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Category: Academic Meeting

Title: The Pragmatist Turn and Embodied Cognition: Habit and Experience at the crossroads between Pragmatism, Neurosciences, and Social Ontology

Description: Keynote Speakers:

- Vittorio Gallese (University of Parma)
- Richard Menary (Macquarie University)
- Daniel Hutto (University of Wollongong), TBC
- Teed Rockwell (Sonoma State University)
- Pierre Steiner (COSTECH/UTC, Paris)
- Roberto Frega (IMM-CNRS, Paris)
- Corrado Sinigaglia (Università di Milano)
- Pentti Määttänen (University of Helsinki)
- Arvi Särkelä (University of Luzern)

The aim of this conference is to account for the many facets of the role that pragmatism is nowadays playing as the main alternative to classical cognitive science, and the contribution that an interdisciplinary pragmatist approach could make to the renewal of social theory. The rediscovery of the contemporary relevance of classical pragmatist theories such as Dewey's, Peirce's, James', and Mead's will be a central issue. This topic will be addressed in a broad sense, dealing with the different aspects of the pragmatist turn involved by 4E cognitive science and their consequences for social sciences. A particular focus will be given to the fruitfulness of pragmatist notions such as 'habit' and 'experience' at the crossroads between social theory, neurosciences, and cognitive sciences.

The notion of habit and an understanding of experience as a process of habit formation constitute a major aspect of classical pragmatist approaches to cognition and social action. Still, since the middle of last century, representational and intentionalist models have hegemonized cognitive sciences, action theory and social ontology. More recently, the importance of the notion of habit as a viable alternative to current paradigms in some of these fields is being rediscovered.

The aim of this conference is to evaluate in particular the contribution that the reconstruction of classical pragmatist approaches to habit and experience such as Dewey's, Mead's, Peirce's, and James' could make to current debates in cognitive sciences and social theory. Which role could pragmatist insights play

in overcoming mind/body, mind/world, perception/action dualisms that have dominated research programs of the last decades and only recently are starting to be tackled?

In particular, we would like to explore how a habit based notion of experience inspired by pragmatism, could make it possible to appreciate the continuity between sensory, motor, and social aspects of action, and offer fruitful theoretical tools to embodied approaches to cognition, including mirror neuron-based research on embodied simulation. Could such a habit based understanding of social action offer also an alternative to socio-ontological models of action based on the notion of collective intentionality? And could the pragmatist naturalistic understanding of experience be implemented by experimental approaches to aesthetic perception? In addressing such question, the Parma Conference will gather philosophers, cognitive scientists and social theorists.

The conference is part of a joint research program organized in partnership with the conference Pragmatism, 4E cognitive science, and the sociality of human conduct (Paris, 7-9 december 2016).

Organizers: Fausto Caruana (University of Parma, Department of Neurosciences), Italo Testa (University of Parma, Department of Humanities - Philosophy).

We invite proposals for oral communications. Abstracts of 400 words should be sent to organizers no later than January 20, 2017. Acceptance will be notified before February 1th 2017. There are no registration fees; but selected participants will have to cover their travel and staying costs by themselves.

Any question should be addressed to one of the two organizers, Fausto Caruana (fausto.caruana [at] unipr.it) or Italo Testa (italo.testa [at] unipr.it)

Place: University of Parma

Link: Conference site

Keywords: Embodied Cognition, Neuroscience, Cognitive Science