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Pragmatism
and Social Theory

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Introduction: Steps toward a Pragmatist Theory of Action

This volume includes a number of my studies on American pragmatism, on the history of its reception, which has been far from free of misunderstandings, and on its possible significance for contemporary social theory. These studies, which were written over the course of the last few years and several of which have already appeared in this or that volume in Germany and elsewhere, document a learning process, one full of twists and turns, the aim of which has meanwhile come more sharply into focus. The current clearer view of the goal, however, does not diminish the value of the terrain that has been covered up to this point. Consequently, the present collection does not involve one continuous text running from beginning to end, but rather a series of studies, each of which is complete in itself. The resulting mosaic-like structure nevertheless clearly reveals a recognizable, distinct pattern.

All these studies start from the premise that American pragmatism possesses an incredible modernity. Admittedly, there are sharp differences between the works of Charles Sanders Peirce, William James, John Dewey, and George Herbert Mead, and each respective oeuvre is in some way tied to the period in which its author lived and to certain peculiarities of American culture. Nevertheless, from the end of metaphysical certainties these thinkers have drawn conclusions whose radicalism has to date not been sufficiently acknowledged. Indeed, they avoided replacing metaphysical assumptions with new certainties based on some philosophy of history, or theory of Reason, and did not regard the end of these certainties as a cause for desperation. Rather, their endeavor under these conditions was geared to inquiring after the possibilities of science and of democracy and to finding a meaningful life for the individual. As they saw it, neither science nor democracy had ceased to have validity simply because it no longer seemed possible to provide any final justifications for them.

I feel confirmed in fundamentally sensing that pragmatism is extremely modern by the fact that a great many of the major representatives of contemporary American philosophy expressly situate themselves in the pragmatist tradition or are situated there by others. The list of names such as Richard Rorty and Richard Bernstein, Stephen Toulmin and

Thomas Kuhn, Willard Van Orman Quine and Donald Davidson, Hilary Putnam and Nelson Goodman shows at the very best the degree to which pragmatism has remained a medium of discourse at American universities, despite its having been severely constrained there for decades. We are speaking, admittedly, of a medium of discourse and not of some clearly delineated school or fixed position, for it goes without saying that to call any one of the intellectuals mentioned here a pure pragmatist is a questionable undertaking, and to assign all of them to pragmatism is impossible if the concept "pragmatism" is to retain any measure of selectivity. At this juncture it is merely important to emphasize that pragmatism is the focus of debate in the United States with regard to arriving at a precise definition of a postscientific philosophy, of a philosophy "beyond realism and anti-realism," as Richard Rorty has called it. Disregarding the obviously spectacular exceptions—Karl-Otto Apel and Jürgen Habermas (as well as a few other specialists there)—in Germany, by contrast, pragmatism is even today having a very rough time of it. In the German discussion, the casual prose of William James and the sober, commonsense style of John Dewey have difficulties making themselves felt against the shrill voice of Friedrich Nietzsche and the visionary tone of Martin Heidegger. Yet, Germans as well as Americans have every reason not to treat democracy and the social sciences as part of the obsolete nineteenth-century faith in progress, as Nietzsche and many of his disciples did. American pragmatism was not some naive form of scientism and it did not hinge on some blindly optimistic faith in the spread of democracy. It only appears as such to those who rule out there being postmetaphysical justifications for democracy and science.

The renaissance of pragmatism in American philosophy has admittedly been restricted to traditional core areas of philosophy. In the philosophy of science and in epistemology, in aesthetics and ethics, one can discern contributions that are "neopragmatist" in nature. By contrast, only rarely are links established to political philosophy and social philosophy. And, aside from Richard Bernstein, there is an even greater distance from discussions of sociological theory. A book such as Richard Rorty's *Contingency, Irony and Solidarity*¹ moves with the greatest of elegance between the philosophical and literary discourses; however, a discourse in the social sciences is so conspicuously absent that one could be forgiven thinking that it does not exist at all.

