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Necessary Characteristic of Pragmatism"

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1. Introduction

Pragmatists declared their anti-Cartesianism at the first appearance of the movement, in Peirce's series on cognition written for the *Journal of Speculative Philosophy* (1867–8). As is well known, the brilliant young scientist characterized Cartesian doubt as a "paper doubt", by opposing it to scientists' true "living doubt" (Peirce 1998 [1868], 115).[1] Some readers have not understood the powerful novelty that his opposition to Cartesianism implies. According to Peirce, research does not proceed from skeptical, "paper" doubt. For Peirce, doubt is possible because of a previous certainty, a position which is similar to the one held by Augustine (Augustine 1970). Research moves from one certainty to another; the abandonment of an initial certainty is only reasonable in the presence of a real and surprising phenomenon that alters one of the pillars on which it stands. Peirce never abandoned this position, even as he corrected the psychologism of his first approach—which paired certainty with satisfaction—in a more realistic direction; he placed this process of correction into a logical pattern by inserting the "surprising phenomenon" as an internal step within the logic of abduction (hypothesis). In these foundational writings of pragmatism, Peirce assigned both intuitionism and introspectivism to the enemies list, together with "paper doubt". In opposition to Descar-

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[1] For quotations to Peirce in this paper, I include the year of the quotation in brackets. This is necessary in order to stress the chronology of Peirce's statements, which will reveal his progressive abandonment of Kant's philosophy.

tes, Peirce refused any form of intellectualism, and the entire pragmatist movement has followed his lead in this regard.

However, this argument against Descartes is still insufficient to define pragmatism as a movement. Empiricists, existentialists, and hermeneuticians were also anti-Cartesians. Pragmatism clarifies the attack on Descartes by means of a second attack on Kant. This second attack has always been overlooked, primarily because of Peirce's initial reverence for the German thinker. In fact, the founder of pragmatism referred to the *Critique of Pure Reason* as the "tables brought down from Sinai" (CP 4.2 [1898]). He gave his doctrine a name borrowed from Kant (CP 5.412 [1905]), insisting that the Kantian problem of the unity of the manifold was the central issue of epistemology (Peirce 1992 [1867], 1).

However, Peirce's unconditional appreciation of Kant faded away over time. This change brought out some critical remarks about issues that had always nagged Peirce. As early as 1868, he said that the real philosophical question was not, "How are synthetical judgments a priori possible?" but suggested that "before asking that question he [Kant] ought to have asked the more general one, 'How are any synthetical judgments at all possible?'" (CP 2.690 [1869]). Jean-Marie Chevalier (2013) showed that, from the start, Peirce understood Kant in a peculiar way that Chevalier calls "Leibnizian". In this paper, I attempt to generally summarize the relationship between the ideas of Peirce and Kant as clearly and faithfully as possible. I will set aside all the harsh statements Peirce made in the second part of his life charging Kant with superficial or hasty logic. These statements should be avoided because most of them are contained in unpublished manuscripts, raising questions about whether it was Peirce's intention to express himself in that way. They are useful as background, however, for pointing us in a conceptual direction, a direction followed by European and American classical pragmatists. I describe this anti-Kantian track herein by recapitulating Peirce's remarks on Kant (in section 2) and casting a quick glance at the views of the philosopher expressed by other classical pragmatists (section 3) so that we can understand why anti-Kantianism is a necessary characteristic of pragmatism.

2. Peirce's march toward anti-Kantianism

We mentioned Peirce's early allegiance to the Kantian flock. Even if his philosophy was characterized by an original twist on Kant's categories and an idealist turn of the phenomenon-noumenon distinction, Peirce did

not criticize Kant explicitly in his series of articles in the 1860s. A hidden critique is implicit in his mention of the a priori method for fixing beliefs in *Illustrations of the Logic of Science* published during the years 1878–9. In this work, Peirce describes the a priori method as one of three ineffective methods of inquiry, together with tenacity and authority. A fourth, effective method is the realist method of science and the connected social view of logic.

