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**Abstract:** In the late years, contemporary philosophy turned towards different forms of realism. Classic pragmatism becomes important again because it can grant a realism respectful of both science and common sense. However, the meaning of realism in a pragmatist perspective is not always clear. A fashionable transcendental reading of pragmatism often reduces it to a chapter of the rationalist project that goes from Kant to analytic philosophy or to a plausible amendment of the latter. Eventually, pragmatist defense of science becomes a cultural support of a neo-scientist version of science. This interpretation loses the originality of pragmatism and its revolutionary look at the contemporary enterprise of thought. The paper shows that classic pragmatists proposed a very peculiar kind of realism that is completely at odd with any sort of scientism as much as it is in favor of the real process of scientific inquiry. The paper clarifies the distance between pragmatism and scientism (I), the kind of realism advocated by classic pragmatists - in particular by Peirce - (II), and a different view of science that follows this realism (III).

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