Shedding Light on the "Eclipse" Narrative: Some Notes on Pragmatism in the Twentieth Century

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I BEGIN BY THANKING David Hildebrand, Daniel Brunson, and the program committee for the magnificent job they have done under the very difficult circumstances imposed by the pandemic. I'd also like to thank the program committee for their generous invitation to present this 2021 Founders Lecture.

Since this *is* a Founders Lecture, it seems appropriate to recall that one of the society's founders, Ralph Sleeper, said on more than one occasion that he would love to have a séance with Frank Ramsey about what he, Ramsey, said to Wittgenstein about pragmatism.

Now, thanks to an extraordinarily well-researched intellectual biography of Ramsey, Sleeper's longed-for séance will not be necessary. Cheryl Misak's book *Frank Ramsey: A Sheer Excess of Powers*, published in 2020, helps to clarify Ramsey's relationship with Wittgenstein and to establish his role in the foundation of what many today call "analytical pragmatism." It is also a close study of his seminal contributions to mathematics, economics, and probability theory. All of that and more was accomplished before Ramsey's untimely death, just short of his twenty-seventh birthday.

Despite Ramsey's brilliant contributions to the study of formal systems, however, he harbored no illusions about their legislative applicability to everyday life. Although he helped establish rational choice theory in economics, for example (and much like his mentor John Maynard Keynes but unlike some of the rational choice theorists who followed), he understood that conditions such as emotions, cultural factors, and income inequities are important considerations when it comes to formulating economic policy. Like Dewey, Ramsey was also critical of single factor ethical theories. I am confident that Misak's intellectual biography will become the standard reference source for Ramsey's life and work. A great companion piece to Misak's book is Zachary D. Carter's book *The Price of Peace: Money, Democracy, and the Life of John*

Maynard Keynes. It is highly relevant to current thinking about pandemic and post-pandemic economic policies.

Given the scholarly excellence demonstrated in her Ramsey book, however, I expect that some may find Misak's brief essay, published in 2019 in the journal *Aeon* with co-author Robert Talisse, somewhat baffling. In this essay, she rejects what she terms the "eclipse" narrative, which she attributes to Richard Rorty. According to this narrative, pragmatism dominated American philosophy "throughout Dewey's heyday, from the early 1900s until the early '40s." Then, post-World War II professional philosophers in America "began fixating on the technical and methodological issues that today are associated with 'analytic' philosophy." This was due in part to the influence of immigrant European positivists during the 1930s and 1940s who dismissed pragmatism as short on rigor and who swiftly gained "strongholds in nearly all the elite Ph.D. granting universities in the US." Pragmatism, then, according to this "eclipse" narrative, went into—well, eclipse: it "was driven underground, where the remaining loyalists built scholarly networks devoted to keeping the classical idiom alive." So that is the gist of the eclipse narrative as Misak characterizes it (Misak and Talisse, "Pragmatism Endures").

Pushing back with her own "anti-eclipse" narrative, Misak argues that far from having been eclipsed, "pragmatism has been a constant and dominant force in philosophy for nearly 100 years" (Misak and Talisse, "Pragmatism Endures"). She faults those who buy into the eclipse narrative, among whom are those whose mission (she suggests) has been to recover or re-introduce Dewey's ideas into mainstream philosophy. She thinks that these misguided people have introduced a "principled insularity" that is "tragic for the prospects of pragmatism" ("Pragmatism Endures") because pragmatism in fact never left the American scene. This "resurrection story," she argues, is "tinged with resentment." "The steady production of volumes devoted to establishing Dewey's 'continuing relevance,' 'discovering' his ideas and recapturing his 'lessons'" has led these people to "talk mainly among themselves" ("Pragmatism Endures"). The net effect, in her view, is that "[a] more reliable strategy for marginalising the classical pragmatists could hardly be imagined" ("Pragmatism Endures").

I suppose the first thing to note about this view is that it is an outlier. Although it focuses on Rorty's narrative, support for various aspects of the eclipse narrative have also been advanced by Dewey biographers Thomas C. Dalton, Alan Ryan, and Robert B. Westbrook. There are other accounts of the career of American philosophy during this period as well, including those by Bryan G. Norton, John McCumber, and James Campbell, that also

include aspects of the eclipse narrative. I will have something to say about some of these in a moment, including the assessment of another of this society's founders, Thelma Z. Lavine.