2.1 Against the "Thing in Itself"

Starting from 1884, Peirce emphasized his criticisms of Kant more and more, particularly in light of the deepening of his idea of "continuity", the true keystone of his philosophy. His mind evolved with respect to this topic, gradually passing from his original Kantian version of the idea into a Cantorian one. Thanks to Peirce's discovery of Georg Cantor's theorem and paradox (arrived at independently of the German mathematician), he came to prefer a unique view that places real continuity beyond any logical or metrical calculation.[2]

Peirce's concept of continuity, and Kant's alleged misconception of it, allowed Peirce to understand why in Kant's thought there is always a "gap" between knowledge and the reality to be known, between the "phenomenon" and the "thing-in-itself". This gap had troubled him since his early philosophical studies (Peirce 1981, 37–44). During the last twenty years of his life, Peirce considered the permanence of this schism to be the epiphenomenon of an entire intellectual attitude, that is, nominalism, understood here in a very different way from a mere rejection of the existence of universals. One can believe that universals are real, yet still be a nominalist if he/she thinks that universals are hopelessly beyond the inferential capacities of humankind. Nominalism affirms an unbridgeable gap or discontinuity between reality and reason. In this view, realism maintains that reason belongs to reality and in the long run, after inquiry, it would be able to know reality. This is a decisive break with Kant's transcendentalism. Peirce synthesizes it using the terms "pragmaticism" and "critical common-sensism" in the following way:

> The present writer was a pure Kantist until he was forced by successive steps into Pragmaticism. The Kantist has only to abjure from the bottom of his heart the proposition that a thing-in-itself can, however indirectly, be conceived; and then correct the details of Kant's

[2] See Zalamea 2012, Moore 2007a and 2007b, Havenel 2008, and Maddalena 2009, 193–224.

> doctrine, and he will find himself to have become a critical common
> sensist.   Peirce 1998 [1905], 353–4

The irony of the quote lies in the "only". To abjure from the bottom of one's heart the "thing-in-itself" is to abjure the entire distinction between phenomenon and noumenon, which is the kernel of Kant's Copernican revolution. When we abandon the "thing-in-itself", we are left with either a profound idealism or a profound realism. In fact, Peirce thought that there was no difference at all between those two possibilities (Lane 2018)—he called his doctrine "real-idealism" and he boasted: "My philosophy resuscitates Hegel, though in a strange costume" (CP 1.42 [1892]).

This first theoretical point underlines another characteristic of Peirce's thought and the treatment of it in the scholarship. It is possible to read the first part of Peirce's production as reflecting an idealist view that would be corrected in the second half of his life by a sort of transcendental realism.[3] However, the manuscripts seem to indicate a different path. If this reading reflected the actual situation, it is difficult to conceive of Peirce's philosophy as a unity. In fact, Tom Short (2007) split Peirce's work into two halves: the idealist and the (transcendental?) realist. There is, however, no hint of this split in Peirce's texts, even though they sometimes describe corrections to previously held views. Of course, one can say that Peirce's ideas changed without his noticing it; however, setting aside the issue of Peirce's self-knowledge, his texts show something else. As far as Kant is concerned, the texts go from an explicit appreciation to increasingly stronger critiques. Moreover, Peirce considered his early papers to be suffused with a kind of realism, even the texts prepared for the Metaphysical Club in the early 1870s. Besides, he considered his later production to accord more with Hegel's monism than with Kant's transcendentalism. About the latter, he thought that its logical bases were weak (CP 2.31 [1902]) and that the crucial distinction between synthetic and analytic judgments was "so utterly confused that is difficult or impossible to do anything with it" (Peirce 1998 [1903], 218). In the last part of his life, Peirce appreciated only Kant's schematism (CP 5.531 [ca. 1905]) because, in his view, it is a tool for creating a real synthesis that is respectful of common sense. However, he also noticed that "[Kant's] doctrine of the schemata can only have been an afterthought, an addition to his system after it was substantially complete. For if schemata had been considered early enough, they would have overgrown his whole work" (CP 1.35 [ca. 1890]).