One cannot contend that this indifference on the part of philosophers corresponds to a disinterest in issues of contemporary philosophy on the part of sociological theorists. Quite the opposite is the case. Within sociology, as Jeffrey Alexander has correctly diagnosed,² a "new theoretical

movement" has emerged. By this he means that the times are gone when sociology—following the disintegration of the "orthodox consensus" of the Parsonian variety which had prevailed in the nineteen-fifties and nineteen-sixties—could content itself with the mere peaceful coexistence of the widest variety of paradigms. The mere coexistence of approaches which either took the form of established, respectively distinct traditions or had to be eclectically linked by individual sociologists was increasingly felt to be unfruitful. This should not be read to say that a uniform theory has taken the place of this pluralism or even that hopes have arisen of such a theory becoming established in the near future. Nor does it mean that there no longer exists within the social sciences that form of empiricist self-understanding which has virtually ceased to be advocated within philosophy today. It does mean, however, that the philosophical demand for the justification of every single theoretical proposal has grown enormously. Alexander himself prefaced his ambitious attempt to revive the Parsonian synthesis with a complete volume dealing with the results of postempiricist or postpositivistic philosophy of science. Even the model of rational action, which is in many respects the least theoretically sophisticated of all social scientific approaches, is justified in such subtle terms by its current proponents—such as Jon Elster—that it no longer looks like a Cinderella from the social sciences in the court of the philosopher king. Taking motifs from sociological systems theory, Niklas Luhmann has erected a theoretical edifice of intimidating proportions; the key to this intricate building does not lie in the traditional sociological discussion about "action" and "system," but rather in the philosophical dimensions of the definitions he gives of the concepts "meaning," "communication," and "self-referentiality." In the case of Jürgen Habermas's *The Theory of Communicative Action*, there is no need to prove that we have to do here with a sociological theory with strong philosophical foundations. Anthony Giddens does his utmost to avoid being drawn into providing a philosophical justification for the valuative implications of his theory of structuration, yet it is plain to see that his innovations would be impossible if they were not linked back to modern philosophy. In the case of Alain Touraine, the underlying philosophical dimension only remains concealed because he essentially adopts it from the political philosophy of Cornelius Castoriadis. Indeed, even the large number of sociologists who strive for a comprehensive sociological theory by taking up Max Weber's oeuvre can be divided into two camps: those who tend to be neo-Kantian and the rather more Nietzschean variants.

To date, the increased need to provide philosophical justifications and

the “new theoretical movement” have not, however, led to the discussion of sociological theory being linked to the renaissance of pragmatism in philosophy. The most important motive behind the studies presented here is to help forge such a link. This book is not a book about pragmatism as such, but on pragmatism, as it is mirrored in different classical and contemporary versions of social theory, and on the potential of pragmatism for the solution of crucial problems in social theory. It is my contention that American pragmatism is characterized by its understanding of human action as a *creative* action. The understanding of creativity contained in pragmatism is specific in the sense that pragmatism focuses on the fact that creativity is always embedded in a *situation*, i.e. on the human being’s “situated freedom.” It is precisely this emphasis on the interconnection of creativity and situation that has given rise to the repeated charge that pragmatists merely possess a theory that is a philosophy of *adaptation* to given circumstances. This accusation fails to perceive the antideterministic thrust of the pragmatists. In their view the actors confront problems whether they want to or not; the solution to these problems, however, is not clearly prescribed beforehand by reality, but calls for creativity and brings something objectively new into the world. Even the assertion that actors confront problems, which indeed force themselves to be tackled, is frequently misunderstood to mean that pragmatism disregards the subjective components involved in defining a situation as a problem situation and thus takes an objectivistic concept of the problem as the point of departure. Contrary to this, the pragmatists quite readily accept the subjective constitution of a given worldview, but nevertheless regard the emergence of the problems within reality, as subjective as it is, as removed from arbitrary subjective reach.