In my view, the anti-eclipse narrative rests on several questionable claims. The ones that seem the most germane to Misak's general thesis, are (1) that logical empiricism and pragmatism featured "remarkable similarities" that included rejection of the correspondence theory of truth; (2) that the view of truth that dominated logical empiricism, a theory of truth according to which true statements were those that were verifiable and successful, "was in fact pragmatism"; and (3) that "each tradition evolved in the light of the other" (Misak and Talisse, "Pragmatism Endures").

Regarding the claim that logical empiricism found fertile ground in America, that logical empiricism and pragmatism held common ideas and evolved together, it seems fair to say that during the mid-twentieth-century, philosophers of various persuasions did communicate with one another more freely than some have tended to do since that time. It also seems clear that there were logical positivists, or logical empiricists as some of them preferred to be called, who sought the support of pragmatists, including Dewey. This is indicated by Neurath's now famous invitation to Dewey to contribute to the *International Encyclopedia of Unified Science*, as well as Reichenbach's contribution to the *Library of Living Philosophers* volume on Dewey.

But since the anti-eclipse narrative makes a general statement about the logical empiricists, it might be fruitful to ask *whose* strand of logical positivism or logical empiricism the authors of the anti-eclipse narrative have in mind, and at what point in that person's career.

A. J. Ayer was by far the best known of the logical empiricists. His book *Language, Truth, and Logic* went through twelve editions, from 1936 to 1971, and by one account, it "eventually became the text by which logical positivism was introduced to most young philosophers for the next half century" (Norton 536). The professor for whom I worked as a teaching assistant during my first year in graduate school in 1965 may have had that strain of logical empiricism in mind when, much to my horror, he informed his largely freshman class that "all philosophy can be reduced either to the physical sciences or lexicography."

But as for the belief that Ayer and Dewey had similar ideas, Alan Ryan provides a crisp inventory of their differences: (i) Unlike Ayer, Dewey accepted neither correspondence nor atomic facts. [Ayer avoids the term "correspondence, but uses "conforms" (Ayer 99).] (ii) Unlike Ayer, Dewey thought that "we verify not one thought or hypothesis at a time, but an entire approach to

the world." (iii) Unlike Ayer, Dewey did not accept the idea that the "physical sciences [constitute] the touchstone of intellectual respectability." For Dewey, science "was sophisticated common sense." (iv) Unlike Ayer, Dewey thought that religion and science could co-exist "on terms of real friendship" (Ryan 129).

We might have some minor quibbles with Ryan's terminology, but his conclusion is unassailable: "Ayer's book was a very pure representative of the logical positivist dismissal of everything not compatible with a simple account of 'the scientific world view.' Dewey's whole career was a protest against that type of simplicity" (Ryan 130). I might add to this that, unlike Dewey, Ayer accepted a traditional analytic/synthetic distinction (Ayer 78) and that he thought that ethical judgments "have no objective validity at all"(Ayer 108).

Perhaps I have not been fair to Misak's anti-eclipse narrative by mentioning Ayer, since he was not one of the émigrés. But I ask you to recall that her anti-eclipse narrative argues in general terms that logical positivism and pragmatism held common ideas, and that the view of truth that dominated logical empiricism was in fact pragmatism.

In Thomas Dalton's account, pragmatists Charles Morris, Sidney Hook, and Ernest Nagel did welcome the logical empiricists, thinking that the two projects had a lot in common. Morris and Nagel hoped that they would adopt a common theory of meaning (Dalton 261). As Dalton put it, however, Morris "failed to foresee that the positivist's agenda for reconstruction actually involved a purified rather than a unified science–one cleansed of any residue of naturalism and references to phenomenal experience" (Dalton 261).

As Dalton's story continues, Dewey respected Nagel's ability and sought his advice, especially when writing about naturalism and logic. Nevertheless, in a letter to Arthur Bentley, Dewey wrote that he regretted that Nagel "should be taken with logical positivism" (Dalton 261; Dewey, *Correspondence* [08613] John Dewey to Arthur F. Bentley [1939.03.05]).