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[3] On this line of thought, with different nuances, see for example Brandom 2011, Gava & Stern 2016, Gava 2014, Misak 2016, and Pihlström 2010.

This interpretative option accepts that there is a profound unity among the different parts of Peirce's production. His initial take on Kant had a "subjective idealist" leaning, but it already contained a phenomenological basis for semiotics. In the following years, on the one hand, he deepened both his fascination with idealism and a realist basis for semiotics, bestowing the precision with which he conducted his studies on continuity to the somehow vague idea of the dialectical development of the Spirit present in Hegel's writings. On the other, by precisely delineating the "outward clash" between secondness and the role of the dynamic object, the object that is not yet a sign, he strengthened the importance of the first two phenomenological categories. Peirce did not consider the two characteristics of continuity and the plurality of phenomenological and semiotic categories as being opposed to one another, as De Tienne's studies on Peirce's phenomenology in both his early and late writings confirmed (De Tienne 2004).[4]

Summarizing, we can say that the reading of Peirce that has him passing from an early, special kind of subjective idealism to a late, special kind of objective idealism corresponds most closely to the texts. As evidence, one can read ms 642 written in November 1909, in which Peirce distinguishes reality from subjective perception, genuineness, and exteriority. He takes the example of a Jacqueminot rose, possibly something that he could find in his garden in Milford, Pennsylvania. Peirce considers the attribute of the rose's redness. First, he introduces the idea that the color would not be less real if we made a mistake in identifying it. If we maintained that it was yellow, the red color would not be less real. Second, if we then say that the color is only relative to our retina, we would not admit anything but that there is a real object, which is the red rose. These two points amount to saying that there is a "hard kernel" (Eco 1997, 36) of reality that is independent from any skepticism arising from our weakness in perceiving. So far, Peirce accepts what someone has recently called a "minimal realism" that corresponds very well to recent philosophical moods and to the idea of a transcendental realism (Ferraris 2014). However, according to Peirce, this is not the kind of reality that is useful for our cognition and science. We need to investigate the content of this hard kernel. That is why Peirce makes another distinction: reality is

[4] De Tienne 2004 contains an important summary of Peirce's late approach to phaneroscopy. Another important text is André De Tienne's doctoral dissertation. The first part was published in French (De Tienne 1996), while the second part, unpublished, is available at the Peirce Edition Project at Indiana University—Purdue University, Indianapolis.

not only "genuineness". Something is genuine when it has a description corresponding to its purported definition:

> We must not confound Reality with Genuineness. A thing is Genuine
> or not according as it is or is not of the description it professes or
> is supposed to have: a false diamond may be genuine paste. Thus
> Genuineness belongs to an object as the Subject of Attributes. But
> Reality is not relative to any professions or suppositions. Nor [...] is
> it relative to any Respect.   MS 642, 8 [1909]

Peirce presents two arguments against a view that would confuse reality and genuineness: first, this view reduces reality to dependence on the mind, falling again into intuitionism and infallibilism; and second, it reduces reality to actual happening, depriving it of an infinity of possibilities. Therefore, the hard kernel of reality is not relative to any form of linguistic or mental description. If the former dilemma between reality and subjective perception singled out reality as something independent from errors and perceptions, now Peirce claims that reality is independent from the single mind. This is the same topic that he also stated clearly in the 1860s: reality is independent from an individual mind or any sum of individual minds.