At this juncture, it is perhaps best to trace the importance of the idea of situated creativity for pragmatism in the works of all four major representatives of pragmatism, without, however, attempting a broader description of the basic ideas of pragmatism.³ The decisive innovation in Charles Peirce’s logic of science—namely, the idea of abduction—is aimed precisely at generating new hypotheses and pinpointing their role in scientific progress. Peirce’s speculative philosophy of nature is built around the question of under which conditions the New can arise in nature. His philosophy also endeavors to find a niche for artistic creativity in an age characterized by both the dominance of science and Darwinism, a way of thinking that brought the Romantic philosophy of nature to an end.⁴ Of William James it can be concluded from his biography that for him the conflict between a belief in free will with religious justifications and naturalistic determinism was not simply an intellectual problem,

but rather one that actually paralyzed all his mental powers. Accordingly, his attempt to find a way out of this dilemma by regarding the ability to choose as itself a function crucial to the survival of the human organism in its environment not only signaled the beginning of functionalist psychology, but was also a step which unleashed his lifelong productivity. John Dewey's work was crowned by his theory of art, or, rather, his theory on the aesthetic dimension of all human experience. Far from being geared exclusively to solving problems of instrumental action, the unifying element running through Dewey's work, with the numerous areas it covers, takes the shape of an inquiry into the meaningfulness to be experienced in action itself. As for George Herbert Mead, his famous theory of the emergence of the self is primarily directed against the assumption of some substantive self; his concept of the human individual and the individual's actions is radically "constructivistic." In all four cases the pragmatists' ideas are not devoted to the creative generation of innovation as such, but to the creative solution of problems. Despite all the pathos associated with creativity, the pragmatists nevertheless endeavored to link it to the dimension of everyday experience and everyday action.

This linkage can be viewed as characteristic of American intellectual history. As early as the German debate on pragmatism prior to the First World War, when the stereotypes about the land of the dollar helped to prevent any serious discussion of pragmatism in Germany,⁵ one of the few German philosophers who had tackled the new theory emphasized this connection. Günther Jacoby concurred with the opinion that pragmatism was a uniquely American philosophy:

not as a philosophy of the dollar, however, but as a philosophy of life, of human creation, of possibilities. For the American pragmatists, cognition is thus not a process of acquisition in the narrower sense, but rather a process of life in the broader sense. . . . For the joy in creating things oneself and the belief in the greatest creative possibilities of the human being: that is indeed American. In America itself pragmatism is a doctrine of cognition as a creative life process, and at the same time it is the belief that every insight contains the greatest variety of possibilities in itself, just as every piece of factual insight itself has become "real" among countless other possible insights.⁶

In American thought ideas of creativity are connected with the idea of democracy to an extent far greater than was ever possible in Germany. Although one would not wish to paint things too baldly in black and white, it can be said that in Germany theories about creativity have always been dominated by an aestheticist ideology of genius.⁷ In the United States, by

contrast, even Emerson, for all his undoubted elitism, had associated Romantic motifs with the active shaping of nature. Especially in the Progressive Era, the instinct of workmanship, as Thorstein Veblen put it, represents a value-laden concept for defining everyday creativity. It is not the artist but the engineer and the inventor⁸ who are the incarnations of creativity, without this, however, becoming transformed into a technocratic ideology. When conservative cultural critics, from Daniel Bell to Niklas Luhmann and Allan Bloom, pour scorn on the concept of creativity as the democratization of the ideology of genius, as "democratically deformed geniality" (Luhmann),⁹ they inadvertently become the targets of their own criticism. It is precisely American intellectual history which is capable of showing us that the myth of the genius should rather more be described as "undemocratically deformed creativity."