In a famous exchange with Nagel, Dewey suggested that the law of the excluded middle applied only to formal logic, and not to existential affairs. Nagel responded that surely a door is either open or closed: there is no *tertium quid*. Dewey's reply was that a door can also be closing or opening.[1]

If you will allow a personal interjection into their conversation, the door to my little greenhouse is what is commonly called a "Dutch door." The top half is opened on warm days, and the bottom half remains closed to keep out various animals. As a matter of common sense, I leave it to you to decide whether on such occasions the door is open or closed. Dewey's reply was, of course, much more sophisticated: it had to do with the interpretation of

formal systems and, more significantly, the importance of thinking in terms of processes rather than static time-slices.

Then there was Hans Reichenbach. In his contribution to the Dewey volume of the *Library of Living Philosophers*, he appeared eager to court Dewey's support. He suggested that he and Dewey were members of the same philosophical group, standing "on the same basis," as he put it. His suggestion of some "alterations" to Dewey's position would therefore merely strengthen their bond. But his remarks on Dewey's project were in fact quite critical: "[W]e do not think that Dewey's nonrealistic interpretation of scientific concepts is tenable" (Reichenbach 164).

Reichenbach was troubled by Dewey's reluctance to say that only scientific objects could be real. He criticized Dewey's treatment of tertiary qualities as real aspects of primary experience, a position that he thought excluded Dewey from the type of realism he himself and the other logical empiricists espoused.

In his response, Dewey politely rejected Reichenbach's invitation. He did not see himself as a member of the positivist club. He viewed Reichenbach as holding "to that traditional particularistic empiricism" that fails to take into account the biological-cultural approach to the theory of experiencing that understands "general ways of behavior [as] an unescapable datum" (Dewey qtd. in Schilpp and Hahn 535, 536; LW 14:20–21). In short, whereas Reichenbach was a *logical* empiricist, he, Dewey, was a *radical* empiricist.

Robert Westbrook highlights some telling details of their exchange. At one point, Reichenbach "suggested . . . an ethical motive beyond Dewey's insistence on the reality of qualitative experience and that this motive . . . stood in the way of rapprochement between Dewey and his positivist critics" (Westbrook 499). According to Reichenbach, "[i]f the pragmatist considers secondary and tertiary qualities as real, he does so because he wants to establish esthetics and ethics as aspects of reality comparable to physics" (178). For Westbrook, this provided an "astute insight into the principal reason why [Dewey] opposed the logical positivists" (Westbrook 499).

I'm going to italicize Westbrook's next sentences, because I think he goes to the heart of the anti-eclipse narrative's claim.

> *Dewey, in granting science a relatively modest portion of existential reality but enormous functional power, had extended its range of operations across the whole spectrum of human experience. The positivists, in granting science the whole of the real and confining its functional power to investigation of this "objective" realm apart from the mere appearances of "subjective" qualities, had rendered it largely irrelevant to judgments of value and relegated*

> *"all moral affairs, personal and social, to the status of private desires or else to the use of coercive force."* (Westbrook 499; emphasis added)

As for Carnap, Bryan Norton describes his early work as involving a "reductionist, virtuosic logic, and his view that "all that could be said about language could occur in [a] formal mode" (541). But Norton thinks that by the end of Carnap's career, in the early 1950s (and much like Wittgenstein, thanks to Ramsey, I would add), he, Carnap, finally accepted some of the central ideas of pragmatism such as instrumentalism and functionalism with respect to language (Norton 551). An element in this "conversion" was his principle of "tolerance" that allowed "for new conventions and new ways of speaking" (Norton 568). Here is Norton: "So Carnap, the positivist warrior, eventually embraced pragmatism, treating the problems of traditional philosophy as 'pragmatic' problems of choosing the best languages for various social purposes" (553). But even at the end, Norton admits, Carnap still couldn't quite make the turn. Unlike Dewey, for example, he still quested for certainty; he never gave up the analytic/synthetic distinction; he never gave up the notion of "necessary truth." And he never gave up the fact/value dichotomy (Norton 557).