At this point, one might say that reality amounts to exteriority, but Peirce makes immediately the distinction between them. It is true that exteriority is independent from the individual and the social mind's definitions and perceptions, but it is not independent from its relationship to the mind itself, or as Peirce says, to "any mind" (MS 642, 10). Exteriority is something that we can predicate insofar as we are thinking of something. The red color of the rose is neither itself because our retina perceives it, nor because our description agrees with the definition of red, nor because our mind can think it. The red color is "interior in respect to its Formal Essence", the place of other realities like poetical power and beauty. "Its color, too, is External in Respect to what it (the color) inheres in, but it is Internal (i. e. not External) in Respect to its Formal Essence; while the Jacqueminot's poetic power (if it has any) and some part of its beauty are still more unquestionably Internal" (MS 642, 9).

Is Peirce going back here to the ancient idea of eternal essence? No, he is not. He makes this clear by immediately quoting the idealist position and maintaining that idealism was very advanced in explaining the dependence of exteriority on mind and in distinguishing it from reality. For idealists, as for Peirce, reality is a rich continuity of developing essences.

> I will not, however, go so far as to say that an External Fact would remain unchanged no matter what conceivable change should take place in what it should be possible for any human mind to Feel, Think, Do or Suffer; because that would make most of the well-known forms of Idealism deny the Externality of these ordinary External Facts which, as it seems to me, those forms of Metaphysical opinions just as sharply distinguish from Internal Facts as Common Sense does, and in the very same way, too. If any disciple of mine were not clearly to apprehend this, I should say to him: "My dear friend, you do not understand Idealism. Read Berkeley again, putting yourself in his intellectual shoes as you read, and as you reflect. Think as much further deep as you can, but do not fail, this time, to apprehend his Thought".   MS 642, 10–11 [1909]

There are essences, but they are not eternal. They coincide with the dynamic object that we can only indefinitely communicate. If we think about it attentively, we can see that Peirce is not far from the idealist tone of his 1860s conclusions, even though he broadened immensely the range of what constitutes reality. As in the 1860s, reality coincides with the general mind, with the Spirit, but this coincidence is not limited to actual facts that could easily be read as either genuine or exterior. Peirce's idealism has become aware of its objectivity, or, stated in another way, Peirce is here stating his peculiar form of metaphysical realism in which there is room for possibilities and necessities along with actualities. Reality is a transition among real modalities.

In order to clarify his position, in the same series of manuscripts Peirce explains the logical-ontological difference between Occurrence and Fact. An occurrence is a "slice" of our experience: it implies an infinite number of details and relationships. A fact is that small portion of an occurrence that can be represented in a proposition (MS 647, 9–10 [1910]). When we think of reality, we have to consider occurrences, and we should admit that they are utterly inexhaustible. They correspond to what in semiotics Peirce calls the "dynamic object". Moreover, according to different logical modalities, we also have to consider the distinction between possible occurrences and necessary occurrences. Necessary occurrences can be thought of as developments of the infinite relations inhering in the actual occurrence, but potential occurrences involve such a proliferation of infinity that they fade away into a deep vagueness (MS 648, 5–6 [1909]).

Now, how general must the general mind be in order to conceive all of this rich continuity?

> Now, when you think that so starting you never would get to the num-
> ber of the details of the simplest occurrence, and that such Occurrence
> Actually does swarm throughout the Infinite Universe of our Experi-
> ence, and that to the eye of Logic it is equally evident that there is a
> Being to whom the thought of such a Universe in all its details [im-
> plies] no effort at all, one's head swims at the contemplation of such
> a Being.   MS 648, 4–5 [1910]

Peirce's late writings confirm and deepen the first insights from which
pragmatism was born. His rejection of nominalism brings him to a view of
reality as continuity in transition among logical modalities and present to
one Being's mind, which is neither classical realism nor classical idealism.
Peirce was probably right to name it real-idealism. We find a confirmation
of what we said in the following passage in MS 636 where Peirce comes
back to nominalism from another point of view.

