as an anti-realism; Peter Godfrey-Smith’s, claiming that “Dewey’s philosophy of science is an unorthodox form of realism” (p. 69); David L. Hildebrand’s, who considered Dewey’s philosophy “as an attempt to avoid some of the classic dualisms like realism/idealism or mind/body by dissolving rather than solving the problems in question” (p. 70). A closer investigation on Dewey’s natural empiricism allows Rubeis to argue that his instrumentalism should be considered as a view *beyond* realism and anti-realism, for “the crucial point of Deweyan philosophy [consists in] his re-thinking the theory-practice relation” and in his attempt to overcome that dualism (pp. 79-80). These observations once more allow us to compare the approaches of classic pragmatists and (especially late) logical empiricists. The former, in particular, attempted to focus on the concrete applications of concepts and theories, on the practical consequences of scientific inquiry instead of on its ontological implications (p. 80). In doing this, the classic pragmatist thinkers showed that (and how) an empirically oriented philosophy can be compatible with metaphysics, but also that to defend an anti-metaphysical view does not necessarily involve the complete rejection of fundamental metaphysical

issues pertaining to the Western philosophical tradition. When approached pragmatically, these issues in fact make sense, although their ontological value must be limited and, consequently, re-defined.

The last paper which is worth mentioning in this review is the one written by one of the editors of the volume, Sami Pihlström (*On the Viennese Background of Harvard Neopragmatism*). The paper is inspired by the same interest in the relationship between pragmatism and logical empiricism that characterizes Ferrari’s, Stadler’s, and Uebel’s papers, and focuses on the purely theoretical issue of metaphysics in pragmatism and neopragmatism. According to Pihlström, “metaphysics has forcefully returned to the center of mainstream analytic philosophy, and pragmatists need to reflect on their ways of reacting to such developments (p. 142). Pihlström’s investigation on Ludwig Carnap’s influence on Putnam (pp. 143 ff.) and on the role played by Ludwig Wittgenstein’s views in the emergence of neopragmatism (pp. 153 ff.) are thus aimed at dealing with that issue. But these connections also reveal how strongly the Viennese background influenced the further development of classic pragmatism, thus contrasting “the thesis that pragmatism ... was ‘eclipsed’ by logical empiricism (and later by analytic philosophy)” (p. 141). On the contrary, Pihlström argues that “not only does the pragmatic maxim ... resemble the logical empiricist’s verificationist theory of meaning ..., [but] also the resolute rejection of unempirical metaphysical speculation, as well as the link between scientific progress and social progress, can be regarded as points of contact between the two traditions” that lasted also after the second generation of both pragmatists and logical empiricists (*ibid.*). The never abandoned critical attitude towards metaphysics shows in particular that “neopragmatism still remains committed to important logical-empiricist ideas” (p. 142) and that these two philosophical approaches should be studied in parallel. Finally, Pihlström argues that, given these correspondences and the general compliance of the two philosophical perspectives explored, it would be possible to develop a new research program resembling both the approaches.

According to Pihlström, an “integrated pragmatist approach” that would lead us back “to the original rendez-vous of pragmatism and logical empiricism” (p. 158) can be found in Morton White’s *holistic pragmatism*. This epistemological position that “can be extended to a holistically pragmatist ontology of culture as well as to a metaphilosophical account of what is correct and incorrect in both metaphysics and anti-metaphysics” (p. 158) is explored in the final part of Pihlström’s paper, leaving the room for further analysis. Although not thoroughly examined, White’s view contributes to the general picture that Pihlström aims to draw. When combined with the observations on Putnam’s neopragmatism indebtedness to Carnap’s ideas, and with the various pragmatist themes that can be found in Wittgenstein’s scholarship, White’s holistic pragmatism sheds light on what pragmatism should be – and, moreover, on how it should be conceived. As Pihlström conclusively remarks, “pragmatism ought to speak – and also *listen* – not only to the well-known philosophical orientations today, such as analytic philosophy or phenomenology, but also to the marginalized, for-

gotten, and eclipsed ones, whether or not pragmatism itself was ever truly eclipsed by logical empiricism or analytic philosophy” (p. 162).

As a final remark, it is possible to say that the reviewed volume provides a good introduction to an issue which is worth investigating because of its importance for the history of the philosophy of science. In fact, both pragmatism and logical empiricism put the basis for the contemporary approach to the aims and character of the scientific inquiry, and their convergence on some fundamental topics is revealing. As shown above, the papers collected offer a multifaceted view on that issue, thus outlining a picture which is detailed both on the historical side and on the theoretical plane, and (hopefully) stimulating a further debate on that matter.

Pietro Gori  
*Universidade Nova de Lisboa*  
DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.3903567