To say, as the anti-eclipse narrative does, that the pragmatists and the positivists had the same theory of truth, appears to assert that Dewey would have accepted the idea that truth is solely or for the most part about sentences (or statements, or propositions, depending on the logical positivist). For Ayer and the earlier Carnap, this was the case. But from the standpoint of James and Dewey, the central, key, and quite obvious objection to the program of the positivists was that truth has to do with reconstructive action and the way we humans are able to manage our lives in a world rich in facilities and constraints. Over several decades, I have argued that this is what motivates Dewey's pragmatic account of technology. Truth in farming is about much more than sentences. Truth in industry is about more than sentences. Truth in the visual and plastic arts is about more than sentences. And truth in education is most certainly about more than sentences.

Jim Garrison reminded me of a remarkably clear passage in which Dewey explains how his pragmatic theory of truth incorporates, but goes well beyond the propositional account of the positivists. "Sometimes the use of the word 'truth' is confined to designating a logical property of propositions; but if we extend its significance to designate character of existential reference, this is the meaning of truth: processes of change so directed that they achieve an intended consummation" (LW 1:128). For the positivists, truth was about

logic. For Dewey, their thin understanding of truth failed to capture its relevance for living.

For more on the putative "similarities" of logical empiricism and pragmatism, I am pleased to quote another of the society's founders, Thelma Lavine. Here she is, writing in the introduction of volume 16 of *Dewey's Later Works* about the views that Dewey and his collaborator Arthur Bentley shared in contrast to the views of the logical empiricists.

> [B]oth [Dewey and Bentley] hold to a holistic, process philosophy and are accordingly anti-dualistic, anti-foundationalist, anti-abstractionist, anti-formalist; and in opposition to positivism and empiricism, tend to be interpretivist. Dewey and Bentley shared as well a broadly naturalistic, organism-environment frame; a rejection of traditional metaphysics and epistemology; an opposition to a legislative function on the part of mathematics and logic in relation to inquiry; and a behavioral, in opposition to a mentalistic, approach to the social sciences. (Lavine LW16:xxv)

There is a third narrative, neither strictly "eclipse" nor "anti-eclipse," that, despite its focus on a time period several decades prior to the time of the "eclipse" narrative, seems to me to hold great promise of a deep understanding of the history of pragmatism. This "professionalism" narrative, as I will call it, also sets the stage for a fourth narrative, a "political" narrative, which I will discuss a bit later.

The "professionalism" narrative unfolds in the work of James Campbell. He argues that there was at least one reason why pragmatism in its pre-1907 form was not amenable to the professionalization of philosophy. Pragmatism had to do, as Dewey famously put it, with the problems of men (and women) and not just the problems of philosophers. It had to do with how we educate our children, how we treat our neighbors, and how we organize ourselves socially and politically.

Campbell, as I read him, would agree that the "eclipse" narrative is faulty, but for very different reasons than the anti-eclipse narrative has put forward. In Campbell's narrative, not only had pragmatism reached a kind of maturity before James published his book *Pragmatism* in 1907, but in fact that book was an attempt to sort through conflicting ideas about the meanings of pragmatism (Campbell, "One Hundred Years" 2). Far from its being dominant for one hundred years, Campbell argues that "there never was a period of Pragmatic dominance in American academic philosophy" ("One Hundred Years" 3).

What there was in America, Campbell argues, was a broad vein of pragmatism in life outside the academy (expressed by Americans such as Benjamin Franklin, for example) that included (1) concern with our place in nature and our role as experimenters; (2) a concern with experience as a criterion of belief and action, with a view toward an ameliorated future; and (3) emphasis on community as the source of our well-being ("One Hundred Years" 3).

Campbell takes care to restate his point so that we will not miss it. "Pragmatism was never primary within the ranks of America's professional philosophers" ("One Hundred Years" 3). It was not pragmatism that dominated academic life in the twentieth century but, after the demise of idealism, various versions of realism. And most versions of realism were concerned with developing a scientific philosophy based on mathematics and physics. Moreover, they focused on the narrowly professional "problem of knowledge" as a primary concern. The rise and continuing success of realism, in this view, was and continues to be dependent on academic professionalism. "For Pragmatism," Campbell writes, "with its fundamental inclination toward the practical possibilities of creative intelligence, professional success in philosophy remained both elusive and secondary" (*Thoughtful Profession* 110).