> There is a celebrated passage in the second edition of the *Critick der
> Reinen Vernunft* and a very notable one, in which Kant says that the
> "I think"—Das Ich Denke—must be able to accompany all his ideas,
> "since otherwise they would not thoroughly belong to me". A man
> less given to discoursing might remark on reading this: "For my part,
> I don't hold my ideas as my ownty-downty; I had rather they were
> Nature's and belonged to Nature's author". However, that would be
> to misinterpret Kant. In his first edition, he does not call the act "the
> I think" but "the object=x". That which that act has to effect is the
> consecution of ideas; now, the need of consecution of ideas is a logical
> need and is due not, as Kant thinks, to their taking the form of the
> Urtheil, the assertion, but to their making an argument; and this is not
> "I think" that that always virtually accompanies an argument, but it
> is: "Don't you think so?".   MS 636, 24–6 [1910]

"In this passage, Peirce does not become a defender of the 'thing-in-
itself' but of the transcendental unity of the object, which, if recognized,
would have led Kant to Peirce's own idealist/realist conception." This is
the possibility that Peirce recognizes when he accepts that his doctrine
implies objective idealism (CP 6.163 [1892]), although he does not agree
with the intellectualism of Hegelian dialectic; Hegel misses what Peirce
calls Firstness and Secondness, that is to say the spontaneity of events
and their brute occurrence (Peirce, 1998 [1903], 177). But at least Hegel
understood that the relationship between reality and the human mind
must be a profound continuity. Moreover, he and some of his cleverest
interpreters such as Royce understood that this relationship itself is Being,
as far as we can conceive of it.

2.2 Against the "I Think"

In the same ᴍs 636 we find a second criticism of Kantianism. The "I think" that shows up in the first *Critique* does not guarantee the unity of the object because of the aforementioned lack of continuity between cognitive processes and reality. On the contrary, in presuming to unify a scattered reality, it paradoxically becomes presumptuously omnipotent. The "I think" pretends to reunite knowledge with its object and therefore it takes on an ability that is not its responsibility. Peirce, who considered the "I" as a semiotic effect more than a cause (De Tienne 2005, 98), cannot be anything but ironic about such a hypertrophic view. In another passage some years before (1904) Peirce said:

> All the special occurrences of the feeling of similarity are recognized as themselves similar, by the application of them of the same symbol of similarity. It is Kant's 'I think', which he considers to be an act of thought, that is, to be of the nature of a symbol. But his introduction of the ego into it was due to his confusion of this with another element.   Peirce 1998 [1904], 320

Here Peirce is explaining that symbols and their sophisticated relationships to icons and indexes can account for the complex architecture of transcendental deduction and can avoid Kant's introduction of the Self, above all in its moral consequences that led to an emphasis of the role of the ego in every field of inquiry. This second criticism completes the picture of Peirce's real-idealism. There is no place in it for any subjectivist turn that might be ascribed to Kant's Copernican revolution. The Self emerges from the web of signs of reality as one of the crucial knots of its development—but not the only one, nor even the most fundamental. Fallibilism is profoundly implied at every step of Peirce's realism. Summing up, there are two main attacks against Kant in Peirce's late position. First, he refuses Kant's nominalism in the meaning specified above. Second, he criticizes the weakness of the "I think", above all as an assumption of a view of the Self that serves as a prelude to the solipsism of a certain idealism or to a poor, minimal, transcendental realism. These two arguments against Kant's philosophy bear the unmistakable mark of pragmatism.

2.3 Nota bene

One can find a third important criticism in Peirce's writings, even if there is no explicit reference to Kant. For Peirce, there is a profound unity between theoretical, ethical, and aesthetic knowledge. Aesthetics

and ethics are not separated from the theorizing of logic; on the contrary, in Peirce's classification of sciences they offer the principles on which logic moves forward (Peirce 1998 [1903], 258–62). As is well known, the entire classification of sciences shows this unity by claiming that logic relies upon ethical principles and the latter upon aesthetic principles. Here, Peirce is quite distant from Kant's distinctions of fields of knowledge as stated in the three *Critiques*. Certainly, some scholars have tried to assert the idea that Kant proposed a similar unity that emerges completely only in the third *Critique*.[5] This may be the case according to the philology of Kant's writings, even if the debate is still open.[6] Peirce, however, had not read the third *Critique*—his Kant was the author of the first *Critique*, which he knew by heart, and of which he became increasingly critical in conjunction with his development of the pragmatist metaphysics.

