INDIVIDUALISM, HOLISM AND THE CENTRAL DILEMMA OF SOCIOLOGICAL THEORY

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BY

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About the Author

Jiří Šubrt has lectured in Sociology at Charles University, Prague, Czech Republic, since 1990. It was in 2009 that he founded the Department of Historical Sociology at the Faculty of Humanities. Jiří is the author and editor of numerous books, mainly dealing with contemporary sociological theory, particularly with regard to issues of action, structure, social systems and social change, and among his most recent works is *The Perspective of Historical Sociology: The Individual as Homo-Sociologicus through Society and History*, published by Emerald in 2017.

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This book is the result of my long-term involvement in contemporary sociological theory. I have lectured on these topics for more than a quarter of a century at Charles University, Prague, publishing a large number of more or less extensive studies, especially in my mother language. Now I want to address my knowledge, ideas and views to a broader professional public. The bulk of this work (Sections 1 and 2) is of a synoptical, summarizing and comparative character; the follow-up part (Section 3) attempts - on the basis of long-term reflection on the problems and critical analysis of the field - to formulate an outline of my own; an original and - as I hope - innovative conception. In the formation of my views on a given area of sociological thinking, important contributions in addition to studying the vast amount of theoretical literature - have been made by a dazzling range of number of experts who have allowed me to consult on and discuss questions and ideas with them. These have included, among others, Thomas Luckmann, Hans Joas, Ilja Srubar, Dirk Kaesler, Willfried Spohn, Bernhard Giesen, Harald Wenzel, Wolfgang Knöbl, Helmut Staubmann, Christoph Reinprecht, Johann Arnason, Dennis Smith and Patrick Baert. Each of them - at different times and to varying degrees - has greatly shifted my thinking about sociology and helped me find the way to my own thoughts, and I am therefore indebted to all of them. My thanks also belong to those who have assisted me in the processing and editing of individual parts of the text; among these are the executive editor of the Czech Sociological Review, Robin Cassling, and especially my long-time friend, proofreader and language advisor, Edward Everett. Without their help, this book would not work as it does.