According to Campbell, "[r]ealism, dedicated to finding the truth . . . could be satisfied with recording and analyzing propositional truths that were uncovered by means that aspired to approximate science" (*Thoughtful Profession* 280). An important consequence of this was that philosophy began to turn its back on associated fields from which it could have drawn new energy, such as anthropology, history, and sociology. The resulting primacy of research over teaching and public service contributed to "administrative commodification of . . . output" (*Thoughtful Profession* 280) (that could be quantified by chairs and deans). What got lost was what pragmatists considered philosophy's primary task: to address the problems of living, "whether the metaphysical ones that tormented James, or the scientific ones that challenged Peirce, or the social ones that invigorated Dewey" (Campbell, "One Hundred Years" 5).

During my graduate student years, when I was working on some problems of late medieval scholastic logic, I was often asked by my peers of analytic persuasion whether I was doing philosophy or the history of philosophy. Although I did not know it at the time, Dewey had addressed this type of question in 1926, when he argued that "philosophy, like politics, literature, and the plastic arts, is itself a phenomenon of human culture. Its connection with social history, with civilization, is intrinsic" (Dewey LW 3:3 qtd. in Campbell, *Thoughtful Profession* 287). While studying Latin, I became aware that learning a language is learning about a culture. No less is it true of learning to read and understand philosophy.

John McCumber provides compelling reasons for accepting yet a fourth narrative, which I will call a "political" narrative, in addition to the several versions of the eclipse narrative, the anti-eclipse narrative, and Campbell's "professionalization" narrative that I have so far discussed.

McCumber's story incorporates aspects of the eclipse narrative and establishes a broader context for understanding the career of pragmatism in the mid-twentieth century. Discussing the relation between pragmatism and logical positivism, he strongly rejects the idea that they were ever on the same page, as Misak would have it. He notes, for example, that Carnap's 1936 article "Truth and Confirmation" treated "the pragmatic theory of truth as if it were a theory of true sentences, when in fact it was something quite different" (McCumber, *Time in the Ditch* 45).

McCumber quotes another of our society's founders, Bruce Wilshire, as he responded to the positivist's view that truth is limited to some property assigned to sentences or statements. "In the earlier [pragmatic] tradition's light," Wilshire wrote, "this appears artificial and thoughtless. . . . [I]t is not just true sentences that navigate us through the world. Silences of certain kinds, images, icons, bodies, scenes, art-works, music, perhaps mystical experiences amplify, clarify, and reveal the world, and can be true in their own ways" (qtd. in McCumber, *Time in the Ditch* 44).

McCumber's political narrative focuses on the fact that philosophy during the McCarthy era largely abandoned consideration of its own place in history and culture. Was it just coincidental that American philosophy turned inward and methodologically reductionistic at precisely the time of the Red hunters? In this narrative, the response of professional philosophy to purges of their faculties, both actual and threatened, was a retreat into a highly defensive position that was narrowly focused almost entirely on truth (and confirmation). If philosophy could present itself as a science, then it might form a bulwark against what Richard Hofstadter termed "the Great Inquisition of the 1950s" (McCumber, *Time in the Ditch* 23). And once the inquisitorial ball got rolling, there were homosexuals, ethnic minorities, people with the "wrong" religious affiliations, and even people who were the targets of personal grievances who would get caught up in the net.

About this, according to McCumber, the philosophical profession basically kept its head down and concentrated on the truth and falsity of sentences analyzed in a timeless context. The irony, as McCumber sees it, is that at the same time that American philosophy chose an ahistorical path, the central problem was more or less that of a retreat to the epistemological problems of philosophy in the seventeenth century. Dewey, of course, thought that many of those seventeenth-century problems continue to be with us and are the

result, as he put it, of Modern philosophy's failure to resolve many problems of the Medieval synthesis, as noted by Phillip Deen in his introduction to *Unmodern Philosophy* (Dewey, *Unmodern Philosophy* xv; see Dewey, *Correspondence* [09281] Dewey to Corinne Chisholm Frost [1931.01.01]).

