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*Introduction*

Perhaps due to the period of international crisis, appeals to creativity multiplied in any field. Sure enough, when the *status quo* cannot grant welfare conditions anymore, something new is needed. And the problem of novelty intertwines that kind of thought that goes by the name of creativity. Philosophically speaking, this request means to question what creativity really is, which are its cognitive processes, whether it is teachable, and where it comes from.

A first methodological question is about the science that should take care of such an important topic. Creativity has often been considered too high (a gift from gods, a normative look from outside the world), too low (unconscious or abysmal), or too lateral (something to relegate to pre-theoretical intuitions) to be observed and studied. When it was studied philosophically, creativity has often been pigeonholed into the aesthetic cage as if it had not to enter other fields of knowledge.

Pragmatism assumed a different attitude towards the creative moment from the start. Classical pragmatists' common stance was a profound idea of continuity of experience, scientifically or epistemologically considered and expressed. With different nuances all of them avoided dualisms, dichotomies and severed approaches to experience. "Experience" itself has to be treated with a whole, or rather a continuity, to which our thoughts and intellectual endeavors belong as well as objects, actions, practical habits, and values. Creativity is no exception and it belongs to this common, continuous ground of experience. Therefore, a quick look at the conception of continuity is important to understand what creativity is and how authors handle it in this issue of the European Journal of Pragmatism and American Philosophy.

Here continuity has to be understood in the Peircean sense. From the analytic mathematical standpoint it remains a hypothesis. However, it is a working hypothesis that recent mathematical studies seem to confirm. This hypothesis regards a non-metrical kind of continuity that consists in a transition among logical and ontological modalities (possibility, actuality, necessity) governed by the properties of reflexivity, generality, modality (plasticity), each underlying one aspect of the relationship between the parts and the whole of continuity. Taking these terms in their philosophical meaning, we can say that *generality* is the law of cohesiveness among parts beyond any individual and any possibility of metrically measuring it; *modality* means plasticity, namely the fact that a continuum is not tied to actualities but involves both possibility and necessity; *reflexivity* means that any part shall have the same properties of the whole to which it belongs. This hypothesis of continuum explains that experience is a very complex pattern that is always evolving: experience is really experience of a change, as James would have said. On this result classic pragmatists converged. With different perspectives that range from psychology to logic, from sociology to epistemology, all of them accepted experience as a continuity.

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Creativity is thus a peculiar kind of change that happens within this changing experience. The peculiarity is due to the fact that creativity seems connected to something new, which would be by definition something that breaks continuity. Late Peirce's view on continuity, classic pragmatists' considerations, and recent mathematical studies show that discontinuity in metrical terms can be conceived within the sort of continuity to which they were hinting and aiming. In this kind of continuous path, any break is more the realization of a possibility than an absolute rupture. In this way, it is possible to conceive creativity as an operation on a novelty that emerges within experience.

The articles of this volume suggest some of the characteristics that are consequence of this understanding and that raise from both the historical and the theoretical treatment of pragmatism.

The first consequence of this conception of experience on the topic of creativity is that this phenomenon cannot be relegated to any irrational or a-rational moment, or rather, that the creative moment is part of knowledge. The papers of this volume well explain that creativity is linked to cognitive processes in all pragmatists' works. James', Dewey's, Santayana's (Mollard), and Peirce's conceptions of "imagination" and "creativity" (Barrena, Zalamea, Tschaespe) are completely embodied in experience and they are bound to perception and to the process of cognition that develops in it and from it. We are somehow creative in any knowledge (Colapietro, Maddalena) and not only in particular processes as abduction. From this perspective this volume overtakes the usual approach that limits creativity to abduction and to the study of it. It shows that pragmatists looked at creative imagination as constant part of cognitive processes of any sort and that this part permits the highest degree of synthesis.