3. Anti-Kantianism in other classical pragmatists

The work of other classical pragmatists confirms that anti-Kantianism is an essential part of pragmatism, with pragmatists on both sides of the ocean criticizing various aspects of Kant's thought (Maddalena 2015, 10–29). Their critiques are often harsher than Peirce's, even though they often focus on the same points. Here I will give a quick overview of some of their arguments.

   William James's criticism of Kant is based on the same elements as Peirce's. In his article "The Pragmatic Method", he ironically invites thinkers to "do without him [Kant]", because he "bequeaths to us not one single conception which is both indispensable to philosophy and which philosophy either did not possess before him or was not destined inevitably to acquire" (James 1904, 687). Some years later, James's *Pragmatism* accuses Kant of intellectualizing experience, which does not present itself according to the measurements of time and space, understood in Kant's terminology as intuitions of the intellect (James 1907, 177–8). According to James's *The Varieties of Religious Experience* (James 1902, 350–1), the complete intellectualization of experience done by Kant—beginning with the experience of space and time—is the result of the transcendental

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[5] This point is often at issue in discussions during conferences and lectures. I have to thank Rosa M. Calcaterra, Guido Baggio, Gabriele Gava, and Sami Pihlström for reminding me of this possibility, which has a long history in the Italian philosophical tradition.

[6] See Allison 2004 for the debate over *The Critique of Pure Reason* and Lyotard 1991 and Garroni 2011 for the debate on all three *Critiques*.

doctrine of apperception, mediated by idealist principles of logic and dialectics. The "I think" is the point James takes issue with as the source of abstraction and the origin of Hegel's idealism, whose rationalist monism James opposed in all his works. Curiously, James's work shares much with Peirce's in their common opposition to Kant, but James did not adhere to real-idealism. In *A Pluralistic Universe* (James 1909, 240–1), James added a distinctive religious component to his criticisms of Kant. While focusing on idealism, to which he was harshly opposed, he locates the derivation of the idealist Absolute in Kant's "ego of apperception". According to James, this legacy accounts for the intellectualist turn of the idealist concept of Hegel's Absolute. This turn derives from Kant's intellectualist philosophy and has little to do with the authentically religious. According to James, the original religious content in Kant came from the second *Critique*, but idealism did not get the pivotal concept of the Absolute from this content.

Dewey asserted similar criticisms against Kant. In his early writings (Dewey 1884), he maintained that the noumenon-phenomenon distinction leaves a gap between the real and the ideal. He added a criticism of the weakness of the "I think" as the unifying principle of experience, which, according to Dewey, involves only an intellectual and formalistic unity, devoid of any content. Years later, in his book *German Philosophy and Politics* (1915), Dewey added a further charge of dualism between nature and morality to these youthful criticisms, which were borrowed from Hegel. He even ascribed the imperialist spirit of First World War Germany to this dualism rather than—as is more usual among scholars—to an interpretation of Hegel's idealism (Johnston 2006, 540). Dewey's criticism focuses on Kant's separation of morality from nature and the knowledge of nature. This separation means that moral laws do not have to respect nature and science, but rather spring solely from an inner command of duty. Furthermore, in Kant's description, this command is deprived of any content and, therefore, is apt to be filled with authoritarian content. In *Experience and Nature* (1925, 50), Dewey returns to Kant, classifying him among philosophers who held a dualist metaphysics, and, in *Logic* (1938), he once again claims that the idealist Absolute derives from Kant's dualistic conception of knowledge and metaphysics (Dewey 1938, 537).