It is surely one of the major tasks of research on pragmatism to place that body of thought as a theory of situated creativity in the more profound context of its original, American environment. For a long time, another major deficit was the lack of adequate attention paid to the link between pragmatism and similar currents of thought in the German, French, and Anglo-Saxon intellectual worlds. This lack has been remedied in a brilliant manner by a young American historian, James Kloppenberg.¹⁰ Although his assertion that a "transatlantic community of discourse" existed between 1870 and 1920 would appear exaggerated in view of the degree to which national discourses increasingly sealed themselves off from the international community during this period, Kloppenberg nevertheless demonstrates quite convincingly that there was a convergence of discourses which were originally very different in approach. This convergence occurs, on the one hand, at the level of philosophy; here Kloppenberg elaborates the features American pragmatists, British neo-Hegelians, German hermeneuticians, and French neorationalists have in common, while remaining sensitive to the differences between them. This confluence also took place at another level, for there was a convergence between the philosophical innovations of this period and the political search for a path that transcended dogmatic liberalism and revolutionary socialism. Kloppenberg's account considers democratic socialists such as Eduard Bernstein, Jean Jaurès, and the Webbs along with the major figures of American progressivism of that period, and he goes on to claim that an affinity existed between pragmatist philosophy and the theoretical basis of a radical-reformist form of social democracy. He argues vehemently that the welfare states which exist today cannot rightfully refer to themselves as the fully fledged realization of this theoretical foundation. Irrespective of the precise shape these

historico-political interconnections may take, for the purposes of a social theory with pragmatist foundations the crucial component of this line of argumentation is that here the pathos of creativity does not engender visions of a permanent revolution or of a macro-subject that can shape society by totalitarian means, but instead is related to the program of a democratic welfare state. "Steady, incremental change through the democratic process, with all its confusions and imperfections, is the political expression of this philosophical creed. These ideas, moderate, meliorist, democratic, and sensitive to the possibility that no perfect reconciliation of liberty and equality can be attained, are the consequences of pragmatism for politics."¹¹

The essays collected together in this volume deserve varying degrees of retrospective commentary. The first chapter of the book centers on reconstructing the influence which the philosophy of pragmatism has had on American sociology. After a characterization of the basic features of pragmatism, the presentation then focuses on the sociological research done by the Chicago School between 1895 and 1940 and the fragmentary continuation of this tradition at a later date in the writings of the symbolic interactionists. The image which emerges is that of an important, if clearly deficient, transformation of pragmatism into a theory of the social sciences and empirical social research. Since the completion of this essay, and in addition to a further helpful overview of the Chicago School, by Dennis Smith, which foregrounds its "liberal" critique of capitalism,¹² various works have appeared which not only contextualize the Chicago School in terms of a history of science—as I do here—but also within a history of civilization. The attempt to trace the School's relationship to the history of American journalism, especially to urban documentary reporting, has yielded results as interesting as those which have come to light in the course of initial efforts to establish a closer link between the history of sociology and Chicago's literary history.¹³ (In this regard, the connection between pragmatist thought and modern architecture in Chicago has only been dealt with in passing to date.) All these contributions generate highly tangible evidence for the claim that pragmatist theories are intimately bound up with modernity.

The following chapters of this book deal with reactions to American pragmatism. First of all, a comparison with pragmatism is given of the theories of Emile Durkheim, the classical figure of French sociology. This study initially draws on the little-known lectures which Durkheim held on pragmatism in 1913–14, after completing his last major work, namely the study of the elementary forms of religious life.¹⁴ However, I am con-