This profound understanding of creativity as part of knowledge implies a different view of aesthetics, if aesthetics is the discipline that has to take care of this cognitive feature as it has been affirmed traditionally. In different ways, Peirce and Dewey provided a good alternative to any view of aesthetics as separated from the rest of the cognitive path. The aesthetical moment is fundamental in order to develop any form of knowledge because it is part of the initial apprehension of experience and of any reasoning: Dewey's appreciation of imagination as pervasive element of any perception in *Art as experience* and Peirce's late but firm consideration of aesthetics as primeval normative science that has to judge upon logical reasoning do not leave any doubts on their approach. Far from being too high, low or lateral, imagination and the aesthetical approach based on it are the pivot of our knowledge.

The second consequence is that in all pragmatist accounts creativity is an answer to an external question. Externalism is one of the landmarks of pragmatism. Creativity is part of a continuity of experience that invests us, whether you read it semiotically (Peirce, Dewey), psychologically (James), or sociologically (Dewey, Mead). Toro's paper suggests that also in Rorty's more controversial position on this topic, we can see that creativity is historically embodied and we cannot abandon cognitive conditions that come from experience.

As for the crucial issue of the novelty that seems to break continuity, the creative moment is something new, but the articles make clear that there is no newness without a profound acceptance of this flux of experience that precedes us. Colapietro's and Maddalena's papers show this game that involves both the belonging to this flux and the modification of it that we name creativity. Moreover, all the papers show that a pragmatist understanding of creativity can never be but highly critical of any romantic overstress on singularity and personalities, since any pragmatist was and is convinced of the deep fallibility that lays at the bottom of human experience. Newness is always a modification of something which is al-

ready part of experience, and newness always has to show up within an understandable situation and cognitive pattern. Absolute novelty would be utterly incomprehensible.

The third consequence of a continuous approach is the unity of the practical and the theoretical aspects of creativity. Inquiring on some Peirce's manuscripts, Zalamea's article shows that the creative answer to reality comes as a practical-theoretical event in which the actual scribing is as important as the theoretical insight. They operate together without any chance to divide them up. This profound unity is what Maddalena advocates in his suggestion of creativity as "complete gesture", explaining it with the semiotic and phenomenological characteristics that he derives from Peirce. It is also the ground for a study of musical creative performance as jazz, which is the example that clarifies Colapietro analysis of creativity grounded on Peirce's and Cavell's inputs.

A fourth consequence is that creativity is part of any discipline, or instead that the division of subjects and methods does not work in the moment of creativity. Zalamea's, Barrena's, Tschaepé's and Mollard's papers show that the creative moment pragmatically understood is part of very different studies and different interests as science and religion, ethics and mathematics. In their studies on Peirce, James, and Dewey they show that classic pragmatists were using a rational approach to these disciplines and that this critical attitude appealed to creative imagination as decisive tool. Zalamea's work illuminates this experience that is quite shared by all those that really perform scientific inquiry: when research reaches its peaks made of highly problematic questions, the division among subjects and sciences does not work any longer. Imagination, sense of beauty, dialogue, calculations, and technical devices are all involved in the experience of creativity, no matter the field under investigation. All divisions do not make sense anymore because, as we have seen, aesthetic judgments are needed in order to reason and the quest for an answer to the problem that experience arises can come from any part. Many creative moments in any field are due to connections and links that someone realizes while they were left severed before.

A final question arises. If creativity has to be understood within the continuous path of experience, any newness that creativity recognizes and fosters is accountable also from an ontological standpoint? This is the topic of the study of James and Whitehead that Brioschi develops in her paper. The answer is not univocal in these two authors and other papers touch upon this question hinting toward different answers: Mollard's final claim urges the possibility of a "realism with a divine face" while Colapietro refers to Mead's emergentism, an attitude somehow closer to Whitehead's view of "process". For sure creativity has to do with the mud (Zalamea) or the vagueness (Maddalena) of a primeval inchoative state of experience that needs to be studied in a new creative way also from an ontological perspective. After Roberto Perry, we called "horotic" the needed logic of borders (*horos*) that should be developed also in order to sink through the terrain that gives birth to both new creative syntheses and more precise analyses. This study would not settle the issue about naturalism either, but it probably will give a better non-ideological perspective on this very complicated ontological and metaphysical topic.

Certainly these few articles do not claim any sort of exhaustion of the problem, but we hope they help introducing to a broad cognitive perspective on the topic and they can suggest some clues for a different pragmatist understanding of creativity.