

INTRODUCTION:

PRAGMATISM AS A SPECIAL 'LEBENSPHILOSOPHIE'

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Once upon a time, in high school, I was a Marxist. As a university student, I became an admirer of Heidegger's *Being and Time*, and then, the circumstances of my life led me to Pragmatism. What is the common denominator, which made these changes possible?

Our everyday life is mostly a process of heterogeneous, fragmented, and rhapsodic happenings. It is not simple to unify them, and if we are missing a unified framework regarding our life, our psyche can easily find itself in a pathological condition. In everyday life, our world-view has the task of creating this framework. Nevertheless, on this level, it is usually enough if people can create an emotional unity among the different dimensions of their life. Those who want more, let us say some discursive order in their life, need concepts, or in the best scenario, some philosophy.

However, it really matters which one is the best philosophy for us? It is difficult to choose since many religions, sects, and, as Ch. S. Peirce put it, „philosophical slop-shops on every corner” (Rorty quotes it in PSH, p. 20.) provide their *global solutions*, next to the traditional philosophies. Therefore, those who did not get any philosophical training, and people mostly did not get it can be lost easily as children in the jungle of spangle but unworthy products. If we follow Heidegger's advice and want to choose from the several discursive opportunities not only by chance but based on understanding and interpretation, then we should think over first our human situation. What is the main characteristic of our life? It is almost impossible to refute that we are unavoidably natural and social beings, and we remain such beings as long as cyborgs do not replace us. It is much more difficult to accept that **human life is *primordially practice***.

Nevertheless, this claim of Pragmatism is my common denominator, which I felt only during high school. At the university, it became clear that the political and

ideological implications of Marxism are incidental for me, because, otherwise, the young Heidegger's philosophy could not enchant me. His hermeneutic, ontological phenomenology interpreted the connections between the different dimensions of human life amazingly, and first of all, its origin: practice. Extremely heterogeneous activities can belong to our life already on the level of everyday life (we work, play, relax, making politics, doing sports, etc.), but we must create the unified whole of our life in practice, since, otherwise, we shall bear sharp tensions and contradictions in our psyche. Pragmatists agree not only in the statement that human life is first of all practice, but they also claim unequivocally that this practice in a broad sense also includes every form of thinking (both science and philosophy). Thus, pragmatists say, and I absolutely agree with it, that every theory is also a tool since life (from pragmatist and evolutionary point of view) is problemsolving, where we use tools.

Thus, not in the sense of Schopenhauer, Bergson, or Kierkegaard, but this broad sense of Pragmatism can be regarded as Lebensphilosophie. We, pragmatists, say that human life is *primordially practice*, which is always a sequence of problems, and we have to solve these problems in very different forms and on extremely different levels. The present volume of Pragmatism Today is an excellent example of this diversity, which could be unified only from the practice-oriented Pragmatism that always includes meliorism. Our issue has three main parts: politics, Peirce's philosophy, and art.

In the first part, the beloved reader might find three papers. Richard E. Hart shows us how we can use Richard Rorty's philosophy in the interpretation of the present, divided American political situation. Scott Pratt explains to us that we can find an original theory of agency and sovereignty, even in the philosophy of the indigenous American people. Belayneh Taye, from his original Ethiopian point of view, defends the new contextual and pragmatist approach of bioethics.

After politics, four excellent paper analyzes the different dimensions of Peirce's philosophy. Examining Peirce's early papers, Karolína Šedivcová focuses on the prehistory of Pragmatism. Avoiding the possibility of an

overblown ontology, Anoop Gupta reformulates the Peircean indispensability argument with the help of Quine, Putnam and others. Vitaly Kiryushchenko compares Charles Peirce's and Robert Brandom's conceptions of normative objectivity. He claims that Peirce's conception reconciles better the social character of knowledge and the objectivity of norms shared by a community of knowers, than Brandom's one. Tullio Viola delves deep into Royce's late reading of Peirce, and he shows, where Royce fails to do full justice of Peirce's thoughts. At the end of the second part, Martin Švantner shows in his article, „Several regimes of semiotics: G. Deleuze's & F. Guattari's rhetorics of affections,“ that their rhetorical and methodological strategies of analysis of various sign systems connected to the general semiotics are based on the idea of specific “pragmatics.”

In the third part of the present issue, we turn to art. Annette Svaneclink Jakobsen examines in her article, “Movements of Design Mediation,“ what constitutes spatial mediations of design by studying the future V&A

East Collection and Research Centre in Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, London. Bálint Veres shows us (“Tactile Tactics in 21st Century Cultural Displays”) that the museum was once considered a church, later a school, then a stage. “Today, in accordance with somaesthetics, cultural displays can be conceived as physical sites of intersubjectivity and models of human environment relationship, in other words: social and ecological agoras.” Dan O'Brien tries to convince us that some images of Christ's suffering, which depict God's high-level empathetic understanding of humanity (via the depiction of the body of Christ), can reconfigure our conception of God and specifically his omniscience. By criticizing the present interpretation of virtual art, Tamás Seregi clarifies the concepts of virtuality and simulacrum (“Virtuality versus Simulacrum”).

The material of our present issue is so rich and diverse that I am convinced, it can re-present Pragmatism as a special “Lebensphilosophie,“ which can offer new considerations for every interested reader.