George Herbert Mead's critique begins with morality but eventually comes around to the same elements we have seen in the other pragmatists. According to Mead in *Movements of Thought in the Nineteenth Century* (Mead 1936, 25–50), Kant's fundamental interest is to affirm the ruling role of human power in society. Kant attempts this affirmation by means

of the universalizing rule of human will (Mead 1936, 30–1), but he never really succeeds because specific contexts and situations are an intrinsic part of moral problems. According to Mead, Kant's assuming the role of lawgiver is also the key to understanding his research into the field of nature: Kant's aim in the *Critique of Pure Reason* is to affirm that "man gives laws to nature" (Mead 1936, 31). Mead underlines the paradox of a critique of experience that finds the unity of experience itself only in the "ponderous construction" of "the transcendental a priori unity of apperception" (Mead 1936, 45). This theoretical tool somehow organizes what comes from the "thing-in-itself" understood as another reality, which is the condition for our actual experience (Mead 1936, 46). Mead concludes that we can have experience only because we postulate something beyond experience. For this reason, Kant falls into metaphysical dualism, exactly as described in Dewey's account of his philosophy. Once again, the "thing in itself", the formality of the "I think", and the Self's tremendous transformation in the moral ruler are questioned. For Mead as for the other pragmatists, the point is that we are not severed from reality, so that we have to be either masters of it (as Kant wants us to be) or servants of it (as prescribed by the traditional metaphysics). Mead sees knowledge as a complex interaction. Experience is not a fixed object but a cluster of processes and problems that we are required to solve.

The European pragmatists exhibited a similar attitude toward Kant. The unity of sciences is one of Giovanni Vailati's starting points for his anti-Kantianism. According to Vailati, Peano's former collaborator and mentor of the Italian pragmatists, Kant did not consider the crucial influence of other disciplines—primarily aesthetics—on theoretical knowledge. Much worse, he did not understand the importance of the genealogical study of disciplines, including psychology, even though his studies on judgments and categories ultimately relied upon it. Moreover, Vailati criticizes Kant because he does not take into account the importance of the evolution of disciplines. Vailati underlines that when Kant was still writing his first *Critique*, which relied on Newtonian physics, the non-Euclidean geometries had already apparently rendered his ideas obsolete. Vailati reaches very radical conclusions, though expressed only in a letter to Papini, in which he quotes an article which appeared in *Le Figaro*, according to which Kant "devoted his genius to disprove theories that no one had ever supported and to defend theses that no one had ever doubted, and concludes by saying that the free spirits admire him for the doubts that were his starting point, and non-free spirits admire him for the dogmatism at which he arrived" (Vailati 1971, 398).

The founder and leader of *Il Leonardo*, the Italian pragmatist journal that enjoyed a short-lived but real success, was Giovanni Papini. This journal existed from only 1903 to 1907, at which time Papini changed his mind about pragmatism and the publication died. However, during the time of his adherence to pragmatism, Papini wrote the book *Il crepuscolo dei filosofi* in which he devoted a chapter to Kant, polemically analyzing him as a man, a moralist, and a theorist of knowledge. As to the first of these, Papini presents an ironic picture of Kant's rationalism by pointing out that Kant taught geography and yet "had never gone outside Könisberg more than ten miles" (Papini 1906, 5). With regard to morality, Papini criticizes Kant for the form of his categorical imperative and for his postulate of freedom. According to Papini, Kant must have derived both from feelings of universality and religious responsibility, because they cannot have come from rational analysis. At the end, Kant's rationalism relies on an uncritical acceptance of certain feelings at the expense of others. Similarly, Kantian theorizing requires an unknowable and inexplicable a priori. On the theoretical side, Papini jumps on the same "two worlds" criticisms pursued by other pragmatists. According to the young Italian thinker, Kant's a priori is unknowable. Since a priori knowledge is still part of knowledge, how can we know the a priori in an analytic way, separating it from that to which it has always been conjoined? (Papini 1906, 26–7). The a priori is inexplicable because, even if we admitted to knowing it, we would not be able to comprehend how it emerged into our knowledge since "Kant did not want to do psychogenesis and not even psychology" (Papini 1906, 27). The same strategy applies to the noumenon: How can Kant mention what should not even be knowable? And if he knows it, how did this knowledge come about?