cerned not only with correcting Durkheim's misconception of pragmatism, which he understood to be "logical utilitarianism," but, more importantly, with establishing the similarities and the differences between pragmatism and Durkheim's program of a sociology of knowledge, i.e. of a theory of the social constitution of the fundamental categories of knowledge. Such a comparison reveals flaws on both sides and points up the opportunities for reciprocal rectification. (Whereas the essay in question concentrates exclusively on Durkheim's late work, I have meanwhile tried elsewhere to identify the role played by the problems of creativity in Durkheim's entire oeuvre and thus to trace a line of continuity there with regard to the issue of how a new morality and/or new institutions could arise.)¹⁵ The study on the attitudes of the "Frankfurt School," which emigrated to the United States, toward pragmatism, the American social sciences, and American society as a whole is intended to show how strongly the representatives of Critical Theory adhered to a Marxist functionalism and the degree to which their efforts to reinstate a concept of "objective reason" fell far short of drawing on the decisive innovations of pragmatism. This resulted in deficits in a whole series of thematic areas. Up to now, a euphemistically positive view of the accomplishments of Critical Theory has helped impede the further continuation of the pragmatist intellectual heritage. This essay on the Frankfurt School is followed by a study on the history of the German misunderstandings of pragmatism. It is a sad story, which ranges from the reduction of pragmatism to a utilitarian theory of truth in the debates prior to the First World War, via the hidden pragmatism of Max Scheler and Martin Heidegger, all the way to the appropriation of pragmatism for the purposes of a fascist philosophy of the deed. Most of the German émigrés, and not only those of the Frankfurt School, remained prisoners of this history of misconceptions, and it was not until the nineteen-sixties that Karl-Otto Apel and Jürgen Habermas, in particular, were able to pave the way for a new approach.

The following part of the book contains outlines on contemporary attempts to devise grand sociological theory; I have attempted to point out critically those problems inherent in the works themselves for which, in my opinion, elements of pragmatist theory would appear to offer promising solutions. The most important of these studies deal with the works of Jürgen Habermas, Cornelius Castoriadis, Anthony Giddens, and Jeffrey Alexander. Since each of these four authors has been remarkably productive, the conclusions I come to can, of course, not be regarded as valid for all time. A few relativizing remarks are therefore in order in all four cases.

What prompted my taking issue with Jürgen Habermas's *Theory of*

Communicative Action was my surprise at how little this author had adopted from pragmatism for his theory as a whole. After all, Habermas had repeatedly documented his orientation toward the pragmatists Peirce and Mead and had, in the above work as well, justified the fundamental paradigm shift “from purposive action to communicative action” by citing Mead and (albeit problematically) Durkheim. For me it was a matter of describing the relative poverty of Habermas’s theory of action in relation to the phenomenal variety of action and to pinpoint that Habermas’s problematical understanding of the logical status of the theory of action inherently compels him to receive functionalism in a specific manner. To the present day, the “theory of communicative action” appears to me to rely on an inconsistent link between hermeneutic and functionalist components. In his replies to his critics and in a series of more recent works Habermas has sought to clarify his position, and in the process he has eliminated most of the reasons for my criticisms of the dualism of system and life-world in the area of political sociology.¹⁶ This, however, does not apply to the issue of what constitutes action in terms of the theoretical basics involved. In a direct reply to my criticisms¹⁷ he rejects the entire question of an anthropological theory of action and contends that he was only concerned to provide an explanation of social action. But if such a narrow definition is taken, then not only play and art, but in fact the whole area of “labor” would fall outside the domain of social theory. This surely cannot seriously be his intention. If Habermas replies to my criticism by contending that with regard to his social-theoretic aims “the juxtaposition of communicative and strategic action (has) the advantage . . . of stressing consensus and influence—those two mechanisms of action coordination which, from the rationality-theoretic viewpoint of whether the rational potential of speech has been exhausted or not, form completely alternative options,” then this reply still confirms two of the criticisms raised. First, it shows that the question as to a theory of action is obscured beneath that of a theory of action coordination; and secondly that the latter, furthermore, was from the outset discussed from the vantage point of a theory of rationality. Both are legitimate approaches, of course, but they are by no means plausible decisions from the standpoint of pragmatism. Surprisingly, Habermas subsumes every attempt to create a nonfunctionalist sociological theory that has action-theoretic foundations under a concept of praxis philosophy which he has obviously derived from a study of Georg Lukács. Habermas’s dictum is simply not true both in that in such approaches collective actors are hypostatized and in that they are necessarily bound up with a “form of society based on labor.” Just as a praxis philosophy in a Lukácsian guise can hardly be helped by grafting spare parts from sym-