In McCumber's narrative, at the beginning of the Cold War, there were four dispositives in secular intellectual life: (1) pragmatic naturalism; (2) idealism; (3) materialism; and (4) the eventual winner, the stratified naturalism of Reichenbach. Stratified naturalism posited a grounding for science that rested on discoverable laws and assumed a "hierarchy of the sciences, together with its objective shadow, stratified nature" (McCumber, *Philosophy Scare* 66). Reichenbach's stratified naturalism was simply not compatible with pragmatic naturalism. If I am correct about Dewey's take on technology, then it is fair to say that his pragmatic naturalism held that the organization of the sciences is a cultural artifact, or put another way, that science is a type of technology. For Dewey, science is a set of tools for organizing human experiences of a particular sort.

For McCumber, a central feature of pragmatic naturalism was public denial that moral values require a supernatural foundation. But to do this during the time of Cold War McCarthyism, when atheism was frequently identified with Communism, was to become vulnerable to the right-wing clergy as well as the Red hunters, both of whom were busily sticking their noses into the business of academic appointments, including tenure. This was especially the case in California, which required loyalty oaths for academics. (There were similar problems at that time at the University of Texas that impacted Dewey's disciple C. E. Ayres, but that is another story.)

The logical positivists did not have that problem. Their stratified naturalism amounted to a promissory note: their view that all the other sciences could be reduced to physics was a work in progress that would take a lot of time before it could be announced publicly. And since they could just ignore moral statements as meaningless (a point that was apparently missed by the right-wing clergy), the game was over. Stratified naturalism was dominant because it was perceived as innocuous (McCumber, *Philosophy Scare* 56–57).

It is interesting to note the ironies at work in this situation. Outside the formal systems of the logical empiricists, real life tended to be rather messy. When they were in Europe, many of the émigré positivists had been personally involved in cultural matters, especially on the political left. But in America, they tended to keep their heads down. Recalling one notable exception, Hilary Putnam once told me that during the height of the McCarthy era, Carnap became so disgusted that he decided to join the Communist Party. He gave up, Hilary said, because he couldn't find them in the phone book.

This seems like a good place to thank Jim Garrison for commenting on an early draft of this paper and calling my attention to a recent essay relevant to my topic by Michael Festl, who has provided what is, in my view, a very productive contribution to the eclipse narrative debate.

Festl has advanced a well-researched and highly complex fifth narrative, which he calls a "monistic" narrative, but which might also be called a "demolition" narrative.

Festl argues that Peirce, James, and Dewey shared a set of contentions and methods even though many of their emphases diverged. His monistic narrative is opposed to what he calls Misak's "dualistic" narrative, which attempts to drive a wedge between Peirce, on one side, and James and Dewey on the other. He thinks that what motivates Misak's anti-eclipse narrative is her belief that "C. I. Lewis . . . embodied the only strain of pragmatism worth fighting for, the strain that starts with Peirce, leads to Lewis, and then to Wilfrid Sellars" (Festl 431). Festl thinks this idea problematic, since "Lewis's philosophy is one in which logical positivism sets the agenda and pragmatism, from time to time, lends a helping hand" (Festl 442).

As for Quine and Sellars, Festl agrees that they were attacking logical positivism with pragmatic weapons. But since they were oblivious to the classical pragmatist tradition, they thought they were inventing a wheel even while they were re-inventing one. Contrary to Misak, Festl thinks that both Quine and Sellars were in fact targeting Lewis. "Albeit largely unaware of its originals, the new generation of philosophers in the 50s [read Quine and Sellars] served venerable pragmatist wine in shining new bottles" (Festl 449). So, in Festl's monistic narrative, the pragmatism of Lewis in the 1940s was not so much eclipsed as dimmed. But in the 1950s, in Quine and Sellars, pragmatism *was* eclipsed. For that new generation, "it seemed as if pragmatism did not really matter" (Festl 449). This Festl calls a "supposed" eclipse, since they were "unaware of the extent to which they relied on pragmatism" (449). But, he argues, this "supposed" eclipse was not so much an eclipse as an actual demolition [of pragmatism]" (450).