Papini adds an interesting criticism of Kant's theory of judgments, probably taken from Vailati. Are analytic judgments really necessary? Papini distinguishes between two meanings of the term "necessary". If "necessary" means "what cannot be otherwise", then everything that has already happened would be necessary but not a priori (Papini 1906, 36); if "necessary" means "what cannot be said the opposite of without absurdity" —for example mathematics—then we would have only one type of connection due to the conventionality of definitions: the definition implies the concept that, if amended, would fall beyond it. There is a problem of names and definitions, which the analytic-synthetic distinction cannot explain. What is analytic was initially synthetic, and today's definitions are always subject to new synthetic evolutions over time.

The intellectualism of the a priori is also the central point of F. C. S. Schiller's critique of Kant. Schiller was professor of philosophy at Oxford, wrote for *Il Leonardo*, and often invited William James to England. As did Papini and Vailati, Schiller charges in his paper "Axioms as Postulates" (1902) that Kant's views in the first *Critique* are covertly psychological. According to the German-British thinker, Kant's a priori does not respect the way in which we experience reality. In the end, the construction of the a priori is only a way of disguising Kant's Platonic dualism of form and matter. Schiller does not criticize the postulation of a priori truths as a clever way of seeing experience, but he despises the idea of ignoring their psychological nature, or of viewing them as anything other than aesthetical devices. If they were considered only axioms needing a postulation, Schiller would not oppose them; in this case, their history and psychogenetics should be studied (Schiller 1902, 431). Kant applies this option to practical reason, and Schiller would have liked him to apply it to theoretical knowledge as well. Instead, Kant's intellectualism hinders him from considering "the fact that the living organism acts as a whole" (Schiller 1902, 434). In the way in which Kant states them, "the most intelligent reader cannot but feel that the dualism of the Pure and Practical Reason is intolerable and their antagonism irreconcilable", while the dual character of the doctrine imposed "upon Kant as both the Cerberus and Herakles of the Noumenal world is calculated to bring ridicule both upon him and upon his system" (Schiller 1902, 436).

4. A short conclusion

Pragmatists have collectively criticized Kant because of his separation between reality and knowledge, between the unknowable "thing-in-itself" and the knowable phenomenon (while often confusing the transcendental object and the "thing-in-itself"). Moreover, they all questioned the role of the "I think", and the a priori principle of knowledge. Finally, with each stressing different nuances, they thought that Kant's initial theoretical separation of knowledge, morality, and aesthetics issued in bitter fruits at both the moral and political level. As we have seen in this short overview, there are many variations and specific branches of this opposition to Kant, but it is integral to the viewpoint of both American and European pragmatists. Obviously, pragmatists' anti-Kantianism may be wrong on Kant from a philological point of view, but it is a fundamental characteristic of their thought, stemming from their strong and clear rejection of any

sort of intellectualism and their synthetic, profound view of the continuity between theory and practice, facts and values, synthesis and analysis, language and action.

Peirce had a most profound view of continuity as the keystone of the pragmatist architecture, and he knew Kant's *First Critique* by heart. It should therefore not be surprising that, of the pragmatists, his attacks on Kant were the most sophisticated, nor should it be surprising that the relevance of his progressive abandonment of the German thinker is the most difficult to understand. This paper has provided evidence of Peirce's historical and theoretical evolution with respect to Kant's thought, sufficient evidence that it is time for scholars of Peirce and pragmatism to accept anti-Kantianism as intrinsic to the thought of Peirce and the movement generally. Scholars should remain free to develop a new form of Kantian pragmatism on new bases, but without any longer attributing its development to Peirce or classical pragmatism.

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