bolic interactionism on to it—as Habermas chidingly notes¹⁸—by the same token spare parts from Luhmann’s systems theory will hardly resolve the dilemmas of Critical Theory. Indeed, Habermas’s own confrontation with the debate on postmodernism in his lectures on “the philosophical discourse of modernity”¹⁹ may in fact enable us to realize that the problems he so brilliantly demonstrates call for a more profound relativization of “rationality” than the concept of communicative rationality permits. I believe that the concept of creativity does more justice to the provocative issues raised in the postmodernism debate.²⁰

Cornelius Castoriadis’s work is most certainly situated in the tradition of the praxis-philosophical interpretation of Marxism. It is, however, so strongly permeated with the experience of totalitarianism and is so original in its link on the one hand to Aristotle and, on the other, to the social phenomenology of Maurice Merleau-Ponty that any reduction of Castoriadis’s thought to the tried-and-true arguments against praxis philosophy would also be illegitimate. Rather, Castoriadis’s theory is currently the most original attempt at a political philosophy derived from the idea of creativity. In the study presented here, the focus will be on the basic features of Castoriadis’s theory of the institution and his understanding of society as the result of a process of institutionalization which is engendered by the ability to project meaning, to draw on the “imaginary.” Nevertheless, I contend, Castoriadis has not managed to develop an adequate theory of modern democracy on this basis. The final statement in my essay asserts that Castoriadis sidesteps the central problem involved in applying his praxis philosophy to social theory, namely “how to uphold the project of autonomy when the myth of revolution is dead.” I do not believe that the events of autumn 1989 in Eastern and Central Europe—including those in the city in which I am penning these lines—have disproved this statement. If we do not wish to speak in terms of a collapse of the post-Stalinist regime, but rather to speak of a revolution, then surely it was a revolution without an innovative program. For the problems of democracy were not solved, but instead placed on the agenda there. However, it is not only in the realm of politics that there are clear differences between Castoriadis’s theory and a contemporary form of pragmatism. Various critics have remarked that in the second, constructive section of his major work to date Castoriadis tends to lose sight of the dimension of action. His theory of creativity runs the risk of not being a theory of creative *action*. Whether or not Castoriadis will be able to avert this danger is something which will be shown by his next, eagerly anticipated major work.²¹

I myself have referred to the theory of Anthony Giddens as a sociological transformation of praxis philosophy, for I think that this description

best characterizes the degree to which his theory both parallels and is distinct from a sociological transformation of pragmatism. An exceptionally broad international discussion has ensued in recent years with regard to Giddens's work and it is impossible to assess what the outcome of the debate will be.²² Shortly after publishing his major theoretical work, *The Constitution of Society*, Giddens himself presented a substantial work on the history and sociology of the nation-state and violence in which he—and here he resembles both Michael Mann and John Hall in Great Britain, but also Randall Collins and Theda Skocpol in the United States—sets out to eliminate one of the most disturbing weaknesses in the formation of sociological theory.²³ However, the way in which these problems are linked to basic theoretical questions can only be elaborated in a different context.²⁴