Taking all this into account, one gets the sense that Misak's anti-eclipse narrative may be based on a rather too quick reading of James and Dewey. This impression appears to be reinforced by Joseph Margolis's review of Misak's book *The American Pragmatists*. Margolis argues that Misak "misses the essential key to the best reading of Dewey and Peirce, taken separately *and* convergently . . . [and that] to rely on the guidance of the 'theory of truth' is already to court confusion" (Margolis).

So what can it mean to claim that pragmatism never left the American scene? Campbell argues that it was never a part of professional philosophy.

Another possibility would be that the vast sweep of the work of Peirce, James, and Dewey was portioned out into various localities where their ideas continued to develop, some more and some less, under the professional radar. Some of those ideas even became so well-entrenched that they lost their identification as pragmatism. The functionalism of James and Dewey, for example, which had its origins in James's 1890 *Principles* and in Dewey's 1896 *Reflex Arc* essay, and which displaced associationism and structuralism in psychology, had by the 1930s become so widely accepted in philosophy and psychology that it ceased to be identifiable as a school.

If Festl is correct, then the dominating figures of philosophy during the last half of the twentieth century did in fact (although probably unknowingly) have a highly attenuated version of pragmatism from which most of the nutrition of a living, existential context had been stripped. This type of pragmatism remains important in many quarters, and in my experience, it is a version of pragmatism filtered through which many young philosophers outside the United States tend to get their James and Dewey. But despite the implications of the anti-eclipse narrative, that is not all there is of pragmatism.

I have so far suggested that the anti-eclipse narrative overstates the similarities between logical empiricism and pragmatism. I have also drawn on several alternative narratives in order to present a picture that is much more philosophically and politically complex than the anti-eclipse narrative and, in many ways, runs counter to some of its central claims.

I cannot avoid the conclusion that for Misak, analytical pragmatism is pragmatism *per se*, without remainder. If you are willing to ignore much of the work of Dewey and James (and even some of Peirce's more metaphysical writings), as well as the lack of fit between logical empiricism and pragmatism more generally, then I suppose some of the elements of Misak's narrative fall into place. But in my view, the result would be a highly attenuated version of pragmatism, a version of pragmatism stripped of much of its vitality, and a version of pragmatism lacking much in the way of contemporary relevance. The pragmatism of James and Dewey (and much of Peirce) was pluralistic. The pragmatism of Misak is exclusionist. In her case, the term "insular" unavoidably comes to mind.

I hope that my earlier comments on Misak's book on Frank Ramsey testify to my belief that analytic pragmatism has enjoyed many successes. It would therefore be a mistake to dismiss or demean that strand of pragmatism. But in my view, it would be an even worse mistake to think, as Misak seems to, that analytic pragmatism is pragmatism without remainder.

I should add that recent work in a variety of fields accomplishes precisely what Misak claims is "tragic for the prospects of pragmatism," namely, efforts

to recover Dewey's insights for philosophy. In fields such as cognitive science, historiography, the ethical treatment of non-human animals, environmental philosophy, philosophy of education, medical ethics, Africana studies, public policy, architecture, and even in comparative philosophy, which now features rich studies of the connections between pragmatism and neo-Confucianism, Dewey's current influence is both considerable and salutary. I wish I had time to mention many of these important works and their authors, some of whom are members of this society. I will only add that it seems remarkable that the anti-eclipse proponents appear to be unaware of the importance of this very large body of work.

Perhaps we need a different leading metaphor. As I was digging alocasia (elephant ear) corms (bulbs) from my garden last fall and preparing them for their winter dormancy, it occurred to me that although there was a period when pragmatism seemed dormant, it was, like those corms, quite alive and lovingly preserved by work that led to the editions of the founding pragmatists, by a growing understanding of the influence on pragmatism by women such as Jane Addams, Elsie Ripley Clapp, Alice Dewey, and Myrtle McGraw, and by several generations of dedicated researchers and teachers. All of this and more constituted the conditions that fostered the explosive growth that the pragmatist corms are now enjoying in the fields I mentioned, and others as well, including renewed interest in Frank Ramsey.

Jerzy Kosiński's famous character Chance the gardener in *Being There* promised that there would be growth in the spring. Now, we have ample evidence of a vibrant and verdant pragmatist spring.

NOTE

1. For the details of this interchange between Nagel and Dewey, see LW 5:197–209 and LW 5:453–60.

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