Jeffrey Alexander's work comes from a tradition that is completely unlike that of pragmatism or Western Marxism. It approaches the Parsonian heritage in a highly critical and creative manner in the endeavor to develop an adequate sociological theory by reshaping that body of thought. In the study presented here I have attempted a careful examination of Alexander's metatheoretical considerations and of his interpretation of the classic sociological figures—Marx, Durkheim, Weber, and Parsons. My intention is to prove thereby that the scheme of "utilitarianism versus normativity," which Alexander culls from Parsons, does not suffice either as an adequate description of the problem which the sociological classics had posed themselves or as the basis on which to develop a satisfactory theory of action. Again, I appeal to a third position, namely that of the theory of creativity. Alexander has recently undertaken relatively major revisions of his theory.²⁵ He accuses Parsons in increasingly radical terms of failing to recognize the contingency of human action both in microsociological as well as macrosociological contexts. This allows him to draw constructively on the works of the symbolic interactionists and on a historically sensitive functionalism, such as that put forward by Shmuel Eisenstadt. In the way in which it perceives the problems, neofunctionalism is increasingly centering on the key issues which are also being tackled by current major sociological theories in Europe. The hubris of this school so noticeable at the outset appears to have waned significantly.

The chapter "Role Theories and Socialization Research" deals with empirical research on the concept of role-taking in research on socialization. The goal of this study is to provide an example which demonstrates the empirical fruitfulness of a key concept of the pragmatist idea of human action.

The volume concludes with a text which I wrote as a retrospective on

the book I wrote ten years ago on the American pragmatist George Herbert Mead. This study deals with the normative implications of pragmatist theory and—of all of the works collected here—provides the clearest indication of what the pragmatist theory of action from which I expect so much in terms of social theory would look like.²⁶

NOTES

1. Richard Rorty, *Contingency, Irony and Solidarity* (Cambridge, 1989).
2. Jeffrey Alexander, "A New Theoretical Movement," in Neil Smelser (ed.), *Handbook of Sociology* (London, 1988), pp. 77–101.
3. See the section on "Pragmatism as the Philosophical Source of the Chicago School" in the following essay, "Pragmatism in American Sociology."
4. See Douglas R. Anderson, *Creativity and the Philosophy of C. S. Peirce* (Dordrecht, Netherlands, 1987).
5. Cf. the study "American Pragmatism and German Thought: A History of Misunderstandings" (in this volume).
6. Günther Jacoby, "Der amerikanische Pragmatismus und die Philosophie des Als Ob," in *Zeitschrift für Philosophie und philosophische Kritik* 147 (1912), pp. 172–84. See especially p. 173.
7. Jochen Schmidt, *Die Geschichte des Genie-Gedankens in der deutschen Literatur, Philosophie und Politik 1750–1945*, 2 vols. (Darmstadt, 1985).
8. On Emerson cf. Eduard Baumgarten's interpretation, *Der Pragmatismus: Die geistigen Grundlagen des amerikanischen Gemeinwesens*, vol. 2 (Frankfurt, 1938), p. 3–96. Thorstein Veblen, *The Instinct of Workmanship* (New York, 1914). Sherwood Anderson's novel *Poor White* left a deep impression on me as a literary treatment of creativity among inventors.
9. Daniel Bell, *The Cultural Contradictions of Capitalism* (London, 1979); Niklas Luhmann, "Vom Zufall verwöhnt: Eine Rede über Kreativität," in *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, June 10, 1987; Allan Bloom, *The Closing of the American Mind* (New York, 1987), pp. 180 ff.
10. James T. Kloppenberg, *Uncertain Victory: Social Democracy and Progressivism in European and American Thought, 1870–1920* (New York, 1986).
11. *Ibid.*, p. 194.
12. Dennis Smith, *The Chicago School: A Liberal Critique of Capitalism* (New York, 1988).
13. Rolf Lindner, *Die Entdeckung der Stadtkultur: Soziologie aus der Erfahrung der Reportage* (Frankfurt, 1990); Eugene Rochberg-Halton, "Life, Literature and Sociology in Turn-of-the-Century Chicago," in Simon Bronner (ed.), *Consuming Visions: Accumulation and Display of Goods in America, 1880–1920* (New York, 1989), pp. 311–38. Cf. also the book by this author entitled *Meaning and Modernity: Social Theory in the Pragmatic Attitude* (Chicago, 1986). Also Heinz Ickstadt, "Concepts of Society and the Practice of Fiction—Symbolic Responses to the Experience of Change in Late Nineteenth Century America," in Marc Chénétier and Rob Kroes (eds.), *Impressions of a Gilded Age: The American Fin de Siècle* (Amsterdam, 1983), pp. 77–95.
14. Emile Durkheim, *Pragmatism and Sociology* (Cambridge, 1983).
15. Hans Joas, "Emile Durkheim's Intellectual Development," in a forthcoming anthology of essays edited by Stephen Turner on Durkheim. The essay on Alexander in this volume contains hints for these interpretations.

16. Jürgen Habermas, "A Reply," in Axel Honneth and Hans Joas (eds.), *Communicative Action*. tr. J. Gaines and D. Jones (Cambridge, 1991), pp. 214–64; "Volks-souveränität als Verfahren: Ein normativer Begriff von Öffentlichkeit," in *Merkur* 43 (1989), pp. 465–77; preface to the new, 1990 edition of *Strukturwandel der Öffentlichkeit* (Frankfurt, 1990), pp. 11–50.

17. *Communicative Action*, p. 249f.

18. *Ibid.*, p. 250.

19. Jürgen Habermas, *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity*, tr. F. Lawrence (Cambridge, 1987).

20. For the time being, see my lecture on "Participation—Yuppification— Violence: On Creativity Today," in: Wolfgang Zapf (ed.), *Die Modernisierung moderner Gesellschaften*. Verhandlungen des 25. Deutschen Soziologentages (Frankfurt/M., 1991), pp. 205–11.

21. A new collection of essays by Castoriadis has appeared only recently; this is not the book referred to here. Cf. Cornelius Castoriadis, *Le monde morcelé* (Paris, 1990). Indispensable for the discussion of Castoriadis's work is Giovanni Busino (ed.), "Pour une philosophie militante de la démocratie: Autonomie et autotransformation de la société," in *Revue européenne des sciences sociales* 27(86) (1989). Cf. in this connection especially the contributions by Bernhard Waldenfels, "Der Primat der Einbildungskraft," in Busino, "Pour une philosophie," pp. 141–60, and Johann Arnason, "The Imaginary Institution of Modernity," in Busino, "Pour une philosophie," pp. 269–92. The works of the former Budapest School (Agnes Heller, among others) are to be situated in the context of this discussion on a new version of praxis philosophy, as well as those of Roberto Mangabeira Unger (*Politics: A Work in Constructive Social Theory*, 3 vols. [Cambridge, 1987]) and Johann Arnason (*Praxis and Interpretation* [Frankfurt, 1988]); cf. also my critique in *Soziologische Revue* 12 (1989), pp. 263–65.

22. This can be seen from the publication of a large monograph on Giddens's work and three collections on the discussion about it: Ira Cohen, *Structuration Theory: Anthony Giddens and the Constitution of Social Life* (New York, 1989), as well as the collections edited by Jon Clark, David Held and John Thompson, and Christopher Bryant.

23. Anthony Giddens, *The Nation-State and Violence* (Cambridge, 1985).

24. On this point, see my works on a sociological theory of war and peace. An overview is provided in my essay "Between Power Politics and Pacifist Utopia: War and Peace in Sociological Theory," in: *Current Sociology* (1991), pp. 47–66.

25. Jeffrey Alexander, *Action and Its Environments: Toward a New Synthesis* (New York, 1988). Cf. also by Alexander, *Structure and Meaning. Relinking Classical Sociology* (New York, 1989). A German parallel to American neofunctionalism can be found in the works of Richard Münch.

26. My essay "The Democratization of Differentiation: On the Creativity of Collective Action," in Jeffrey Alexander and Piotr Sztompka (eds.), *Rethinking Progress* (Boston, 1990), pp. 182–201, gives an initial overview of such consequences in social theory. My book *The Creativity of Action* (published in German, Frankfurt, 1992) develops this theory in a systematic way.